



Johnny X

by
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"Johnny X: the pilot"

FADE IN:

Start out of focus; zoom in, zoom out.

CROSSHAIRS, possibly that of a rifle, attempt to survey an empty apartment room. Focus on a few items, casually strewn; a YOYO, strings tangled from usage, a weathered HACKY-SACK, a ~~FRISBEE~~. Also of note: Eastern artifacts, Kristanmurthi or ZEN BOOKS, half-burnt INCENSE STICKS, spiritual shit.

RING, says a phone. RING.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Hands brush shower curtain aside, listens. RING.

MAN (O.S.)
(dread)
Oh boy...

Also, from behind the shower curtain...

WOMAN (O.S.)
Don't...

A beat; RING.

MAN (O.S.)
I have to...

He shuts off the water, grabs a white towel, exits tub.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

A one bedroom apartment; plain, simple. The young man darts out, picks up.

MAN
Yes... ?

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

From its lofty perch, crosshairs focus in, form an "X" over the young man, wet, half-naked, hero of the hour -- JOHNNY X.

JOHNNY (V.O.)
Now, as in now?

The woman, robed, enters the room. She steps between Johnny and the crosshairs, negating a clean shot.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

The woman, we'll call her MONA (25); picture a "Mona," endow her with womanhood and be generous, be very generous.

Mona listens with disdain.

JOHNNY
Five minutes...

He hangs up, turns to her.

JOHNNY
... I'll make it up to you.

MONA
What happened to, "Hafta' take you to this all-night Thai place, best Pad Thai in the city... ?

Johnny pulls her close, trying to assuage, hoping to appease.

JOHNNY
... when I get back, promise.

MONA
(resists)
When you get back, maybe I won't be here.

He kisses her.

MONA (cont'd)
... maybe, maybe I will.

They kiss; a hot and heavy kiss, so hot, so heavy the lamp behind them begins to flicker... glow with intensity... and inexplicably EXPLODES. Mona withdraws from the kiss to see but Johnny pulls her back in.

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

The room goes dark. Gloved hands flick a switch, switch the lens to INFRARED night vision.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

BUZZ, says the front door. BUZZ.

Johnny. Mona. In the half-light, they pull away slowly, dazed, disoriented. The former checks his watch, thinking "five minutes already?"

Checks the peephole. PEEPHOLE POV: a FIST accelerates toward us, fast. The front door EXPLODES, an ARM punching through the wood directly at Johnny's awaiting face.

He ducks, leaps out of the way of a splintered wood. A LEG demolishes the door with a kick, delivers three Homo Erecti: MANNY, MO, JACK.

Instinctively, Johnny steps in front of Mona, pushes her back.

MANNY
(leader; at Mona)
So this is the little punk you left me for?

MONA
Please, Manny. Don't hurt him...

JOHNNY
Manny?

MO	JACK
(w/ IRON KNUCKLES)	(shows BAT)
L-1-let's break his face, Manny.	Batter up.

MANNY
(proffers KNIFE; steps
up)
Baby, what does this guy got, I don't?

Johnny reacts, yanks off his towel. A beat; it registers on everyone that Johnny is now buck-naked. Johnny proceeds to twist the towel into a hard whip.

He measures up Manny, positions himself for the fight. Manny tries not to stare, trying to maintain eye-contact, can't. He succumbs to curiosity, looks down at Johnny's...

... SNAP; Johnny strikes first, strikes Manny in the face, stuns him. He moves in, entangles the towel around Manny's arm and knife. The towel snaps, propels the knife upward, lodges it in the ceiling.

The rest of the Pep Boys roll up their sleeves, raise their respective weapons of pain, charge.

The next several seconds are a whirl of arms and legs, three sets against one, Johnny demonstrating quite elegantly that he can take care of himself; all done with a towel, all done buck-naked. On Mona's reaction of shock; "who is this guy?"

The Pep Boys look bad, look pretty damn silly, out-matched and so on. They lay in a ruin of shattered glass, ripped curtains, broken furniture. Johnny replaces his towel.

Mona stares at him in disbelief, probably seeing him for the first time. Johnny moves to her, she inches away.

MONA
 (a hint of fear)
 What kind of work are you in again?

On Johnny...

EXT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Crosshairs get a clear shot of Johnny. Gloved hands move, lower not a rifle but a recon telescope. Pull back to reveal the Observer on the roof: a WOMAN (25), in a black jumpsuit. She jots down notes on a paper pad.

"JOHNNY X"

EXT. HIP COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Hang-out place. Coffee served hot and bitter.

INT. HIP COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Johnny enters, talking in his cellphone, noticeably upset.

JOHNNY
 ... you have no idea how dangerous sales is, Mona. Gimme a chance to explain, it's complicated. Lemme explain, please. And when I come back, I'll take you to that Thai place...
 (line goes dead)
 ... Mona... Mona?

Johnny grimaces; "dumped again."

INT. MEN'S ROOM - HIP COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

An empty bathroom; Johnny finds a stall at the far end, enters. He proceeds to unzip his pants and urinate. A small MONITOR opens on the tile wall in front of him.

MONITOR
 (computerized female voice)
 Identification unsuccessful. Inadequate sample. Inadequate sample.

