

BECOMING MORTAL

"When Death Knocks"

Written By

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BECOMING MORTAL

"When Death Knocks"

CAST

MICHAEL PEREZ

JOHN HONDA

FRANCES HONDA PEREZ

REGAN YOUNG

PENELOPE WATERS

CORDELIA BLACK

BENJAMIN BLACK

QUINN MEYERS

HENRY

GUEST CAST

LIBRARIAN

MILITARY DOCTOR

DOCTOR

ADAM

HECTOR

DIRECTOR BROOKS

THEO MANN

BECOMING MORTAL

"When Death Knocks"

SETS

INTERIORS:

BROWNSTONE

Kitchen

Foyer

Regan's Bedroom

Backyard

John's Bedroom

NEW YORK LIBRARY

U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS

THEO'S OFFICE

VITAL CENTER

SPARE CONFERENCE ROOM

EXTERIORS:

THEATER ALLEY

EVA MARTIN'S BACKYARD

NEW YORK LIBRARY

TEASER

INT. U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS BUILDING - SPARE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

SUPER: Washington, D.C. 2068

The large conference room is a perfect neutral zone for these two juggernauts.

QUINN (30), slim with short blonde hair and a permanent scowl on her face. She rubs the bridge of her nose.

QUINN

I heard back from Director Brooks about your concerns and he is still undecided-

THEO

He's undecided? How is he undecided? The answer is obvious.

Quinn glares at THEO MANN (60), white hair and beard, pompous and thinks he knows best - he never does.

QUINN

That may be true but we have our orders.

THEO

Our orders?

QUINN

It's not our job to make decisions. We are supposed to make sure eighty people are living correctly until the are needed. No more, no less.

THEO

So I'm supposed to sit by and let this happen?

QUINN

Yes.

Quinn rises and glides out of the room. Theo follows her out into the...

INT. U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Quinn strides down the elegant hallway. Office drones scramble out of her way.

THEO

So you are just going to let the president die?

QUINN

Future President. You seem to think that I have the sole power to manipulate Director Brooks.

THEO

You have the sway, don't deny it.

QUINN

A man will possibly die in thirty years. Don't get ahead of the information.

THEO

The possibility is too great.

QUINN

Yet it is not our decision to make.

The elevators open in front and Quinn steps inside the empty car.

QUINN (CONT'D)

You can't play God this time, Theo.
Let it go.

The elevator doors close.

INT. U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS BUILDING - HENRY SHAW'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The flickering fluorescent bulb swings above HENRY SHAW(45), a man in week-old clothes and crumbs in his beard.

He sits in front a computer screen. He carefully pecks a series of letters into the keyboard

His eyes cut from the screen to a paper on the desk beside him with a long access code.

Theo stands behind Henry as he works. He taps his foot.

The computer beeps and displays a locked screen.

HENRY

I need your login.

Theo leans over and types in his password.

A cursor blinks on the screen. Henry types in more codes.

THEO
How much longer?

Henry types in "Project Black" and names fill in the screen: "Michael Perez, Frances Perez, John Honda, Regan Young and Penelope Waters" along with corresponding pictures.

Two of the photographs match the ones that the mysterious man had in his possession.

Henry scrolls down until he reaches the end of the page.

HENRY
Ready?

THEO
Do it.

Henry's cursor moves toward the red Terminate button on the screen. He clicks it.

The files on-screen slowly dissolve until the screen goes blank.

INT. BROWNSTONE - JOHN'S BASEMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: New York 2013

A twin bed sits across from a desk overrun with papers.

JOHN (58), a Japanese man with salt and pepper hair and a strong jaw line, jerks in his sleep and his forehead beads with sweat.

He's one of people on Theo and Henry's screen from 2048.

John's eyes pop awake, confused, and he wheezes and pushes himself up.

He was healthy earlier that night and now he's not. There was no warning.

John tumbles out of bed and crawls to his desk. He pulls himself into the desk chair.

His hands dig into the mess on his desk to find a black notebook. He flips through the pages, reading his scribbles and finally finds the first clean page.

He glances at the clock: 4:02 AM. Something's changed.

He scribbles in the notebook with vigor.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. BROWNSTONE - REGAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

Photographs cover the walls, each of them showing moments in history: The construction of the Eiffel Tower, the first motion picture camera, one of the first planes. A woman is in each of them.

It's REGAN (25ish), tall, thin, with short hair and a roguish grin. In every photograph, Regan looks the same -- youthful.

