

I AM LEGEND II

BY

RADEK SMEKTALA

BASED ON A NOVEL

BY

RICHARD MATHESON

BASED ON A SCREENPLAY

BY

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BASED ON CHARACTERS AND SITUATIONS CREATED

BY

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STORY TREATMENT

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FADE IN:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY

Open on an image of a deserted city as the sun is about to set. It's heavy winter - with no one to take care of the streets, the snow is knee high.

As the camera zooms in-- Footprints. Three sets. We track them.

A wheelchair comes into frame. Loaded with blankets and some canned goods, with a beat up radio receiver on top. Pull out to reveal--

Our first glimpse of the survivors:

BEN CORTMAN, early thirties. Deep, soulful eyes. Tall, brooding. Years on the road have left him a shell of a man. He dreams of nothing, fears nothing. Whatever feelings Ben has left, he saves for--

VIRGE MORGAN, just over twenty. Fragile, sensitive and absolutely terrified. But hope keeps her going, as will be proven once and again.

While they wait -- for something or someone -- Virge notices a graffiti on the wall. Four simple words that made it worth surviving for so long:

YOU ARE NOT ALONE

And as she remarks that they must be getting close--

GUNSHOTS are heard.

Ben and Virge turn to see their companion emerging from a meat shop. Flashlight in one hand, a pistol in the other he is--

RICHARD MORGAN, pushing fifty. While this man used to be a blue collar worker, the need to protect his daughter has turned him into the ultimate survivalist. Big, ruthless and pragmatic, he is the kind of guy you'd like to have with you when the doomsday clock advances to midnight.

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Richard has found shelter. A meat locker. As the group enters the shop, Virge points at dead humanoid creatures on the floor. Her father's doing. They have only one bullet left now and it's not good news.

The survivors lock themselves in. Although Ben and Virge don't speak much, their mutual affection comes through. Richard may not like this Cortman kid but he is happy for his daughter.

Virge mentions the graffiti and THE STORY gets told once more. The story that made them believe in salvation. A fairy tale, perhaps--

They are not alone. There are other survivors.

Robert Neville can help them.

HE IS LEGEND.

Then the night falls and another story begins. A story told with screams and moans. A story of incomprehensible terror. Pull out to show--

The HEMOCYTES - DARKSEEKERS - gathering in front of the meat locker, banging at the steel door. More and more of them pour in. Then pull out even further--

To the streets, as a formidable group of hemocytes swarm the shop. A deafening WACRY rings out and--

Off we go.

I AM LEGEND II

THE NEXT DAY

The survivors continue on the road. As they scavenge the city - and there's not much to scavenge - we learn more about them, the hand they were dealt and the weight they carry.

Richard is clearly sceptical of the Robert Neville tale, but he understands that if he takes it away from Virge, she will have little reason to continue on. He and Ben, after all, are mortal, while legends never die.

Then they find good batteries and everything changes. Richard puts them into the radio receiver and a voice comes on - a voice Virge finds especially comforting, repeating the message she knows by heart.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE.

And the signal is strong. So strong, in fact, that it has to be broadcast from nearby.

It's risky to look for the source but Virge can be pretty convincing when she wants to.

Eventually, the survivors reach a skyscraper with broadcasting antennas on the roof. It is quiet inside - too quiet. Richard and Ben manage to enter the sealed room from which the recording is being played - Virge stays behind, in the cleared area - and they come to a startling conclusion.

THE MESSAGE HAD BEEN PLAYING FOR OVER TEN YEARS.

Frustrated, Richard smashes the transmitter to pieces.

Meanwhile, the shadows seem to come to life. It's hemocytes waking from their slumber.

The creatures catch human scent immediately. All hell breaks loose and a sacrifice must be made.

Ben offers to slow down the darkseekers - keep their attention while Richard and Virge hide.

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She tells him she can't stand being alone.

He answers that she will never need to be.

They part. Ben stands face to face with the hemocyte ALPHA MALE. Alpha lets out a terrifying cry. Ben mimes his behavior - as if he was storing his anger for this moment all along.

Richard and Virge crawl into an air duct. She explains, fighting back tears, that what Ben had just said to her was what he told her when they first met.

RICHARD

You really love this kid, don't
you?

She doesn't even need to answer. Richard's little girl is all grown up and her boy comes before daddy.

