

Murder Justified
2008

By

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Writers Guild 2002
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"MURDER JUSTIFIED"

FADE IN:1#

RURAL HOME IN A LOWER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD, HARRIS COUNTY TEXAS. -- NIGHT

Several police cars are sitting outside of a white, wood framed home. Lights from emergency vehicles flicker and reflect off the home, and surrounding structures.

Officers THOMPSON and GREER approach the door, guns directed at the doorway. Thompson calls into the home.

THOMPSON

Police! Come out with your hands in the air.

There's a long pause with no reply. Flashlights beam into the opened door. One officer's light encounters a view.

GREER

My God!

The officers storm into the home.

INT. YOUNG HOME -- MOMENTS LATER

STEVEN (O.S.)

Let me go! Mom, help!

The screen door crashes open; Greer and Thompson emerge holding onto STEVEN RAY, 12, slender build, rusty brown hair. He is violently trying to break free, and attempts to kick the officers' legs, but misses.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Let me go! You'll be sorry for doing this.

Steven manages to pull free; he sprints away from Greer and Thompson, running toward the garage area; his flight is blocked by a chain-link fence.

Several officers give chase, and they soon trap the boy between the HOME and GARAGE.

Steven backs up against fence. His breath is rapid and hard; he struggles to let out a scream as the officers close in.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Stay away from me!

THOMPSON
Son, we're not trying to hurt you.

STEVEN
Liars!

The officers tighten their circle.

Steven drops to his knees and attempts to shoot between Greer's legs.

Thompson leaps down, grabs the boy and holds him tight.

THOMPSON
Cuff him!

Green gives Thompson a hard look.

GREER
Cuff him, with what? My handcuffs
are not small enough!

Steven kicks and screams, but the officer hangs tight.

THOMPSON
Just don't stand there...give me a
hand.

The other officers shoot each other a look some smile.

OFFICER
Call dispatch. Officer down,
assistance needed!

Greer aids Thompson with the boy, and he gives the other officers a discouraging look.

GREER
Funny guys!

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE -- LATER

Thompson enters the Courtroom, and a BAILIFF steps in front of Thompson, takes a file. He walks it over to judge MAXWELL.

Maxwell looks over the report, then, looks hard at Thompson.

MAXWELL

A kid?

THOMPSON

Yes, sir.

MAXWELL

Why have you brought him here, instead of taking him to Social Services?

THOMPSON

He's involved in a murder, and he's violent.

Maxwell looks at the file again.

MAXWELL

Steven Ray, twelve years old! What am I supposed to do with a boy?

(Beat)

Just how violent can a twelve year old be?

THOMPSON

Very violent, sir.

Maxwell makes a disgusted gesture.

MAXWELL

Okay, bring him in.

A boy's screams are heard near the main entrance.

Maxwell looks up as the courtroom door flies open from Steven's kick.

Greer enters, holding tightly to the struggling Steven, a second Officer assist. After a beat, they walk him up in front of Maxwell's stand.

Maxwell looks at the boy, puzzled.

MAXWELL (CONT'D)

Are you Steven Ray?

STEVEN

That's none of your damn business!

Maxwell looks surprised by the remark.

MAXWELL

We are here to help you son; now
please, control yourself!

Steven makes several attempts to break free.

STEVEN

Liars, every one of you!

Steven unexpectedly kicks Greer in the BELT LINE. He pulls
free and sprints toward the door.

The bailiff leaps at the boy, misses and lands face down on
the floor. An Officer blocks his escape and Steven turns
back. Thompson aids Greer, recovers and resumes the chase.

Steven runs behind the judge.

Maxwell makes an attempt to catch the boy but fails, he stands
looking frustrated.

Steven passes the judge's bench, and runs to a table covered
with books, and computer equipment. He crawls under it.

The officers slowly surround him. The table shifts up and
fall forward; the equipment falls, crashing into the floor.

Steven picks up several books and throws them to repel the
officers. One book flies just past Maxwell's head.

MOMENT PASS:

Steven is caught, several officers hold the boy, preventing
his escape.

Maxwell recomposes, and looks hard at the boy.

MAXWELL

Get him out here!

THOMPSON

We can't put him in a county cell;
we need an order to send him to the
Detention Center.

MAXWELL

It's ordered! And see that he's
evaluated, A.S.A.P!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DOCTORS COMPLEX HALLWAY -- EVENING

Looking through an opened door from a busy hall. A man is sitting at a desk, slouched; one hand supports his head up off of the desk. The desk is littered with files and papers. His white shirt is wrinkled, attire, somewhat displaced for a professional.

Behind and above the desk hang wall-mounted plaques, awards, and diplomas.

INT. OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

BILL PETERSON, 30's, face comes into view. Clearly, he's fatigued, and his free hand searches through the piles of papers in search of a lost item. After a few moments of searching, his head-shakes negatively from discouragement and returns to the palm of his hand for support.

The telephone, sitting nearby but covered by paperwork, rings. Peterson looks toward the sound a moment; then pushes aside a pile to uncover the receiver.

PETERSON

Yeah, what?

There's a long pause.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

But, I'm already....

A second pause follows. Peterson's expressions show a slight bitterness to the caller.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll look at him, but no promises!

As he hangs up, sounds of footsteps near Peterson's opened door. A well-dressed man steps into the office, Dr. Armstrong, steps in and looks at Peterson. Peterson fails to give the visitor recognition as his eyes continue to scan the desk.

ARMSTRONG

Don't tell me you're taking on another case?

PETERSON

I didn't say I would. I said I would look at the boy, and the case.

ARMSTRONG
For whom?

PETERSON
Maxwell.

Armstrong pulls a chair up to the front of Peterson's desk. He looks worried, but Peterson's eyes avoid contact.

ARMSTRONG
I can talk to him.

PETERSON
What? Why would I want you to?

ARMSTRONG
Look at yourself! Bill, you're taking on too, much.

Peterson resumes his search for the lost item.

ARMSTRONG (CONT'D)
I'm concerned; the entire staff is concerned.

(Beat)
This will not help you to forget, please, slow down and pull yourself together.

Peterson stops searching; his eyes make direct contact with Armstrong's, and there is a brief hard stare.

PETERSON
(Sarcastic)
Who do you think you are, my mother?

Armstrong slides out of the chair, then, walks to the doorway. He pauses, looks at Peterson.

ARMSTRONG
(Somewhat bitter)
A friend, I thought!

Armstrong walks out without continuing.

CUT TO:

INT. A DARKENED LIVING ROOM -- LATER

The room's design clearly shows an upper class home, but the room is in a disorderly condition.

Headlights streak across partially drawn blinds, followed by the sounds of a slamming car door.

The homes' door slowly opens. Peterson's hand is seen searching for the light switch. The light blinks on as he steps inside, then, walks over to an end table. He pushes aside an empty container, exposing a telephone and answering machine. A button is pushed; no new calls are seen. Peterson shoves a briefcase onto the table, forcing it between the container and phone.

Peterson walks to a nearby sofa, drops down into a somewhat slumped sitting position. A hand fumbles through old newspapers lying on a nearby coffee table, and it pulls out a remote control. The television turns on and channels scan station to station repeatedly.

Leaning back onto the sofa's arm, the picture stops and the screen displays a newscast and shows a mute icon. The remote drops to the floor.

INT. A DARKENED LIVING ROOM -- LATER (DREAM)

The room's design clearly shows an upper class home. Flickering light can be seen in an adjacent room. Headlights streak across partially drawn blinds, followed by the sounds of a slamming car door.

The homes' door slowly opens. Peterson's hand is seen searching for the light switch.

PETERSON

Why is it so dark in here?

The light blinks on, and he walks toward the sofa. His briefcase drops onto the sofa.

Unexpectedly, the lights dim. Peterson turns to the switch and sees Sandy, a beautiful woman, dressed in an evening gown. Peterson smiles at her.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

What, are we conserving power now?

Sandy walks over to Peterson; they embrace.

SANDY

You're late, again.

PETERSON

I know, sorry, dear, but the caseload is taking more and more of my time.

SANDY

Forget about work tonight. It's time we relaxed, and take some time for ourselves.

Peterson smiles at her, they kiss.

PETERSON

Tell me, just what do you have in mind?

Sandy takes Peterson's hand and leads him toward the flickering light.

After a moment, a dining area comes into view; the table is set with two burning candles. Peterson escorts Sandy to her chair, seats her and then walks to his chair.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Looks like this meal took you all day to prepare. How did you find the time?

SANDY

I called it in.

Silence follows as both prepare to dine. After a moment the telephone rings, Sandy answers.

SANDY (CONT'D)

Yes.

(Beat)

No, Sam, not tonight.

(Long beat)

Okay, okay. I'll go.

Peterson's fork drops to his plate, and looks hard at Sandy.

PETERSON

Let me guess, our evening is over.

Sandy walks back to the table.

SANDY

Just for a little while. I'll be back and we'll resume.

Peterson stands.

PETERSON

That station has more reporters; why send you again?

SANDY

The strike is my story, Bill. And it's my job to...

PETERSON

The strike...at night! I don't like you going out there this late; it's dangerous!

SANDY

There's a possible break in the talks.

PETERSON

I'll go with you.

SANDY

No, stay here and relax. Please! I'll be fine; besides, the crew will be with me.

Sandy walks to a closet, removes a coat and starts toward the door.

PETERSON

I still don't like this.

SANDY

I'll be fine, relax.

INT. DEN -- LATER

Peterson is working on files sitting on his desk. In the background, we see the table and the candles are half burnt. A television is heard in the background.

Peterson stands up and stretches; he hears Sandy's voice, steps into the living room. He sees her interviewing a company manager. He smiles at the set; then, returns to the den.

On the screen, we see a suspicious person pushing through the crowd.

Peterson starts to sit back at his desk. Screams are heard from the television; a gunshot rings out.

He runs back to the set, sees Sandy falling.

INT. A DARKENED LIVING ROOM--REAL TIME RESUMED

Peterson sits up screaming.

PETERSON

No!

He regains his thoughts, glances toward a clock; its flashing 6 AM. He looks at his self a moment, shaking his head back and forth. Then he realizes he's in dire need of a shower and walks out of the living room.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN: (MAIN) GARNET, TEXAS, MAY 1999 GOODWIN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY FOR BOYS.

THE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY LOOKS LIKE AN OLD COUNTRY SCHOOL, BRICK, AND THE GROUNDS ARE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED WITH A TEN-FOOT FENCE.

Steven stands looking out of a window from his room in the detention center watching an active compound.

A VIEW of the compound shows several BOYS playing in the morning sun. SOUNDS of the outside activities, makes Steven's thoughts drift.

A lone tear can be seen trickling down the boy's cheek.

CUT TO:

EXT. VISION--A CITY PARK IN HOUSTON TEXAS-DAY (SPRING 1993)

An eight-year-old boy is seen in a swing; he screams out at his mother, MARY RAY, 20's slender, with long golden brown hair. She stands behind the young boy, daydreaming.

STEVEN

(Screaming)

Higher Mom, push me higher!

Mary continues her steady gentle pushes, and does not respond to the boy's request. Her facial expressions show she's deep in thought.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE RAY HOME LIVING ROOM--NIGHT (1988)

ALLEN RAY, 22, muscular build, can be seen sitting in the living room. Credits roll up on a television screen signaling the football games end. Empty beer cans litter the floor and sofa.

Allen stands up, slightly disoriented. He looks toward the bedroom then walks toward his sleeping wife, staggering occasionally.

INT. BEDROOM--FOLLOWING

Mary, now nineteen and pregnant, can be seen sleeping soundly.

Allen enters the bedroom and walks over to the bed. He sits on the edge staring at his wife. His hand reaches to Mary's uncovered leg, and glides upward, attempting entry into her panties.

Mary moans and she pushes the intruding hand away.

Allen once again forces his hand into her panties. He then grabs them and tries to pull them down.

MARY
(Slight distress)
Stop it, Allen!

Mary sits up on the bed; again she pushes the hand away.

MARY (CONT'D)
I told you, no more sex until after
the baby is born. You're too rough
and it hurts!