The HISS of a gas stove sounds in her room along with the FOOT STEPS wakes her.

Regan blinks and climbs out of bed and stretches.

EXT. BROWNSTONE - BACKYARD - DAY

MICHAEL (23), soil stains on his shirt and unkempt hair, kneels in the dirt, packing the flowers in.

His cell phone sits by his knees, on speakerphone.

MICHAEL

(to phone)

Anywhere else on your agenda today?

A slightly accented voice barks out of the phone.

HECTOR (V.O.)

(from phone)

A lot of the guys are asking for their checks.

MICHAEL

I'm handling it.

HECTOR (V.O.)

(from phone)

They're ready to walk and I don't have any way to keep them.

MICHAEL

End of this week, I promise.

HECTOR (V.O.)

(from phone)

Okay, I'll be in Queens if you need me.

MICHAEL

Bye Hector.

Michael hangs up the phone.

INT. BROWNSTONE - KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen looks like an interior designer's dream: high-end marble counter tops, expensive wood cabinets, chrome fixtures, and stainless steel appliances.

The young woman from the photograph: FRANCES (36), a tall Japanese woman with John's jaw line, stands in front of the gas range and makes two omelets.

At the kitchen island, PENELOPE (9), a precocious Black girl in jeans and a white T-shirt with braids, reads Of Mice and Men and swings her legs into her stool.

FRANCES

Didn't you just go to the library two days ago?

PENELOPE

I want to see if the annotated Grapes of Wrath is back.

FRANCES

On Steinbeck again I see.

PENELOPE

I decided to skip Hemingway.

The stairs CREAK as combat boots meet hardwood.

Regan descends the stairs. She digs through the cabinet for a box of cereal and sits next to Penelope. She chomps and watches Penelope drink her juice.

Frances places an omelet in front Penelope and sits and eats her own breakfast.

Frances plucks the book out of Penelope's hand. Penelope shrugs and takes a bite.

They all eat in silence.

INT. U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS BUILDING - VITAL CENTER - DAY

SUPER: Washington, D.C. 2068

Rows and rows of screens showing the vital signs of very important people light the room. Men and women sit in front of each screen and watch.

This is the life force that makes sure that everything is running smoothly.

Quinn slowly makes her way down the rows of stations. She stops behind a TECHNICIAN and points at a red flash on the screen.

QUINN
What is that?

The technician taps the flashing notification.

The notification opens up and reads "Project Black terminated".

QUINN (CONT'D)
When did this happen?

TECHNICIAN #1
Says last night. Around 4.

Quinn clenches her jaw.

QUINN
Check the other projects related to Black.

The technician types and clicks and several new windows pop up on the screen. Each windows shows a piecemeal family similar to Frances'. They are all in active status.

Everything else is running smooth.

QUINN (CONT'D)
Theo.

INT. BROWNSTONE - KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: New York 2013

Regan dumps the empty box of cereal in the trash and pours a cup of coffee.

Penelope jumps off of her stool and finishes her juice and runs upstairs.

Michael stands next to the coffee maker, a mug in his hand.

MICHAEL
(to Frances)
Have you seen him this morning?

FRANCES
No. Could you?

Michael finishes his coffee.

MICHAEL
Sure. Regan, come with.

Regan sighs in annoyance and follows.

INT. BROWNSTONE - BASEMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Regan and Michael walk down a darkened staircase to enter the apartment.

MICHAEL
Stay here.

Michael opens John's door and steps inside the dark room.

MICHAEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Regan!

Regan runs right into...

INT. BROWNSTONE - JOHN'S BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Michael leans over and watches John's eyes flutter as he fights to remain conscious in his chair.

Michael guides John into bed.

MICHAEL
Go get Frances.

JOHN
I'm fine.

MICHAEL
Go.

Regan runs back up the stairs to the...

INT. BROWNSTONE - KITCHEN - DAY

Frances drinks her coffee and Penelope reads with her backpack on her back when Regan comes in.

Frances pulls her mug away when she sees Regan run in.

FRANCES
What happened?

REGAN
John. He's sick?

Frances rushes toward the stairs, Penelope on her heels.

FRANCES
Go to the library.

REGAN
I think he needs a doctor.

FRANCES
I'll handle it.

PENELOPE
What's wrong with him?

FRANCES
Don't worry about it.

PENELOPE
You know I can help.

