

THE HANGING STRANGER

Screenplay by

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Based on the Story "The Hanging Stranger"  
written by Philip K. Dick

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1 EXT. A NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The sunset disappears at the horizon, clouds aggregate and the sky turns blue from pink.

There's a row of double-layer houses in a suburban neighborhood below the sky, light shed out from them.

A BOY(O.S.)

Dad, we should get a new TV.

2 INT. ED'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TOM(12) and JIM(14) scramble for the TV controller on a sofa facing an old TV. Near the TV, ED LOYCE(40), a man with a pair of glasses and a plaid shirt is repairing it. He plugs the charger of the TV into an outlet and switches on the TV, images show up on the screen. A REPORTER(35) is reporting.

REPORTER(V.O.)

...is a neuroscientist, her studies of manipulating neuron activities through nanomachines were considered as a potential direction of depression therapy. The police have ruled out foul play.

ED

(stands up and walk backward)

No need...this one is good.

Ed turns around, looks at the two boys.

TOM

(tries to catch Jim's arms)

It's news time! Give it to me!

JIM

(raises the controller)

No more fake news, watch something normal!

Jim runs away from the sofa and clicks the controller, the TV channel jumps to another channel. Ed's wife, JANET, a short chubby woman(35), walks toward them with two cups of water.

JANET

Be careful, kids.

She hands the water to the children and turns to Ed.

JANET  
 (smiles)  
 Want some water?

ED  
 No thanks, honey, my Chinese friend  
 said it's better to boil the tap water  
 before drinking it.

JANET  
 You know you're in a developed  
 country, right?

Janet walks away. Ed shrugs and walks toward the front door.

HOST(V.O.)  
 So you think social media helps spread  
 conspiracy theories and makes our  
 society more polarized?

GUEST(V.O.)  
 Exactly...

Ed reaches the front door, picks his coat, and puts on his shoes.

3 INT. ED'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Janet cuts vegetables in the kitchen, then stops and looks toward Ed through the bar between the kitchen and the living room.

JANET  
 Where are you going?

INTERCUT between the living room and the kitchen.

ED  
 Kim...they have a protest, I got to  
 take care of the store myself.

JANET  
 You should tell him to be careful with  
 that.

ED  
 (shrugs)  
 Will be back before dinner.

Ed picks up a car key from the bar between the living room and the kitchen. A newspaper is on the bar, with the headline "Neuroscientist calling nanomachine should be regulated". Sounds of door opening and closing.

4 EXT. CAR ON ROAD - NIGHT

The sky is fully dark, clouds reflect the moonlight. Ed drives his car into a square surrounded by stores, many people are walking around with shopping bags.

5 INT. ED'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

RADIO(V.O.)

Certainly, the polarization is caused  
by economic inequality...

Ed drives forward and looks through the window, a store with the title "LOYCE TV SALES AND SERVICE" appears. Behind the windows of the store, multiple TVs are playing different channels, some are news, some are documentaries about DNA. He looks around, the square is full of cars and has no place for parking.

ED

(murmur)

Damn.

Ed turns around and drives toward a corner of the square.

RADIO(V.O.)

...and we need to find a solution for  
it...

6 EXT. SQUARE - CORNER - LATER

The corner is dark and empty, Ed turns off the car and gets out of it.

7 EXT. SQUARE - SIDEWALK AT THE CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Ed walks along the sidewalk, he bypasses a trash bin lying on the ground, garbage leaks out of it. While walking forward, people become more and more, Ed has to avoid people intentionally.

He looks up and sees a shapeless dark bundle hanging on a lamppost about 50 meters away from him. He walks closer and adjusts his glasses. The thing is swinging a little with the wind.

Multiple people pass the lamppost but no one notices it. When Ed is about 10 meters away from the thing, it rotates a little bit. Ed sees a human face on the top, it's a HUMAN BODY.

ED  
(shouts)  
Ah!

Ed moves back quickly, then stops and carefully looks at the body while rubs his chin.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

A middle-aged man with a pallid but peaceful face with a pair of half-opened eyes behind glasses.

BACK TO SCENE

ED  
(trembling)  
Look at it! Come on out here!

