

1. BLACK...

A grating whine assaults our sound scape. It screeches, creating auditory friction.

It stops momentarily.

Labored breathing.

It begins again. A grunt.

Another pause.

Suddenly the screen FLASHES. The whine returns as charcoal stained hands push a wooden wardrobe in front of a door.

BLACK again. Footsteps cross over to the other side of the room.

Another FLASH. A window is slammed shut. No lock. A slender body drags a chair to block the fire escape. A glass is filled with a thick green substance. NyQuil then Vodka stream one after the other. A dirty finger mixes the concoction together. A swig.

Back to BLACK. A long zipper sounds from off screen.

FLASH TO feet rustling in a sleeping bag as the the face of a young man NOAH (24) is revealed.

He zips himself into the bright orange monstrosity as a fan softly hums on his bedside table.

Clunky wired headphones adorn NOAH's head as he finally wriggles himself and his sleeping bag under the covers.

He exhales finally comfortable, arms locked tight at his sides.

Suddenly he turns to look at his desk light. He left it on.

CUT TO:

2. INT. BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

The fan continues to lightly hum in the dark as the camera slowly pans over to NOAH. The old apartment creaks and groans as a shallow rustling begins.

NOAH's eyes are blown open wide as he stares up at the ceiling. The glassy blank look intensifies as his body

begins to fight the fabric of the tight sleeping bag.

Images of NOAH in a black, lifeless void emerge. Blood oozes from the side of his head, he slowly begins to flutter his eyes open, lightly coughing.

In his apartment, NOAH begins to rise from his bed as he wriggles himself free of his homemade constraints.

Another FLASH. NOAH struggles against a weight, close-ups of deep gashes, and bloodied glass shards. The coughing becomes more forceful, he gasps-

Suddenly, NOAH violently propels himself off of the bed, slamming his head into the floor. Blood slowly streams from the corner of his scalp.

He lies there, still for a moment- his eyes begin to flutter shut.

CUT TO:

3. INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - MORNING

The sounds of the city begin to stir as warm sunlight streaks in through the window.

The light illuminates the walls of the bedroom, which are adorned with charcoal drawing of a hollowed female face. All of them without eyes.

A car honks in the distance and NOAH begins to awaken. He rises, wincing at the light as an intense pain begins to sweep through his head.

And then suddenly- panic. NOAH yanks the headphones off his head and clumsily reaches for the clock on his nightstand. It's past nine.

He scrambles.

CUT TO:

4. EXT. SUBWAY - DAY

A train screeches past NOAH as he stands on the platform. He winces as the wheels shriek against the metallic tracks. A bandage is secured to his head. NOAH takes a swig of his spiked NyQuil out of a clear plastic water bottle.

The sound of the train resonates between NOAH's ears as he rushes to secure his wired headphones to his head.

Everything becomes slightly muffled and a small sense of relief washes over NOAH.

CUT TO:

5. INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

The fluorescent lights of the train car exacerbate the heavy bags under NOAH's eyes. He stands, clutching onto a pole as his eyes wander aimlessly from advert to advert. He sees doubles of everything. A sticker with the words TUNE OUT catch his attention. He looks for a moment as it falls into focus, and exits the train.

CUT TO:

6. CORPORATE OFFICE - DAY

NOAH makes his way through a bustling office building. Most are dressed in gray business attire. The hallways are adorned with comic book covers. Gray characters glance at NOAH as their monochromatic titles hint at their stories.

NOAH sits at his desk only to be met with a stack of folders. He looks at it confused.

A light knock on his cubicle disrupts him.

DAVID
(cheerful)
Hello- hello

A man in his early 40's, DAVID, peers into NOAH's workspace. He wears the same gray suit the others sport.

NOAH glances up.

DAVID
I'm popping in to remind you that
we are printing a children's book
and these are-

DAVID searches for the right word.

DAVID
Not what we are looking for.

NOAH looks back down at the folder and opens it to see his work. Charcoaled faces with hollow eye sockets stare back at him.

DAVID

We have pushed the deadline with the distributor yet again so this needs to be fixed by next week or we may be forced to reassign you.

NOAH looks back up meeting DAVID's eyes. An awkward beat passes between them.

DAVID

Okay! Well I'll leave you to get to it.

DAVID awkwardly exits as NOAH watches him go. We see DAVID whisper something to another employee who looks back at NOAH disapprovingly. NOAH takes a shaky swig from his bottle. He turns back to the folder and sticks a pencil into an electric sharpener.

CUT TO:

7. EXT. SUBWAY - DUSK

The muffled sound of the pencil sharpener is hijacked by the sound of a train whirling past NOAH. He takes a few steps back, removing his headphones.

