

BLEED MY SOUL

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FADE IN:

EXT. DESERT HIGHWAY - DAY

Quiet. Lonesome. An empty two-lane highway.

Over a distant hill, a sedan comes into view.

As it approaches, the lights identify it as a police car.

In the opposite lane, a coupe speeds past.

The police car flips on its lights and siren as it does a quick U-turn.

After a short pursuit, the coupe pulls over.

The police car eases up behind as the siren goes silent.

EXT. HIGHWAY - THEN

HENDERSON (28), who just screams "rookie", steps out of the cop car and nervously approaches the coupe.

EXT. SEDAN - THEN

The DRIVER rolls down the window.

HENDERSON
May I see your license and
registration, please?

No response.

HENDERSON
Sir?

The Driver sits in shadow, staring ahead.

Henderson eases his hand onto his sidearm.

HENDERSON
Sir, did you hear --

The Driver nods in silence.

Henderson peeks inside the windows of the coupe.

HENDERSON
Do you know how fast you were
going?

The Driver tightens his grip on the steering wheel so hard, his knuckles are pale white.

HENDERSON
Can you even hear me? Hablas
Ingles?

The Driver turns to Henderson, his face still in shadow.

DRIVER
(Thick African accent)
You don't know who I am, do you?

Henderson grips his holstered gun tight.

HENDERSON
Should I?

DRIVER
How 'bout you go find out?

The Driver faces front.

Henderson takes a step back and grabs his radio.

HENDERSON
(Into radio)
This is Unit 19. Can I get some
backup out here?

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. LEVETKIN HOUSE - DUSK - ESTABLISHING

The kind of house where a person resides, but doesn't live.

INT. LEVETKIN HOUSE - KITCHEN - THEN

SAM LEVETKIN (44), with deep bags under his glazed-over eyes, slices onions at the kitchen counter in a deep silence.

A small pan of water boils on the stove.

The ring of a wall phone disrupts the abnormally quiet house.

Sam drops the knife and shuffles to the phone then hesitates by it.

After two, tedious rings, he answers.

SAM
(Monotone)
Who is this?... Yeah, this is
him... What's Alan want with me?...

As Sam listens, it's as if a switch has been flipped. Life seems to return to his eyes.

The boiling water creeps up the side of the pot.

SAM
You've got him now?... Right now?

A small tear rolls down his cheek.

SAM
On my way.

Sam quickly hangs up the phone and takes a deep breath.

The water boils over onto the stove.

Sam walks out of the kitchen.

SAM'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

It could be most readily described as a disaster. Sheets hang off the bed, clothes are strewn about, bottles -- both prescription and alcohol -- line all surfaces.

Sam takes a seat on the edge of his double bed.

He looks in the top drawer of his bedside table to find a near-mint condition Bible.

He throws the Bible on the floor and reaches in the back of the drawer and emerges with a small pistol.

Attached to the pistol is a wedding band necklace.

Sam unties the necklace and slips the ring on his finger.

He gets up and heads for the --

HALLWAY

Where he stands outside another door.

Sam places his hand on the knob and pauses.

JOSHUA'S BEDROOM - THEN

The door creaks open as Sam stands in the doorway.

The inside of the room is filled with toys, games, everything you might expect to find in a young boy's bedroom except --

That the room is pristine and covered in dust. Nobody's been in there for years.

Sam takes one last look then closes the door.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. POLICE STATION - LOBBY - NIGHT

WILLIAMS (32), sits at his desk, with a large pile of paperwork in front of him.

He gives off the vibe of someone who wants to impress; hair done messy, neatly-trimmed goatee, fit.

He rubs the bridge of his nose and reaches for a bottle of aspirin when --

Sam enters with a furious pace.

Williams looks up, his eyes wide.

SAM
Where's Farrands?

WILLIAMS
Are you Sam?

SAM
Where?

Williams stands, halfheartedly pointing to his left.

WILLIAMS
He's in with the guy.

Sam walks past Williams.

WILLIAMS
(Calls out)
He asked for you to wait out here.

Sam glances over his shoulder.

SAM
Try and stop me.

ALAN (O.S.)
We'll do our best.

Sam turns back to see --

ALAN FARRANDS, (52) business-like with an imposing figure,
standing in the open doorway.

ALAN
(Warm)
Sam.

They face each other, less than two feet apart.

SAM
(Determined)
Is it true?

ALAN
(Nods)
As far as we can tell.

Sam's eyes glass up. His lip quivers.

A look of hope crosses his face.

ALAN
But Sam, it's more complicated than
you think.

Sam seems confused. The information makes no sense to him.

ALAN
We should talk.
(To Williams)
Williams, would you mind grabbing
Sam, here, a cup of coffee?

Alan leads Sam through the doorway.

WILLIAMS
(Sarcastic, to himself)
Of course, General.

Williams scoffs as he goes off into another room.

INT. POLICE STATION - ALAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Cramped for a Captain's office. Files galore.

Alan stares out the window.

Sam leans against a bookcase, opposite Alan.

Williams knocks on the door then lets himself in. He offers the coffee to Sam, who declines.

A look of annoyance comes over Williams' face.

WILLIAMS
(Offers the coffee)
Cap?

ALAN
(Looks to see)
Not thirsty.

Williams clenches his fist tight as he leaves.

SAM
Well?

Alan turns back to face Sam and grabs a half-full decanter and two small glasses from his desk drawer.

He pours two drinks then hands one to Sam.

SAM
You're stalling.

Alan exhales deep as he flips open the top file on his desk.

ALAN
Asher Greene.

SAM
(Direct)
Last seen with my son.

ALAN
Not necessarily.

Sam looks confused by the response.

ALAN
For him, four years is a long time.
There's probably others.

SAM
Where is he?

ALAN
Across the hall. We're grillin' 'im
right now.

SAM
About Josh?

ALAN
Sam, he's given us a lotta names...
but not Josh.

Sam exhales in frustration.

SAM
Why?

ALAN
We're workin' 'im, Sam. Just a
matter of time.

SAM
Who you got in there?

ALAN
Aguilar.

SAM
(Frustrated)
Aguilar? There's your fucking
problem.

Alan closes the file.

ALAN
Wish I could do better.

SAM
Then do better.

ALAN
I don't have a lot to work with.
We're getting information, but
unfortunately, it's taking a little
bit a' time.

Sam locks eyes with Alan.

SAM
Look, I only know about Aguilar by
reputation but when you used to
need someone interrogated, you came
to me.

Alan leans forward.

ALAN
You want in there?

Sam steps up to the desk then plants his hands on it.

SAM
Just say the word.

Alan looks disappointed.

ALAN
Sam, you know that's just a pipe
dream.

SAM
It's not. I was the best you had.

Alan stands eye-to-eye with Sam.

ALAN
You're not a cop anymore.

This hits Sam hard. He backs away from the desk.

SAM
Then why call me? You've got
nothing. Aguilar isn't gonna break
this guy and he's got nothing about
Josh.

ALAN
Aguilar's struggling. I need you to
help him.

SAM
Not a chance.

Alan stands, puts his arms around Sam.

ALAN
Sam, please. If anybody can get
information outta this guy --

SAM
Then get me in there.

ALAN
...without breaking the law.

Sam sighs. Tired and frustration in full effect.

SAM
You read philosophy, Alan?
Kazantzakis?

ALAN
Can't say I do.

SAM
I did. A lot since Josh was taken.

ALAN
I didn't know that.

SAM
Why would you?

Sam finishes his drink.

SAM
"We come from a dark abyss and we
end in a dark abyss."

Sam walks to the door.

SAM
Just get me in with that son of a
bitch.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A concrete room except for a two-way mirror on one wall. A metal table rests in the middle of the room.

ASHER GREENE (58), an unimposing black man with short, graying hair on his head and face, sits with his hands folded and handcuffed on the table.

Asher cranes his head towards the mirror with curiosity.

INT. POLICE STATION - OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Almost a mirror of the interrogation room, except for a video camera trained right on Asher.

Sam, Alan and EDGAR AGUILAR (42), a Hispanic man with great dress-sense and a polished badge on his belt, watch Asher through the mirror.

EDGAR
Guy's tough, Cap.

Alan nods in agreement.

ALAN
Edgar, Sam Levetkin. Sam, Edgar
Aguilar. He's heading up the
interrogation.

Edgar extends his hand.

EDGAR
Pleasure.

SAM
(Dismissive)
Mm-hmm.

Edgar rescinds his hand.

ALAN
Joshua Levetkin was his --

SAM
Son.

Edgar nods.

EDGAR
Understood.

Alan runs his hand through his hair.

EDGAR
Never had one like this, Cap. All
I've got out of him is what he's
volunteered.

SAM
How many? Kids, I mean.

EDGAR
Eight, so far.

Alan hands Asher's file to Edgar.

ALAN
Get it out of him.

EDGAR
Working on it, Cap.

SAM
Whatever it takes.

Alan and Edgar share a glance.

ALAN

Within the confines of the law.

Edgar exits the room, file in-hand.

Sam steps towards the glass, keeping his eye on Asher.

SAM

(re: Asher)

He's not playing by the rules,
Alan. Why are you?

Alan joins Sam by the glass as they eyeball Asher.

ALAN

If we don't, we're worse than him.

Sam looks Alan right in the eye.

SAM

We could never be worse than him.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Edgar immediately walks in and takes his seat.

Asher folds his hands, as if waiting patiently.

Edgar opens the file and silently spreads out pictures and paperwork in front of Asher.

EDGAR

Asher Greene. Cool name, by the
way. Birth name?

ASHER

I see they pay you for more than
just dressing nice.

EDGAR

Let's see here. No known address.
No family. No social security
number. So, how is it we know your
name, then?

ASHER

Well, there was this one time you
brought me -- not you, people like
you -- brought a trial against me.
That was fun.

EDGAR

How about that? Acquitted of...

Edgar scans down a piece of paper.

EDGAR
...74 separate charges. 74?