People look at Ed strangely and avoid him. DON(42), a heavy man in a colorful uniform carrying a newspaper under his arm, comes out from a candy shop near the sidewalk. Ed moves toward Don and points toward the body.

ED  
See it?  
(looks at Don)  
What's wrong with everybody? They just  
walk on past!

Don stops near Ed, takes a glance at the body, and lights a cigarette slowly.

DON  
Take it easy, man. There must be a  
good reason, or it wouldn't be there.

Ed stares Don up and down.

ED  
A reason? What kind of a reason?

Don spits out smoke and shrugs. Behind them, JACK(60), a slightly hunchbacked man in an old brown suit walks toward them from a bookstore.

DON  
Some sort of civic thing. How would I know?

JACK  
(stops near Ed and Don)  
What's up, boys?

ED  
(again points to the body)  
There's a body hanging from the lamppost, I'm going to call the cops.

JACK  
(Looks at the body calmly)  
They must know about it, or otherwise, it wouldn't be there.

DON  
I got to get back in, business before pleasure.

Don walks toward the candy shop, a few children play in front of the door. Ed stares at the back view of Don in amazement and then turns toward Jack, waves his arms in the air.

ED  
(raise his voice)  
Do you see it? You see it hanging there? A man's body! A dead man!

JACK  
Sure, Ed. I saw it this afternoon when I went out for coffee.

ED  
(stare at Jack and stuck for a while)  
...you...you mean it's been there all afternoon?

JACK  
Sure. What's the matter?

Jack glances at his watch and looks at Ed, whose arms are in a strange shape and keep shaking.

JACK  
Have to run, see you later, Ed.

Jack leaves and joins the flow of people moving along the sidewalk. The body rotates when the wind blows, the half-opened eyes make it like a watcher who's observing everyone. Ed moves his eyes away from the body, wraps his coat closely about himself, and keeps walking toward the TV store.

8 EXT. SQUARE - THE SIDEWALK NEAR THE TV STORE - LATER

Ed walks along the sidewalk, he stares at the ground while rubbing his neck.

ED  
(murmurs)  
For Haven's sake...

Ed bumps into JENKINS(25), a boy wearing a fashionable T-shirt with a headphone on his neck, holding a box of CDs, hurrying along the sidewalk.

JENKINS  
(shouts)  
Watch it!  
(looks up)  
Oh, it's you, Ed.

ED  
(nods dazedly)  
Hi, Jenkins.

JENKINS  
What's the matter? You look sick.

ED  
(shaking his head)  
The body. In the corner of the square...

JENKINS  
Sure, Ed. Take it easy.

Jenkins leads Ed into the alcove of the LOYCE TV SALES AND SERVICE store.

KIM(O.S.)  
Ed! My protest is canceled, I forgot to call you...something wrong?

KIM(23), a young man in a blue uniform walks out from the TV store and comes to them.

JENKINS

Ed's not feeling well.

ED

(holds his head)

How can you stand here? Don't you see it? For God's sake...

KIM

(looks at Ed with confusion, then turns to Jenkins)

What's he talking about?

ED

(shouts)

The body! The body hanging there!

More people collect, Ed shakes Kim's body harshly, Kim moves backward to escape from him. Ed then turns to Jenkins. Jenkins moves away from him.

ONLOOKER1(O.S.)

(whisper)

Is he sick?

ED

(screams)

The body!

People form a circle around Ed, Ed moves towards an onlooker, the onlooker moves backward.

ONLOOKER2(O.S.)

(whisper)

Better get a doctor!

ONLOOKER3(O.S.)

(whisper)

He must be drunk...

ED

(shots at people)

Do something!

Ed moves toward Kim and Kim recoils, people behind Kim moves away too. The circle gradually becomes larger.

ED

Don't stand there! Do something!  
Something's wrong! Something's  
happened! Things are going on!

Ed fights his way through the people, he stumbles and half falls. Ed's hat drops on the ground but Ed does not look at it.



A BLONDE COP(35) and a BRUNETTE COP(35) appear, both of them are heavy-set, the crowd melts respectfully as they move toward Ed. They look very similar, from figure to expression.

ED  
 (looks at the cops)  
 Thank god.