Johnny shakes, trembles, squeezes out his last drop, PLOP.

MONITOR (cont'd)
 Identification accepted. Please take a seat.

Johnny obliges, sits. The wall, the toilet seat starts to turn, stops half-way, grinds in its spot. Johnny rolls his eyes. He pounds the side wall with his fist, dislodges it.

The wall revolves, takes him inside, replacing the stall with another toilet.

INT. LABORATORY - LIFE UNLIMITED - NIGHT

TECH people in white lab attire run amok, phones and faxes blaring, screaming, computers churn out data, binomials. The atmosphere is abuzz with panic.

First person to greet Johnny is MURDOCH (40); stiff-upper-lip Brit, accent and all. Military ilk. High-risk group for colon cancer.

He directs Johnny down a labyrinth of hallways. Several AIDES follow behind him like scavenger fish waiting for whale poop.

MURDOCH

What took you so long?

JOHNNY

I was busy being dumped.

MURDOCH

If we weren't so pressed for time, I'd say, "not again." As it is, we gotta get you briefed and dispatched pronto. This is big, Johnny. Code Blue. Breach of security.

JOHNNY

Been meaning to ask you about that: Why Code Blue, why not Code Red?

MURDOCH

We don't have red, we have green, yellow, and blue. No red.

JOHNNY

Why no red?

MURDOCH

Everybody uses red, it's not original.
(re: PHOTODISK in his hand)

I want you to listen to this is...

As they walk, we close in on the photodisk: A MAN (Dr. Sorenson) paces in the background of a LAB, holding a PHONE. Murdoch plays the image.

FREDERIC (V.O.)

I know it's late, darling, but I worked it out. It's in the equation.

EMILY (V.O.)

Oh, Frederic, that's wonderful news. This means I'll see you soon, right... ?

FREDERIC (V.O.)

Two hours, if I leave immediately. I'll break the news to them in the morning.

EMILY (V.O.)

(w/ background noise)

Come home, Frederic. Come home.

FREDERIC (V.O.)

I'm so tired, Emily... I miss you so much.

MURDOCH

He never made it home.

They step into...

INT. HOLOGRAM ROOM - LIFE UMLIMITED - NIGHT

Murdoch feeds the photodisk into the HOLOGRAM MACHINE. A HOLOGRAM IMAGE of the same Man (40); hyper-intelligent, kind, BUCK-TEETH out to there.

MURDOCH

... preeminent in the field of genetics and biotechnology, Dr. Frederic Sorenson has been working with us in a highly sensitive area of research: Synthetic DNA.

Johnny, Murdoch; they stand during the briefing, circling the hologram image of Dr. Sorenson.

JOHNNY

I thought the project was years from completion.

MURDOCH

Was. Dr. Sorenson was working on alternative methodology to circumvent systemic tissue rejection. In layman, we were having a bitch of a time fooling the body to accept the synthetic genetic code.

(beat; re: photodisk)

Till now.

JOHNNY

Someone nabbed him for the equation?

MURDOCH

Tire tracks in the vicinity certainly suggests that. If this "equation" gets into the wrong hands, well, let's say it could irreparably compromise years of research and funding.

Murdoch inserts a PHOTODISK into the computer console, activates yet another HOLOGRAM IMAGE of a WOMAN (30); EMILY SORENSON, beautiful beyond words. Johnny is entranced by her image.

JOHNNY
 (re: odd coupling of
 Beauty and Buck-Teeth)
 His wife?

MURDOCH
 Emily... Dr. Emily Sorenson. She's a
 veterinarian surgeon, renowned in her own
 right, performed the first cross-species
 organ transplant. A true pioneer in her
 field.

Johnny, impressed, steps toward Emily Sorenson, standing literally in Frederic's shoes for a closer look.

MURDOCH
 We think she might be involved. Your gut
 read?

JOHNNY
 C'mon, look at her. Look at him.

MURDOCH
 If indeed we're right, she's probably not
 working alone. There must be a third party
 involved, someone with the resources and
 hardware to know what to do with the
 equation.

An AIDE enters through swinging doors...

AIDE
 Two minutes.
 (points to roof)
 Heliport.

On Johnny, his eyes still riveted on Emily Sorenson. Murdoch leads him out of the Hologram Room.

INT. CORRIDOR - LIFE UMLIMITED - NIGHT

Johnny. Murdoch. They head through the halls of Life Unlimited, towards the elevator.

Up ahead, the DING of an elevator gets Johnny's attention. The door opens, presents to us one STAN(LEY) HIMMELFARB (60); founder of Life Unlimited, a radical hippie in a conservative white LAB COAT. He probably has a Grateful Dead t-shirt underneath and knows the difference between Super Skunk and Purple Hair.

Stan raises a SLINGBLADE, some folks call it a kaiser blade, we call it a slingblade, Johnny calls it 'a sharp projectile, which Stan promptly throws full force.

Johnny reacts; all AMBIENT SOUND goes silent, all save the WHIR of the blade as it twirls toward him. He leans sideways, dodges the blade by inches, all done in SLOW MO or hyper speed, depending on whose perspective.