Allen raises his hand and SLAPS Mary in the face.

ALLEN
Does that feel better, you heartless
bitch!

MARY
(Crying)
Go away and leave me alone!

Allen stands up; bitterness can be heard in his voice.

ALLEN
Well, if I can't get a little
affection at home, I'll look
elsewhere!

The front door is heard SLAMMING.

Mary falls back on the bed, crying.

CUT TO:

INT. WEBSTER'S BAR--LATER

Allen is sitting on a barstool drinking. He looks over the room and sees the same old familiar crowd. Expressions of lust and upset can still be seen on his face. A WOMAN giggles; his attention turns to the laugh and the conversation at a nearby table.

TRACY WALL, 30's, is dressed like a hooker and sits talking to a middle-aged businessman.

MAN
I thought you had to cancel tonight
because your sitter didn't show up?

TRACY
She didn't, but, hell Cindy's sixteen
now. She's old enough to watch
herself a few hours now. Don't you
think?

Allen stares at the two, deep in thought.

ALLEN (V.O.)
(Thoughts)
Hell, that worn out hole never could
satisfy me. But, he looks like the
type that's easily pleased.
(Beat)
I know someone that might though!
And she's only a few blocks away.

Allen quickly finishes his beer, then, exits the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. TRACY WALL'S HOME--NIGHT

CINDY WALL 16, is sitting in the dark living room watching a late night movie, in her nightgown.

She jumps, slightly startled, when someone knocks at the front door.

Cindy walks over to the front door slowly. She starts to look out a peephole when, Allen knocks again.

CINDY
Who's there?

ALLEN
It's me Allen. I need to see your mother.

Cindy relaxes when she hears the familiar voice, and opens the door.

CINDY
Allen, you scared the hell out of me! I wasn't expecting visitors tonight.

ALLEN
Sorry, babe. Didn't mean to do that!

CINDY
Mom's not home right now.

ALLEN
(Acting surprised)
Damn. I really need to talk with her. Do you know when she'll return?

CINDY
Your guess is just as good as mine!

ALLEN
Mind if I come in and wait for her?

CINDY
Sure, you can keep me company. I'm watching Fright Night Theater.

ALLEN
Great, I can keep them Gremlins away from you; that is, if you'll get me a cold brew?

CINDY
Have a seat. I'll go get you a beer.

Cindy exits briefly, returns with a beer, and sits on the opposite end of the sofa.

Allen takes the beer and pretends to watch television.

ALLEN

Thanks, babe. What's playing?

CINDY

Nightmare Street, and it is real scary.

ALLEN

Has it been on long?

CINDY

No, it just started a few minutes ago.

ALLEN

Well, if you get too scared, remember, I'm right here!

The room becomes silent except for the television.

Cindy slowly closes her eyes; her robe opens exposing a bare leg.

Allen continues drinking; he looks at the girl with lust in his eyes.

Cindy relaxes on the sofa; turns a little exposing both legs.

Allen reaches for the remote control, turns off the set, grabs Cindy's legs pulling her into a laying position and crawls up on her.

Cindy screams.

CINDY

Stop it, Allen. I'm not Mom!

ALLEN

I know. I don't want your mom tonight.

Cindy struggles and attempts to push off the attacker.

Allen starts disrobing the girl.

Cindy's hand accidentally hits the coffee table. She remembers there's a pair of SCISSORS lying on the table. Her hand frantically looks for the weapon. She grabs the scissors and stabs them into Allen's side just as he starts to climax.

Allen screams in pain, jumps off the girl, and runs out of the home.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK SCENE--RESUMED

STEVEN

(Screams)

Mom! Push me higher!

MARY

Sorry, Steven, I was just thinking about Allen.

STEVEN

Who?

MARY

Your father, the man that's coming home tomorrow!

(Beat)

What am I thinking, you haven't seen him. He's been in jail since you were an infant.

STEVEN

Mom, I need to go higher, so I can fly!

MARY

Don't you even think about turning loose, young man! I can't handle an injury, and your father's return at the same time.

STEVEN

I bet he can't fly!

Mary stops the swing.

MARY

Get out now, before you do something stupid!

STEVEN

Oh, Mom!

CUT TO:

EXT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY-PRESENT TIME--DAY VIEW OUT OF THE WINDOW -- DAY

The scenes of CHILDREN at play resume.

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM CORRECTIONAL FACILITY-PRESENT TIME--DAY

The door to Steven's room opens. He looks toward the door, frightened, and backs away from the window.

A guard, DAVID ANDERSON, mid 50's, thin build enters; he is followed by.

BILL PETERSON, 30's, psychiatrist, well dressed, excellent condition, dark hair and complexion.

Steven continues to silently back away from the intruders.

DAVID

See, Doc, I told you. He acts like a frightened puppy!

Both men step closer to Steven.

PETERSON

It looks like he's been crying!

DAVID

Yeah, he looks like that a lot. We never figured out why.

PETERSON

Steven, there's no need to be scared. I have been sent over just to talk with you. That's all.

Steven backs himself into a corner, near his bed.

STEVEN

(Screaming)

Stay away from me! Why won't you people leave me alone?

PETERSON

Looks like a difficult one.

DAVID

He's been here a week, so tell me something I don't already know!

PETERSON

Has he been violent?

DAVID

Well, not since we've put him in solitary. But, when he first arrived, he was a bit violent.

PETERSON

What happened?

DAVID

We put him in with another boy the day he arrived.

(Beat)

Doc, it was like throwing a cat in with a dog! He hid in the corner of the room and refused to sleep or eat. If the other inmate got too close, Steven would start throwing objects at the boy.

(Beat-a laugh)

I hear he also gave the officers who brought him in, what for!

PETERSON

So, I would assume he hasn't told anyone here what happened that night?

DAVID

He hasn't spoken to the living, only an occasional scream.

PETERSON

What does that mean? Hasn't spoken with the living?

DAVID

We hear him talking in here. It sounds like he's talking to someone, but there's never anyone in the room. Maybe he has an invisible friend or something?

PETERSON

I see.

The doctor walks closer to the frightened boy.

STEVEN
(Screaming)
I told you to stay away from me!
Get out of my room!

Steven picks up a pillow from his bed, and throws it at the approaching doctor.

Peterson dodges the pillow and continues toward the boy.

DAVID
His hearing is less than two weeks.
Do you think you'll be able to find
out why he killed his father by then?

PETERSON
Two weeks! Why so soon?

DAVID
The boy caused a scene in court so;
the judge thinks its best to hurry
the hearing...in case the lad needs
hospitalization. You know, a rubber
room....

PETERSON
From his looks, I'd say he doesn't
need it.

The doctor pulls a bright silver watch out of his pocket
then a syringe with a sedative.

PETERSON (CONT'D)
Hypnotism works wonders in these
types of cases. Help me get him on
the bed please.

Peterson lays the watch on a nearby table, and then he
prepares the syringe.

The men start toward Steven. He jumps up on the bed
attempting to cross; David catches him before he makes it to
the floor.

STEVEN
(Screaming)
Mom, make them go away!

PETERSON
Your mother isn't here son.

STEVEN
She'll be here, and she'll take care
of you two, Ass Holes!

DAVID
Hurry up Doc! He's stronger than he
looks!

Peterson moves over to aid David, injects the boy.

Steven becomes relaxed within moments.

PETERSON
That's better. Lay him on the bed.

DAVID
He'll run off.

PETERSON
I don't think so.

David lays the boy down and steps back.

Steven lies on his bed, alert, but almost motionless

STEVEN
(Crying)
What have you done to me?

PETERSON
It's a mild sedative. Don't worry
it will wear off shortly.

David moves away. He leans against a wall to rest and catch
his breath.

DAVID
I'm getting too old for this kind of
nonsense!

Peterson pulls a TAPE RECORDER from his briefcase, sets it
on a nearby table, and pushes the record button.

PETERSON
You can go now. I'll call you when
I'm ready to leave.

DAVID

Okay Doc. I need to go check on some of our other guests. If he gives you any more trouble, just yell.

PETERSON

We'll be just fine, won't we, Steven?

STEVEN

Go to hell!

DAVID

(Chuckles)

That shot didn't hinder his mind any!

David exits the room.

Peterson starts swinging the watch in front of Steven. We can see the boy's eyes fix to the moving object. The drug keeps him from resisting or turning away.

PETERSON

Steven, let your mind travel back into your childhood and tell me the first thing that comes into your mind.

Steven remains silent, looking at the swinging object. His eyes slowly close.

STEVEN

(Screams)

There's a strange man in our house!

CUT TO:

RESUME VISION--RETURNING FROM PARK (1993)

INT. RAY HOME--DARK

Mary 22, can be seen carrying her exhausted son into a small run-down home in the northeast side of HOUSTON. She walks toward the sofa and starts to lay down the sleeping boy. Allen 20's, voice startles her.

ALLEN

Just where the hell have you been all day?

Mary gasps in a slight panic, then, she realizes who is speaking

MARY

Allen! I didn't expect to see you today. Did they release you early?

ALLEN

If you had stayed your ass at home, you would have known! I called all day long trying to reach you.

MARY

Sorry, but I wasn't expecting your call till tomorrow!

ALLEN

What's done is done! Now, put the boy to bed. We have some catching up to do! Two years in a cage is rough on a guy!

Mary picks the boy up.

INT. BEDROOM--FOLLOWING

Mary enters the room carrying Steven to his bed; she places him on a small twin bed. She covers the boy, kisses him on the forehead then exits the bedroom closing the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN BEDROOM

Allen enters his bedroom, undresses and climbs into bed waiting for his wife.

ALLEN

(Yelling)

Hurry up! I'm not getting any younger or any less horny you know!

Mary enters the room.

MARY

Keep your voice down! You'll wake up Steven.

Mary starts to undress and sits on the bed.

STEVEN

MOM!

Mary attempts to get up, but Allen pulls her back down to his side.

MARY

Let me go. I'll be right back.

ALLEN

The kid will keep, you stay put!

Mary does as Allen orders.

MOMENTS LATER:

The crying boy can be seen standing in the bedroom doorway calling for his mother.

STEVEN

Mom, who is that man on top of you?

ALLEN

(Screams out)

Get back in your room...now!

INT. HOME--FOLLOWING

Steven runs back to his room, jumps into bed, frightened. He covers up completely hiding and crying.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH OF THE RAY HOME--NEXT NIGHT

Steven is sitting on a porch swing outside the home looking up into space. A stream of TEARS runs down the boy's left cheek. Suddenly the sound of glass breaking can be heard inside the home.

Steven draws up on the swing, curling into a fetal position.

ALLEN (V.O.)

(In a drunken voice)

You bitch! You almost hit me with that vase.

MARY (V.O.)

Well its too damn bad I missed!

INT. RAY'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Mary stands inside the bedroom doorway. She reaches over to a dresser and picks up a picture frame. She throws it at Allen, but again it misses and shatters on a living room wall.

Allen walks over to Mary and grabs a handful of hair.

EXT. PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

Steven jumps when he hears the frame hitting the wall. It is followed by the sound of a slap.

Steven hears his mother's scream. The crying boy tries to cover his ears to shield out the sounds.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Allen pulls Mary by the hair into the living room.

Mary SCREAMS in pain.

MARY

I can't believe I ever loved you!
Many times I wish we never...ever
met!

ALLEN

Instead of dating you, I should have
just raped you and left!

MARY

Like you did that schoolgirl...
eight years ago! Why they let you
out of prison is a mystery to me.
You perverted bastard!

ALLEN

Good behavior got me out of that
hellhole.

(He laughs)

Those bastards will fall for that
goody-boy act every time!

MARY

Let me call them out here. Then
they can see... The real you!

EXT. PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

More STRUGGLING SOUNDS can be heard, followed by Mary's crying. A body can be heard falling.

Allen storms out of the home, gets into his car and drives away.

Steven uncurls, and gets up his courage and climbs off the swing.

INT. HOME--FOLLOWING

Steven runs over to check on Mary still lying on the floor.

STEVEN
Mom, are you all right?

Mary sits up and attempts to dry her tears.

