

EXT./INT. GREEN JALOPY - DETROIT, MICHIGAN - NIGHT

A green 80's Ford Tempo covered in Bondo and rust spots, speeds erratically between busy traffic. A single left hand effortlessly secures a very heavy old STOVE on top of the roof.

The left hand belongs to CORDELL "CRISPY" JORDAN, late 30's, thin, bronze skin, short twists and eerily emotionless. His pupils have completely disappeared into the top of his head. All that remains are the disturbing WHITES of his eyes.

Detroit commuters lay on their horns. His right-hand jerks the steering wheel erratically, barely avoiding catastrophe. The green jalopy scrapes against parked cars but hauls ass up the road.

EXT. SR21 GARDEN APARTMENTS - LATER

The old Detroit building façade is mustard yellow with burnt orange doors. The parking lot is littered with trash, used condoms, and an assortment of abused furniture.

These are less than modest single-level apartments. They resemble a converted low-budget motel without a front desk. Time and people have not been kind.

The green jalopy is parked crookedly in front of apartment #103.

INT. SR21 GARDEN APARTMENTS #103 - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The small two-bedroom apartment is decorated with a peeling linoleum kitchen floor, pressed wood cabinets, and a worn gray carpet. Mixed bargain furniture completes the décor.

TYREE JORDAN, 12-years-old, bald fade, sits on the ripped pleather couch. He hovers over a laptop. Sultry music and female moans sing softly through his wireless headphones.

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. The front door rattles. Tyree is startled by the sound and quickly shuts off his laptop. He rests his headphones across the back of his neck.

TYREE

Who is it?

KNOCK. KNOCK. He rises from his seat to see who is seeking entry. He pulls out a gun and cautiously peers through the spy hole. Convinced it's safe, he slowly opens the door.

EXT./INT. SR21 GARDEN APARTMENTS #103 - CONTINUOUS

Tyree looks around and down. The old stove sits at the front door with Crispy curled up on top. Crispy's sleeping like a baby.

TYREE

Crispy...Crispy, wake up.

He leans out the door and SLAPS Crispy's face hard. Crispy jumps to attention and looks down at the stove he's sitting on. He rubs his face confused.

CRISPY

What did you hit me for? Hold up.
I'm home?

Tyree gives a 'same ol' shit', look as he hides his gun.

TYREE

Trash on top of junk. Did you spend
our money on weed again?

CRISPY

No. I bought this stove.

Crispy hops down from atop the stove.

TYREE

Sure you did. Orlando is looking
for you. He said to tell you to pay
the back rent in two days or he's
kicking us out.

CRISPY

Orlando ain't gon' do nothing. We
got at least three months before he
can start the eviction process.
Don't answer the door if he stops
by again.

TYREE

He's the landlord. He got a key.
Why can't you just pay the rent?

CRISPY

Don't worry about what I do. Help
me move this stove.

Tyree rolls his eyes and goes inside. Crispy fights the stove into their apartment.

CRISPY (CONT'D)

Your momma home?

TYREE (O.S.)
No. She got a real job.

INT. SR21 GARDEN APARTMENTS #103 - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Crispy removes their non-working stove and readies the replacement. There is a very obvious problem. It is too wide for the space. Tyree heavily exhales, annoyed.

TYREE
Wow. A smart person would measure their old stove before they bring junk home.

CRISPY
I got it. I'll make it fit.

Crispy tries to force it into the small space by kicking it. It won't budge. He repeatedly tries to shove and kick it into submission. Tyree flops on the couch.

TYREE
You're an embarrassment. I don't know why my momma stayed with your clown ass.

Frustration and anger overtake Crispy. He quickly stands over Tyree with his fists clenched.

CRISPY
Call me a clown again. I'll beat that ass! You gon' show me some respect.

Tyree stands with his muscles tense. He's not backing down.

TYREE
Go ahead. Do it! Hit me so they send your black ass back to jail.

Crispy closes his eyes. He opens them, relaxes, and sits at the kitchen table. Tyree storms into his room. He returns with a backpack and marches to the front door.

TYREE (CONT'D)
I ain't gon' let you make us homeless. We don't need you.

