

"THIS SMALL HUMAN LIFE"

written by

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1 INT. UNIVERSITY AUDITORIUM - DAY

A cavernous modern lecture hall. Tiered seating. Dim.  
A soft hum of PROJECTOR FANS fills the room like white noise.

Dozens of grad students, clinicians, and faculty settle in,  
notebooks ready.

At the podium stands DR. MARA ELLISON (38) — composed, sharp-  
eyed, carrying the severe calm of someone who has endured too  
much and learned to bury all of it.

She clicks a remote. The projector warms.

A TITLE SLIDE appears:

MULTIVERSE IDENTITY DISORDER:  
A CONTEMPORARY PATHOLOGY OF MYTH  
AND MEMORY  
Dr. Mara Ellison, Helios Institute  
for Cognitive Research

Mara waits. The room quiets.

MARA  
Before we begin — I want to make  
something clear.

A beat. She studies her audience — really looks at them.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Every era produces its own  
delusions.  
Medieval Europe had demonology.  
Early America had possession.  
Twentieth-century patients believed  
they were implanted with  
microchips.

She clicks the remote.

SLIDE: A collage of superhero film posters, comic book  
covers, pop culture icons.

MARA (CONT'D)  
And today... we have this.

A ripple of laughter. Mara doesn't react.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Young men throwing themselves off  
buildings  
(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)  
 convinced they will fly.  
 Adults insisting they can control  
 weather, or see  
 alternate futures.

Click.

SLIDE: A blurred CELLPHONE VIDEO of a man screaming on a rooftop at night.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 Multiverse Identity Disorder –  
 M.I.D. – is a false-memory  
 syndrome fueled by pop culture,  
 trauma displacement,  
 and the very human desire to be  
 extraordinary.

Click.

SLIDE: JONAS VALE (40s) – grainy police bodycam footage.  
 Jonas sits on a curb, hands behind his head, eyes blazing  
 with conviction.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 Case study number seventy-nine.  
 Jonas Vale.  
 Former inmate. Claimed he once held  
 entire buildings  
 aloft with “a thought.”  
 He describes a world that collapsed  
 – an event he calls  
 ‘The Fall.’

The room murmurs. Mara changes slides.

SLIDE: SERA KYNE (30s) – hospital bed, IVs, oxygen cannula.  
 Staff crowd the frame. She’s mid-argument, furious.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 Sera Kyne. Terminal autoimmune  
 failure.  
 Claims she used to be able to  
 “repair the world  
 one cell at a time.”  
 She says her illness is “a form of  
 forgetting.”

Click.

SLIDE: DAVID RUIZ (20s) – dashcam clip of a hoodie-wearing  
 man walking along a highway shoulder at dawn. When a car  
 passes him, every streetlight BLOWS OUT.

Gasps ripple through the auditorium.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 David Ruiz. Photophobia.  
 He claims he once "spoke to  
 sunlight."  
 And that it now refuses to speak  
 back.

She lets the slide linger.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 These individuals are not  
 dangerous.  
 They are not superhuman.  
 They are people whose minds have  
 turned inward  
 and mistaken imagination for truth.

Click.

A SLIDE titled:

THE HELIOS PILOT PROGRAM  
 A Controlled Study of M.I.D.  
 Patients

MARA  
 Next month, I will begin a twelve-  
 week, fully supervised  
 clinical trial at the Helios  
 Institute.  
 A government-funded opportunity to  
 study M.I.D.  
 at scale and determine the  
 cognitive architecture  
 behind multiverse delusions.

She pauses. Looks tired around the eyes, but steady.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 My goal — our goal — is to  
 understand why the modern mind  
 is choosing myth over reality.

A small smile, humorless.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 And maybe convince it to stop.

FADE TO—

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2 EXT. HELIOS INSTITUTE - DAWN

A cold, silver-blue morning.  
A brutalist research compound nestled in dense woods.  
Fog hugging the ground like something alive.

A SECURITY GATE slides open.

A shuttle van pulls through.

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3 INT. SHUTTLE VAN - MOVING - DAWN

A sterile white interior. Padded seats with restraints.

Three patients sit separated:

JONAS VALE

Hands cuffed. Shoulders tense like  
coiled wire. Eyes sharp, alert to  
every detail.  
He watches treetops blur past, jaw  
clenched.

SERA KYNE

Thin, pale, hiding nerves beneath  
sarcasm. She taps a syringe port on  
her arm rhythmically - like a  
stress tic.

DAVID RUIZ

Hood up. Sunglasses on despite the  
dim interior.  
Light leaking through the windows  
makes him flinch subtly each time.

None speak.

The only sounds: ENGINE DRONE, TURN SIGNAL TICKS.

A GUARD sits up front, checking a clipboard.

GUARD

(to the driver)

Three for Cohort Seven.  
Intake in twenty minutes.  
Psych evals first, then baseline  
scans.

Jonas lifts his bound hands as far as the cuffs allow.

JONAS  
You don't have to keep me chained.  
(beat)  
I'm not dangerous here.

The guard doesn't look back.

GUARD  
That's what they all say.

Jonas closes his eyes.

For just a moment — the air beside his knee TREMBLES, subtle,  
like a distant pressure wave.

Sera notices. Goes still.

David keeps his head down — but a faint electrical BUZZ  
flickers around the reading light above him.

The van takes a turn.

The institute looms through the windows — stark, clinical,  
monolithic.

Sera exhales.

SERA  
Looks like a prison designed by  
Apple.

David huffs a micro-laugh. Jonas doesn't react.

The guard shoots them a warning glance.

GUARD  
Last chance to behave like people.

David whispers — barely audible.

DAVID  
We're trying.

The guard hears nothing.

The van slows.

A metallic CLANG as the gate closes behind them.

CUT TO—

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4 EXT. HELIOS INSTITUTE - INTAKE BAY - DAWN

The van doors open. Cold air consumes the space.

Jonas steps out first — calm, almost serene.  
Sera next, adjusting her hospital bracelet.  
David last, eyes down, avoiding the rising sun.

A team of ORDERLIES waits with clipboards and scanners.

The lead clinician, DR. LEO CHAN (42), approaches. Soft-spoken, observant.

LEO  
Welcome to Helios.  
We'll get you processed quickly.  
Just follow instructions and—

He stops mid-sentence as he looks at David.

For a fraction of a second, a faint halo of pale light flickers around David's silhouette — barely-there, like an optical illusion.

Leo blinks hard.

The halo is gone.

LEO (CONT'D)  
(recovering)  
—and everything will go smoothly.

David seems to register something in Leo too — staring back as if recognizing a stranger.

Jonas watches the exchange.

Sera shivers.

Leo gestures inward.

LEO (CONT'D)  
Welcome to the start of your  
treatment.

They enter the building one by one.

As Jonas crosses the threshold, the metal FRAME of the doorway SHIVERS — a faint metallic flex, like the gravity around it buckles for a millisecond.

No one notices.

We FOLLOW THEM INSIDE—

FADE OUT.

5 INT. HELIOS INSTITUTE - MAIN LOBBY - MORNING

A double-height atrium of glass and concrete.  
Everything is too clean. Too deliberate.  
Security cameras stare down like unblinking eyes.

A RECEPTION DESK divides the space. Behind it, a subtle  
HELIOS LOGO — a stylized sun fractured into geometric shards.

Mara stands with a small escort:

ADMIN HEAD

SECURITY CHIEF HENDRICKS (50s), ex-military vibe

INTAKE NURSE VAL (30s), brisk, efficient

They watch as Leo leads Jonas, Sera, and David through the  
security scanners.

VAL  
Cohort Seven, huh?

HENDRICKS  
You say that like it's a good  
thing.

Val smirks. Hendricks doesn't.

Mara's eyes are all calculation. She studies the new arrivals  
like a crime scene.

MARA  
Jonas Vale, Sera Kyne, David Ruiz.

Leo nods as each passes.

LEO  
Vitals stable... for now.

The scanner BEEPS as Jonas steps through. A RED LIGHT  
flashes.

GUARD #2  
Metal on subject.

Hendricks gestures.

HENDRICKS  
Pat him down.

Guard #2 pats Jonas. Finds nothing but cuffs.



GUARD #2

He's clean.

The scanner light FLICKERS between red and green, struggling.

For a second, Jonas's silhouette on the sensor display seems to blur, stretch, like gravity is pulling him sideways.

Then it SNAPS back. Light turns green.

A tiny GLASS PENDANT hanging from a reception plant VIBRATES, then settles.

Mara notices the pendant move. Files it mentally. Says nothing.

Sera steps through the scanner. It chirps, then shows her skeleton outline — her ribcage pulsing, lungs inflamed.

VAL

(quietly, to herself)

Jesus.

Sera catches that. Forces a grin.

SERA

Don't worry. I only explode if I see the bill.

No one laughs. The scanner clears her.

David steps up, hesitating. The bright overhead fixtures make him flinch.

LEO

(soft)

Take your time.

David nods slightly, stepping through.

The scanner HUMS. The lights above them FLICKER — then a POP as one bulb blows out.

Everyone flinches. Hendricks looks up.

The scanner shows David's outline — but the image is heavily overexposed, flaring white around his head and shoulders.

Then it corrects. Scanner flashes green.

HENDRICKS

Maintenance. Today.

ADMIN HEAD

Already filed.

A slight tension hangs in the room.

Mara steps forward, composed.

MARA

I'm Dr. Ellison. I'll be leading  
your treatment  
over the next twelve weeks.

Sera watches her carefully. Jonas stares, unreadable. David keeps his eyes low.

MARA (CONT'D)

You're not prisoners.  
You are participants in a clinical  
study.  
But for everyone's safety, there  
are rules.

She lets that land.

MARA (CONT'D)

No unsupervised access to exterior  
doors.  
No tampering with equipment.  
No violence of any kind — against  
staff, against each other,  
or against yourselves.

Jonas's gaze flicks, just for a second, at that last part.

SERA

(dry)  
And if we discover we can fly?

Mara doesn't blink.

MARA

Then you can file it in your daily  
self-report form.

Sera weighs her. Almost smiles.

LEO

(to them)  
We'll start with orientation, then  
individual interviews,  
then scans. Breakfast after that.

DAVID

(hoarse)  
Do you... keep the lights like this  
all the time?

Leo meets his eyes.

LEO  
We can dim your room. Common areas  
stay bright for safety.

David nods. Swallows it.

Mara gestures toward a set of internal doors marked:  
COHORT WARD - AUTHORIZED ACCESS ONLY

MARA  
Welcome to Helios.

They move toward the doors.

As the automatic doors slide open, the frosted glass briefly shows a REFLECTION of the group — except Mara's reflection lags a half-second behind the others.

No one sees it.

CUT TO—

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6 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - CORRIDOR - MORNING

A long corridor, doors on either side — patient rooms.  
Muted artwork on the walls, generic landscapes.

Jonas, Sera, and David are escorted in.

Each door has:

a small window

a nameplate slot (currently labeled with printed temp tags)

a discreet CAMERA tucked into the corner of the ceiling

Val hands them thin plastic INTAKE FOLDERS.

VAL  
Inside you'll find your daily  
schedule, patient rights,  
and consent forms for recording.  
You've already signed  
the initial agreement, but we like  
things redundant here.

SERA  
Redundant. That's comforting.

Val gives her a look.

VAL  
Think of it as... thorough.

She stops at Jonas's door. Slides a temp nameplate in:

VALE, JONAS - C7-01

She unlocks the door, opens it for him.

VAL (CONT'D)  
This is you. Try not to break  
anything.

Jonas steps in, taking in the room:  
Bed. Small desk. Bolted-down chair. Tiny bathroom.  
A wide window overlooking the woods.

He stares at the window. Sets his cuffed hands on the sill.

For the briefest moment, the GLASS seems to warp inward, like  
gravity is tugging on it.  
A faint CREAK.

Val doesn't notice. She's already moving on.

Sera's door:

KYNE, SERA - C7-02

Sera peers in.

SERA  
Wow. I've always dreamed of a mid-  
range corporate Airbnb.

Val, deadpan:

VAL  
Room service runs at seven, twelve,  
and five.  
If you experience any side effects,  
press the call button.  
If you experience existential  
crisis, that's page three.

She moves on.

David's door:

RUIZ, DAVID - C7-03

Leo lingers with him.

LEO  
We can put blackout shades over  
your window, if it helps.  
We've done that for photosensitive  
patients before.

David looks genuinely relieved.

DAVID  
I... yeah. That would be good.

LEO  
I'll put in the order.

David steps in. Leo watches him a beat too long.

From Leo's POV: a faint shimmering aura around David's  
outline in the doorway.  
When David takes a step further into the room, the aura  
stretches — like light resisting his movement — then snaps  
back.

Leo blinks it away. Exhales.

Down the hall, Mara stands watching all this, a quiet general  
surveying a battlefield she hasn't admitted is one yet.

Hendricks steps up beside her.

HENDRICKS  
You sure you want all three of them  
in the same cohort?

MARA  
That's the point, Chief.  
Same delusion. Shared environment.  
We observe how it behaves.

HENDRICKS  
Just remember — delusions don't  
sign incident reports.

She half-smiles. Not warm.

MARA  
That's what you're here for.

He nods. Walks off.

Mara watches the closed doors of C7-01, C7-02, C7-03.  
For just a second, she feels a wave of... familiarity. As if  
she's stood in this exact configuration before.

She shakes it off. Heads down the hall.

CUT TO—

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7 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - LATER MORNING

A small room with one-way glass looking into a modest INTERVIEW ROOM.

Monitors show live feeds from the cohort rooms.  
Brainwave readouts. Heart rate monitors. Everything labeled.

Leo sits at a workstation, prepping notes.

Mara stands at the glass, watching the empty interview chair in the next room.

LEO  
So, what's the sequence?

MARA  
Start with Jonas.  
He's the most likely to test  
boundaries.

LEO  
You read his file?

MARA  
Twice.

LEO  
He's... calm. Too calm.

MARA  
People who believe they're  
invincible often are.

On the monitors:

Jonas sits on his bed, hands resting calmly in his lap.

Sera is unpacking: a worn notebook, a pen, a small faded photo.

David is curled in the corner of his bed, hood up, hands clasped like he's praying or holding on to something invisible.

Mara's eyes linger on David.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Ruiz. He was the one with the  
highway footage?

LEO  
Yeah. The streetlights.  
Power company said it was a surge,  
but...

He pulls up the video on a secondary monitor.

DASHCAM FOOTAGE — car approaching David walking along the shoulder.

As the car draws level, every streetlight in frame POPS to darkness in a wave.

MARA  
Coincidence. Faulty transformers.

LEO  
And the thermal camera washout?

He scrubs to another angle — THERMAL VIEW of David from a cruiser.  
His body shows as a white-hot silhouette, way brighter than ambient.

Mara watches, stone-faced.