MARY
Yes, dear. But you better go to
your room in case he returns.

INT. BEDROOM--FOLLOWING

Steven runs into his bedroom. He curls up on his bed and begins talking as if he's praying.

STEVEN
Please sir, if you are really there
and listening...don't let that man,
you know the one that's supposed to
be my father, hurt Mom anymore.
(Beat)
If he must hurt me, well, that's all
right, as long as he will leave her
alone.
(Beat)
Please God, make him go away!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM--DAY (PRESENT TIME RESUMED)

Peterson looks at the boy lying on his bed, trembling, and crying.

PETERSON
I hate these types of cases.
(MORE)

PETERSON (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Steven, when you wake up, you will not remember this discussion. When I say the word "Mother," you will return to this hypnotic state. Do you understand?

STEVEN

Yes.

Peterson picks up a tablet and begins to take notes when a strange uneasy feeling comes over him.

MARY (V.O.)

Help my son, please!

Peterson looks around the room.

PETERSON

I have been working these types of cases too damn long. I'm starting to hear things!

Peterson pauses, scans the room then resumes writing notes. After a moment he walks to the door and calls out for David.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Guard, I'm ready to leave now.

David enters moments later.

DAVID

Looks like you still have him knocked out.

PETERSON

Yes, but I'm ready to wake him up.

(Beat)

Steven, when I snap my finger and say "Mother" you will wake up. But, you will no longer be violent to me or to David here. Understand?

STEVEN

Yes.

Peterson SNAPS his fingers.

PETERSON

Mother!

Steven sits up on his bed and looks as if nothing has happened.

STEVEN

Are you two still here? I told you to leave me alone!

DAVID

I thought he wasn't supposed to be violent?

PETERSON

He won't be, but his mouth will be!

(Beat)

Make the necessary arrangements for me to visit this boy every afternoon until the hearing.

DAVID

I tell them up front.

PETERSON

Also, see about getting this prescription filled. Steven will need to take two tablets daily, until further notice.

Peterson hands David the script.

DAVID

Will do, Doctor. I've just heard through the grapevine the judge in this case is considering charging this boy as an adult. That is, if he's not insane.

(Beat)

Maybe he's to be an example for other juvenile offenders.

PETERSON

I'll just go have a talk with the judge about this. We'll see what's going on.

DAVID

Good luck! The judge is old hard-nosed Maxwell. He's a strict one!

PETERSON

By the way, do you know what happened to this boy's mother?

DAVID

The last I heard about her was, that she's in the hospital in a comatose condition.

(Beat)

I'm told, she was found severely beaten and almost dead out by the ship channel. Speculation is her husband committed the act and dumped her to cover up his crime. There was no evidence to prove it though. I guess we'll never know what happened now.

PETERSON

You never know. Something just may surface!

CUT TO:

INT. BILL PETERSON'S HOME--NIGHT

Peterson enters his quiet middle-class home. He walks to the home's only other occupant, the answering machine.

PETERSON

No calls, looks like another boring night!

Peterson goes into his living room, turns on the television. He stops to look at a photo of his departed wife sitting on the set.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

It's been so deathly quiet since you left me, Sandy. Seems only yesterday we laid here together laughing. Then, again, at times it feels like years of loneliness are haunting this empty shell of a home.

TIME PASSES TO 11P.M.

A late newscast plays on the set as Peterson drifts off to sleep.

MARY (V.O.)

If you only knew how Allen was, you'd help my Steven.

Peterson wakes briefly, grabs the remote control.

PETERSON
Stupid set. You're feeling a need
to talk with me and ease my
lonesomeness, too!

Peterson drops the remote, lays back and closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. DREAM PAST EVENTS

Peterson in a dream sees Allen raping Cindy.

Dream scene from PAGE 5 SCENE 5 REPEATED: CINDY slowly closes her eyes; her robe opens exposing her bare legs.

Allen continues drinking. He looks at the girl with lust in his eyes.

Cindy relaxes on the sofa; both her legs now up on the sofa.

Allen reaches for the remote control, turns off the set, grabs Cindy's legs pulling her into a laying position and crawls up on her.

Cindy screams.

CINDY
Stop it, Allen. I'm not Mom.

ALLEN
I know. I didn't want your Mom
tonight!

Cindy struggles, attempting to push off the attacker.

Allen starts disrobing the girl.

Cindy's hand accidentally hits the coffee table. She remembers there's a pair of SCISSORS lying on the table. Her hand frantically looks for the weapon. She grabs the scissors and stabs them into Allen's side just as he starts to climax.

Allen SCREAMS in pain, jumps off the girl, and runs out of the home.

EXT. ALLEN RAY'S BOYHOOD HOME--NIGHT

A police car pulls up into the drive of the country home. An OFFICER parks the auto then exits the car; he walks over to the back door.

OFFICER
Get out, Allen.

Allen exits the car. (Now a 17) and the Officer grabs his arm then takes him to the front door, and knocks.

GEORGE RAY, 40's, overweight, foul looking, opens the door.

GEORGE
Yeah, what do you want?

OFFICER
Damn George, you're on the sauce again.

GEORGE
I can do whatever I please, in my own home!

OFFICER
Well, this boy of yours has did it again! We caught him breaking into Pullman's Grocery. This makes twice this week, George, and if you can't control him. The department will!

GEORGE
Damn you boy! Get to your room. I'll deal with you in a minute.

Allen runs out of the room.

OFFICER
I'm telling you, George, this is the last time. Next time, the office of Children's Welfare will be involved. And you don't want them looking at your parenting skills.

GEORGE
It won't happen again!

George slams the door as the officer turns to walk away.

OFFICER
See that it doesn't!

CUT TO:

INT. ALLEN'S BEDROOM--NIGHT

George walks into the room taking off his belt.

GEORGE
I warned you...you, little bastard!

George swings at Allen, but misses knocking items off a dresser.

Allen starts throwing items at his father. Then he tries to run for the door.

George grabs the boy, but he struggles free. George then swings a fist hitting Allen in the mouth.

Allen falls into the floor, his lip busted and bleeding, George walks over, kicks the boy.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Next time, I'll kill you!

INT. LIVING ROOM--FOLLOWING

George staggers back into the living room, sits on the sofa, and resumes drinking, and passes out minutes later.

INT. BEDROOM

Allen crawls out a window, goes to a nearby shed and grabs a gas can. He soaks the home, sets it on fire, then runs into the woods and hides to watch.

ALLEN
Who's going to kill me now?

Allen then vanishes into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. PETERSON'S LIVING ROOM--DAY (REAL TIME RESUMED)

MARY (V.O.)
See what type of man Allen was?
Will you help him, please!

An ALARM clock rings. Peterson sits up, rubs his eyes and turns off the alarm.

PETERSON
No more late night TV for me!

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL--DAY

Peterson walks down a corridor, locates Mary's room. He enters and sees a lifeless woman, connected to monitors and life support. He then walks over and picks up her chart at the foot of her bed.

PETERSON
Was it you that caused my dream last night. No, I guess not.

A doctor enters the room.

DOCTOR
I thought I heard a voice in here.

PETERSON
Sorry, I didn't see you enter.

DOCTOR
Those charts are for hospital personal use. May I ask, why you're reading them?

PETERSON
I'm also a doctor. Bill Peterson is my name.

DOCTOR
Mine is, Patrick Myers, but I've never seen you here before?

PETERSON
I don't work here. I work for the state. I've been assigned to evaluate her son. I'm trying to piece together exactly what happened to her, and the boy.

DOCTOR
I see. Well, there's little I can tell you.

(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
She arrived here about like you see
her now; only the bruises and injuries
have healed slightly.

MARY (V.O.)
(Very faint)
Help us, please.

Peterson looks around the room.

PETERSON
Did you hear something?
(Beat)
Never mind.
(Beat)
Has she had any brain activity at
all?

DOCTOR
Not much. Frankly, I think
administration will be seeking a
court order to terminate her life
support soon. If no family is found
soon, that's generally what happens
in these types of cases.

PETERSON
That won't help her son!

DOCTOR
I'm sorry to hear that. But, that
is not my decision. I can notify
you though, if the administration
does attempt to terminate her support.

PETERSON
Please do. Here's my card.

Myers takes the card and starts to exit.

DOCTOR
If anything develops, I'll contact
you.

PETERSON
Thank you.
(Beat) (To himself)
Now, why did I do that?

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE--DAY

Judge Maxwell's Chambers. Maxwell sitting at a desk reviewing the morning briefs. A BAILIFF enters the room.

BAILIFF

Judge. There's a Doctor Peterson here to see you.

Maxwell drops the files down onto his desk.

MAXWELL

Just what I need today, a doctor!
Send him in.

Peterson enters the chambers.

MAXWELL (CONT'D)

Peterson, that name sounds familiar.

Maxwell looks over his desk.

PETERSON

I'm the doctor that was assigned to mentally evaluate the boy.

MAXWELL

Oh yes, that's how I know your name.

Maxwell locates the file and briefly looks it over.

MAXWELL (CONT'D)

What can I do for you, Peterson?

(Beat)

Are you here to give me a personal report?

PETERSON

No sir, but I did come to ask if you would consider dropping the charges. This crime is pointing more to, self-defense!

MAXWELL

What? Let a murderer walk free?
I hardly think so!

(BEAT)

I remember that boy from his arraignment. He's a wild animal, a violent one!

PETERSON

He's driven by fear. The boy's mind is in a constant state of terror.

MAXWELL

That's your opinion. I have my own. I should have guessed this was coming.

(Beat)

I must admit, my first impressions of the boy were, possibly, a bit hasty.

Peterson gives Maxwell a bitter look.

PETERSON

Judge Maxwell, I came to save a young man's life.

MAXWELL

He took a life Doctor. I cannot just dismiss the case as if nothing happened.

PETERSON

Has an attorney been appointed to his case?

Maxwell pauses, searching for a reply.

MAXWELL

No, not yet.

PETERSON

You have scheduled a hearing in two weeks! Don't you think the boy needs one soon?

MAXWELL

Yes, he does but... not many lawyers wish to step forward and take this type of case. And in my opinion, the boy needs help, soon as possible.

Peterson pauses his reply, thinking. Suddenly he hears a woman's voice.

MARY (V.O.)

Please help my son. He's all that I have!

PETERSON

Well I'd like to defend the boy!

(Thoughts)

Am I nuts? Why did I say that?

MAXWELL

(Laughs)

You must be joking. You're a doctor,
not a lawyer!

PETERSON

I also have been trained in the legal
profession. If no one else wants
the job, I'll take it.

MAXWELL

Well, I can see the determination
from your expression. I will allow
it to prove I'm not the cold-hearted
man you and everyone else thinks I
am!

(Beat)

However, you can't be the boy's doctor
and attorney. Someone else will be
assigned to do the exam.

PETERSON

I understand.

MAXWELL

Do you need to postpone the hearing?

PETERSON

I might, I'll need to get back with
you after I do a little research.

MAXWELL

Do not wait long...if you need more
time tell me soon as possible!

PETERSON

Yes, sir. Now excuse me, I have
work to do and only a few days to do
it! It's been an experience talking
with you! Good day.

Peterson exits the chambers.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM--NEXT DAY

Peterson is entering Steven's room carrying video equipment. David enters behind Peterson carrying electronic equipment.

DAVID

So, you went from doctor to lawyer in one day? How did you convince old hard-nosed MAX to allow it?

PETERSON

Actually it was easy. He thought this idea would better his image.

David laughs.

DAVID

Oh, I see. He's found a new way to take advantage of this case.

PETERSON

He's a trying man, it seems!

DAVID

I can't believe that old fart is allowed to sit on the bench! The people that elected him received more than they bargained for.

PETERSON

A high conviction rate, that's what keeps a judge!

Peterson turns his attention back to Steven.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Well, you seem a lot calmer today!

Steven looks puzzled, wondering why this man returned.

STEVEN

Why are you back? I told you yesterday. Leave me alone!

PETERSON

Dave, has he been started on the medication I prescribed?

DAVID

Yes, we started him on it this morning. Getting a pill down him was a chore!

