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Hidden Consequences

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. STATUE OF LIBERTY - NIGHT

We are approaching the Statue of Liberty from the edge of New York City. As the Statue gets closer, we notice nothing moving about the island and there is silence except for background noise from the city.

EXT. TORCH ARM - NIGHT

From above we see THE TORCH with many little moving dots on it. Each is a TOURIST, dressed in typical tourist attire, but all immigrants recently naturalized. Many are new high-tech cameras designed to work with their E-Eyes and are taking pictures of each other with the torch and New York in the background.

Jay, Carl, and Jen are all arrayed around the torch. Jay is in his late 20s, short, with long hair. Carl is about the same age, tall, with shorter hair. Jen looks a bit younger and is quite short. All are dressed in a layered dark green which blends into the side of the torch. Carl and Jen have impressive-looking bulges on their belts which are radios.

Each is talking, being good tour guides for the Tourists, but glancing all around nervously as if expecting something bad to happen.

CARL

Off to THE NORTH we can see the remains of Ellis Island, formerly the most popular point of immigration for those who, like you, came from abroad to this country seeking personal betterment and knowledge to move forward the ideals of our nation. After arrivi

Carl interrupts himself, throws his hand up into the air, and gives a stare which freezes the tourists in place as he darts to the side of the torch to look down. Jay and Jen have similarly stopped and watching Carl follow his gaze downwards

JAY
Crap, Police!

Carl turns to Jay looking for instruction

JAY (CONT'D)
Find a way

Carl starts heading for the ARM ENTRANCE and as he does so, touches something at his side, then a field envelopes him and he dissolves from sight while moving.

Jen removes a spherical item from her belt and places it in the center of the torch area. A similar field effect envelopes everybody on the torch and while we can still see everybody from inside, we assume they are all invisible to the outside.

Jay moves to the side of the torch, leaning over the edge.

EXT. STATUE ISLAND GROUND THROUGH E-EYESIGHT - NIGHT

We see the ground through his E-Eyesight. E-Eyesight has an overlay indicating zoom, and a crosshair in the middle with a distance indicator for the object in focus. A clock in the top right shows that it is the middle of the night.

On the ground, we see several POLICE VEHICLES with lights going and officers pouring out into the statue, as well as more vehicles sitting empty. One officer leaves his vehicle and walked over to a panel on the side of the base with alarm lights going on top of it.

ALARM PANEL IN EXT. - NIGHT

The panel shows sound levels over the past hour. A threshold indicator has the level passing the alarm level a minute or two prior.

JAY
So that's what did it. We were just a little too loud. They used to turn a blind eye to us. Why are they watching so much more carefully recently?

JEN

I don't get it either. The police used to be here to protect us, now they just seem to want to arrest the traditional unofficial tourists.

INT. ARM CORRIDOR HEADING DOWN - NIGHT

Carl is running down the arm's corridor, looking to see how clear the path out is. He barrels around a corner and nearly collides with one of three OFFICERS, who turns suddenly and stares right at him

INT. ARM CORRIDOR HEADING UP - NIGHT

Officer looks at the place Carl is standing

OFFICER 1

I thought I heard something up that way

Officer points at Carl

INT. ARM CORRIDOR HEADING UP THROUGH E-EYESIGHT - NIGHT

Carl is invisible to the officer

OFFICER 1

Nothing's there, though. Must have been imagining it

OFFICER 2

This old statue creaks all the time

OFFICER 1

Okay, let's keep heading up to the torch

INT. ARM CORRIDOR HEADING UP

The officers start heading up and Carl runs away ahead of them

EXT. TORCH ARM - NIGHT

The tourists are all sitting in the middle of the torch, huddled together and absolutely silent. Jay and Jen are standing off to the side, whispering

JEN

Where's Carl? He should be back by now to tell us how it looks.

JAY

Unless he got caught. Who knows, he might be arrested and carted off to jail as a terrorist

JEN

Ha. Ha. You know how it works - they catch us and we get a stern talking to but that's all. They know we're not terrorists.

JAY

I know that's how it's supposed to be, but things keep changing and none of us can figure out why. Let's hope he's okay.

INT. ARM CORRIDOR HEADING UP

We are further up the corridor, Carl is running just a bit ahead of the officers.

Carl reaches a junction. A sign pointing to the right says "Torch - 300 steps" while a sign pointing to the left says "Crown - 200 steps"

Carl pauses in front of the sign, waits for a second, then goes to the left.

EXT. TORCH ARM - NIGHT

Jen, Jay, and the tourists are still on the Torch as before. Some of the tourists are shuffling a little restlessly, but nothing else has changed.

JAY

Where is he? He hasn't been on the radio, has he?

JEN

Nope, not a peep - do you want to risk sending him a message?

JAY

Yeah, I think we have to find out what's going on. And there's still very little chance the police will notice, for all their radio scanning they won't recognize Morse code as anything more than static and noise.

Jen reaches for the device on her belt and starts tapping it. We hear short bursts of static

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT - NIGHT

We continue to hear short and long bursts of static as letters appear in Jen's E-EYESIGHT

C-A-R-L

EXT. TORCH ARM

Back to seeing Jen and Jay, we now notice in the background, Carl jumping up and down on the crown, waving his arms.

