

THE DEAD ZONE

Scars
(fka In The Heat of Battle)

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*He who fights with monsters must take care lest he thereby become a monster .
-Friedrich Nietzsche*

Plagued by visions and dreams of a future Armageddon, and armed with knowledge about the man he believes will be responsible, Johnny Smith makes his first major move against Greg Stillson. To his distress, this forces Johnny to accept a lesser evil an evil he will confront in a vision of the past an evil he will overlook in the name of good. Tonight we ask the question: what happens if Johnny tries to ignore one of his visions? Tonight we learn the answer: hell hath no fury like a Dead Zone scorned

Independent political candidates don't have access to the big piggybanks that major party candidates do (unless yer name is Ross Perot). To win, they must run a successful grassroots campaign. These kind of campaigns rely on dedicated volunteers rather than high-priced pros. This is why Greg Stillson is interested in Sarah Bannerman. She's smart, she projects a wholesome image, and she speaks her mind. She'd make a perfect co-chair for his public relations committee. At least, that's his pitch to her on a Saturday morning in his busy campaign headquarters/trailer. And Sarah is seriously considering it. For the last twelve years, she's voted against Harrison Fisher, Republican incumbent, war hero, congressional fixture and Stillson's major opponent in this year's race for the House. The Democratic candidate, Steven Meimfreuder, is, for lack of a better word, a dweeb whose face no one can remember (the three are mid-way through debates right now, and Stillson is leading in popularity). Greg Stillson is the new hot flavor, and his views on education and law enforcement are amenable to Sarah's. She's naturally wary of his slick spit-polished charisma, but it's not enough to turn her away. If she only knew what Johnny knows

The truth is, Sarah doesn't know about Johnny's Armageddon vision, and she's just as susceptible to Greg Stillson's appeal as the next Maine voter. Sarah is a person who's searching for something—maybe to fill a gap in her life, maybe to escape life's current troubles by taking on new challenges she can solve in the foreseeable future. Also, she's tired of baking all those cookies from season one.

Stillson is also directly interested in Sarah because of Johnny. Lately, Stillson has been getting reports from various sources close to him that Johnny Smith has been snooping into his background, trying to dredge up information in a suspicious way that suggests more than innocent curiosity (this would be Johnny gathering info for his Stillson files). Sarah is uncomfortable talking about Johnny, but still defends him to Greg: Johnny Smith isn't out to get anybody, unless they've done something wrong that he's seen in a vision. Johnny gets visions, and acts on them. He always does what he thinks is right. Greg should be fine, she points out, as long as you've got nothing to hide.

Well, we've all got *something* to hide, he reminds Sarah, which strikes a nerve. Greg's sympathetic smile makes Sarah think he can somehow see into her soul, to the secret she's been hiding about her one-night affair with Johnny. The bus ride comes to an end, dropping Sarah off at home. Stillson watches her go, thinking about what she's said. He nods to himself, acknowledging an internal dialogue.

Johnny Smith likes Archie's Diner. He likes it because of those tall-backed booths that enclose you in wood and red leather and make it hard for people to peer at you. He also likes their tuna melt, which he's eating right now while reading the paper.

Anything about me in there?

Johnny looks up to see Greg Stillson sliding into his booth. Johnny closes down his paper and his eyes dart past Stillson to the front of the restaurant: looks like he came by himself. Johnny, caught totally off guard, says hello, and tells Stillson he was reading the sports section

Greg cuts him off, No, I mean, is there anything about me (and he points to Johnny's head) in there. Johnny can't believe what's happening and he can't believe it's happening RIGHT NOW. One second he's eating his tuna melt, and the next second the Anti-Christ is sitting opposite him and casually asking him about Armageddon.

But wait Stillson can't know about Johnny's vision. He can't know can he?

Johnny is shifting nervously in his seat. Greg smiles, says okay calm down I'm just here to talk. Seeing as though they're both affiliated, politically and personally, with Reverend Purdy and the Faith Heritage Alliance, Greg just thought he should make a proper how-d-you-do.