PETERSON

(Laughs)

I bet it was!

(To Steven)

I can't leave you alone Steven.

(Beat)

I'm your attorney now.

STEVEN

Big deal!

PETERSON

Yes, it is a big deal. Do you want to say in this prison the rest of your life?

STEVEN

What do you care? It's not you!

DAVID

Are you going to hypnotize him again?

PETERSON

No need to. All I need to do is say the word, snap my finger, and it's done. I learned that trick years ago. It works wonders with difficult cases.

DAVID

I bet it does! You should have taught me that trick. We needed it getting that pill down!

(Beat)

Well, you're all set up. Call out if you need me.

PETERSON

Thanks! Steven, about your question; you should have said, why do I care?

STEVEN

Whatever!

PETERSON

What would you say if I said, I'm doing it for your mother?

STEVEN

(Screams out)

You're a damn liar! She's dead!

PETERSON

No, your mother is very much alive! She's in County General hospital in a coma, but alive.

Peterson sees the information about Mary is working to calm the boy.

STEVEN

I still think you're lying!

PETERSON

Ask the guard! If that's not enough, I'll make arrangements for you to call the hospital yourself.

STEVEN

You're trying to trick me! If she is alive and in a coma, how did she ask for your help?

PETERSON

That might be difficult to explain. Let's just say I heard her call out for my help.

The Doctor's statement strikes a nerve. Steven becomes upset and cries slightly.

Peterson looks puzzled by the BOY'S actions.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Why does that upset you?

STEVEN

Because, I hear her voice too!

PETERSON

Now we are getting somewhere. Please sit down and let's begin. Time is wasting away.

Steven starts to cooperate, but acts extremely cautious.

Peterson says the word "MOTHER" and SNAPS his finger.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Yesterday, you told me about the fight your parents had when you were young. Are there other events like that one you can tell me about?

Peterson pulls a chair next to Steven and sits down.

Unexpectedly, Steven's hand reaches over and grabs Peterson's hand,

STEVEN

I was eight years old when...

The room darkens and Peterson sees the event.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE KETTLE CAFÉ HOUSTON, TEXAS--VISION--DAY

Mary is in the small café. She's wearing a waitress uniform, turned away from the door, picking up an order of food.

Allen enters and walks up to the counter behind her.

ALLEN

Hey babe, give me twenty dollars.

Mary turns around.

MARY

What are you doing here, and where is Steven?

ALLEN

In the car, where else would he be?

MARY

Why do you want twenty dollars?

(Beat)

You better not be planning to slack off of your baby-sitting job! Someone has to watch Steven while I work!

ALLEN

(Resentment tone)

I'm watching him. Now give me the money!

MARY

I shouldn't give you any, but the last thing I need is for you to cause a scene. I need to keep this job to put food on the table! Since you don't!

Mary reaches under the counter and removes a bill from her purse. She reluctantly hands it to Allen.

ALLEN

Thanks, babe! Catch you back home later.

Allen turns to exit.

MARY

You better watch Steven, and stay out of trouble.

ALLEN

Yeah, yea!

Mary watches as the old banged-up Cutlass drives away.

MARY (V.O.)

I wonder where the hell he's heading?

CUT TO:

INT. WEBSTER'S BAR-DAY

Allen sits on a barstool next to:

CLARA SIMPSON, 19 with long golden hair, childish attitude, who loves to tease the men. She's teasing Allen by slightly raising her extremely short dress.

Allen reaches down, his hand slides up her leg near the panty line.

Clara laughs then pushes his hand away.

ALLEN

So sweet thing, how about coming back to my place and help me baby-sit?

Clara gives Allen a look.

CLARA
 You're a pervert! Using your kid to
 take me to your home!

ALLEN
 He won't watch! I promise!

Clara is just about to blow Allen off when she sees her ex-boyfriend entering the bar.

CLARA
 Tell you what, good looking. I'll
 go home with you some other time.
 When you're not busy that is, but
 for now, can you drive me home?

ALLEN
 You're there!

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT-DAY -- FOLLOWING

The two exit the building, walk toward the Cutlass.

Clara sees Steven sitting in the back seat. She looks at Allen, surprised.

CLARA
 You call leaving him in the car baby-sitting?

ALLEN
 Hell, it works!
 (Beat)
 Where to babe?

Both enter the auto.

INT. CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

CLARA
 Just out past North Lake.

ALLEN
 Oh, you live in the country!

CLARA
 Are you sure you're able to drive?
 You did drink several beers.

ALLEN

I can drive the car and my instrument
up you!

CLARA

Just keep your mind on the road.

(Beat)

Take highway 14, I live about two
miles past the lake.

EXT. HIGHWAY

We see the CUTLASS driving up highway 14 approaching North
Lake.

INT. CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Allen sees a dirt road ahead and knows it leads into a wooded
area. He turns onto the road and accelerates. Once out of
sight of the main highway he stops and turns off the engine.

CLARA

Why did you come up here?

ALLEN

I'd like to get to know you better.
Can't we sit here and talk?

CLARA

Yea right! I don't live far from
here. So I'll walk.

Clara attempts to exit the car.

Allen grabs her by the arm.

CLARA (CONT'D)

Let go!

Clara tries to struggle to free herself.

ALLEN

Hell no!

Clara has no chance to reply before Allen pins her to the
seat with his hand in her panties.

CLARA

Sick-o, the kid can see you!

Steven looks frightened and curls up into a fetal position hiding his face from view.

ALLEN
So, it won't be the first time!

CLARA
You're a crazy S.O.B.

Clara struggles to free herself without success.

Allen rips off the under garment and tries to push the girl into a laying position.

Clara SCREAMS in pain then starts trying to kick at Allen. She manages to sit up, briefly.

Allen pushes her upper body down; hard causing Clara's head hit the door extremely hard, knocking her unconscious.

Allen concludes the rape. He then exits the car dragging CLARA out by her feet. He picks her up and carries her to the water then tosses her into the lake. Then he returns to the car and starts to drive away.

INT. RAY HOME-DAY

Allen carries Steven into his bedroom. He tosses the boy onto his bed. Then he reaches down and grabs the boy's private area, squeezing it in his hand.

Steven starts SCREAMING in pain.

ALLEN
Doesn't feel very good, does it?
Tell your mother or anyone else what
happened today and I'll rip this
little pecker off!
(Beat)
Understand me?

Steven shakes his head yes and begins to cry.

Allen releases his grip, exits the room.

CUT TO:

INT. DAY STEVEN'S ROOM--DAY (REAL TIME RESUMED)

PETERSON
What kind of sick bastard was his
father?

Peterson snaps his finger.

PETERSON (CONT'D)
Steven, wake up now.

Steven shakes his head slightly then looks at Peterson in
anger.

STEVEN
Are you still here?

PETERSON
Yes, we just finished a nice long
talk.

STEVEN
Yea right!

Peterson prepares to leave.

PETERSON
I might stop at the hospital to check
your Mother's condition. Is there
anything you would like me to tell
her?

STEVEN
I thought she was in a coma!

PETERSON
That doesn't mean she can't hear.

STEVEN
Well, if she's really there, tell
her that I love her and not to worry
about me.

INT. HARRIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE JUDGE MAXWELL'S CHAMBERS--
LATER

Peterson talking with Maxwell.

PETERSON
Can the hearing be postponed for a
few weeks? I need more time.

MAXWELL

I can give you two more weeks. Can you assure me the boy will not harm himself?

PETERSON

I assure you, sir he will be just fine.

MAXWELL

Anything else?

PETERSON

Yes, an injunction blocking the possibility of County's attempting any type of termination of Mrs. Ray's life support?

MAXWELL

Mrs. Ray...I'm not aware she was found.

PETERSON

Yes, she was found right after Steven's arrest. She's in a coma, and the Doctors are thinking about terminating her life support.

(Beat)

If Steven finds out, it will devastate all my progress.

MAXWELL

I'll check into the matter and get word over to the hospital today, ordering the continued life-support until the hearing has concluded.

PETERSON

That will help a lot. Thank you Judge.

MAXWELL

Good day Doctor, or should I say Counselor?

Peterson smiles slightly as he exits the chambers.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION RECORDS DIVISION--SAME DAY

Peterson is sitting at a computer in the records room. He searches back to through the years through all the missing persons reports.

A case name pulls up one the computer screen.

CLARA SIMPSON

Missing: Clara Simpson, age nineteen, shoulder-length golden blond hair, 125 pounds, 5 feet 6 inches.

Report filed by Robert Simpson, father. Last seen at Webster's bar. April 30, 1985 NOTE: Clara Simpson found dead in North Lake. Cause of death: drowning, blunt trauma to the head. Cause UNKNOWN.

Possible foul play involved. "UNSOLVED"

PETERSON

It really did happen just like Steven said!

Peterson copies the files then exits.

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS -- FOLLOWING

Peterson walks up to the main information desk.

A YOUNG OFFICER stands at a computer, another Officer looks through a file cabinet.

PETERSON

Excuse me?

OFFICER

May I help you with something?

PETERSON

Yes, I'm the attorney in the Ray case and I needed to follow up on a little information.

OFFICER

What type of information are you searching for, sir?

PETERSON

A little over five years ago there was a girl found dead in the North Lake area. Can you tell me who handled that case? Her name was Clara Simpson.

OFFICER

Let's see if that name pulls up on the computer.

(A brief pause)

Yes, here it is.

(Pause)

Clara Simpson, a nineteen year old was found dead. The case is still officially open. Detective Larry Hill worked that case.

PETERSON

Is it possible for me to speak with him?

OFFICER

Let me check and see if he's in his office.

The younger Officer picks up the telephone.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Sir, there's a Mr. Peterson here wanting to speak with you about the Simpson case.

(Beat)

Yes, sir, I'll tell him.

The Officer hangs up then looks at Peterson.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Please have a seat. Detective Hill will be up in a moment.

PETERSON

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. WAITING AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

Peterson goes to the waiting area and waits. He waits for almost thirty minutes and is just about go back up to the

desk and complain when a middle-aged gray-haired man in a rusty brown suit enters the waiting area.

Hill looks at Peterson wondering.

HILL
Mr. Peterson I presume?

PETERSON
Yes.

Hill walks over and shakes Peterson's hand.

HILL
Sorry to have kept you waiting so long, but I had a difficult time finding the Simpson file.

PETERSON
I understand. It looks like a busy day here.

HILL
Everyday is busy!
(Beat)
The desk said you wanted to speak to me about Clara Simpson.

PETERSON
Yes. I have some information that will be helpful to you and to my client.

HILL
I heard rumors you were defending the Ray kid. You have a difficult job ahead!

PETERSON
It might not be so difficult.

HILL
Let's go to my office to talk in private.

INT. HALLWAY-OFFICE --FOLLOWING

Peterson follows Hill into a small office.

PETERSON

The department doesn't give you guys much room to work in, do they?

HILL

No, they don't.

(Beat)

Now, what can I help you with?

PETERSON

Maybe we can help each other. I think I know who killed the Simpson girl.

HILL

I hope you're not referring to the Ray boy. He was too young back then.

PETERSON

No, but he's the witness. Did you know Allen Ray, his father?

HILL

Everyone in the department did.

(Beat)

He was one bad egg. The boy should get a medal for killing him, instead of prosecution.

PETERSON

Everyone tells me he was, "a bad one."

HILL

So, the boy claims he witnessed this murder?

PETERSON

That boy witnessed too much in his life. And that is a fact!

(Beat)

Anyway, he was in the car when his father raped the girl and killed her.

HILL

What you're telling me might true, but it's a little late to prove it now, with Ray dead.

PETERSON

Maybe not! Steven told me during the struggle Clara hit her head on the passenger door, and it sounded like a hard blow.

Hill looks through some case records.

HILL

Well, the boy knows more than he should. It says here the girl did have a head injury, and if my memory is correct, she was indeed raped!

PETERSON

The car we speak of is still parked at the Ray's home. Since the girl injured herself on that door. Couldn't there possibly still be some type of evidence left behind?

HILL

Oh, I see what you're getting at. There might be some type of tissue samples, but it's been a long time. More than likely it is all gone by now.