MARA  
You know better than to go in with  
a narrative, Leo.

LEO  
I know better than to pretend this  
is ordinary.

Beat.

Mara checks her watch. Presses an intercom button.

MARA  
(into intercom)  
Bring in Vale.

CUT TO—

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8 INT. HELIOS - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A simple room. Table. Two chairs. Camera in the corner.  
A small box of tissues. A glass pitcher of water.

Jonas sits already, cuffs removed but hands resting neatly together.  
He sits straight-backed, posture almost military.

The door opens. Mara enters with a tablet. She sits opposite him, unhurried.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Mr. Vale. I'm Dr. Ellison.

JONAS  
Mara Ellison.

Not "Doctor." Just the name. It lands with weight.  
She notes that.

MARA  
You prefer Jonas, or Mr. Vale?

JONAS  
Jonas is fine.

MARA  
All right, Jonas.  
Before we get into your personal  
history, I want you  
to understand the structure here.

She slides a CONSENT FORM across the table.

MARA (CONT'D)  
You're being recorded.  
Everything you say can be used for  
both clinical treatment  
and anonymized research.  
You're free to refuse any question,  
but that may affect  
your inclusion in the study.

Jonas barely glances at the form.

JONAS  
You're looking for patterns.

MARA  
Yes.

JONAS  
You're hoping I match them.

MARA  
I'm hoping you get better.

A faint smile that doesn't reach his eyes.

JONAS  
You don't believe I'm sick.



MARA

I believe you have beliefs that are causing you distress.

JONAS

That's not an answer.

She lets the silence sit. He leans back.

JONAS (CONT'D)

You showed them footage of me. In your lecture.

That lands. She keeps her face neutral, but we can tell: that jolts her.

MARA

How do you know that?

JONAS

(shrugs)

You're proud of your work.  
And they needed a monster.

MARA

You're not a monster.

JONAS

No. That's the problem.

She studies him — more closely now.

MARA

Jonas, can you tell me in your own words why you're here?

JONAS

You already know why I think I'm here.

MARA

I want to hear it from you.

He considers. Then:

JONAS

I remember a city that doesn't exist.  
I remember holding up a tower with my hands, except my hands weren't touching it.  
I remember a sky folding in on itself like paper.

(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)  
People screaming. Light turning  
inside out.

MARA  
"The Fall."

JONAS  
That's what we called it. Yeah.

MARA  
We?

He looks at her. Direct.

JONAS  
You were there.

Beat.

Mara doesn't react — outwardly. She clicks her pen. Jots a  
note.

MARA  
You mean "people like me."  
Scientists. Doctors.

JONAS  
I mean you.

A gentle, unnerving certainty.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
You looked different.  
But it was you.

The air feels thicker for a second.

Mara leans back, keeps it clinical.

MARA  
Jonas, when did these memories  
start?

JONAS  
They didn't start.  
They came back.

MARA  
After your incarceration?

JONAS  
After I survived something I  
shouldn't have.

He rolls his sleeve up slightly – revealing a faded SCAR across his bicep.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
They shot me here. Point-blank.  
The bullet slowed down.  
Right... here.

He taps a spot in mid-air, six inches from his skin.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
I watched it hover.  
Like it was remembering gravity  
wrong.

A shiver of something passes over Mara's face – quickly buried.

MARA  
Jonas, when you say you could "hold  
buildings up"—

JONAS  
I know I can't do it here.

MARA  
Why not?

He gestures vaguely, around them, at the ceiling, the walls.

JONAS  
This place is... heavier.  
Like someone turned reality up.

He leans forward, eyes intent.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
But it's the same person in here.  
(taps his chest)  
Same mind. Same memory.

He studies her.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
You're here to convince me I'm  
wrong.

MARA  
I'm here to understand why those  
memories feel real to you.

JONAS  
Because they are.

He smiles faintly – not mocking, not pleading. Just sure.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
And the thing that scares you,  
Doctor Ellison,  
is that somewhere in you... they're  
real for you too.

He holds her gaze.

Somewhere, a distant, low HUM seems to vibrate the room –  
like a far-off turbine starting, then fading.

We don't know if it's real or not.

Mara writes something in her notes, breaking eye contact.

MARA  
Thank you, Jonas. We'll continue  
this later.

JONAS  
We already have.

She stands. That line unsettles her more than she'll ever  
admit.

CUT TO—

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9 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara steps back into the observation room, closing the  
interview door behind her.

Leo swivels his chair toward her, eyebrows raised.

On the monitor, playback shows Jonas in the chair, waiting.

LEO  
How'd it go?

MARA  
He's... well-practiced.

LEO  
You look like someone just read  
your diary out loud.

She ignores that.

MARA

Queue up Kyne. I want to see how  
she frames it.

Leo hesitates.

LEO

You should watch this first.

He rewinds the Jonas recording a few seconds.

We see Jonas tap the air where the bullet "stopped."

Leo hits a key.

The image zooms in slightly.

We see Jonas's fingers... and there's the faintest, odd  
distortion around them, like the pixels themselves drag  
inward for a single frame.

A near-imperceptible PULL.

Leo freezes that frame.

LEO (CONT'D)

Compression artifact, right?

Mara stares at the screen. Forces a nod.

MARA

Probably.

He studies her.

LEO

You don't sound convinced.

MARA

We built this entire facility on  
the premise  
that we're studying pattern  
recognition gone wrong.

(beat)

Let's not start hallucinating with  
them.

She presses the intercom button again.

MARA (CONT'D)

(into intercom)

Bring in Sera Kyne.

CUT TO—

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10 INT. HELIOS - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Sera sits opposite Mara now.  
Her notebook rests on the table between them.  
She holds a plastic cup of water with both hands, knuckles white.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Sera, thank you for participating.  
How are you feeling?

SERA  
Like I checked into a hotel where  
the minibar is pills  
and the view is regret.

Mara actually almost smiles.

MARA  
That sounds... specific.

SERA  
I've had practice.

Mara nods at the notebook.

MARA  
Is that a journal?

SERA  
Symptoms. Thoughts.  
Things I don't want to forget.

MARA  
May I see it?

Sera's fingers tighten around it.

SERA  
Not yet.

Beat. Mara lets it go.

MARA  
All right. We'll come back to it.

She taps her tablet.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Sera, can you tell me why you  
agreed to this program?

SERA

Because my doctors said I'm running  
out of "standard options."  
Because you people have better  
toys.  
Because if I'm going to die, I'd  
like to at least understand  
what the hell I am before it  
happens.

MARA

And what do you think you are?

Sera looks at her. No joking now.

SERA

A downgrade.

Mara waits.

SERA (CONT'D)

I remember...  
waking up in a place where disease  
was a bad memory.  
Where people healed like time-lapse  
videos.  
Where we could fix things. Not just  
bodies.  
Systems. Oceans. Weather.

MARA

And you were part of that.

SERA

I helped. Yeah.

She swallows.

SERA (CONT'D)

Then one day it was like someone  
unplugged the world.  
The sky... glitched.  
That's the only word I have.  
It stuttered, like a bad feed.  
And I was here.  
Sick. Small. Wrong.

MARA

Sera, when did these memories begin  
to—

SERA

They're not memories.  
They're... absences.

Mara tilts her head.

MARA

Explain.

Sera taps her chest lightly.

SERA

My body knows how to fix itself.  
It keeps trying.  
And something keeps telling it  
"no."

She looks up, eyes bright with a mix of fury and fear.

SERA (CONT'D)

It feels like somebody put a  
governor on my life.

MARA

A limit.

SERA

A cage.

Beat.

MARA

These feelings... did they begin  
after your diagnosis?

SERA

No.

(beat)

My diagnosis began after them.

That lands.

SERA (CONT'D)

I woke up one night convinced my  
lungs were wrong.  
Like... they had been better.  
Different.  
The doctors said it was anxiety.  
A month later they found the  
lesions.

She laughs once, humorless.

SERA (CONT'D)

You want me to say I watched too  
many movies.  
That I wanted to feel special.

(MORE)



SERA (CONT'D)  
That I'm using some big superhero  
story to cope.

Mara says nothing.

SERA (CONT'D)  
But you know what really terrifies  
me, Dr. Ellison?

MARA  
Tell me.

SERA  
What if this is the downgrade?

Silence.

Sera leans in, softer now.

SERA (CONT'D)  
What if some version of us figured  
it out — how to be  
more, better —  
and someone tore it all down?

Mara's pen pauses over the tablet, mid-note.

SERA (CONT'D)  
What if the delusion isn't that I  
remember that world?  
What if the delusion is that this  
one was worth keeping?

That hits something in Mara she doesn't let us see.

MARA  
(careful)  
Sera... do you believe someone did  
this on purpose?

Sera looks at her. Very still.

SERA  
Don't you?

A low hum seems to pass through the overhead vents — again,  
maybe just HVAC, maybe something else.

Mara glances once at the camera in the corner, then back to  
Sera.

MARA  
Thank you. This is helpful.

SERA

For who?

Mara stands.

MARA

We'll talk again soon.

As she heads to the door, Sera speaks, almost casually.

SERA

You looked different then, you know.

Mara stops.

MARA

Then?

SERA

In the other world.

(beat)

You smiled more.

Mara turns, slowly.

MARA

Why do you say that?

Sera just studies her face.

SERA

Because you look like someone who remembers choosing.

That unnerves Mara more than anything so far.

She exits.

We stay on Sera.

She opens her notebook, flips pages of messy handwriting and diagrams – and briefly, we glimpse a ROUGH SKETCH of a city collapsing in on itself, and a figure in a dark geometric robe standing before it.

MATCH CUT TO—

---

Back in the observation room, monitors glow, data scrolls, and for just a moment—

A diagnostic window FLASHES a label over Mara's video feed:

SUBJECT: ELLISON, MARA

PATTERN MATCH: 87% - COHORT SEVEN

Then it vanishes.

No one sees it.

---

11 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

Mara steps back into the room, shaken but steadying herself.  
Leo watches her closely, trying not to show concern.

LEO  
She was... intense.

MARA  
They're all intense.

LEO  
No.  
(beat)  
She was talking like she remembered  
you.

Mara doesn't respond. Instead:

MARA  
Queue Ruiz.

Leo hesitates.

LEO  
He's the least stable.  
Or the most. Hard to tell.

MARA  
Then let's find out.

Leo nods and triggers the intercom.

CUT TO—

---

12 INT. HELIOS - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

David sits hunched, hands clasped, hoodie low over his face.  
The blinds have been partially lowered to dull the overhead  
glow.

He keeps his head down until Mara sits.

Silence.

She waits.

He finally speaks – voice soft, ragged.

DAVID  
You dimmed the lights.

MARA  
Leo arranged it.

DAVID  
He's... different.

MARA  
How?

David's hands tighten.

DAVID  
He looks like he's... already  
remembering.

Mara sits, poised, professional—but her pulse quickens.

MARA  
David, can you tell me why you're  
here?

DAVID  
Because light hurts now.  
(beat)  
It didn't used to.

He lifts his head slightly – just enough for us to see red-rimmed eyes, exhausted.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
And because when I walk around this  
place, things...  
bend.

MARA  
Bend?

DAVID  
Light bends.  
Around me.

He gestures vaguely, like trying to describe an impossible shape.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Like it's avoiding me.  
Like I'm... contaminated.

MARA  
When did this sensation begin?

DAVID  
Not when I got sick.  
Before that.

The word "before" hangs heavy.

MARA  
Before?

DAVID  
Before here.

Mara leans forward subtly.

MARA  
David... where is "here"?

He sits very still.

DAVID  
This world.  
This... version.

Beat.

MARA  
You believe there was another  
world.

DAVID  
I don't believe it.  
(looks up)  
I remember it.

We see his face now — fragile, haunted.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
There was a field of mirrors.  
Not actual mirrors — light.  
Light turned into solid things.  
Light that listened.

MARA  
You interacted with light.

David laughs faintly, bitter.

DAVID

No.  
I was light.  
And so were others.  
Jonas. Sera.  
And—

He stops abruptly. Eyes lock onto Mara's face.

Not her eyes — her forehead.  
Like he's seeing something above her, around her.

MARA

And...?

David's breathing quickens.

DAVID

You're...  
you're dimmer here.

Mara stiffens.

MARA

David, what does that mean?

He shakes his head, trembling.

DAVID

You were made of light before.  
Now it's like someone turned you  
down.  
Like someone covered you in... noise.

He swallows.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Did you do that?  
To yourself?

A faint tremor passes through the room — maybe just a truck  
outside, maybe not — the water in the glass ripples.

MARA

(quiet)  
David, what do you remember about  
the event you call  
"The Fall"?

David lowers his head.

DAVID

Everything burning. But not like  
fire.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

Like...  
like truth burning through lies.

He squeezes his eyes shut.

DAVID (CONT'D)

And a voice saying—  
(barely audible)  
"It must begin again."

Mara's pen stops mid-note.  
Her pulse spikes.

Because she dreamt those exact words. Last night.

MARA

(soft)  
David... who said that?

David opens his eyes.  
Tears streak down his cheeks.

DAVID

You did.

He curls inwards, shaking.

Mara sits frozen, unable to hide the shock this time.

CUT TO—

---

13 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mara enters fast. Shuts the door.  
Her hands tremble for a moment before she clenches them.

Leo stands.

LEO

That looked—

MARA

(sharp)  
Don't.  
Not yet.

She takes a breath. Another.

LEO

Mara... this isn't normal delusion  
presentation.

MARA  
They're priming each other.  
They're feeding a shared fantasy  
structure.

LEO  
They haven't spoken to each other  
yet.

Beat.

That sinks in.

Mara's jaw works.

MARA  
People perceive patterns where  
there are none.

LEO  
Do you?

She looks up, unsettled by the challenge.

MARA  
I believe...  
that narratives can be contagious.

LEO  
That's not what I asked.

Mara doesn't answer.

On the monitors:

Jonas sits perfectly still on his bed, eyes open.

Sera writes furiously in her notebook.

David curls in a ball, muttering to himself, light flickering  
subtly around the edge of the frame.

Mara stares.

MARA  
I need air.

She exits abruptly.

CUT TO—

---

14 INT. HELIOS - NORTH CORRIDOR - DAY



Mara walks briskly through a long hallway.  
Glass walls on her left show a courtyard.  
To her right: labs, offices, secured wings.

She tries to steady her breathing.

MARA (V.O.)  
They're delusional.  
They're traumatized.  
They're looking for meaning.

She passes a mirror-like security panel.

Her reflection—

lags a full second behind  
...then snaps to match her movement.

Mara stops cold.

Turns back.

The panel shows only the empty hallway.

She stands alone, shaken.

Then—

A sharp CLANG echoes from somewhere deep in the institute —  
maybe a dropped tool, maybe something else. She can't tell.

She forces herself onward.