The blade lodges in the wall with a TWANG. Stan is undeterred; he proffers yet another slingblade, throws it again. This time, Johnny catches it by the wooden handle, in mid-flight; all of this is seen in hyper speed from Stan's perspective.

A beat; what's going on here?

STAN
Nice catch, my boy.

JOHNNY
(not into it)
Thanks, Stan.

They've done this before. Murdoch rolls his eyes at the silly routine.

STAN
(re: blade in the wall)
Try. Bring it back.

Johnny, perfunctory, turns and focuses on the blade, trying to will it out of it's spot; no go, the blade remains unmoved. He repositions himself, tries again... POP; a hall light bursts from some unseen energy.

On Johnny; his heart just isn't in it. Stan; a tad of concern.

STAN (cont'd)
(to Murdoch)
Can we have a minute, Roger.

Murdoch points to his watch, "hurry," and exits.

STAN (cont'd)
I take it the date didn't go well. Mona, was it?
(off Johnny's nod)
It's hard to make them understand.

JOHNNY
It's not just that. Lately... I don't know, I can't seem to focus the Energy. The job, what I do, I feel like I'm just going through the motions. I mean, day in, day out, how do you do it, Stan?

Stan shakes his head, leads him through the hall, past more pictures of chemical bonds, chromosomes on the wall.

STAN (cont'd)

Sometimes, I wake up mornings and I wonder myself, forming Life Unlimited, putting my colleagues in constant danger because of the work we do here.

(beat)

Poor, poor Frederic. Is it all worth it? And then I think about the research we do, the breakthroughs we've made in science, technology, improving quality of life. I think about Frederic... and his work with synthetic DNA, being able to alter genetic information to eradicate diseases at their inception, leukemia, diabetes... baldness.

(beat; at Johnny)

I guess that's what keeps me going, Johnny. Day in, day out. The work that we do. A lot caffeine doesn't hurt either.

As they turn to leave, Johnny finds the security camera up on the wall, holds on it for a beat, as if looking directly through the lens. On camera, as we...

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LIFE UNLIMITED - NIGHT

... enter the monitor in the control room; we see Johnny holding his gaze on the screen. He shrugs it off, leaves.

Pull back to reveal the Woman from the rooftop, still in her black jumpsuit; she is taken aback by the act, doesn't know if he can see her. Give her a name; MIA (25), pretty, tough, think La Femme Nikita.

MURDOCH (O.S.)

He sensed your presence, but not to worry. He can't put your face to it. Johnny has what we call the "X" factor. 13th Century Shaolin monks call it...

MIA

(astonished)

Chi...

Murdoch; impressed.

MIA (cont'd)

... Life force. It's in everything, plants, minerals, it's the energy of all life. He who can harness this Chi is capable of amazing...

(MORE)

MIA (cont'd)
 (getting it)
 ... earlier tonight, the lamp.

MURDOCH

Lately, he hasn't been himself and that worries me. I can't take the risk, not this mission. Despite his incredible talents, he's undisciplined, which is where you come in. Your military credentials can be of great value.

CUT TO:

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

A SHOTGUN EXPLODES. GLASS shatters, WALLS peppered with HOLES, BIRDS in ORNATE CAGES FLAPPING, TWEET-TWEETING out of control. Johnny finishes a somersault, ducks behind a love seat.

MRS. SORENSON

(trying to be calm)

I'm scared and that makes me very dangerous.

Beautifully defiant Mrs. Emily Sorenson wields the shotgun from the kitchen, keeping him pinned.

MRS. SORENSON

(hysterical)

What have you done with my husband, what have you done to my Frederic?

JOHNNY

Your husband and I work for the same people.

MRS. SORENSON

You have to do better than that.

JOHNNY

Mrs. Sorenson. I want to find out where he is as much as you do. You just have to trust me.

(confident)

Besides, you just fired your two shots.

Johnny takes a step, a shotgun BLAST pulverizes the love seat. He dives for cover.

A BOX of shotgun SHELLS. Mrs. Sorenson and her ammo.

MRS. SORENSON

I reloaded.

On Johnny; "this is going to be tougher than he thinks."

JOHNNY

Mrs. Sorenson, is this going to take all day?

MRS. SORENSON (O.S.)

S'long as it takes.

A beat.

JOHNNY

That case, Mrs. Sorenson...

(embarrassed)

... can I use your bathroom?

A beat; no response.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

On Mrs. Sorenson; "did I hear him right?"

JOHNNY (O.S.)

I had a Big Gulp on the way over, I really need to go.

She still doesn't know what to say.

JOHNNY (O.S.; cont'd)

You have the shotgun, Mrs. Sorenson.

(beat; no answer)

Please... ?

CUT TO:

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Sorenson; in the kitchen, armed with her shotgun, aiming it at a BATHROOM DOOR. Inside, the SLOSH of urine against water is heard loud and clear.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Close on a toilet bowl, as a STREAM sloshes the basin. Follow the stream up to reveal a rube Goldberg DEVICE coming from the sink faucet. Close on the OPEN WINDOW.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Sorenson; "just how big is a Big Gulp?"

MRS. SORENSON

You can come out now.

A finger taps her shoulder from the back. She whirls around. It's Johnny, having just come in from the KITCHEN WINDOW. She raises the shotgun, shocked.

