

In the dim aftermath of a chaotic carnival scene, Jim Nightshade bursts through the back door of a maze, panting and chaotic. The Illustrated Man, amidst the darkness of black tents, pauses, as does the Dwarf and the Skeleton. They share a collective moment of stillness, not reacting to Charles Halloway's presence, but rather to the extraordinary sounds resonating around them.

The air is filled with a cacophony as mirrors shatter, creating a symphony of glass breaking in rapid succession. A surreal image unfolds: one moment, a multitude of mirrors reflect the world, and the next, they explode like meteor showers onto the ground. The Illustrated Man feels the vibration of this destruction resonate almost within himself, as Halloway seemingly unleashes a profound and beautiful sound that disrupts the stability of the mirrors, sending shards cascading downwards, mingling elements of light and dark.

This transformation is a testament to Halloway's ultimate acceptance of the carnival, the night, and his place in it—embracing both the bright and the shadowy aspects of life. His cry echoes through the empty space like a trumpet blast, releasing hidden spirits trapped within the mirrored surfaces. With a sense of liberation, he frees himself from the weight of the past and the phantoms of fear, allowing the fresh lights of the morning and carnival's essence to fill the void around him.

Will, observing the scene, inquires about his father's actions, but the match he held slips from his grasp, extinguishing what little light remains. They search for Jim, who has vanished among the shadows, the last electric lights sputtering out. Together, they face the challenge of finding him in the suffocating darkness of the carnival grounds. Will, fraught with growing anxiety, realizes they need to find Jim, but also contend with other sinister forces at work.

Amidst the creeping darkness, Will and his father recognize the urgency of the moment. They must confront Jim, Mr. Cooger in his Electric Chair, and Mr. Dark, an enigmatic figure containing the souls of the damned. There's no time for police help; they collectively decide to address their immediate concerns; Jim must be found, and the other threats eliminated. With the moonlight breaking through the darkness, they take a deep breath and step into the night, determined to confront whatever awaits them with newfound resolve .