CUT TO—

---

15 INT. HELIOS - ADMIN OFFICE - DAY

Mara steps inside, trying to regain composure.

Admin files paperwork. Doesn't look up.

ADMIN  
Dr. Ellison. Everything all right?

MARA  
Fine.  
(beat)  
I need the full architectural map  
of the facility.

ADMIN  
The what?

MARA

The layout.

I...

I want to review patient flow.

Admin shrugs, taps keys, prints a large layout.

Hands it to her.

Mara scans it—

And her face goes pale.

The corridor she just walked down is labeled as:

NORTH CORRIDOR — UNDER RENOVATION  
RESTRICTED ACCESS  
AREA CLOSED

But she just walked through it.

Lights on. Staff passing. Fully functional.

MARA

(quiet)

This is outdated.

ADMIN

No, that's live.

That wing's been closed since  
January.

Mara stares at the map.

Her hand shakes.

CUT TO—

---

16 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - HALLWAY - LATER

She walks quickly past the three patient rooms, trying to keep control.

Jonas sits on his bed, staring out the window.

We hear the faint creak again — the glass bowing inward.

Sera is sketching the collapsing city again.

David sits cross-legged, palms upward, whispering something rhythmically — and the overhead light dims each time he breathes out.

Mara stops mid-hallway.

On the wall in front of her:

A framed photograph of the Helios Institute's founding.

Staff lined up. Administrators. Doctors.

One figure is blurred – the only one blurred in the photo.

Body posture suggests Mara's height. Her stance. Her silhouette.

She stares at it.

A cold dread crawling behind her ribcage.

CUT TO—

---

17 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - EVENING

Lights low. Screens glowing.

Leo sits alone, tense.

Mara re-enters, composed but off-balance.

LEO

You okay?

She nods. Too quickly.

MARA

Let's consolidate the morning  
interviews.

Map the common symbols, shared  
phrases, sensory details.

LEO

(carefully)

And the shared memory of you?

Mara freezes. Just a fraction.

MARA

We categorize it under  
transference.

LEO

All three of them described your  
presence in their  
other-world narratives.

MARA  
And that makes sense  
psychologically.

LEO  
Does it?

Beat.

Mara sits, almost collapsing into her chair.

MARA  
We need to stay objective, Leo.

LEO  
(soft)  
Are you?

Mara looks at the monitors.

Each patient's feed shows a faint flicker of artifacting –  
subtle distortions around their bodies.

Like the frames are resisting them.

Or like the world is trying to remember them differently.

She watches David's feed.

For a fraction of a second – there are two Davids.  
Overlapping frames.  
Like a double exposure.

Then it corrects.

Mara's breath catches.

Leo saw it too.

They say nothing.

The hum of machines grows louder.

Lights flicker.

Somewhere in the building – a low, resonant SOUND  
reverberates like a bow drawn across a massive cello.

A sound that feels like it comes from under the world.

FADE OUT.

18 INT. HELIOS - MARA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Small. Clean. Books meticulously organized.  
A single desk lamp glows, casting soft gold across a stack of  
PATIENT FILES.

Mara sits rigidly in her chair.

A mug of tea sits untouched.

Open on her desk:  
DAVID RUIZ - OBSERVATION NOTES.  
SERA KYNE - DAILY JOURNAL EXCERPTS.  
JONAS VALE - INCIDENT REPORTS.

She flips through Jonas's file—

SECURITY REPORT - TWO YEARS AGO

"INMATE CLAIMS BULLET HALTED IN MID-AIR."  
"Video footage corrupted."  
"Witness accounts disagree on distance to target."

She flips to Sera's medical charts—

"AUTOIMMUNE CYCLE INCONSISTENT WITH DISEASE  
PROGRESSION."  
"Spontaneous tissue repair event?"  
"Recommend re-evaluation of baseline."

Then David's intake notes—

"SEVERE PHOTOPHOBIA."  
"Streetlight cascade failure."  
"Thermal signature unexplained."

She rubs her temples.

MARA (V.O.)  
Pattern-seeking.  
Correlation without causation.  
Narrative contamination.

She tries to breathe. Controlled. With discipline.

Then—

A faint reflected light catches her eye.

Mara looks at her office window.

Instead of her reflection, she sees—  
a city of glass and white spires collapsing inward, silently.  
A sky turning dark, folding into itself.

She gasps—

And the image flickers back to her normal reflection.  
Mara jolts to her feet, chair skittering behind her.  
She approaches the window, breath fogging the glass.  
Only her reflection now.  
She touches the cold surface—  
and hears a faint WHISPER behind her:

WHISPER (O.S.)  
It must begin again.

She spins—  
The office is empty.

Silence.

Mara's breath trembles. She steadies.

Her phone BUZZES.

TEXT FROM LEO:

COME TO WARD SEVEN. NOW.

CUT TO—

---

19 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway lights flicker subtly — not broken, more like pulsing with a faint heartbeat rhythm.

Mara strides toward Leo, who stands rigid outside Sera's room.

MARA  
What happened?

LEO  
(quiet)  
You should see for yourself.

He opens the door.

---

20 INT. SERA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sera sits on the floor, back against the bed, breathing hard.

Her left arm is wrapped in a towel soaked with blood.

The room looks normal except—

A small overturned tray lies beside her.

A broken piece of glass — sharp enough to cut — glints under the bed.

MARA

Jesus, Sera—

Mara kneels.

Leo hovers.

LEO

I found her like this.

Mara gently unwraps the towel—

A deep, fresh wound runs across Sera's forearm.  
Cut clean. Deep enough to expose underlying tissue.

Sera stares ahead, detached.

MARA

(soft)

Did you do this to yourself?

SERA

(whispers)

I needed to see.

MARA

See what?

A beat. Sera looks directly at her.

SERA

If this world still remembers me.

Mara presses a clean towel. Blood seeps through.

MARA

Sera, you could have hit an artery.

SERA

I did.

(beat)

Watch.

Mara freezes.

Sera pulls her arm closer, letting the towel fall away.

The wound—  
is closing.  
Slow. Subtle.  
But visibly sealing itself.

Skin knitting.  
Blood ebbing.  
Tissue pulling together like time-lapse reverse footage.

Mara's eyes widen.

Leo stops breathing.

LEO  
That's not—

MARA  
(sharp)  
Sera. Stay still.

Mara watches— scientific, horrified, mesmerized.

Within thirty seconds the deep gash becomes—

A thin pink line.  
Then a faint scar.  
Then nothing.

Sera exhales shakily.

SERA  
It's slower here.  
But it's coming back.

Mara sits frozen.

Unable to rationalize.  
Unable to deny.

Then Sera leans close, almost whispering into Mara's ear:

SERA (CONT'D)  
You did this to us.

Mara recoils.

CUT TO—

---

21 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

The lights BUZZ.  
Monitors flicker.



Something in the circuitry HUMS wrong.

Mara and Leo stand over the footage of Sera's healing.

Played back frame by frame.

LEO  
Cells don't behave like that.  
That regeneration rate is—

MARA  
Impossible.

Leo rewinds the footage.

Pauses. Zooms.

On one frame—

The blood on Sera's arm hangs suspended in mid-air.  
Not dripping.  
Not falling.

Just hovering for a single frame.  
Then continuing downward.

LEO  
What the hell...

MARA  
What timecode is that?

Leo checks.

LEO  
19:43:12.

Mara's eyes flick.

MARA  
That's when I saw—

She stops.

LEO  
When you saw what?

She hesitates.

MARA  
Nothing.  
A reflection glitch.

Leo stares.

LEO

Mara...  
something's wrong with this place.

The monitors suddenly FLICKER — all feeds cut to static.  
Then return.

But for a moment—

All three patients appear in each other's rooms.  
Overlapping.  
As if their silhouettes are sharing the same space.

Then the feeds correct.

Mara steps back, dizzy.

CUT TO—

---

22 INT. HELIOS - JONAS'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jonas sits at the edge of his bed, breathing slow.

The windowpane trembles.

A water glass on his bedside table begins to SHAKE.

Jonas closes his eyes.

JONAS

(whispers)

Hold.

Hold.

The gravity in the room subtly ripples —  
The metal legs of the bed creak —  
The floor HUMS like a distant engine—

Then everything slams back to normal.

Jonas exhales, exhausted.

He whispers, barely audible:

JONAS (CONT'D)

Someone turned the world up again.

CUT TO—

---

23 INT. HELIOS - DAVID'S ROOM - SAME TIME

David kneels in the dark.

Hands upturned.

Light from the hallway seeps under his door, flickering.

Flashes of white illuminate the room in pulses.

David whispers:

DAVID  
Stop looking.  
Please. Stop looking.

He covers his face with his hands.

Light bursts through the cracks in his fingers.

CUT TO—

---

24 INT. HELIOS - NORTH CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

Mara walks the corridor again.

But something is wrong.

The floor plan has changed—  
The corridor now ends in a wall that wasn't there before.

She stops dead.

Touches the wall.

It feels... warm.

A faint vibration pulses under her fingertips.  
Like something massive is moving behind it.

She steps back—

The wall shifts.  
Not visibly—  
but the pattern in the wallpaper slides a fraction of an  
inch, like the surface is glitching.

MARA  
(whisper)  
No. No, no, no—

She turns to leave—

And Jonas stands at the far end of the corridor.

Still. Watching her.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Jonas?

He tilts his head.

JONAS  
Do you feel it?

MARA  
Feel what?

He steps closer. Calm.

JONAS  
The world changing its mind.

Mara's breath catches.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
We're remembering.  
And so are you.

A beat.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
That's how it starts.

Suddenly—

A deep, resonant boom shakes the facility.  
Lights flicker.  
Alarms chirp then die mid-tone.

Mara stumbles, grabbing the railing.

Jonas doesn't move.

Sera's scream echoes down the hall.  
David's light pulses under his door.

The foundations of the institute HUM.

Reality feels thin.

Jonas whispers:

JONAS (CONT'D)  
Welcome back.

FADE TO BLACK.

---

25 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - NIGHT

A cramped, fluorescent-lit control room.

Banks of monitors show different sections of the institute, each feed slightly out of sync by a fraction of a second.

HENDRICKS stands with two GUARDS reviewing the recent tremor.

HENDRICKS  
What caused it?

GUARD #1  
No seismic activity.  
No external strikes.  
No equipment failure.

GUARD #2  
It wasn't from outside.

Hendricks glances at him.

GUARD #2 (CONT'D)  
Felt like... inside the walls.

Hendricks doesn't like that.

He scrubs footage of the moment the tremor hit.

Each camera feed stutters—  
frames freeze—  
shapes smear—  
Jonas appears in three frames at once—  
Sera's silhouette flickers like a shutter speed mismatch—  
David becomes a white flare—

Hendricks pauses the stack of feeds.

A beat.

HENDRICKS  
Run diagnostics.  
Every camera. Every door. Every  
lock.

GUARD #1  
On it.

Hendricks stares at the monitors, jaw clenched.

HENDRICKS (V.O.)  
Something's wrong here.

CUT TO—

---

26 INT. HELIOS - MARA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Mara sits alone, lights dim.

She tries journaling in a clean, clinical hand.

ENTRY - 10:14 PM:

PATIENTS EXHIBIT SYNCHRONIZED DELUSIONAL FRAMEWORKS.  
Observable physical anomalies require rational explanation.  
Possible somatic responses triggered by stress, psychogenic  
non-epileptic events, group narrative reinforcement.  
I am not experiencing hallucinations.  
The corridor discrepancy was a misinterpretation.  
The glass reflection—

She stops.

Her hand shakes.

She drops the pen.

A faint whisper brushes the back of her neck.

WHISPER (V.O.)  
You closed the door.

Mara bolts upright. Spins—

Empty room.

Computer screen flickers.  
Her own face in the webcam feed...

lags by a full second.

She shuts the laptop hard.

CUT TO—

---

27 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - SERA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sera sits cross-legged on her bed, the lights dim.

She stares at her healed arm.

Then opens her notebook to a fresh page.

She begins drawing—

Not the collapsing city this time.

Something circular.

Intricate.

A sigil-like pattern of overlapping arcs—  
like a lock.

Or a seal.

Her hand moves with mechanical precision, like she's copying  
from memory rather than inventing.

She whispers as she draws:

SERA

This wasn't meant to stay closed.

As she finishes the sigil—

A faint crack spreads across the room's light fixture.

A quiet, delicate sound.

Like ice forming.

Sera looks up.

SERA (CONT'D)

Not again.

CUT TO—

---

28 INT. HELIOS - JONAS'S ROOM - SAME TIME

Jonas stands perfectly still, hands at his sides.

The water glass on his table TREMBLES.

The room's metal frame CREAKS.

Jonas inhales slow through his nose.

JONAS

(to himself)

Stay balanced.

He presses his palm against the wall.

The wall seems to bulge inward slightly around his handprint.

Jonas winces, as if resisting something powerful bracing  
behind the thin membrane of reality.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Not yet.

CUT TO—

---

29 INT. HELIOS - DAVID'S ROOM - SAME TIME

David sits in total darkness.

Only the tiny red LED of the camera glows.

He faces it directly.

DAVID

I know you're watching.

He lifts a hand.

The LED flickers—  
then extinguishes.

Static fills the camera feed.

David whispers into the dark:

DAVID (CONT'D)

Tell her she can't run from  
herself.

A bloom of light bursts from his palm—  
brief, like a camera flash—  
illuminating cryptic markings scratched into the wall behind  
him.

CUT TO—

---

30 INT. HELIOS - OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT

Leo sits at the workstation, watching the feeds fail in  
cascading order.

David's room: STATIC.

Jonas's room: DISTORTED.

Sera's room: CAMERA LOOPING 2 SECONDS BACK AND FORTH.

Leo stands, unsettled.

He moves to the window looking into the INTERVIEW ROOM.

Nothing there.

Then—



A SHADOW crosses the interview room—

But there's no one inside.

Leo freezes.

The shadow crosses again.

He flicks on the interview room lights—

It's empty.

But the shadow moves one more time.

Like something is pacing the room.

Leo backs away, breath quickening.

LEO (whisper)

Mara...

Where are you?

CUT TO—

---

31 INT. HELIOS - ADMIN CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

Mara walks with urgent steps, clutching the printed floor plan.

She stops at an intersection of hallways.

According to the map, the WEST LAB should be here.

But instead—

A blank wall.

Smooth. Seamless.

Mara touches it.

Her hand TREMBLES.

She presses harder—

The wall gives, just slightly, like something soft underneath a thin shell.

She yanks her hand back.

The wall ripples.

Ripples.

Like a liquid membrane holding shape.

Mara backs away—

Footsteps behind her.

She spins—

DAVID stands in the dim corridor, hood down, eyes reflecting faint ambient light like a predator's.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I told you.

Light doesn't like lies.

Mara tries to compose herself.

