

Necrolepsy

by Kev Dooley

EXT. BIG PHARMA LAB — DAY, SUNSET

A modern, sterile monstrosity of glass, metal, and bleached concrete set amongst carefully manicured landscaping.

BRIAN (30s, m), absentminded, sloppily dressed, fumbles his employee badge, swiping it angrily at a badge reader.

ANNOYED BEEP

A red light winks.

He groans. Tries again.

Same result.

Fuck it. He tries another door.

CLICK

Finally! He yanks the door open and stomps inside.

INT. BIG PHARMA LAB — DAY, SUNSET

Severe, high tech — all computer monitors, steel and tile.

Brian floats in to find CAROLINE (30s, F), all business with a tidy bun and minimalist, fashionable outfit, prepping syringes.

A **SCREECH** rings out from one of the many cages lining one wall.

CAROLINE

Late again, Bri — and I think
someone noticed.

BRIAN

Yeah, yeah. What's on the docket?
Still narcolepsy meds?

CAROLINE

Yup. Gonna have to keep your
sweetie up all night.

He nabs a hanging lab coat, slips it on en route to the cages.

A happy **CRY** now as he looks lovingly at a mother rhesus monkey and her two babies.

BRIAN

(to monkey)

Hey Sasha. Feeling ok tonight?

Sasha stretches out her hand, Brian lets her grab his finger.

BRIAN
(to Caroline)
Why are her babies here?

CAROLINE
Animal handling says she wouldn't
leave 'em, so they let them tag
along.

BRIAN
Should've just subbed her out.

CAROLINE
Can't. There's a weight loss thing
tonight too. All the rhesus
subjects are in use.

BRIAN
(to monkey)
It's gonna be ok... We're just
gonna stimulate your hypocretin
production so you stay up all
night. Your babies are perfectly
safe.

Caroline joins him at the cages, a tray of syringes in hand.

CAROLINE
Ready?

The two work their way down the line of cages, administering
injections to each of their subjects.

FADE TO:

INT. BIG PHARMA LAB — NIGHT

The lights have been dimmed as the lab techs are settled into
the boring stretch of early morning waiting.

Brian's feet up, reading a trashy romance novel.

Caroline monitors her phone more than her computer.

CAROLINE
The Baroness ever seduce her Duke?

BRIAN
This one's set in space. She's a
ship captain this time around...

Tiny **PEALS** of pain. Wet, jaw-smacking **CRUNCHES**.

Caroline snaps to the monitor — a readout flashes red.

CAROLINE
It's Sasha. Heart rate is off the
charts. Check on her?

Brian tosses his book, bolts to her cage.

Shadows conceal the worst, but two twitching bloody piles tell
the story. He can't see Sasha...

He whistles and taps the bars.

BRIAN
Where'd you go girl?

No response.

He fumbles with the latch.

BRIAN
Hit the lights! I can't see shit
over here.

Caroline hustles to the door.

Brian whips the cage door open.

Worried, unthinking, his head in the cage as he looks around...

BRIAN
C'mon... I know you're in--

A **HOWLING** ball of fur and rage swings down from the cage top.

SLAM TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. OLD, SHITTY CAR - DAY

SUPER: One Year Later

ALYX, late 20s, nonbinary, leaning femme - wears a long sleeve
tee under their scrubs and rocks out to a MOTHER, MOTHER track.

Idyllic golden hour light bathes the car's interior as they run
their fingers through their purple and blue hair.

A ringing replaces the song.

They fumble one-handed to answer.

ALYX
Hey mom! What's up?

MOM (O.S.)
Just wanted to check on you
sweetie — you gonna be ready for
finals with all this work?

Alyx glances at their backpack.

ALYX
Yeah mom. Plenty of time to study
while the patients sleep.

MOM
You sure? I'm worried about you...

The car slows — they flip on a turn signal.

EXT. ROAD TO FACILITY — CONTINUOUS

Unending cornfields beside Alyx, waiting for a turning semi.
Rows of identical warehouses loom across the road.

ALYX
Yeah mom. Talk fast — I'm about to
lose signal.

MOM
I hate you working way out there.

INT. OLD, SHITTY CAR — CONTINUOUS

Alyx rolls their eyes and makes the turn.

ALYX
I know. But I'm fine. Love ya mom
— I gotta go!

MOM
Ok sweetie, call if you--

ON THE PHONE

Zero bars. The call dies.

MOTHER, MOTHER resumes.

EXT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY — CONTINUOUS

Alyx parks in front of a nondescript brick building.

INT. OLD, SHITTY CAR — CONTINUOUS

Alyx digs through their bag to retrieve a name badge.

The textbook *Basic Principles of Ophthalmic Surgery* peeks out of their bag.

Badge in hand, they grab their bag.

EXT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY – CONTINUOUS

Bag slung, they hop out of the car and head toward the door.

A rumble of **THUNDER** gives them pause.

They peep the sky – dark, angry clouds pushing out the sunset.

INT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY, LOBBY – EVENING

A tiny, deserted waiting room filled with older furniture.

Over Alyx's head are shiny new maglocks for the exterior door.

On one wall, a window, and on the other side a desk with a bubbly, hyper femme RECEPTIONIST (30s, F).

BUBBLY RECEPTIONIST
Hey Alyx! It's been a crazy day –
Lisa wants to see you ASAP!

ALYX
Crazy, huh? Couldn't sleep or
couldn't wake up?

BUBBLY RECEPTIONIST
Oh, not the patients! Lots of
changes! Lisa will fill you in.

Alyx pulls one side of the double doors. It doesn't open.

The receptionist's eyes widen as she remembers her new button.

A **CLICK** and it finally opens.

INT. LOBBY HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

On the other side of the door, a CONTRACTOR (40s, m),
screwdriver in hand, stumbles back as Alyx squeezes by.

They notice the contractor is installing a badge reader.

ALYX
(to the receptionist)
Fancy new locks, huh?

BUBBLY RECEPTIONIST
And more! We went high tech!

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE — NIGHT

A perfunctory knock as Alyx slips in and plops into a chair.

ALYX
Hey, hey! Busy day...

Behind the cramped desk in an office crowded with overflowing bookshelves sits the site director LISA (40s, F), holding a small camera up to her eye.

Next to her, monitoring a tablet, is a TECH INTEGRATOR (30s, M)

LISA
Just a sec...

INTEGRATOR
Actually it looks like you're all done. Thanks for your time.

He takes his camera back and exits.

Lisa lets her hair down and straightens her barely office-appropriate blouse.

LISA
Lot's going on. Indeed.

ALYX
The grant went through, huh?

LISA
Yeah, a while ago. They suddenly had an opening for the install.

ALYX
Are we clear to run the study tonight? I kinda need the hours.

LISA
They're taking Dennis's retinal scan next and said everything should be ready after that.

Alyx is visibly relieved.

LISA
Speaking of Dennis... he let me know that, in his words, "He's getting too damn old for overnights."

Alyx sits up, suddenly worried about what that means for them.

LISA
So we're looking to make a few
changes – and Dennis is
recommending you take over the
overnight studies.

ALYX
Whoa. For real?

LISA
Absolutely – and I agree. Of
course it'll mean less time
studying during your shift...

ALYX
Oh, yeah, of course.
No worries. I'm in.

LISA
Glad to hear it. Shadow him
tonight and make sure you're up
for it.

ALYX
I'm on it! Thanks boss!

All smiles, they hop to their feet and head to the door.

LISA
Before you go – there's a master
control in here in case you have
any issues with the new system.

She swivels a shiny new touch panel on her desk toward Alyx.

LISA
Dennis' badge will get you in.
I've got a date tonight – but call
if you need any help...

Oh shit... my date!

Lisa flies into a frenzy of panicked packing before bolting to
the door as she realizes how late it is.

LISA
I'm gonna be late!

Giddy, Alyx follows Lisa out.

By the door they cheerily punch a new oversized red button next
to a small touch panel and give a little skip.

INT. BREAK ROOM — MOMENTS LATER

Alyx skips past the integrator as he leaves and cuts a beeline for the clunky analog time clock by to the kitchenette.

DENNIS (60s, m), grandfatherly, cardigan over a tie and slacks, looks up from his clipboard.

A heavy CLUNK as Alyx punches a paper time card.

DENNIS

Oh hey — we're not using that anymore. Use this.

He holds out a replacement badge on a lanyard, points to a kiosk with a digital time readout and a badge reader.

DENNIS

Just hit "Time In" and badge. You talk to Lisa yet?

Alyx snags the badge, nodding.

A **BEEP** as they clock themselves in.

ALYX

Yeah... You think I'm supervisor material?

DENNIS

You know anyone else that can keep the other two on task?

There's pride in Dennis' eyes as they both share a chuckle about their coworkers.

Half of "the other two" barges in: NOAH (30s, m), their EEG tech who looks like a gym bro stuffed in a too-small lab coat.

NOAH

Can you believe this? They're just going to leave without tying in the networking.

DENNIS

What's not working? I'll have them get it online before they leave.

NOAH

Everything works. I just can't monitor it yet.

DENNIS

You can't monitor the EEGs?

NOAH

No, the new security stuff. Don't worry. I'll get it running.

Frustrated, Noah waves off Dennis as he heads back out.

Alyx giggles. Dennis just looks confused.

DENNIS

Is that even his job?

ALYX

He thinks all the tech is his job... but he's relatively smart... How bad could it be?

Dennis pushes to his feet with an old man's sigh.

DENNIS

Ready when you are!

ALYX

Let's do this!

Alyx stashes their bag in a cubby hole along the back wall.

They grab a blood pressure cuff and a stethoscope and follow Dennis out of the break room.

INT. NURSES STATION — MOMENTS LATER

Like the center of a wheel, several hallways meet here, giving access to most of the facility from a central location.

The greenish white walls are dingy, but the lighting is bright and everything seems in good repair.

There is a long counter and behind it a cluttered desk with several workstations.

Behind the desk is the second half of "the other two": ZURI (40s, F), their licensed nurse practitioner — a petite, anxious woman who looks like she hasn't slept much lately.

A bright pink hoodie over her scrubs, she's currently engrossed with sending a message on her phone.

Dennis and Alyx come around the corner, mid-conversation, startling Zuri, who almost drops said phone.

DENNIS

--so feel free to run with that.

ZURI

Oh! Hey! Uh... Is all this new stuff really necessary?

Zuri nervously motions toward freshly installed cameras.
Dennis waves an arm down his frame.

DENNIS

Do I look like someone who knows what modern doodads are necessary?

ZURI

Yeah... Umm... I just hate the idea of someone watching us... Anyway – I've got our subject rundown ready for you.

Zuri hands over a packet of papers.

Dennis hands them straight to Alyx who scans through quickly.

DENNIS

Got another copy?

ZURI

No, but I can print one out... Wait, why do they need a copy?

ALYX

Actually... can I have a tablet?

DENNIS

Alyx is shadowing me tonight.
Trying to help grow their skillset and all that...

Zuri huffs in annoyance as she looks through the clutter on the desk to locate a table. She finds one and offers it to Alyx.

Alyx pushes the papers back to Dennis and takes the device, logging in and following along as Zuri continues.