I thought I'd call first, but I figure you'd know I was coming anyway.

Johnny shakes his head, regaining his cool, It doesn't work that way. Greg wonders how does it work: you touch someone, get a vision of them doing something bad, like kidnapping a kid or murdering some girl, and then you try and make it right? Johnny shrugs, something like that. He feels this conversation is becoming surreal. Greg leans forward like he's sharing a secret, And when we shook hands at that rally, you got a vision of me doing something bad, right?

Johnny stares at Stillson for a long beat, heart pounding. Something like that. Greg nods solemnly, he knows he's done some things that might have appeared bad to Johnny, but he's done them in all in the name of good, or at least what he's thought best. I'm a direct guy, and I wanted to deal with this problem directly, especially seeing as how we're supposed to be on more or less the same side. (He maybe gives Johnny a recap of his friends and enemies list mantra). The bottom line is Greg doesn't need to waste time justifying himself to a psychic; I've got enough to worry about with Harrison Fisher, I don't have time to worry about you.

Then don't, says Johnny, trying to back away from the confrontation without backing down. Greg's smile disappears, and he whispers to Johnny, concerned, I know you've seen horrible things, Smith. Wicked, brutal things. But you ain't seen politics, and trust me, you're

better off. Don't try to stop something that'll just run you right over. Stillson gets up, dropping cash on the table to cover Johnny's bill. He purposefully pats Johnny on the shoulder, and Johnny is SLAMMED BY A VISION OF THE MONOLITH — which we know symbolizes Armageddon. The vision is accompanied by a raw scream that sounds like Greg Stillson howling in either ecstasy or rage or both.

Johnny snaps out of the vision and Greg smiles, "What'd you see? Do I win?" Greg smiles playfully, "Wait! Don't tell me. Don't tell me." He puts a finger to his lips and slides out of the booth. Johnny watches him go. He just got his hat handed to him by the devil. That scares him and sickens him, but mostly it gets him mad.

Enough gathering information. Enough hiding in the shadows. Johnny decides to take action. Now. But what to do? In the Dead Zone novel and film, Johnny takes gun in hand, risks his life to take Stillson's, and makes the ultimate sacrifice. Our Johnny is no less motivated, but he's smarter than that. Plus, he's got a lot more to live for. There's got to be another way.

Ironically, it's his conversation with Greg Stillson which sparks the idea: Stillson said he has enough to worry about with Harrison Fisher, his main political opponent. If Johnny can use his powers to help Harrison Fisher beat Greg Stillson in the election, he'll stop Stillson's rise to power dead in its tracks. Or at least delay it for a few years, giving him more time to work out a plan. Johnny discusses this plan of action with Bruce, who encourages him. Except for the part of helping elect a Republican, Bruce thinks it's an all-around smart play: non-violent and organic. Though Bruce cautions Johnny to watch his back; when Stillson gets wind of what he's up to, he's going to retaliate. Johnny accepts that, it's the price of war.

Harrison Fisher's campaign headquarters. Johnny tries to get a meeting with Harrison Fisher, but his staff is leery. They've all seen the photos of him literally holding hands with Greg Stillson. Johnny says he's more disturbed by those photos than they could know. In fact, the reason he's here is because he wants to do anything to prevent Stillson from getting elected.

Suddenly, an office door opens and HARRISON FISHER, mid 50 s, exits a conference with a couple advisors. Johnny tries to introduce himself as Fisher is heading into out to his limo. Fisher and his entourage are wary of Johnny, how do they know he s not a plant? Johnny agrees that sort of thing isn t beneath Greg Stillson. Nothing is beneath that man. Johnny tells Fisher that he has dirt on Stillson, a whole bucketful, in fact. One of Fisher s bodyguards moves to shoo Johnny away, but Fisher waves his man off (like Jimmy Carter does in the novel). He thanks Johnny, but tells him that he s not interested he s content to run on his record. He s never been a mudslinger, and he s not about to start. Even with such an easy target as Greg Stillson.