MARA

David— you're supposed to be in  
your room.

DAVID

Rooms don't matter.

Doors don't matter.

Not when the world starts  
remembering.

He steps closer.

Mara does not move.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You feel it too, don't you?

She swallows.

MARA

What do you think I'm feeling?

David's head tilts.

DAVID

Yourself.

---

A beat.

Then—

A violent SHUDDER rocks the building.

Light fixtures BUZZ.

Sprinkler pipes RATTLE.  
A deep HUM pulses like a heartbeat.

David closes his eyes.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
It's waking up.

Hendricks' voice blares over the PA-

HENDRICKS (V.O.)  
All staff to Level Two.  
Repeat: all staff to Level Two.  
Structural instability detected.

David looks at Mara.

DAVID  
There's no structure.  
There never was.

He turns-  
And the lights bend around him, warping, shimmering-  
and he's suddenly further down the hallway, without moving  
normally.

Mara stares, breath ragged.

CUT TO-

---

32 INT. HELIOS - LEVEL TWO LAB - NIGHT

Emergency lights flood the hallway.

Medical carts overturned. Papers everywhere.

Alarms flash red.

Staff gather, frantic.

Hendricks sees Mara rush in.

HENDRICKS  
Dr. Ellison- you need to see this.

He leads her to a reinforced glass window overlooking-

---

33 INT. LEVEL TWO - ISOLATION LAB - CONTINUOUS

A secure storage lab.

Steel walls. Heavy environmental locks.

Inside—

Equipment floats six inches above the floor.

Not spinning.

Not thrown.

Just hovering.

A metal gurney rises slowly toward the ceiling, like caught in a slow gravitational drift.

A terrified technician stands trapped inside, pressed to the wall, unable to move forward.

TECHNICIAN

(screaming)

LET ME OUT! PLEASE!

Hendricks pounds the emergency override.

Nothing.

MARA

(to Hendricks)

What triggered this?

HENDRICKS

No idea.

Started a minute ago.

Like the whole room lost... weight.

Sera's voice echoes faintly through the hallway—  
though her room is three floors up.

SERA (O.S.)

It's not the room.

Mara freezes.

She whirls around.

Sera stands barefoot in the hall.

Pale. Sweating.

Her eyes unfocused—

as if sleepwalking through a vision.

SERA (CONT'D)

(soft)

It's Jonas.

CUT TO—

---

34 INT. HELIOS - JONAS'S ROOM - SAME TIME

The room THRUMS with low-frequency vibration.

Jonas crouches in the center—  
Hands braced on the floor—  
As if holding something down.

Furniture lifts slightly.  
Screws from the vents RATTLE loose.

Jonas's voice shakes:

JONAS  
It's leaking—  
It's leaking through—

He looks up, eyes glowing faintly with reflected emergency light.

JONAS (CONT'D)  
I can't hold it if she keeps  
remembering.

He collapses forward—  
Gravity normalizes—  
Everything slams back to the floor at once.

Jonas gasps for breath.

CUT TO—

---

35 INT. HELIOS - NORTH CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Mara runs back toward Cohort Seven ward—

As she rounds the corner—

The corridor shifts.

Not visually—  
Spatially.

One moment it's straight—  
The next moment it turns sharply left—  
Then right—  
Then straight again.

Like a digital environment mid-render.

Mara stops, gripping the wall to steady herself.

A dull ROAR echoes from somewhere below—  
Like a massive gate straining against pressure.  
Mara whispers:

MARA  
This isn't real.  
This isn't real.  
This isn't—

A second voice whispers from behind her—  
Her own voice.

MARA (WHISPERED) (CONT'D)  
It must begin again.

Mara spins, terrified.  
The corridor behind her is empty.

FADE OUT.

---

36 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - CENTRAL COMMON ROOM -  
NIGHT

Emergency lights cast the room in pulsing red.  
Mara bursts in, breath sharp, skin clammy with fear.  
Jonas, Sera, and David are all here, though none should have  
been able to leave their rooms during lockdown.  
They stand equidistant from each other, forming a loose  
triangle.  
Silent.  
Eyes unfocused.  
Breathing steady.  
Like they're listening to something Mara can't hear.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(shouting)  
None of you should be out of—  
What the hell are you doing?!

They don't acknowledge her.  
A rising TONE hums through the walls — almost musical, like  
dissonant organ pipes buried under concrete.

Mara grips the doorway, trying to stay grounded.

MARA (CONT'D)  
Jonas! Sera! David!  
Look at me!

One by one, they slowly turn.

Their movements eerily synchronized.

SERA  
(calm, distant)  
We didn't come here.

MARA  
What does that mean?

DAVID  
We were called.

MARA  
By who?

JONAS  
(soft)  
By you.

The hum intensifies.

Mara shakes her head.

MARA  
No.  
I didn't call anyone.  
I didn't—

But the red emergency bulbs begin to pulse in sync with the patients' breathing.

Jonas steps forward.

JONAS  
You don't remember doing it.

Sera steps forward.

SERA  
But you did.

David steps forward.

DAVID  
You needed us awake.

Mara backs away, terrified, holding her hands up defensively like they're animals that might spook.

MARA

Stop—  
Stop coming closer!

They stop.

All at once.

Sera's pupils dilate.  
David's skin seems to flicker like heat distortion.  
Jonas's outline bends the air.

JONAS

It's almost time.

MARA

Time for what?

They answer in unison:

THE THREE

Remembering.

Mara bolts from the room—

CUT TO—

---

37 INT. HELIOS - SOUTH STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Mara rushes down the stairs two at a time, breath uneven.

She reaches the landing—

—and nearly collides with LEO, who looks disoriented, sweating, pale.

MARA

Leo— what's happening?

LEO

(dazed)  
I... I don't know.  
The building—  
I think the building is... looping.

Mara grabs his arms, steadying him.

MARA

What do you mean looping?



Leo gestures weakly down the hall.

LEO  
I walked to the security hub.  
Three times.  
Different lighting each time.  
Different clocks.  
I saw Hendricks—  
but he didn't see me.

MARA  
(horrificed)  
Leo—

LEO  
I'm seeing things I shouldn't see.

He presses a hand to his temple.

The emergency lights above them flicker.

For a moment, the stairwell becomes—

A white, glass spiraling tower.  
A city of impossible angles.  
People moving in kaleidoscopic patterns.  
A sky folding like origami.

Then—  
back to the stairwell.

Leo gasps.

LEO (CONT'D)  
I'm...  
I'm losing time.

Mara stares at him, shaking.

MARA  
Leo, listen to me.  
You're not losing time.  
This place is—  
something is wrong with the  
infrastructure—

Leo laughs, brittle.

LEO  
You're lying.

Mara freezes.

MARA  
I'm not lying to you.

Leo steps closer, eyes locked on hers.

LEO  
You know something.  
You've always known something.

MARA  
I haven't- I don't-

LEO  
They talk about you when you're not  
in the room, Mara.

MARA  
(shaking)  
Leo-

LEO  
They say you were there.  
With them.  
In the other world.

A long silence.

Mara tightens her grip on him.

MARA  
(whisper)  
I don't remember anything like  
that.

Leo looks at her for a long, devastating moment.

Then:

LEO  
That's what terrifies me.

Cut to-

---

38 INT. HELIOS - LEVEL ONE LAB - NIGHT

Mara and Leo push through double doors.

The lab is in disarray-

papers scattered

microscopes overturned

monitors frozen on corrupted images

the HUM louder now

A TECHNICIAN stands trembling in a corner.

TECHNICIAN

Dr. Ellison—  
Something's wrong with the  
building's reality anchors.

Mara wheels on him.

MARA

Reality anchors?

He hands her a tablet showing fluctuating readings.

TECHNICIAN

Stabilizers built into the  
architecture.  
The materials can flex slightly  
under stress, but this—  
This is like the entire building is  
trying to reconfigure.

MARA

Like the structure is... bending?

TECHNICIAN

Like it's remembering an older  
shape.

Another low BOOM reverberates through Helios.

Lights flicker.

Glassware trembles.

The floor vibrates subtly.

Leo steadies himself against a table.

LEO

(whisper)

Somebody built this place to hold  
something in.

Mara stares at him.

Leo stares back.

A beat.

CUT TO—

---

39 INT. HELIOS - MARA'S OFFICE - LATER NIGHT

Mara sits in the dark.

Just the faint glow of the computer monitor.

She opens her personal notebook —  
her private one, the one she hasn't shown anyone.

Blank pages.

She whispers:

MARA  
This is psychological  
contamination.  
Mass suggestibility.  
I am not hallucinating.  
I am not—

A soft CHIME sounds from her laptop.

She looks.

A new folder has appeared on her desktop.  
She didn't create it.

Label:  
ORIGIN / AUDIO

MARA (CONT'D)  
No...

She opens it.

Inside:  
A single audio file.

FALL\_RECON.mp3

She hesitates, trembling—  
then clicks it.

Static.  
Like wind whispering through cracked glass.

Then a voice emerges—

Her voice.

Older.  
Colder.

Resonant.

MARA (V.O., RECORDING) (CONT'D)  
 It won't hold much longer.  
 The city is collapsing.  
 I have to close it.

Mara's eyes widen—

MARA (V.O., RECORDING) (CONT'D)  
 If anyone finds this..  
 I did this to save us.  
 I did this to save every world that  
 came after.

The static grows—  
 then the same phrase from David's interview echoes:

MARA (V.O., RECORDING) (CONT'D)  
 It must begin again.

Mara SLAMS the laptop shut, shaking violently.

CUT TO—

---

40 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - NIGHT

Mara approaches the ward cautiously.

Emergency lights flicker.

The patients' doors stand OPEN.

Sera sits in the center of the floor, drawing sigils in  
 chalk-like dust she's ground from something unseen.

Jonas stands against a wall, eyes closed, palms outward,  
 stabilizing something invisible.

David sits cross-legged, light shimmering faintly around him  
 like he's a lantern under a thin veil.

Mara steps closer.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 All of you—  
 back in your rooms.  
 Now.

Sera looks up.

SERA  
We're here because you're  
remembering.

David lifts his gaze.

DAVID  
The world is waking with you.

Jonas opens his eyes.

JONAS  
And if you keep forcing it down—  
it's going to tear itself apart.

Mara shakes her head, near tears.

MARA  
I don't remember anything.

A silence falls.

Then Sera whispers:

SERA  
You will.

And suddenly—

A violent FLASH of white light—

---

41 MARA'S MEMORY FLASH — "THE ORIGIN CITY" — UNKNOWN PLANE

She stands in a gleaming white metropolis.  
Towers made of glass tears.  
Light cascading like waterfalls.

People—  
beautiful, impossible people—  
move through the city, hand trailing through beams of light  
that bend around them.

Mara wears a geometric black robe, embroidered in flowing  
silver.

Her eyes glow faintly.  
Not human.

A massive SPIRAL STRUCTURE collapses in the distance—  
light implodes—  
sound distorts—

A man falls from a balcony of pure light, screaming words in a language that exists only between seconds.

Mara lifts her hands—  
forms a shape—  
a sigil—  
the same one Sera drew—

And reality begins folding inward.

A voice roars through the collapsing city:

VOICE (V.O.)

WARDEN.  
THE GATE.  
CLOSE IT.

Mara's younger self screams, trying to hold the sigil stable—

A blinding implosion—

---

42 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - BACK TO REALITY - NIGHT

Mara collapses to the floor.

Sera catches her.

Jonas steadies the air around them to stop the tremor.

David dims the lights with his hands.

Mara gasps for breath:

MARA  
(shaking)  
I...  
I saw—

SERA  
We know.

Mara looks around, terrified, pale, sweat-soaked.

MARA  
What are you?

Jonas kneels beside her.

JONAS  
Pieces of you.

David whispers:

DAVID  
You broke yourself to survive.

Sera leans in:

SERA  
And now you're remembering  
what it cost.

Mara can't breathe.

The building HUMS, louder—

A low, monstrous tone under everything, like the growl of a world awakening.

Emergency lights flicker violently.

Hendricks' voice blares over intercom:

HENDRICKS (V.O.)  
ALL STAFF—  
INITIATE FULL LOCKDOWN!  
I repeat— FULL LOCKDOWN!  
SYSTEM FAILURE IN PROGRESS!

The ward doors SLAM shut automatically—  
locking them all inside together.

Jonas whispers:

JONAS  
It's begun.

FADE OUT.

43 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - LOCKDOWN SEALED - NIGHT

Red lights strobe.  
Sirens bleat in short, failing bursts.

Mara sits on the floor, back against the wall, shaking  
violently.  
Her breath comes in short, panicked gasps.

Jonas, Sera, and David stand around her — not threatening,  
but orbiting her, each watching her differently.

MARA  
(hoarse)  
That wasn't real.  
That wasn't real.  
It can't be real.



SERA  
(soft)  
It was a memory.

DAVID  
A fractured one.

JONAS  
You hid it from yourself.

Mara grabs her head as if trying to crush the memory out of her skull.

MARA  
No—  
No, I'm losing it.  
This is contamination— this is  
stress— this is—

Jonas crouches, grounding her.

JONAS  
Listen to your body.  
Does it feel like a lie?

She opens her eyes.

Everything seems brighter.  
Sharper.  
Like she's seeing the room at two frame rates at once.

MARA  
What's happening to me?

SERA  
You're waking up.

Mara shoves herself away from them, crawling backward until she hits the wall.

MARA  
Stay back!  
Stay away from me!

David steps forward.

DAVID  
We can't.  
We're pieces of you.

Mara's eyes widen.

MARA  
That's not possible.

DAVID  
It's already happening.

He opens his hand.

Light pulses beneath his skin—  
like a second circulatory system illuminating his veins.

The pulse syncs with Sera's breath—  
which syncs with Jonas's steady heartbeat.

Mara watches in horror as—

All three inhale at the same time.  
Exhale at the same time.  
Blink at the same time.

Like a single organism made of three bodies.

Mara can't breathe.

CUT TO—

---

44 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

HENDRICKS stands with his team, staring at the building's  
security interface.

The digital blueprint is rewriting itself.

Walls shift.  
Corridors re-route.  
Rooms flicker in and out of existence.

HENDRICKS  
(to tech)  
Why do the floor plans keep  
changing?!

TECHNICIAN  
Sir—  
I swear to God—  
this is a live update.

HENDRICKS  
Buildings don't update themselves.

TECHNICIAN  
This one is.

On the monitors:

Staff move through hallways—  
but the hallways change shape around them.

One corridor splits into two.

Another compresses, shrinking from 20 feet long to 6 feet.

GUARD #1  
I can't get eyes on the ward.  
Every feed's corrupted.

HENDRICKS  
Ellison's still in there with them.

A beat.

HENDRICKS (CONT'D)  
Prep entry team.  
Full tactical gear.  
We breach in five.