ASHER
Unfortunately, you policemen
improperly collected evidence in an
alleged murder that led you to all
my other alleged murders.

Edgar seems to be getting frustrated.

EDGAR
The murder of eight children.
Raped, tortured, mutilated... and
disposed of.

Asher shrugs.

EDGAR
But, let's get to the point. That's
why you volunteered them, isn't it?
Once you've been acquitted, what
difference does it make?

ASHER
Ain't that a bitch?

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam rubs the bridge of his nose.

SAM
You're not getting anything out of
this fucker.

Alan shakes his head.

ALAN
Let the man work.

SAM
Look, all he's given up is
information that can't be used
against him. We need more.

Sam and Alan watch Asher's movements, looking for a clue.

ALAN
It's only been a couple hours.
Aguilar's about to start --

SAM
(Interrupts)
Gunning for his promotion.

Alan seems confused by the response.

SAM
Couldn't you see it? He doesn't
give a damn about Josh. He wants
this nailed down so he can get his
gold shield.

ALAN
What if he's trying to get both?

SAM
What if he's not?

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar paces about the room.

EDGAR
Six different states lookin' for
you. Six.

Asher mockingly counts on his fingers.

ASHER
Sounds right.

EDGAR
Federally wanted.

ASHER
Hence the multi-state task force
hunting me, ever-so-vigorously.

EDGAR
So, why turn yourself in?

Edgar leans on the table and stares Asher in the eye.

EDGAR
What's your play?

Asher keeps his hands folded as he stares straight at the
mirror, almost as if he can see who's on the other side.

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Asher and Sam lock eyes, unknowingly.

ASHER
Is Papa Levetkin in there?

Sam gives a wide-eyed reaction.

Both Alan and Edgar look to Sam.

ASHER
(Sly)
Yeah, he is. He's in there.

SAM
(Mumbles)
You son of a bitch.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Edgar slams his hand down on the table.

EDGAR
Hey, eyes on me.

Asher turns back to Edgar.

ASHER
That's the way you like it, right,
all eyes on you? Being the center
of attention?

EDGAR
We're not talking about me, we're
talking about you, you twisted
fuck.

ASHER
For the moment, yes.

EDGAR
Now, why would you ask about him?
What do you know about Mr.
Levetkin?

ASHER
I suppose I'm just curious how much
he misses his son...

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam has clenched his fists so tight that the color is
beginning to drain from his hands.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

With a sly smile creeping across his face:

ASHER

...Josh.

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam furiously punches the two-way mirror so hard it cracks.

SAM

You mother fucker!

Sam turns towards the door as --

Alan puts his hands on Sam's shoulder, to stop him.

SAM

Get your fuckin' hands off me!

INTERROGATION ROOM - SAME TIME

Edgar looks up to the window as he heads for the door.

EDGAR

Don't move.

Asher holds up his handcuffed hands.

ASHER

(Chuckles)

I'm not going anywhere.

HALLWAY - THEN

Sam storms out of the observation room with Alan following closely behind as --

Edgar emerges from the interrogation room. He blocks Sam's path and holds him back with his hands.

SAM

Get outta my way.

EDGAR

Wait a minute. Just wait.

SAM

He fucking knows where Josh is!

ALAN

Sam, Josh's abduction was highly publicized. Think about it. He could know about what happened to Josh without knowing a Goddamn thing.

EDGAR

He's playing you. He's playing all of us. Just stay calm.

SAM

He wants me in there. He's doing everything but begging for it.

ALAN

Then don't give him what he wants.

EDGAR

Think for one moment. We're recording everything. You go in there, it's coercive and you lay one finger on him, you'll never get a conviction.

Sam takes a deep breath and takes a step back.

ALAN

All right?

SAM

All right. Just make it happen.

INT. POLICE STATION - LOBBY - LATER

AGENT CURTIS MOORE (34), tall, in a business suit with a briefcase, walks in with authority.

Williams glances up from his paperwork.

WILLIAMS

Help you?

Curtis stops at the desk and sets his briefcase down.

CURTIS

Agent Curtis Moore here for Captain Farrands.

WILLIAMS

(Surprised)

Can I see a badge?

Curtis' left eye twitches. As he pulls out his FBI badge:

CURTIS
What the hell happened to taking
someone at their word?

INT. POLICE STATION - ALAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

A knock at the door.

ALAN
Come in.

Curtis breezes in and stops when he sees Alan, Sam and Edgar in different corners of the room.

CURTIS
(to Alan)
You Farrands?

Alan steps forward.

ALAN
That's right. And, you are?

CURTIS
(All business)
Agent Moore, FBI. Where is he?
(Looks around)
Who are they?

ALAN
That's Sergeant Aguilar, he's
heading up the interrogation. And
that's Sam Levetkin.

CURTIS
Levetkin? Why's that name so
familiar? Doesn't matter. Take me
to Greene.

ALAN
How'd you know we had him?

CURTIS
Better question is why didn't you
turn him over to us? And, why is
Levetkin here?

ALAN
He turned himself in.

CURTIS
Levetkin?

ALAN
Greene.

CURTIS
(To Sam)
Still doesn't explain why you're here.

ALAN
He has a unique knowledge of the case.

CURTIS
How so?

SAM
He kidnapped my son.

CURTIS
Oh. That's a shame.
(To Alan)
So, you gonna release him to me or what?

SAM
(To Curtis)
Fuck you, too.

ALAN
Agent Moore, we're currently in the middle of our interrogation. We're not going to break that up 'cause you came in here and wanted to scoop him away.

CURTIS
Middle? By your own definition, your interrogator has been sittin' on his ass for God knows how long. This shit show is done.

ALAN
I don't think so. We've got this.

CURTIS
You got this? I've been here two minutes and I can already tell the three of you are as useful as the Swiss Army.
(Thinks)
Who's in with Greene?

EDGAR

Nobody. We're taking a break.

CURTIS

A break? Are you for real?

ALAN

Leave him alone. We've already made a lot of progress so far.

CURTIS

Is that so?

ALAN

Eight victims, location and all.

CURTIS

That's great work. Unhook him and we'll finish up the rest.

ALAN

You wanna take him outta here, you go through the proper channels. 'Til then, he's ours.

The tension in the room has reached a fever pitch.

Once again, Curtis' eye twitches, so he rubs it.

CURTIS

What's say we go have a look-see?

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar and Curtis walk in.

Curtis uses the mirror to neaten his hair and suit.

Edgar stays focused on Asher.

Satisfied, Curtis purposely drags the metal chair across the floor, which screeches the whole way.

Edgar stays in the far corner, arms crossed.

Curtis slams the chair into the side of the table and swiftly brings his face down two inches from Asher's.

They have a mini standoff then Curtis steps away from the table, laughing to himself.

Curtis goes completely serious as he stands across from Asher.

Note: Curtis speaks with a very specific inflection throughout this entire sequence.

CURTIS

Here's a good one. Lemme know if you heard it before. Meet Doug: fifties, white, enough said, right? So, anyway, investment banker, the kind of guy who'd get ass fucked to death in minimum security. He's got the good life; the wife, 2.2 kids and a cushy life in Suburbia. The trouble is that these guys always like getting a little action on the side. A Glasgow Grin here, a Colombian necktie there -- Hey, get this, you can't do a Colombian necktie. You paying attention?

Asher doesn't break line of sight with Curtis.

CURTIS

See, the tongue's attached to the mouth -- yours and mine -- so you can't pull it out of a person's throat. Example: I take my knife --

Curtis pulls a switchblade from his back pocket.

Edgar goes wide-eyed as he looks towards the window.

Curtis places the blade against his own throat.

CURTIS

-- and I SLICE myself ear-to-ear --
fffft --

Curtis makes the cutting sound effect as he drags the knife along his own neck.

CURTIS

The tongue...
(Points to his throat)
...can't reach to come out my throat. It's not long enough. Cool, huh?

Curtis puts the knife away, but doesn't notice that blood is dripping onto his white shirt.

CURTIS

Point is, myths get spread. My friend, Doug, was not the nice hedge fund whatever everyone thought he was. He was a cold-blooded, sadistic, fucking whackjob who butchered his family 'cause he could. Just. Like. You. And, you better believe I put his ass away, just like I'm gonna do to you.

Curtis stands upright and smiles as he neatens his tie.

CURTIS

I'll be back in a jiffy.

Curtis walks past Edgar who looks horrified.

Asher gives Edgar a small smile as Edgar follows Curtis out of the room.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Alan and Sam are waiting outside.

Curtis and Edgar join them.

ALAN

(To Curtis)

Are you insane?

CURTIS

No. 'Course not.

ALAN

What the hell was that?

CURTIS

Most serial killers have a flair for the theatrical. Shrines, trophies, et cetera. I thought he'd appreciate it.

EDGAR

You're, uh, bleeding, too.

Curtis rubs his finger along his throat and wipes the blood all over his fingers.

CURTIS

What's the matter? Never cut yourself shaving?

Curtis chuckles to himself as he walks away.

ALAN

We can't put that psycho back in there with him.

EDGAR

No way.

Sam almost seems curious.

SAM

What if we did?

ALAN

What?

SAM

Think about it. All the info we've got is solid, it'll hold up --

EDGAR

You can't take him back to court for it.

SAM

Fuck the courts. I'd put him in the Goddamn ground, if I could. But, look, the Fed's not one of us and if he can put on enough pressure to get some info about Josh, then the Feds can take him for all I care.

INT. POLICE STATION - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Curtis stares at his reflection in the mirror.

The blood continues to drip from the long cut across his throat to where his collar has started to turn red.

Curtis dials a number on his cell phone and puts the phone to his ear.

After a moment of ringing, somebody answers:

CURTIS

Yeah, it's Agent Moore. I'm down here where they're holding Greene... Nah, no dice. They're stonewallin' me... Well, I could, but I'd rather not resort to that...

(MORE)

CURTIS (CONT'D)

Just get me something official...
Yeah... About half an hour?... I'm
on it.

