

*Do not be deceived: God is not
mocked, for whatever a man sows,
that he will also reap.*
Galations 6:7

FADE OUT.

TEASER

INT. MEDICAL LAB HALLWAY

Military boots march in sync down a sterile hallway. Three ASIAN MEN fully covered in white HAZMAT SUITS are being saluted by stationary guards on every corner.

The MEN stop at a door flanked by stoic guards at attention.

A DRAGONFLY DRONE buzzes in front of the men. It hovers in front of each face. A LASER scans their eyes. ID verified. It's the future.

They enter. The door closes.

A RED light above the door turns GREEN.

INT. MED-LAB OPERATING THEATRE

The MEN salute other high ranking government officials who are milling about in a tight observation room. The air is thick with nervous energy. The men gather in front of a one way mirror and gaze into a high-tech operating room below.

INT. MED-LAB OPERATING ROOM

The quarantined operating room is covered from top to bottom in dense plastic. A Chinese DOCTOR directs CHANGCHANG(early 30's),petite Chinese woman, struggling through her last stages of LABOR.

STRONG CONTRACTION. Changchang grimaces in pain and holds her breath, pushing to her doctor's count.

Changchang's HUSBAND stands helplessly beside his wife, supporting her with encouraging words in Mandarin. The words are hollow, muffled through his hazmat suit.

DOCTOR
 (in Mandarin)
 OK Changchang, I need you to give
 me one more strong push.

SCREAM. She pushes as a thunderous contraction peaks and rips through her body.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
 That's it! That's it!

INT. MED-LAB OPERATING THEATRE

The government officials move forward, hope surging through the room as they watch the baby enter this world.

CRIES.

INT. MED-LAB OPERATING ROOM

A STOPWATCH mounted on the wall starts TICKING.

The doctor lifts the BABY in the air. A boy.

LIFE.

Umbilical cord still pulsing, he places the glistening baby on the breast of his mother.

Sweaty and exhausted, Changchang nuzzles her son's head.

PEDIATRICIAN places a HEART MONITOR on the baby and steps back, exchanging a look of NERVOUS anticipation with the DOCTOR. The team collectively holds their breath.

Changchang looks into her baby's eyes. He stops crying. She smiles, pure love emanating from her face.

CHANGCHANG
 (whispering)
 Your name is Tao --

BEEP BEEP BEEP. The HEART MONITOR alarm sounds.

The doctor glances at the STOPWATCH then up to the one way mirror.

PANIC.

A team of pediatricians RUSH in crowding the bed.

The pediatrician rips the baby from Changchang's arms.

The doctor leans in and CUTS the cord, separating mother and child. Blood spurts onto Changchang's face.

The pediatrician places the baby in an INCUBATOR.

All hands on deck, the pediatric team goes to work placing IV's and sliding an intubation tube down his tiny throat.

BEEP... BEEP. The heart rate starts to drop.

CHANGCHANG (CONT'D)

Don't hurt my baby! Give me back my
baby! Don't hurt my baby!

FRANTIC. The team rushes the baby to an adjoining room prepped for this emergency. A pediatrician performs infant CPR, another administers epinephrine.

Nothing is working.

FLAT LINE.

The pediatrician still pushes down on the tiny chest, begging the heart to restart with the pump of his fingers. Not giving up.

The doctor looks up at the mirror. A GREEN light turns RED.

DOCTOR

That's enough! Call it.

The DOCTOR slowly peels off his gloves and mask. He tosses them into the trash before pushing through metal double doors.

He enters a long sterile hallway lined with isolation pods. CHINESE WOMEN in the last stage of pregnancy peer at him with hopeful eyes through secured glass windows.

DEFEATED. He stares straight ahead. He stops at an elevator and pushes UP. The doors open.

He steps inside and pushes a button. Hands shaking, he pulls a cigarette from his pocket, lights it, and inhales deeply. His hands stop shaking, calm now.

DING. The elevator announces his arrival. He walks out onto the rooftop, throws down the cigarette, and stubs it out with his foot.

The DOCTOR walks to the edge of the roof, never hesitating as he steps off into the smog-layered horizon.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. NAPA RIVER BANK - DAY

SPLASH. ASHER(40's), clean cut, fills up a futuristic PURIFIER with rushing river water. He looks the part but tries to keep his balance, nature's not his strong point.

He seals the purifier. Four bars light up red then blink, one bar turns green.

REN, biracial, tall and lanky for 13, balances two purifiers as he nimbly jumps onto a slick rock.

BIGGIE, a hot off the market pocket sized AI bot, is strapped to Ren's back shoulder. Biggie uses augmented reality to frame the perfect selfie shot.

BIGGIE

Oh yeah, looking good! The ladies love this outdoor stuff.

Asher turns around to hand off the full purifier. No Ren.

ASHER

(annoyed)

Hey! --

Ren looks, slides off the rock, grabs the purifier, and passes his dad an empty one.

BIGGIE

Whoa man! God I hate the water.

REN

Come on really? I'm not going to let you get wet.

He tosses the purifiers over his back and heads to the shore.

ASHER

Hey! Remember stay in the truck and lock the doors.

Ren waves without looking back.

FOCUSED, Asher fills up the last one.

SPLASHING. He looks up and notices a MAN across the river starting to fill up purifiers. Asher studies him for a moment then continues his work, almost done.

COMMOTION. Across the river, a DISHEVELED MAN has now appeared at the edge of the wood line. He has a HAND GUN pointed at the man filling his purifiers and is demanding they be handed over.

DISHEVELED MAN
(desperate)
Just give me all your fucking water.

MAN
OK, OK just put the gun down, please.

Man slowly tosses over two water purifiers.

DISHEVELED MAN
And your wallet -- oh and your shoes, I'm going to need them too.

MAN
OK.

He tosses over the wallet and his shoes.

JITTERY, The disheveled man scoops up the wallet and shoes.

DISHEVELED MAN
Give me that last purifier too.

MAN
Look mister, I gave you two. Now I got a family to feed--

Disheveled man steps towards the shoreline, closing the gap.

DISHEVELED MAN
(agitated)
Give me the fucking water!!

Man stands his ground.

MAN
You know I can't do that.

DISHEVELED MAN
You can't do that?

Disheveled man lunges towards Man , scuffling for the purifier and the gun.