CUT TO—

---

45 INT. HELIOS - LOWER LAB - NIGHT

Leo stumbles down the corridor, disoriented.

The fluorescent lights stutter in patterns—  
like Morse code from another world.

He rounds a corner—  
and almost runs into DR. NICOLE HAWTHORNE (50s), the  
institute psychiatrist.

She's pale, trembling.

HAWTHORNE  
Leo— thank God— I can't—

She stops.

Behind her:  
a STAFF MEMBER stands utterly still.  
Facing the wall.  
Forehead resting against it.

His hand is pressed to the surface—  
and the surface is rippling around his fingers.

Like a membrane.

HAWTHORNE (CONT'D)

(whisper)

He's been like that for ten  
minutes.

Leo steps closer.

LEO

Hey—  
sir—  
can you hear me?

No response.

Leo touches the man's shoulder—

The man dissolves into static.

Not visually—  
but frame by frame, like a VHS tape eaten by the machine.

Glitch.  
Sputter.  
Gone.

Nothing left but the indentation in the wall.

Hawthorne collapses to her knees.

HAWTHORNE

Oh my God—  
Oh my God—

Leo backs away, horrified.

LEO

Mara...  
Mara needs to know—

He stumbles down the hall—

CUT TO—

---

46 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - SAME TIME

Mara sits now, arms wrapped around her knees, terrified.

Sera kneels across from her.

SERA  
Remembering hurts.  
It's supposed to hurt.  
You broke something big.

Mara shakes her head.

MARA  
I didn't break anything.  
I didn't—

JONAS  
You closed a world.

MARA  
No— no, that's not—  
That's—

Jonas leans in.

JONAS  
You saved this one.  
But you didn't come alone.

DAVID  
None of us did.

Suddenly—

David's outline flickers.

For a brief instant, there are two Davids.

One solid.  
One transparent overlay.  
Perfectly aligned except the transparent one smiles.

The solid one does not.

Mara gasps.

MARA  
What—  
What was that?!

David shakes, blinking hard.

DAVID  
A bleed.  
A version of me that didn't  
survive.

SERA  
(soft)  
Our past is catching up with us.

JONAS  
The world's past too.

Mara looks at them, horrified, vulnerable:

MARA  
What am I?

Silence.

Then Sera whispers:

SERA  
The one who closed the Gate.

CUT TO—

---

47 INT. HELIOS - MAIN CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Leo staggers toward the ward, gripping the rail.

His vision stutters.

The world around him flickers—

For a second, he sees the corridor filled with light-beings.  
Tall, geometric figures moving in spirals.  
A city beyond the walls.

His breath quickens.

He blinks.

The corridor is empty again.

But—

At the far end—

Mara stands.

Still.  
Back to him.

LEO  
Mara—?

She doesn't move.

Leo steps forward.

LEO (CONT'D)  
(gentle)  
Mara.  
Are you okay?

He takes another step—

Suddenly, Mara is GONE.

Just—  
gone.

Leo freezes.

He hears Mara's voice from behind him—

MARA (O.S.)  
Leo?

He spins.

She stands behind him—

—but she looks different.  
Her eyes glow faintly.  
Her hair moves as if under water.  
Her outline pulses like a heat mirage.

He blinks—  
and she's normal again.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(concerned)  
Leo?  
Are you all right?

He stumbles back from her, terrified.

LEO  
You're—  
You're everywhere.

Mara moves toward him.

MARA  
Leo— breathe—  
Look at me—

LEO  
I did!

He breaks down, weeping.

She grabs him, holding him steady.

MARA  
Stay with me.

LEO  
I can't—  
I'm losing time—  
I'm losing myself—

His eyes roll back—

He collapses.

Mara catches him as alarms blare overhead.

CUT TO—

---

48 INT. HELIOS - WARD MEDICAL ROOM - MINUTES LATER

Mara lays Leo on a bed, checks his vitals.  
They stutter on the monitor.

His heart rate doubles then halves then doubles again.

Temporal loops.

MARA  
(firm)  
Leo.  
Stay here.  
Stay with me.

He opens his eyes weakly.

LEO  
(slurred)  
They're remembering you too.

MARA  
Who?

Leo's eyes drift toward the ceiling.

LEO  
Everyone.

His vitals SPIKE—

Mara hits the emergency call button.

No response.



MARA

Damn it!

Mara leans over him.

MARA (CONT'D)

Leo, listen—

I need you to stay present.

Right here.

With me.

Leo's breathing slows.

His gaze sharpens for a moment.

LEO

I'll try.

She takes his hand, squeezing it.

It flickers briefly like double-exposure film—  
two hands overlapping.

Mara pulls hers back, startled.

CUT TO—

---

49 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara returns.

Jonas, Sera, and David now stand in a perfect triangle.  
Hands at their sides.

Breathing in sync.

The air between them HUMS —  
a faint shimmering distortion like heat above asphalt.

Mara steps around them cautiously.

MARA

Whatever you're doing—  
stop.

Now.

JONAS

We're not doing this.

MARA

Then what's happening?

SERA  
We're aligning.

DAVID  
The pieces were scattered.  
The Fall broke us apart.  
Being here...  
brings us together.

JONAS  
And you're the center.

Mara feels faint.

MARA  
(whisper)  
I'm not the center of anything.

David looks at her with pity.

DAVID  
You sealed the Gate.  
You hid us in this world.  
You buried your own memories to  
survive.

SERA  
But a sealed wound still remembers  
the cut.

Mara looks at them in terror.

MARA  
If I did that—  
if any of this is real—  
why wouldn't I remember?

The three answer in perfect unison:

THE THREE  
Because you chose to forget.

The HUM grows louder.

Lights dim.

A ripple of force moves across the ceiling tiles—  
subtle but undeniable.

Mara backs away.

MARA  
What are you aligning for?

Jonas steps forward.

JONAS  
To wake the Warden.

Mara's pulse pounds.

MARA  
I'm not—  
I am not that—

DAVID  
You are.  
You were.  
And you will be.

SERA  
We remember you.

Jonas whispers:

JONAS  
And now...  
you will remember us.

The HUM peaks.

The lights go out.

Total darkness.

We hear breathing.  
Footsteps.

A faint whisper from all directions:

WHISPER  
It must begin again.

FADE OUT.

---

50 INT. HELIOS - DARKNESS / COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Total blackout.

Heavy breathing.  
Footsteps.

A low electrical BUZZ building under the silence — not from circuits, but from the air itself.

Mara gasps, hands groping for a wall.

MARA

Jonas—?  
Sera—?  
David—?

No response.

A faint ripple of pale white light blooms — illuminating Jonas's silhouette.

He stands perfectly still, facing her.

Then Sera appears.

Then David.

Each revealing themselves in pulses of dim glow, like bioluminescent creatures emerging from deep water.

JONAS

(soft, echoing)  
We're here.

Mara flinches backward.

MARA

Stay back—!

Sera raises her hand — and the lights return, dim but steady.

The three of them stand exactly where they were before — as if they've been there the whole time.

Only Mara is in a corner, trembling.

SERA

You saw more, didn't you?

MARA

I...  
I saw—  
I don't know what I saw.

DAVID

The city.  
The collapse.  
The Gate.

Mara's face goes white.

David's eyes soften — pity, not menace.

DAVID (CONT'D)

You're not losing your mind.  
You're regaining it.

Mara shakes her head violently.

MARA

No—  
You're contaminating me.  
You're—  
you're infecting my memories—

Jonas steps forward, slow, gentle.

JONAS

Then why did you see the Gate?

Beat.

Mara collapses onto a bench, covering her face.

CUT TO—

---

51 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

Hendricks and his team stand before the monitors.

Every feed shows corrupted images — shifting frames, duplicated silhouettes, stretched geometry.

GUARD #1

Sir—  
we've lost the main power grid.

HENDRICKS

Transition to backup.

TECHNICIAN

Backup's failing too.

HENDRICKS

(tight)  
How is that possible?

TECHNICIAN

(terrified)  
The wiring map doesn't match the  
building anymore.

Hendricks stares.

HENDRICKS

Excuse me?

The technician pulls up a layout:

The digital blueprint flickers.  
 The hallways shift.  
 Rooms stretch or vanish.  
 New wings appear.

TECHNICIAN  
 It's rewriting the architecture.  
 Like the building is changing  
 shape.

The lights flicker.

The feed from Level 3 Corridor shows a lone STAFF MEMBER  
 running.

The image lags—  
 freezes—  
 then shows the staff member duplicated, two frames  
 overlapping.

Hendricks leans in.

HENDRICKS  
 What the hell—?

Suddenly—

The staff member's head jerks upward unnaturally.  
 His body freezes mid-running motion.  
 Then begins to slide upward into the ceiling, frame by frame—  
 like being pulled between still images.

GUARD #2 stumbles back.

GUARD #2  
 He's—  
 He's being erased—!

The staff member disappears entirely.

Only a flickering outline remains.

The ceiling light above him shatters.

CUT TO—

---

52 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara is pale, sweating, hyperventilating.

Sera kneels beside her with quiet gravity.

SERA

Breathe through it.  
Don't fight the memory.  
Fighting makes it worse.

MARA

I'm not—  
I'm not remembering—  
I'm hallucinating—  
I'm—

She stops.

Because the emergency lights around the perimeter of the room  
begin to spin, one by one, like slow moving constellations.

Jonas watches them with an aching familiarity.

JONAS

It's happening faster.

Mara grips her head.

MARA

Stop.  
Stop saying "it's happening."  
Nothing is happening.  
This is—  
this is neurological misfire—

David steps closer.

DAVID

Then how do we share it?

Mara looks up, breath held.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Three separate patients.  
Three separate histories.  
And all of us see the same city.  
The same collapse.  
The same sigil you drew in your  
sleep.

Mara freezes.

MARA

I didn't draw anything.

Sera reaches behind her and retrieves a piece of paper from  
the floor.

She unfolds it.

A sigil — circular, geometric, intricate — drawn in Mara's handwriting.

Mara recoils from it as if it's alive.

MARA (CONT'D)

(whisper)

No.

No, I didn't—

SERA

Your hand remembers what your mind  
won't.

CUT TO—

---

53 INT. HELIOS - LOWER STAIRS / SUBLEVEL LANDING - NIGHT

Leo rushes down the stairs, holding onto the railing.

His vision distorts in flashes—

Three versions of Mara appear ahead of him:

One wearing her normal clothes

One in a flowing geometric robe

One with glowing white eyes

They overlay and smear like frames from misaligned film.

Leo collapses to one knee.

LEO

Please—

Stop—

Please—

The visions flicker and vanish.

Leo presses his forehead to the cold floor.

LEO (CONT'D)

(whisper)

Mara...

I don't know which world I'm in  
anymore.

CUT TO—

---



54 INT. HELIOS - COHORT SEVEN WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara stands slowly.

MARA  
(quiet, shaking)  
Tell me.  
Tell me everything you think... I'm  
supposed to remember.

Jonas, Sera, and David exchange a look.

Jonas begins.

JONAS  
There was a world before this one.  
A world of light and shape and  
possibility.  
A world built on belief.

SERA  
We lived there.  
All of us.  
Not human.  
Not gods.  
Something in between.

DAVID  
We weren't individuals.  
We were expressions.  
Forces with names.

Mara steps back.

MARA  
(whisper)  
What was I?

The room vibrates faintly.

SERA  
You were the Warden.

The lights dim.

The air seems to hold its breath.

MARA  
What does that mean?

DAVID  
You held the Gate.  
The boundary between worlds.  
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)

The line that kept the mythic from  
collapsing into the physical.

JONAS

And when the origin world began to  
fracture—  
when belief turned violent—  
when the things we were became too  
much—

He steps closer.

JONAS (CONT'D)

You closed it.

MARA

Closed...  
the Gate.

Sera nods.

SERA

To save everything else.

DAVID

Including this world.

MARA

No.  
I'm a scientist.  
Not—  
not a cosmic—  
not—

The three speak together:

THE THREE

You were.  
You are.

Mara's breathing quickens. She stumbles toward the door—  
but the door slides away from her, corridor distorting—

She crashes into a wall where the doorway should be.

MARA

(crying)  
Stop it!  
Stop changing—!

The wall bends inward like fabric under her hands.

CUT TO—

---

55 INT. HELIOS - SUBLEVEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Leo staggers along the hallway.

Something moves at the far end.

A figure—

Walking toward him.

Steady.

Calm.

Backlit by flickering emergency lights.

LEO

Mara...?

As the figure approaches—

It becomes clear—

It isn't Mara.

It's a man.

Tall.

Wearing a tattered ALIGNMENT SUIT — medical research gear from an old experimental program never finished.

But his face—

His face flickers between multiple versions of itself—

Young. Old. Burned. Whole. Smiling. Screaming.

Leo collapses backward.

LEO (CONT'D)

No—

No no no—

The figure stops directly in front of him.

Opens its mouth.

A sound like a dying light bulb and a human scream, spliced into one.

Leo covers his ears.

Lights explode in the corridor.

CUT TO—

---

56 INT. COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara slams her fists into the bending wall—

It ripples, then turns solid again.

She backs away, chest heaving, terrified beyond reason.

MARA

I'm not her.

I'm not this Warden.

I'm not—!

Sera's voice breaks gently through her panic.

SERA

You don't have to believe us.

Just believe yourself.

Mara looks up, trembling.

SERA (CONT'D)

You saw the city.

You heard your own voice.

You drew the Gate.

David steps forward, raising his glowing hand—

A pale reflection of the sigil appears in the air between them—

DAVID

And now the world remembers you  
too.

Mara stares at the floating symbol as the lines pulse gently.

She whispers:

MARA

Oh my God.

The HUM becomes a low roar.

Somewhere deep beneath Helios—

Something huge shifts.

Something old.

Something awakening because she has awakened.

CUT TO—

---

57 INT. SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

Hendricks stares at the monitors as the blueprint collapses entirely.

The digital map flickers—

Then resolves into a new shape.

A circular structure.

Perfectly symmetrical.

The same sigil Sera drew.  
The same one Mara just saw.

Hendricks whispers:

HENDRICKS  
What the hell is that?

The technician stares, horrified.

TECHNICIAN  
Sir...  
I think the building is becoming  
something else.

CUT TO—

---

58 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

The patients stand in formation.

The sigil burns faintly behind them.

Mara steps toward it involuntarily.

MARA  
(whisper)  
What is this?

SERA  
The Gate.

DAVID  
What you once closed.

JONAS

And what you may have to open.

Mara's breath freezes in her chest.

MARA

(terrified)

Why?

Their answer is soft.

Resigned.

Beautiful.

Terrifying.

THE THREE

Because the world you saved...  
was never meant to last.

Mara's eyes fill with horror.

A deep, thunderous BOOM shakes the facility again.

Dust falls from the ceiling.

Lights dim to blood-red.

