A SIMPLE QUESTION

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FADE IN:

INT. WINDOWLESS ROOM

A dull bulb hangs. Darkness fills the rooms edge.

Sat in a chair, wearing just his boxers is THE PRISONER. Head slumped forward, wrists taped to the chair. His legs stretch out in front, ankles taped to a foot rest. His feet dangle over its edge.

He stirs. His head moves slow from side to side.

His head lifts. He's around twenty. Would be handsome if not for the bruise on his forehead and the dried blood under his nose, down his chin.

He rolls his neck, winces.

He squints at the light.

PRISONER

Hello?

He looks down at himself.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

Somebody!

He grits his teeth, tenses, his biceps bulge, legs shudder.

He relents. He pants, chest heaving.

Sweat trickles down his forehead.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Somebody help me!! Anybody! Is there anybody there?!!

He turns his head to see behind. Turns the other way.

He takes a deep breath, grits his teeth.

He struggles. The chair doesn't move. The foot rest doesn't move.

He gasps.

PRISONER (CONT'D) This isn't happening.

(O/S) CLUNK.

He turns his head.

(O/S) CREAK.

FOOTSTEPS ECHO.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Who are you? What do you want?!

A man, THE CAPTOR, steps into the light. Dressed all in black, including gloves and balaclava. He carries a chair.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Hey! I'm talking to you!

The captor places the chair in front of the prisoner.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Are you deaf?! You won't get away with this!

The captor sits. Takes off his shoes.

PRISONER (CONT'D) You have no idea who I am or what's going to happen to you now do you?

CAPTOR I'm going to ask you a question. It's a simple question. I suggest you don't make it hard.

PRISONER I suggest you let me go! You can still walk away from this.

CAPTOR Where is mister Severus?

The prisoner looks away.

PRISONER I don't know what you're talking about.

CAPTOR Where is mister Severus?

PRISONER

Fuck you!

He spits at the captor.

The captor stands, moves silently toward the prisoner.

The prisoner tenses, the captor passes.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Wait. Wait! Where are you going?! Come back here. Come back!

The prisoner turns his head. Wriggles his wrists.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Help me!! Help!!!

(O/S) CREAK. CLUNK.

The captor steps into the light. He carries a rucksack.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Somebody help me!!

The captor sits.

CAPTOR No-one can hear you.

PRISONER Where am I? What do you want? Money? I can get you money. Is that what you want?

CAPTOR I don't want your money. All I need is an answer. Where is mister Severus?

The prisoner looks down. Shakes his head.

PRISONER I don't know.

The captor opens the rucksack. Reaches in, pulls out a gun, places it down.

The prisoners eyes widen.

PRISONER (CONT'D) What the fuck? Who are you?

The captor reaches in the rucksack, pulls out a blowtorch, places it down.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Let me go! Let me go dammit!

The captor reaches in the rucksack, pulls out a cigar cutter.

The prisoner struggles, his body glistens with sweat.

CAPTOR Three days ago you took part in a robbery. A robbery ordered by your boss, mister Severus. PRISONER Please! I don't know what you're talking about.

The captor CLINKS the cutter.

CAPTOR This is not about what was taken. It's about principles. It's about trust.

PRISONER Look I don't know who you are, but you've got the wrong guy. I can't help you.

The captor stands, moves to the prisoners side. The prisoner leans away.

CAPTOR I gave you a suggestion. You should have listened.

The captor grabs the prisoners hand.

PRISONER No! Stop! No!!

The prisoner struggles, balls his fist.

The captor prises free the pinky finger.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Please! Don't do this! I cant tell you anything! I can't!

The captor slides on the cutter.

CAPTOR Where is mister Severus?

PRISONER I can't tell you. Please. Please!!

The captor takes a deep breath.

CLINK.

The prisoner SCREAMS.

The captor moves around the prisoner, stops on the other side.

CAPTOR Where is mister Severus? PRISONER I can't. You don't know what you're doing. Please. You can't do this.