ZURI

So anyway... We've got Phase 1 of a narcolepsy med test.

ALYX

Got it. All healthy, no narcoleptics.

ZURI

Right. And familiar faces mostly.

Dennis skims for the names.

DENNIS
Brody, Lauren, and... Tom.

ALYX
Brody? Ugh. Hey... You'll have the
"can't sleep here with a gun"
talk, right?

DENNIS
Only if you keep Lauren calm
enough to finish a session.

ALYX
Deal.

ZURI
Ten bucks says she won't make it.

Alyx stifles a chuckle.

ALYX
Is there anything you won't bet
on?

DENNIS
And the drug?

Zuri ignores Alyx, turning to answer Dennis' question.

ZURI
Really promising – animal trials
went well. Stimulates hypocretin
production to keep them awake.

DENNIS
(to Alyx)
Which means we need to be on the
look out for what as side effects?

ALYX
Ummm... Increased appetite and...

They giggle. Dennis gives a stern look before relenting.

DENNIS
Arousal. But also aggression and
impulsivity. Let's bring 'em in.

They head toward the...

INT. LOBBY – MOMENTS LATER

The three aforementioned subjects are now waiting in the
previously empty room:

* BRODY: Oversized man in his 60s. Grey hair, cargo pants, and his best fishing shirt. He approvingly studies the new maglocks.

* LAUREN: Shy, nervous – a 3rd grade teacher in her 30s wearing a muted multi-colored sweater. She sits and reads what could only be the sequel to Brian's trashy romance novel.

* TOM: A tall, lanky middle-aged man with a retreating hairline who could be friendly and thoughtful or he could be the serial killer next door. He's chatting with the bubbly receptionist by the window.

TOM

So you're going to want to rinse
the quinoa until there's no suds--

Alyx and Dennis stroll in from the hallway.

DENNIS

Oh good – you're all here.

Brody turns from the locks and moves to the center of the room, ready to take charge. Lauren dog-ears her spot in her book.

BRODY

Looks like y'all are finally
getting some decent security
around here.

DENNIS

Indeed. There's also been some
changes to your study rooms that
we'll go over shortly.

Lauren bristles at the thought of changes.

Alyx takes a couple steps forward to set a hand on Lauren's shoulder. Lauren looks up and gets a small smile from Alyx.

TOM

Hey doc – good to see you. We
sleeping or staying awake tonight?

DENNIS

Great to see you Tom. Alyx'll let
you know what to expect tonight.

ALYX

Yeah, so tonight is checking to
see how a new narcolepsy med works
in healthy adults...

Brody puffs up his chest, smiling.

ALYX

This drug is designed to stimulate the production of certain brain chemicals. These help you feel alert – but also may affect your appetite and other... umm...

DENNIS

...other bodily rhythms. So, to answer your question Tom – awake. Now, if you'll all follow me, we'll take you to your rooms.

Dennis turns and leaves, Brody and Tom fall in line.

Lauren stays put, nervously playing with her hair.

ALYX

Hey, how're you feeling tonight?

LAUREN

I'm fine. I just... I was tired for days with the last one...

ALYX

No worries! This is a daily dosage, it should wear off in a few hours. Just get some good sleep when you leave and you'll be right as rain.

More hair fidgeting before a heavy sigh.

LAUREN

Ok... well... if you're sure?

Lauren looks for reassurance.

Alyx, all smiles, moves to help her up.

Lauren weakly returns the smile and lets Alyx lead her.

Alyx waves to the receptionist on their way to the doors.

ALYX

I think that means we're good for the night. Thanks!

BUBBLY RECEPTIONIST

Sounds good! Lisa already left so I'm heading out too.

ALYX

'Kay! Have a good night!

Alyx and Lauren pass through the doors.

As they swing shut, the lock engages with a thick **CLACK**.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM – NIGHT

The end of the hallway opens to a broad space with several windowed doors.

Everyone listens as Dennis goes over changes.

DENNIS
So, from this vantage point
there's not much difference other
than these badge readers.

He steps to the nearest door and swipes his badge.

A green light.

The **CLACK** of the releasing lock.

DENNIS
Instead of deadbolts with keys,
these allow the shift supervisor
to quickly open your door if
needed. All openings are
automatically logged and require a
medical reason or the study is
invalidated.

Lauren looks from the badge reader to Dennis – panic mounting.

DENNIS
Not to worry – you have an
override button in your room.
You can leave at any time.

Lauren nods, but doesn't exactly calm down.

Alyx steps up to escort her to a door marked with the number 3.

ALYX
I promise, you're completely safe.

Alyx swipes their badge.

A red light.

An **ANRGY NOISE**

They try again. Same result.

ALYX
Right. Supervisor.
That's still Dennis.

Dennis steps over, badges the door open.

DENNIS
(to Tom and Brody)
While Alyx gets Lauren settled in,
let's get you two started.
Brody, you're in 1. Tom take 5.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS

A tiny, almost motel-like room with a twin bed, a chair, a small desk, and an overflowing snack basket.

There's a door in the back with a picture of a toilet on it.

They enter. Lauren immediately scans for the override button.

Alyx pulls the door shut and motions for Lauren to open it.

Lauren smacks the button, the lock **CLACKS** and she pushes the door open, relief on her face.

ALYX
All good?

Lauren perches on the bed's edge — deep breaths, nodding.

Alyx motions to an intercom panel with a gooseneck mic.

ALYX
As always, we're just a call away.

LAUREN
Yeah. Ok, ok. Let's do this.

Alyx smiles, pulling the blood pressure cuff from their scrubs.

INT. BRODY'S ROOM — SAME

An identical room.

Brody thumbs distractedly through the snacks.

Dennis clears his throat and gives him a stern look.

DENNIS
I assume we don't need to have the
gun talk again?

Brody scans the room, clocks the camera overhead.

BRODY

Nope! Heard ya loud and clear last time. No firearms on the premises.

Dennis is visibly relieved.

DENNIS

Great. Get settled. Alyx will start grabbing vitals. Noah will hook you up to the EEG and then Zuri will be by with the meds.

Dennis leaves as Brody turns his back to the camera, pulls a small revolver from a pocket, and slips it under his pillow.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — FOLLOWING

Alyx and Dennis pop out of their respective rooms at the same time, meeting at Tom's door.

DENNIS

It's all you kid. I'll go make sure Zuri and Noah are ready.

INT. TOM'S ROOM — FOLLOWING

Alyx finds Tom lounging comfortably.

His shoes are side by side under the chair, his jacket draped over the back.

TOM

Hey there! Did someone get a promotion?

ALYX

Yeah — I suppose I did.

Alyx pulls the blood pressure cuff out again.

ALYX

I know you're all comfy, but I gotta get your deets.

TOM

Do what ya gotta do Doc!

ALYX

Not a doctor!

TOM

Not yet!

Alyx gives a smile at his vote of confidence before sliding the blood pressure cuff up his arm.

INT. LISA'S CAR - NIGHT

Cornfields fly by as Lisa races back towards town.

She checks her makeup in her compact's mirror from its uneasy perch on her steering wheel.

She is mid-conversation, game-planning with her best friend about tonight over the phone's connection to the car.

LISA
Sure he booked *Joie de Vivre* but
he can be fancy AND a creep.
Text me at eight?

LISA'S FRIEND (O.S.)
Obvi. But I got a good feeling - I
know you'll send the all clear...

A truck horn **BLARES**.

Lisa slams on her brakes.

A semi **ROARS** past, inches from her car.

Shaken, Lisa sheepishly peeps the stop sign in front of her.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM - NIGHT

The gang's all here - Alyx and Dennis chat over a tablet as Zuri and Noah exit Tom's door.

DENNIS
When Zuri checks in, log the time
here...

ZURI
Well, that's all of them.

Dennis tugs each door to make sure they're locked.

DENNIS
And we're off! Let's head back.

Alyx punches in data as they all head to the nursing station.

INT. BRODY'S ROOM - SAME

Brody paces, clearly agitated.

Now wearing a rubber EEG headband, he scratches at it and checks the snacks again.

He plucks out a candy bar and ruthlessly devours it.

INT. TOM'S ROOM - SAME

Tom is completely unaffected, settling down to sleep.

The lights on his headband wink as nonchalantly as he seems.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM - SAME

Lauren, still on the edge of the bed, sucks down deep breaths.

She compulsively twirls her hair, tugging her EEG monitor off kilter with each twist.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Zuri and Noah slide behind the desk, wake up their computers and log in, bringing up their specific monitoring programs.

Zuri's shows camera feeds of each subject's room.

Noah's tracks the graph of each subject's brain activity.

Dennis leans on the counter and flips through his clipboard.

Alyx continues out the other side of the room.

ALYX

Gonna grab my bag - be right back!

Dennis waves distractedly while Zuri takes off her hoodie, drapes it over her chair and digs her phone out of a pocket.

She brings up a basketball game - a commentator's voice blares:

BASKETBALL COMMENTATOR (O.S.)

Sixers up by 12, but there's a lot
of game left...

Zuri quickly adjusts the volume down to a murmur.

Dennis jumps at a **BOOMING THUNDERCLAP**.

The lights flicker.

NOAH

Great. Another night fighting to
keep things running.

He digs in a drawer, grabs a flashlight and barges through a door on the other side the open area marked *IT ONLY*.

Alyx returns and settles in with their giant text book, propping their feet up on the desk.

Noah exits the IT closet, slamming the door.

NOAH
They never hooked up the damn
batteries!

Nobody seems overly concerned.

ZURI
Fuck yeah! Three points!

She looks up sheepishly, realizes everyone's staring.

ZURI
Sorry. I've got a hundred dollars
on the game...

ALYX
Ever win anything on these bets?

Zuri just scowls back at them.

DENNIS
(to Noah)
Let's not worry before there's a
problem, ok?

Noah shakes his head, throws the flashlight in the drawer and
plops back down in his chair.

He slides across the space, colliding with Alyx.

They look up, annoyed.

Noah tries to be playful – reaches over and bends their book
open wider so he can see the page.

NOAH
What do we have tonight?
Oh... eye surgery? Gross.

Alyx rolls their eyes.

A **BEEP** and a disembodied voice pipes in.

BRODY (O.S.)
Y'all better be listening.
I'm all out of food.

Dennis sets his clipboard down and presses the mic button on
the intercom – looking to Zuri for confirmation.

DENNIS
Say again?

Zuri turns her monitor so they can all see.

ON THE MONITOR

Brody throws the empty basket across the room, wrappers flying everywhere before rushing back to the intercom panel.

BACK IN THE ROOM

BRODY (O.S.)
I said I'm out and I'm fuckin'
hungry! Bring me more jerky!

Noah brings Brody's EEG fullscreen.

It's red and spiking.

NOAH
Pre-frontal cortex is lit up.
He's losing it.

Dennis thumbs the mic button again.

DENNIS
Hang tight. We're on our way.

As soon the mic is released, Brody screeches back in – ranting and clearly not listening.

Dennis cranks the volume down and taps Alyx's foot.

DENNIS
Let's go.