Curtis hangs up the phone.

HALLWAY - THEN

The three men are still outside the interrogation room.

Curtis comes upon them with a swagger that can't be matched.

CURTIS

Just so you know, the order's on
the way. You get to play around
with your prize for another half
hour, then he's mine.

Curtis clicks his tongue and gives an obnoxiously large smile
and two thumbs up then walks past them.

SAM

Heh. Thirty minutes?
(To Edgar)
You gotta get back in there. Put on
the pressure, do something.

EDGAR

I'll give it my best shot.

Edgar goes back in the interrogation room.

SAM

Alan?

ALAN

Yeah?

SAM

The Fed. If they take... him,
I'll never find out what happened
to Josh.

ALAN

I'm sorry, Sam. You know I can't.

Just then, Williams comes up behind Alan.

WILLIAMS

Captain?

ALAN

Yeah, what is it?

WILLIAMS
Can I talk to you in private?

Alan nods then glances to Sam.

SAM
Yeah, I got it.

Sam heads for the bathroom as --

Alan and Williams walk to Alan's Office.

BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sam swings the door open and approaches the sink. He turns the sink on and fill his hands with water then --

Splashes it all over his face.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan closes the door behind Williams.

Williams leans back on Alan's desk.

ALAN
What is it?

WILLIAMS
Cap, what you got against me?

ALAN
What are you talking about?
Nothing.

WILLIAMS
You're always treating me like
shit. "Get this, get that." You
never let me in on anything big.
Like that guy we got in there
tonight.

ALAN
What about him?

WILLIAMS
Who is he? Why the FBI? Is there
anything I can do to help? You're
always shorting me on information.
I could be valuable to you.

ALAN

I don't have time for this.

Alan opens his door back up.

BATHROOM - THEN

Sam hangs his head over the sink. Water drips down his face.

Just then, the power goes out. The room is pitch black.

SAM

Oh, what the Christ?

The lights flicker back on.

Sam notices in the mirror a CHILD (8) with his back turned.

The Child wears a puffy jacket with the hood pulled up.

Sam whips around, recognizing the outfit.

SAM

J-Josh?

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Williams walks up to the door and closes it.

WILLIAMS

Cap, I'm serious.

ALAN

I am, too. What do you want from me?

WILLIAMS

I didn't go through the Goddamn academy to end up your secretary.

ALAN

I know you didn't.

WILLIAMS

Then, why? Why keep me on the bench?

ALAN

I need selfless officers on my squad.

(MORE)

ALAN (CONT'D)

I don't need officers who complain if they don't get enough time on the playing field. You earn your place through good work.

WILLIAMS

You didn't make Aguilar go through all this bullshit.

ALAN

Is that what you think?

BATHROOM - THEN

Sam apprehensively watches the Child.

SAM

Josh?

The Child doesn't respond.

Sam approaches as the Child holds out his hand towards the bathroom door.

Sam walks around to the front of the boy but --

The front matches the back: a puffy jacket with the hood pulled up.

Sam holds the Child's outstretched hand.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan and Williams are standoffish.

WILLIAMS

It's what I know. Preferential treatment's running rampant through this place.

ALAN

What would make you feel better? A "please", a "thank you", what?

WILLIAMS

A transfer.

Alan taps his fingers on the doorknob.

BATHROOM - THEN

With their other hand, the Child reaches towards the sink.

JOSH (V.O.)
(Soft)
Dad?

Sam looks to the mirror.

In the reflection, he sees himself standing next to --

JOSH (8), a small, blonde boy in a puffy coat with an ear-to-ear grin.

Sam can't believe his eyes.

Slowly, he steps closer to the mirror.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan walks back to his desk and takes a seat. He pours himself a drink and pops a prescription pill.

ALAN
Is that what you really want?

WILLIAMS
Yes and no.

ALAN
I'm listening.

WILLIAMS
Cap, I'm sorry, but this wasn't the kind of job I was looking for. I was gunning for a bigger department, more responsibility, things like that.

ALAN
Let me ask you something, Greg. Do you think I'm good at my job?

WILLIAMS
Sure, Cap.

ALAN
And, how you think I got this way? Think I woke up one day and said, "I think I'll be Captain, today"?

BATHROOM - THEN

Sam stands at the sink, staring at Josh in the mirror.

He turns around to find the Child still facing away.

When Sam looks at the mirror again, Josh is one step closer to him than he was before.

Sam looks back to the Child.

Still in the same spot. Still facing away.

SAM
What the hell?

Sam looks at the reflection again and Josh is even closer.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan downs the glass and looks up to Williams.

WILLIAMS
You really shouldn't mix those.

ALAN
Heh. You're tellin' me. But, listen to me 'cause I know what I'm talkin' about. You're a good kid, you're a good cop.

WILLIAMS
But that doesn't --

ALAN
Shh. Please. Truth is, you're comin' up the same way I did. You ever meet Lou Oliver? He was Captain before me?

WILLIAMS
No, sir.

ALAN
Good man. Great man, really. But the miserable old bastard treated me like shit, all this menial work for no payoff. You know why he did it?

Williams shakes his head.

ALAN

He was groomin' me. He wanted me to take over when he retired.

Williams seems surprised.

ALAN

I want the same for you. I mean, come on, you aced the entrance exam, I'm sure you'll ace the Sergeants' exam.

WILLIAMS

Well, I didn't ace it.

ALAN

Did you or did you not earn your blues?

WILLIAMS

I guess, yeah.

ALAN

Look, within five years, you'll be ready to take my job and I'll be fixin' to hang up my spurs.

WILLIAMS

What about Aguilar?

ALAN

What about him?

BATHROOM - THEN

Sam starts shaking as he leans back against the sink, staring at the facing-away Child.

He goes to the bathroom door and pulls the handle, but the door won't open.

SAM

Jesus.

Sam pulls the knob as hard as he can.

The door refuses to budge.

Sam pounds on the door to get people's attention.

SAM

Hey! Open the door!

Sam grunts as he pulls as hard as he can to open the door.

The door won't open.

Dejected, Sam walks back to the sink, but won't look in the mirror, terrified of what he'll find.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan pours a glass for Williams, who accepts it.

ALAN

Edgar's a good cop, but that's all he'll ever be. Sure, he's just trying to move up the ladder, like he oughta wear a sign around his neck that says, "Promote me", but he's not the kind of guy I want running a department.

WILLIAMS

And, I am? Why?

ALAN

Nobody becomes a cop to get rich. Worse than playing Powerball. There's only three reasons to wanna be a cop and, correct me if I'm wrong, but I think you legitimately wanna do good.

Williams drinks the drink.

ALAN

In that way, you remind me of me.

WILLIAMS

(Nods)
Thanks, Cap.

ALAN

Now, get outta here before the front desk tries escaping.

WILLIAMS

Heh.

Williams sets the glass on the desk and leaves.

BATHROOM - THEN

Sam leans against the sink, rubbing his hands together as he stares at the Child facing away from him.

Five seconds pass. Ten seconds.

Time almost seems to slow to a crawl.

Finally, he decides.

Sam whips around and looks in the mirror to find --

Josh standing behind Sam with a Bowie knife raised high above his head, ready to stab Sam.

Sam spins around to stop the attack but --

Curtis is behind him and grabs Sam's arm then kicks out Sam's lower leg, dropping him to the ground.

CURTIS
Sorry, reflexes.

Curtis reaches down and helps Sam up.

CURTIS
You okay?

SAM
Yeah.

CURTIS
You sure? You look kinda pale.

SAM
I'm fine. Apart by being attacked
by our resident psychopathic
Federal Agent.

CURTIS
I don't know whether to take a bow
or apologize, but I hope you know,
it was just an act.

SAM
Cutting your own throat is an act?

CURTIS
Scare tactic, yeah. See if I could
get him on edge.

SAM
Didn't look like it.

CURTIS
Nope. Just gonna have to try
something else is all.

SAM
Well, good luck with that.

Sam heads for the door.

CURTIS
Hey? You really Josh Levetkin's old
man?

SAM
What's it to you?

CURTIS
I did a profile on him a few years
ago. More I read up on it, the more
I thought about it. And, the more I
thought about you.

Sam turns to look at Curtis.

SAM
Meaning what?

CURTIS
Not having kids of my own, I was
wondering if it's better to love
and lose than never love at all.

SAM
Keep wondering.

Sam turns back for the door.

CURTIS
One more thing.

Sam stops, but doesn't look back.

SAM
Make it quick.

CURTIS
How far would you go to find out
what happened to your son?

Sam looks over his shoulder at Curtis, with the most serious
expression he could muster.

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar sits opposite Asher with papers spread out across the table.

EDGAR

Get sick of talking? Taken a vow of silence, something like that?

Then, the door opens and Curtis stands by it.

CURTIS

(To Edgar)

Beat it, rookie.

Edgar sighs as he looks over his shoulder. He collects the papers and leaves.

Curtis slams the door behind him and removes his jacket. He sets it on the back of the chair.

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam enters the room and turns off the video camera. He stands by the window and watches.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Curtis sets his briefcase down on the desk and towers menacingly over Asher.

CURTIS

How's it going, fuck face?

Curtis pulls out two pairs of handcuffs and cuffs each of Asher's arms to the chair.

CURTIS

Let's get these on nice and tight, huh?

Curtis takes a step away and admires the restrained Asher.

CURTIS

So, you like that term, "fuck face"? I do. Always have. I like to reserve it for a special kind of person. You know what kind?

ASHER

(Smiles)

I think I have an idea...

Instantly, Curtis punches Asher in the face.

Asher recoils then regains his composure.

CURTIS

Let's try that again, shall we? You know what kind?

ASHER

Nope. No idea.

CURTIS

See, now, you're getting it. It's the kind of person who you don't feel bad for punching in the face or... oh, I don't know, sawing their hand off with a butter knife.

ASHER

Okay, I get it.

Punch. Again, square on the nose.

