

IN-CLOSURE

Written by

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FADE IN:

**EXT. AERIAL SHOT OF LOS ANGELES - NIGHT**

**CAPTION:** *When should you answer the last phone booth in L.A.?*

**FADE CAPTION:** *Only when your conscious has nothing to say.*

Somewhere below, a WOMAN screams.

**EXT. LOS ANGELES SIDEWALK - THAT MORNING**

MR. WHITE, 60s, Caucasian, in a suit carrying a briefcase, walks down the sidewalk. He checks his Rolex wristwatch, then increases his pace. He is a Very Important Person, just ask him. He walks past a vintage telephone booth.

Phone inside the booth *fast-rings*. White slows. Phone *fast-rings* again. White stops. Phone *double-rings* like a British telephone. White tilts his head, then looks around.

PEDESTRIAN, female African-American, walks towards White.

WHITE

(points to booth)

Excuse me, but do you hear --?

Pedestrian quickens her pace holding up a palm, *Talk to the hand*, nervous-exiting past White.

White shrugs and takes a step. Phone *rings* regular again, but *loud*. White jumps, sets his briefcase down beside the booth, and enters closing its *squeaking* accordion door.

**INT. LOS ANGELES PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS**

Its door latches to the sound of a jail cell *slamming* shut.

Phone rings *echoing* making White spin to it. He picks up its receiver, cleans the mouthpiece with an alcohol wipe, then holds it to his ear and *clears* his throat. But before White can talk, a raspy male voice speaks.

VOICE (FILTERED)

Why?

White hangs up fast, stares at phone, then turns to open the door. Phone *dongs* loud like "Big Ben." White covers his ears, then looks at phone cautious, and picks up its receiver.

WHITE

Who --?

VOICE (FILTERED)

(same, but now deeper)

You know.

White *slams* the receiver on its hook and spins to push the door open. Door won't budge. He throws his shoulder against it. Nothing. Phone *rings* regular. White ignores the *ringing* to keep fighting with his door. Useless.

U.S.C. JOGGER, college-Asian female, runs by outside booth.

White *knocks* hard on the inside of his booth's glass.

Jogger stops, then scans the area jogging-in-place.

White double-arm waves wild inside his booth.

Jogger checks her wrist-pulse, then continues on.

White watches her leave.

WHITE

What did I do to deserve this?

(surprised himself)

*Why did I just say that?*

Phone *rings* again. White spins angry and punches the receiver up from its bottom so it goes airborne, then catches it.

WHITE

What?!

VOICE (FILTERED)

(deeper, sinister)

You know.

White *slams* receiver down and spins to *kick* at door's bottom.

**EXT. WHITE'S PHONE BOOTH - IMMEDIATELY**

SCHOOL GIRL, Caucasian, 12, in school clothes with a backpack, skips past White's booth. She is too darn cute.

White pounds on the booth's glass. No response from her. He rests his forehead forlorn on the door's glass.

School Girl skips backwards to stop in front of his booth.

White jab-points at the door's outside handle while yelling.

WHITE

Won't, open!

Nothing can be heard outside.

School Girl looks around, then grabs White's briefcase.

**INT. WHITE'S PHONE BOOTH - CONTINUOUS**

White shakes his head, *I knew it*, grumbling.

WHITE

*Yeah, okay, whatever --just open  
the freakin' door!*

School Girl looks at White smiling. Her perfect white teeth actually star-gleam, *ding*. She skips away with his briefcase.

WHITE

Hope you score 400 on the SAT's!  
(tries to relax)  
*Calm down, nothing of value in it.*

White's eyes pop open wide as he pats himself down frantic, then drops his head.

WHITE

Except my cell.

Phone *rings*. White jumps. He grabs receiver to answer angry.

WHITE

Stop saying I know! If I "know" --  
what the hell do I know I know?!

VOICE (FILTERED)

(now echoes)  
Youuuu ...

White *slams* receiver down on its hook.

**OVERHEAD POV INSERT:** White goes on a rampage inside booth bouncing off its four walls.

Receiver is knocked off its hook to swing by its metal cord.

White, now winded, rests bent-over with hands on knees, then slow turns his head to look at the still dangling receiver.

VOICE (FILTERED)

(continues echo ominous)  
...knowwww.

White grabs receiver furious standing up to scream into it.

WHITE

What, WHAT?! Tell me what! What do  
I know?!

PHONE (FILTERED)

*(sound of a baby crying)*

White drops receiver like electrocuted cowering in a corner.

BABY stops *crying*, then same gritty male voice now yells.

VOICE (FILTERED)

YOU KNOW!

**EXT. WHITE'S PHONE BOOTH - IMMEDIATELY**

HISPANIC WOMAN, older, dressed homeless, ambles by pushing a vintage stroller-trolley and stops in front of White's booth.

White pounds frantic on his inside glass as before yelling.

WHITE

See me! I'm a person!

Nothing is heard on the outside.

Hispanic Woman looks inside her stroller, then at White, and smiles with blackened teeth.

White relaxes exhausted with palms flat on his inside glass nodding, *Finally*.

Hispanic Woman steps towards booth, then picks up an empty plastic water-bottle beside it and pulls back the sun-shade of her stroller. Its bucket is filled with empty water bottles and soda cans to recycle. She drops the bottle in, pulls up sun-shade again, and continues on.