Alyx hops up and the two rush down the hallway.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM – FOLLOWING

Dennis breaks for Brody's door, waves Alyx toward the others.

DENNIS
Make sure Lauren and Tom are ok.
I've got Brody.

Dennis peers through window.

Brody screams at the intercom, red-faced.

Dennis knocks loudly.

DENNIS
Hey Brody, we're here.
What's going on?

Brody charges the door.

BRODY
FOOD DAMMIT! I NEED FOOD!

Alyx reaches Lauren's door and looks in.

POV

Lauren, still on the edge of the bed, is now anxiously chewing on the ends of her hair.

ALYX
Hey... doin' ok?

Lauren flinches and looks up.

LAUREN
I think I want out. What if this stuff causes cancer?

END POV

Brody's read face fills the window of his door.

He **BANGS** his fists against it.

Alyx whips their head toward the commotion.

Dennis, hands up, doing his best to calm Brody.

DENNIS
I understand you're hungry. We'll note it in your chart... but I can't open the door for snacks.

BRODY
NOW!

DENNIS
Look, if I open the door for non-medical reasons, it invalidates your results.

BRODY
FUCK IF I CARE!

DENNIS
You won't get paid...

A pause.

Something snaps in Brody.

His body jerks rigid.

The whites of his eyes flood red.

A **GROWL** erupts through a demented smile.

He bares his teeth and sinks them into his own arm.

Blood erupts.

Dennis badges frantically, flinging the door open.

Brody sees (smells?) a better option and **ROARS** in excitement – a piece of his own flesh falling from his jaws.

He yanks Dennis to him, forcing an undulating **SCREAM** from him.

Alyx sprints to help, but Brody **SLAMS** the door in their face.

Scanning, they spy the intercom.

INT. NURSE'S STATION – CONTINUOUS

The light on the intercom blinks, but no sound comes out.

Noah and Zuri are clueless as they huddle together, both watching the game on Zuri's phone.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM – CONTINUOUS

Alyx abandons the intercom, swipes to open Brody's door.

Red light.

ANGRY NOISES

They look in the window – Brody has Dennis pinned to the floor, face buried in his bloody torso.

They sprint back towards the nurses station.

INT. NURSE'S STATION – FOLLOWING

Alyx careens in, breathless.

ALYX

HELP! Brody. He's. got. Dennis.

Noah looks across to Zuri's monitor and leaps to his feet.

Alyx and Noah are gone before Zuri can react.

ZURI

Oh shit!

She stuffs her phone in her scrubs and hustles after them.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — FOLLOWING

Alyx and Noah banging on Brody's door as Zuri bolts in.

NOAH
BRODY! OPEN THIS DOOR!

ALYX
Are you crazy?

NOAH
I can handle him.

Noah keeps banging on the door. Alyx sees Zuri.

ALYX
Check on Tom!

Zuri charges over and peers into Tom's room.

THROUGH TOM'S WINDOW

Tom is asleep. Snoring. Oblivious.

BACK TO THE ATRIUM

ZURI
Tom's... asleep?

Lauren's face fills the window on her door. She's panicked.

LAUREN
WHAT'S GOING ON?

ZURI
Brody attacked Dennis?

LAUREN
What? This is too much!
I'm leaving!

A **CLACK** — but not from Lauren's door.

Brody's door flings open, hitting Noah in the face.

Noah flies back, skidding to a stop on his ass.

Brody fills the doorway, grunting, scanning the room.

Noah painfully pushes to his feet.

Brody sniffs the air, his bloodshot eyes light up.

Noah and Alyx move to block him before he can push past.

Brody shoulders them out of his way as he bolts from the room, running a bloody hand down the hallway as he goes.

The shove forces Alyx to one knee while Noah slams into the wall head-first.

Noah takes a beat to shake out the cobwebs before charging after Brody.

NOAH
Help Dennis - I've got Brody.

ALYX
No - wait--

But it's too late - he's gone.

LAUREN
On second thought... I'll stay in
here for a while...

She leaves the door as Zuri crosses to help Alyx to their feet.

ALYX
Call Lisa. I've got Dennis.

Zuri nods, digs out her phone while Alyx moves into...

INT. BRODY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dennis stirs and moans feebly as Alyx crouches next to him.

They scan his injuries:

- * Flesh missing.
- * Ribs exposed.
- * Blood oozing.

Alyx retches, but holds it in.

They whip the sheet off the bed.

As they do the revolver flies off the bed, barely missing Alyx's head, skidding to a stop under the desk.

A beat as Alyx stares.

They shake it off and shove the sheet into Dennis' wounds, applying pressure.

ATRIUM - CONTINUOUS

Zuri texting furiously on her phone.

ON THE PHONE

Previous messages:

Unknown — *Let us know when you've
administered the dosage.*

Zuri — *It's done.*

Unknown — *Excellent. Keep us updated.
Remember, it's imperative
that all subjects remain at
the facility and are fully
monitored until morning.*

The current message as Zuri types and hits send:

Zuri — *WHAT THE FUCK
IS HAPPENING?!?!*

Three dots as she's left on read...

ALYX (O.S.)
Are you calling?

BACK TO THE ATRIUM

Zuri snaps out of it, makes the call.

INT. JOIE DE VIVRE RESTAURANT — NIGHT

A dim corner of the swanky French restaurant.

Lisa sits across from her CHARMING DATE (40s, M), laughing, fully engrossed in the conversation.

She reaches out, smiling, touches his hand on the table. He returns the gesture with a knee-buckling smile of his own.

Her purse is slung across the back of her chair, peeking out of the top is her phone, the screen lit up as it silently rings.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — SAME

Zuri holds her phone to her ear, shaking her head.

ALYX
Forget it. Help me with Dennis.

Zuri shoves the phone back in a pocket, dashes over to help.

BRODY'S ROOM

Zuri kneels next to Alyx, takes in Dennis' condition.

She looks away.

ZURI
I can't believe Brody would do
something like this...

ALYX
I need you to focus on what's
next. Worry about the why later.

Zuri nods, turning back to look at Dennis.

ZURI
Grab his badge. We'll need it.

Alyx swipes it off his belt and grabs him under the shoulders.

ALYX
Good call. Now help me get him
somewhere secure – somewhere with
medical supplies.

ZURI
The nurses station?

ALYX
Are you nuts?
It's completely exposed!

ZURI
Right – but there's supplies and
we can hole up in that IT closet.

Alyx nods.

ALYX
Grab his feet.

Zuri does and the two shuffle Dennis out of the room.

INT. NURSE'S STATION – MOMENTS LATER

Alyx and Zuri struggle into the room with Dennis as Noah bolts
back from the other direction.

NOAH
I lost him. He shattered the glass
on the vending machine in the
break room, took a bunch of shit
and disappeared.

Alyx's grip slips from the blood covering her hands.

ALYX
Don't care. Grab a trauma kit.
Move!

Alyx and Zuri continue moving Dennis toward the IT closet.

Noah scrambles, finds what he needs, grabs a tablet and meets them there.

He badges them in and they all duck inside.

INT. IT CLOSET – NIGHT

The brightly lit room is lined with one wall of racked servers.

The rest of the floor is likely usually empty – but is currently stuffed with a tool cart and boxes full of cables and various odds and ends from the not-quite-finished installation.

Noah clears a spot for Alyx and Zuri to lay Dennis down.

Alyx takes charge:

- * Rips his shirt open
- * Grabs supplies from Noah
- * Kneels to clean Dennis' wounds

Zuri holds Dennis' head in her lap, stroking his face. He's responsive, but seems close to passing out.

ZURI
We've got you Dennis.
You're going to be okay...

Noah secures the door then fiddles with the tablet, bringing up the camera feeds one-by-one.

NOAH
I don't see Brody anywhere.

Alyx breaks out bandages, makes headway on Dennis' injuries.

NOAH
What the hell is going on? Why did
Brody attack Dennis?

ALYX
He was like an animal. It has to
be the medication, right?

Shrugs all around – no one knows how to answer that, but they don't have a better explanation.

ALYX
Ok. I think I got the bleeding
stopped.

She takes in the puddle of blood around Dennis and the trail
back to the door.

ALYX
But he's already lost so much...
Dennis closes his eyes and falls still.
Zuri pats his face.

ZURI
No. No. No. Stay with us!
A tense moment as everyone watches.
Dennis finally stirs, struggles to open his eyes.
With a weak rasp he asks...

DENNIS
Are Tom and Lauren... ?

ALYX
They're safe.

ZURI
And normal.

A hoarse sigh of relief.

ALYX
Next thing we gotta do is get you
an ambulance. Zuri - can you call?

Dennis holds up a hand.

DENNIS
Gotta stop Brody first...

ALYX
...without hurting him...

ZURI
I say we try to get outside and
let the police handle Brody...

A judgmental pause.

ALYX
I'm not leaving Tom and Lauren
alone in the building with him.

DENNIS
Police will... just shoot...

Noah grunts, steps over the group and rummages through the cart, looking for something to use as a weapon.

NOAH
Yeah? Well maybe they should.
He fuckin' tried to eat Dennis!

He finds some chunky cable termination pliers.

A snort - they'll have to do.

He turns toward the door.

NOAH
Fuck it. I'll take care of Brody.

No! ALYX ZURI
No!

Noah pauses, hand on the door knob.

Alyx and Zuri trade a look. Zuri motions for Alyx to handle it.

ALYX
We just need to lock him up
somehow. Then we get Dennis help.

Noah, unconvinced, puffs up their chest, ready to take charge.

ALYX
You - we - are medical
professionals. We have a duty to
provide care... ESPECIALLY since
we caused this.

Noah softens, nods. Alyx pushes to their feet to go with him.

ALYX
Once it's clear, we get Dennis to
the lobby for EMS and I'll stay
with Lauren and Tom.

NOAH
Absolutely not. You get out and
take care of Dennis. I'll protect
Lauren and Tom - I'm the best
suited for that.

ALYX

While I appreciate your commitment
to gender norms... after the last
few minutes, I'm not sure you're
the one to stay with them... This
isn't some macho protection
fantasy...

Noah raises a hand to object, his face flushing...

Alyx doesn't care and turns to Zuri.

ALYX

You got this? Can you handle it?

Once no one is watching, Noah's anger slips away, replaced with relief.

Zuri nods and pulls her phone out, waves it at Alyx.

ZURI

I'm good. Text me when the way is
clear and we'll get out as fast as
we can.

Noah cautiously opens the door, scans the nurses' station.

Thunder **BOOMS**.

A brief flicker then the lights die.

The servers suddenly stop humming.

ZURI

Or maybe not...

Behind Zuri, a rack of new battery backups, wires sticking out
— clearly not hooked up to anything.

NOAH

GOD DAMMIT! I told you--

Zuri turns her phone to check it.

ZURI

Yep. Wifi's out... and I never
have cell signal here.

She scans the group — it's the same for all of them.

ALYX

So we call from a landline...

NOAH
Can't. Our phones are run by
computers...

Emergency lights kick in – pools of hard light and harsh shadows in the otherwise dark building.

A **CRASH** in the dark, they all whip their heads toward it.

NOAH
The break room...

ALYX
Which means it should be clear to
the lobby. Dennis, can you move?