CURTIS

No. You will never get it.

ASHER

Aren't you going to roll up your sleeves?

CURTIS

What is that?

ASHER

Normally, you white collar-types roll up your sleeves when you're ready to "get down to work".

CURTIS

Nah, I'd rather not.

ASHER

Well, you don't want to get blood on your... Oh, too soon?

Punch. Asher's nose bleeds profusely now.

CURTIS

So, let me get straight to the point. I've been tasked with finding out what happened to a certain child.

ASHER
A specific one? I'm really gonna
have to rack my brain.

Curtis punches Asher in the gut.

Asher lets out a couple coughs, trying to catch his breath.

ASHER
Whatever I can do to help.

CURTIS
Josh Levetkin.

ASHER
(Thinks)
Josh, Josh, Josh...
(To himself)
Was he the one I burned in the oil
furnace or the one I drowned in wet
cement?
(To Curtis)
It's always so hard to keep track
of these things.

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam clenches his fist so tight, his hand shakes. The fury in
his eyes is overwhelming.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Asher continues to mess with Curtis.

ASHER
No, no, no, sorry. Those were the
twins. I get all these kids
confused from time to time.

Curtis pulls a photo of Josh from his pocket and lays it in
front of Asher.

CURTIS
Comin' back to you?

ASHER
Nah, not so much.

Curtis clears his throat.

CURTIS
Mind if I tell you another story?

ASHER

I love stories. Is this one also gonna end in self-mutilation?

CURTIS

Your blood lust is gonna have to go unsatiated, I'm afraid.

ASHER

(Mumbles)

Not yet, you're not.

CURTIS

I got this a couple years ago. I fancy myself as a bit of a collector and when opportunity knocks, well...

Curtis opens his briefcase and pulls out --

A HUMAN SKULL with the upper half cut off, exposing the inside. It has been fashioned into a candle holder.

ASHER

You always carry that with you?

CURTIS

Well, when I heard I was being sent down here to pick you up, I could hardly resist.

Curtis pulls out a lighter and lights the candle.

ASHER

Ooh, mood lighting. Is this the part where I get a ghost story?

CURTIS

I wanna know two things: what happened to Josh Levetkin and how many kids you've killed.

ASHER

Well, the latter, I've already made clear.

CURTIS

Just eight?

ASHER

Yeah... give or take a few zeroes.

Asher smiles, but Curtis isn't amused.

CURTIS

Got a little Henry Lee in you, huh?
The attention whore, right? Yeah,
you wanna feel more important than
you are. What was it, 3,000?

ASHER

As for the Levetkin boy... I want
to speak to the father.

CURTIS

And I wanna fuck a Playmate. We
can't always get what we want.

ASHER

Then, I must respectfully refuse.

Curtis rolls up both of his sleeves, which reveals --

A thick mural of tattoos snaking up his arms.

CURTIS

Reconsider.

ASHER

That's some nice ink you got.

CURTIS

One chance...

ASHER

(Cracks his neck)
Let's get to work.

CURTIS

I was hoping you'd say that.

Curtis swings the metal table across the room, lodging it
against the door.

He kicks Asher's chair back against the wall.

Asher laughs, giddy as a child, as Curtis towers over him
like a mountain.

Curtis pulls out a lighter and his knife. He starts to heat
up the blade.

ASHER

Correct me if I'm wrong, but this
seems like it's familiar to you.

CURTIS

First time. But, I'll be damned if I hadn't wanted to.

ASHER

I'll bet.

Curtis kneels down in front of Asher, looking him in the eye.

CURTIS

Thing about rapists, though, you can't change 'em. Any other criminal, there's a chance of rehabilitation. But, not you.

ASHER

Kinda like sociopaths.

Curtis' left eye twitches.

CURTIS

All I wanna know is where Josh Levetkin is. You tell me that and this all stops.

ASHER

"Stops"? Hell, I'm waiting for you to pick up the pace.

Curtis stands up straight and forces Asher's head against the wall as he slashes Asher across the cheek.

Asher clenches his teeth as he grunts in pain.

CURTIS

Oh, stop it. Just think of all the pain you caused those kids. You're getting off light.

Curtis goes over to his briefcase and pulls out a water bottle and a cloth.

ASHER

What, you're gonna waterboard me?

(Scoffs)

Please. You need a hell of a lot more than one bottle.

CURTIS

Yes, I would.

Curtis sets the bottle on the table and grabs a roll of duct tape from the briefcase.

He walks over to the chair and kicks it out from underneath Asher and slams him to the ground.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan sits at his desk, filling out paperwork when Edgar walks in, drinking a bottle of soda.

EDGAR
Such bullshit.

Alan looks up from his work.

ALAN
Why aren't you in with the guy?

EDGAR
Fuckin' Fed threw me out.

ALAN
They're in there alone?

EDGAR
Yeah...

Alan slams his pen on the table as he almost jumps out of his chair and storms for the door.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Curtis holds the rag above Asher's face.

CURTIS
Last chance to give it up.

ASHER
You're right. It is your last chance.

Curtis places the rag over Asher's mouth and tapes it around his face.

He walks back to the water bottle and kneels down by Asher.

CURTIS
See, you were right. I couldn't waterboard a five-year-old with a bottle of water. Then again...

Curtis removes the cover from the bottle and takes a whiff.

CURTIS
...this isn't water.

Curtis pours the substance all over the rag, soaking it in.
Asher grunts and strains and coughs from the substance.
The smell is abundantly clear. It's gasoline.
Curtis flicks his lighter and hovers it above Asher's face.

CURTIS
Ready?

Then, the doorknob turns, but the door doesn't open.
Curtis looks back over his shoulder at Alan peeking through.

ALAN (O.S.)
Agent Moore!

Curtis disregards them and taunts Asher.

CURTIS
You want it to stop? Tell me where
the boy is!

ASHER
(Muffled)
Fuck you!

HALLWAY - THEN

Alan slams into the door, trying to dislodge the table.
Williams runs up, joining Alan and Edgar.

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam runs out to the --

HALLWAY

To meet Alan, Edgar and Williams.

SAM
Alan, don't stop him!

Alan glares at Sam as he continues to push the door open.

SAM
He's gonna get something out of
him.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Curtis pulls his gun from his holster and places it right
against Asher's forehead.

CURTIS
Fuck it. What do you want, the gun
or the fire?

The table slides just enough away from the door for Alan to
break in.

Alan stops in the doorway and draws his gun on Curtis.

ALAN
Put the gun down!

Curtis doesn't move and keep his eyes right on Asher.

CURTIS
(Calls out)
You shoot me, I drop this lighter.

Nobody moves a muscle.

CURTIS
(To Asher)
What's it gonna be?

ASHER
All right, I'll talk...

CURTIS
Good.

ASHER
...only to Sam Levetkin.

CURTIS
(Calls out)
Captain Farrands? I'm stepping away
from the suspect. May I move?

The sweat drips from Alan's brow.

ALAN
Yeah.

Slowly, Curtis rises to his feet with his gun raised in the air. He turns to face Alan.

CURTIS
May I holster my weapon?

ALAN
Yeah, do that.

Carefully, Curtis holsters the gun and puts the lighter away. Curtis steps past Alan as he goes into the --

HALLWAY

And, as he passes Sam:

CURTIS
I got him.

Curtis keeps walking.

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Williams and Edgar hoist Asher's chair off the ground.

ALAN
Uncuff 'im.

Alan walks over to Sam, who leans against the door.

ALAN
You knew this was going on?

Sam nods.

ALAN
And you did nothing?

SAM
It was my idea.

ALAN
Sam, come here.

Alan and Sam exit to the --

HALLWAY

And close the door behind them.

ALAN

Sam, what are you doing?

SAM

I don't care about this scumbag. I want to know what happened with my son.

ALAN

But that, you're not gonna be able to make a case against him, now.

SAM

It's like you told me earlier, I'm not a cop anymore.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Edgar and Williams both undo a pair of handcuffs that Curtis had applied to Asher.

EDGAR

I got him. You go back and watch the front.

WILLIAMS

Man, I don't know if I should.

Asher slowly shakes his head.

WILLIAMS

Some weird shit's goin' down.

EDGAR

Well, this guy's not going anywhere.

ASHER

(To Williams)

Yeah, go on. Nobody here needs you, anyway.

EDGAR

Shut the fuck up.

(To Williams)

Don't listen to him. I can take care of this guy.

ASHER

(To Williams)

We'll be fine. Go sit at your desk like you always do.

Edgar gives Williams a slight nod.

Williams leaves the room.

HALLWAY - THEN

Williams walks past Alan and Sam who continue to talk.

ALAN
Hey, you okay?

Williams, as he keeps walking:

WILLIAMS
Yeah. Edgar's on it.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Edgar drags the table back towards the center of the room.

ASHER
How long 'til you get the big job?

EDGAR
Shut up.

ASHER
What's wrong? You've been wanting
to talk to me all night.

EDGAR
You had your chance.

ASHER
That's all right. I'm sure you're
on the shortlist for a promotion.
By the way, your shoes are looking
a little scuffed.

Edgar looks down. It's true.

His once-immaculate shoes are smudged.

ASHER
Tsk, tsk, tsk. They can't promote
someone whose shoes are smudged...
or badge isn't polished.

EDGAR
Shut the fuck up. It's fine.

ASHER

It's not.

Edgar refuses to look at his badge.

BATHROOM - THEN

Curtis bears down on the sink with his shirt off.

His whole upper body is a mish-mashed mural of tattoos; crime scene photos, dates, serial killers' names, victims' names.

With his free hand, Curtis quick dials a number then puts the phone up to his ear.

CURTIS

Hey, it's me... Where the hell is it?... What storm?... What do you mean, an hour?!... You get that fucking thing here now!

Curtis whips his phone at the wall.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Asher folds his hands on the table.

ASHER

I should apologize, though.

EDGAR

I'm not listening.

ASHER

No, I mean it, sincerely.