White pounds and screams berserk inside his booth.

Nothing is heard on the outside.

**INT. WHITE'S BOOTH - SIMULTANEOUS**

White *pounds* on his inside glass watching Hispanic Woman walk around the building's far corner. She is now gone.

WHITE

Forgive Me!

(tilts head)

*Why did I just say that?*Phone *rings* regular.

White spins with his back against the door staring at phone.

Phone *rings* again, but different, slower, almost soothing.White nods as if understanding and calms down. His mouth opens like he wants to speak, then both hands slap-cover his mouth like the *Speak No Evil* monkey.Phone *rings* regular a third time.

White picks up the receiver to answer desperate.

WHITE

Why are you doing this to me?

VOICE (FILTERED)

You ...

White *beats* the receiver against its hook trying to break it. Completely exhausted, he leans in a corner holding the phone down, then cautiously brings its receiver back up to his ear.

Voice now speaks clearly. White recognizes it. It is his own.

VOICE (FILTERED)

...a-r-e.

That's it. White drops the receiver to slide down the wall and sit on the cement sobbing. He closes his eyes in pain.

MANAGER (O.S.)

Sir --?

White opens his watery eyes and looks around.

There is no phone booth. He sits under a wall's phone-box on its metal stand with receiver still on its hook.

White scans the sidewalk around, then looks up.

MANAGER, African-American male, NBA height, in a white grease-stained short-sleeve shirt with "Pep Boys" patch on its front pocket stands mere feet away looking down at White concerned.

MANAGER

Your front end alignment is done.  
But, uh --did you hit something  
last night?

White stands brushing himself off, then buttons his suit jacket jutting his jaw out nonchalant.

WHITE

Didn't see them in time. I went  
back, but nothing I could do.  
Besides, no one's going to miss her  
or that "baby-thing." So I got in  
my car and drove to a car wash,  
what a mess --then here this  
morning.

(straightens his tie)

I mean, not like I killed a tax-  
paying member of society or  
anything.

MANAGER

(steps back alarmed)

Are you, are you confessing to  
committing a hit-and-run? --When?

WHITE

No, no, don't you see? It was an  
unhoused "thing," female I think,  
*but you can never really tell.* Last  
night, under the overpass where  
they all camp, *so gross.* --She  
jumped out right in front of me!

MANAGER

A homeless woman "jumped" in front  
of your speeding car --last night?

WHITE

(tilts head thinking)

Don't think I was speeding, *it all  
happened so fast?* I was coming home  
from a business dinner.

MANAGER

Did you have alcohol?

WHITE

Just a bottle of wine? *Or was it  
two?* But then this shape with a  
grocery cart --. Was it? Yes, no?

(snaps fingers)

Old-style stroller! Anyway, it was  
an accident, totally avoidable.

Earlier Hispanic Woman pushes her recycle-carriage around the far corner and waves to White friendly.

WHITE

See?! She understands, she has to.  
It was not my fault. Couldn't be,  
absolutely not, nope, never.

White's hand trembles as he points to the Hispanic Woman.

WHITE

I, I didn't do anything wrong, ask  
her, she'll tell you. --She knows!

Manager looks to where White is pointing.

MANAGER

Who --are you pointing to?

Manager shakes his head, pulls out his cell, and *dials* 911.

MANAGER

"Every man is guilty of all the  
good --he did not do."

White waves back way too friendly to the Hispanic Woman.

WHITE

Voltaire.

911 RECORDING (FILTERED)

Your expected wait time is --thirty  
minutes.

Manager hand-motions for White to come with him.

White takes a step, but is bumped-back as if hitting an invisible wall. White recovers, then flat-palms his air-wall like a mime "Trapped in a Box." He *pounds* against his three imaginary walls now yelling silent inside his mind's cage.

Manager holds down his cell phone, sighing.

MANAGER

We are all trapped --by our own  
decisions.

Manager drops his head shaking it, then looks up watching as White continues to "fight" within his invisible walls.

**EXT. SIDEWALK UNDER WALL PHONE - IMMEDIATELY**

Three squared intersecting chalk-lines drawn on the sidewalk.



The kid's coloring-chalk enclosed "box" around the wall-phone is the size of a vintage phone-booth.

White's shoes rub at the three lines as he tries to "get out" scuffing some of the chalk away.

CUT TO BLACK:

**EXT. SAME WALL PHONE - THAT NIGHT**

Manager and White are now gone. The three smudged chalk lines remain on sidewalk.

Same Hispanic Woman pushes her carriage around the far corner again and stops at the wall-phone to bend and "refresh" the three chalk-lines around it, then stands pocketing her chalk. She speaks in White's exact voice to her stroller.

HISPANIC WOMAN AS WHITE

He knew.

Baby is again heard *crying* but now from inside her carriage.

She bends down to it smiling and jiggles the carriage-body. Baby starts *laughing* inside.

Hispanic Woman looks up Breaking the Fourth Wall now with an open head-wound and blood running from her hairline down a cheek to speak in her own voice.

HISPANIC WOMAN

Do you?

FADE OUT.

**DEDICATION:**

*To Yale screenwriting professor Marc Lapadula, your love of film not only made us better writers, but better human beings.*