JOHNNY

(raises arm)

I could've disarmed you but I didn't.

(beat; she backs away)

Mrs. Sorenson, you and I are in the same boat: We both want your husband back.

Problem is, I want you to trust me...

just as I want to be able to trust you.

She considers this gesture, rethinks her predicament.

MRS. SORENSON

So how do you suppose we do that?

JOHNNY

I'd like to ask you some questions.

CUT TO:

EXT. SORENSON ESTATE - DAY

"Boris" the Cow grazes in the GREEN GRASS, under a SKY OF BLUE. Mia, via telescope and behind the protection of "Boris," tries to follow the action inside.

MIA

(to watch)

She's got the gun on him, I'm going in...

(stops, notices something)

... she's crying.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Canaries TWEET-TWEETING in the living room. Johnny. Mrs. Sorenson, distraught, sobbing...

MRS. SORENSON

... I knew he shouldn't've left unaccompanied. I just... it's just I hadn't seen him in weeks.

JOHNNY

Mrs. Sorenson, as you know...

(a la Murdoch)

... if this "equation" gets into the wrong hands, it could irreparably compromise years of research and funding...

MRS. SORENSON

Is that all you people care about, this damn equation? My husband is missing, he could be dead, or worse!

Oh Johnny; "remorse" best describes his state of mind.

MRS. SORENSON
The dedication he put in his work, the personal sacrifices, you can't possibly understand it.

On Johnny; he does understand it.

JOHNNY
I know he is a genius.

MRS. SORENSON
Genius? You don't understand what it means. To Frederic, it means enormous responsibility.

(beat)
Have you any idea how hard it was for him to bear the weight of that burden?

On Johnny; empathy. He sees Frederic's PICTURE over the fireplace, goes over to it. It's a wedding picture of the terribly odd-looking couple.

MRS. SORENSON (cont'd)
God, what a brilliant mind. And so utterly selfless.

(welling with emotion)
Deep down, all he wanted was to come home and just sit on the porch, idle away the afternoon in my arms...

JOHNNY
Quiet...

MRS. SORENSON
(raises shotgun)
What?

JOHNNY
(listening)
Quiet...

Johnny retrieves a MICRO-DISK player from his pocket, plays it...

EMILY (V.O.)
Come home, Frederic. Come home.

FREDERIC (V.O.)
I'm so tired, Emily... I miss you so much...

Johnny rewinds the disk, repeats.

FREDERIC (V.O.)
I'm so tired, Emily... I miss you so much...

Again, rewind, repeat.

FREDERIC (V.O.)

I'm so tired, Emily... I miss you so much....

Johnny focuses in on the disk, drowns out all ambient noise save the recording of "I'm so tired... I miss you so much." He rewinds the disk, extracts "I'm so tired... I miss you so much" and picks up a background noise.

Goes like this... "TWEET TWEET." The canaries in the house.

Again, Johnny rewinds the disk, drowns out the noise, the words, finds "TWEET TWEET." The birds. He repeats the process, drowns out the "TWEET TWEET," uncovering a symphony of tiny HEARTBEATS, accompanied by a high-pitch HUM.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The living room. Johnny scans the room, listens. Again, he drowns out all ambient noise save the TWEET TWEET of Mrs. Sorenson's canaries. He drowns out the TWEET TWEET, finds their collective heartbeats.

Emily enters from the kitchen, curious.

Johnny is listening for the HUM. No HUM. Puzzled, he scans the room, checking the inventory of colorful canaries in their respective cages.

He finds an EMPTY CAGE by the phone.

JOHNNY

What happened to...

EMILY

... Sylvester. His artificial heart gave out yesterday. It hasn't been a good week for me.

JOHNNY

Artificial heart?

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A HOLE in the ground, freshly dug up.

INT. BASEMENT - BARN - DAY - LATER

"Sylvester" the Canary under the operating light. Johnny. Mrs. Sorenson; she holds up a tattered artificial HEART to a magnifying glass.

MRS. SORENSON
I don't understand, it looks like the
heart... exploded.

JOHNNY
(a closer look)
Or, self-destructed.

MRS. SORENSON
What do you mean? I designed the heart
myself, it couldn't...

He takes a tweezer, removes a tiny DEVICE from the heart.

JOHNNY
Is this part of the design?

MRS. SORENSON
What is that?

JOHNNY
(realization)
We got a fancy term in my business for it:
It's called a Bug. You designed the heart
but who built it?

MRS. SORENSON
(perplexed)
Zorcom?

CUT TO:

EXT. GRASS FIELD - DAY

POV: an unassuming WAREHOUSE COMPOUND. A large grain SILO looms
at the center of premise, the name "Zorcom" etched unimpressively
across its side.

TWO ARMED MOTORCYCLE GUARDS circumvent the perimeter, making
their rounds; they communicate to each other via CELL PHONES.

JOHNNY
(to his WATCH)
Zorcom funded her research last year in
organ transplant. They've been using her to
get to Frederic.

MURDOCH (V.O.)
Zorcom's relatively new, we don't have
anything on them. Be careful.

Johnny rolls up his sleeves, reveal two X-K5 STAR CANNONS. He
presses a few switches, AMMO CARTRIDGES lock and load.