Somewhere far below—

a vast mechanism awakens, groaning under the weight of a  
universe shifting.

CUT TO BLACK.

---

59 INT. HELIOS - SUBLEVEL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Emergency alarms echo, distorted as if stretched.

Leo lies on the tile floor, curled in a fetal position,  
shaking.

The corridor flickers— alternating between:

sterile hospital

a glass-white cathedral of light

a dark void of geometric silhouettes

Three versions of Leo flicker around him:

Leo A - bleeding from the forehead

Leo B - older, tears streaming

Leo C - smiling strangely, whispering something

All overlaying.

Leo presses his palms to his ears.

LEO  
Make it stop—  
Please— make it stop—

The flickering slows.

One version of Leo remains: the present one, fragile, trembling.

A SHADOW falls over him.

Leo looks up—

A FIGURE stands at the far end of the hall, backlit, wearing a fractured geometric robe — similar to the one Mara saw in her vision.

FIGURE (O.S.)  
You're not meant to witness this.

Leo crawls backward.

LEO  
No—  
No, no—

The figure steps forward— silently.

Then—

BLINK

It's suddenly right in front of him.

Leo SCREAMS—

CUT TO—

---

60 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - SAME TIME

The sigil pulses on the wall.

Mara stands inches from it.  
Sweat on her brow.  
Shaking hands.

Jonas, Sera, and David form a triangle around her— not restraining, but guiding, channeling something.

MARA  
 (barely)  
 I don't want to see it.

SERA  
 You have to.

MARA  
 No—  
 Last time it hit me—  
 I couldn't breathe—  
 I couldn't— I—

DAVID  
 (soft)  
 This time we're with you.

JONAS  
 Hold your ground.  
 Let it come.

The sigil glows brighter.

The HUM in the room turns into a resonance— like a massive structure vibrating.

The walls flicker—  
 changing shape, angle, color—  
 white light bleeding through like cracks in a shell.

MARA  
 (whisper)  
 I'm scared.

The three speak as one:

THE THREE  
 Good.  
 Fear means you're still here.

The sigil BLOOMS open like an iris—

Mara's pupils dilate—

And the world FALLS AWAY.

---

61 MEMORY VISION - "THE LAST DAY OF THE ORIGIN CITY" -  
 UNKNOWN PLANE

A city of impossible beauty.

White and glass towers twist upward like coral.



Light moves as if alive.  
People formed of shimmering geometry walk in spiral patterns.

The sky is a luminous sheet of energy.

We hear Mara's breath echo over the vision.

MARA (V.O.)  
(terrified)  
No—  
No— not again—

Her younger self (the Warden) stands atop a vast platform overlooking a fractal spire.

She is taller.  
More angular.  
Her robe black with glowing silver etchings.

Her eyes burn white.

Six other beings stand around her — Jonas, Sera, David, and three more:

THE CHRONICLER (Anika's original form)

THE RED SHIFT (Kieran's original form)

THE ARCHITECT (another figure we haven't met yet)

Their forms flicker with immense power.

A low, thunderous crack splits the sky.

The city begins collapsing inward— like a massive flower folding AT ONCE.

Buildings crumble into beams of light.  
The ground ripples liquid.

A VOICE booms overhead— layered, ancient, made of multiple tones:

VOICE (V.O.)  
THE WORLD IS OVERLOADED.  
THE MYTH EXCEEDS THE ROOT.

The Warden lifts her hands.

WARDEN MARA (younger)  
Hold the boundary!

The six around her channel energy—  
but their powers flicker, unstable.

Light stutters.  
 Shapes warping.  
 Time bending in loops.

JONAS (ORIGINAL)  
 (straining)  
 We can't hold the Gate!

SERA (ORIGINAL)  
 The belief density—  
 It's too much—  
 It's collapsing under us—!

DAVID (ORIGINAL)  
 The city is turning into itself—  
 Inside out—  
 We're losing the axis—!

The ground beneath them splits.

A blinding crack in reality opens:  
 THE GATE — a massive circular structure of light and dark  
 intertwined.

But it's fracturing.

WARDEN MARA  
 I have to close it!

CHRONICLER  
 If you do—  
 We won't survive the implosion!

RED SHIFT  
 If you don't—  
 No world will survive!

The collapse intensifies—  
 Light screams—  
 People dissolve into pure geometry—

Mara screams with them—

WARDEN MARA  
 I CHOOSE SURVIVAL!

She brings her hands together—

The sigil forms between her palms—  
 a perfect circle.

She SLAMS it down—

The Gate SNAPS CLOSED—

And the entire world EXPLODES into white-

---

62 INT. COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - BACK TO REALITY

Mara collapses on the floor, sobbing violently.

Sera catches her before her head hits the tile.

Jonas kneels beside her.

David dims the lights instinctively, making the room less overwhelming.

Mara shakes uncontrollably.

MARA  
(weeping)  
I killed it-  
I killed everyone-  
I- I ended-  
I-

SERA  
(calm)  
You saved what you could.

MARA  
NO!  
I decided-  
I decided who lived and who didn't-

DAVID  
You decided who *could* live.

Mara can't breathe.

Jonas puts a hand gently on her shoulder.

JONAS  
You closed a collapsing universe.  
You carried us through the Gate.  
We shattered.  
You shattered with us.

MARA  
(breaking)  
I don't want this.  
I don't want to remember-

The HUM shakes the building.

Lights flicker.

David looks up, suddenly rigid.

DAVID  
It's opening.

SERA  
The Gate?

DAVID  
Not yet.  
Something *around* it.

The floor trembles under their feet.

CUT TO—

---

63 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

Hendricks grabs his radio.

HENDRICKS  
All teams— status report!  
We need eyes on structural  
integrity—

A loud CRACK splits the ceiling above the hub.

Dust falls.

The monitors glitch.

Feed after feed cuts to black.

TECHNICIAN  
Sir—  
The building—  
it's losing shape!

HENDRICKS  
Define "losing shape."

TECHNICIAN  
(panicked)  
It's not Euclidean anymore!

Hendricks stares at him.

HENDRICKS  
English!

The technician points at a live camera feed.

A hallway is folding and refolding—  
bending into impossible angles—  
like it has too many corners.

And then—

A STAFF MEMBER sprints down it—

—but every step lands in a different version of the hallway.

He flickers—  
doubles—  
triples—  
then falls right through the floor and vanishes.

Hendricks slams a fist on the console.

HENDRICKS (CONT'D)  
Seal sublevels!  
No one goes down there—

The floor beneath the hub trembles.

Too late.

CUT TO—

---

64 INT. HELIOS - SUBLEVEL CROSS-CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Leo crawls, barely conscious.

His vision flickers between:

the hospital hallway

the Origin City

a black void of geometric lines

a barren desert

He whispers:

LEO  
Mara...  
Please...  
please—

A figure appears around a corner.

Mara?

No.

This version of Mara's face is glowing—  
Eyes silver.  
Hair floating.  
Robe flickering in and out.

The Warden version.

Leo falls backward, terrified.

LEO (CONT'D)  
You're not her—  
You're not—  
You're—

The Warden steps toward him.

Her mouth moves—  
but the sound comes out distorted.

WARDEN MARA  
You are not meant to witness us.

She reaches toward his forehead—

And the air around her HAND dents inward—  
like gravity bowing beneath a black hole.

As she touches him—

Everything goes WHITE—

CUT TO—

---

65 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara stands slowly, wiping tears.

Her posture changes.  
Straighter.  
Steadier.  
Horrificed, but aware.

MARA  
(soft)  
I remember.

Jonas nods.

JONAS  
Then act.

Mara looks at them — as if seeing them for the first time.

MARA

Jonas Vale.  
Sera Kyne.  
David Ruiz.  
You were—

SERA

Extensions.  
Aspects.

DAVID

Refractions.

Mara touches her chest.

MARA

Of me.

They nod.

MARA (CONT'D)

(whisper)

Why us?  
Why these bodies?  
Why this world?

Sera answers gently:

SERA

Because it was stable.  
Quiet.  
Forgetful.

David looks around the warping room.

DAVID

But it's remembering now.

Jonas's jaw tightens.

JONAS

And something else is remembering  
too.

Mara stiffens.

MARA

What do you mean "something else"?

An unnatural GROAN resonates from the sublevels.

Long.

Low.  
Ancient.

The floor tiles tremble.

David swallows hard.

DAVID  
The thing that tried to come  
through the Gate when you shut it.

Mara's face drains of color.

MARA  
I thought I stopped it.

Sera slowly shakes her head.

SERA  
You didn't stop it.  
You trapped it.

DAVID  
Beneath this place.

JONAS  
And the more you remember—  
the more it does too.

The HUM becomes a ROAR deep below them.

Lights flicker wildly.

Mara whispers:

MARA  
Oh God.  
What did I bring with me?

CUT TO—

---

66 INT. HELIOS - SUBLEVEL CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Leo lies unconscious.

The Warden version of Mara kneels beside him, face calm,  
emotionless.

She tilts her head — examining him.



WARDEN MARA  
(whisper)  
He sees too much.

She lifts her hand—

Reality BUCKLES inward—

And Leo is dragged rearward across the floor by an invisible force—

Straight into the darkness.

His scream echoes—

And abruptly cuts off.

CUT TO—

---

67 INT. COHORT WARD - SAME TIME

The floor vibrates violently.

Mara grabs the nearest wall to stay standing.

MARA  
What is it?  
Tell me what's under this building!

The three exchange a grim look.

Sera answers:

SERA  
A remnant of the Origin World.  
Something that wasn't meant to  
survive.

JONAS  
Something that followed us through  
the Gate.

DAVID  
The one thing even the Warden  
feared.

Mara trembles.

MARA  
(choked)  
What did I do?

Jonas steps closer, gentle but firm.

JONAS  
You saved reality.  
And you saved us.

Sera places a hand over Mara's shaking one.

SERA  
But the cost is waking up.

The floor shakes again.

A far-off SCREAM echoes from the lower levels.

Mara jerks.

MARA  
That was—  
That was Leo—

David's voice is quiet.

DAVID  
He's caught between frames now.

Mara collapses against the wall.

A huge metallic GROAN echoes — like a gate being pried open by something immense.

MARA  
(whisper)  
The Gate is opening.

SERA  
No.  
That's something else.

JONAS  
That's what wants to *come through*.

Mara stares at them.

MARA  
What do we do?

Sera exhales.

SERA  
Remember everything.

David nods.

DAVID  
Become what you were.

Jonas steps forward.

JONAS  
Or this world ends like the last  
one.

Mara's breath catches.

She looks at the glowing sigil—

...and we CUT TO BLACK.

68 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

The sigil on the wall pulses like a slow, enormous heartbeat.

Mara stands facing it, still shaking from the memory.  
Jonas, Sera, and David hold a loose formation around her.

The building HUMS with a low, resonant vibration that's not  
mechanical.  
It feels... animal.

MARA  
(quiet, terrified)  
If it's not the Gate opening..  
What is that sound?

Jonas and Sera share a look.  
David stares at the floor, jaw trembling.

SERA  
You remember closing the world.

MARA  
Yes.

SERA  
Do you remember what was trying to  
come through  
when you did?

Mara's eyes dart — flashes of the collapsing city, the  
roaring Gate, light tearing—

MARA  
I saw..  
something behind it.  
I felt—  
pressure.  
Like...

(MORE)

MARA (CONT'D)  
like something pushing from the  
other side—

David's voice is almost a whisper.

DAVID  
It wasn't the world.  
It was what was **behind** the world.

Mara goes still.

MARA  
What was it?

Jonas answers, firm, low:

JONAS  
A feeder.

SERA  
A thing that lives on belief.  
On stories.  
On worlds that think too much of  
themselves.

DAVID  
We fed it for a long time.  
Without knowing.

Mara shakes her head.

MARA  
No.  
I would have remembered—

SERA  
You remember closing the door.  
Not what was clawing at it.

The floor thrums beneath their feet.

A deeper, more animal sound rumbles from somewhere below —  
like a growl stretched across miles.

Mara grips the back of a chair.

MARA  
(small)  
It followed us.

JONAS  
You slammed the Gate as it lunged.  
It didn't make it through whole.

DAVID  
Just a fragment.  
Just enough.

SERA  
It hitched a ride in the collapse.  
Got tangled in your act of saving  
us.

Mara's voice cracks.

MARA  
Where is it?

A long beat.

Jonas lowers his eyes.

JONAS  
Down.

The floor vibrates harder.

SERA  
They built Helios on top of it.  
They didn't know what it was.  
Just that there was... energy.  
Pressure.  
A place where reality was thin.

DAVID  
A perfect place for a research  
institute.

Mara staggers back a step, horrified.

MARA  
(to herself)  
I put it here.  
I brought it here.

The three patients speak, not quite in unison, but close:

THE THREE  
You brought it **with** you.  
There's a difference.

CUT TO—

---

69 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

Hendricks barks orders, trying to maintain control over a situation that has clearly outgrown him.

HENDRICKS

We're losing containment on every level.  
I want lockdown protocols on physical doors, manual overrides on bulkheads, and I want—

He stops.

Because one of the monitors — showing a sublevel schematic — flickers, then resolves into a new view:

A huge, cavernous chamber under the building.

Dark.

Wet.

Concrete walls warped by enormous pressure.

In the center:

Something like a sphere of black glass, cracked—  
light leaking from inside those cracks like bleeding stars.

It pulses with the same rhythm as the sigil upstairs.

TECHNICIAN

(stunned)

Sir...

That's... below the foundation.

HENDRICKS

That's impossible.  
There's nothing beneath—

The "sphere" on the monitor shifts.

A crack widens.

Something like a limb of shadow presses to the surface from inside, stretching it outward.

The audio feed picks up a low, inhuman MOAN.

Everyone in the hub goes silent.

GUARD #1

Jesus Christ—

HENDRICKS

(low, shaken)

What the hell did we build this place on?

CUT TO—

---

70 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

The room's geometry is subtly wrong now.

Corners too narrow.

Ceiling lower on one side than the other.

The sigil seems closer than it was.

Mara paces like a trapped animal.

MARA

You're telling me I closed a  
collapsing universe,  
shattered myself, dragged pieces of  
my mind into weaker bodies—

(breaking)

—and I also dragged a **monster** along  
with us?

SERA

Not a monster.

A process.

DAVID

A habit the universe has.

A thing that forms whenever belief  
gets too dense.

JONAS

But yes.

You dragged it.

Mara laughs once — a wet, hysterical sound.

MARA

Great.

Fantastic.

I didn't just screw up one world—

I imported the apocalypse.

Sera's gaze is sympathetic, not accusing.

SERA

We were all there.

We all helped build that place.

You were just the one strong enough

to shut it down.

David looks toward the floor, as if listening.

DAVID  
It's hungry again.

MARA  
(snaps)  
Hungry for what?