9 INT. A VAN - NIGHT

Ed sits in a van, the blonde cop and the brunette cop sit opposite to him. The brunette cop takes out a notebook and writes on it. The blonde cop sits bolt upright, stares at Ed with an expressionless face.

BRUNETTE COP  
 Name?

ED  
 (mops sweat on his forehead)  
 Loyce, Ed Loyce.

BRUNETTE COP  
 Address?

ED  
 1368 Hurst Road...listen to me. Back there, in the square, hanging from the lamppost...

BRUNETTE COP  
 (looks at Ed)  
 Have you drunk any water today?

ED  
 Water? Of course. Why?

BRUNETTE COP  
 Tap water?

ED  
 No, I don't drink tap water. Why? What has that to do with...

BRUNETTE COP  
 (writes on the notebook)  
 What have you drunk? Soda? Coffee?

ED  
 Tea? I guess...

The two cops look at each other, then look back at Ed.

ED

(leans forward)

Did I miss the explanation? I didn't  
get in on it? Like everybody else?

A beat.

BRUNETTE COP

That's right. You missed the  
explanation.

ED

Then why is the body...hanging there?

BRUNETTE COP

It's supposed to be hanging there. For  
everybody to see.

Ed blinks his eyes as he's processing the cop's message. The  
two cops stare at him, say nothing.

ED

(grins weakly)

I guess I sort of went off the deep  
end. I thought maybe something  
happened. You know...I'm glad to know  
it's on the level.

BRUNETTE COP

It's on the level.

ED

I feel better. I was kinda excited  
there, for a minute. I guess I got all  
stirred up. Now I see...there's no  
need to take me in, is there?

Ed looks at the two cops, but the cops give no response, just  
stare at him.

ED

(frowns)

I should be back at my store. I'm all  
right, now. No more trouble. Is there  
any need of...

DRIVER

This won't take long, a short process.  
Only a few minutes.

A dark shadow of the DRIVER appears on the window between the driving room and the backseat. Ed looks toward the window, but can't see the driver clearly. He then looks back to the two heavy-set cops. His hand is shaking.

ED  
(mutters)  
I hope it's short.

The van is slowing down, Ed and the two cops bodies lean toward the head of the van due to inertia. Ed moves his eyes slowly toward the handle of the door, yanks the door open.

10 EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Ed jumps out into the driveway and rolls to his feet. He stands up, looks around, and runs away from the driveway. Ed looks back while running.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

The van stops. There's no license plate on the rear.

BACK TO SCENE

Ed runs toward a hardware store on the side of the road.

11 INT. MAIN ROOM OF THE HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Ed enters the store, races toward the back, pass the startled clerks and customers. His coat is dusty. He runs toward the back of the store and hardly pushes the door that has an exit sign above it.

12 EXT. ALLEY BEHIND THE HARDWARE STORE - CONTINUOUS

Ed gets out from the back door of the store, trips over a garbage can. Ed turns left and runs along the alley for a while.

He reaches the end of the alley, a poster is on the wall, with an outline of a spy and the title "THE RED MENACE IS REAL" at the top. Ed turns right, climbs over a fence, and jumps down on the other side.

Ed stops and looks backward, stays and gasps, no sounds behind him. He then looks ahead.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

A highway at the far end. A street light twinkles. Not many cars on the highway.

BACK TO SCENE

Ed moves toward the highway.

13 EXT. HIGHWAY NEAR A WATERWORKS - NIGHT

Ed walks along a highway below a bridge, almost no car on the highway, a waterworks is located on the left side of the highway, surrounded by farmlands.

A huge water tower with the logo HAYEK WATER SUPPLY on it stands in the area of the waterworks. Two searchlights sweep back and forth. Ed glances at the waterworks, he then hides behind a pier and sticks his head out, and observes. A poster with the title "LET'S MAKE IT GREAT AGAIN" is on the pier.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

Over 50 trucks park near the waterworks, people in blue uniforms with HAYEK WATER SUPPLY printed on the back transport tanks from the trucks toward the water tower, in a mechanical pattern, like a group of robots.

They connect the tanks to the pipes under the water tower and rotate the valves on the tanks. After a while, they disconnect the old tanks and connect the pipe with new tanks.