PETERSON

Would you please try? For the boy's sake and the possibility you'll be able to close this case.

Hill pauses and thinks a moment.

HILL

Okay, if it will help the boy, I'll see what I can do. I will need to get a search warrant, and a lab technician to examine the car for DNA.

PETERSON

The information is needed as soon as possible.

HILL

I can't promise anything there. The lab has been backed up for months now, but we'll see.

PETERSON
Please call me if you find anything
at all.

Peterson hands Hill papers with the addresses and his contact information.

PETERSON (CONT'D)
Thanks for your time.

HILL
I'll be in touch. Good day.

Peterson exits as Hill picks up the phone.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- LATER

Peterson is entering the room, and he picks up Mary's chart.

PETERSON
Damn! Still no change!
(Beat)
Come on now, Mary, wake up and help
me fight to save your son!

Peterson notices the monitors fluctuate as he speaks.

PETERSON (CONT'D)
Steven said to tell you that he loves
you!

Moments later:

A NURSE enters the room.

PETERSON (CONT'D)
Nurse. Her brain activity increased
for a moment while I was speaking to
her.

NURSE
Those monitors fluctuate all the
time. Sorry, but it means nothing.

PETERSON
Are you sure?

NURSE
Yes, it's normal.

PETERSON

Well, I guess you would know.

NURSE

I see it happen all the time!

The Nurse exits, Peterson looks at Mary. We can see his expression go from concern to slight affection.

PETERSON

I hope we can get to know each other.
So, please, come back for your son's
sake and mine!

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM--DAY

Peterson walks into the room; David follows.

Steven jumps up off the bed from a sitting position

STEVEN

So, you did tell me the truth?

PETERSON

What?

STEVEN

My mom, she is alive, and you did go
to see her?

PETERSON

I told you I was going to the
hospital!

STEVEN

I know, but I didn't believe you
then.

PETERSON

Why do you believe me now?

STEVEN

Because she told me! And thanks for
giving her my message.

David looks at the two talking in disbelief.

DAVID

It's getting weird in here!

Peterson looks at David.

PETERSON

This case is a lot weirder than you know!

DAVID

I don't think I want to know. I'm just glad the boy is getting better and behaving himself.

PETERSON

He'll be out of your hair soon enough.

DAVID

What makes you say that?

PETERSON

Just a feeling I have!

DAVID

Well, you have only a couple of weeks left.

PETERSON

I know. If it's all right I'll continue counseling Steven all weekend.

DAVID

Fine by me, after all, you're the Doctor at law!

PETERSON

Let's get started, Steven.

David discreetly rolls his eyes as he exits the room.

Steven hears the snap, and the word, Mother. Immediately he looks entranced.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Mother.

(Beat)

Steven, is there any other events you wish to tell me about?

STEVEN

I can see my room. It's dark in there.

(MORE)

STEVEN (CONT'D)

I'm sitting on the edge of the bed.
I think I'm getting ready to hide.

PETERSON

How old are you now?

STEVEN

Ten.

PETERSON

Why are you getting ready to hide?

STEVEN

My dad, he's real mad.

PETERSON

Why?

STEVEN

Because there's no beer for him to drink! He's watching a football game in the living room. He's swearing about mom not working enough to buy any.

PETERSON

Where is your mom?

STEVEN

She's at work. Working a double shift, and she will not be back home until late.

(Steven pauses then,
shows an expression
of terror.)

I got to go. He's coming after me!

PETERSON

Don't be afraid. Just tell me what you see.

INT. VISION-THE RAY'S HOME--DAY

Steven, now 10-12 is hiding under his bed, staring at the door and SOUNDS of approaching footsteps. His bedroom door suddenly flies open, hitting into the wall.

ALLEN

Get out from under that bed! I've got a job for you.

No reply, only low crying sounds.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
You heard me boy. Don't make me
drag you out from under that damn
bed!

Steven slowly emerges out from under the bed.

Allen grabs the boy by the arm and leads him outside to the car.

CUT TO:

EXT. INSIDE THE CUTLASS -- MOMENTS LATER

Allen's auto pulls up in front of a lifeless looking grocery store.

ALLEN
Now, do it just like I told you to
do! Screw this up or tell anyone
and I'll throw you into that lake
like I did Clara.

(Beat)

You do remember her, don't you?

Steven shakes his head yes, expressions of fear.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Good, get in there then. There's
only one man in the place this
afternoon.

Allen opens the car door as STEVEN exits the passenger side.

Steven runs into the store.

Allen opens his door, falls out of the car onto the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. GROCERY STORE -- MOMENTS LATER

Steven runs into the building screaming.

STEVEN
Help mister, my dad, he's real sick!

A CLERK leaves his register and walks over to the panicking boy.

CLERK
What's the matter with him, son?

STEVEN
My father has fallen out of the car
and can't get up. Will you go see
what's wrong?

CLERK
Yes, of course.

STEVEN
(Starting to cry)
Help him, please.

CLERK
Stay here. I'll go check on him.

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

Clerk exits the building into the parking lot and sees ALLEN lying beside the car, acting unconscious.

Clerk walks over to check on the man.

INT. GROCERY STORE -- CONTINUOUS

Steven waits until the clerk is out of sight, then goes to the cash register, opens it and stuffs all the money into his pants pockets. He then closes the drawer and returns to the car.

EXT. PARKING LOT-- MOMENTS LATER

STEVEN
Is he all right, sir?

Clerk is trying to check Allen's pulse.

CLERK
I don't now. Maybe he's having a
heart attack. I can't find his pulse!

Allen slowly starts to show movement then his eyes drift open.

ALLEN
Where am I? What happened?

CLERK

It appears you fainted! Come inside
and I'll call for a paramedic.

Allen gets up acting like he's having a hard time doing so.

ALLEN

No, that's okay. I have had these
fainting spells before. It will
pass, I just need to get home and
lay down.

CLERK

Are you sure you can drive?

ALLEN

Yes, and thanks for your concern.
(Beat)
Let's go, Steven.

Steven gets back into the passengers seat.

Allen starts the car and drives away as the Clerk stands
watching.

CUT TO:

INT. CUTLASS -- MOMENTS LATER

ALLEN

(Low voice)
Did you get the money and close the
drawer like I told you to do.

STEVEN

Yes!

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT -- CONTINUOUS

CLERK

(Speaking to himself.)
Well, I guess he will be all right!

INT. CUTLASS -- MOMENTS LATER

Moment's pass, Allen starts to laugh as soon as the car was
out of the Clerk's sight.

ALLEN

That dumb fucker! It will be hours before he knows what happened! By then he won't remember what we look like.

The CAR stops outside of a second store. Allen gets the money from STEVEN then goes inside and buys two six packs of beer.

INT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY HALLWAY--DAY (REAL TIME RESUMED)

David unlocks the door to Steven's room.

Doctor DON CALLAWAY 40's enters the room holding a folder. He pauses and turns to David standing at the threshold.

CALLAWAY

That will be all for now.

David backs out pulling the door closes, but stays close by.

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM DAY--CONTINUED

CALLAWAY

Good morning, Steven.

Steven stands from a sitting on his bed position and back away from the stranger.

STEVEN

Who the hell are you, and what do you want?

CALLAWAY

I'm here to talk with you. My name is Don Callaway, but you can call me Don.

(Beat)

I'm here to talk with you.

STEVEN

What about?

CALLAWAY

To ask, why you shot your father. You see I'm a psychiatrist sent here by the judge.

STEVEN
I'm not talking to you. I already
have a doctor.
(Steven screams)
So get out!

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Peterson can be seen approaching Steven's room. He hears Steven scream and increases his pace.

David sees Peterson and walks toward him then, whispers.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM DAY--CONTINUED

Peterson enters the room with a confused expression for a moment.

PETERSON
What's going on in here?

CALLAWAY
I'm trying to talk to this boy, but
he's being very, uncooperative.

PETERSON
Callaway, isn't that your name? I
see Maxwell didn't waste any time
sending in another doctor.

STEVEN
Bill, make him go away!

PETERSON
It's all right Steven. He's not
here to hurt you!

CALLAWAY
You two are already on a first name
basis?

Callaway looks over the room and locates a chair then, writes a note in his tablet.

CALLAWAY (CONT'D)

I am supposed to test the boy's mental awareness, but he's being unresponsive and a bit violent!

(Beat)

Maybe Maxwell was right in his opinion of an angry lad.

PETERSON

It's fear gripping the boy, not anger.

CALLAWAY

Regardless of the cause, without his cooperation I will not be able to file a report.

(Beat)

Do you have any suggestions?

Peterson drags a chair over and places it next to Callaway.

PETERSON

I suggest you sit and listen while I interview him.

CALLAWAY

That is not standard procedure, Doctor.

PETERSON

No, it isn't. But this way you will know what caused this boy's fear.

(Beat)

Steven, please come here and sit on the bed.

Steven walks near Peterson but keeps his distance from Callaway. He sits down on a corner of his bed.

Peterson then snaps his finger as he says the word to put Steven back into hypnosis then; he moves his chair in front of the boy and sits down.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Steven, remember you told me about the incident at the grocery store?

STEVEN

Yes.

PETERSON
Move on to the next major incident
after that robbery.

STEVEN
I ran away one time.

PETERSON
How old were you then?

STEVEN
Twelve.

PETERSON
What happened to make you want to
run away from home?

STEVEN
It was a late Saturday night, and I
couldn't sleep because of a storm.

CUT TO:

INT. VISION-STEVEN'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Steven is in his bed, clenching the covers over his head
tighter as lightning flashes and loud CLAPS of thunder
VIBRATES the room.

Sounds of a drunken man are heard nearing the doorway; the
sounds send a wave of terror through Steven's facial
expressions.

STEVEN
No, not again!

Steven gets out of bed and runs to his bedroom window. He
tries to open it, but has difficulty at first try. The window
opens as Allen enters the room, stumbling.

ALLEN
Just where the hell do you think
you're going?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOME -- CONTINUOUS

Steven crawls through the window and runs down the darkened
street. A hard rain pounds his face. He slips in the mud,
but stands back up, more determined to escape.

Allen appears in the window, looks out yelling.

ALLEN

Get your ass back in this house.

Allen then crawls through the window, falls to the ground, battles to regain a standing position. He then runs after the boy, staggering several times, bumping into items in his path.

Steven slows a moment to look back. He sees Allen following, and increases his speed.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

You're going to regret doing this
when I catch up with you!

Steven leaves the road and runs down an alley tripping occasionally on debris from the storm. He has a difficult time keeping his footing from water and mud.

Due to the darkness, Steven cannot see he is nearing Greens Creek. His fear block the rushing water sounds nearing.

A SHOT of the creek shows it is swollen from the heavy rains.

Steven trips and slides down a hill. He reaches out at limbs trying to grab hold, but he is unable to stop the sliding. Suddenly, he finds himself sliding into the creek. The swift current against his body tries to push him away from the bank. His body slams into a small bush next to the bank; he grabs a limb, and it stops him from being swept downstream. Steven screams in pain and fear.

STEVEN

Help!

Allen stops at the waters edge.

ALLEN

I should drown your ass and be done
with you! But I wouldn't be able to
explain how you got out here!

Allen pulls the boy out of the creek and throws him on his shoulder. He staggers and slides while walking back home.

INT. RAY HOME--NIGHT

The front door opens and Allen enters; he sees Mary sitting on the sofa waiting and worrying.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- DAY (REAL TIME RESUMED)

Steven sits up and screams out.

STEVEN

No, he's going to beat her again!

Steven unexpectedly breaks out of the hypnotic state, surprising Peterson.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

(Crying)

I can't tell you the rest right now.

PETERSON

That's okay Steven, you can tell me later.

Steven can be seen trembling.

Peterson gestures Callaway away from the boy.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

There must be a terrible memory hidden at the end of that story, to break him out of the trance like that!

CALLAWAY

Maybe, but I'm still confused. Why did the boy panic so as his father entered the room?

PETERSON

His father entered the room at night to rape the boy.

CALLAWAY

Oh, that indeed would trigger a panic episode!