David looks up at her.

DAVID  
Us.

The word hangs in the air.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
Our stories.  
Our fear.  
Our belief.  
It fed on us before we knew what it  
was.  
And when the city started to come  
apart—

He swallows.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
—it rushed the Gate.

Images flash across Mara's face — fragments of the vision she  
just relived.

MARA  
(whisper)  
I felt something... pushing...

Jonas nods.

JONAS  
You slammed the Gate in its face.  
It tore.  
Part of it got cut off.  
Fell with us.

Sera looks around — at the walls, the floor, the humming air.

SERA  
It's been sleeping under this  
world,  
under this building,  
under your life—  
for a long time.

David's voice drops, almost reverent, almost terrified.



DAVID

And now that you remember who you  
are...  
it's remembering you.

The building shudders like something just shifted its weight.

CUT TO—

---

71 INT. HELIOS - LOWER SERVICE ELEVATOR - SAME TIME

A TACTICAL RESPONSE TEAM — four heavily armed guards in  
ballistic gear — stand crammed in a rattling service  
elevator, weapons ready.

Their faces are tight with the kind of fear people try to  
ignore.

The elevator descends.

Lamps flicker over their helmets.

GUARD #3

(under his breath)

This is bullshit.  
We're a research facility, not a  
damn military base—

GUARD #4

Tell that to the thing in sublevel  
footage.

The elevator jerks as if something grabbed the shaft.

They all grab the rails.

Lights blow out.

Emergency red kicks on.

The elevator stops.

A digital display reads: B2

GUARD LEAD

Doors. Now.

The doors CREAK OPEN—

Darkness beyond.

A faint, wet breathing noise echoes in the shaft outside.

None of them want to move.

GUARD LEAD (CONT'D)

(forced)

Go.

Move.

They step out, flashlights cutting narrow beams through concrete corridors that shouldn't exist — angles wrong, floors slanted.

Something drips somewhere.

We leave them—

CUT TO—

---

72 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara leans back against the wall, sliding down until she's sitting on the floor.

MARA

If this thing wakes up...  
what happens?

Silence.

Jonas finally answers.

JONAS

It feeds.  
Here.  
On this world.

SERA

It will turn belief against itself  
again.  
Turn stories into weapons.  
People into fuel.

DAVID

It will make this world like the  
last one.  
Bright.  
Beautiful.  
And unbearable.

Mara shakes her head.

MARA

I won't let that happen.

SERA  
That's what you said last time.

MARA  
(raw)  
And look how that worked out.

A long silence.

Sera sits beside her.

SERA  
Last time, we didn't know what it  
was.  
We didn't know how it fed.  
We didn't know how to stop it, just  
how to outrun it.

JONAS  
You did the only thing you could.  
You shut the Gate.  
You saved anything that could be  
saved.

DAVID  
This time, we know more.

Mara looks up.

MARA  
We?  
You're three patients in a  
psychiatric trial.

Sera smiles sadly.

SERA  
We're more than that.  
And so are you.

Jonas nods at the glowing sigil.

JONAS  
You don't have to do it alone this  
time.

CUT TO—

---

73 INT. HELIOS - SUBLEVEL B2 - CONTINUOUS

The tactical team advances down a concrete tunnel.

The HUM is stronger here – a physical pressure in the air.

Their flashlight beams occasionally bend slightly, like light passing near a massive gravity source.

GUARD #3  
(whisper)  
You seeing that?

GUARD #4  
Yeah.  
Not thinking about it.

They turn a corner–

And freeze.

Ahead lies a vast, circular CAVERN.

Concrete walls reinforced with steel braces – many of them bent.

Catwalks run along the edges, half-collapsed.

In the center, partially embedded in the floor–

The “sphere” from the monitors.

Up close, it’s less a sphere and more a chrysalis – a black, cracked shell with light bleeding through breaks.

The HUM is deafening here.

They approach slowly, weapons raised.

GUARD LEAD  
Stay sharp.  
Don’t touch anything.

GUARD #3  
It’s... alive.

GUARD #4  
(whisper)  
You don’t know that.

The shell pulses.

Concrete dust falls.

A chunk of outer material flakes off–  
revealing something shifting underneath.

Like muscle.  
Or smoke.

Or both.

The nearest guard's flashlight beam bends sharply, distorted.

GUARD #3

Oh my God—

A crack begins to crawl up the shell, splitting it.

Inside, something moves.

Something blacker than the darkness around it.  
Something that's not made of matter in any recognizable way—  
more like a hole in meaning shaped vaguely like a limb.

The entity presses against the crack like a hand pushing  
through wet fabric.

The HUM climbs in pitch.

The guard lead whispers:

GUARD LEAD

Fall back—

Too late.

The crack tears wide.

Something reaches out.

The flashlight beams twist violently toward it.  
The guards' helmet cams feedback into their own eyes.  
Sound compresses into a shrill whine.

One guard SCREAMS—  
and his scream cuts into STATIC, like someone pressed mute  
mid-sound.

We—

SMASH CUT TO—

---

74 INT. HELIOS - SECURITY HUB - SAME TIME

The sublevel feed shows chaos—

Cameras glitch, freezing on frames of:

a guard levitating mid-air, limbs stretched  
helmet visors imploding inward

light folding around the black chrysalis thing

Then the feed dies.

Static.

The HUM in the hub grows louder.

Hendricks stares, ashen.

HENDRICKS  
(to no one in particular)  
What did we dig up?

No one answers.

CUT TO—

---

75 INT. COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara feels the change before she hears it.

She goes still.

MARA  
(whisper)  
That wasn't the Gate.

David nods, eyes wide.

DAVID  
It's moving.

Sera presses her hand flat to the floor.

SERA  
It's reached the foundations.

Jonas looks at Mara.

JONAS  
When it gets high enough...  
the whole building becomes its  
mouth.

Mara stares at them, something steadier, harder, settling in her expression.

MARA  
Tell me how to stop it.

Sera actually smiles a little — not happy, but relieved.

SERA  
There she is.

MARA  
(even)  
I can't undo closing the Gate.

DAVID  
You don't have to.  
You just have to use what's left of  
it.

He nods at the sigil.

DAVID (CONT'D)  
You're still the Warden.  
Even like this.  
Even... smaller.

Mara looks at her hands. Human. Trembling.

MARA  
I can't do what I did there.  
I'm not what I was there.

JONAS  
Neither are we.  
But we're enough.

Sera leans forward.

SERA  
Listen.  
Last time, you closed from the  
*outside in.*  
You slammed the Gate shut on an  
entire world.

DAVID  
This time, you can close from the  
*inside out.*

Mara stares.

MARA  
Inside what?

Jonas says it:

JONAS  
Inside the thing that's waking up.

A long silence.

Mara shakes her head.

MARA  
You want me to go **into** that?

Sera:

SERA  
You're the only one it wants badly  
enough to let in.

David:

DAVID  
If you get close enough to its core  
—  
you can seal it.  
Not the whole world.  
Just the infection.

MARA  
(shaken)  
And what if I fail?

Sera doesn't sugarcoat it.

SERA  
Then it eats you.  
And then it eats everything else.

Mara swallows.

No escape hatch in that answer.

CUT TO—

---

76 INT. HELIOS - WARD MEDICAL ROOM - SAME TIME

Leo lies on the bed, barely conscious.

His vitals flicker on the monitor — heart rate tracing  
multiple lines as if several lives are being recorded at  
once.

He murmurs, half-dreaming.

LEO  
(slurred)  
Mara...  
Don't go alone...

The overhead light flickers.



For a second, we see three Leo bodies on the bed.

Then just one again.

CUT TO—

---

77 INT. COHORT WARD - COMMON ROOM - NIGHT

Mara stands.

Her fear hasn't gone away — it's just been... joined by resolve.

MARA  
If I go down there...  
how do I get back?

David and Sera both look at Jonas.

He answers honestly.

JONAS  
We don't know.

Mara laughs, broken and humorless.

MARA  
That's not very reassuring.

Sera shrugs.

SERA  
Last time, you didn't have us.

David lifts his hands, faint light gathering along his fingers.

DAVID  
We can anchor you.  
As much as this reality allows.

SERA  
We help you remember who you are—  
while you're inside something that  
wants to make you forget.

Jonas steps forward.

JONAS  
And if you start to get pulled  
apart—  
(MORE)

JONAS (CONT'D)  
we'll hold as much of you together  
as we can.

Mara looks at them for a long moment.

MARA  
(soft)  
Why... would you do that?

Sera's eyes are sad but warm.

SERA  
Because you broke yourself to save  
us once.  
This is us returning the favor.

That lands heavy.

Mara's throat tightens.

MARA  
(barely)  
I didn't protect you very well.

David's voice is gentle.

DAVID  
We're still here.

The building shudders again — a more violent jolt.

Plaster cracks spiderweb across the ceiling.

A tiny chunk falls and hits the floor between them.

Time is running out.

Mara turns to the sigil.

MARA  
(to it, to herself)  
If I'm still the Warden...  
show me how to get down there.

The sigil BLOOMS slightly, lines rearranging.

The floor in the corner of the room begins to blur —  
tile outlines smearing, depth warping.

A circular pattern appears in the floor —  
a smaller echo of the Gate symbol.

It rotates once.

Sinks.

Revealing a dark opening.

Like an elevator shaft that was never built.  
Or always there.

Mara stares.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(quiet)  
Of course.

She looks back at the three.

MARA (CONT'D)  
If I don't come back—

SERA  
(cuts her off)  
We're not doing goodbyes yet.

JONAS  
Go.  
Before it comes all the way up.

David steps forward, hesitant, then:

DAVID  
(small)  
If you see what it really looks  
like...  
don't look at it for too long.

Mara nods.

She takes one long, slow breath.

And steps toward the opening.

The HUM from below grows louder.

She glances once more at them.

Then descends into the dark.

We HOLD on Jonas, Sera, and David.

The three of them instinctively move closer together,  
shoulders almost touching.

Their breathing syncs.

Their silhouettes almost seem to merge at the edges, humming with a faint, shared light.

Jonas whispers:

JONAS

Hold her.

Sera closes her eyes.

David raises his hands.

The room fills with a faint, pulsing glow that sinks down into the shaft after Mara.

We follow that light—

DOWN.

---

78 INT. DESCENT SHAFT - CONTINUOUS

Mara lowers herself down a rough, concrete-lined shaft that shouldn't exist, lit only by the faint glow following her from above.

The walls are wrong—  
angles don't meet correctly, distances feel inconsistent.

Her breathing echoes strangely — each breath delayed by a half-second as if the sound has to catch up.

She slips, catches herself, scraping her palm — winces.

Her blood beads—

—and floats, briefly, before gravity remembers itself.

MARA

(to herself)

Not real.

Not meaningful.

Just physics misfiring—

A deeper sound rises from below.

Not a hum.

A heartbeat.

But not hers.

She keeps going.

DOWN.

---

79 INT. SUBLEVEL CAVERN - ENTITY CHAMBER - LATER

Mara emerges onto a rusted catwalk.

The cavern yawns beneath her:

The huge chamber we saw on the monitors – concrete walls warped and crushed inward by some vast pressure.

In the center:

The chrysalis-shell thing.

Bigger up close.  
Cracked open wider now.

Light leaks from the fissures.  
But not warm light.

Light with weight.

The tactical team's equipment lies scattered around the perimeter – rifles twisted, helmets crushed inward like tin cans.

No bodies.

Mara stares at the shell.

Her breath catches.

Something within the cracks moves.

Not in any animal way.

More like a negative space rearranging itself.

Her ears ring.

The HUM is almost intolerable here.

She approaches, gripping the railing for balance.

The closer she gets, the more her vision doubles—  
Helios overlaying the Origin City overlaying a black void  
overlaying a burning, impossible landscape.

She forces herself to keep going.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 (to herself)  
 I am Mara Ellison.  
 I am the Warden.  
 I closed the Gate.  
 I survived.  
 I survived.

The shell shifts.

Cracks widen.

Something pushes outward—

We don't see its full shape.  
 We never get a clean outline.

Just hints:

a limb that bends in more joints than it should  
 a curve that doesn't obey perspective  
 a cluster of "eyes" that are actually small versions of the whole

Looking at it hurts.

Mara's nose starts to bleed.

She squints, looking just to one side of it.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 (hoarse)  
 I know what you are.

The Entity presses closer to the opening.

The HUM modulates — almost like it's responding.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 You're not a god.  
 You're not a devil.  
 You're hunger with shape.

The shell cracks further, screaming against its own material.

A wave of pressure knocks Mara to one knee.

She clings to the rail.

In the chamber above, faintly—

We HEAR Jonas, Sera, and David murmuring in unison, as if sending a signal down:

THE THREE (V.O.)  
 You are the Gate.  
 Remember.

Mara lifts her head.

Blood on her teeth.  
 Eyes wild.  
 Terrified.  
 Resolute.

She steps closer to the crack.

MARA  
 (to the Entity)  
 You came to my city once.  
 You wore our stories like clothes.  
 You fed until the world broke.

The crack pulses.

Images slam into her mind:

the Origin City at its brightest

beings like herself soaring through lattice-light

the Entity slithering through their myths, making them grander, more violent, more hungry

Mara grits her teeth.

MARA (CONT'D)  
 I won't let you do it again.

She presses her hand toward the crack.

Reality around her HAND dents inward—  
 like it did in the vision of her Warden-self.

Even here, even now, in this smaller human body—

She still bends the air.

The Entity's surface ripples where her hand nears it.

The HUM spikes—

...and we CUT TO BLACK.

---

80 INT. SUBLEVEL CAVERN - ENTITY CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

The HUM claws at the edges of Mara's hearing like a swarm of insects.

Her hand is inches from the widening crack in the chrysalis-shell.

The Entity presses outward—  
a sickening bulge of negative space given hunger and sound.

Her palm vibrates from the proximity alone.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(whisper, trembling)  
I'm not strong enough for this...

Above her, faint voices drift down—

THE THREE (V.O.)  
Hold.  
Hold.

Mara anchors her stance.

Her fingers brush the crack—

The world goes silent.

Then:

SOMETHING GRABS HER WRIST FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

Not a hand.  
More like a decision made flesh.

Mara SCREAMS as she's yanked forward—  
her body stretching, her outline smearing like film burning  
in a projector.

She fights it.

Her other hand grips the railing until the metal bends under  
her grip.

The Entity pulls harder—

And—

---

81 INT. ENTITY SPACE - "THE INSIDE" - UNKNOWN

She is inside it.



Or:  
 She is inside a place the Entity has made from her own mind.

Darkness.  
 But not empty—  
 full of shapes moving, swimming, rearranging.

Geometric shadows ripple across black horizons.

Voices whisper in languages made of emotion, not sound.

Mara gasps—

There is no floor.  
 Just an endless abyss and a thin suggestion of solidity where  
 she steps.