EDGAR

What?

ASHER

The young boy at the front desk -- Williams -- word is he's next in line for the throne.

Edgar looks Asher in the eye.

EDGAR

That's bullshit.

ASHER

I'm just the messenger.

Edgar slams his hand on the table as he storms out.

HALLWAY - THEN

Edgar looks around for Alan then spots him. He rushes over and interrupts Alan and Sam.

EDGAR
(To Alan)
When you retire, who's taking your
place?

ALAN
(Stunned)
What?

EDGAR
When you retire, who's taking
command of the precinct?

ALAN
Edgar, where's this coming from?

EDGAR
Who?!

ALAN
I don't even -- Nobody. I haven't
even thought about it.

EDGAR
I heard it's gonna be Williams.

ALAN
Then, you heard wrong.

EDGAR
Fine.

Edgar turns back to the Interrogation Room.

ALAN
(Calls out)
We could trade, if you want. I'll
watch Greene.

EDGAR
I got it!

INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Edgar walks back in and slams the door.

EDGAR
I knew you were bullshittin'.

ASHER
You knew?

EDGAR
Yeah. He doesn't even know who's taking over.

ASHER
Sure, he does. And, if you were so certain, why'd you have to check?

EDGAR
Because I...

Edgar chuckles as he catches himself.

EDGAR
Nice try.

ASHER
You don't believe me?

EDGAR
Fuck, no.

ASHER
Then, go ask Boy Wonder himself.
I'll bet he remembers their little talk.

HALLWAY - THEN

Sam looks quizzically at Alan.

SAM
Were you lying to him?

ALAN
(Scoffs)
No.

Alan peeks around to make sure nobody's listening.

ALAN
(Soft)
Between you and me, I wouldn't let Williams run a food truck.

Sam takes a deep breath.

SAM
Wish me luck.

Sam heads for the Interrogation Room but --

Alan grabs his arm and stops him.

ALAN
Sam... You're just playing into his
hands. You know that, right?

SAM
I have to know.

ALAN
Has it occurred to you that this
guy might not have any clue about
what happened to Josh? That he's
just jerking you around?

SAM
Won't know 'til I ask him.

Sam walks away, leaving Alan by himself. He comes to the
Interrogation Room door and pauses.

After a moment of reflection, Sam opens the door.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

The door swings open as Sam locks eyes with Asher.

ASHER
Sam!

Sam walks in and looks to Edgar, who's sitting opposite
Asher.

SAM
Will you give us a moment, please?

ASHER
Just one? How disappointing.

Edgar gives a nod and gets up from his chair and leaves.

Sam slips into Edgar's chair and stares down Asher.

ASHER
Can I ask you something?

Sam refuses to respond.

ASHER
Why does a man bring a gun to an
interrogation?

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Edgar walks in and keeps an eye on them.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Asher can barely contain his excitement.

ASHER
Just saying, as an ex-police
officer, you should be well-versed
in weapon concealment. Are you just
rusty?

SAM
Where's Josh?

ASHER
(Disappointed)
Oh. That. And, we were having so
much fun.

SAM
You wanted to see me. You saw me.
Now, you hold up your end of the
deal and tell me where he is.

ASHER
Alive or dead, does it make a
difference?

SAM
Is he alive?!

ASHER
(Shrugs)
I was just curious if it mattered.

SAM
You son of a bitch.

ASHER
Whore, actually, but that's beside
the point. I mean, she was lovely
but, still, a whore.

SAM

I don't give a fuck about your fuckin' family tree.

ASHER

Sam, I'm trying to connect with you, you know, on a deeper, human level.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan sits at his desk with a brand new bottle of bourbon resting on his hand.

Just then, his desk phone rings.

Alan answers.

ALAN

Barrett Hills Police Department,
this is Captain Farrands.

A young girl, MADDIE, speaks rhythmically:

MADDIE (O.S.)

(On the phone,
rhythmically)

As I went down to my grandfather's farm/A Billy goat chased me around the barn...

ALAN

Who is this?

MADDIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It chased me up a sycamore tree/And this is what it said to me...

ALAN

Maddie?

MADDIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I like coffee, I like tea/I'd like Alan to jump with me.

Immediately, Alan hangs up the phone.

ALAN

(To himself)

That's impossible.

Alan grabs another of his prescription pills. He downs it with a long swig of bourbon.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Curtis stands just outside the front doors, smoking a cigarette. He looks up at the starry, night sky.

After a moment, he pauses to think.

CURTIS
(To himself)
I'll be damned.

Curtis walks out into the parking lot and looks at the sky in all directions.

As far as the eye can see, it's perfectly clear. Not a cloud in the sky.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

SAM
Did I tell you, I just saw the future?

ASHER
No, please do. Are the Cards finally gonna win the Super Bowl?

SAM
No. I saw you in the desert with a bullet right between your fucking eyes and me standing over you.

Asher doesn't have a response for that.

SAM
Now, tell me, where is my son?

ASHER
Are you talking just his head or the whole thing?

Sam's really starting to get angry.

ASHER
It was a joke. Lighten up, Sam. In all seriousness, though, you oughta kill whoever picks out your wardrobe. Talk about dated.

Off Sam's reaction:

ASHER

Oh, you do? I thought the Missus might've. Speaking of which, how is the old lady? How'd she take the whole "My son's been kidnapped and possibly killed" thing?

Sam tries his best to keep on an even keel.

ASHER

That bad, huh? Well, I hope you don't hold me personally responsible for your lack of supervision.

SAM

My lack?

ASHER

Were you a chaperone on that field trip? No. Did you have any sort of communication set up or a plan to keep him safe beyond "Stranger Danger"? No.

SAM

You did kill him, didn't you?

ASHER

Wake up and smell the ammonia, Sam. I got that from a newspaper article that came out the day after he vanished. "Josh Levetkin", "8", "field trip". Type those in on the Web and any hack can tell you more about what happened that day than you can.

SAM

And, for the record, my wife is dead.

ASHER

Yeah, I know. That was in the paper, too.

SAM

All right, I'm done.

Sam gets out of the chair.

ASHER

You're leaving?

SAM
You're not gonna tell me anything I
wanna know.

ASHER
If I told you, you wouldn't talk to
me anymore.

SAM
Sure, I would.

Sam leans down on the table.

SAM
You gonna tell me?

ASHER
Nothing personal, Sam, but I don't
trust you.

SAM
That goes double for me.

Sam leaves the room.

Asher sighs, looking disappointed.

ASHER
But, you will.

HALLWAY - THEN

Sam leans back against the wall and exhales deeply.

Curtis approaches, which gets Sam's attention.

SAM
Feel better?

CURTIS
Do you?

Curtis opens the door to the Interrogation Room.

SAM
Careful...

Curtis gives a nod as he goes inside.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Asher seems excited to see Curtis.

ASHER

Agent Moore. What a pleasant surprise. Forgive me for not getting up. Hey, you wanna hear a joke? I got a good one. I mean, you're always telling me a story, so let me return the favor.

CURTIS

Sure, Asher. Tell me a joke.

ASHER

Okay, so there's this blonde who goes to the doctor after she blew her index finger off. So, the doctor asks her, "What happened?" She goes, "Oh, I tried committing suicide."

Curtis' left eye twitches.

CURTIS

Uh-huh.

ASHER

So, the doctor asks, "By shooting your finger off?" "No, no, no," she says. "See, I was gonna shoot myself in the chest, but I just got a boob job, so I didn't wanna waste \$3,000."

Curtis balls his hand into a fist, getting frustrated.

ASHER

"Then, I was gonna shoot myself in the face, but I'd just got a face lift and I didn't wanna waste \$5,000." Doctor says, "So, you shot your finger off?" "Well, I decided I was gonna shoot myself in the ear, but I thought it might be too loud, so I stuck my finger in my other ear."

Asher waits patiently for Curtis to laugh.

ASHER

Didn't you like it?

CURTIS

I loved it.

Asher gives a side-of-the-mouth smile.

CURTIS
You know what else I love? Your
scare tactics.

ASHER
(Cagey)
Scare tactics? I've been here the
whole time.

CURTIS
I've been waiting patiently for an
order to come which would give me
custody over you. It seems to have
been delayed by a storm... Twice.

ASHER
That's my fault?

CURTIS
Oh, I think it is. And, truth be
told, I'm sick of waiting.

Curtis pulls his pistol from the holster and storms over to
Asher, hauling him up by his shoulder.

ASHER
And, they call me dangerous.

CURTIS
Shut the hell up.

Curtis leads Asher across the room and opens the door.

HALLWAY - THEN

Curtis peeks out with his gun drawn.

The Hallway is empty.

Curtis drags Asher out of the room.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan watches as Curtis passes by with Asher in tow.

ALAN
Hey!

Alan draws his gun and leaps up from his desk.

HALLWAY - THEN

Curtis spins around and uses Asher as a shield.

Alan trains his gun on Curtis.

ALAN

Where the hell are you taking him?

CURTIS

I'm taking him to the office.

ALAN

I can't let you do that.

CURTIS

It's not up to you. Haven't you figured that out, yet?

ALAN

What the hell are you talking about?

Edgar comes up from Curtis' side and points his pistol right at Curtis' head.

EDGAR

I got him, Cap.

CURTIS

Can't you see how he's playing us against each other?

ALAN

The only one doing that is you.

EDGAR

How you want me to play this one, Cap? Shoot or no?

SAM (O.S.)

I wouldn't.

Edgar turns his head to see Sam standing right next to him with his gun aimed straight at Edgar's head.

ALAN

Sam?

SAM

He's right. Something's going on and I don't know how to describe it, but he's right. We gotta get him outta here.

CURTIS

Look. I don't wanna hurt you. I'm gonna take my finger off the trigger. Okay?

Curtis releases his finger from the trigger. Slowly, he raises his gun in the air.

CURTIS

Okay?

Curtis glances over at Edgar.

CURTIS

Come on, man, I put my gun up.