Great, Johnny thinks. An honest politician. He s got to take a different tack. Johnny visits The Kennedy Center, where the televised debates for house seat are taking place. The auditorium is empty right now, except for a couple custodians vacuuming the aisles. Johnny steps up onto the stage, looks at the three silent podiums. He approaches the middle one. Stillson s. Johnny stands behind it, focuses on the microphone, concentrating on it. He grips the podium with both hands, and receives a VISION: *Johnny becomes Stillson at tonight s debate. In front of the cameras, he flamboyantly sandbags Harrison Fisher with a fact about his voting record on an obscure bill that indirectly led to dozens of constituents losing their jobs. Fisher, caught off guard, stumbles his response and looks incompetent for it. Johnny/Stillson glares at Fisher; self-righteous or acting it perfectly.*

Johnny comes out of the vision, a thrill running through him. Why? It s simple: Johnny envisioned a goal, used his power, and accomplished the result he wanted. It s the closest we ve ever seen of his Dead Zone acting like a super-ability, and Johnny is pleased for a change. A janitor spots him on stage and yells at him, Hey! What are you doing up there? Johnny walks off the stage, nodding to the man, I m getting good at this.

At home, Johnny calls up Fisher and ends up talking to one of his staff. Johnny warns him about the question that Stillson is going to ask tonight. The staffer thanks Johnny, says he'll pass it on, but it doesn't sound like he's taking him that seriously. That NIGHT, at the debate, Johnny watches from the back of the auditorium with Bruce. Johnny is recounting to Bruce his success with the podium-vision. Bruce is amused, you actually sound glad. Johnny wonders what's wrong with that? Bruce shrugs it's just he's never heard Johnny excited about a vision. Johnny reminds him, it rarely does what he wants it to do. Bruce suggests, I know you never got a dead zone instruction manual, but maybe you're finally using it in the right way. Or the intended way. Johnny falls silent, glances over to the VIP seats to see PURDY watching the debate, and recalls his speech to Johnny about his destiny. Maybe there's something to that.

Bruce nudges him and points out Sarah, who is in the same section. Johnny's eyes narrow, what the hell is she doing with those Stillson staffers? Before he can remark, he hears Stillson begin his sneak-attack on Fisher's voting record. Johnny and Bruce watch intently as Fisher absorbs the attack and smoothly recovers. He explains how his vote actually led to the formation of a new local industry which created hundreds of jobs in the district. Thanks for bringing that up, Greg, I had almost forgotten about it. The audience chuckles and applauds with approval. Stillson is flustered, and scans the audience. His eyes lock on to Johnny's, and Greg realizes what must have happened. He nods slightly to Johnny, acknowledging the victory, and acknowledging that the battle lines have been officially drawn. Just then, an aide from the Fisher campaign approaches Johnny, leans over and whispers an invitation to the post-debate meeting at campaign headquarters, courtesy of Harrison Fisher himself.

Back at campaign HQ, the mood is celebratory. Johnny and Bruce are welcomed in. Fisher approaches Johnny to thank him personally and apologize, then adds, It is an unexplained phenomenon that we're trailing Stillson in the polls. Maybe we can use a psychic

around here, after all Aides laugh and applaud as Fisher extends his hand and shakes Johnny s. On their touch, we ramp into Johnny s face