EXT. SILO - DAY

Via Mia's telescope, we see Johnny take out a GUARD. He props the guard up to a RETINA SECURITY DOOR, uses the guard's eye for entry. (Or, told via Mia's play-by-play.)

INT. MAIN LAB - DAY

Dark at this hour, dark save a flickering COMPUTER MONITOR; it features a familiar image of BLUE SKY and GREEN GRASS.

Johnny enters, beholds the set-up. A Machine, the SYNAPTIC IMAGING SCANNER, rotates via TRACKS suspended from the ceiling. The scanner projects a RED LASER GRID onto a GLASS TANK below, cylindrical in shape, bubbling on an examining pedestal.

In the tank and suspended in saline is a HUMAN BRAIN. Johnny takes a beat to process his thoughts, catch his breath. The blue sky and green grass seems familiar, is familiar; it's the view seen from the front porch of the Sorenson estate.

The scanner transmits brain activities onto the monitor; presently, it is thinking of "home." On Johnny; shock, disbelief, utter terror. Realization hits him like a wet brick: This is Dr. Frederic Sorenson.

Then, as if communicating, the blue sky and green grass is replaced by the IMAGE OF EMILY SORENSON.

Johnny approaches the tank, transfixed on The Brain. He walks into the path of the Machine, into the field of laser as it rotates around the track. On the monitor and unbeknownst to him, the scanner reads his brain. In quick, disjointed succession, we see:

... the tropical greenery of Southeast Asia, tall grass and cloudy blue sky... the image changes. We see conflagration, MORTAR fire, we see villages being decimated by flames... we see a CRYING CHILD, clothes tattered, parents missing...

... we see a hazy image of a faceless WOMAN, back turned, her hair flowing like silk...

INT. CONTROL ROOM - LIFE UNLIMITED - NIGHT

Murdoch. Stan. On edge. An Aide enters, hands Murdoch a slip of paper. Murdoch reads, turns ashen.

MURDOCH
(hands to Stan)
Zorcom's annual stock report. Fifty-one
percent is owned by Zeitgeist Industries.

Stan reacts...

STAN
 (panic; into mic)
 Mia, get Johnny out of there. Abort mission
 now!

MIA (V.O.)
 Too late. He's in.

Forboding best describes the mood. Hold on Murdoch. Stan.

STAN
 Uwe...

INT. DARK ROOM - ZEITGEIST INDUSTRIES - NIGHT

Pull back to reveal a mop of bright RED HAIR as it descends from a ceiling contraption; it SNAPS onto a METAL KNOB atop a bald head. Behold, UWE (OOVA) OPPENHEIMER (50), identity hidden behind the bulk of his metal chair. A gigantic Muscle Man stands beside him, we'll call him BOLO (30); he holds up a mirror to his superior.

Uwe observes Johnny's stealthy work with calm interest. On monitor, Johnny slows, senses on hyper-drive, sensing that he's being watched.

INT. DARK ROOM - ZEITGEIST INDUSTRIES - NIGHT

On Uwe's monitor: the same image of a crying child, clothes tattered, parents missing... an image of Young Stanley Himmelfarb, in khaki fatigues...

BOLO
 (anxious)
 Gocckk!

UWE
 Not yet, Bolo... not yet...

INT. MAIN LAB - DAY

Johnny. The Brain; in its glass prison.

JOHNNY
 Time to go home.

The monitor, again, flashes blue sky and green grass. Johnny proceeds to unhook the tank from The Machine. ALARM screams, screaming intruder alert. RED LIGHTS flash, summon GUARDS to the scene.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Guards rushing to the scene.
- B) Johnny pins them back via flurry of stars from his X-K5.

C) Johnny grabs the tank.

D) Uwe observes via monitor from his dark lair, impressed.

INT. MAIN LAB - DAY

Johnny kicks, knocks a GUARD across the room, landing under the red laser grid of the Synaptic Scanner. On the monitor, we catch the Guard's unconscious brain activity: CINDY CRAWFORD HOLDING A LEATHER WHIP.

JOHNNY

(looking for way out)

All right, think, think, think.

(at Brain)

You're the brain, got any bright ideas?

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Johnny. The Brain.

Lost in the labyrinth of Zorcom/Zeitgeist, holding a team of GUARDS at bay. FIRENZI, the leader of the Guards, keeps his men holstered.

FIRENZI

Careful, you don't want to drop that.

JOHNNY

Stay back, or the brain gets it.

Over the INTERCOM, Uwe speaks...

UWE (V.O.)

It's a privilege to finally meet Life Unlimited's Prodigal Son. I'm Uwe Oppenheimer, founder of Zeitgeist Industries. I see you've already met Dr. Sorenson.

INT. DARK ROOM - ZEITGEIST - DAY

Uwe. Johnny is on the monitor.

JOHNNY

You killed him!

UWE

He lost control of his vehicle. Very unfortunate for all of us. Had he surrendered quietly, none of this would've been necessary. Dr. Sorenson would've gladly cooperated once he understood a simple Zeitgeist conceit which Life Unlimited is incapable of understanding: The business of the World is Business.