Her breath becomes visible—  
 thin trails of silver.

MARA  
 (terrified)  
 This... isn't real.

A distorted version of her own voice answers from all  
 directions:

ENTITY-MARA (O.S.)  
 But it's yours.

Then—

A memory slams into her.

---

82 MEMORY - MARA AND HER FATHER - LATE CHILDHOOD - DAY

A modest kitchen.  
 Her father hunched over the table, rubbing his temple.

Mara (10) stands holding a trophy.

He barely looks.

FATHER  
 (tired)  
 It's just a game, Mara.

YOUNG MARA  
 But— I won.

FATHER  
(sigh)  
Try to be normal, honey. Please.

Young Mara deflates.

The Entity's voice overlaps with her father's:

ENTITY-MARA (V.O.)  
You have always been too much.

The memory shatters—

---

83 INT. ENTITY SPACE - UNKNOWN

Mara stumbles.

The floor buckles beneath her—  
then reforms.

The Entity is showing her guilt, mistakes, shame.

Trying to weaken her identity.

Trying to make her forget who she is.

MARA  
(angry)  
I'm not ten years old anymore.

The dark ripples.

A second memory hits her—

---

84 MEMORY — MARA, AGE 23 — HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT

A young woman codes in the ER.

Mara, a med-student at the time, freezes in place.

The attending shouts:

ATTENDING  
Pull the crash cart! NOW!

Mara doesn't move.

She can't.

She's paralyzed by fear.

The woman dies.

The hallway lights flicker—

and the Entity twists the memory—

Everyone in the hospital turns to stare at her.

Every face melted into disappointment and accusation.

ENTITY-MARA (V.O.)  
You can't save anyone.

MARA  
(screaming)  
STOP IT!

The memory blasts apart—

---

85 INT. ENTITY SPACE - UNKNOWN

Mara drops to her knees.

Her hands flicker to white-glow, then back to human.

She's losing coherence.

Suddenly—

A hand touches her shoulder.

She flinches—

but it's Jonas.

Or rather:

A luminous, abstract version of Jonas.  
A human silhouette made of dim light.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(choked)  
Jonas...?

JONAS-LIGHT  
A part of me.

Sera appears beside him—  
a figure of fractal geometry shimmering in blue and gold.

SERA-LIGHT  
And a part of me.

David manifests last—  
a tall, sharp silhouette made of pale radiance.

DAVID-LIGHT

And me.

Their outlines bleed into one another at the edges.

Not merging, but synchronizing.

MARA

How—

How did you get inside here?

JONAS-LIGHT

You opened the way when you touched  
it.

SERA-LIGHT

We followed.

DAVID-LIGHT

To keep you from breaking.

The space around them shifts— spiraling outward into a  
starless void.

MARA

(panicking)

I'm losing the floor—

JONAS-LIGHT

(urgent)

Then take ours.

They reach for her.

Mara hesitates—

until the world distorts again.

---

## 86 THE ENTITY MANIFESTS

The void compresses inward.

A titanic shape forms around them—  
not seen clearly, only suggested:

a curve with no end

a body made of unfinished thoughts

hundreds of "eyes" scattered like stars across a silhouette

It looks like what happens when an idea tries to become flesh and fails.

The HUM here is so loud Mara feels her bones ache.

ENTITY (V.O.)  
You closed my feast.

A shiver down her spine.

ENTITY (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I remember your taste.

Jonas-LIGHT steps in front of her.

JONAS-LIGHT  
(defiant)  
She's not alone this time.

Sera-LIGHT extends a geometric lattice of light shielding them.

David-LIGHT brightens, illuminating the Entity's edges — like shining a flashlight at a nightmare, making it shrink slightly.

Mara forces herself to stand.

MARA  
You're not feeding here.  
Not again.

The Entity's voice rumbles:

ENTITY (V.O.)  
You are smaller now.  
Breakable.  
Frightened.  
Delicious.

Mara snarls, stepping forward—

MARA  
I am still the Warden.

The void shakes.

For a brief second—  
her eyes flash white.

Her outline grows taller.  
Sharper.

Truer.

The Entity recoils.

ENTITY (V.O.)  
(hissing)  
THERE you are.

MARA  
Yes.  
Here I am.

She raises her hand toward the swirling core—

The space bends inward, forming a sigil of pure unlight—

And—

---

87 INT. HELIOS - COHORT WARD - SAME TIME

Jonas's real body convulses.

Sera gasps.

David doubles over.

Their bodies tremor in sync —  
heads thrown back, eyes glowing.

They speak in unison:

THE THREE  
Anchor her.

The sigil on the wall flickers violently.

---

88 INT. ENTITY SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Mara's veins glow white.

Her human form struggles.

Her Warden form pushes through.

Two versions of her overlap—  
one scared and trembling—  
one tall, luminous, wrathful.

The Entity SCREECHES across trauma, memory, and hunger.

Reality bends.

The void warps.

Memories crash down on her—

her father telling her she's too intense

the patient she couldn't save

Jonas screaming during the Fall

Sera dying

David shedding light in agony

the Gate slamming

the world collapsing

All weaponized against her—

The Entity whispers:

ENTITY (V.O.)  
You closed the world.  
You killed your kin.  
You let the light drown.

Mara screams back:

MARA  
I SAVED WHAT I COULD!

Her Warden-self steps forward.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(vibrating between voices)  
I DIDN'T COME HERE TO BREAK AGAIN.  
I CAME TO FINISH THIS.

The Entity's form writhes—

A single massive crack opens in its core—  
the weak point it fears—

Mara reaches toward it—

Her human hand flickers—  
then becomes her Warden hand—

The light intensifies—

Her palm presses to the crack—

The Entity SHRIEKS— a distortion of all sound.

Black light geysers outward—  
Jonas-LIGHT, Sera-LIGHT, and David-LIGHT HOLD HER STEADY—

THE THREE-LIGHT  
CLOSE IT FROM INSIDE!

Mara screams through clenched teeth—

MARA  
I—  
REMEMBER—

The sigil blossoms from her palm—  
The crack begins to seal—  
But the Entity fights back—  
Reality shreds—  
Her three anchor-patients shimmer, glitching, struggling—  
The Entity tries to rip her identity apart—  
She shrieks:

MARA (CONT'D)  
I AM MARA ELLISON!  
I AM THE WARDEN!  
I CHOOSE THE DOOR—

The sigil flares—  
And the Entity's core SLAMS SHUT—  
WHITE OUT.

---

89 INT. ENTITY SPACE - WHITEOUT → SLOW FADE IN

White.  
Then gray.  
Then shadow.  
Then form.

Mara floats — suspended in a cradle of dim, humming light.  
Her eyes half-open.  
She breathes.



Barely.

A gentle glow surrounds her, but it flickers – unstable.

She whispers through cracked lips:

MARA (CONT'D)

(weak)

...did I do it?

A shape forms beside her.

A silhouette made of light – not one person, not three – but Jonas, Sera, and David combined.

A single form with subtle echoes inside it – three presences harmonized into a gestalt.

Their voice is layered, soft, sad.

THE ANCHOR (JONAS/SERA/DAVID)

Not yet.

You sealed the wound.

But it's not dead.

Mara struggles to sit upright, shaking.

MARA

Then–

then what did I just do?

THE ANCHOR

You stopped it from crawling out.

But the part already here...

is still alive.

In the void, far away, something BOOMS – like a god pounding on a door miles thick.

The light around Mara trembles.

MARA

So I need to kill it.

THE ANCHOR

No.

Beat.

MARA

(breath hitching)

No?

THE ANCHOR

You can't.  
Killing it would collapse this  
reality.  
It is bound to you.  
As long as you exist here...  
so does it.

Mara's eyes fill.

MARA

(broken)

Then I brought the apocalypse with  
me.

THE ANCHOR

You brought survivors.  
You brought hope.  
You brought yourself.

Another BOOM.

The void distorts.

Mara steels herself, wiping blood from her mouth.

MARA

Let me finish this.  
Let me do what I should have done  
the first time.

The Anchor tilts its head.

THE ANCHOR

You're not hearing us.  
You cannot kill it.  
But you can **lock it**.  
Permanently.

MARA

How?

The Anchor steps closer — their merged light flooding over  
her.

THE ANCHOR

You seal it **inside you**.

Mara freezes.

MARA

...no.

The Anchor's voice is infinitely gentle.

THE ANCHOR  
You were the Warden.  
You are the Warden.  
The Gate was never a door—  
It was you.  
You held reality in balance.

MARA  
(shaken)  
I'm human now.

THE ANCHOR  
Only because you ran from yourself.

The void flickers violently — reality straining.

THE ANCHOR (CONT'D)  
If you take it into you...  
you live with it.  
Forever.  
No escape.  
No end.

MARA  
And if I don't?

The Anchor looks upward.

A gigantic CRACK rips across the void above —  
reality breaking like ice.

THE ANCHOR  
Then this world ends.  
Just like the last.

Mara trembles violently.

MARA  
I don't—  
I don't want to be a prison.

THE ANCHOR  
You were created to hold the line.  
That is your burden.  
That is your strength.

Another BOOM.

Closer.

Mara stiffens.

MARA  
 (quietly)  
 I'll do it.

The Anchor kneels beside her – light gently touching her forehead.

THE ANCHOR  
 Then remember who you are.  
 All of you.

Their light ENGULFS her–

---

90 INT. SUBLEVEL CAVERN - SIMULTANEOUS

Her human body lies on the concrete near the chrysalis-shell.  
 Unmoving.

The shell pulses violently – cracks expanding – something pushing out.

The overhead catwalk collapses in the far corner.

Pipes burst.

Dust rains down.

The creature within the shell presses harder–

–

Mara's body SLAMS upright, gasping, eyes glowing white.

Her breath comes out in shimmering clouds of light.

Her voice is layered – human and Warden overlapping:

MARA / WARDEN  
 Come to me.

The Entity pauses.

As if recognizing her.

Then–

It lunges.

A mass of negative geometry surges from the shell–  
 tendrils of absence, of hunger, of broken world-light.

Mara opens her arms.

The sigil appears around her – not drawn, but manifested.

The void-light coils toward her chest–

And sinks INTO HER.

---

91 INT. MARA'S MIND - "THE CHAMBER OF SELF" - UNKNOWN

She stands in a vast circular room.

This one looks human – like a cathedral mixed with a hospital ward mixed with a childhood bedroom.

Her memories form stained glass along the walls.

Opposite her stands–

The Entity.

Now her size.

Humanoid.

A shadow with her outline.

It speaks in her voice.

ENTITY-MARA

You cage your monsters.

But you forgot–

I am not yours.

MARA

You are now.

They collide.

Light explodes.

---

92 MONTAGE - INTERNAL BATTLE

This part plays like a cerebral, surreal duel:

Mara choking on memories the Entity forces into her

The Entity trying to expand inside her skull

Mara slamming mental "doors" shut one by one

The Entity whispering every cruelty she ever believed about herself

The Anchor (Jonas/Sera/David) appearing in flashes – silently  
bracing her psyche

A door swings open–

Her father:

FATHER (VISION)  
You're too much.

She SLAMS the door.

Another door–

The hospital death.

ATTENDING (VISION)  
You froze.  
She died.

SLAM.

Another–

The Origin City burning.

SLAM.

The Entity roars.

ENTITY-MARA  
You cannot lock me away!  
I am hunger–  
I am truth–  
I am–

MARA  
(screaming)  
NO.

She reaches into her own chest.

Pulls out a glowing sigil.

Slams it onto the Entity's chest.

MARA (CONT'D)  
I am the Warden.

The Entity's form CRACKS–

WHITE FLASH–

---

93 INT. SUBLEVEL CAVERN - AFTERMATH

Mara lies on the concrete.

Smoke rising gently from her skin.

The chrysalis-shell is shattered and hollow.

The cavern is quiet.

Dead quiet.

Until—

A soft groan.

From Mara.

She opens her eyes.

Human again.

Or mostly.

Her pupils flicker white for a second—  
then settle.

She sits up.

Pain everywhere.

But alive.

MARA (CONT'D)  
(whisper)  
Is it done?

A voice behind her:

THE ANCHOR (O.S.)  
For now.

She turns.

Jonas, Sera, and David stand together—  
not merged, not glowing—  
but human again.

They're exhausted. Pale. Worn.

But alive.

Mara crawls toward them—and collapses into their arms.

---

94 INT. SUBLEVEL CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Leo emerges from the darkness.

Barefoot.

Dazed.

Eyes unfocused and flickering with ghost-impressions of alternate selves.

LEO  
(broken)  
Mara...?

Mara lifts her head—

MARA  
(gasp)  
Leo—

She runs to him.

He falls into her arms.

He trembles like a leaf.

LEO  
(whisper)  
I saw everything.  
All of it.  
Too many of you.  
Too many of me.

Mara holds the back of his head like comforting a frightened child.

MARA  
I'm here.  
I'm here now.

LEO  
Am I...  
still myself?

A devastating moment.

Mara cups his face.

MARA  
You're you.  
You're still you.

He breaks into quiet, exhausted sobs.



She holds him.

---

95 INT. HELIOS - UPPER LEVELS - LATER

The building is broken beyond repair.

Emergency lights flicker.

Walls bowed.

Floors split.

Rooms in the wrong places.

Staff stagger through, injured but moving.

The HUM is gone.

Just silence and a faint ringing, like after a bomb.

Mara, Jonas, Sera, David, and Leo climb the stairs.

Mara supports Leo.

Sera clutches her ribs.

Jonas limps.

David moves slowly, shielding his eyes from flickering light.

They emerge into—

---

96 EXT. HELIOS INSTITUTE - DAWN

The dawn sky is a thin, cold blue.

Emergency vehicles fill the parking lot.

Paramedics swarm.

Reporters gather beyond police tape.

The five of them exit the ruined building.

A medic runs over.

MEDIC

Do you need assistance?

Mara looks back at the crumbling Helios Institute.

Its shape is still... wrong.

Windows in the wrong places.  
Edges bent.  
Like a broken memory.

She looks at her three patients.

At Leo.

MARA  
(quiet)  
We need time.

The medic nods and ushers them away from the wreckage.

But Mara stops.  
Turns.  
The wind brushes her hair.

Her eyes flick white for just a moment.

A reminder.

She inhales sharply.

The Entity—  
now sealed inside her—  
stirs.

Just a twitch.

She steadies.

Sera watches her.

SERA  
(soft)  
Can you hold it?

Mara nods.

Not confidently.

But truthfully.

MARA  
I can hold it.

David exhales relief.

Jonas touches her shoulder.

Leo leans against her, struggling to stay upright but alive.

A firefighter shouts in the distance.

The dawn brightens—

—and Mara whispers to herself:

MARA (CONT'D)  
(soft, resolute)  
I am the Warden.

CUT TO BLACK.