PETERSON

Now do you see what caused the fear?

CALLAWAY

I can see the reason to fear his
father, but no reason to kill him.

PETERSON

You will!

Callaway starts to exit the room.

CALLAWAY

Maybe, but I cannot do the exam with
him under hypnosis. I'll have to
report my findings to the judge. If
he still insists on following through
with the exam, you will be requested
to remove your hypnotic control.

(Beat)

Good day, Mr. Peterson.

Callaway exits closing the door.

PETERSON

Are you okay, Steven?

STEVEN

I'm glad he's gone!

PETERSON

You sound fine now!

(Beat)

Why did you say, you can't tell me
the rest, right now?

STEVEN

Mom, she told me to say that!

PETERSON

I don't understand, why?

STEVEN

I don't know. Maybe she will tell
me later.

PETERSON

I hope so...

(Beat) (To himself)

This is getting too strange!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DOCTOR PETERSON'S HOME--FOLLOWING WEEK--DAY

Peterson is in bed sleeping when the telephone rings. He slowly arises to answer.

PETERSON

Hello?

(Beat)

Judge Maxwell, isn't it a bit early
for you to be calling?

MAXWELL

Peterson! Is it true you're using
hypnosis on the Ray boy?

PETERSON

Yes sir, it is.

MAXWELL

Well, I don't like it! Get your
butt in my chambers now!

PETERSON

If you insist! I'll be there shortly.

CUT TO:

INT. JUDGE MAXWELL'S CHAMBERS -- LATER

Peterson is escorted into the chambers by a Bailiff.

Maxwell can be seen talking with Callaway.

MAXWELL

Well, it's about time you arrived,
Doctor!

PETERSON

I came as soon as I could.

MAXWELL

Let's cut the formalities. You
already know Callaway. He tells me
you're doing some type of hypnotic
therapy on the Ray boy.

PETERSON

Yes, I am.

MAXWELL

Well, I don't like the sound of it. Why would you need to hypnotize the boy?

PETERSON

To get the truth about what happened, and why the boy killed his father!

MAXWELL

You're missing the point. We know he did it. The why's are of little value now! Why not just plead him guilty and be done with it?

PETERSON

Because I think it's a case of self-defense!

MAXWELL

I don't see how! There were no signs of a struggle. The boy had no wounds to speak of. And he surely didn't claim self-defense when he was arrested.

PETERSON

He was in shock that night and frightened. Wounds are sometimes unseen!

MAXWELL

Callaway, what do you think of this hypnotic therapy?

CALLAWAY

It's an effective tool as long as it's used properly! But like I told Peterson, I cannot do an evaluation while he's under hypnosis.

MAXWELL

Good point! Peterson, how do we know you're not influencing the boy under hypnosis?

PETERSON

Every session is being taped, so you will have no reason to think that I'm influencing the boy!

(MORE)

PETERSON (CONT'D)

(Beat)

As for Callaway doing the mental evaluation. It will not be necessary, since we are going to plead innocent!

Maxwell looks at the court schedule.

MAXWELL

So, you're going to plead not guilty?

PETERSON

That's correct.

MAXWELL

Well then, we have a last minute opening. Let's set the trial for this Friday. There's an open jury in the Kingston case. The man hung himself last week, so his trial will be dismissed. That gives you four days.

(Beat)

Do you think you can be ready by then?

PETERSON

No problem! And I'm sorry if this upsets you judge, but we're going to win!

Maxwell laughs.

MAXWELL

I hope you do; if not, the boy will be in State care for the rest of his life.

CUT TO:

INT. GOODWIN BOYS HOME HALLWAY--DAY

Peterson is walking down the hallway toward Steven's room.

David stops him in the hallway just outside Steven's room.

DAVID

Doc, you and them pills have worked miracles on that boy!

PETERSON
I hope we're helping him!

DAVID
You sure are! For the first time
since he's been here. He asked to
go outside.

PETERSON
That is good news. Did he get to go
out?

DAVID
Yes. And his attitude is much better
toward the staff.

PETERSON
He will get better with time. That
boy has a lot hidden in his mind.
And we know whom to thank for that!

DAVID
There is some bad news though.
(Beat)
I still hear him talking to someone.
I think it's his mother.

Peterson giggles slightly as he opens the door.

PETERSON
That's all right. I talk to her
too!

David looks surprised by the doctor's statement. He mutters
to himself as he walks away.

DAVID
Maybe the boy's illness is rubbing
off on him!

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

STEVEN
You're back!

PETERSON
I said I'd be back. Remember?
(MORE)

PETERSON (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Is that a tone of excitement I hear
in your voice?

STEVEN

I got to go outside today!

PETERSON

Yes, I know. Why did you suddenly
decide to go out?

STEVEN

Mom said it was time to get back out
in the fresh air.

PETERSON

Weren't you terrified?

STEVEN

A little, but she said not to worry.
She would keep the bullies away.
But, I tried to stay by the building
away from everyone. And I bumped
into another boy, like me. He was
trying to hide.

PETERSON

What happened then?

STEVEN

We talked, and I think we're friends
now. His name is Ken.

(Beat-sad eyed)

Will you try to help him, too?
Please?

PETERSON

I don't know if I can, but I'll check
into it.

STEVEN

Can we go out? I want you to meet
him.

PETERSON

Maybe later. We have more talking
to do first. The judge has moved
your trial to the end of this week.

(MORE)

PETERSON (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Go sit on your bed, please, and we'll try again.

STEVEN

Okay.

Steven walks to his bed.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

Will you please try to help him too?

PETERSON

I'll try, but no promises.

(Beat)

I'm still amazed you ventured out.

STEVEN

Thank my mom.

PETERSON

I will. I just wished she'd help me a little with this case!

STEVEN

Don't worry Doctor. She'll help you. This I do know.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE STEVEN'S ROOM HALLWAY--DAY

David stands near the door pretending to be sweeping the floor.

DAVID

Maybe the boy's illness is rubbing off on him!

David shakes his head, and walks away.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM--CONTINUED

Peterson snaps his fingers.

PETERSON

Mother.

Steven looks expressionless, staring at an empty space on the wall.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Steven, you told me a yesterday about the storm. Will you tell me now what happened after you returned home?

STEVEN

No, Mom said wait. But, Dad did do something else you should know about.

PETERSON

I'd like to hear the other story first, but go ahead, and tell me about it please.

STEVEN

Late one afternoon, Mom just left for work. Dad told me to get ready to go with him.

PETERSON

Where did he want you to go?

STEVEN

Back to the same bar where we picked up Clara. It was about a year ago.

Steven's hand again reached out to Peterson; the room darkens.

CUT TO:

INT. VISION-RAY HOME--DAY

Steven is laying on the sofa watching television in the living room. ALLEN walks over and turns off the set.

ALLEN

It's time you earned your keep!

Steven looks frightened and shocked by the statement.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

There's a woman I know that's loaded. Tonight we will be going to her place and this is what you are to do.

(MORE)

ALLEN (CONT'D)

(Beat)

I'll get her into the bedroom and distract her. You find her purse and take all the money out of it. Like you did at the store. Also look around the home for money that might be hidden. Like in piggy banks, in books and things.

Steven acts as if he wants to flee away, but fears Allen too much to attempt it.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Screw up and you'll regret it! And that's a promise!

Allen grabs Steven by the arm and leads him out of the home.

CUT TO:

EXT. WEBSTER'S BAR PARKING LOT--NIGHT

Steven is seen waiting in the back seat of the Cutlass.

CUT TO:

INT. WEBSTER'S BAR-NIGHT

Allen can be seen inside looking through the crowd for his victim.

SARA BARNS, a middle-aged nicely built brown-haired woman.

Sara sees Allen looking through the crowd. She walks over to him and remarks.

SARA

(Drinking heavily)

Well, it's about time you showed up. I though you were going to stand me up again!

ALLEN

Stand you up. Never!

Sara giggles and becomes very friendly with Allen. She takes an arm and wraps it around his shoulders. Her hand slides down past his rib cage to the belt line. Then she gently squeezes his instrument.

SARA
Want to go home with me?

ALLEN
I thought you'd never ask!

Allen escorts Sara from the bar.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
We'll have to take my car. I'm
babysitting again!
(Beat)
I hope bringing the boy along doesn't
bother you.

SARA
As long as he stays out of the bedroom
I don't mind.
(Giggling)
It's a big house you know, maybe
he'll get lost in it!

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE SARA'S HOME--NIGHT

The Cutlass is seen pulling into a driveway of an elegant
two-story brick home.

ALLEN
Sure hope your husband doesn't mind
my visit!

SARA
Husband! Hell, I threw that bum out
months ago! He was only after one
thing. My money!

ALLEN
That's a good thing to know. I hate
surprise interruptions.
(Thought)
He'll be the one that gets blamed
for what I'm going to do to you!

The Cutlass parks in front of the home, three exit entering
the home.

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE SARA'S HOME LIVING ROOM AREA -- MOMENTS LATER

SARA

This way, darling! Tell the little boy to go turn on the TV and help himself to the refrigerator. That will keep him occupied I'm sure.

Sara lays her purse on a coffee table near the living room door, then, walks slowly up the staircase removing, garments to intrigue Allen.

Allen pulls Steven up close and whispers in his ear.

ALLEN

I'll be back in a few minutes.
Remember what I told you to do!

Allen then follows Sara up the stairs. He picks up her garments along the way.

Steven looks at Sara's purse. He then walks to it and removes all the cash. Then, he walks around the living room area, but makes no attempt to look for more valuables.

Minutes pass, Steven hears Sara moaning loudly. He quietly walks upstairs toward the direction of the sound.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY NEAR SARA'S--BEDROOM

Steven nears a bedroom door. It is partly open. He looks into the room and sees the two adults in bed with all of their clothing off and his father lying on top of the rude woman.

Sara's drunkenness causes her to become loud and arrogant. She starts complaining about Allen's performance.

SARA

Is this the best you can do?
(Beat)
Hell the paperboy has a bigger and better pecker than you!

ALLEN

Shut up and enjoy it!

SARA

Give me something to enjoy!

Steven sees Allen move, Sara moans out sounds of enjoyment.

SARA (CONT'D)
That's more like it!

Steven sees the movement continue for a short time longer.

Allen stops and lays motionless on top of Sara.

SARA (CONT'D)
No! You can't be finished already!

ALLEN
Sorry babe, but I am.

SARA
Damn you! I was expecting much more
from you!

Sara pushes Allen off her. She sits up on the edge of the bed turned away from Allen.

SARA (CONT'D)
Get out! Take your worthless ass
and your son and get out of my home!

Steven sees his father pick up a lamp from a nearby end table. He swings it, hitting SARA in back of the head. Blood and glass splatter over the room. SARA'S nude body falls face first into the floor.

The impact sound causes Steven to jump back away from the door.

ALLEN
Sorry you didn't enjoy it bitch!
It's the last dick you'll ever feel!

Allen then gets dressed and starts ram-sacking the room. We see him placing valuables in his pockets. Before exiting he removes a large butterfly shaped diamond ring from Sara's finger, then wipes his fingerprints off of the lamp.

Steven runs in fear back down the stairs in tears, out the doorway and gets into the Cutlass.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- DAY (REAL TIME RESUMED)

A cell-phone rings.

PETERSON

Hello?

HILL (V.O.)

Well, I might have some good news!

PETERSON

I sure could use some about now.

CUT TO:

EXT. RAY HOME--DAY

A POLICE OFFICER is taking samples from a bloodstain inside the Cutlass.

HILL

We found some hair on the Ray car passenger door. It was between the armrest and door panel. The victim's hair must have got caught in the space there and pulled out. Also there seems to be an old bloodstain inside the door panel.

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- DAY

PETERSON

I'm glad you found the evidence.

HILL (V.O.)

It's not positive yet. We still have to test the samples and see if it's a match. But, I can say the hair color is the same as Clara Simpson's.

PETERSON

Will it take long to test?

HILL (V.O.)

It might, but I'll try to get a rush job done.

PETERSON

Here is another possible murder case you might want to check on.

HILL (V.O.)

Another one! You're kidding.