EDGAR

Cap?

ALAN

(Deep exhale, to Edgar)
Put it down.

One by one, everyone lowers their guns.

ASHER

Well, that was anti-climactic.

Curtis pistol-whips Asher on the nose, which drops him to the ground. He hoists him back up.

CURTIS

Look, I'm taking him with me.
(To Sam)
And I give you my word I'll find out about your son, whatever it takes.

SAM

Good luck.

Curtis walks Asher to the front door and leads him outside.

Alan takes a deep breath and wipes the sweat from his brow.

ALAN

(Soft)
Jesus Christ.

SAM

You made the right call.

EDGAR

Did he?

Sam nods.

ALAN
Anybody else need a drink?

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Curtis walks Asher out to a gray Crown Vic, opens the door.

ASHER
What's the matter? Not gonna slam
my head into the door?

CURTIS
You want me to?

Curtis sits Asher down in the back then gets in, himself.

INT. CURTIS' CROWN VICTORIA - THEN

Curtis adjusts the rearview mirror to get a look at Asher
then drives away.

ASHER
You're not really taking me back to
your offices, are you?

CURTIS
No, I'm not.

ASHER
I appreciate your candor.

CURTIS
You're dead, Asher Greene. No, not
this second. But, it's a certainty.

ASHER
If I'm not mistaken, you told Debra
something similar on the night she
took her life... or, at least,
that's what it said on the autopsy
report.

Curtis looks at Asher in the mirror.

CURTIS
What the fuck'd you say?

ASHER
Don't sweat it. I don't judge. And,
I'm a big admirer of your work.

CURTIS
That right?

ASHER
You know, putting pressure on...
Aw, hell, I said too much.

CURTIS
No, go on. What is it you think you
know about me?

ASHER
Well, when a man such as
yourself... "instructs" a medical
examiner to forge an autopsy
report, needless to say, I'm
jealous.

CURTIS
Nobody forged shit.

ASHER
You don't have to lie. Trust me,
you're among friends and we'll
never tell anybody.

CURTIS
"We"?

Just then, a FEMININE HAND reaches out from the passenger's
side and touches Curtis' face.

Curtis' eyes dart over to see --

DEBRA MOORE (36), a professionally-dressed blonde with a
massive exit wound in the side of her skull, staring right
back at him.

CURTIS
Debra?

DEBRA
My love.

Debra leans over and plants a kiss on Curtis' cheek.

In the back seat, Asher casually puts on his seat belt.

CURTIS
Debra, I'm so sorry.

DEBRA
I understand. But, there's a way
you can make up for it.

CURTIS

How?

DEBRA

Make us even.

Debra jerks the wheel to the side.

EXT. DESERT - THEN

The Crown Victoria weaves all over the road as Curtis tries to maintain control of the car.

INT. CURTIS' CROWN VICTORIA - THEN

Curtis tries to push Debra away, but she's too strong.

DEBRA

Come, my love! Let's be together...

Debra pulls the wheel so hard, the car veers off the road.

DEBRA

...forever.

EXT. DESERT - THEN

The Crown Victoria clips the edge of a large rock, sending it flipping three times before coming to a stop.

INT. CURTIS' CROWN VICTORIA - THEN

The car is engulfed in smoke as Curtis lies dead in the driver's seat, with his face cut up by glass.

INT. POLICE STATION - ALAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Alan, Sam and Edgar sit around the room, sipping bourbon from paper cups.

EDGAR

What a fuckin' night, huh?

ALAN

Thank God we got that freak show outta here.

EDGAR

Which one?

Alan scoffs and glances at Sam, who stares out the window.

ALAN
You okay?

SAM
(Soft)
Yeah.

ALAN
We're gonna find out where your son
is, Sam. At the bare minimum, get
you some piece of mind.

EDGAR
I'm gonna take a leak.

Edgar gets up from his chair and leaves.

HALLWAY - THEN

Edgar crumples up the cup and tosses it in the trash. He
walks until he reaches the --

POLICE STATION - LOBBY

And stops by Williams, who's reading a book.

WILLIAMS
So glad to have that guy outta
here. Gave me the creeps.

EDGAR
Yeah, me, too.

Edgar leans against the desk.

Williams sets his book down.

WILLIAMS
What's up, man?

EDGAR
Did you and the Cap talk earlier?

WILLIAMS
Yeah, we talk sometimes.

EDGAR
Uh-uh. Did you and him talk
earlier?

WILLIAMS
Yeah, I suppose we did.

EDGAR
What about?

WILLIAMS
Edgar, what's wrong?

EDGAR
Did you and Cap talk about who
would take over the department when
he retired?

Williams tries to laugh it off.

EDGAR
Did you?

WILLIAMS
He mentioned it, yeah.

EDGAR
What did he say?

Williams swallows really hard, trying to pick his words
carefully.

WILLIAMS
H-he hadn't decided.

Edgar lays his gun down on the desk with his finger on the
trigger. It's aimed right at Williams.

EDGAR
Did he say it would be you?

WILLIAMS
Edgar, please, I didn't...

EDGAR
You or me?

WILLIAMS
(Deep breath)
Me. Okay? He said it would be me
and I know how much it means to you
and I'd be happy to turn it --

Without saying a word, Edgar turns back, heading straight for
Alan's Office.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Sam takes a seat on the other side of Alan's desk.

SAM
Man, I'm tired.

ALAN
It's almost over.

SAM
I don't know, Alan. I'm not sure I
wanna know what happened to Josh.

ALAN
Sam, you have to. You can't go on
like this, wondering if he's still
out there or... if he's gone. Even
if it's for the worse, it's still
better than having that lingering
doubt.

SAM
I guess.

Just then, Alan's phone rings.

ALAN
Excuse me a sec.

Alan answers the phone:

ALAN
Barrett Hills Police Department,
Captain Farrands.

MADDIE (O.S.)
(On the phone,
rhythmically)
Mabel, Mabel, set the table/Don't
forget the red hot label/Shake the
salt and shake the pepper/Who will
be the highest stepper?...

POLICE STATION - LOBBY - THEN

Williams watches as Edgar walks away and grabs the phone then
speed dials Alan's Office.

Busy signal.

WILLIAMS
Shit.

ALAN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Alan continues to listen.

MADDIE (O.S.)
(Rhythmically)
Winds blow hot and winds blow
freeze/How many times did Alan
bleed?...

Alan furious hangs up the phone.

As he looks up, he sees Edgar approaching with his gun drawn.

HALLWAY - THEN

Edgar fires a shot, shattering the glass.

Alan and Sam both duck out of the way.

Edgar fires two more shots into Alan's Office.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan and Sam hide along the wall and pull out their guns.

ALAN
Edgar, what the hell are you doing?

EDGAR (O.S.)
You were gonna steal it from me!

SAM
Put the gun down!

ALAN
(Confused)
Steal what?

EDGAR (O.S.)
My promotion! You don't know how
hard I worked for it!

Sam looks to Alan, who shrugs, having no legitimate idea what Edgar's talking about.

Sam carefully rises to his feet, with his back against the wall.

ALAN
Just put the gun down and we can
talk about this.

EDGAR (O.S.)
I was supposed to take over when
you retired! Me!

Sam creeps closer to the door.

ALAN
You will!

EDGAR (O.S.)
Bullshit!

ALAN
Edgar, you were the only one ever
in consideration, I swear!

EDGAR (O.S.)
Fuck you, Cap! I just talked to
Williams who swore to me that you
promised the job to him!

ALAN
I never even talked to Williams
about it!

Sam spins in front of the door with his gun drawn but --
Edgar shoots him once in the shoulder.
Sam falls to the ground and takes cover against the wall.

ALAN
Jesus Christ, you shot him!
(To Sam)
You okay?

Sam nods as he clutches his shoulder.

HALLWAY - THEN

Edgar takes cover along the wall.

EDGAR
Sam?!

SAM (O.S.)
(Labored)
Yeah?

EDGAR (O.S.)
I'm sorry. I really didn't mean to
shoot you.

SAM (O.S.)
But, you did.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

The desk phone rings.

Alan crawls along the floor then hides behind the desk. He answers the phone.

ALAN
What?

WILLIAMS (O.S.)
(On the phone)
Captain, it's me. You guys okay in there?

ALAN
One sec.

Alan covers the receiver then whispers to Sam:

ALAN
Keep him talking.
(Into the phone)
Yeah, we're okay. Edgar started shooting at us and he hit Sam.

SAM
Edgar, what are you doing, man? You think you're gonna get your promotion by killing Alan? You don't wanna do that.

EDGAR (O.S.)
Doesn't matter anymore, now, does it?

WILLIAMS (O.S.)
Is he okay?

ALAN
Yeah. Do me a favor and call for an ambulance, though.

SAM
Guess not.

EDGAR (O.S.)
Two counts of attempted murder on a police officer. That'll be a fun twenty years.

WILLIAMS (O.S.)
Captain, what if I said I had a
shot on Edgar?

ALAN
You do?

WILLIAMS (O.S.)
Yeah, I have line of sight. Should
I or can you talk him down?

ALAN
We'll see. Call the ambulance.

Alan hangs up the phone.

SAM
Edgar, listen to me. Given
everything that's happened today,
I'm perfectly willing to forgive
this. Okay? Just put the gun down.

Alan peeks out from behind the desk.

ALAN
Edgar, you've got my word, too.
It's going to be pretty tough to
forgive and forget, but I'll tell
you this: I'll try.

Just then, a black object is thrown through the broken
window.

Alan and Sam both look away.

After a moment, Sam looks to see --

EDGAR'S BADGE.

LOBBY - SAME TIME

Williams peeks out from behind his desk.

At the end of the hall, he can see Edgar crouched just
outside Alan's Office.

Williams picks up the phone and flips through an emergency
flipbook to find the nearest hospital.

He pulls the phone off the desk and quick dials the number.