He leaves Virge the pistol - if the darkseekers come for her, she is to end it herself, as discussed - and with a final kiss on the forehead, leaves to save Ben.

But even though the camera stays on Virge, we HEAR he doesn't succeed. And the hemocytes are still hungry.

As she is being dragged out of the duct, Virge is seconds away from taking her own life. But it is not to be.

Suddenly, hooded figures appear. Black body armor, long steel lances. Whoever they are, these guy make short work of the creatures.

Virge passes out.

CUT TO:

BLACK

MATTHIAS (O.S.)

Are you positive she's not
infected?

ETHAN (O.S.)

There are no traces of the virus
in her blood. Anyway, she would
have shown symptoms by now.

AS VIRGE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS--

She finds herself in an infirmary. Two men greet her:

JONATHAN MATTHIAS, over forty. Charismatic, kind, compassionate. He introduces Virge to the town doctor, a man that took care of her--

ETHAN WILSON, early twenties. Reserved, mysterious. Has trust issues.

Matthias offers Virge a tour. It turns out they are in--

THE SURVIVORS COLONY, VERMONT

And it's a paradise. Beautiful houses, wooden church, a greenhouse, waterwheel. As if Virge was transported back in time.

Matthias, the leader of this community - THE FAMILY, he calls it - couldn't be more caring. A perfect replacement for Richard in time of peace.

Matthias says that the legend of Robert Neville is just that - a myth. But it doesn't matter. The Family is more than Virge ever dared to dream of, and unlike Neville, it is real.

Over the following days Virge gets to meet the other survivors, and they all put her plight in perspective.

HARRY had it bad before the hemocytes came. An alcoholic, gambler, struggling to provide for his parents. But now, as part of The Family, he feels needed and accepted. Harry has found his little piece of Eden.

MARY, on the other hand, lost someone she loved in the plague. She would gladly give up the comfort of the colony for a single moment with her departed man.

Virge is ready to accept this new family. She gets along with the older members, like Harry and Mary, but people her own age - mostly males - scare her.

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Every day one group suits up, arms itself with lances (ammunition is scarce) and moves out to search for resources. Each following night another party sets out and thins out the hemocyte ranks.

They seem to enjoy it a bit too much, but Matthias explains it's necessary evil - when the sun sets, darkseekers gather around the high walls of the colony trying to get in.

One night, in the cantina, these young men - THE FAMILY'S MILITIA - make advances towards Virge.

They are not subtle.

Thankfully, Matthias saves the day. He asks Virge to forgive their behavior. The boys never knew a different life. Every other night, they lose a comrade, either to hemocytes themselves or the virus they carry. Then, naked bodies are found in the woods, completely bloodless. And it's been going on for years.

We learn that the virus responsible for turning humans into monsters has mutated. Those who were once absolutely immune, can now get infected through bites and scratches.

Virge is fascinated with Ethan - a man consumed by a compulsive need to fix things even though he knows he can't.

During one of their conversations, Ethan directly contradicts Matthias words.

It turns out Neville DID exist and the young doctor once travelled with him. Neville supposedly came up with a way to cure hemocytes, but according to Matthias, the compound killed all subjects in a matter of days. Since then, Ethan finds it difficult to trust anyone.

From this moment on, so does Virge - not only Neville turned out to be just a man, fallible and weak, but apparently Matthias, a father figure, lied to her.

A chance to talk this through presents itself when Matthias invites Virge to his house.

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It is amazing, like a museum, with exquisite works of art exhibited next to cutting edge technology. And in the dining room - cooked rabbit, red wine, candles.

Virge asks about Robert Neville. Matthias apologizes for lying earlier and paints Neville as a false prophet. It was better, he believes, to keep the legend alive than expose the man behind it as a fraud.

Then, Matthias gives Virge good news. Latest finding. Apparently, the darkseekers are sterile. The creatures will die off in a generation. The bad news?

So will humans.

There are not many women left, not ones in reproductive age at least. It's nature, males are more likely to survive when confronted with brute force.

Virge doesn't like where this is going. For a good reason. The Family starts to sound more and more like a cult, with Matthias a deluded guru.

He asks Virge to become his bride. She declines and Matthias gets mad.

He decides to punish Virge, to show what kind of fate awaits her if she doesn't comply.

The militia storms in and take Virge somewhere dark. Somewhere cold.

As her eyes adjust to the lack of light, she sees--

A PACK OF HEMOCYTES RIGHT IN FRONT OF HER!