He nods weakly. Alyx tosses Dennis' badge to Zuri.

ALYX
Get him there. Noah and I will
distract Brody. But first...

Alyx jogs to the cart, rifles through it, comes up with a roll of tape.

They zip back to the door and tape latch so it won't lock.

ALYX
Just in case it all goes to
hell...

A nod from Noah and Zuri as Zuri helps Dennis to his feet.

Alyx pushes past Noah and slips out of the room. Noah follows.

INT. BREAK ROOM HALLWAY – FOLLOWING

Alyx, focused, slinks along, avoiding the pools light.

Noah's head swings constantly – looking for any sign of Brody.

They approach the opening to the now silent break room.

An ET-like trail of snacks and wrappers leads away from it.

Alyx follows the trail, Noah hisses after them.

NOAH
Wait a sec...

He slips into the break room and returns – the pliers are gone and he's now wielding a heavy wooden mop handle.

Alyx rolls their eyes.

ALYX
Remember, we're trying to restrain
him...

Noah ignores them and pushes past, down the snack trail...

INT. LOBBY HALLWAY — SAME

Zuri struggles to keep Dennis on his feet as they approach the heavy double doors to the lobby.

DENNIS
Motion detectors will be down, but
try the badge?

Zuri props him against the wall.

She flubs getting the badge out of her pocket, but finally yanks it free and turns away from him to swipe it.

Nothing.

Another swipe.

More nothing.

Panic in Zuri's eyes.

DENNIS
Ok. No worries. There's an
override. Find the button.

Zuri zeroes in on the big red button, smashes it with almost gleeful expectation.

Nothing.

She pounds her fists against the doors. They are unaffected.

She launches her tiny frame against them.

The maglocks hold the doors perfectly motionless.

DENNIS
Shhhh! Did you--

Zuri falls still, listening.

A brief moment of quiet fills with a guttural **GROWL**.

Zuri turns back to Dennis slowly, eyes widening as she sees what's coming.

Brody lunges at Dennis, barreling into him.

Dennis stumbles, shoving Zuri into the doors.

The impact forces the badge from her hands.

Flailing after it, she knocks under the door, into the lobby.

Brody pounces on Dennis, dragging him into the darkness.

Zuri screams, jumps to her feet, sprints back toward the nurses' station.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — NIGHT

Alyx and Noah follow the trail, which leads directly to Lauren's door.

Alyx squints, trying to pierce the darkness around them.

ALYX
Wait... where is he?
This is a dead end...

Noah peeks into Tom's window, knocks on it with his mop handle.

NOAH
I don't think I've ever seen him
sleep like this.

Alyx looks through Lauren's window.

POV INTO LAUREN'S ROOM

Lauren mumbles indecipherably to herself, completely oblivious to their presence.

She sits on the bed, knees pulled up to her chest, rocking back and forth, pulling at her hair, surrounded by snack wrappers.

END POV

Alyx looks worried.

ALYX
Any chance we can still see her
EEG anywhere?

A prideful grin stretches across Noah's face.

NOAH
Yeah — I made sure my systems'
batteries were hooked up. The
nurses' station has a UPS.

ALYX
Well hello Mister Fancy-pants.
And it'll work without wifi?

NOAH
It has its own network, there's a
chance it's still up.

ALYX
Ok — let's go. I think we're about
to have another problem...

The two rush out.

INT. NURSE'S STATION — FOLLOWING

Alyx and Noah dash behind the desk. He wakes up his computer,
logs in, and checks the connection.

NOAH
See — still getting a signal.

Alyx tries to hide the fact that they're impressed as he turns
the monitor to show her.

ON THE SCREEN

For Brody, an angry, spastic red line.

Tom's is a nice, rolling, green line.

Lauren's line looks much more like Brody's...

BACK TO THE ROOM

ALYX
That's... not good. We gotta get
help. Can we log onto this network
to get a call out?

Noah shakes his head.

NOAH
No — it's a closed network — no
outside connection.

ALYX
What? Why?

It dawns on them as soon as they say it.

	ALYX	NOAH
HIPAA		HIPAA

A beat and then...

ALYX

But you've got power? Can we hook
it up to something else?

Noah props his mop handle against the wall and grabs the flashlight from the drawer, shines it under the desk.

There's an IT rack mounted there – he studies it for a moment.

IN THE RACK

Everything is lit up and seems to be working, held in place with odd looking screws.

Ragged pieces of masking tape serve temporary labels with names scrawled on them in marker. We see:

- * EEG
- * Med Device Network
- * Subject Cameras
- * Subject Doors
- * Director's Office
- * UPS Power Supply

BACK IN THE ROOM

Noah shakes his head.

NOAH

Everything's screwed down and held
in place with security screws...

ALYX

So? What's that mean?

NOAH

It means I can't move anything
installed here.

ALYX

So we find an extension cord...

The two look across the now seemingly huge open area.

The IT closet might as well be across town.

A **SHRIEK** as Zuri bolts across the nurses's station and darts back into the IT closet.

Alyx and Noah rush to follow.

INT. IT CLOSET – NIGHT

Zuri slams the door – stopped only by Noah's heavy boot shoved in the way.

Zuri **WAILS** again, throwing her body against the door.

NOAH
(wincing)
DAMMIT ZURI, IT'S US!

Zuri pauses, unsure.

Noah seizes the opportunity and shoves the door open – he and Alyx slip in, closing the door behind them.

ALYX
What's wrong? Where's Dennis?

Zuri just shakes her head.

ALYX
Brody?

A nod.

NOAH
Did he... trick us?

All three exchange glances filled with mounting fear.

ZURI
He's hunting us.

ALYX
We need a way to keep tabs on him.

Noah shines his light on the battery backups, examining them more closely.

NOAH
Ugh. These weren't even plugged in
to power – none of these batteries
are charged.

A BEEP.

They all turn toward the cart.

Noah's tablet is there, half covered by his weapon search.

He digs it out, checks something and shows them the same EEG monitoring as the nurse's station.

NOAH
We can at least keep tabs on
changes to brain activity.

They all see a big spike to Lauren's activity.

NOAH
Give me sec... I think the cameras
are still up in their rooms.

He switches over to the feed of Lauren's room.

She's still in the same spot, but rocking faster now,
surrounded by wrappers.

She slows down, tugging at her hair again.

A collective sigh.

ALYX
The only cameras still up are in
their rooms? We can't use it to
find Brody?

Noah shakes his head.

NOAH
No, all we can do is monitor his
EEG and see if he gets excited...

He flips the feed over and makes Brody's scan full screen.

INT. LAUREN'S ROOM — NIGHT

Lauren stops mumbling, looks up with bloodshot eyes, and takes
a long, hard sniff.

She slips off the bed and onto the floor. She crawls, limbs
twitching with every movement, as she follows the scent.

At the door, a hand snakes up, smashes the override button.

ON THE NURSE'S STATION RACK

A light blinks on the device marked Subject Doors.

BACK TO LAUREN'S ROOM

CLACK.

She noses the door open and slinks along the trail of snacks.

Anything unwrapped is shoved in her mouth. Anything still
wrapped she slips in her shirt for later.

INT. IT CLOSET - NIGHT

They're still talking, trying to figure out next steps.

NOAH
You know - there was something in
the rack about Lisa's office...

ALYX
The master control!

Confused looks from Noah and Zuri.

ALYX
There's a touchscreen in there.
Lisa said shuts off all the new
security stuff.

Finally, a bit of hope.

NOAH
Who has access to Lisa's office?

ALYX
Dennis' badge will get us in.

Alyx and Noah turn to Zuri, who is suddenly interested in
staring at her feet.

NOAH
You do still have it, right?

Zuri recoils, shaking her head.

ALYX
Where is it?

INT. BREAK ROOM HALLWAY - NIGHT

Lauren, still spastically crawling, stuffs her face and her
shirt as she follows Brody's snack trail.

From the other direction is a bloody trail, leading into the
break room.

INT. BREAK ROOM - NIGHT

Brody is digging through what's left of Dennis. He looks up as
Lauren comes in.

Cautious, she stops, sits back on her haunches and pulls at her
hair hard enough to come away with a lock of it.

In a ragged, confused voice:

LAUREN
So hungry...

Brody growls and pulls Dennis' body away from her.

LAUREN
No. Gross...

Brody puffs up.

Lauren petulantly tosses the lock of hair at him as she retreats. Brody, the proud lion, goes back to his kill.

INT. IT CLOSET - NIGHT

Everyone is searching through the installation materials, looking for anything to help. Alyx opens a box on the floor.

ALYX
Wait - will these work?

They lift the box, dumping a mess of black cables onto the cart. Noah looks at one. It's a server power cable.

NOAH
They're not long enough and you
can't chain them together--

ALYX
What if we spliced them or
something?

NOAH
It's worth a shot - but if we mess
this up, it could short out what's
still working...

ALYX
But if it works the motion
detector will open the lobby
doors, right?

NOAH
Yeah. Let's give it a shot. We'll
need wire cutters and some wire
nuts.

ZURI
What are wire nuts?

NOAH

Little plastic cylinders that are closed on one end, but look like they screw on to something on the other.

Zuri holds up a plastic container full of bright red wire nuts.

ZURI

Like this?

NOAH

YES!

He digs through a small bin of hand tools on the cart and finds the cutters.

He holds them up, they all brave a small smile of hope.

BEGIN MONTAGE

- * Alyx lays out the cables end to end across the closet.
- * Noah shows Zuri how to cut the ends off and strip the wires.
- * Alyx scans the racks of servers, reading the masking tape labels – they find one marked DOORS.
- * Zuri moves down the line, stripping wires.
- * Noah uses the wire nuts to join each of them together.

END MONTAGE

NOAH

Okay... Now all we have to do is connect it and hope for the best. I'll take the end for the nurses' station. Alyx when I tell you, plug into the server you found.

Alyx nods as Noah gingerly wraps the cable.

He heads to the door and pushes it open.

NOAH

Zuri, I need you to hold the door to keep it from closing on the cable. Keep an eye out for Brody?

Zuri looks at the door in horror. She doesn't want to risk meeting Brody in the dark again.

NOAH

C'mon – this is going to take all three of us.

She relents and heads to the door, carefully stepping over the makeshift extension cable.

Noah backs out slowly as Zuri posts up, nervously scanning the open area of the nurses' station.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

He tiptoes, doling out the cable inch by inch.

A distance **CRASH** as Brody destroys something.

Noah pauses, waiting, listening for anything else.

ZURI
(whispering loudly)
HURRY UP!

He doesn't need to be told twice - as quickly as he can quietly move he crosses, carefully laying the cable as he goes.

IT CLOSET

Zuri glances from Noah to Alyx, sees they're not watching and then moves the cable with her foot so a splice is in the jamb.

She slowly pulls the door, making sure it will shut on the splice then pushes it open to keep watch.

NURSES STATION

He slides under the desk, flashlight in hand, finds an open spot to plug in their Frankenstein cable and shoves it in.

Nothing. So far so good.

In a hoarse whisper-shout:

NOAH
Ok! Plug it in!