NOAH begins to look around aimlessly, green staining the corners of his lips. He inspects the various advertisements and graffiti sprawled on the cavernous walls. The tunnel is uncharacteristically quiet. A few evening commuters are peppered over the raised concrete but for the most part it is the closest to peace the city can achieve.

A worn poster catches NOAH's eye. It is semi-obstructed by other advertisements pasted over it but the bold lettering of the words TUNE OUT can be seen. A fetus floats stark in the middle of page, as a pair of wireless headphones cling to the developing alien.

NOAH carefully moves the obstructing advertisements from view and underneath a phrase is revealed.

NOISE IS PERSONAL.

A train pulls into the station. He winces. NOAH glances at the poster one last time and exits the frame. He gets on the train.

CUT TO:

8. INT. APARTMENT LIVING ROOM- NIGHT

The camera sweeps through the apartment as the dim glow of the TV illuminates the small living space.

The room has more of the hollowed drawings adorning the walls.

A digital clock read 3:13 AM.

NOAH's eyes blink and begin to flutter closed.

A lone stop sign in the VOID FLASHES before us.

Suddenly the TV ERUPTS with sound.

NOAH, passed out on the couch with the bottle of NyQuil in hand, startles awake.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Struggling to turn your brain off
at night? Looking to tune out the
noise?

The screen flashes. The product: a futuristic, glossy black set of headphones. They rotate on a platform.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Introducing... SonicVeil 7xi! The
ultimate solution for TOTAL peace
of mind.

NOAH rubs his eyes as the harsh white light of the screen intensifies. He is still in his clothes from yesterday. The dark circles under his eyes are painfully in view.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
(excited, fast-paced)
With revolutionary MindSync™
technology and a simple,
installation procedure, SonicVeil
7xi becomes a permanent part of
you! No more unwelcome sounds or
dreams again!

NOAH attempts to gather himself, moving the empty NyQuil bottle to the table in front of him. He sits up leaning into the screen, the ANNOUNCER's voice can be described as hypnotic.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
For only \$2100.00 experience true
calm. It's simple with 7 easy

payments of \$299—it's a one-time procedure that guarantees a lifetime of uninterrupted mental clarity.

The TV flashes to a woman finally at peace thanks to her permanent headphones. NOAH's curiosity and desperation continue to peak. He leans forward.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Don't wait! Call now and we'll even throw in a FREE cleaning kit!

A number manifests on screen.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
Call 1-800-TUNEOUT. That's 1-800-TUNEOUT.

NOAH grabs a pen and a piece of scrap newspaper. He frantically jots down the number.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
SonicVeil 7xi—Tune out the noise, tune in to clarity

NOAH continues scribbling.

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
(fast, in a disclaimer voice)
Limited time offer. SonicVeil 7xi requires a permanent procedure. Extreme calmness may occur. Results may vary. Call now!

The TV screen goes black. It's as though the commercial sucked all the power from the system.

NOAH stares forward. Eerie silence passes through the room. He rubs his eyes and begins to rise.

CUT TO:

9. INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

A montage ensues. The bizarre night routine on full display as the dresser is shoved back against the door. The window slammed shut— a chair dragged in front. NOAH touches the bandages on his head. A decision is made. The bed screeches as it is moved out of the way. NOAH lays on the floor. The sleeping bag unzipped— the wired headphones placed upon his head, arms locked in tight at his sides, and the light—

NOAH slams his head back in frustration.

His hand turns it off. He wriggles back into the sleeping bag, eyes fluttering shut.

FADE TO:

10. INT. BLACK VOID

NOAH's eyes snap open. A cool, airy ambiance is heard, as a thick black void swallows the light around him. Only he is illuminated. He stares ahead. A woman sits in the center, a singular warm light shining above her as snow softly falls around her. She reads an unmarked book.

NOAH slowly moves towards her. She appears familiar. Her features are revealed and NOAH freezes.

NOAH
Cora?

CORA
(continuing to read)
Yes?

NOAH
N-no- it can't be.

NOAH begins to crouch next to her. She bears a striking resemblance to the woman in his sketches. He reaches out a hand to touch her face. CORA closes her book and slowly meets his eyes. Though stiff she allows him to make contact with her.

NOAH
I thought I lost you.

She leans into his touch. Her hand moving to hold his face as there heads meet.

CORA
(whispered)
You hurt me.

Her hand strokes the back of his neck.

NOAH slowly pulls back, his brain unable to catch up to her words.

NOAH
I-I never meant-

Slowly her hand moves closing around his neck. Her touch is

light but becomes more violent and NOAH makes no move to stop her. He lets out a strangled cough as he struggles against her violent grip when suddenly-

MATCH CUT TO:

11. INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM

NOAH gasps for air as he pulls at the black headphone cord tangled around his neck. His fingertips rip at the plastic as he rolls onto the floor finally freeing himself.