OPERATOR (O.S.)
(Automated)
We're sorry, but the number you're
trying to reach --

Williams hangs up the phone then pulls his revolver and
crouch-walks down the hallway, towards Edgar.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan slides from his desk back to the wall.

ALAN
What do you say, Edgar? Can we come
to an understanding?

WILLIAMS (O.S.)
Captain!

ALAN
(Calls out)
Williams?

WILLIAMS
You can come out.

Sam looks at the base of the door as blood creeps in.

SAM
(To himself)
Shit.

HALLWAY - THEN

Williams approaches Alan's Office with his gun lowered.

Sam and Alan both walk out.

Alan kneels down by Edgar --

Who slashed his throat with a large shard of glass.

Alan feels for a pulse, but Edgar's already dead.

Sam kneels down by Edgar and moves Edgar's head slowly.

SAM
Jesus. He tried to decapitate
himself.

ALAN
He wasn't gonna let us save him.

Sam reaches inside Edgar's jacket and, in one of the pockets, finds a folded-up letter.

He pulls it out and checks on it.

WILLIAMS
What is it?

SAM
I don't know.

Sam unfolds it and checks the front.

SAM
"The Montoya Family"?

ALAN
Montoya? That was Edgar's old partner, Rodrigo.

SAM
Jesus, look at the price on this stamp. \$.32? How long has he been holding onto this?

ALAN
Montoya was his first partner. He died in a crash in '98.

Sam rips open the letter.

WILLIAMS
Hey, what are you doing?

Sam scans through the letter.

SAM
Alan, he didn't just die.

Sam hands over the letter to Alan.

SAM
He was murdered.

Alan reads through the letter, himself.

ALAN
Oh, my god.

Sam gets up and goes back into Alan's Office.

ALAN
(To Williams)
How long 'til the ambulance gets
here?

WILLIAMS
I don't know.

Alan looks over at Williams, frustrated by the answer.

WILLIAMS
I couldn't connect.

ALAN
So, you only tried once?

WILLIAMS
I'll try again, Captain.
(re: Alan's glare)
I'll keep trying until I get
through.

Williams turns back to the Lobby.

Alan follows Alan back in his office.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Alan sees Sam at his computer.

ALAN
What's up?

SAM
I think I know what's going on.

Alan comes around the desk to see Sam looking up a file on
Curtis Moore.

Many of the stories deal with either the suicide of his wife
or the numerous dangerous criminals he caught.

ALAN
Agent Moore? What are you looking
him up for?

SAM
I was watching when he was
interrogating Greene and he taunted
the Fed with a joke about a blonde
trying to commit suicide.

Sam clicks on a news article which pops up a story about Debra's suicide, with a big, color picture of her.

SAM

Get it?

ALAN

No...

SAM

Look, Edgar was on your case about his promotion and you said you never had a conversation with Williams about it, but Williams swears you did. Right? And, this sent Edgar off the deep end.

ALAN

Yeah...

SAM

What if you really did have that conversation and you don't remember it?

ALAN

Sam, come on. That's impossible.

SAM

Look, whatever's happening, it's because Greene knows what our deepest fears, or demons, something like that, are and he's using them against us.

ALAN

I just want to make sure you know how crazy that sounds.

SAM

I'm not crazy. His wife's death, Edgar's need for validation, my son's kidnapping... Does he have anything on Williams... or you?

Alan looks out into the Hallway where --

MADDIE HAYNES (6), a pretty girl in a dress, jumps rope. The side of her face was removed from a gunshot wound.

ALAN

(Entranced)

Not that I know of.

SAM

And, I think you're right. He may not have even killed Josh.

Alan makes eye contact with Sam.

SAM

But he knows who did.

WILLIAMS (O.S.)

GUYS!

This immediately gets their attention.

They both get up and run into the --

HALLWAY

To find Williams standing down the hall, just staring.

They walk down to where Williams is.

Williams stares through the cracked-open door to see --

Asher sitting in the Interrogation Room, whistling the "Tales From the Crypt" theme.

ALAN

What the hell?

WILLIAMS

This can't be happening.

SAM

Leave us alone.

Sam steps into the Interrogation Room and slams the door behind him.

Alan and Williams share a confused look.

WILLIAMS

What do we do?

ALAN

Exactly what he said. We rally should have a talk.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Sam pulls the chair out and sits opposite Asher.

ASHER

Sam. Long time, no see.

SAM

I know what your game is.

ASHER

My game?

SAM

Don't play stupid. You've been fuckin' with us since the moment you got here.

ASHER

I'm rather glad one of you finally caught onto it.

SAM

Where's the Fed?

ASHER

Oh, him. He had an accident... the same kind his wife had.

SAM

'Cause he killed her, didn't he?

ASHER

Uh-huh. I never met her, but from everything I heard, she sounded like a sweet lady.

SAM

So, what the hell do you want?

ASHER

You know, I... I don't actually know. Never thought about it. What about yourself, Sam? What do you want?

SAM

You know what I want.

ASHER

But, is that all? Are you so blinded to the world around you that all you can do is hang your hopes on one day reconciling with your child?

SAM

As opposed to...?

ASHER

How 'bout living life? You're not the first guy who's lost a kid, sorry to say.

SAM

Yeah, 'cause of people like you.

ASHER

Still deflecting. But, here's what I think. You've spent so much of your life waiting that if and when you do actually find out what happened to your son, you won't know what to do with yourself.

SAM

You tell me where my son is and we'll find out.

ASHER

You're not ready to know, yet.

SAM

Then, when?

ASHER

You remember how Curtis taped a rag around my face and soaked it in gasoline? You just sat in the other room and watched him do that. So, what makes you think you've earned the right to know?

Sam angrily kicks his chair out and leaves the room.

ALAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Sam walks in to find Alan and Williams talking.

WILLIAMS

What happened?

SAM

He killed the Fed then came back here, apparently.

WILLIAMS

Is it true? Is he making all that shit happen to torture us?

SAM

I don't know for sure, but yeah,
I'd assume so.

ALAN

What are we doing about it?

WILLIAMS

Can we kill him?

Sam shakes his head.

WILLIAMS

Why not?

SAM

He knows where my son is.

WILLIAMS

Look, man, I appreciate that, but
I'm not gonna end up like Edgar,
okay? Going crazy and killing
myself, I'm not gonna do it.

ALAN

We could leave. Just take off, the
three of us.

WILLIAMS

Who's to say he doesn't follow us?

ALAN

How could he?

SAM

Because he can read our minds and
project our fears. There's nowhere
we can hide from him that he won't
find us.

WILLIAMS

(Mutters, to Sam)

This is all your fuckin' fault.

SAM

My fault?

WILLIAMS

You and your kid. If you could
think about something else for five
fucking seconds, he'd probably
leave us the hell alone.

SAM

You'd better shut the fuck up
before you say another word about
my son.

WILLIAMS

Look, I vote to kill the son of a
bitch. Majority rules.

Williams raises his hand then looks at Alan for support.

Alan won't look Williams in the eye, embarrassed.

WILLIAMS

One vote for kill and... what are
you even voting for? What's your
plan, Sam?

SAM

Find out what his intentions are.

WILLIAMS

We already know! He killed the
Agent and he made Edgar kill
himself! It couldn't be anymore
clear, don't you get that?!

SAM

Then, we show solidarity. Okay?
Strength in numbers.

WILLIAMS

(Scoffs)

Whatever, man. I'm fucking
starving.

Williams turns and walks to the door.

ALAN

Gimme your gun.

Williams turns with an incredulous look on his face.

WILLIAMS

What?

ALAN

I don't think we can trust you with
it right now.

WILLIAMS

I'm not gonna shoot the prick. I
don't want anything to do with him.
Or, with you.

Williams leaves the office and slams the door.

ALAN
You think he'll be all right?

SAM
He's just scared.

ALAN
People are never more dangerous
than when they're scared.

BREAK ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A medium-sized room with a refrigerator, a table with four chairs, a vending machine and other knick knacks.

Williams comes upon the refrigerator. He opens the door --

But finds SEVEN SKINNED HOUSECATS hanging inside.

Williams recoils in horror and slams the door then falls to the ground, backing away.

WILLIAMS
Jesus fucking Christ!

Williams, breathing heavy, gets to his feet, but continues to stare at the refrigerator.

He takes a chair and slides it across the floor then smashes it into the vending machine.

He sets the chair down and grabs a bag of chips then takes a seat at the table.

A moment later, Sam and Alan run up to the room to see Williams munching on chips.

SAM
What the hell was that?

WILLIAMS
I didn't have any change.

Sam scoffs as he walks away.

WILLIAMS
Hungry, Captain?

ALAN
No. Enjoy your dinner.

Alan walks away as Williams gives a fake, forced "cheers".

ALAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Alan and Sam sit on opposite sides of the desk.

ALAN

I don't know what's wrong with him.

SAM

Like you said, he's scared.

ALAN

You said that, Sam, not me.

SAM

No. You said it first.

ALAN

I didn't, but it doesn't matter. We can't stay in here like this forever.

SAM

I know.

ALAN

Do you have a plan?

Sam shakes his head.

ALAN

Look, Sam, there's something I need to tell you.

Sam's listening.

ALAN

Remember when you asked if I had anything in my past?

(re: Sam's nod)

I do. When I was a couple years on the force, I killed a girl. It was an accident. I was in a bad neighborhood and she was just jumping rope in the middle of the street, but this guy opened fire on me from across the street. Instead of trying to let her get clear, I just shot back. She went down with a bullet to the head. Then, Captain Oliver, he, um, made it go away.

SAM
(Angry)
What does that mean?

ALAN
He forged a couple of reports and gave me a new sidearm while he planted my gun on an illegal who lived a couple blocks away. He went down for her murder and I was never there.

They both sit in silence.

ALAN
I've been seeing her, Sam. The girl. Maddie Haynes.

Alan looks past Sam, into the Hallway where --
Maddie stands with her jump rope, judging Alan.

ALAN
I see her right now.

SAM
So, what are you saying?