And find ourselves in watery darkness. The face floating in front of us opens its eyes. It s Johnny. He rises and we rise with him, above the water line. Water drips off Johnny s face, but it doesn t smudge the camouflage under his eyes. Five more shapes break the still river surface behind him. Five men, armed with dripping Colt Commando sub-machineguns, same as Johnny. This is Cambodia, 1972. Johnny Smith is Harrison Fisher. Harrison Fisher is leading his SEAL team up onto the bank of a small jungle village. Johnny/Fisher gives hand signals for stealthy movement. As they move to encircle the grouping of huts, a single gun shot rings out. Johnny/Fisher drops to the ground, and yells, Frag em! The SEALs respond, lighting up the night with muzzle bursts, turning the jungle into hell for five seconds, devastating the thatched huts. Johnny/Fisher signals for cease fire. Silence. Suddenly, a shape darts out one of the huts. Johnny/Fisher takes a quick bead and puts the insurgent down with a three round burst. Moving over to the kill zone, the team discovers that most of the huts were empty, save for one, where they find the bullet-ridden corpses of four women, three children, and an old man clutching an antique rifle. Civilians, not NVA. Johnny/Fisher looks over to the downed assailant who rushed from the hut. It s a ten year old boy, his bare feet speckled with blood Johnny/Fisher s eyes are wide with terror, he can t face his men as he rasps, Burn it down. Burn everything down

Johnny/Fisher s face white-blurs back into present-day Fisher s face, who s looking at Johnny. Is everything okay? Johnny, who s face has lost color, nods yes. Then turns to one of the staffers, what d you put in this punch, anyway? Everyone laughs, but Bruce pulls Johnny aside. You saw something. What. Johnny shakes his head, then forces a weak smile. A chance. We got a good chance of beating Stillson Johnny excuses himself, says he s feeling tired. He catches Harrison Fisher looking at him as he leaves.

A day later, Sarah stops by Johnny's house to talk. This is the first time they've both been at his house together since the night they slept together, and the tension is new all over again. Sarah lingers on the porch, reluctant to come in. She's upset with herself and with Johnny. She's been killing herself with guilt over their night spent together, especially since Walt's injury and recovery from coma. She's trying to get on with her life the best she can. She knows that they haven't been talking much since that night—that they haven't really talked about that night at all—but Sarah feels the more she talks with Johnny, the more power is given to the secret of what happened, and she's not sure she can keep the secret anymore. Johnny says, "No one's asking you to keep it a secret."

And now Sarah looks at Johnny, angry. "If you want to see me suffer, that's fine. You may even be entitled. But there's no excuse for trying to punish me like this. It's childish. It's not you. Johnny is losing patience, What are you talking about?"

Sarah is talking about Harrison Fisher. Johnny has voted against him since that guy took office in 1988, now suddenly he's trying to join his campaign? Everyone at the Stillson campaign is talking about it—they're all surprised seeing as how Johnny was on the friends list of the Stillson party. But Sarah isn't surprised. She can think of one particular explanation why Johnny would take such an out-of-character action: her. It's hard to tell what angers Johnny more—the fact that Sarah would presume such a thing or the fact that she is, indeed, working for the devil. He tries to tell Sarah that Stillson is dangerous, he's a monster—Johnny has *seen it*. Stay away from him. Sarah is caught off guard by the intensity in Johnny's voice, and a little scared by it. Sarah takes a step back and Johnny takes a step towards her—but then he sees something.

Blood speckles on the ground.

Johnny tenses, his gaze follows them to a pair of small bare feet. A CAMBODIAN BOY, a gunshot wound through his chest, stands in the bushes near Johnny's porch, smiling right at him.

Johnny's heart catches, and then he looks past Sarah, to the bushes across his driveway, where an OLD MAN, the old man killed in that jungle hut in 1972, raises an antique rifle and aims it at Johnny. Johnny yells at Sarah to get down! He tries to push her out of the way, but she pushes back. Get a hold of yourself! she yells, now really frightened. Johnny looks around and sees the boy and the old man have vanished. They were just visions, of course. Johnny, reeling, tries to apologize, but Sarah is already heading for her car, apologizing for upsetting him. Johnny sits down on his steps, shaken, and watches her drive away.