BACK TO SCENE

Ed pulls his head back, stands with his back against the pier. His eyes widened in terror. After a while, Ed looks in the direction of the waterworks again.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

More trucks arrive, followed by a black sedan stop near the waterworks. A man in a suit comes out, another man in a blue uniform comes out from a building and shakes his hand.

BACK TO SCENE

Sounds of trucks rise behind Ed, he quickly jumps into the brushwood near the road. A few trucks pass. Ed stands up slowly and looks toward the waterworks again. He is suddenly focused on by the two searchlights.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

Two dazzling light sources.

BACK TO SCENE

A beat.

Ed jumps out of the brushwood and runs away from the lighted area quickly. The searchlights search for him but fail.

14 EXT. SIDEWALK BY A HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The moon is covered by clouds. There is only Ed runs slowly on the sidewalk by a highway. No building around, only farmland and woods. A bus stop is located about 20 meters ahead. He looks backward, a bus is moving toward him. Ed speeds up and arrives at the bus stop as the bus does.

15 INT. BUS - NIGHT

Ed finds a seat in the rear, by the door. The bus departs. Ed looks out the window, sees nothing but darkness. He takes a deep breath and sees an advertisement on the bus with the slogan "Get what you need - Hayek water supply". In the advertisement, a couple and a child are drinking water while smiling.

Ed observes the passengers on the bus. With expressionless and sluggish faces, their bodies wave with the bus.

Ed sees a SLENDER MAN(35) in a dark blue suit on another side of the bus, with dark hair and a small mustache. The slender man's eyes are brighter than the other passengers, he's holding a small book in his hand, looks at Ed. When Ed's eyes reach him, he turns quickly away.

Ed stares at the slender man, he looks at Ed and moves his eyes away again.

16 EXT. DRIVEWAY BY A BAR - LATER

The bus halts by a bar. 1960s music playing in the bar, an advertisement stands near the bar with the title "MAKE LOVE NOT WAR".

17 INT. BUS - LATER

An ELDERLY MAN(65) with a full beard gets on the bus from the front door and drops a few coins into the box. The bus moves. The elderly man and the slender man look at each other and nod. He moves down the aisle and takes a seat opposite Ed.

The elderly man gazes at Ed, Ed looks at the slender man, he stares at him too. Ed holds the bus pole near his seat. He runs to the rear door and yanks the emergency door release, the rubber door swing open.

The BUS DRIVER(45), a bold man in a yellow jacket looks back and jams on the brake.

BUS DRIVER  
(shouts)  
Hey! What the hell?!

18 EXT. DRIVEWAY NEAR THE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT - CONTINUOUS

Ed jumps out of the bus, falls to the ground due to loss of balance. The slender man gets out of the bus when it is fully stopped, and the elderly man follows. Ed gets up but falls into the brushwood by the sidewalk again.

The slender man comes to him. Ed turns back and kicks the man madly. The man falls near Ed.

SLENDER MAN  
Ouch!

Ed picks up a rock from the brushwood and hits the man with it.

SLENDER MAN  
Stop! For God's sake listen...

Ed raises the rock and hits the man's head, the man's voice cut off with a crunching sound. The elderly man stands by, with eyes wide-opened. Walkers stop by and look at Ed.

Ed stops, looks at the man lying there. He seems dead. Ed crawls back, gets up, and runs away.

19 EXT. THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF ED'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A row of double-layer houses, light shed out from a few of them. An advertisement stands in front of one of the houses with the title "FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY". Ed walks over the advertisement wearily.

20 INT. ED'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Janet lies on the sofa in front of the old TV. The TV is playing a documentary about nanorobots.

DOCUMENTARY(V.O.)

By placing the nanorobots in the frontal lobe of the mice, the researchers can manipulate their decision-making and emotion...

The door crashes the wall. Ed enters the house, with his dirty coat. Janet looks back.

JANET

(surprised)

Ed! What is it? Why don't you answer my phone...

Ed slams the door behind him. He looks around and pats his pockets.

ED

Give me your phone.

Janet stands up and walks toward Ed, looks Ed up and down. She takes out her phone and hands it to Ed. Ed opens it, the signal is zero.

ED

They've blocked the signal. Who else is here besides you?

JANET

Nobody, just the kids. What happened to you? Did you lose your phone?

Ed hands the phone back to Janet and locks the door.