(MORE)

UWE (cont'd)

Forget government and nations, the world doesn't turn unless we, the corporations and banks, tell it to turn. Think Microsoft, think Time-Warner and General Electric, think Zeitgeist Industries. Don't you see, Johnny, it's all about business.

JOHNNY (V.O.)

What ever happened to peace, love, and understanding?

INT. DARK ROOM - ZEITGEIST INDUSTRIES - DAY

Uwe is not amused. He remotes his monitor, replays Johnny's synaptic images recorded earlier.

UWE

You see, Johnny. Unlike Stanley Himmelfarb, I understand you. Beneath the wisecracks and casual irreverence...

On the monitor; the image of the crying child.

UWE

... there is a child...

On the monitor; the image of conflagration, a village being decimated.

UWE

... pained by loss, haunted with regrets...

On the monitor; the image of a woman, her long silky hair flowing.

UWE

... terrified of being alone.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Johnny, spooked, backs down the corridor towards the ELEVATOR. Remember, he's still holding The Brain, keeping Firenzi and his guards at bay.

UWE (V.O.)

It's a lonely business, Johnny. I don't have to tell you that. But it doesn't have to be. I can open doors for you...

DING; the elevator door opens, revealing three ELEVATOR GUARDS. Johnny is surrounded.

JOHNNY

(threatening to throw)
Shot-put!

FIRENZI
Hold your positions!

JOHNNY
(to Firenzi; re:
elevator Guards)
You with the booming voice, get them out.

Firenzi waves them out. Johnny stops the last Guard.

JOHNNY (cont'd)
(his hands are full)
Kindly press the first floor, please.

EXT. ZORCOM WAREHOUSE - DAY

Mia, via watch phone, does the play-by-play of the escape to Murdoch.

MIA
He's out, he's out.

MURDOCH (V.O.)
Do you see Dr. Sorenson?

MIA
He's alone. But he's got some kind of...
tank.

O.S. MOTORCYCLE NOISE... followed by a CRASH.

MIA (cont'd)
He just took out the motorcycle guard. He's
on the motorcycle.

MURDOCH (cont'd)
Where's he going?

MIA
I have no idea...

MOTORCYCLE REVS O.S., fades out.

CUT TO:

EXT. SORENSEN ESTATE - NIGHT

The motorcycle off the side of the house. "Boris" the Cow lingers in the foreground. In the background, Johnny paces on the front porch.

EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

The front door opens. Mrs. Sorensen steps out, her eyes swollen red from a fresh cry. Johnny turns to her, doesn't know what to say. A tense beat.

MRS. SORENSEN

You weren't supposed to bring him here,
were you?

JOHNNY

(re: porch)
I don't think there's anywhere else he'd
want to be.

Mrs. Sorensen fights back tears.

JOHNNY (cont'd)

(pacing)
They'll be coming for him.

MRS. SORENSEN

What do we do? We gotta hide him.

JOHNNY

(stops; light bulb)
I got it!

CUT TO:

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Peace. Quiet. Pre-storm calm. A rooster CROWS.

Red sunlight spills over the horizon, announces dawn, bathes a singular figure on the porch.

A stir in the wind, a disturbance in the air, something gets his attention; this is it. He goes inside.

INT. MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Living room. Johnny. Straight and sturdy. Closes his eyes, at peace with the forces that be. Chi kicks in. The room falls SILENT. ZERO AMBIENT NOISE.

INT. MAIN HOUSE - DAY

On Johnny; eyes still closed, knowing full well something ill this way comes.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

ZEITGEIST TROOPS, to be exact. They come in VANS, directed by Firenzi. As they mobilize, we hold on one particular VAN; a FIGURE crawls out from under, this figure being none other than Mia; she hitched a ride via van chasis.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

On Johnny and in SLO-MO; he opens his eyes, just in time to see the windows and doors EXPLODE. (Slo-mo ends and the action begins.) Five Guards leap in, making mess and mayhem.

Fight goes like this. Johnny takes them all on, pulls a few pages of Hong Kong Action, pulls rugs from under a Guard, breaks furniture, side-kicks a Guard out the window and onto the porch; somewhere David Carradine is firing his agent.

Fight goes into the kitchen. Broomstick makes a handy weapon, hurts like hell, just ask the Guard who gets it across the back; it breaks in two, doubles the pleasure, doubles the pain. Johnny kicks a knife out of a Guard's hand and lodges it into the roof, brings him down with a refrigerator door.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Five Guards en route to the action. The Last Guard, a little slow, gets intercepted by an elbow from behind, goes down. Mia takes his CELLPHONE, dials 911.

INT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

Johnny frisbees a frying pan across the room, drops the last guard. He turns, catches the barn door open and under seige. He's out the window...

EXT. FARM HOUSE - DAY

... and running, running for the barn.

INT. BARN - DAY

Johnny be one, taking on four. It goes like this. The Guards get a few punches in, get Johnny with a few good shots to the face, d'poor guy is tired.

EXT. BARN - DAY

Five Guards encroach on the barn, tightening the noose on our hero inside. The FIFTH GUARD waves the FOURTH GUARD over to the back, lets him lead, then promptly levels him with the butt of his gun; the watch on the Fifth Guard tells us it's Mia.