The captor leans close.

CAPTOR I am doing this.

The captor grabs the prisoners hand.

The prisoner struggles, balls his fist.

PRISONER You're dead! You hear me? Dead!

The captor prises free the pinky, slides on the cutter.

PRISONER (CONT'D) I'm going to kill you you piece of shit. I'm going to cut off...

CLINK.

The prisoner screams.

CAPTOR Now, losing a pinky is not a problem.

The captor grabs a thumb. Slides on the cutter.

CAPTOR (CONT'D) It's a different story losing a thumb.

PRISONER OK stop! Stop. I'll talk. Please, just stop.

The captor removes the cutter, moves to his chair.

He sits, places the cutter in the rucksack.

CAPTOR Tell me what I need to know.

PRISONER We did the job. It was our test. I can get you the money. You just have to let me go.

CAPTOR I told you. I don't want your money. All I need to know is where is mister Severus? That's all. PRISONER I don't know. Please. I can't tell you. You can have the money. All of it.

The captor shakes his head.

He picks up the blowtorch.

CAPTOR Your time is running out. I suggest you think carefully.

PRISONER You don't understand. You have no idea. I can't tell you. I can't tell you where he is.

The captor turns a nozzle, the blowtorch lets out a HISS.

CAPTOR You can save yourself a whole lot of pain. Trust me.

He reaches into his pocket, removes a lighter.

PRISONER What are you doing? Please don't do this. Please.

The prisoner sobs.

The captor sparks the lighter, moves it to the blowtorch.

The blowtorch flame flashes yellow, turns blue.

The captor turns the nozzle, the flame gets shorter.

He pulls his chair closer.

Grabs a foot.

The prisoners legs shake, his free foot wiggles.

His body tenses, he struggles.

CAPTOR Where is mister Severus?

PRISONER I can't tell you! He'll kill me. He'll do worse than kill me. You have no idea what he'll do, what he's capable of.

The captor lowers the blowtorch.

PRISONER (CONT'D) No! No!!! The prisoner SCREAMS. Tears flow from his eyes. The captor stares down. Smoke rises between them. The scream fades. The prisoners eyes flicker, his mouth open. His head flops forward, eyes closing. The prisoner stirs. Panicked he lifts his head, eyes squinting. He grits his teeth, sucks in air. CAPTOR Welcome back. Now, where is mister Severus? He raises the blowtorch. The prisoner cries. PRISONER It was our first job for him. How did this happen? How did you find me? CAPTOR I wouldn't worry about that now. He lowers the blowtorch. The prisoner SCREAMS. PRISONER OK!!! Stop! OK! The captor raises the blowtorch. CAPTOR Go ahead. PRISONER He's at the docks. We were meant to meet him tonight. CAPTOR Where at the docks?

7.

PRISONER A yacht. On a yacht.

CAPTOR

What yacht?

PRISONER Please. I've told you enough. You can find him. You know where he is.

The captor lowers the blowtorch.

PRISONER (CONT'D)

The captor raises the blowtorch.

OK. OK!!

PRISONER (CONT'D) It's... It's the Mephistopholes. Peer eight.

The captor turns the nozzle, the flame dies.

He pushes back his chair.

Places the blowtorch in the rucksack.

Puts the rucksack over his shoulder.

Pulls on his shoes.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Let me go. Will you let me go now?

The captor nods.

The prisoner bows his head. He sobs.

PRISONER (CONT'D) Thank you. Thank you.

The captor reaches into his pocket, removes a phone.

He dials, holds the phone to his ear.

He picks up the gun.

Stands.

CAPTOR Yeah, it's me... He talked... Everything... Consider it done.

He hangs up, puts the phone in his pocket. He raises the gun, aims at the prisoners chest. PRISONER What? But you...

BANG! BANG!

The prisoners eyes widen.

Blood splutters from his mouth.

The captor raises the gun, aims at the prisoners head.

CAPTOR All you had to do was keep your mouth shut.

BANG!

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END