IT CLOSET

ZURI
(to Alyx)
He says plug it in!

Alyx takes a deep breath, double checks that they have the right device and plugs it in.

A light blinks on the server as it comes to life.

Zuri turns to let Noah know when...

A much closer **BOOMING SMASH** echoes down the hallway.

Zuri **SLAMS** the door shut, severing the cable and the briefest moment later, almost as an afterthought, **SQUEALS**.

NURSES STATION

Sparks fly into Noah's face and the cable burns out the outlet.

He pulls himself out from behind the rack, sweeps the light down the front of the components.

Smoke rises from the one marked Subject Cameras.

NOAH

FUCK!

He pushes to his feet, jogs back to the IT closet and **BANGS** on the door.

IT CLOSET

Alyx shoves Zuri out of the way, yanks the door open.

Noah spills in.

NOAH

WHAT THE FUCK WAS THAT?

Zuri stands up for herself.

ZURI

I thought Brody was back. You haven't seen him like I have! You don't know what he's capable of!

NOAH

You just blew our best chance of getting out of here!

Alyx steps between them, playing the peacekeeper.

ALYX

Hey, hey – it's ok... we'll just find another way. What's messed up out there?

Noah takes a deep breath, Zuri just moves away.

NOAH

We lost cameras in their rooms – but Lisa's door should still work.

ALYX

Fine. Plan B – we find a way to get Dennis' badge and we use it on Lisa's door.

Tempers cool as they return to searching, after a moment Noah comes up with a large plastic circular item – a fish tape.

NOAH
This'll work!

He pulls the flexible but stiff fiberglass line out a few inches, showing it to both of them.

ALYX
Perfect. Now let's find a way to
get out of here!

Alyx and Noah turn towards the door. Zuri hesitates...

ZURI
Maybe I should stay here, just in
case?

NOAH
In case of what?

ZURI
I just don't want to screw
anything else up... but also, what
if Dennis comes back?

NOAH
I thought you said he was dead.

ZURI
Yeah... I mean... probably?

Noah fights back anger. Alyx steps in.

ALYX
Dennis could barely move on his
own before the second attack. If
it's as bad as you said and we
come across him - it'll take two
of us to move him. Without the
third to keep watch there's no way
we'll make it. We gotta stick
together here.

Zuri nods, but doesn't move.

NOAH
Look, if this works, it'll be
quicker to just make a dash out
the front door.

Another nod, this time she inches toward the door.

INT. NURSE'S STATION - CONTINUOUS

They exit the closet.

Noah shoves the fish tape at Alyx.

NOAH
Here, take this.

They take it as Noah cuts to the desk to grab his mop handle.

Alyx gives him a dirty look as he rejoins the group.

INT. LOBBY HALLWAY — FOLLOWING

The three steal down the hallway.

Alyx in the lead, fish tape in hand, pausing every few steps.

Peering into the dark.

Listening.

Zuri shuffles nervously behind her, monitoring the EEG tablet.

ZURI
Looks like Lauren's calming down.

Noah brings up the rear, slowly turning in circles, holding the mop handle out like a holy relic in a vampire film.

NOAH
As long as she stays in her room,
I don't care. How's Brody look?

SLURP

Alyx pulls up short.

Zuri freezes, squeezing her eyes shut.

Noah, currently facing backwards, stumbles into Zuri.

Zuri **YELPS**.

ALYX
SHHH!

Alyx tries to decipher the darkness.

A **MOAN** floats back to them.

Noah pushes to the front, mop handle extended.

NOAH
Enough tricks Brody!

LAUREN (O.S.)
(muffled)
Hungry...

ALYX
Lauren?

Silence. And then...

LAUREN (O.S.)
(muffled)
So hungry...

ALYX
Noah, give me some light.

Noah, hands shaking in fear, bobbles the mop handle, dropping it with a loud **CLATTER** as he digs out the flashlight.

He gets the light out and shines it down the hallway.

Lauren sits in front of the lobby doors, her back to them.

There are now several large bald patches on her head.

Alyx rushes to her, reaching out.

Lauren twitches, jerks around to face them.

Both hands stuff hair in her mouth.

She sucks it down greedily.

ZURI
OH GOD NO!

ALYX
NOAH! Get her hands!

Noah shoves the light to Zuri, rushes in to restrain Lauren.

Lauren **SHRIEKS** and kicks back towards the door.

Alyx puts a hand on Noah's shoulder.

ALYX
Lauren, wait! It's ok.
We're here to help.

Lauren pauses, confused.

Noah takes a step forward.

Lauren recoils from him.

ALYX

Easy... Everyone take it easy.

A beat as Lauren looks from one to the other.

LAUREN

Huuuung...ry....

ALYX

I know, I know. If we can find you
some food – will you go back in
your room?

Lauren turns her focuses on Alyx.

LAUREN

Food?

Noah slips out of her peripheral vision, angling into position.

ALYX

Yeah, I brought a lunch – some
leftover pasta salad. It's all
yours if you go back...

Lauren closes her eyes and takes a deep breath, as if already
smelling the pasta salad.

Noah lunges, grabbing for her arms.

Lauren wasn't smelling the non-existent pasta salad.

LAUREN

FOOD!

Eyes wide, she spins to face Noah.

She ducks under his reaching arms and comes up far too close.

Before Noah can react, she's sunk her teeth in his meaty neck,
blood spouting as her incisors find his jugular.

Alyx charges forward.

Noah's eyes glaze over.

Alyx hits Lauren with the only thing they have at hand – the
fish tape.

Lauren swats at it, twisting the awkward item out of Alyx's
hands, sending it skittering away in the dark.

ALYX

ZURI, HELP!

Zuri drops the flashlight and tablet to pull Noah to safety.

Lauren's bite holds.

A chunk of Noah's throat rips away.

Blood gushes over both of them as Noah collapses on Zuri, driving them to the floor.

Teeth clacking, Lauren thrusts toward Alyx, chomping the air.

Alyx jumps back, narrowly missing Lauren's lunge.

They're ready when she tries again.

With a quick side step, they shove Lauren from behind as she shoots past them.

Lauren stumbles headlong toward a bathroom door.

Alyx sees their chance and charges at her with a shoulder tackle, driving Lauren through the swinging door, quickly pulling it shut.

Alyx struggles to keep the door shut as Lauren attacks it from the other side.

They **SCREAM** in desperation while scanning the hallway for anything that can help.

Zuri tries to push herself up and out from underneath Noah.

Her hand lands on the mop handle which immediately rolls away.

She crashes back to the floor.

ALYX

Zuri! Grab that – quick!

Zuri flails.

The door surges away from the frame again.

ALYX

NOW!

Zuri steadies herself, pushes up, finally gets a grip on the handle, and shoves it to Alyx.

Alyx uses their foot to pull it close.

The door yanks inward again.

Alyx barely keeps it closed with both hands.

Deep breath.

Alyx strains with their whole body to hold the door.

They brave freeing one hand to grab the mop handle.

Alyx tries to shove it through the door handle but misses as the door pulls back from the frame again.

Anger bubbles over and erupts as another **SHOUT**.

They shove the mop handle through the door handle and across the door's frame.

Lauren jerks at the door again.

With an confidence-erasing **CREAK**, the mop handle holds.

Alyx backs away slowly, not trusting it.

Zuri's weeping breaks Alyx's focus.

They turn to see her cradling Noah's head in her lap, blood everywhere.

Noah's eyes are open and unfocused.

His mouth hangs agape.

ZURI

No... no... it wasn't supposed to
be like this...

ALYX

What do you mean?

ZURI

Not my pretty Noah...

Alyx crouches, lays a hand on each side of Zuri's head and forces her to face them.

ALYX

What wasn't supposed to be like
this?

Zuri tries to shrink away.

Alyx holds her tight.

A struggle, but Zuri eventually gives up and settles for lowering her eyes.

ZURI

I just... I was always one bet
away from getting out of the hole.

ALYX

Please tell me I'm not dying for
your gambling addiction...

ZURI

All I was had to do was make a
copy of the data at the end of the
night... and all my markers...
just gone.

Alyx pushes back in horror, rising to their feet.

ALYX

Wait... does that mean...
The cable... that was on purpose?

Zuri says nothing, just looks away.

ALYX

So you knew this would happen and
your job is to what? Keep us here?

ZURI

NO! They said to make sure the
subjects stay on site... I never
thought it would be like this.

Zuri looks down at Noah's slack-jawed face, her tears creating
watery runs in his crimson mask.

ZURI

ALL I HAD TO DO WAS KEEP THEM SAFE
AND COPY THE DATA. THAT'S IT.

ALYX

How much?

ZURI

Huh?

ALYX

How much debt are they wiping out?

Zuri tries to look anywhere other than Noah or Alyx.

ZURI

A hundred and eighty kay.

ALYX
Someone offers you four times your
annual salary to copy data... and
you assume everything's kosher?
How fucking dumb are you?

A **LOUD, SPLINTERY CREAK** as Lauren tries the door again.

ALYX
We don't have time for this. Let's
get the badge and get out. Where's
the fish tape?

Alyx retrieves the flashlight, shines it around, looking for
the fish tape.

As the light crosses Zuri, Alyx sees her pointing...

At the lobby doors.

Alyx slides to the crack under the doors, shining the
flashlight, trying to see it. Their body goes slack.

ALYX
God. Damn. It.

Alyx slowly climbs to their feet, clearly dejected.

ALYX
Ok... we need a new plan. Let's
check Lisa's door and see what we
can come up with.

Alyx moves to pull Zuri to her feet, she shrugs them off and
reaches for the tablet.

ALYX
Forget it.
What good has it done us?

Zuri nods, takes Alyx's help getting up.

The two make their way back down the hallway.

Behind them, on the tablet, Tom's EEG twitches, spikes, and
goes from green to yellow.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY — MOMENTS LATER

Alyx and Zuri, cautious and on edge, creep to Lisa's door.

Alyx quietly tries to open it — it doesn't budge.

Zuri examines the new security apparatuses.

ZURI
Is that a palm reader?

ALYX
And a retinal scanner too...

ZURI
When did we become the CIA?

ALYX
This is all big pharma FDA
bullshit so we can do more
testing.

ZURI
So.. umm... who can get in Lisa's
office?

ALYX
Lisa... and Dennis...

They look at each other, not sure who's going to say it.

ALYX
We can't drag him here. Not with
Brody on the loose.

Zuri emphatically shakes her head. She wants none of this.

ZURI
We can't even find an extension
cord. And you want to... what? Cut
his hand off?

ALYX
You got a better idea?

ZURI
But he was our friend!

ALYX
You helped get him killed and now
you care? Spare me.

ZURI
That's not fair--

ALYX
Don't you even try to talk to me
about fair. The only thing that
matters now is getting out of
here. C'mon, I think I saw what we
need back in the closet.

Alyx doesn't wait, they push past Zuri and head down the hall with purpose.

INT. IT CLOSET — FOLLOWING

Alyx charges in.

After a beat, Zuri slinks in behind her.

Alyx makes a beeline for the cart while Zuri watches the door.

Alyx digs through the tool bin — they find assorted wrenches, pliers, and screwdrivers.