It is only when the monsters jump at Virge that she realizes there is a thin plexiglass sheet separating her from the darkseekers.

Creatures beat on the glass, scream at the top of their lungs. The Alpha Male comes forward, facing Virge.

IT'S BEN CORTMAN.

And at first, he is as savage as the rest of them. Craving Virge's blood.

Through tears, she pleads with him to stop. Begs him to remember. With no success.

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Virge falls to her knees.

VIRGE

Please, stop. You promised me.

(beat)

You promised I will never need
to be alone.

Ben calms down. He puts his hand against the glass.
Virge does the same.

An incredible thing happens. For the first time we see
a hemocyte struggling to speak.

BEN

Not alone.

The others join him.

HEMOCYTE SOLDIER #1

Not alone.

HEMOCYTE SOLDIER #2

Can help.

As the chorus grows louder we realize what is
happening:

THE CREATURES REPEAT ROBERT NEVILLE'S RECORDING.

He is their legend too.

Meanwhile--

THE SUN RISES OVER THE COLONY.

Matthias' men, from within the colony, approach the
entry gate. They look outside through a visor. In front
of the gate--

THE MILITIA. Hoods, body armor, lances.

Something seems off, but maybe they just had a bad
hunt.

The guards open the gate. A grave mistake.

THE HEMOCYTES - DRESSED IN MILITIA UNIFORMS - ASSAULT THE COLONY.

The hoods and tight suits cover the monsters from the sun. God knows how long they were preparing for this, how many militia soldiers they had to kill one by one to pull this off.

But they did.

As a regular war rages outside, Ethan comes to liberate Virge. He is not happy about how she was treated.

Virge wants to free Ben, but Ethan drags her out of the building.

They do their best to survive, helping others hide. Up to this point, the battle is waged between the militia and the hemocytes. Civilians gather in the church.

By nightfall, the militia is decimated. Only Matthias survives along with a couple of his trusted men. They barricade in the church as well.

There, Virge confronts Matthias. Tells him about what happened with the captive darkseekers. How the only reason they stalk the colony is a desperate hope for Neville's cure.

Matthias, in a tense moment, reveals that a cure exists. That Neville really found one. But Matthias saw the colony as a way to shape the future the way he thought was best. Without a bogeyman - the darkseekers - to keep people in control, his glorious vision would be impossible to realize.

MATTHIAS

I did it for all of us!

As the survivors weigh Matthias's motives, hemocytes manage to break inside. They circle the last remnant of humanity and everything seems lost. Until--

BEN AND HIS PACK CRASH THROUGH THE WINDOWS.

They cut the other darkseekers away from the humans giving them a chance to escape. It's a stand off between two hemocyte tribes.

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Ben gives Virge one last look--

TENDER, LOVING

--and the humans flee.

As they rush outside, Ethan tells of an escape route. An underground tunnel. It was Matthias's secret that he shared with Ethan, but with no hope for a future outside the colony, the young doctor saw little reason to take advantage of it before.

Now, that the facade of The Family has crumbled, he realizes a new life awaits beyond Vermont. A new legend to be written.

The civilians leave the colony through the passage, but Ethan, Virge and Matthias stay behind.

Ethan is determined to get the cure and forces Matthias to take him to it.

They reach a secret room in Matthias's house where a box containing dozen syringes with Neville's serum is found. Virge and Ben escape clutching the cure, but Matthias chooses to remain in his fortress. He is the captain of this ship and won't abandon it when it's sinking. He grabs the gun Virge had with her at the beginning.

Matthias examines the magazine.

ONE BULLET.

He lets out a nervous laughter. It's over.

Finally, the hemocytes come, led by Ben. Matthias holds up the pistol.

A GUNSHOT RINGS OUT OVER THE COLONY.

Meanwhile, in a cave few miles outside Vermont, Virge and Ethan reunite with Harry, Mary and the rest.

Virge sits near the exit, a box in her lap. Inside - NEVILLE'S SERUM.

She looks up and stares longingly at--

A NEW DAWN

The first day of the rest of human history.

CUT TO:

BEN CORTMAN.

Wrapped in a blanket to cover himself from the sun.

BEN

Not alone...

Ben watches the dawn as well. A crimson tear rolls down his cheek. But this is not despair.

This is hope.

FADE OUT.

THE END