JAY

Hear anything back? What's going on?

JEN

Nothing. He may be lost

We can see Carl in the background stopping his jumping and reaching for his belt

JEN (CONT'D)

Oh wait, there's something

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

We see letters appearing:

E-E-Y

EXT. TORCH ARM

Jen shouts and then reaches over to Jay's face and starts putting her fingers on places around his right eye. As she presses, we see lights appearing and handles coming out of his skin around the eye.

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

From Jay's view, we see an alert saying "Enhanced Eyesight Unit Removal in Process" but the crown in the background seems normal, with nobody on it.

The alert goes away and so does the E-Eyesight layer. We are now seeing through Jay's 'real' vision and he can see Carl on the crown in the distance.

JEN

You idiot! You made me risk sending a message just because you forgot to use your real eyesight? You're one of the only people who can use their eyes and get around the shields that keep enhanced eyes from seeing us. You should know better!

Jay waves his hand at her to be quiet as he studies what Carl is doing

EXT. CROWN - NIGHT

Carl is making wild gestures, trying to convey his message

There are three officers

Running Quickly

Up towards the torch

They will be there in 90 seconds

EXT. TORCH ARM - NIGHT

Jay signals all of the tourists to hold absolutely still and whispers to Jen

Long Pause for suspense

Three officers arrive having run up the stairs. They stop in the doorway.

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

From Officer 1's view, we see the torch from the doorway. It looks just like it should - clear of any tourists.

Officer 1 steps out onto the Torch platform and, clinging to the edge, circles away from Jay and Jen to take a look at the back side of the flame.

There is nothing there, it looks just like the part visible from the entrance.

OFFICER 1

Nothing up here. But I'm sure those people are around here somewhere. We have to catch them! Let's go back down

EXT. TORCH ARM

Officers head back through the doorway and go away

After a while, Jay starts stirring and then talks to the tourists

JAY

Okay, they're not going to find us up here, but they're going to wait around a while expecting us to come down, so we'll have to find another way. I'm sorry, it's not supposed to happen like this, but the police have been cracking down on tradition a lot recently and seem determined to get us, and there's nothing we can really do about it.

Jay turns away to talk to Jen

JAY (CONT'D)

So, what do we do? Just wait it out?

EXT. SKY OVER THE STATUE - NIGHT

Helicopters are circling the statue now, spotlights running over the surface, looking for our tour.

The helicopters are circling in lower and lower, moving around the statue at a close distance

EXT. TORCH ARM

Jen is looking over the side at the ground again, to a little ranger shack.

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

Jen zooms in to the shack, where we see several officers talking to a man in a ranger outfit. She zooms in on his belt where we see a clip for the same sort of radio she carries, but he doesn't have it. Instead, she zooms out and pans to an officer's hand, where she zooms in and we see the radio. The officers and the Ranger seem to be having a conversation and asking about the device.

EXT. TORCH ARM

Jen turns to Jay to explain

JEN

Uh oh, they've got Leo

JAY

It'll be fine. They always talk to him and he never says anything

JEN

Yeah, but this time they have the radio. They must have heard it going when we were trying to talk to Carl

JAY

Darn! There goes his excuse. I guess they'll be more suspicious about him now, but I'm sure he'll be fine.

Jen turns back to look over the railing

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

Jen looks down again and this time sees handcuffs being put on Leo the Ranger. He's being taken away to one of their cars.

EXT. TORCH ARM

JEN
They're arresting him!

JAY
No way, they wouldn't

Jay looks over the railing

JAY (CONT'D)
Crap, you're right. This is
absurd. We're helping Tourists,
not Terrorists! Okay, we have to
find a way out soon - I don't trust
them to just go away after a little
while

Jen looks up to the air, and follows a helicopter with her
eyes. Jay watches her, and then looks at her like she's
crazy

JAY (CONT'D)
Don't even think about it! There's
no way we're going to ride a
helicopter down

JEN
Why not? Just jump onto the bottom
two at a time and they won't notice
the weight if we're balanced on
both sides. We can just ride until
it'll land us in the soft crash pad
by the ranger station.

JAY
Any other time, I'd say you're
crazy, but arresting us for
traditional tours is pretty crazy
too. Let's do it.

Jay turns back to the tourists and we see him explaining what
is going to happen. The tourists faces react first in
amazement, then terror, and finally understanding.

EXT. SKY OVER THE STATUE

We see a helicopter at just-above-torch level, moving around
the statue, approaching the torch.

EXT. TORCH ARM

Jay is standing next to a tourist, perfectly spaced to jump onto two skis of a helicopter, which we can see coming. Jen is nearby and Jay turns to talk to her

JAY

You know, this means we can never do this again. It's such a long-standing tour, but the police have changed and are out to get us. Risking arrest just isn't worth it to carry on with traditions.

Jen doesn't get a chance to respond, but nods as the helicopter approaches.

EXT. TORCH ARM THROUGH E-EYESIGHT

Jay looks up at the helicopter ski and jumps as it is overhead. His E-Eyesight back, he can look down at the ground and see projections of exactly where he would land if he let go. He waits until the projection highlights a spot which looks really soft, then lets go and we see the ground rushing up.

FADE OUT.