At Archie's diner, a harrowed Johnny meets with Bruce and comes clean about the massacre vision he got off Harrison Fisher. Bruce knew Johnny saw *something* that night, but he wasn't expecting *this*. Then, Johnny tells him about the old man and the boy. He wasn't touching anything when they appeared. This reminds Bruce of Johnny's encounter with Osborne, when Johnny saw himself disappearing. It's like vision osmosis, Bruce suggests. He asks what Johnny is going to do about the deep dark secret he's uncovered. Johnny has thought about that, and he already has an answer: nothing. Harrison Fisher committed an atrocity, and he knows it. Johnny also believes that, otherwise, Fisher is a moral man, and the horrific incident weighs heavily on his mind. He also realizes that if this skeleton is ever taken out of its closet, it will blow any chance of Fisher winning this election and beating Stillson. Bruce understands, but also doesn't understand. So you're just gonna do nothing? Can you do that? What do you mean, can I do that?

Can you just ignore a vision? I mean, don't you have to do something?

Johnny acknowledges that he is doing something: he's making a choice. And that choice is to let history remain history for the sake of the future. But even as he says this, Johnny spots one of the CAMBODIAN WOMEN staring at him from a nearby booth. Her eyes are piercing, her dress is soaked through with blood.

Essentially, Johnny is taking on Fisher's tortured guilt over the incident, which has been swelling through the years since that night. The longer that Johnny tries to suppress his vision, the worse the effect gets: images of the slaughter will invade Johnny's everyday life: the Cambodian victims will appear when he least expects them and in the least likely places; visions of the murderous attack will appear anywhere the sounds of machine-gun fire will startle him jangling his nerves and playing tricks with his mind.

But Johnny resists this torment with all his might, determined to see Harrison Fisher defeat Greg Stillson in the election. He continues to help Fisher's campaign, and is successful at it, though Harrison Fisher's personal attitude toward Johnny has shifted slightly. He picks up on Johnny's nervous behavior, and Johnny feels Fisher staring at him in campaign meetings, out the corner of his eye.

Things heat up when Johnny accompanies Fisher's entourage to Augusta for a reception at the governor's mansion. All of the candidates for the House are there, including the ones from Maine's first district. Sarah is there with Walt, both in formal attire (Walt looks uncomfortable, but he's agreed to accompany Sarah, who wants to participate in the process but feels intimidated by the power-players). One of those power players is AARON HIGGINS, an industrialist supporter of Harrison Fisher, whom Johnny is introduced to personally by Fisher. Johnny is also uncomfortable, feels like his world is closing in around him and then Reverend Purdy approaches. Purdy is upset with the rumors that Johnny is working to get Harrison Fisher elected. It's a free country, Gene says Johnny, admitting the rumors are true and reminding Purdy that, just an election or two ago, he supported Fisher himself. Before Purdy can dig further into this problem, Greg Stillson, looking dashing in a tux, walks over with a smile on his face. He greets Purdy, and doesn't acknowledge any tension between he and Johnny. Later, though, during a formal slow dance, a waltz, Stillson turns away a young lady asking to dance and approaches Johnny, who is standing off to the side of the dance floor, watching Sarah dance

with Walt. Stillson acknowledges the bad blood between he and Johnny, and then casually drops another bomb, You know, when I sent you over to Fisher, I took a gamble. I knew you'd help him against me, but I was pretty sure you'd blow his secret wide open. I mean, whatever he did's gotta be ten times worse than anything I could cook up.

Johnny is shocked to discover that Stillson is much more cunning than he gave him credit for: Stillson wanted Johnny to help Fisher's campaign, and goaded him into it at the diner, because he knew Johnny would uncover Fisher's secret. Greg knows Fisher is hiding a scandal, but he doesn't know what. Talking under the music, he openly tells Johnny about John Mullver, a Navy SEAL whom his associates tracked down on a facts finding mission to dig up dirt on Harrison Fisher. John Mullver was a member of Fisher's SEAL team during the Vietnam War, and was ready to spill his guts about an incident that weighed heavily on his conscience. Before we got the old drunk to talk, he blew his brains out with his Navy issued Colt. This was a damn shame but it whetted Stillson's appetite for the awful truth. Johnny tells Stillson that his plan failed; Fisher has nothing to hide and you just bought him the election. I'm going to see to that.