He coughs violently, tears percolating in the corners of his eyes.

Papers from his desk litter the bedroom floor as though NOAH ransacked the room in his sleep.

Shaking, NOAH glances at the clock. 6:15. Then he glances at the floor.

His scribbled handwriting looks back at him: 1-800-TUNEOUT.

He picks up the phone and dials.

CUT TO BLACK:

Screams can be heard in a far off hallway. The sounds of heart monitors and the clanging of surgical instruments echo in the distance.

Flashes of NOAH being wheeled down a dimly lit hallway come quick. He is strapped to an old and unsanitary looking hospital bed. His face obstructed by a laughing gas mask.

Latex hands and the black thread being stitched through flesh flash into view. A heart monitor increases in pace as NOAH begins shaking and screaming.

His eyes burst open and another set of hands runs to cover his face with the mask once more. We see the surgeons one last time before they fade into obscurity.

CUT TO:

12. INT. ABANDONED HOSPITAL - NIGHT

We see NOAH laying on the same dirty hospital bed, an IV drip connected to his hand. He begins to slowly rise, disoriented. Slowly he swings his legs over the bed.

NOAH rolls his neck, his SonicVeil headset is covered

partially in gauze and blood. He slowly reaches out to touch the new addition. He flinches as the top of the headphones tug at his newly stitches ears.

Suddenly, a figure emerges from the darkened hallway. A man dressed as a SURGEON enter the room. His latex gloves are covered in blood and the front of his smock is smeared with red stains. The SURGEON begins to pull his gloves off, discarding them in a small trash bin. He pulls his mask down and begins to speak.

His mouth moves but no sound comes out. NOAH moves his hands around the headset frantically.

The SURGEON rests his hand on NOAH's shoulder satisfied with NOAH's confusion then slides his hand over the side of the headphones, pressing hard on a button. NOAH yelps, when suddenly a warm artificial voice emerges.

SONICVEIL

Welcome to your new reality:
SonicVeil 7XI

NOAH adjusts his head. The SURGEON begins to remove the IV drip from NOAH's hand.

SONICVEIL

In the coming hours, your brain will be adjusting to the MINDSYNC™ technology. You may notice heightened clarity and focus, along with a sense of calm. Mild disorientation and tingling around the implant site is normal and should subside within days.

The SURGEON helps NOAH to his feet.

SONICVEIL

Do not contact your surgeon under any circumstances. Continue wiring your monthly payment installations to the routing number below.

The SURGEON slides a card into NOAH's hands.

SONICVEIL

Your journey to peace begins now.
Thank you for choosing SonicVeil.

He begins escorting NOAH and the hospital bed to the door.

A ringing begin to emerge.

NOAH fiddles with the headset. They arrive on the other side and the SURGEON disappears down the dark hallway.

NOAH, panicked, runs towards a propped open door in the other direction.

He steps outside, his breath freezing in the bitter air.

CUT TO:

13. INT. NEW YORK CITY APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

NOAH begins to settle into his bed, the sleeping bag coddling him.

The ringing dissipates and is replaced by cool ambient noise. Waves crashing, sounds of nature, echoing in a chamber of resonance.

NOAH peacefully begins to drift off to sleep.

CUT TO:

14. INT. NEW YORK CITY APARTMENT BEDROOM - MORNING

NOAH's eyes flutter awake as the sounds of the ambient noise intensifies then ceases.

SONICVEIL

Good Morning.

NOAH startles looking around the room. He is still in his sleeping bag, everything is quiet.

The isolated voice speaks again.

SONICVEIL

Hope you enjoyed your rest.

NOAH rises disoriented. He tugs on the headphones, the skin underneath still tender.

He glances at the clock. 10:32. He begins to frantically untangle himself from his sleeping bag.

SONICVEIL

No need to worry Noah. It's Saturday.

NOAH glances at the crooked calendar on the wall. It's right.

SONICVEIL

I will play some blue noise to aid
in concentration.

A static hum begins to play, it washes over NOAH.

A montage begins as NOAH begins to piece his life back together. Empty beer cans and alcohol bottles are removed from the living room floor. The wardrobe and bed are moved to their rightful place. The eerie charcoal drawings are ripped from the walls. NOAH showers and gets dressed.

Finally he sits at his desk- a blank page stares back at him.

SONICVEIL

Switching to white noise at 70
decibels to aid in creative
function.

An atmospheric wash overtakes the soundscape. NOAH looks down He breathes deeply and begins to draw.