Frances pushes her cup into Regan's hands.

FRANCES
Regan, please.

Frances disappears down the stairs.

INT. BROWNSTONE - JOHN'S BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Frances watches Michael pace around the small room. John sleeps on his bed.

MICHAEL
Has he ever gotten sick?

Frances shakes her head.

Michael checks his watch. He frowns.

FRANCES
Do you need to go?

MICHAEL
I can push back my appointments.

FRANCES
We need to call someone.

MICHAEL

And tell them what? He can't go to the doctor, he has no insurance and he technically doesn't exist.

FRANCES

I'm not going to let my father die.

MICHAEL

Despite the fact he would let you?

Frances' eyes flash with anger and hurt. That hit the mark.

FRANCES

I don't know what to do.

MICHAEL

Well, don't look at me.

Frances watches John pant and sweat.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Regan and Penelope exit an office building. Regan holds out her hand for Penelope as they shuffle down the crowded sidewalk.

PENELOPE

We should go back home.

REGAN

And risk Frances' wrath?

PENELOPE

But-

REGAN

Look, Peewee, don't go back to the scene of the crime.

Penelope scowls at the nickname.

PENELOPE

I just think we shouldn't hide.

REGAN

Yeah, well, that makes one of us.

Regan and Penelope move down the sidewalk and run into--

BENJAMIN (48), a biracial man with grey hairs at the temples wears a trench coat and knit hat despite the warm weather.

He stares at Regan and Penelope as if he knows them.

REGAN (CONT'D)

Excuse us.

BENJAMIN

No, it's my fault.

Benjamin moves off to the side.

Regan and Penelope pass.

Regan pulls Penelope closer to her as they walk further away from him. This guy creeps her out.

PENELOPE

You know that young man?

Regan shakes her head.

PENELOPE (CONT'D)

You must have one of those faces.

Regan glances back and makes eye contact with Benjamin.

She turns and pulls Penelope along.

INT. BROWNSTONE - JOHN'S BASEMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Frances pats John's back as he hacks into his hands.

JOHN

I'm fine sweetheart.

FRANCES

You're not.

JOHN

I'm not going to be able to help you with the hard part.

FRANCES

Hard part?

JOHN

This is happening 60 years late. Strange things are going to happen.

John breaks into a coughing fit for a bit.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You can't tell Michael any of this.

FRANCES

Why not?

JOHN

You've always been open-minded.

Frances and John hear Michael STOMP around above them and they sit in silence.

INT. U.S. DEPT. OF CORRECT EVENTS BUILDING - THEO'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: Washington, D.C. 2068

Everything in the room is large and expensive, definitely bought to make Theo look like the most important man in the world.

Quinn shuffles papers on his desk, hoping to find something that will help.

The door creaks open and Quinn's head pops up.

DIRECTOR BROOKS (60), a man with the body of a line backer and the seriousness of a drill sergeant, stands in the doorway.

DIRECTOR BROOKS

Meyers.

QUINN

Sir.

DIRECTOR BROOKS

Anything?

QUINN

No, sir.

Director Brooks grinds his teeth. It's a small motion but terrifying.

DIRECTOR BROOKS

Find out what he did.

QUINN

Yes, sir.

Director Brooks closes the door.

INT. BROWNSTONE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: New York 2013

Michael stands in the kitchen and digs through cabinets. He finds a dusty bottle of Robitussin. He wipes it off and places it on the counter.

He sighs as his phone BEEPS in his pocket.

He takes the phone out: three missed calls from Ms. Martin and two text messages from Hector.

The steps CREAK.

Michael stuffs his phone in his pocket as Frances walks in the kitchen.

MICHAEL
Everything okay?

FRANCES
It's fine.

Frances pulls a bottle of water from the refrigerator and holds it in her hands.

Michael hands Frances the dusty bottle of Robitussin.

MICHAEL
It's from '07 but I figured anything could help.

Michael's phone BEEPS in his pocket but he ignores it.

FRANCES
Do you need to answer that?

MICHAEL
It's nothing.

FRANCES
I don't want this to jeopardize your work.

MICHAEL
What are you talking about? He's family; I'm not going to leave.

FRANCES
I'm not suggesting you do, just don't drop everything.

MICHAEL
I'm just trying to support you.

Michael moves to rub her shoulder in comfort but Frances flinches away.

The doorbell rings. They look at each other in confusion.

END OF ACT ONE