Stillson calmly tells Johnny that he knows when people have something to hide. Like, for example, he knows that Johnny and Sarah slept together not too long ago. I don't have second sight, but my first sight's pretty good. I know how to read a woman's face, for one thing. It's an open book to me. Then, with a wink, Don't worry. Your secret's safe with me.

Johnny, feeling as if he's losing control, glances down at the wine glass in his hand. It's filled with bright red blood. Johnny drops it and it shatters at Stillson's feet. Suddenly, someone opens fire with a machine-gun nearby and Johnny is RIDDLED WITH BULLETS, his suit is torn to shreds as his body jerks and he drops to his knees, shouting out hoarsely, Burn it! Burn it all!

Johnny looks up to see the slow dance has slowed to a standstill. He is unharmed, the victim of a powerful guilt-triggered vision. His wine has spilled, and everyone heard him cry out like a madman. Including Harrison Fisher, who fixes Johnny with a concerned stare. Johnny quickly moves for the exit. Walt heads after him but Sarah stops him, Johnny's been acting strange lately. Purdy approaches Stillson and asks what happened. Stillson says he doesn't know but, One thing about your pal, Reverend. He's definitely not boring.

Driving away from the ball, Johnny's anger has gotten the better of him. He pounds the steering wheel a little like Greg did in *Destiny*. The fact that Stillson tried to manipulate him has made Johnny want to take the bastard down even more. Damn the visions. However, the visions are intent on damning Johnny: he looks up to see a boy standing in the middle of the road he swerves to avoid him and runs up onto the embankment. We catch a quick glimpse of the boy — it's the Cambodian Boy from the massacre. Johnny sits in his car, parked on the embankment, trying to catch his breath. Another pair of headlights drive up and park behind him. Johnny gets out to clear his head and tell the other driver he's fine. The other driver gets out; it's SONNY ELLIMAN, Stillson's right hand man. Sonny's followed Johnny from the reception. We didn't get a chance to chat. Sonny knows that his boss is playing games with Johnny, but Sonny is uncomfortable with it. He'd just assume Johnny get the fuck out of dodge. Sonny stands very close to Johnny, This is from me to you. Do not stand against us or you will be hurt. You can take that as a threat. Johnny pushes Sonny away, who grins, I was hoping you'd do that. Sonny PUNCHES Johnny, and at the moment of contact Johnny is socked into a VISION: *Johnny becomes Sonny Elliman standing alongside Greg as Greg meets with AARON HIGGINS, the industrialist who is supposedly allied with Harrison Fisher. Higgins sees that the tide is turning in Stillson's favor, and his colleagues would prefer not to back a loser. They can't appeal to the democrats, but maybe Stillson could look out for them on the Hill. Higgins thinks they can probably rustle up an even number, say four million, for Stillson's campaign.*

Greg shakes his head, reproachful, Aaron, you know one of the main platforms I'm running on is campaign finance reform. He holds his grimace and deadpans, So this has to stay between you and me. Aaron Higgins grins, and then Johnny comes out of the vision, picking himself up from the ground and wiping blood from his lip. And I was hoping you'd do that he says to Sonny. Johnny backs to his car, gets in, and peels off.

Night. The Fisher Campaign HQ is relatively quiet, with only the candidate and a few stalwart volunteers working. Those volunteers greet Johnny enthusiastically; they are ecstatic over the latest polls, it looks like the electorate is swinging in Fisher's direction. Johnny finds Fisher in his office. I need to talk to you about something. Fisher looks at Johnny, I know. Johnny stops dead in his tracks. Fisher takes a deep breath, I know that you know. I saw the look in your eyes when we first shook hands. I recognized that look, but I didn't know how. Then, it came to me. It's the look I see in the mirror every day.

Fisher feels compelled to confess to Johnny. He explains how he was part of a Black Ops mission whose objective was to bring down a Khmer Rouge faction thought to be hiding out in a small river village. Turns out their intel was out-dated. The Khmer Rouge had moved on, and some farmers moved in to use their huts. Innocent civilians, looking for a foothold during wartime. They probably thought a tiger was stalking into the village, and they fired off a shot to scare it off. They scared it alright.

Fisher is relieved Johnny is the first person he's told about this incident since it happened. He feels he can't live with this anymore. He's glad that Johnny has given him the courage to tell the truth. Johnny says that Fisher will need even more courage to keep it a secret, because if this comes to light — his chances are gone. Fisher is aware of this everything has its price. Johnny tells him that the price they will pay if Stillson wins the election is much, much greater. Without literally coming out and saying, This guy is going to destroy the world, Johnny tries to impress just how evil Stillson is, how important it is that he not get any more

power than he already has. Johnny goes on to say that he KNOWS how Fisher feels — knows it better than the congressman might think. He sees the innocent, the dead, crying out for justice. He feels the slow-burning torture of buried guilt and he's willing to live with it. For the greater good.

Fisher nods, seems to agree with Johnny, but only half-heartedly. He tells him that Stillson will probably win the election anyway. Johnny says, Not when you hear what I've just learned.

THE FINAL NIGHT OF THE DEBATES — Greg Stillson is on fire, railing against corporate corruption, like Nader at an IMF protest. He accuses Harrison Fisher of serving the interests of big business and not the people.

It is Fisher's turn to respond.

Johnny waits in the audience, tense with anticipation. Fisher leans into his microphone. He asks Greg if, according to his stance, he would accept campaign support from one of the state's largest industrial coalitions, for, say, 10 million dollars? Stillson hesitates, but responds, Absolutely not, reminding the audience of his views on campaign finance reform. Fisher says, How about five million dollars? Stillson again manages to pick Johnny out of the crowd. Fisher has forced Stillson to go on the record that he would not take that kind of money from those kind of people — something we know he was planning on doing, and counting on.

Now, having made a successful strike against Stillson, Fisher drops the bomb. For the answer to the next moderated question about the environment, He announces that he'll be unable to address that as he is withdrawing from the congressional race tonight. A shock goes through the crowd, and Johnny is stunned. Fisher then begins to explain why, exposing the truth behind his bronze star, and talking about carrying the guilt of his actions for so long. As he talks, emotional, Johnny's VISIONS mix with reality — those innocent victims of the military manslaughter walking up on stage and standing behind Fisher as he talks. Fisher's confession particularly affects Sarah, also in the audience. Fisher finishes his speech, and leaves

the auditorium in an uproar; the debates are effectively over for tonight. Johnny looks up the villagers have vanished.

Our final scene finds Johnny back at Archie's Diner reflecting in his booth, and half-expecting Stillson to show up which he does. Stillson thanks Johnny for pushing Fisher into doing the right thing. Although he had to scrap his backdoor deal with Aaron Higgins, effectively losing five million dollars for his campaign it was worth it in the end. Johnny says something to the effect of, we're not at the end, yet. Greg tells Johnny, I see why Purdy is so high on you. You say you see the truth and he thinks you're right. Greg again leans forward to confide a secret, I see the truth, too and I know I'm right. It's a powerful thing, isn't it? To know you're right? Lots of people think it, but only a handful really know.

Johnny can't help sense how crazy Stillson is it's intimidating. He looks away as he asks what Greg wants from him?

Stillson shrugs, If we go toe to toe, I know how that ends it isn't that interesting. But if we go side by side join forces I don't know where that goes. But I gotta tell you, it makes me curious. Stillson leans back, opens his arms, What do you think?

Johnny looks Stillson in the eye, I don't think you'll find it that interesting.

Stillson nods. That's the way it's going to be. He gets up and heads out. Johnny watches him go, thinking about his vision of Armageddon. It's a vision that he's resolved not to ignore, and it's a vision that he'll have to confront sooner than he planned because his secret is blown.

Greg Stillson knows that Johnny Smith is standing in his way. .