ED

Listen, we don't have much time. They disguised themselves as cops to capture me, but I knew they're fake. I know every cop in the town. I escaped and they must be looking for me now.

JANET

(lower her voice)

Wh...what? Who?

Janet's face twists with bewilderment and fear.

ED

The town has been taken over by...by a company...

Ed pulls down the blinds and looks outside through them.

ED(CONT'D)

We gotta leave the town.

JANET

What are you talking about?

ED

...they're mixing something into the water supply...maybe some chemical material. They can control minds through it. Your mind.

Ed looks at Janet.

JANET

(scratches her head)

My mind?

ED

We're getting out of here, we need to inform the government. They don't know this. Get your coat and call the twins. Don't stop to pack, there's no time.

Janet, white-faced, moves toward the closet and gets down her coat.

JANET

(touches her face)

Where are we going?

ED

Oak Grove, they have an independent water supply, must have not yet been contaminated.

Ed looks outside again, sees nothing. He turns to Janet.

ED(CONT'D)

Now call down the twins. Your car is full of gas, isn't it?



JANET  
 I had it filled up yesterday  
 afternoon...  
 (moves toward the stairs)  
 Ed, I...

ED  
 Call the kids!

A beat.

JANET  
 (calls upstairs)  
 Come on downstairs. We're...going out  
 for a while.

TOM(O.S.)  
 Now?

ED  
 (barks)  
 Hurry up! Get down here, both of you.

Janet looks at Ed worriedly. Ed gazes at the stairs, rubs his chin. Tom appears at the top of the stairs with a white T-shirt on which has a DNA icon.

TOM  
 I was doing my homework. We're  
 starting fractions. Miss Parker says  
 if we don't get this done...

ED  
 Where's Jim?

TOM  
 He's coming.

Tom walks down the stair and Jim appears, in a yellow T-shirt.

JIM  
 What's up, Dad?

ED  
 (tries to be calm)  
 We're going for a ride.

JIM  
A ride? Where?

Ed does not answer. Janet goes toward the floor lamp.

ED  
Leave the lights on, and the TV set.  
Go turn it on.

Janet nods and walks to the set. A buzz. Janet stops and turns to Ed with an expressionless face and half-opened mouth. Ed looks at Jim and Tom, their faces become emotionless too, with half-opened mouths.

Ed opens his mouth, wants to say something but can't. They stare at Ed and walk toward him slowly. Ed moves toward the front door and rocks the handle. The door is locked, he unlocks and opens it.

21 EXT. THE SIDEWAY BY ED'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Ed gets out of his house and runs toward a red car in front of the house. He rocks the handle of the car but it's locked. Ed pats his coat, the key is not in his pockets. He looks back, Janet, Jim, and Tom walk out of the house. Ed retches. He turns back to the car and beats the windows. Ed looks at his family, they are about 10 meters away. He then runs away.

FADE OUT.

22 EXT. ROAD - DAY

The sun rises halfway. Ed walks slowly along a road, surrounded by low buildings. He takes off his coat and throws it on the ground. His jacket is wet. About 200 meters away from him, a protest is ongoing, two groups of protesters hold signs, stand on two sides of the road, yelling at each other.

A few men on the left side across the road and punch one woman. Then more protesters from the left side across the road, the two groups fight with each other.

23 EXT. ROAD BY A COFFEE - DAY

Ed reaches a restaurant, a big sign with the text "OAK GROVE COFFEE" is above the front door. Ed pushes the door and gets into the restaurant.

24 INT. COFFEE - CONTINUOUS

A white-clad ATTENDANT(25) stares at Ed suspiciously. Ed holds the wall and gasps.

ED

Thank God. I didn't think I was going to make it. Hopefully, they are not following me.

ATTENDANT

(walks toward Ed)

What happened? Are you in any trouble?

ED

They have the whole town...they...can I have something to drink?

ATTENDANT

Oh, sure...

(moves toward the bar)

Is ice water okay?

The attendant picks a cup and puts it below a tap. Ed stares at the tap.

ED

Never mind...

ATTENDANT

(turns to Ed)

What?

ED

How should I get to the police office?

ATTENDANT

Oh...you turn left first and then turn right at the next crossroads, then you should be able to see it.