Then a box cutter. They consider it a moment before setting it aside. Finally they find what they need — a hacksaw.

They turn back toward the door, the saw held up.

Zuri turns away, disgusted.

ALYX
Don't worry, I'm going to do it.
Wouldn't want you to get your
hands dirty.

Zuri scoffs but otherwise takes the insult.

Alyx reaches past Zuri to pull the door open and steps out of the closet.

ALYX
Just help me keep an eye out for
Brody, ok?

Zuri ignores them, steaming.

ALYX
Which direction did he drag Dennis
off to?

FLASHBACK TO THE LOBBY HALLWAY — EARLIER

Screaming.

Chaos.

Brody dragging Dennis into the dark...

...down a side hallway, blood trailing behind them.

BACK TO THE PRESENT

A ragged, terrified breath from Zuri.

ZURI
Towards the break room, I think.

ALYX
Alright. Stay close.

Alyx sneaks that direction, Zuri follows.

INT. BREAK ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

Broken glass and snack food wrappers surround Dennis' now-mangled body in the otherwise empty room.

Just beyond the corpse and the emergency light's cone of light, Alyx and Zuri take one last look around before creeping in.

Alyx steps over the body and they both kneel on opposite sides to inspect the hand closest to them.

Neither one has good news.

ALYX
Well shit. I've got three missing fingers. How's your side?

Zuri throws up in her mouth in response and just points.

Alyx looks over at a jagged, seeping stump, no hand in sight.

They both lean back to think through options.

As if coming to the conclusion simultaneously they both scan up the body to Dennis' face.

Alyx turns to consider the hacksaw.

ALYX
I can't take out his eye with this.

Zuri almost relaxes before she realizes what that means.

ZURI
No... you can't!

ALYX
It's no different than his hand at this point. This is what we need to do if we want out of here.

Zuri backs away, pushing to her feet.

Alyx moves up Dennis' body to the neck, taking deep breaths.

They hold the hacksaw to his throat when--

A **GROWL** rumbles from the darkness in the hallway.

ALYX
See anything?

ZURI
No... but I feel him out there.

Zuri slowly turns her head, scanning the surrounding dark.

ALYX
Listen - I need a couple minutes
to get this done. You've got to
keep him away from here.

Brody charges Zuri from her blind side, **ROARING** as he does.

She stumbles away from him and throws the closest thing at hand
- the pliers Noah left here earlier.

The pliers hit him square on the nose - he stops him mid-rush.

He shakes his head, **GROWLING** again.

Zuri takes the brief pause to inch toward the hallway.

She grabs a nearby chair, bangs it on the floor to pull his
attention away from Alyx.

It works.

He jerks his head toward her, just in time to catch the now-
thrown chair full in the face.

He **ROARS** again and charges toward her.

Like a frightened gazelle, she bolts.

The lion gives chase.

Alyx seizes the opportunity, drawing the hacksaw across Dennis'
throat with a **SQUELCH**, blood spraying onto their face.

Another deep breath as they wipe the blood out of their eyes.

Back to sawing, they shiver as blood spurts with each thrust.

INT. LOBBY HALLWAY - NIGHT

Zuri comes tearing around the corner in a full sprint.

Her foot lands squarely on one half of the mop handle.

It rolls out from under her and she flies head-first into the wall, crumpling onto the floor.

Groggily, she turns herself over, staring into the darkness of the now-open bathroom door.

Before she can process this information, Brody lopes around the corner – headed straight for her.

Without thinking, she reaches for the only thing at hand – the broken handle, and brings it up at the last second.

Brody's unable to stop, impaling himself on the now sharpened stake and crashing into Zuri.

He **HOWLS** in pain.

She crawls out from under him, kicking him over on his back.

The mop handle protrudes from the front of his shoulder.

He'll live, but that arm won't ever work the same.

He tries to sit up but falls back down.

At least for now, the fight has gone out of him.

Zuri pulls herself up, evaluating her options.

She looks from the hallway back to the break room to the one that leads to the nurses' station.

In between her eyes stop on the open bathroom door – its empty black eye staring back at her.

ZURI

Fuck this.

She heads back toward the break room.

As she does, Brody stirs, reaches up to pull the mop handle out of his shoulder.

INT. TOM'S ROOM – NIGHT

Still sleeping, the lights on his EEG now blinking angrily.

His eyes snap open.

Where Brody's and Lauren's eyes were merely bloodshot, Tom's are almost solid red, with ropey black streaks.

INT. BREAK ROOM — NIGHT

Alyx is bent over their work.

They pause to arm sweat and blood from their brow.

Back at it, the saw **GRINDS** against the vertebrae.

Sinews **SNAP** and **POP**.

One final **SQUELCH** as the saw breaks through.

Dennis' head rolls free.

Alyx sits back, out of breath.

A beat passes.

Alyx pulls themselves to their feet, drops the hacksaw and gingerly picks up Dennis' head with both hands.

They accidentally make eye contact and hitch back a sob.

ALYX

You don't deserve this.

Tucking his head under their arm, Alyx leaves, heading the opposite way that Zuri went, trailing blood behind them.

A beat.

Barely visible in the darkness, a now nearly-bald Lauren skitters by on her hands and knees, following the blood trail.

A beat.

Zuri turns the corner into the break room and stops at the sight of Dennis' headless body, sobs wracking her again.

Before she can compose herself... a **GROWL** from behind her...

INT. NURSES STATION — MOMENTS LATER

Alyx, head still tucked under their arm, cautiously crosses the open space, looking in all directions.

SLURP

They stop.

The wet slurping doesn't.

They look down, finally noticing the blood dripping down their leg and trailing behind them.

ALYX

FUCK.

They look around, see Zuri's hoodie on the back of her chair.

They snag it and wrap the head in it.

INT. BREAK ROOM – NIGHT

Zuri is not only backed into a corner, but she's backed halfway into the open refrigerator.

She's using the door to hold back a snarling Brody.

He slams into the door, crushing her with it.

She **SHRIEKS**, but shoves back, flinging the door back open so hard it rocks the refrigerator forward.

She doesn't notice.

Holding the door out with one hand she blindly searches the fridge with her other for anything solid enough to be a weapon.

Brody swats ineffectually at her over the top of it.

With no luck getting to her, he changes tactics, grabbing the door and yanking it towards himself.

The fridge rocks forward again, pulling Zuri off-balance.

She catches herself as a jar of pickles rolls into her hand.

She **SCREAMS** and throws it at Brody's face.

He jukes his head to the side and her throw goes wide.

He yanks at the door again.

This time Zuri dodges out of the way.

Without her body to stop it, the refrigerator tips forward.

She **BELLOWS** in victory and pushes it over onto Brody.

His head bounces off the tile floor as the fridge crushes down on him – he's out cold.

Deep breaths as she backs away toward the door.

She pauses.

She has to know.

Zuri returns to him and bends close.

He's still not moving.

She reaches out a hand to check for shallow breaths.

His eyes fly open and he snaps at her, snagging her ring and middle fingers in his mouth.

She **SCREAMS** in pain, punching at him with her free hand over and over again.

He just shakes his head like a dog killing the squirrel it finally caught.

A **RIP** and a **POP** – Zuri stumbles backward.

Still **SCREAMING**, she holds her hand up.

The two fingers are gone.

The scream intensifies as she bolts from the room.

Brody chews his prize in delight.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY – NIGHT

Alyx sits against the wall next to the door to Lisa's office.

Dennis' head is on the floor next to them, keeping company.

Alyx's head is buried in the crook of their elbow as they cry.

Zuri's scream reaches them just before Zuri comes tearing around the corner, skidding to a stop.

Alyx leaps to their feet instantly, drying their eyes with their sleeve.

Zuri shoves her hand at Alyx.

Blood pumps from her stumps in rhythm with her heart beat, splashing across Alyx's face. Alyx sputters a response:

ALYX

Ok, ok. Calm down. I got this.

They leap into action, pulling off their scrub top to stuff into the wound.

Zuri finally stops screaming, drawing in ragged breaths.

Alyx's long sleeve tee underneath is a band shirt for Calabrese, with the band posing as zombies.

ZURI

Fuck. Even your shirt's in on it.

A smile from Alyx.

ALYX

You're going to be ok – but you
gotta tell me, are we safe?

ZURI

(between breaths)

Yeah... I uh... dropped a fridge
on him?

Alyx almost looks impressed before guilt sets in.

ALYX

Is he... dead?

Zuri shakes her head.

ALYX

Ok. But we've got another problem.
Dennis' eyes are messed up.
Scanner won't work.

Zuri squats to look at Dennis' face.

Both eyes look like they've been scratched, but the left eye is
in marginally better shape.

Zuri pushes back up, shrugging.

ZURI

I was reading about these the
other day... they scan the back of
your eyes.

Alyx looks from Dennis' head back to Zuri.

ALYX

And?

ZURI

His left eye is mostly intact. I
bet if we removed the damaged
front of the eye, it would scan.

ALYX

How does that help us?

ZURI

Isn't that what you're studying?

ALYX
Corpse mutilation?

ZURI
Ophthalmological surgery?

A beat. Alyx considers it.

ALYX
I don't have any actual
instruments.

ZURI
Well no, but maybe we can make
something else work?

ALYX
I saw a box cutter in the
closet... but I might as well just
use a chainsaw...

ZURI
Got a better idea?

Their own words flung back at them sting a bit.

Alyx sighs heavily.

They reach down and pick up Dennis by the hair.

ALYX
C'mon old friend. Time to
disrespect you a bit more.

Alyx trudges back towards the closet.

Zuri sees the pink of her hoodie on the floor, just barely in
the light.

ZURI
Oh hey – how did this get here?

She snags it and pulls it over her head before realizing it's
soaked with Dennis' blood.

She immediately regrets her decision.

ZURI
What the fuck?

She strips it off, throws it away and marches after Alyx.

INT. IT CLOSET - NIGHT

Alyx barges in, crosses to the cart, all business.

They scan, grab the box cutter, and shove everything else off the cart before moving it directly under the emergency light.

They set Dennis down on the now cleared cart.

He flops over to one side.

Annoyed, Alyx surveys the mess on the floor.

They dip down, grab a soldering iron stand and set it on the center of the cart.

They lift Dennis, line him up, and shove him down onto the stand right as Zuri comes in.

ZURI

Oh for fucks sake!

Alyx shrugs, nabs the box cutter and runs the blade out, inspecting it.

ALYX

Do me a favor and just watch the door, okay?

Zuri nods and turns around to secure the door, pulling the tape off and letting it lock.

The blade is new and sharp.

Alyx tries multiple grips and approaches, looking for the best way to do this with the wrong tool.

Eventually they give up.

They look through the mess on the floor again for a screwdriver and disassemble the box cutter, pulling out the bare blade.

Deep breaths as they hold the blade mere millimeters from Dennis' eye--

BANGING on the door.

Zuri **YELPS**.

Alyx lets out a long, steadying exhale.

They make their first cut, gingerly slicing away an almost imperceptibly thin layer of damaged tissue.

More **BANGING**.

Brody's lets out an angry **ROAR**.

Alyx shoots Zuri a look to make sure the door is holding.