CUT TO:

15. INT. CORPORATE OFFICE - DAY

The muffled sounds of the office come into our sound scape as NOAH settles himself at his desk. A stack of drawings lie waiting for him.

DAVID walks in, his usual manufactured cheeriness gone from his face. He begins to speak- it's muffled.

SONICVEIL

(abruptly)
Your cortisol levels are
increasing. This office is
unsuitable for total calm.

NOAH flinches, startled. DAVID looks at NOAH confused.

SONICVEIL

Yes I monitor all of your hormonal
functions. MindSync technology
monitors your thoughts and
feelings to determine the best way
to return you to a state of calm.

DAVID continues speaking, attempting to maintain his composure. NOAH glances down at his drawings. Sketches of CORA with blacked eyes and a blank expression stare back him. Confused, NOAH goes through all the pages, they are

all the same way.

DAVID looks at NOAH, waiting for a response.

NOAH opens his mouth to say something but is left dumbstruck.

Frustrated, DAVID storms out of the office.

NOAH looks around the office helpless. His peers sharing glances and whispers.

SONICVEIL
You seem conflicted.

Suddenly, loud ambient whirling begins to play. It's abrasive but slowly settles as NOAH is lured into a hypnotic state.

16. INT. SUBWAY PLATFORM - DUSK

NOAH stands still, staring straight ahead, his back to the tracks.

His eyes are glazed over as flyers of all kinds advertise the same thing: TUNE OUT.

SHORT FLASHES of NOAH and CORA slow dancing to the airy ambiance of the void conjure before us. A wispy white snow falls only on them.

The ambient noise intensifies as NOAH stands fixed at the wall.

MATCH CUT TO:

17. INT. BLACK VOID

NOAH stands transfixed, as he watches himself and CORA dance peacefully in the void.

SUDDENLY they stop. NOAH stares unmoving as his DUPLICATE turns to him.

DUPLICATE/SONICVEIL
You need to listen harder.

CUT TO:

18. INT. NEW YORK CITY APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

NOAH jolts awake, gasping for air. He splayed out on the living room floor, still in his work attire.

A static hum plays in his ears as he makes his way to the bathroom. He begins to frantically splash water on his face.

SONICVEIL

Shhhhhhhhh.

NOAH stops. The water continues to run.

SONICVEIL

Don't be afraid. I got you home.

The ambient sounds of the VOID begin as the static fades out.

NOAH's hands shakily turn the faucet off.

SONICVEIL

Stop resisting perpetual calm.

NOAH's eye begin to flutter shut. He turns on the faucet and violently begins splashing water in his face.

The ambient noise intensifies.

Images of the VOID flash before us. NOAH lies bloodied and trapped under a loose car door. Red and Blue lights flicker onto the scene.

SONICVEIL

Recommend SonicVeil to your friends.

Back in the APARTMENT, NOAH's body begins to slump over the sink. He is losing the battle to sleep.

ANOTHER FLASH: NOAH struggles against the door as he coughs up blood, he turns his head to see CORA body unmoving in the glass. Red and Blue lights continue as a police siren blares.

In the APARTMENT: NOAH fights for control over his hands, moving them towards his eyes, propping them open.

SONICVEIL

Help us build a family of calm soldiers.

The ambient noise shifts to an unbearable ringing. Sounds

of car crash cut through. NOAH clutches his ears succumbing to the noise.

SONICVEIL

(stern)

There is no place for disobedience
in a calm world.

NOAH screams in frustration and leaps to his feet. He meets his eyes in the mirror. They are framed by a purplish hue. Exhaustion does not begin to describe his physical state.

FLASH BACK to the VOID: NOAH finally frees himself from the car door and drags his body towards CORA.

IN THE APARTMENT: Tears percolate in the corners of his eyes as he realizes what he must do.

NOAH grabs hold of his right headphone and begins to pull. His hand shakes as he pulls hard and hard, the black stitching loosening from his ears.

The static and ringing increases. The sirens continue. His own horrified screams from the void echo as a dispatcher radio blares.

DISPATCHER RADIO

Attention all units, we have a
major vehicle collision at Carter
and Monroe.

He lets out an blood curdling scream as the stitches begin to rip from the skin one by one.

DISPATCHER RADIO

EMS and fire department are en
route.

The voice of SonicVeil emerges warped.

SONICVEIL

(distorted)

There is no place for disobedience
in a calm world. There is no place
for disobedience in a calm world.

It turns into an ugly, disorienting conglomerate, of eerie sound but the headphones won't budge further.

NOAH shrieks in agonizing frustration.

He slides onto the floor and lays there as the static infused messaging plays over and over and over and over and over and ove-

FADE TO BLACK.

SONICVEIL

There is no place for disobedience
in a calm world.