ALAN
I'm siding with Williams. We kill Greene and pretend like all this never happened.

SAM
So, you're gonna cover up a murder with another murder?

ALAN
Sam...

SAM
You got yourself into this Goddamn mess. You. I want my son back and you're not gonna stand in my way.

ALAN
Sam, I don't want to kill him, but I can't let this happen.

SAM
Too bad, Alan. It's already happening. You're on your own and, I swear to God, if you get in my way, I will kill you.

Sam gets up and leaves the Office.

Alan looks to be on the verge of tears.

Then, he stares down at the bottle of pills on his desk.

HALLWAY - NIGHT

Williams carries two bags of candy as him as he stops by the Interrogation Room.

He opens the door and peers inside.

Asher is already looking right at him.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Williams goes inside and drops the candy on the table.

WILLIAMS

Thought you might be getting kinda hungry.

ASHER

That's very thoughtful.

Williams nods then turns to leave.

ASHER

Why do they call you Williams?

Williams stops, but keeps facing away.

WILLIAMS

That's my name.

ASHER

But, why call you that? You have a first name and they know it.

Williams takes the bait and turns around.

WILLIAMS

That's what I prefer to be called.

ASHER

Since when? And, you think that matters to them? Maybe it's just me, but when I was a child, calling a person by their last name without adding "Mr." or "Mrs." was seen as a sign of disrespect.

WILLIAMS

Yeah, well, I don't like my first name, so...

ASHER

What's wrong with "Greg"? It's a nice name. Maybe you like being demeaned?

WILLIAMS

What?

ASHER

Well, the way you let them push you around. Calling you by your last name, having you do errands instead of actual police work.

WILLIAMS

That's how you move up in the world.

ASHER

Then, perhaps, it's time to change the way the world works?

OBSERVATION ROOM - THEN

Sam walks in and spots Williams talking to Asher.

ASHER

You should never accept disrespect as a sign of friendship.

WILLIAMS

Like I need friendship advice from you?

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Asher continues on:

ASHER

Why not me? I see myself as an honest, straightforward, objective type of --

WILLIAMS

Child killer?

ASHER

At least I don't look down on you
the same way they do.

WILLIAMS

For what?

ASHER

Your service record, for one thing.
Having to take the test several
times and failing your
psychological evaluation.

WILLIAMS

All right, shut the hell up.

ASHER

Greg, I don't judge. Okay? Them?
They do and believe me when I say
that's why you have my sympathy.
They think you'll never amount to
anything more than a doormat with a
badge while I know what kind of
potential you have.

WILLIAMS

Meaning what?

ASHER

The important thing is how hard you
work, now, not what happened in the
past... Now, who's the only person
standing in the way of you getting
the recognition you deserve?

WILLIAMS

Levetkin.

Asher raises his eyebrows.

Williams stands up, knowing what he has to do, now.

WILLIAMS

I'll be back.

ASHER

I'll be right here.

HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Williams leaves the Interrogation Room as --

Sam peeks his head out from the Observation Room. He sneaks into the Interrogation Room but --

Williams glances over his shoulder and catches Sam going in with Asher.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Sam carefully closes the door and glares at Asher.

SAM
Have a nice talk?

ASHER
Sam, haven't you got the game, yet?
I knew you were there the whole
time.

SAM
Then, what the hell was that?

ASHER
Motivation. You want to find your
son and I want to help you.

Sam steps closer to Asher.

SAM
Then, help me.

ASHER
No tag-alongs.

ALAN'S OFFICE - THEN

Williams goes inside to see Alan lying on the ground, with the empty bottle of pills by his side.

He checks Alan's pulse then hints at a smile.

INTERROGATION ROOM - THEN

Sam seems confused.

SAM
Meaning?

ASHER
Meaning... I'll only take you.

SAM
Yeah, except you told him the same
thing about me.

ASHER
Sure did.

SAM
You want us to kill each other,
don't you?

ASHER
Of course not.

Behind Sam, the door creaks.

ASHER
I just don't think it'll be your
choice.

Immediately, Sam jumps out of his chair and spins, aiming his
gun at --

Williams, in the doorway, who's got his gun trained on Sam.

SAM
Williams, man, don't do it.

WILLIAMS
What's my first name?

SAM
What?

WILLIAMS
What is my first name?!

SAM
I don't know!

Just then, the room goes pitch black and --

A SERIES OF MUZZLE FLASHES go off as Sam and Williams both
unload their clips on each other.

After a moment of silence, the lights come back on.

Asher sits patiently at the table as Sam and Williams both
lie on the ground, bleeding.

Sam coughs a couple times as he staggers to his feet. He
looks down and Williams, riddled with bullets.

Asher rises from the table.

ASHER

It was Greg.

Sam clutches at the bullet wound on his left ribs. He turns to Asher with a vengeance.

SAM

Now, take me to my son.

ASHER

As agreed.

Asher steps past Sam as they walk over Williams' body.

HALLWAY - THEN

They walk down the blood-riddled hallway.

LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Asher stops at the front door. He turns to Sam.

SAM

And, Sam... you're gonna need a shovel.

Hearing that is almost like a punch to Sam's gut.

EXT. POLICE STATION - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Sam hobbles to his sedan as he sits Asher in the passenger's seat.

INT. SAM'S SEDAN - MOMENTS LATER

Sam starts the car then looks across to Asher.

SAM

Where?

ASHER

Due west.

EXT. POLICE STATION - PARKING LOT - THEN

Sam's Sedan peels out and pulls onto the main road.

INT. SAM'S SEDAN - THEN

Sam breathes heavy.

The blood loss is taking a serious toll.

SAM
Where?

ASHER
Down the road.

Sam nods, keeping his focus on the road.

ASHER
Is it worth it?

SAM
What?

ASHER
Finding out what happened? Look at
what it's cost you. It cost you
your wife...

Sam glares over.

ASHER
...your life --

SAM
Don't you talk about her.

ASHER
You should have just let it go,
Sam. You could have spared her so
much anguish.

SAM
Shut up.

ASHER
Maybe even saved her.

Sam slams on the brakes and pulls the car over. He takes his gun and smashes Asher with it, twice, in the face.

SAM
Don't. Talk. About. Her.

Asher nods.

Sam gets back on the road.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - NIGHT

The headlights from Sam's Sedan are the only lights, besides the bright, night sky.

INT. SAM'S SEDAN - THEN

Sam's blood-covered hands grip the wheel tight.

ASHER

I know it's not my place to say --

SAM

Then, don't.

ASHER

Disability isn't any kind of life, Sam. You should've been out there, enjoying life.

Sam tries not to listen.

ASHER

You think that's the kind of life Josh would've wanted for you, live like some kind of fucking hermit?

SAM

No. I would've seen him grow up. Get him in sports or whatever, watch him make the Honor Roll and get a girlfriend. He'd graduate, go to college and get married. Move into a nice, little apartment and I'd help them buy their first house; a nice, little, starter ranch house. Maybe, I'd get to hold their children. From time to time, they'd stop by the old house and check in on us and we'd be happy like that forever.

For the briefest moment, Sam smiles, then it immediately fades back into anger.

SAM

Until you took that away from me.

ASHER

I'm sorry, Sam. It's gonna be the next right, right after this phone pole.

EXT. DESERT ROAD - THEN

Sam's Sedan takes a right onto a small, dirt road.

INT. SAM'S SEDAN - THEN

Sam lets out a deep exhale.

SAM
How much further?

ASHER
Just over this hill.

A tear rolls down Sam's cheek.

ASHER
Sam, you don't have to do this. You
can turn around. Go back home.

SAM
I have to know.

ASHER
You can never go back from this.

EXT. SMALL DIRT ROAD - THEN

Sam's Sedan eclipses the hill and pulls to a stop.

Sam and Asher both get out. Sam pops the trunk.

They walk to the back of the car.

Sam keeps his gun trained on Asher.

SAM
(re: the shovel)
Get it.

Asher grabs the shovel then shuffles into the weeds.

Sam follows from a safe distance.

GRAVE SITE - THEN

Asher comes to a stop by a large rock, sticking up from the ground.

SAM
That's where?

Asher nods.

SAM

Dig.

Asher starts to dig.

ASHER

Sam, listen, you don't need to see this. Gimme your phone, I'll call the cops and tell 'em where we are and they'll do it.

SAM

I need to see it for myself.

Asher digs, begrudgingly.

GRAVE SITE - LATER

Asher is several feet down.

Sam stands above him like an executioner, ready to fire at the precise moment.

His shirt has been stained almost-entirely red.

IN THE GRAVE - THEN

Asher lifts another shovelful of sand, which reveals a shoe. He sighs and lets out a deep exhale.

ASHER

Sam?

Sam steps closer and peers over the edge of the grave and sees the shoe.

SAM

Keep going. I need to see him.

ASHER

Sam, I know you recognize those shoes. Isn't that enough?

SAM

I need to see him.

Asher continues to dig.

GRAVE SITE - LATER

Sam paces around, but has since turned almost a ghostly shade of pale.

ASHER (O.S.)

Sam?

Sam perks up and hobbles over to the Grave. He looks over to see Asher standing over a body.

ASHER

It's done.

Sam holds out his hand and hoists Asher out of the grave.

ASHER

Sam, please... don't look.

Sam looks down and, although we don't see what's down there, Sam's expression says it all:

Josh is buried in the grave.

Sam steps away then lowers his head, in thought.

After a moment, he spins around and shoots Asher once in the chest.

Asher falls into the grave.

Sam drops the gun to the ground then stands over the grave and looks down at Asher.

SAM

You didn't... kill him, did you?

Asher shakes his head.

A tear rolls down Sam's cheek.

SAM

You didn't kill any of them, did you?

Asher shakes his head.

Sam drops to his knees.

Asher dies from the blood loss.

After a moment of kneeling, Sam falls onto his back.

Sam dies with the slightest hint of a smile on his face.

FADE OUT.

THE END.