Tyree slams the door on his way out. Crispy pulls out a vape pen. He stares at the replacement stove that won't fit.

CRISPY

How in the hell did I get this home?

He strolls to his refrigerator, opens it, and debates his options. There's not much to choose from. He hits a vape pen.

He's distracted by reading expiration dates and doesn't notice XYLA in the form of KAYLA JORDAN, fifteen, afro-puffs, materialize from thin air behind the refrigerator door.

XYLA

He really hates your ass. I got us home by the way. You're welcome.

Crispy slams the door shut and backs away. He stumbles but regains his balance.

CRISPY

Kayla! Why do you keep fucking with me?

XYLA

First off, calm down. I'm not your little sister. My name is Xyla.

CRISPY

Xyla? Naw, you're a guilt ghost.

XYLA

Wrong. Ghost ain't real. I'm a symbiotic parasite permanently attached to your brainstem. I can be any form from your memories. I'm lucky your little sister was in there. Those porn outfits looked uncomfortable. My purpose is to keep us alive until you're done.

CRISPY

Done with what?

XYLA

Selecting the forty souls to heal, dum-dum.

He rubs the back of his head. His face lights up with a memory.

CRISPY

That's right, that red lady said you would tell me about...forty something.

XYLA

Yep. You have been given the ability to physically heal one soul-being a day for the next forty days. Your mission is to find one soul-being, in the forty, worthy of a second chance. If you do not find a worthy soul in forty days, all life in this world will be destroyed. Easy-peasy.

CRISPY

Hold up. Did you say destroyed?

XYLA

I ain't finished. Soul beings are people, animals, insects, plants, yada-yada. If it got a soul, you can heal it. What you can't do is bring anything back from the dead. And yes - destroyed. As in death and destruction. Badass right?

Crispy shakes his head and takes out his cell phone.

CRISPY

Nope. Bullshit. You're a hallucination. God ain't real and neither are you. I'm going to prove it so you will go away. One sec.

XYLA

Take a bazillion for all I care.

He makes a call. Xyla plops down on the couch.

CRISPY

Yo, what up?...No, my P.O. found it...Don't worry about it...fall through, I got the Henny...cool. Oh, bring Tito to....Yeah, I'm sure!...I tell you when you get here. Later.

He pockets his cell phone.

XYLA

Really? I see what you're doing.

CRISPY

No you don't. Now stop talking to me. You make me feel crazy.

Crispy takes a bottle of Hennessy out of the kitchen cabinet.
Xyla sits up on the couch.

XYLA

You have a few awesome alcoholic
memories. The rest are blurred.
Your dad was a dick by the way.

Crispy fills his glass to the rim.

CRISPY

Can I drink you away?

XYLA

Not a fucking chance. Dang. Prison
sucked balls.

EXT. THE CELESTIAL THRONE - DEEP SPACE

Dark. Silent. An eternity of twinkling stars stretches for as
far as the eye can see. A perfectly round GOLDEN glowing
sphere, star-like, nestles securely within the void.

SUPERIMPOSE: 6 HOURS EARLIER

INT. THE CELESTIAL THRONE - DEEP SPACE

The color white extends infinitely throughout, there is no
beginning or end. No up or down. Three small celestial beings
encircle a translucent slow spinning image of Earth.

MIDGE, red skin, green robe, hair pulled into ponytail
extends her hand towards the earth image.

MIDGE

FORTY. Yes you. You are he.

OMEGA, red skin, green robe, short mohawk folds his arms
across his chest.

OMEGA

Humans are awful. Once again, they
are destroying everything. Let me
drown them all. Why bother with
dramatics?

MIDGE

Dramatics help pass the infinite
time. Besides, it's my job to give
them an opportunity to course
correct.

OMEGA

I know, but it is so boring. Death and chaos, that is real entertainment.

MIDGE

This is why they think you are a two-horned devil.

OMEGA

Me...who said that? I'll smite them in one single day.

MIDGE

I allowed you to tempt the last human I selected for forty days and he didn't break. He went on to turn things around for a while down there.