ED

(moves toward the front door)

Thanks.

ATTENDANT

Sir...are you not ordering something?

The door shuts.

25 INT. POLICE OFFICE - DAY

The blinds are pulled down. A POLICE COMMISSIONER(50) with greased hair in the uniform, sits behind a desk. Ed sits at another side of the desk. A YOUNG OFFICER(25) sits in the corner with a notebook by a TV. The commissioner looks at the young officer and nods. The officer leaves.

The commissioner turns to Ed, gets out his cigarettes, lights up slowly, and frowns.

ED  
(stares at the commissioner)  
You don't believe me.

The commissioner offers Ed a cigarette, Ed pushes it impatiently away.

COMMISSIONER  
Suit yourself.

The commissioner moves over to the window and stands for a time looks out through the blinds.

COMMISSIONER(CONT'D)  
I believe you.

ED  
(sags)  
Thank God.

COMMISSIONER  
So you got away. You only drink boiled water, a weird habit. But that helped you avoid the...contaminated tap water.

ED  
(murmurs)  
I have a theory.

COMMISSIONER  
What is it?

ED

About them. The companies take over one area at a time. Starting at the bottom...once they controlled enough population, they can use the people against the government and take over the country. Then they can make more money.

The commissioner looks back at Ed.

ED(CONT'D)

But there's one thing I haven't figure out.

COMMISSIONER

What is it?

ED

The hanging man. The dead man hanging from the lamppost. I don't understand that. Why? Why did they deliberately hang him there?

COMMISSIONER

(smiles faintly)

That would seem simple. Bait.

ED

(stiffs)

Bait? What do you mean?

COMMISSIONER

To draw you out. Make you declare yourself. So they'd know who was under control...and who had escaped.

ED

(recoils with horror)

So they anticipated...you react. You make yourself known. Gosh, the company must have planned for a long time!

The commissioner extinguishes the cigarette butt and leaves it in the ashtray.

COMMISSIONER

(looks at outside)

Or it can be the government.

ED

The government? Why?

COMMISSIONER

Do you watch the news? Mr. Loyce.

ED

Not much.

The commissioner takes out a TV controller and turns on the TV. A REPORTER(30) stands in a district, behind her, police cars with lights park behind her on the TV.

REPORTER

It was a peaceful protest in the beginning and upgraded to a violent conflict. Caused 2 dead and 1 injured...

A beat.

COMMISSIONER

(turns off the TV)

Things like this happen every day. Consider a society as an organism, its mainstream culture is its DNA and ideology is an essential component of it. Traditional media like TV and magazines are the mRNA, guide individuals on serving society.

ED

(Wipes his forehead)

I...I don't see your point.

COMMISSIONER

(turns toward Ed)

When traditional media collapses, especially when facing forces like social media, the mainstream ideology could be divided. Then the society is in danger of being divided.

ED

So you think the government is trying to control people's minds to prevent the nation from being divided?

COMMISSIONER

Correct, they need a new form of mRNA to deliver the ideology to the individuals. Nanorobots, for example.

ED

That's the thing they put into the waterworks? Why are you not doing anything?!

COMMISSIONER

(smiles)

Why should I, this is the necessary process of society's evolution.

ED

Society's evolution is not like this, it happens naturally, it should be determined by all people!

COMMISSIONER

This does happen naturally, people have let the government be the representation of them, to make this decision for them.

The young officer opens the door with a cup of water, the commissioner nods toward him and points to the desk. The young officer places the cup in front of Ed.

COMMISSIONER(CONT'D)

(pushes the cup of water toward Ed)

Those tiny robots don't control you all the time, they only function when you are out of the social norm.

The commissioner turns toward the windows, looks outside, and says nothing for a time. Ed's forehead is full of sweat now. He leans forward to look at the water in the cup. Some tiny things like insects swim in the water. Ed swallows.

COMMISSIONER(CONT'D)

Dear Loyce. We exist as human beings only when we are part of society. You have to make a choice.

The commissioner opens the blinds, the office becomes alight suddenly. Ed slits his eyes, then opens them slowly.

ED'S POINT OF VIEW -

Outside of the windows, people walking along the street. A rope is hanging on one of the lampposts.

BACK TO SCENE