PETERSON

I wish. Do you know a woman named Sara Barns?

HILL (V.O.)

Let me think a minute.

(Beat)

Barns. I remember a Barns being murdered about a year ago, but her husband was convicted of the crime. It was a case of revenge.

PETERSON

Well, detective. It looks like you got the wrong man locked up for that murder.

HILL (V.O.)

I hope you're pulling my leg, Doctor.

PETERSON

Steven, did your father take more than the woman's ring.

STEVEN

He had all kinds of jewelry. And I think he took some kind of paperwork.

PETERSON

Did you hear that detective? Maybe you should search the Ray's home and see if any of Mrs. Burns items are still there.

HILL (V.O.)

We'll do a search of the home while we are here.

Peterson hangs up the phone then remembers Steven is still under hypnosis. He looks to the boy and sees both of his hands at his groin in a protective posture.

PETERSON

Why are you sitting like that, Steven?

STEVEN

In case he grabs me again to warn me not to tell.

PETERSON

That's enough for now. You look like you need a break!

CUT TO:

INT. RAY HOME--DAY

Detective Hill is seen with two police officers searching inside the Ray's home. One Officer in the bedroom lifts up the mattress on a bed in Allen and Mary's bedroom. He picks up a large diamond ring that is hidden under the mattresses.

OFFICER

Wow! Look at the size of those diamonds on this ring!

Hill enters the bedroom.

HILL

Let me see that ring.

The Officer hands the ring to Hill.

OFFICER

A unique shape, isn't it? That's the first time I ever seen a butterfly pattern.

HILL

Well, I'll be damned! This ring did belong to Mrs. Sara Barns. I remember it was listed on the sheet of stolen items.

OFFICER

Is that the woman who was murdered last year by her husband?

HILL

She was murdered all right. But it looks now like the husband had nothing to do with it!

A SECOND OFFICER is searching in Steven's bedroom.

SECOND OFFICER
(Calls out)
Wasn't this place searched when the
boy killed his father?

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S BEDROOM

Hill enters the room and looks at the discovery.

HILL
I think so. Why?

SECOND OFFICER
The boy's bed, there are bloodstains
all over the sheets! And bullets
under the mattress! I wonder why?

HILL
I bet I know someone that can answer
who question!

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM -- LATER

STEVEN
Can we go out now? I want you to
see my friend.

PETERSON
I'll get David to take you out while
I go check on why Ken's here. I'll
meet you outside in a few minutes.
What's his full name?

STEVEN
Ken Cellars.

Peterson exits, and locates David.

PETERSON
David, do you know the boy Steven
talked with today, named Ken?

DAVID
Sorry, Doc. He's in the North
section. I don't know much about
those inmates, but I can check.

PETERSON

No need. I'm going to the office now to look at his file. Do you have time to take Steven back out? He wants to show me the boy?

DAVID

Sure, I take him out. We'll be by the picnic tables. That's where the two bumped into each other earlier.

PETERSON

Thanks, I'll be there shortly.

CUT TO:

EXT. COMPOUND -- LATER

David watches as Peterson exits the building with a folder.

DAVID

Well, did you find out anything?

PETERSON

Not much. His file said he was brought here for shoplifting. His father refused to claim the boy. I wonder why.

DAVID

This place needs to keep better records.

PETERSON

Yes, I agree.

(Beat)

Where's my little prisoner?

DAVID

Over by the building, with new his friend!

David points out the two boys.

PETERSON

Looks like we're about to meet. He looks small for thirteen, don't you think?

The Men see Steven start walking toward them with boy, Ken 11, years old.

DAVID

Looks like the work of starvation to me. I've seen it before, neglected kids stunted or ill from lack of nourishment.

PETERSON

You think that's why.

DAVID

I'd bet on it.

(Beat)

Doc! Is it my imagination or do those two look a lot alike?

PETERSON

Oh, my God! Look at the two of them!

Peterson strains to look closer at the boys.

DAVID

You're not thinking, what I'm thinking, are you?

PETERSON

If you're thinking those two look related then, yes. The thought did enter my head.

DAVID

Related hell, they look like brothers to me!

PETERSON

I wouldn't go quite that far.

DAVID

(Laughs)

I'm glad I'm not you! This case gets stranger every day!

PETERSON

If you only knew how strange it really is!

DAVID

I'm here when you want to tell it, Doc.

Steven interrupts.

STEVEN
Bill, here's the boy I told you about.

DAVID
(Teasing)
Bill? Not doctor, that's a little
odd.

PETERSON
Hello there, son.

Peterson extends his hand out to Ken.

Ken hides behind Steven.

STEVEN
Don't worry. He won't hurt you.
He's here to help us.

Ken slowly comes out from behind Steven

DAVID
Looks like they share more than looks!

KEN
Yes, that' my name.

STEVEN
His father didn't want him around,
like mine.

PETERSON
Why are you here?

STEVEN
He was hungry!

PETERSON
Hungry! Is that why you were charged
with shoplifting, to get food?

KEN
Yes, sir.

STEVEN
Call him Bill, I do.

David laughs.

Peterson looks hard at Ken then over a file.

PETERSON

It says here, your father's name is,
Tom Arnold.

KEN

He's not my father! He's my
stepfather!

PETERSON

Where's your mother?

KEN

She died, a long time ago!

PETERSON

What was her name? Maybe she has
some family around that might take
you out of here.

KEN

Tracy, but I don't think she has any
family.

Peterson becomes quiet; he looks distressed. He remembers
the dream of Allen raping Cindy, Tracy's is shown in notes
to be the boy's Mother!

DAVID

Doc, is something wrong? You look
like you've seen a ghost.

PETERSON

Maybe, I did!

(Beat)

Do you know why your mother died,
Ken?

KEN

Not really, but Tom said a bunch of
letters, I think it was AIDS.

Peterson is stunned, and thinks for a moment.

PETERSON

I'll track down Tom, and see what I
can find out.

(Beat)

David, will you please see the boys
get back inside. I've something
terribly important to do.

Peterson starts walking away, deep in thought, before David's reply.

DAVID

Sure thing Doc.

(Beat)

Oh, hell, he's not listening. Go back and play, boys. You still have fifteen minutes till dinner.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM--SAME DAY

Peterson sits near Mary's bed, reading charts, and trying to figure out the day's events.

PETERSON

What are you doing to me, Mrs. Ray?
The boy, is he Allen's?

(Beat)

Damn, I wish you would wake up and explain all of this!

CUT TO:

INT. HARRIS COUNTY COURT ROOM--DAY

The trial is in progress. Maxwell sits on the stand, Peterson sits with Steven and a prosecutor, BENNY WALTON, just called his first witness.

WALTON

The state calls Deputy Harry Thompson to the stand.

Thompson walks from the audience to the stand. The standard swearing in can be seen.

WALTON (CONT'D)

Deputy, you and an Officer Greer were the first ones to arrive at the Ray home the night of, April 23, 1999. Approximately 8:30 P.M.

THOMPSON

Yes sir, we were the first to arrive on the scene that night.

WALTON

Please tell this court exactly what happened?

THOMPSON

We received a call stating a neighbor heard gunshots, but when we arrived it was deathly quiet.

CUT TO:

EXT. VISION--OUTSIDE THE RAY HOME--NIGHT

Thompson and Officer Greer approaches the door, Thompson calls into the home.

Officers Thompson and Greer approach the door, guns directed at the doorway. Thompson calls into the home.

THOMPSON

Police! Come out with your hands in the air.

There's a long pause with no reply. Flashlights beam into the opened door. One officer's light scans the room through the door.

After a few moments, they hear faint crying sounds.

GREER

You don't think Allen shot the boy, do you?

THOMPSON

He might have!
(Beat)
Get ready to move in.

Thompson flings open the screen-door; both men then enter and search for the source of the crying.

Greer calls out.

GREER

My God! Thompson, look at this!

Steven can be seen still sitting in the corner pointing the gun at his father's lifeless body.

THOMPSON

Son, put the gun down!

The Boy sits extremely still, keeping his eyes fixed on the body, and the gun stays aimed at Allen.

GREER
He's in shock!

Greer walks over and removes the gun from Steven's hands.

Thompson walks over to check Allen's body. He checks the neck for a pulse.

THOMPSON
He's dead.

Greer waves his hand in Steven's face, but still no response.

The boy continues with his eyes fixed on Allen.

GREER
I wonder just what the hell happened here?

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM (REAL TIME RESUMED)

WALTON
I noticed that you called, Mr. Ray by his first name. Did you know the man?

THOMPSON
Yes, we had seen Allen Ray, several times before his death.

WALTON
In your opinion, was Steven the one who shot Mr. Ray?

THOMPSON
I believe the boy did shoot him!

WALTON
Thank you, Deputy. That will be all.

Walton walks back to his seat.

MAXWELL
Peterson, do you wish to question this witness?

PETERSON
No, your honor.

MAXWELL
Walton, call your next witness.

WALTON
The state calls medical examiner,
Samuel Jones.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM--DAY

The trial can be heard on a television in a nearby room.

WALTON (V.O.)
Doctor, you're saying Steven Ray put
three bullets into his father?

A MONITOR alarm sounds, a NURSE runs in to check Mary, and she sees activity on a brainwave monitor. Doctor Myers is called into the room.

NURSE
Doctor, her brain activity has
suddenly increased.

MYERS
Strange. I wonder why now, after
all this time?

The trial can be heard again from a nearby room.

NURSE
Do you think hearing the trial has
something to do with it?

MYERS
I guess anything is possible.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE--DAY

Peterson sits in a hallway during lunch recess. His cell phone rings.

PETERSON
Hello.

SECRETARY (V.O.)

Bill, there's a Doctor Myers trying to reach you.

PETERSON

Put him through please.

(Beat)

Doctor, is there a problem?

(Beat)

That's good. Why don't you turn on the set in her room and see if it helps. Keep me advised.

INT. COURTROOM--SAME-DAY

THE TRIAL RESUMES:

MAXWELL

Peterson, it's your turn. What proof do you have to support the innocent plea?

PETERSON

I have several taped interviews to play for the court. But first, I would like to call Mr. Tom Arnold to the stand.

MAXWELL

Proceed. The bailiff will set up the equipment.

TOM ARNOLD 40-50's walks out of the crowd to the stand.

PETERSON

Mr. Arnold, is it true that you have a stepson, incarcerated at the Goodwin Correctional Facility named Ken?

Walton stands up.

WALTON

I object to this, your honor. What possible bearing does this have on the Ray murder?

MAXWELL

Good question, well, Peterson, care to explain?

PETERSON

This man knew the victim, and about his character. His testimony will aid the jury when they hear Steven's taped interviews.

MAXWELL

You may continue.

PETERSON

Thank you.

(Beat)

Well, Mr. Arnold, do you have a son at the facility?

ARNOLD

A son no, he's not my boy. Kind of a stepson forced upon me.

PETERSON

A boy is a boy, Mr. Arnold.

(Beat)

Why did you abandon him there?

ARNOLD

I'm not on trial, why should I tell you!

MAXWELL

Because of a contempt charge you'll get if you don't answer.

ARNOLD

He wasn't my boy, after his mother died. I saw no reason to look after him. The little thief!

PETERSON

You sound like a very...caring man!

There are laughs at his remark.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

I'll let that thief remark slide for now. But, I know the reasons the boy did steal.

(Beat)

Do you want me to tell this court why?

Arnold looks worried.

ARNOLD

No, Sir.

PETERSON

Why did Ken's mother die?

ARNOLD

If you must know, Tracy was not the boy's mother! That hooker took off and abandoned the boy.

PETERSON

Personally, Mr. Arnold, I love your attitude! And I'm sure the court sees your loving personality, too.

Again the crowd giggles.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Well then, if you're not the father to Ken, and Tracy was not the mother. Do you know who Ken's parents are?

ARNOLD

Yes, I do. Allen Ray is the, father. Tracy pretended to be the boy's mother. But his mother was Cindy. Tracy's daughter, the one Allen raped. She became pregnant with Allen's child.

Steven looks shocked. He jumps out of his seat, standing, and screams out.