OMEGA

Pure luck. He would have succumbed to my temptations in one day had I tried. Forty days is overkill if you ask me.

MIDGE

Humans need time to see the errors of their ways. Besides, I happen to like the number forty.

ALPHA, red skin, green robe, bald, strokes his long beard.

ALPHA

Let us not squabble. Who do you choose to save them all?

MIDGE

I have selected the human named Cordell Jordan.

Omega leans forward and squints his eyes.

OMEGA

Is he a pope - a president? Wait a millennium, you're joking? Tell me, why did you choose this human?

MIDGE

He is - right for the task.

OMEGA

Or is he the fortieth human in your search?

MIDGE

Pure coincidence. He is the one.

Alpha raises both his arms in the air and an open book materializes before him.

ALPHA

It is decided. The human, Cordell Jordan has been chosen to reverse humanity's decline within forty days. If he fails, we shall destroy all life on earth. How say you, Midge?

MIDGE

I...

ALPHA

How say you, Omega?

Omega looks over to Midge, annoyed.

OMEGA

I...

ALPHA

It is written and so shall it be.

INT. JIMMY'S CHICKEN SHACK - EVENING

Jimmy's is dimly lit, dingy, with yellowing grease-stained walls. The outdated furniture needs repair. Customers are in line at the counter.

BRENDA JACKSON, early-20's, braids, gloves, mask, stands behind a homemade worn wooden counter, counting change.

BRENDA

Next.

Crispy, earbuds, stares deep into the fryer. He's lost in his thoughts.

JIMMY RAY SMITH, 60's, pudgy, balding, "Make America Great Again," mask under his chin, waddles out of a small office with two white envelopes. He hands one to Brenda.

JIMMY

Here you go. Don't spend it all on that horse hair.

Jimmy giggles. Brenda snatches the envelope, tucks it in her purse, and rolls her eyes. He walks over to Crispy who has his back to him.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Hey, convict.

Crispy doesn't turn around. Jimmy takes one of Crispy's earbuds from his ear. Crispy returns from his thoughts and spins around.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Didn't I say no electronics while on duty?

CRISPY
You said no cell phones.

JIMMY
Cell phones, earphones, they're all electronics. Shut it down now.

Crispy takes out the earbud. Jimmy tosses him the other one and he catches it.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
Now that you can hear me. Here's your pay.

Jimmy hands Crispy a white envelope and waddles to the counter. Crispy rips open the envelope and counts the cash. He looks dumbfounded and counts again.

BRENDA (O.C.)
I need a number four fried hard.

CRISPY
Four-hundred-fifty-three dollars.
Naw, this gotta' to be a mistake.

He turns off the fryer and meets Jimmy at the counter.

CRISPY (CONT'D)
Jimmy, my money ain't right.

JIMMY
It's right, convict.

CRISPY
No. I worked thirty hours of overtime. This is less than my regular forty. Are you cheating me?

Jimmy gets in Crispy's personal space. He looks him over.

JIMMY

My drawer was short by three-hundred-dollars. There ain't but one ex-con I employ.

CRISPY

I'm not a thief. I didn't take it.

JIMMY

Don't care. If I say you did - you did. Get outta' my face before I call your P.O.

Crispy takes a deep breath, walks to the fryer, and starts cooking. Brenda rolls her eyes at Jimmy. He shrugs his shoulders and waddles back into his small office.

BRENDA

That ain't even right. White devil.

CRISPY

Damn. I promised Gigi I'd buy a stove and pay rent. I should rob his ass.

PASTOR MALVEAUX, 60's, tailored suit, gold rings, mask under his nose, listens from the other side of the counter.

PASTOR MALVEAUX

No you shouldn't, brother. God's got your back.

Triggered. Crispy spin's around. Disgust on his face.

CRISPY

There ain't no God. I got my own back.

Pastor Malveaux leans over the counter ready for a verbal fight.

PASTOR MALVEAUX

He's real, brother. He's here, there, and everywhere. Amen.

(hand on ear)

What was that?

(points to Crispy)

He just told me to bless you.

CRISPY

Ain't nobody told you shit. Go con somebody else with that invisible miracle man in the sky nonsense.