INT. BARN - DAY

Enter second wind. Guards start to go down, one by one. Imagine pulleys catapulting Guards onto haystacks, imagine rakes making merry and guards going down, imagine all the people, living for the day.

The last Guard drops. Johnny takes a breather, only to be clocked by Firenzi from behind. Johnny recovers, can't hurt The Man In The Dark Suit with his punches, kicks.

EXT. BARN - DAY

The Fifth Guard (Mia) drags a THIRD GUARD behind the barn, having just decked him via the same ruse, depositing him on top of the Fourth Guard.

INT. BARN - DAY

Reveal Firenzi's chest, exposed via a ripped shirt; it's METAL-PLATED, surgically implanted to his body. Johnny; "holy cow." He spots a METAL BUCKET, steps into it, reinforcing his kicks. Funny sound metal makes against metal, sounds like BAM BAM BAM...

EXT. BARN - DAY

... Firenzi sails through the barn wall, his metal chest impressed with the bucket's circular print.

EXT. CORN FIELD - DAY

Johnny takes flight into the corn field; the TALL GRASS allows him to hide, seek, catch his breath.

He closes his eyes. Again; silence, no ambient noise. He opens his eyes, rises from his stoop to peer above the grass. What he sees is this: a circle of Guards, Firenzi included, GUNS aimed at his vital organs.

Firenzi walks up, decks Johnny with an elbow.

FIRENZI

Obligatory physical abuse, no offense.

JOHNNY

(bleeding lips)

None taken.

FIRENZI

Where's the good doctor?

JOHNNY

(re: loose tooth)

I think a dentist would be more appropriate right now.

Firenzi gives a hand signal to his men.

FIRENZI

I don't think your friend here shares your sense of humor.

Johnny looks up, realizes that "friend" refers to Mia, demasked and with a bloodied lip, in the custody of a Zeitgeist Guard. He holds a GUN at her head. On Johnny; ???

FIRENZI (cont'd)

Tell us or she gets a permanent headache.

JOHNNY

(Chi recognition?)

You. What're you doing here?

MIA

Murdoch sent me in. Reinforcement.

JOHNNY

Reinforcement?

(incredulous)

You? You're my reinforcement?

MIA

You got a problem with that?

JOHNNY

Do I have a problem with that, you're damn right I have a problem with that. Since when do I need back-up?

MIA

In case you haven't noticed, your performance hasn't been exactly reassuring.

JOHNNY

My performance... ? Reassuring... ? Let me tell something about my performance...

FIRENZI

(FIRES shot in air)

Enough, already. What is this, The Young and The Restless? Where is the brain?

MIA

(realizing; shock)

Dr. Sorenson... ?

Firenzi signals the Guard to cock the gun.

JOHNNY

All right, all right...

(beat, cornered)

... you really want this brain, don't you?

MIA

(defiant)

You have your orders. Don't do it on account me.

JOHNNY

How 'bout I do it on account of I don't
want to get killed?

MIA

How 'bout you grow some balls...

FIRENZI

(fed up)

Kill 'em!

SLAM; the barn door opens and delivers Mrs. Sorenson and the tank.

EMILY

Please... don't hurt them.

Johnny feigns disappointment, mocks dejection. Firenzi signals a Guard over, wrests the tank from Mrs. Sorenson; she sadly watches it go.

FIRENZI (cont'd)

(to a TECH)

Make sure it's alive?

A black VAN pulls up. The Indian Tech leaps out the back with a PORTABLE SYNAPTIC IMAGING SCANNER. On Mrs. Sorenson, on Mia, on Johnny: Game Over.

The Indian Tech switches on the scanner, projects a red laser grid on the Brain. A monitor shows STATIC, black and white. He adjusts the knob, re-positions the scanner, gets the BLUE SKY and GREEN GRASS. The Indian Tech gives a thumbs up.

At this time and in the distance, SIRENS SCREAM; sounds like the cops Mia had dialed for.

Firenzi waves a "let's go" to his troops; they board their black vans, hurry out of there. He turns to Johnny, Mrs. Sorenson, Mia; he's the last remaining one. As he backs toward his Lincoln...

FIRENZI (cont'd)

Courtesy of Zeitgeist Industries...

... he FIRES a shot at Mrs. Sorenson.

On Johnny, in SLO-MO; mouths a frightened "NO!", steps in front of her. CHI. SILENCE. ZERO AMBIENT NOISE. All we hear is the WHIRL of the BULLET SLUG as it SPINS out of the barrel with extreme prejudice.

On Johnny, as he is struck with a sudden FLASH of repressed memory. He sees the raging FIRE, as seen at Zeitgeist's lab via the Synaptic Imaging Scanner.

Johnny forms an "X" with his arms, then straightens it as he shifts his body sideways. The bullet is deflected into the sleeve of his shirt; it runs along his arm, exits his shirt, pierces the barn wall. (Slo-mo ends.)

Firenzi, stunned by this feat, FIRES a shot at Mia. Again, another FLASH of memory. A BOY, no doubt Johnny, crying before the aforementioned conflagration. On Johnny, giving it all he's got; his Chi STOPS the bullet before it exits the barrel. Firenzi's rifle IMPLODES.

Firenzi retreats, tail between his legs, thoroughly frightened by this "X" phenomenon. Zeitgeist retreats in a cloud of dust.

Mia, Mrs. Sorenson, eyes wide, mouths open. Johnny, dazed from the experience, drained from the pain of his memory, spent of all energy; he collapses to his knees.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN HOUSE - DAY

Mrs. Sorenson waves goodbye to a pair of FIRETRUCKS; a false alarm. She turns, smiles at Johnny, who sits on the porch, staring at blue sky, green grass. Mia exits the house, joins Johnny.

MIA
Murdoch's on his way.

Johnny; no response.

MIA (cont'd)
(pacing nervously)
He's been apprised of the situation and I
can assure you he's not happy.

Again, nothing from Johnny. He simply stares out at the field.

MIA (cont'd)
How can you be so calm about this? We
failed. The mission is a failure. Does that
mean anything to you? The equation is lost.

Johnny's POV: The field, Mrs. Sorenson, walking alongside
"Boris" the Cow.

JOHNNY
Isn't that the most beautiful sight?

MIA
What're you talking about? Look at her, the
poor lady, she must be so devastated.

JOHNNY
 (turns to her; smiles) '
 You don't get it, do you?

EXT. FIELD - DAY

They turn to the field. Mrs. Sorenson stands by "Boris," who grazes in the green grass.

MIA (V.O.)
 Get what? She's obviously grief-stricken
 and delirious... she's commiserating with a
 cow.

Close on "Boris" and a peculiar detail seen for the first time:
 FRESH STITCHES across his forehead.

JOHNNY (V.O.)
 This is going to be a little complicated to
 explain.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

The air THROBS, delivers a helicopter. Murdoch greets Johnny with
 a frown of disapproval.

JOHNNY
 I know, I know.

He boards the helicopter. Mia follows suit.

MURDOCH
 Will someone please tell me what's going
 on?

MIA
 (knowing)
 It's a little complicated to explain. Sir.

INT. HELICOPTER - DAY

Airborne. Johnny; waiting for the axe, biting his nails. Murdoch;
 restraining the ire within. Mia simply waits for the bomb to
 drop.

JOHNNY
 Well... all right. I know what you're
 thinking, I messed up. The equation, the
 brain, yes, very important. You want to
 know where the Brain is and...

PILOT
(to Murdoch)
Sir...

MURDOCH
Not now...

JOHNNY
... and, uh, more
importantly, the equation...

PILOT
(re: below)
Sir, you really need to see
this...

JOHNNY
... so, what I really want to
say is...

Murdoch, annoyed, stares out the window.

AERIAL VIEW: The Sorenson Estate. As the helicopter swoops over the field, we see Dr. Frederic Sorenson (Boris) grazing the perfect image of the equation...

$$x = \int 2\pi/\Delta...$$

... onto the green green grass, under the sky of blue. Murdoch can't believe his eyes, the equation everyone has been looking for. Johnny takes a look for himself, sees the equation, flabbergasted, does a "there is a God," sees Mrs. Sorenson, on the porch, waving to them.

JOHNNY (cont'd)
(all smiles; confidently
now)
... what I want to say is: Have I ever let
you down before?

CUT TO:

INT. DARK ROOM - ZEITGEIST INDUSTRIES - DAY

Uwe sits in his metal chair, basking in the glory of his kingdom. He is not wearing his wig; the metal knob protrudes from his fleshy cranium, surgically implanted for his hair pieces.

Bolo pours wine, serving lunch.

BOLO
Gocckk! Gocckk!

UWE
(mouth full of lunch)
Yes, Bolo. It has been an eventful week. A
little disappointing, I suppose. This
Johnny Z...

BOLO
Gocckk!

UWE
 X, yes. Johnny X. He's very resourceful.
 (sighs; spoons another
 bite of lunch)
 Just as well...

Uwe holds up a ZIPLOCK BAG labeled "Dr. Frederic Sorenson"; it contains several strands of HAIR.

UWE (cont'd)
 Send this down to Genetics Division.
 (re: his lunch)
 You know Bolo, cow brain doesn't taste half
 bad.

BOLO
 Gocckk!

INT. LOFT - DAY

Nice, spacious, a cool place to set the show. Be nicer if it were in San Francisco. A freight ELEVATOR grinds to a halt, delivers Johnny to his new home. He drops his duffle bag, sees a NOTE on the table: "We took the liberty to move your clothes in. P.S. Hope you don't mind the new living arrangement."

Johnny stands in his new pad, back from a mission; alone again. He checks out the spread, walking over to a nice wood dresser. He opens it up, does a double-take, pulls out a BRA. He holds it up, speechless.

The elevator starts to move, GRIND. Johnny turns, watches the elevator door open. We see high-heel PUMPS walk out, attached to beautiful legs and a slender, feline body; we know her to be Mia. She holds her own DUFFLE BAG, just back from the job.

This is the first time we see her out of her black reconnaissance gear and she looks great; striking features and hair flowing like silk.

MIA
 So you're my new roommate.

On Johnny, holding her bra and speechless; "you?"

MIA (cont'd)
 I got matching panties if you want to try
 the whole set.

On Johnny X...

FADE OUT:

THE END