Zuri pushes her petite frame against the door.

Another deep breath.

Another delicate cut.

More **POUNDING**.

The door **CREAKS**.

Alyx's hand slips, the bare blade digging into their fingers and drawing blood.

They reset, drawing in a deep breath.

Alyx traces a thin cut around one side of the iris.

A tiny drop of cloudy fluid follows their blade, mixing with the blood on oozing from their fingers.

Brody hits the door so hard Zuri bounces off it.

ZURI
I don't think this will hold much
longer!

Alyx nods.

They trace a cut around the other side.

Fluid pours freely out of the eye as the iris falls away.

ALYX
Ok. We've got a clear view of the
back of the eye.

Brody slams the door again.

The latch pops, the doorframe splinters.

His arm snakes in, swiping at Zuri who barely keeps him at bay.

His hand finds her hair and hauls her into the widening crack of the door – she **SCREAMS**.

Alyx dives into the pile next to the cart, finds a hammer.

Holding the top of Dennis' head in place, they smash the hammer into his jaw.

Teeth fly loose, but the jaw holds.

They swing again, bones **CRUNCHING** as one side comes loose.

Dropping the hammer, they wrench the jaw loose from the other side and bolt to the door.

Alyx shoves the jawbone over Zuri's head, waving it under Brody's nose.

He stops to sniff the offered treat, his eyes following it as Alyx sways it side to side.

ALYX
Yeah, that's a good boy. You want
your treat?

He cocks his head.

Somehow he knows they're mocking him.

Alyx throws the jawbone deep into the nurses' station.

Brody gives chase.

Alyx sprints back to retrieve what's left of Dennis and hurries toward the door.

ALYX
MOVE!

Zuri reacts instinctually, yanks the door open and sprints away, Alyx on her heels.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY — FOLLOWING

They skid to a stop at Lisa's door, panting, trying to listen.
Silence.

ALYX
Here goes nothing. Watch my back.

Zuri nods and turns to watch the hallway.

Alyx holds Dennis up to the scanner by his hair.

Nothing.

ALYX
WHAT THE ABSOLUTE--

They notice that Dennis' hair is blocking his eye.

ALYX
Didn't even think to give you
haircut while I was at it...

They brush his hair away, hold his eye to the scanner and...

It scans.

Baited breath.

Red light.

ANGRY BEEP

Enough is enough.

Alyx screams a deep, coarse **ROAR** of frustration.

As their cry fades away, it's met with a guttural **RUMBLING** and, on it's heels, a quiet, longing **WHIMPER**.

Alyx turns as Brody and Lauren slink out of the darkness.

Another **SCREAM** as Alyx launches Dennis at Brody.

Brody ducks, but smells what just missed him and pivots, diving after the mutilated head.

Lauren's eyes go wide with a different type of hunger.

She licks her lips and throws herself at Brody, pressing herself against him as he claws at the head.

A beat as Alyx and Zuri take in Lauren's new tactic.

ALYX
I think we should give them some
alone time...

Zuri nods as they beat feet back to the...

INT. NURSE'S STATION - FOLLOWING

Zuri jogs up to the desk, bends over, hands on her knees taking in deep shaky breaths.

Alyx, right behind her, leans up against the counter, a goofy smile on their face.

Zuri pushes upright, clearly laughing.

ZURI
Well, uh... I hope they're very
happy together.

ALYX

Pretty sure that just makes them
more dangerous – right? I mean,
talk about a power couple...

They share the laugh a moment longer.

The moment fades when a loud **CLANG** rings out from the hallway
to the subject rooms.

ALYX

Is that Tom?

ZURI

Has to be. What now? We don't even
have a safe place to hide anymore.

Zuri points at the ruined IT closet door.

Alyx paces, thinking through the problem.

ALYX

Each of these new locks has an
override on the inside, right?
Somehow we need to activate the
one on Lisa's door...

ZURI

Great – if only one of us had
studied electrical engineering...

Alyx pauses, closes their eyes, trying to remember...

FLASHBACK TO DIRECTOR'S OFFICE – EARLIER

A much happier Alyx gleefully punches the red override button.

Next to it, a small touchscreen panel.

FLASHBACK ENDS

ZURI

I mean... short of blowing a hole
through the wall--

Alyx's eyes snap open – eureka!

ALYX

Zuri – you're a genius! C'mon!

Alyx takes off down the hall to the subject rooms.

A confused Zuri follows after them.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — NIGHT

The window in Tom's door is shattered.

The door hangs open, held only by the bottom hinge.

Alyx pulls up quick, scanning the room after seeing the damage.

They see nothing but pools of deep, inky darkness in this area.

Zuri slinks in behind Alyx.

ZURI

Did... Tom do that?

Alyx nods, holding a finger to their lips.

ZURI

(quieter)

We should just go!

Alyx shakes their head and cautiously creeps into Brody's room.

Zuri's head is on a swivel as she keeps watch.

INT. BRODY'S ROOM — CONTINUOUS

Alyx pulls the chair out of the way and slides under the desk, looking for the gun.

They find it and exit the room, holding up their prize.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — CONTINUOUS

From the darkness, Tom charges Alyx.

He slams into them — lifting them off their feet and sending them flying into the wall.

Zuri spins to see the commotion, realizes what Alyx is holding.

ZURI

JUST SHOOT HIM!

Alyx, groggy, shakes their head, stuffs the gun in their waistband, and crawls back into Brody's room.

ALYX

NO! I can't!

Tom turns to follow, a grin spreading across his deranged face.

A blur of red as something strikes the side of his head.

Zuri towers behind him, fire extinguisher in hand.

As Tom turns, chuckling, Zuri realizes the error of her ways.

She backs away slowly, lowering the extinguisher.

ZURI

Hey Tom... Can we talk this out?

His answer – a step forward, his grin spreads into a toothy smile.

From Brody's room a basket flies out, hitting Tom in the head.

He is not phased.

Alyx throws the chair.

It hits him in the back, he pauses.

But no – he continues stalking the retreating Zuri.

A **GROWL** from the dark of the hallway as Zuri passes it.

She chances a glance and dives out of the way as Brody lunges toward her.

He misses her, slamming square into Tom's chest.

Tom drops to one knee, but shoves Brody back.

A savage **CRY** rings out as Lauren leaps over Brody and drives Tom to the ground, throwing her full weight on his face.

Brody dashes back in and the melee becomes a rolling mass of clawing, biting, and kicking, headed straight for Brody's room.

Alyx, eyes wide in fear, makes for the door.

But they're too late, the pile pushes in, cutting them off.

INT. BRODY'S ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Alyx jumps on the bed, trying to avoid the writhing scrum.

The three bang into the bed.

A random limb swings toward them and Alyx jumps over it.

They see their opportunity.

Leaping to the desk, Alyx has a clear shot out of the room.

They dive through the doorway, rolling to their feet.

INT. SUBJECT ATRIUM — CONTINUOUS

As Alyx gets their bearings, Zuri dashes in and slams the door, pressing her back against it.

ZURI
They've still got an override.
They'll just get right out.

ALYX
I got this.

Alyx pulls the revolver from their waistband, kneels, and puts the gun up to the badge reader.

They look away, squeezing their eyes shut.

Zuri clears out as Alyx jerks the trigger.

BANG

The plastic reader shatters.

A puff of sulfurous smoke wafts from the hole.

Alyx peers through it and into the room.

POV

The brawl has paused, each of the patients staring at the door.

END POV

Alyx pushes up, stashes the gun again, and backs away.

The three subjects rush the door, slamming into it.

ZURI
Did it work?

ALYX
Guess we'll know soon enough?

A look between them, realizing they'd rather be anywhere else.

They sprint off down the hallway to...

INT. NURSE'S STATION — FOLLOWING

Alyx and Zuri skid to a stop outside the IT closet doorway.

Alyx ducks inside.

INT. IT CLOSET – CONTINUOUS

Alyx digs through the pile of supplies and tools, finds a screwdriver and the pair of wire cutters.

INT. NURSES STATION – CONTINUOUS

Alyx comes back out.

ALYX

Let's get our asses out of here.

Zuri nods and the two take off down the...

INT. DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY – FOLLOWING

The two pull up as they reach the door.

Alyx hands the pliers and the gun to Zuri, who looks very uncomfortable holding it.

Alyx stabs the screwdriver into the wall next to the palm reader and retinal scanner, chipping away until they have enough room to get the tool in behind the scanners.

A **SCREECH** of metal and the **POPPING** of plastic.

The scanners fall limp, hanging by their wires.

Alyx turns to Zuri and swaps the screwdriver for the wire cutters.

They clip the wires and the dangling devices **CLATTER** away.

A faraway **CLANG** causes both of them to jump – Zuri drops the gun and dives to retrieve it.

ALYX

Got it? We gotta move fast – but
we can't fuck this up. Stay calm.

Zuri comes up with the gun, nodding.

Alyx digs the flashlight out of a pocket and inspects the hole in the wall.

POV

The flashlight shines off the galvanized junction box of the touch panel.

Alyx repeatedly hits a circular cutout on the box with the wire cutters.

It bends away from them and then pops free into the box.

END POV

Alyx turns back to Zuri, trades the wire cutters for the gun.

They fiddle with it, looking for, and finally finding, the way to open the cylinder of the revolver.

They dump the empty shell and four remaining rounds into Zuri's hands before stuffing the gun back in their waistband.

Alyx picks up a round and uses the wire cutters to help pull the bullet away from the shell.

They reach back into the hole and dump the gun powder into the junction box.

As they reach for the next round...

ZURI

Do we need to use all four?

ALYX

I honestly have no idea.

ZURI

Maybe save one? Just in case?

Alyx nods and proceeds to empty two more shells into the box.

They take the last round and load it back into the revolver, trying to line up the cylinder so it'll be the next round.

Back in the waistband with the gun.

ALYX

You, uh, might want to stand back?

Zuri enthusiastically steps back.

Alyx uses the wire cutters to strip the plastic from the ends of two of the hanging wires.

They touch the wires together, getting the hoped for spark.

ALYX

Well here goes nothing...

They reach in with both hands, face turned away in a grimace.

BOOM

A not-as-small as they hoped for fireball.

A SCREAM

Alyx falls back, clutching their smoking hands to their chest.

ZURI

ALYX!

Zuri rushes to them, Alyx waves her off.

ALYX

No time. They know where we are
now. Get the door.

Zuri peers into the smoking hole – sees the office through it.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE – CONTINUOUS

Zuri's arm shoots through the hole as she proceeds to smack
blindly on the wall, looking for the button.

Finally she hits pay dirt.

CLACK

The door releases and is immediately yanked open wide.

Zuri's arm retreats through the hole.

She and Alyx stumble in the office, pulling the door shut.

ALYX

It's there – on her desk. See if
there's any way to get out.

Zuri inspects the desk – sees the touch panel.

ZURI

This thing?

Alyx nods. Zuri spins it to face her, taps it.

A beat as the screen stays black.

Then it lights up.

A mostly empty screen with a single text entry field: *Password*

ZURI

We've got a problem.

ALYX

Have you met Lisa?
Look around for a post-it.

Alyx joins Zuri in searching the desk.

They yank a drawer open and find a first aid kit. They set it on the desk top.

Zuri scans the monitor and finds it – across the bottom of her monitor is a row of pink post-its.

Most are scrawled with dates, times or out-of-context phrases.

The last one is a random string of characters and symbols.

ZURI
What about this?

ALYX
That's gotta be it. Punch it in.

Zuri taps away, hitting enter.

ON THE TOUCH PANEL

A processing indicator turns lazily for what feels like an eternity.

Finally, the login screen is replaced with a thumbnail-based menu. We see:

- * Cameras
- * Doors
- * Schedules
- * Alarms
- * Settings

Cameras and Doors are both greyed out.

BACK TO THE ROOM

ZURI
Umm... Any ideas...

Alyx, wrapping their hands with gauze from the first aid kit, looks over her shoulder.

ALYX
Of course... there's no power. See what's in settings.

Zuri taps.

A long, confusing list of options comes up.

She scrolls through them.

ALYX
Stop! Right there – try power routing.

ON THE TOUCH PANEL

Zuri taps the Power Routing option. We see:

System	Local Power	System Power
Cameras	X	
Doors	X	
Alarms	X	

ALYX (O.S.)
What happens if you switch the
doors to "System Power"?

Zuri taps the option. A warning message comes up:

Depending on your configuration, this option may drastically reduce the run-time of any battery backups. Do you wish to change your routing option?

BACK TO THE ROOM

Zuri's hesitates.

ZURI
What's that mean?

ALYX
I think it means we better be
ready to leave as soon as you
change it.

ZURI
Do we want to stay?

A beat. Zuri turns to look at a conflicted Alyx.

ZURI
You can't be serious.

ALYX
I mean... We've kept them safe
this long — and the medication
should wear off soon, right?

ZURI
You really think a company that
offered to pay off my gambling
debts gave us accurate drug info?

ALYX
But... they're in our care...

ZURI

And they ate Dennis. And Noah.
Do you want to be next?

Alyx bites their lip, thinking.

ALYX

No... but we caused this, ya know?
Don't we have a duty to... I dunno
protect them from themselves?

Alyx still can't decide... so Zuri does.

ZURI

Fuck it.

She punches the "Yes" button.

ZURI

Now what?

Alyx doesn't respond.

The emergency lights noticeably dim.

ZURI

ALYX! NOW WHAT?

ALYX

Fuck. Fine. Back to the main menu.
See if Doors are still greyed out.

ON THE TOUCH PANEL

She exits to the menu. Doors can now be selected.

ZURI (O.S.)

It works. Now what?

ALYX

Unlock all the doors before we
lose power.

Zuri selects Doors.

Next we see a list of every door with a fancy new lock.

Her finger scrolls to the bottom where there is an entry
labeled: All.

She punches the button marked Unlock.

The processing animation lethargically mocks them.

BACK TO THE ROOM

They stare at each other nervously as the animation turns.

Simultaneously:

- * A loud **CLACK** of the door unlocking.
- * The lights die.

Alyx and Zuri let out a collective sigh in the room which is now only lit by the touch panel.

Alyx digs the flashlight out again.

ALYX
We better go. They've got to be
close by now.

Zuri nods and the two make their way back to...

INT. DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY — CONTINUOUS

They are close. As in, all three of them are just a few feet outside the door, sniffing and looking for their prey.

Prey who were kind enough to step out right next to them.

ALYX
Shit. Run for it?

Zuri's answer is a dash toward the biggest gap between them.

Lauren swipes at her but just lands an ineffectual slap.

Brody and Lauren turn to follow after Zuri, giving Alyx the opening they needed.

Alyx sprints forward, shoving Lauren into Brody.

The two go down in a tangle of flailing arms and legs.

Tom laughs.

Younger legs and lungs mean Alyx quickly catches up to Zuri.

ALYX
I know you didn't just leave me
behind.

ZURI
You said to run!

Tom gallops after them at an inhuman speed, steadily closing the distance to his quarry as they reach...

INT. NURSES STATION — CONTINUOUS

Alyx makes a slight detour to grab a rolling chair and spin it out into Tom's path.

He attempts to barrel through it, but his foot lands on one of the wheels, causing him to slip and plow into the counter.

Alyx and Zuri make their turn down...

INT. LOBBY HALLWAY — CONTINUOUS

Sprinting for all their worth.

A recovered Tom unflaggingly pursuing them.

Zuri sees the bloody mop handle, stoops to grab it, and chucks it spear-like at Tom.

He swats it away effortlessly and closes.

The two burst through the double doors into...

INT. THE LOBBY — CONTINUOUS

They move to sprint across the lobby.

Zuri's first step into the room lands on the fish tape.

She slides sideways, careening into Alyx.

Alyx catches them deftly and sets them back on their feet, but it cost them fractions of a second.

It's enough for Tom to dive and snatch Zuri's foot.

She slams into the ground face-first.

Blood erupts from either side of her head.

Alyx skids to a stop and turns.

Tom, still holding Zuri's foot, rises, pulling her to him.

He twists her foot and she flops over with no resistance.

Kneeling on her midsection, he raises both fists high and slams them into her chest.

He raises his hands again--

A chair hits him square in the chest, metal legs bending.

He snaps his head to look at his attacker.

Alyx doesn't hesitate to bash him again – now in the face.

Tom shakes it off and rises, **ROARING** in defiance.

He rips the chair from their hands, throws it across the lobby.

Alyx lunges away from him.

It's impossible for them to move fast enough.

Tom hammers at them, sending them careening toward the receptionist's window.

A **CRACKING** as Alyx impacts the window.

They turn to face Tom.

Leering, he grabs their face, pounds their head into the glass.

Again.

And again.

And again.

A **CRACKING** of glass with each impact, spiderwebs of cracks growing from their head.

Alyx struggles against Tom's grip.

His hands are like iron bands.

A fifth time against the glass – blood explodes from the back of their head.

Tears stream down their face as they continue to struggle.

Alyx closes their eyes, an audible sob wrenches from them as...

BANG

Tom slows.

Stops.

Releases Alyx.

and stumbles back, looking down.

Blood spreads from the smoking bullet wound in his abdomen.

He drops to one knee.

Alyx drops the gun with a loud **CLATTER**.

They bulldoze him, drive him to the floor, sprinting to Zuri.

Zuri's nose is broken.

Teeth are missing.

Her chest caved in.

But she draws a ragged breath.

ZURI

You... came back?

ALYX

Yeah. You're the asshole. Not me.

Tom stirs.

ALYX

Shit. This'll hurt. A lot. But
it's better than being eaten...

Alyx moves to Zuri's shoulders, drags her toward the exit.

Across the room from them, Brody and Lauren prowl in.

Torn between Alyx and Zuri and the weakened Tom, they pause.

Alyx keeps dragging Zuri.

As Alyx backs into the door, Brody and Lauren make a decision.

They lunge at Tom as he pushes to his knees.

They drive him back to the floor **HOWLING** in delight.

Alyx smashes the crash bar and fumbles Zuri out into the pre-dawn darkness.

EXT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY – NIGHT

Everything is soaking wet, but thankfully the rain has stopped.

Alyx pulls Zuri clear of the door and sets her down gingerly.

Scanning the entry area, they spy a bench.

Straining, grunting, slipping they drag the bench to the doors, angling it under the pull handles to wedge the door shut.

Back to Zuri, they kneel by her.

She's slipping in and out of consciousness.

ALYX
I'm going for help — I need you to
stay alive until they get here.

A weak nod — Alyx knows they can't expect much more.
They take a shaky breath before sprinting down the...

EXT. ROAD TO FACILITY — CONTINUOUS

Giant, silent, windowless warehouses on either side.
Not a soul in sight.

Alyx stumbles.
Catches themselves.
Rushes on.

They reach the...

EXT. MAIN ROAD — CONTINUOUS

...and scan the crossing road for traffic.
Just cresting the hill back towards town — a pair of
headlights.
They dart toward them, waving their hands over their head.
The car's horn **BLARES** out as it swerves around them and speeds
on.
Alyx **SCREAMS** in frustration.
They turn, barely in time to dodge the semi truck coming from
the other direction.
The **SCREECH** of tires skidding and the **PSSSHHHHTT** of air brakes
locking up fill the early morning.
Alyx picks themselves up and bolts for the cab.

ALYX
OH THANK GOD! WE NEED HELP!

The truck's door opens and an older, stout TRUCK DRIVER (60s,
F) hops down from the cab, phone in hand.

TRUCK DRIVER
Are you alright--

Alyx snatches the phone from her hand and makes a call.

The truck driver opens their mouth to protest but notices all the blood and thinks differently.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
Nine one one, what's your
emergency?

ALYX
We need EMS and police. There's
been a medical emergency. Multiple
dead.

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)
Slow down ma'am. I'm gonna need
some details...

As the conversation continues, the truck driver ushers Alyx to the cab of their truck.

FADE TO:

EXT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY – DAWN

Alyx, on the ground, Zuri's head cradled in their lap.

The two are covered in blood, eyes unfocused, sitting in a mental fog.

Flashing red lights splash over them.

Alyx comes to and sees an ambulance and two police cars pulling around the semi truck parked just outside the lot.

The **SIRENS** break through the daze just before cutting out.

The sound is replaced with something softer.

WEEPING

INT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY – SAME

The drug has apparently worn off.

Lauren sits with her knees pulled tight to her chest, rocking herself, reaching to twirl hair that is no longer there.

Tom holds what's left of his shirt in his gunshot gut, trying desperately to stop the bleeding.

Brody looms at the doors that leads back into the facility, staring into the darkness.

Each of their faces contorted in guilt, they sob uncontrollably at memories that will never be far from their thoughts.

The lights flicker and come back on.

BEGIN MONTAGE

IT CLOSET

BEEPS and flashing lights as the servers kick in and power on.

LOBBY HALLWAY

The badge reader light comes on, shining green.

DIRECTOR'S HALLWAY

The loose wires are touching, raining sparks onto the destroyed scanners on the floor.

NURSES STATION

Lights on the desk phone run through a start-up sequence and go out except one marked *MESSAGES* which continues to blink.

BREAK ROOM

The overturned fridge, door ajar, shines a weak white light on a pile of forgotten food and condiments.

PRE-LAP: A phone **RINGS**

END MONTAGE

EXT. SLEEP STUDY FACILITY – CONTINUOUS

Alyx gently juggles Zuri to dig their ringing phone out of their pocket.

ON THE PHONE

Lisa is calling.

BACK TO SCENE

Alyx answers, holds the phone to their ear without a word.

LISA (O.S.)
Hey Alyx! Sorry I missed Zuri's
call – my date went great!
Anyway, how'd the shadowing go?
Ready to step into Dennis' shoes?

EMTs rush up, examining Zuri.

LISA (O.S.)
Hello? You there?

Alyx clears their throat, spits a bloody wad of phlegm.

ALYX

Yeah... I think I'm going to need
a few days off if that's okay.

They hang up, tears finally flowing as an EMT kneels next to them and the police rush into the building.

FADE TO BLACK.