

THRESHOLD

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FADE IN:

EXT. GOSFORD RAILWAY STATION - PLATFORM 1 - TWILIGHT

18:02 - Gosford Station.

A cool winter evening.

The last traces of sunlight cling to the western sky, washing the station in deep blues and fading gold.

The station breathes with familiar rhythm.

Electronic departure boards flicker.

A distant announcement echoes across the platforms.

Cars pass beyond the station.

Somewhere in the distance, a freight train horn.

Nothing unusual.

Nothing memorable.

A MAN in his early 30s, unremarkable, walks up the station ramp with a backpack over one shoulder.

He taps his transport card.

The gate CHIRPS.

He continues without breaking stride.

For a few moments, he is our only focus.

Then

He isn't alone.

Perhaps forty people are spread along the platform, each absorbed in their own small world.

A TEENAGE GIRL scrolls endlessly through short videos, earbuds planted firmly in her ears.

A TRADESMAN in a fluorescent work shirt, stained with the day's effort, leans against a column, nursing an energy drink.

A YOUNG MOTHER crouches beside her son, patiently tying a shoelace that refuses to stay tied.

Two UNIVERSITY STUDENTS argue cheerfully about something inconsequential.

An ELDERLY COUPLE stand comfortably in silence.

A BUSINESSMAN finishes a phone call.

BUSINESSMAN

Yeah. I'll be home in about an hour.

He hangs up.

A WOMAN reads a paperback, occasionally turning a page.

A SCHOOL STUDENT absently swings his backpack from one shoulder to the other.

Nobody notices anybody else.

The electronic voice interrupts.

STATION PA

The next service departing Platform One is the 6:02 Central Coast and Newcastle service to Central.

People instinctively move closer to the yellow line.

No urgency.

Just routine.

Far down the straight track—

Twin headlights appear.

Growing brighter.

The familiar electric hum builds.

An OSCAR rolls into the station.

Brakes hiss.

Doors align with practiced precision.

A soft electronic chime.

The doors slide open.

Passengers step off.

Others step on.

Our MAN boards through the middle carriage.

INT. OSCAR - STANDARD CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

The familiar interior.

Cool white lighting.

Blue patterned seats.

Grab rails polished smooth by years of commuters.

Air conditioning murmurs overhead.

A recorded announcement.

RECORDED VOICE

Doors closing. Please stand clear.

The doors close.

The train eases away almost silently.

Outside, Gosford Station begins to drift backwards.

Inside, life resumes.

The BUSINESSMAN opens his laptop.

The TRADESMAN removes his boots from the aisle after catching someone's eye.

The YOUNG MOTHER settles her son beside the window.

He immediately fogs the glass with his breath and begins drawing shapes.

Two TEENAGE GIRLS share headphones.

One quietly laughs.

Across the aisle, an ELDERLY WOMAN carefully unwraps a homemade sandwich from greaseproof paper.

Someone sneezes.

A polite

PASSENGER

Bless you.

The carriage gently sways.

The rhythmic clatter of wheels over rail joints becomes almost hypnotic.

Outside the windows, suburban streets slip past.

Streetlights begin to awaken.

The last sunlight disappears behind the ridgeline.

No one is looking outside anymore.

Everyone has settled into that strange commuter state—

Present.

But mentally somewhere else.

A MAN stares blankly through the glass without seeing anything.

A CHILD sleeps against her father's shoulder.

A phone vibrates.

Someone smiles at a message.

Someone else silently deletes one.

Time passes.

Real time.

Unhurried.

Comfortably ordinary.

EXT. CENTRAL COAST LINE - MOVING - DUSK

The OSCAR snakes through bushland.

Steel wheels sing against the curve.

Eight silver carriages follow one another with practiced elegance.

The train begins climbing.

Ahead

A tunnel mouth cuts into the sandstone hillside.

Dark.

Featureless.

Waiting.

The headlights illuminate nothing beyond the black entrance.

The train enters.

INT. OSCAR - STANDARD CARRIAGE - CONTINUOUS

Instantly

The world outside disappears.

The windows become mirrors.

Only the fluorescent cabin lights remain.

The atmosphere changes almost imperceptibly.

Not frightening.

Simply

Detached.

As though the outside world has ceased to exist.

The familiar sounds continue.

Rails.

Air conditioning.

The soft rustle of paper.

Phone screens glowing in the glass.

For one fleeting moment...

Every passenger exists together inside a brightly lit island floating in complete darkness.

One window fills the frame.

Reflections.

Faces.

Then only black.

The sound of the train continues.

CUT TO BLACK.