STEVEN

(Yells out)

Does this mean Ken's my brother?

ARNOLD

(Looking at Steven
and the crowd)

Yes, he is!

PETERSON

Are you absolutely sure? Allen Ray was his father?

ARNOLD

Yes.

PETERSON

Explain to us then why everyone thought Tracy was the boy's mother.

ARNOLD

Tracy claimed to be pregnant to protect Cindy from Allen, and to cover up the fact that she left her daughter home alone, night after night.

(Beat)

A short time later, he beat Tracy up.

(Beat)

We thought his intentions were to make her miscarry.

(Beat)

That man, Allen Ray, was insane! He never stopped harassing Tracy. Not until his boy gunned him down. That kid should get a metal, not a conviction!

PETERSON

Then tell us, what happened to Cindy Wall?

ARNOLD

She died during childbirth, some kind of complications.

PETERSON

Tracy then continued to claim Ken as hers, to fool Allen?

ARNOLD

Yes! And to protect to herself!

PETERSON

Thank you Mr. Arnold for your testimony. I will be talking with you later in regard to your stepson!

MAXWELL

Walton. Care to cross-examine?

WALTON

No, your honor.

MAXWELL

Peterson, call your next witness.

PETERSON

We call Detective Larry Hill to the stand.

Hill walks to the stand.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Detective, I contacted you a few days ago about a Clara Simpson, advising you that my client witnessed his father murder the girl.

HILL

Yes, at first, I thought you were nuts, but since the case remained unsolved. I looked into the claim.

PETERSON

What did you discover?

HILL

We found hair and blood in Allen Ray's car. The samples did in fact match the murder victim's.

PETERSON

So, the story Steven told me, under hypnosis, that he witnessed his father murdering Clara Simpson, turned out to be true?

HILL

The evidence shows that it's true.

MUMBLING fills the courtroom.

MAXWELL

Order! Keep quiet people.

PETERSON

The jury will hear the complete story later, your Honor.

Peterson walks to a nearby table and picks up a package.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Detective, this is a ring? And can you tell this court where you found it?

HILL

Yes, we found it in the Ray home.
Hidden under a mattress.

PETERSON

Do you know who owned this piece of
jewelry?

HILL

Yes, it was stolen from Mrs. Sara
Barns, the night she was murdered!

PETERSON

Steven also witnessed this murder.
But, I think the detective has a
little more information to share.

HILL

The Barns case was closed. The
department thought her husband
committed the murder! Mr. Barns was
convicted of the crime.

PETERSON

I see, so what happens now?

HILL

We reopened the case. With this
evidence and Steven's testimony, I'm
sure Mr. Barns will be released.

PETERSON

Thank you, Detective. That will be
all.

The crowd begins to laugh and make remarks about the
conviction.

VOICE

They did it again, convicted an
innocent man.

Maxwell slams the gavel.

MAXWELL

Fifteen-minute recess. You people
better let it all out now! Or stay
out!

CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Peterson exits, places a call to Doctor Myers.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

A NURSE walks in and turns on the television set.

NURSE

I wonder if this will work?

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM -- LATER

Peterson walks over to a monitor.

PETERSON

This is the last taped interview with Steven. On this tape you will hear exactly what happened the night Allen Ray died.

The monitor comes on showing tapes of the interviews, on-screen.

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM CORRECTIONAL CENTER -DAY

Peterson can be seen in a chair beside the bed, and Steven sits on the bedside.

PETERSON

Steven, go back to the night when you shot your father. Tell me everything that happened right before you pulled the trigger. Tell it just as it happens, as if you are living it again.

STEVEN

It was late and I was trying to go to sleep, but Dad was keeping everyone awake because he was drunk and mouthy.

PETERSON

You said everyone. Was your mother home too?

STEVEN

Yes, she was in bed trying to rest. She had worked two shifts and she was extremely tired that night. They had fought a long time after we returned.

PETERSON

Returned from where?

STEVEN

The night attempted to run away, Mom was real mad. She was demanding to know what happened. She never knew that, I fell into the creek! But, it finally became quiet, and I thought they were sleeping. When...

CUT TO:

INT. VISION--STEVEN'S BEDROOM--NIGHT

Steven hears a squeak as his bedroom door slowly opens. He starts to quiver and cry.

Allen staggers into the room and walks over to the bed. He jerks off the covers and grabs Steven's pajamas ripping off the garments.

Steven resists and attempts to escape.

Allen pulls off his belt and slashes the boy across his back. He then forces the boy onto his stomach and crawls on top.

Steven screams.

STEVEN

MOM! HELP!

Mary wakes up and hears the boy's cries. She quickly goes to his room.

Mary enters and sees Allen raping her son. She notices a golf club next to STEVEN'S dresser. She picks it up and then hits Allen in back of the head.

Allen rolls off of Steven, onto the floor holding the back of his head.

Mary rushes to her son and wraps him in a blanket. She starts to pick him up, but stops and screams as Allen's hands wrap around her neck.

ALLEN

You'll never hit me again. Bitch!

Mary struggles free after she elbows Allen in the stomach. Allen regroups quickly and puts Mary into a headlock. He then hits her and drags her toward the bedroom door.

Steven rolls out of his bed and hits the floor. He then pulls himself under the bed, hiding and crying.

STEVEN

(Pleading)

God! Please stop him. Don't let him kill Mom!

Allen exits the room, dragging Mary.

Still hears Allen hitting his mother repeatedly. Then a sound like a body falling onto the floor can be heard.

A brief silence follows.

Steven can hear the living room door opening.

ALLEN

I told you. You'll never hit anyone again.

Strange noises can be heard from the living room then, the door slams.

Steven then hears the car starting and pulling out of the driveway.

STEVEN

(Screams out)

No! Don't take Mom to the lake!

Steven dresses himself and runs to the living room door, but the car is already out of sight. He folds into a squatting position crying and says.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

If he kills my mom, I'm going to kill him!

Steven goes into his parent's bedroom and opens the top dresser drawer. He removes his father's 22 pistol, and goes back into the living room with the gun in his trembling hand.

INT. RAY HOME -- LATER

Steven hears the car pulling into the driveway. He looks out of the door window and sees his mother is not with Allen.

Allen walks toward the doorway.

Steven cries and backs up against the wall, then he slides down into a sitting position.

STEVEN
(Crying intensely)
He killed her!

The living room door opens and a mad drunken Allen walks into the room. He sees Steven sitting next to a wall but cannot see what the boy is holding in his hands.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
(Screams out)
What did you do with Mom? Throw her
in the lake like you did that other
lady.

ALLEN
Yeah, I did!
(Laughs)
And that's where you're going, too.
You little snot-nosed brat!

Allen walks closer. He can be seen holding the golf club. He hits it in the palm of his hand as he nears the boy.

ALLEN (CONT'D)
Kiss your ass goodbye!

We see the figure of Allen in the darkness raising the club over his head preparing to strike Steven.

Steven pulls the trigger and fire can be seen coming out of the gun barrel. It fires two more times.

Allen stumbles back and the falls onto the floor.

The gun continues to click, flashing lights from a passing car flicker into the home and we see Allen lying in a pool of blood.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM--DAY

Myers and a Nurse stand watching Mary's responses as the television shows the trial in progress.

NURSE
Look! It's working.

MYERS
Well I'll be damned!

MARY
(Screams out)
No! Don't make him relive that night!

Mary sits up in her bed, but then the alarms go off. She falls back lifeless.

MYERS
Call a code blue!

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Walton stands up.

WALTON
I object, your honor. There is no way to prove any of this occurred like the boy said. The only other witness to this is Mary Ray, and she's in a coma!

The Courtroom doors open, a woman walks inside. The crowd looks back; whispers and chatter fill the room.

STEVEN
Mom!

Mary walks toward her son.

MARY
Yes, Steven.
(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

(Beat)

Mr. Peterson, I'm here to help.

Peterson looks shocked, and in disbelief. After absorbing the moment, he resumes with a smile.

PETERSON

Okay! Whoop's sorry.

(Beat)

The defense calls Mary Ray to the stand.

The room again fills with chatter; Peterson looks at Walton.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Bet now, I can prove it!

Mary releases her embrace and walks to the stand, she's given the oath, and takes the witness chair.

MAXWELL

Order in this court, or I'll clear everyone out!

PETERSON

Mary, did you just hear Steven's taped testimony about the night of Allen's death?

MARY

Yes, and it did happen like he said it did! Allen thought he killed me. He took me out by North Lake and dumped me out in a ditch.

PETERSON

Thank you, Mrs. Ray.

MARY

You're welcome.

MAXWELL

Well, Walton, do you have any questions?

WALTON

No, your honor.

MAXWELL

You're dismissed, Mrs. Ray.

Mary leaves the stand, walks over to Steven.

MARY

I must go now. Stay with Mr.
Peterson, dear. I'll see you in a
little while.

STEVEN

But Mom!

Steven attempts to follow his mother, Peterson holds him
back.

PETERSON

I'm sorry son, but you can't go right
now.

STEVEN

(Yelling)

Mom, come back please!

Peterson is surprised by Mary's emotionless exit.

The crowd gossip resumes, and increases.

VOICE (V.O.)

Let him go, you no-account prosecutor!

MAXWELL

Order!

(Beat)

Well Mr. No-account, I mean Mr.
Walton, What now?

LAUGHTER fills the room.

Walton stands up, looks embarrassed.

WALTON

Hearing this new testimony, the State
decides to drop all charges. It
looks like self-defense.

VOICE (V.O.)

It's about time you came to your
senses.

Maxwell looks to the head juror.

MAXWELL

Does the jury agree with Mr. Walton?

A MAN stands up in the jury box.

JUROR

We thought the charges should have
been dropped after seeing the tapes,
your honor.

MAXWELL

(Smiles at Peterson)

Agreed! This indeed is a, Murder
Justified!

(Beat)

Case dismissed as self-defense.

STEVEN

Does this mean I'm free?

Peterson picks up the boy.

PETERSON

Yes, it does.

MAXWELL

(Interrupts)

Good job, Counselor!

PETERSON

Thank you, sir.

MAXWELL

I assume you will take charge of the
boy's needs?

PETERSON

Yes, sir. He still has a long road.

MAXWELL

Agreed. Steven.

STEVEN

Yes, sir.

MAXWELL

The next time you become frightened,
try to do it without violence.

Steven smiles and nods his head yes.

PETERSON

Ready to find you mother Steven?

STEVEN

You bet!

Peterson's cell phone rings.

PETERSON

Hello, this better be important!

(Beat)

You're kidding. She was just here!

Peterson exits quickly with Steven.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

Myers continues shocking Mary, and her heart starts beating again.

MYERS

She's back!

NURSE

I thought we lost her for good this time.

MYERS

Me too!

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S HOSPITAL ROOM -- LATER

Steven and Peterson walk into the room and see Mary sitting up in her bed.

STEVEN

Mom. How did you get back here?

Steven runs to his mother and climbs up beside her.

MARY

That's not important dear.

Peterson walks over and pulls up a chair next to the bed. He reaches out and takes Mary's hand.

PETERSON

Just as long as you don't leave us again!

Mary free hand caresses Peterson on the cheek.

MARY

Thank you for believing in my boy.

Mary then leans down and kisses her son on the forehead.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oh, who is this other boy, Ken?

STEVEN

My new brother!

CUT TO:

TIME PASSES:

EXT. PARK--DAY

Mary is sitting on a park bench; Peterson sits near her. They watch two boys playing.

PETERSON

I think your adopting Ken was a great idea!

MARY

I'm glad you and judge Maxwell agreed.

Mary reaches for Peterson's hand.

MARY (CONT'D)

Maybe, I should adopt you, too!

Peterson smiles, and turns to watch the boys playing.

PETERSON

How fast they can recover.

Peterson's CELL Phone rings.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Hello?

(Beat)

David, I'm not a full time attorney.

The boy needs a proper defense lawyer.

Mary looks upset at Peterson's reply; he sees her pleading eyes.

Peterson's tone changes.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Okay, I'll come look; maybe I'll
talk with the boy...But no promises!

FADE OUT: