

ASHES OF NEW YORK

by
MATT WATERS

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- DAWN

GUS WHEELER, a slovenly bum in his late sixties, sporting ragged clothes and carrying a bagged bottle of Malt Liquor, staggers alone down a winding rail line. In between intermittent burping and incoherent mumbling, he maintains the rhythm of a melody.

GUS

It's the same old song they sing...
I love you! The boys are all mad
about Nellie, daughter of officer
Kelly, and it's all day long they
bring flowers, all dripping with
dew.... And they join in the chorus
of Nellie Kelly, I love you!

Gus suddenly halts his gait, noticing a body on the tracks up ahead, face down. He initially approaches with apprehension, manner relaxed after a long, sloppy swig from the brown bag.

GUS (CONT'D)

Come now, vagabond, haven't you a
home, a bed, a warm breakfast
waiting? Aren't you lucky?

Gus kneels down beside the body, belonging to a young male, flowing blonde hair escaping beneath a beanie cap. Gus taps his shoulder, receiving no response.

GUS (CONT'D)

Must be a fortunate one, my lad.
I've passed out round here before,
been robbed, used as a fucking
toilet. You get a wake up call.
What a world...

Gus turns the body over, revealing a face bloodied, a stomach ripped apart by bullet holes. This was GARRETT MORRIS.

GUS (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ... Jesus Christ...
just a kid... just a fucking kid...
Jesus...

Gus stares at his hands, caked in crimson. He feels for a pulse.

Nothing.

GUS (CONT'D)

Help.

There isn't another soul in sight.

GUS (CONT'D)

Help! Help! Somebody help!

The accompanying echo is nearly deafening.

FADE TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT

A circular bar encloses a raised platform, where the scantily clad MOLLY dances, her calculated gyrations bouncing off flashing fluorescent lights.

Molly is 22. A very petite girl, she has short, black hair.

She notices a spectator watching her every movement intently, sitting alone in a drunken malaise.

Molly crawls toward him, his features becoming sharper, defined, light brown hair, a thin beard. He's wearing a faded, black leather jacket. Shadowy bags hang underneath his green eyes, belying an age of 35.

This is JAKE MOORE.

She extends her tiny hand toward his, taking hold, kissing it, winking. Jake smiles, producing a 20 dollar bill. Molly tenderly takes hold of the cash. She spins the ring on his index finger, whispering something inaudible, before slinking away.

EXT. STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT

Jake smokes a cigarette in solitude, leaning against a dumpster. Spilled alcohol lines his jacket. Molly emerges from a side door to his left, wearing a small fur coat. A light snow falls.

MOLLY

A little sloppy, I see.

JAKE

Who, this guy?

Jake points toward himself, peers over his shoulder.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Guess I'm guilty.

MOLLY
Spare a cigarette?

Jake fumbles removing the box from his pocket, dropping it to the pavement, cursing under his breath, before finally handing one over.

MOLLY (CONT'D)
Very smooth. I'd ask for a light,
but I'm not carrying a fucking fire
extinguisher.

Jake lets out a loud, uncomfortable laugh.

JAKE
Well, I thought it was a good line.

Molly lights her cigarette, lets out a puff of smoke, exhaling.

MOLLY
So... come here often?

JAKE
A comedian, I see.

MOLLY
Is it beneath you?

JAKE
We have a moment, back inside?

MOLLY
I share a million moments a day.

JAKE
For a price.

MOLLY
Well, maybe not a million.

JAKE
Hopefully.

MOLLY
But we did share something.

JAKE
A cosmic connection.

MOLLY

No.

Molly stamps out her smoke.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

A cigarette.

JAKE

I wasn't smoking. But you do owe me one.

Jake beams.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Pretty and witty. A rare combo. When's your shift finished?

MOLLY

Really?

JAKE

Why not?

MOLLY

Your sincerity... misguided, yes... but it blows me away. It really does.

Molly heads back inside, her platform heels clanking on the icy concrete.

JAKE

I'll be waiting.

MOLLY

He's serious. He's really serious. Amazing. By the way... it's Molly. In case you were wondering.

Molly returns inside.

Jake looks around.

JAKE

What the fuck am I doing out here?

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM -- MORNING

Jake tosses and turns amid his sleep, waking with a yelp.

He grabs his head, groaning.

JAKE

Molly...

He sweeps his hand through the sheets.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He releases a strained chuckle, standing, circling his room, finding a lone cigarette taped to his night stand, fixed on an index card. The cigarette is accompanied by crudely drawn, arrow pierced hearts.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Sincerity... nice.

His alarm begins blaring.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Jake sits uncomfortably in a stiff leather chair, across from JOE WALSH, a Captain in the New York Police Department, his superior.

Walsh, a portly man of 55, seems agitated, unable to fix his eyes on Jake for more than a moment without averting sight.

He glowers over a wide oak desk, bare of any personal memorabilia, covered with paper work, the plate bearing his name almost completely camouflaged.

WALSH

How were they last night?

JAKE

Who?

WALSH

The cabaret.

JAKE

Wouldn't know. I stayed home.
Caught a movie.

WALSH

Caught a movie... right. I can
smell the whore's perfume. Why
bother lying?

JAKE

Fucking ball breaker.

Walsh laughs bitterly. He points to himself, cranes head over shoulder.

WALSH
Who, this guy?

JAKE
Fucking thief...

WALSH
What's that?

JAKE
Pay no mind.

Walsh rises from his seat, adjusting his slacks. He ambles toward a small window in the far corner of his office, peeking outward.

WALSH
Haven't made a case lately, Jake.

JAKE
Bit of a blunt assessment.

WALSH
How so?

JAKE
Not factoring in extenuating circumstances.

WALSH
Your condition?

JAKE
I'm not an alcoholic, Joe.

WALSH
Evidence is in disagreement.

JAKE
Circumstantial. I can handle it...
Irish tolerance. Got a pink slip in that drawer?

WALSH
No. Course not. I haven't forgotten your skill.

Walsh returns to his seat. He removes a bottle of Jack from his desk, along with a shot glass. He fills it up.

WALSH (CONT'D)
I can't forget anything.

Walsh gulps the shot, head rocking backwards.

WALSH (CONT'D)
We have the same problem.

JAKE
I was some kind of prodigy round here. Couple years back. A few, maybe.

WALSH
We see ghosts, Jake. The best of us. Can't sleep at night.

JAKE
What's this about?

WALSH
It's the stoicism... you know, Lou Gehrig. A dying man calling himself lucky. We have to convince ourselves this life isn't a lost cause.

JAKE
When am I going to start working real cases again?

WALSH
Most men, wearing your shoes, they'd give up this work. I'd never expect such resiliency, not from my brother, best friend... but you're different. A public servant. Aren't allowed to hurt. Your pain doesn't show in the stats. And we ride on that bottom line.

JAKE
I'm not the only one in a slump. For what it's worth.

WALSH
You're leaving a mess at every turn.

JAKE
Is the implication that I'm a wash out?

WALSH
You should consider the
possibility.

Jake leans forward.

JAKE
You know what I've given this
department.

WALSH
Your work's declined.
Precipitously.

JAKE
What do you want me to do?

Walsh sighs. He takes another shot.

WALSH
Everyone carries a cross.

JAKE
She was everything, Joe.

WALSH
And you cared.

JAKE
I did. I do.

WALSH
Job's been contaminated. Grief
turned you cowboy. We nearly had a
fucking scandal over...

Walsh stops himself.

JAKE
No. Say it. Go ahead.

WALSH
We aren't vigilantes.

Walsh grimaces.

JAKE
Should let it out. Less stress on
the heart... sitting there, judging
me while pounding straight shots of
jack? You're so full of shit...

Jake's face reddens.

Quiet. The grievances have been aired.

WALSH

Winter of 2004. A street beggar named Gus Wheeler finds one Garrett Morris dead on the L.I.R.R. Train tracks. Near the Broadway station. He'd been shot four times, close range. Clean bullets. No trace. He was a junkie. People stopped caring quick. The case was never solved. It's cold. A corpse.

JAKE

So this is what I'm reduced to?

WALSH

His mother still calls, once a week, four or five times a month. She's a someone in the community, Jake. Real estate. People know her. We need to make an effort. You need to make an effort.

Jake bows head into hands, doesn't respond.

WALSH (CONT'D)

I won't beg.

Jake looks up. His eyes are red.

JAKE

No choice, is there?

WALSH

I'm not asking you to solve this. But show me something.

JAKE

What if there's nothing?

WALSH

Prove it. Take this one gently into the night. From there, you can return to good graces.

JAKE

Am I working at my leisure?

WALSH

Two weeks.

JAKE

Two weeks for a career?

Walsh puts away the bottle, the shot glass.

WALSH

They took enough, that day. Don't let them have your life, too.

INT. DEUCES BAR AND LOUNGE -- NIGHT

Jake shares a drink with his best friend, and fellow detective, TIM DALY.

Tim is 35, athletically built, sporting a thick black beard.

Deuces is a small, well lit establishment. Jake and Tim are practically alone, save for the bartender.

JAKE

That fat son of a bitch... used to say I was like a son.

TIM

He took you under his wing. It probably pains him pulling ultimatums.

JAKE

Think that's the only way I can operate?

TIM

You could use some motivation.

JAKE

And you could use some fucking tact, but do I complain?

Awkward silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm just begging you Tim... I'm fucking begging you... No big brother speeches tonight. I'm not in the fucking mood.

TIM

I'll save my breath.

JAKE

People don't understand.

TIM

That much I'm sure of. Take your pick.

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

Empathy, sympathy, camaraderie...
people don't understand lots of
things.

JAKE

Violence. That's universal.

TIM

Raise your glass. Only reason we
have jobs.

JAKE

Goes for one of us.

TIM

Such a pessimist... predicting
demise for-fucking-ever.

JAKE

Since Masterson.

Tim's manner suddenly becomes strained.

TIM

Right. Masterson.

JAKE

I took the fall. By myself. Didn't
ask to be protected, even though I
was owed a few favors. I stood up.

TIM

Did right by the blue.

JAKE

And for what? Been a dead man
walking since the suspension.
They're just waiting for another
fuck up. Now they have me chase
some junkie's ghost... out of
sight, out of mind... Tim... it's
insulting. Degrading.

TIM

But you're taking it?

Jake slams his drink down.

JAKE

Absolutely.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE DEPARTMENT -- DAY

Jake is chatting with detective MARCUS REID, the two standing in front of a acrylic glass partition.

MARCUS is black, in his mid-thirties, sporting a bald head and a sharp suit.

A short, Hispanic cop named WILLIE, Reid's partner, interviews a person of interest from inside the sealed room, gesticulating wildly, emitting a soundless barrage of verbal abuse.

JAKE

Sure you got the time? Willie's taking it pretty personal.

MARCUS

Willie smells a confession. I'm sure your familiar with his technique.

JAKE

I've taken notes.

Willie turns over the table in the interrogation room.

JAKE (CONT'D)

That's new.

MARCUS

For this junkie, I have a quick minute.

JAKE

I read the case file. Pretty standard stuff. Lucky break that vagabond had a heart attack the day after discovery, huh?

MARCUS

Chances are he didn't hold any valuable insights. They never seem to.

JAKE

How confident are you in your ultimate assertion?

MARCUS

I'd say 85 percent. Can never be sure when there's no witnesses. Fact is, with all due respect Jake--

JAKE

You could save it, though it's appreciated--

MARCUS

Or with all undue respect, whatever you prefer, if this kid were black, if his mother didn't have friends in high places, if this murder took place in Queensbridge instead of Whitestone, if any of those stars weren't aligned, the powers that be would have had to send your sorry ass on some other wild goose chase.

JAKE

Comforting.

MARCUS

It was a drug deal gone bad. For what reason, who the fuck knows, who the fuck cares? May the dead rest, and may I be spared any additional paperwork.

JAKE

That from Numbers?

Willie fixes the table, gives the perp a pen and a piece of paper to sign.

MARCUS

Could have sworn it was Leviticus.

JAKE

What's our friend here in for?

MARCUS

Punk killed his pregnant girlfriend. We found her in a shallow ditch, partially buried... along with the murder weapon.

JAKE

And we share the air... Always thought Darwin was full of shit.

MARCUS

Time and chance, isn't it?

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE -- DAY

Jake pulls into the driveway of a two story ranch smack in the middle of Suburbia, flanked by buildings nearly identical in design.

He drives a beat-up 1992 Red Corvette. The vehicle's shine has long since expired, though it retains a degree of refinement.

Exiting the car, Jake carefully analyzes his park job. Apparently satisfied with the inspection, he heads for the front door.

A plane flies overhead. Jake stops cold, grabbing his chest, looking skyward.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

ANGELICA MORRIS, a weathered woman of 39 years, painstakingly plays the opening notes to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" on a large, dusty piano, retracing her steps multiple times until the melody strikes just right...

She's tall, hunched over the piano, dirty blonde hair dipping beneath slender shoulders.

There is a knock at her door. Angelica walks across the living room to answer. The house is empty, neat.

Angelica opens the door, finding Jake Moore waiting on the other side.

JAKE
Sorry I'm late.

ANGELICA
It's fine.

Angelica steps aside.

Jake lingers in the doorway.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)
Come in.

JAKE
The Van Wyck was brutal.

ANGELICA
Par for the course.

Jake enters, closes the door behind him.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, DINING ROOM -- DAY

Jake is seated at a circular dinner table across from Angelica.

He has a miniature note pad in his right hand, absently spinning a pen with his left.

ANGELICA
Noticed the ride. Good taste.

JAKE
The last remnant of my youth.
Should of sold it years ago. It
stalls all the time...

ANGELICA
Sentimental value?

JAKE
You play often?

ANGELICA
Excuse me?

JAKE
The piano. Noticed it in the living
room.

ANGELICA
Not regularly, no. Lately, it's
just been collecting dust.

JAKE
Too bad. Beautiful instrument. And
you've got talent. Heard from
outside.

ANGELICA
Yeah, well... beauty's often wasted
in this world, detective.

JAKE
Call me Jake.

ANGELICA
Have they officially reopened the
case?

JAKE
We never close unsolved homicides.
I admire your persistence. Haven't
let us forget. The department, I
mean.

ANGELICA
How could I?

JAKE
Caring can wear a person down.

ANGELICA
I need to know.

JAKE
You want a reason.

ANGELICA
Yes.

JAKE
Well, that's my job.

Jake opens the note pad. He scribbles something down.

ANGELICA
Did you step on someone's toes?

JAKE
What?

ANGELICA
Is this a punishment?

JAKE
How do you mean?

ANGELICA
Two years go by, and nothing. Than
one day, you're at my doorstep.
Why?

Jake shifts in his seat.

JAKE
Something about the case caught my
interest, lodged in my mind. I'd
slip it into conversations, time to
time. When they finally decided to
revisit, thanks in large part to
your due diligence, I was picked.
And I'm anxious to work it. That
simple.

ANGELICA
What caught your eye?

JAKE

You needn't worry about my motivation, Miss Morris, though I certainly appreciate your concern. Let's direct this conversation toward your son.

ANGELICA

I don't mean to be rude.

JAKE

Understood.

ANGELICA

Have you ever lost someone you loved?

JAKE

Pardon?

ANGELICA

You have a child... you love him... He's special, the most special person in the universe. Like a secret the rest of the world could never understand. One morning you wake up, and he's gone. No different than a deer caught in the cross hairs... shot.. ripped apart... and all I have left is an unanswered question.

Angelica begins to cry. Jake almost gets up from his chair, but she advises him to remain seated, gesturing with her hands, halting her tears.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. This is inexcusable. This is pretty fucking inexcusable.

JAKE

You loved your son. Apologizing for that would be inexcusable. This won't take long, you have my assurances.

Angelica wipes her eyes dry, takes a deep breath.

ANGELICA

The burn never gets better.

Jake nods.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

You know what I mean?

They gaze into each other's eyes for a moment.

JAKE

Has your opinion regarding
Garrett's behavior in the days
leading to his death remained the
same?

Angelica is thrown by the question.

ANGELICA

You can tell me... if you
understand. I see it in your eyes.

JAKE

It isn't my job. My personal
experiences aren't relevant to the
task at hand.

ANGELICA

What are you saying?

JAKE

You have your burdens. I have mine.
It wouldn't be productive for them
to intertwine.

ANGELICA

You have a wife? Lovely ring.

Jake conceals his wedding ring.

JAKE

Again, this isn't productive. In
the slightest.

ANGELICA

Me and Rick were divorced before
Garrett's first birthday. Haven't
seen him since.

JAKE

For the funeral?

ANGELICA

Nope. All my love was buried with
Garrett.

JAKE

Again, Garrett's mood, his temperament, was he worried, scared, anything you told Detective Reid that needs amending, anything worth adding?

ANGELICA

You don't want to talk about your wife.

JAKE

No.

ANGELICA

Not with me.

JAKE

My questions are important.

ANGELICA

The answers haven't changed. Time doesn't soothe. It numbs like novocaine. Did I learn anything new? Not a chance.

JAKE

I'm truly sorry for what happened to your son, Miss Morris. It wasn't necessary. Nature doesn't feed on our pain. A man did this. A man who will be caught. You deserve closure.

ANGELICA

And I extend my apologies... Jake. If I made you... uncomfortable. Christ, the last time I really looked someone in the eye... made a connection through the flesh... I try forcing the contact. So I can remember, maybe. And it isn't fair expecting everyone to reciprocate. It isn't my right.

JAKE

You know, when I interview friends, family of victims... and they pour their hearts out, recounting details of days and nights they probably wish wiped from their memories... I feel I owe them something transcending the truth.

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

A piece of me for a part of them, I suppose. So it's very rarely a complete transaction. The bad guy never has any answers. I've learned that... You understand what I'm saying?

ANGELICA

I understand.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Angelica escorts Jake to the front door, opening it. He steps out, but not before turning, pulling a card out of his pocket.

JAKE

My card.

ANGELICA

I'm familiar with the procedure.

JAKE

Right. I'm available, most hours. In case something rises from the doldrums.

ANGELICA

Be in touch?

JAKE

You'll be updated on my progress.

Jake has one foot out the door. But he can't quite leave. He clears his throat, hesitating, something on his mind.

ANGELICA

Yes?

JAKE

My wife died. I wear the ring to honor her. Who she was to me. There. Preemptively paid my debt.

Again, they stare at each other.

ANGELICA

I'll call. We can... talk.

JAKE

Right.

Jake departs.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Jake sits alone on a lawn chair, city skyline clear in the distance. His legs are perched on a concrete ledge at the roof's edge.

He drinks from a bottle of Red Wine, a very light smattering of snow falling gently from the sky. He stares deeply into the night.

EXT. ROOFTOP -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Same place, different time. Summer.

Jake is shirtless, toned and tanned, doing pushups, nowhere near the roof's edge.

A stereo next to him is blaring a Bob Dylan track.

A Hispanic female, 27 years old and vivacious, joins Jake on the roof, climbing from the fire escape.

She creeps up from behind, on her toes, wearing two piece business attire. She has pretty thick lips and slender hips, jet black hair and deep dark eyes.

Once close enough, she unleashes a vicious slap to Jake's bare back.

He cries out in agony, getting up and chasing around the perpetrator, his wife SANDRA MOORE.

He picks her up, carries Sandra on his shoulder.

JAKE

Want to get dropped? I'll cry
suicide. I swear officer, she just
jumped!

Sandra screams in playful protest, slamming her fists into Jake's back.

SANDRA

Let me down!

JAKE

Say you're sorry!

SANDRA

No!

Jake starts on a dead run toward the roof's ledge.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
OK! OK! I'm sorry!

Jake slams on the brakes, setting Sandra down.

JAKE
Where do you get off pulling that
shit? Shouldn't you be at work?

SANDRA
I left. Said I was sick. Wanted to
hang with you.

JAKE
You said you were sick? What are
you, in the fifth grade?

SANDRA
Jake... I hate this job.

JAKE
Everybody hates their job. Show a
little responsibility.

SANDRA
You didn't marry a zombie.

JAKE
Yeah, I married a real drain on the
economy.

SANDRA
Don't be mad at me.

Jake caresses her face.

JAKE
I could never be mad at you. You
found the right sucker.

SANDRA
That was the plan. Rich white boy
saves me from the ghetto...

JAKE
Yeah, I'm really rich...

SANDRA
Pledges to be my sugar daddy.

JAKE
Sugar daddy? So that's the official
Sandy plan, is it?

SANDRA
Always was.

JAKE
Sandy baby... please... just give
this job a chance. I pulled some
serious strings setting it up.

SANDRA
You don't understand... I'm not
from their world. I feel like
everyone's looking at me.

JAKE
A few more months?

SANDRA
October?

JAKE
October.

Sandra extends her hand. Jake takes hold of it, wheels her
into his arms. They dance around the roof, to the rhythm of
the music.

SANDRA
Oh my God! You are so corny!

JAKE
Your home girls are jealous!

Sandra laughs hysterically.

SANDRA
They are! They are!

JAKE
You like Bob Dylan? Oh wait, he's
never been shot. Not up to your
high standards, right?

SANDRA
Shut up! So mean!

JAKE
I'm not.

SANDRA
Yeah you are.

They kiss.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Jake catches a snowflake, rubs it between his fingers.

JAKE
Fucking winter.

He drops the wine, passing out.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT -- DAY

Two teenagers play a spirited game on a puddle pocked court.

MICKEY REYNOLDS, 19, is short and rail thin. His black hair hangs in bangs which nearly obscure his green eyes. He wears blue jeans and a grey hooded sweat shirt.

He competes with WALT DAVIS, 18. Walt is tall and stocky, a buzz cut rendering him close to bald. Stylistically, he and Mickey are near a perfect match, jeans and a hoodie.

Mickey is diminutive but quick, attempting to dribble around the hulking Walt, leaving the latter exhausted.

MICKEY
(dribbling)
Yeah, yeah, talking all that shit,
but I hear you huffing and puffing,
same shit different day you big
clumsy fuck, you're easier to read
than a pop up book, never, ever
changing that strategy, might work
on the little duns but not me,
baby, I'm not driving to the lane,
because I don't have too--

WALT
Shut the fuck up you fucking troll,
where you going, huh, where you
going?

MICKEY
--I'm too smart for that shit.

Mickey suddenly pulls back and releases a high arching shot, which smacks off the backboard and through the hoop.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Game! Guess who's lighting up
tonight.

Mickey's victory is punctuated with applause from across the court.

The two turn to find Jake, clapping.

JAKE

Nice moves. Well worth the price of admission.

MICKEY

Fuck's this guy?

WALT

I don't know, but he better be ready to run his pockets, creeping up and shit.

JAKE

Run my pockets? My, this neighborhood has really kissed the abyss. How far can we fall?

Jake steps nose to nose with Walt, handing him his badge.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There's the contents of my pockets. Satisfied?

Walt inspects the badge.

WALT

Legit.

Walt returns it to Jake.

JAKE

Who said diplomacy is dead? Thought I might have to take it back. Would have been most unpleasant.

WALT

For one of us.

Jake laughs.

JAKE

I like this guy. I really like this guy. Bright future. America.

MICKEY

Fuck you want, cop?

JAKE

I want to talk. Share some meaningful dialogue. With you.

MICKEY

This about Garrett? Thought it was over.

JAKE

It'll be over when an arrest is made.

WALT

Amen.

MICKEY

Well, go ahead. I'm all ears.

JAKE

I'd prefer some privacy. Unless you're interested in a trip to the station.

Mickey nods toward Walt.

MICKEY

Work on your fucking jump shot.

WALT

Yeah, yeah...

Walt picks up the ball and tosses up a few bricks, as Mickey and Jake walk outside the court, toward the playground across the street.

EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

The playground is a small enclosure, resting on a lawn next to a Church.

Mickey sits on a swing, smoking a cigarette. Jake stands in front of him, note pad in hand.

JAKE

(sarcastic)

Want a push?

MICKEY

Think I can manage.

JAKE

You and Garrett were close.

MICKEY

Enough to be brothers.

JAKE

Were you surprised when he died?

MICKEY

Shocked. Thought he was doing better. Things were looking up.

JAKE

Had a drug problem, am I right?

MICKEY

Shouldn't you know that already?

JAKE

What if I didn't? Would you tell me Mick?

MICKEY

Why hide it? The devil got him. Bad.

JAKE

I did know. For the record.

MICKEY

What happened to the black guy?

JAKE

Vacation.

MICKEY

Cleaning his dirty laundry?

JAKE

You could say that. But he didn't catch hell whiffing on this one.

MICKEY

Why not?

JAKE

Because there weren't any answers to the right questions.

Mickey stamps out the cigarette.

MICKEY

Shit. Just realized something.

JAKE

What?

MICKEY

That was my last one.

Jake emits an annoyed grunt, lending Mickey a spare cigarette.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

What do you know? A cop when you need one...

JAKE

Last person I lent a cigarette fucked my brains out.

Mickey laughs.

MICKEY

Really? What was his name?

JAKE

We relaxed now? Cracking jokes? Ready to talk?

MICKEY

What's the point? Spook asked me all this already. Even wrote it down. Study his notes, cheat a little. Stop wasting my time.

Jake raises his left hand. Mickey flinches.

JAKE

Watch your fucking mouth. Marcus tried. So am I. I'm retracing his steps. Seeing if any new information arises. Little racist prick.

MICKEY

Oh, oh, who said I was racist all the sudden? Spook's a practical term of endearment. Where you from, cop?

JAKE

Just answer the fucking question.

MICKEY

Fine. I'll fucking repeat myself. Garrett? Enemies? No. Fuck no. If he had any enemies, I would have gone to the steel, for real.

JAKE

Well, you tell me. Why did your friend get shot, close range?

MICKEY
Wish I knew.

JAKE
Where did he get his drugs?

MICKEY
He never told me.

JAKE
Where do you get your drugs?

Mickey smiles.

MICKEY
Nice try. We done?

JAKE
You were shocked.

MICKEY
When he died? Yeah.

JAKE
Thought he was clean. For how long?

MICKEY
A month, maybe.

JAKE
And than he's dead. Just like that.

MICKEY
Just like that.

Jake scribbles in his note pad.

JAKE
See Mick, it doesn't add up. Take drugs out of the equation, and there's no motive for whoever did this. No motive, no crime. It's a fucking paradox. And I can't solve those.

MICKEY
That a fact?

Mickey shrugs his shoulders.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
I've resigned myself to never finding out.

JAKE

He was your best friend.

MICKEY

It hurts too much. Hurts so bad you forget how hope even felt... this state of mind keeps me sane. You wouldn't understand.

Mickey leaps off the swing, starts back toward the court.

JAKE

I wasn't finished...

INT. SUPER-MARKET -- DAY

The aisles are jam packed with shoppers.

DAVID PEREZ, an elderly man of 72, struggles forward, approaching a long row of checkout lines dotting the front of the store.

David is the market's sole owner and proprietor, receiving friendly glances as he winds his way forward.

He scans the scene, his eyes fixing on register 5, and the young lady working it, SAMANTHA FIELDS.

Samantha is 19. She's short, her vibrant red hair juxtaposing a faded, pale complexion. She wears an orange cashier vest and ripped blue jeans.

DAVID

Sam! Sam!

Samantha is busy with a customer, frantically filling a brown bag with assorted household amenities.

David stealthily steps behind the register, tapping her on the shoulder. She spins around, ready to snap, softening at the sight of her boss.

SAMANTHA

Mr. Perez... sorry. I thought you were the retarded new guy asking for another roll of quarters.

DAVID

You need to take five, Sammy.

SAMANTHA

Why?

DAVID

A police officer is waiting in the break room. Wants a word. Said it'd be over quick. No need for an announcement. Just take care of it.

Samantha sighs. An annoyed customer drops an oversized box of cereal in front of the price scanner.

CUSTOMER

What kind of fucking service is this?

David wears a weary expression.

DAVID

Hurry.

INT. SUPER MARKET, BREAK ROOM -- DAY

Jake and Samantha sit across from each other, a small square table serving as a buffer.

They are alone.

Drops of water fall steadily from a busted pipe in the ceiling.

Jake, note pad in hand, clears his throat. Samantha taps her fingers on the table, eyes drifting.

JAKE

Some real first class facilities you're treated to here.

SAMANTHA

Mr. Perez likes to brag that the break room hasn't changed since he was a cashier. Takes pride in this distinct lack of progress.

JAKE

Odd.

SAMANTHA

People are totally irrational.

JAKE

I'm slowly arriving at that conclusion.

SAMANTHA

What took so long?

Jake points his pen toward Samantha, in deference.

She winks at him.

JAKE

Probably know why I'm here.

SAMANTHA

Sure. But why see me at work?

JAKE

The element of surprise.

SAMANTHA

Leaving me little time to conjure a lie?

JAKE

It was my thought process.

SAMANTHA

Pretty cynical. Garrett's murder was never solved. That why they bought in a replacement?

JAKE

Fresh eyes.

SAMANTHA

Fresh questions?

Jake laughs, scribbling something.

JAKE

Questions? You have me pegged as predictable.

Jake gets up from his chair, begins pacing. '

JAKE (CONT'D)

Who said I had any questions? Tell me about Garrett.

SAMANTHA

Tell you what?

JAKE

Tell me about him. If he strolled in this room right now, took a seat, what kind of person would you describe?

Samantha stares straight ahead.

SAMANTHA

Don't say that, alright.

Jake nods.

JAKE

You're right. I'm sorry.

He sits, again.

JAKE (CONT'D)

See, I could come down here, waste your time and mine with bull shit, rehashing what the two of us already know practically verbatim. Or... I could try to know this guy. Get illuminated, start drawing conclusions. Because I've got a question mark, right now. Me and my brethren... at times, I'll be honest, we get insulted. We believe in a system. And when we encounter a case that defies common knowledge, that doesn't become a shred clearer after pouring our mind full tilt toward absolution... We tell it to fuck off. That's right. We file it away. This is what we've done to your boyfriend, Miss Fields. Help me see him. Help me see.

Samantha thinks.

SAMANTHA

Garrett was an artist. Did you know that?

JAKE

Yes.

SAMANTHA

Did you know what kind of pictures he painted?

JAKE

No.

SAMANTHA

People like Garrett see the world differently every day. They notice details. Life's alive to them. That's what I'll remember.

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

He had a spark. Could win your heart with a glance. He never gave up on me.

JAKE

The drugs... why would such a charismatic guy bother?

SAMANTHA

A part of him hated the acclaim. All so respectable... Garrett knew the world wasn't perfect. Maybe he wasn't having fun unless he was fucking everything up...

Samantha rubs out the tears forming in her eyes.

JAKE

Think he was self-destructive?

SAMANTHA

He was always above it. Right when the addiction seemed ready to take over, he could just stop.

JAKE

Cold turkey?

SAMANTHA

Always in control. Strong mind.

JAKE

In the case file... you never refuted the possibility that Garrett was killed in a botched drug deal, a set-up, something in that vein. You ever question that?

SAMANTHA

There any other explanation?

Jake rifles through his notes.

JAKE

But he was clean up to a month before the murder. One night, he just changes his mind?

SAMANTHA

He always did.

JAKE

Wasn't there an easier way for him to score? How did he usually obtain his drugs?

SAMANTHA

I can't answer that. Pleading the fifth.

Jake shoots an incredulous look toward Samantha.

JAKE

Don't you want to know who killed your boyfriend?

SAMANTHA

Our connect isn't involved.

JAKE

Who is it?

SAMANTHA

The answer's irrelevant.

JAKE

Who's doing the killing when a deal goes bad? The customer?

SAMANTHA

Whoever killed Garrett... it was someone we didn't know.

JAKE

Someone you didn't know... well, that really narrows the suspects down, doesn't it? What's the population these days? Should I put that on a wanted poster? Someone you didn't know?

SAMANTHA

The best I can do.

JAKE

You're willing to impede this case just to protect the name of a drug dealer? And you wonder why it hasn't been solved? You kidding me, sweetie?

SAMANTHA

You should be thanking me. I'm saving you some time.

JAKE
Everything is connected.

SAMANTHA
Not this. I swear.

Jake throws his note pad down, totally frustrated.

He slides his card toward Samantha.

She takes a glance, shoving it in her pocket.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
This has nothing to do with our
dealer. I barely even talk to the
guy anymore.

JAKE
You're killing me.

SAMANTHA
Any other question... I'd have an
answer.

JAKE
So give me a hypothesis. Who did
this, and why?

SAMANTHA
Your guess is as good as mine.

JAKE
(annoyed)
We're through.

SAMANTHA
Thanks for the card.

JAKE
Whatever.

Samantha thinks about saying something else, but notes Jake's
anger, and instead leaves the room.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Real fucking productive... Colonel
Mustard in the Conservatory
perhaps...

Jake slings his pen.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE -- NIGHT

Jake and Tim have the two tiered range to themselves, sitting in a booth on ground level, drinking beers.

Tim puts his beer down, picking a shiny white golf ball out of a pile, placing it on the tee in front of them.

He clubs a shot about two hundred feet, before unleashing a belch.

TIM

I tell ya' something Jake... should of went pro.

JAKE

Did I ever doubt you?

TIM

When my brother in law bought this place, I guaranteed it'd be a failure. Never took him for an entrepreneur.

Tim sets another ball on the tee.

JAKE

Took him for a dumb shit.

TIM

Right.

Tim shanks the drive. Jake laughs.

TIM (CONT'D)

But the silly son of a bitch did it. Living the dream.

JAKE

Not the jealous type, Tim. Besides, he was gracious enough to give you a key.

Tim sets another ball.

TIM

And he thinks I've got it made. Life's a funny thing, Jake.

JAKE

Tragic.

Tim drives this one, even further than the first. He picks up his bottle of beer, taking a satisfied sip.

TIM
Speaking of comedies, how's the
cold case investigation proceeding?

JAKE
As anticipated.

TIM
Dry leads?

JAKE
Saharan levels.

TIM
A shame, really. What was the
limit?

JAKE
Two weeks.

TIM
Than what?

Jake ignores the question, furrowing his brow.

JAKE
We have a meeting tomorrow. A set
time and everything.

TIM
They've really tightened the leash.

JAKE
Wait for the electronic bracelet.

Tim readies another shot.

JAKE (CONT'D)
How 'bout your cases?

TIM
Come now, Jake. Hate talking about
that shit.

JAKE
I need some inspiration.

TIM
Inspiration? How about a pharmacist
iced in an alleyway waiting for a
shipment of black market drugs that
didn't exist? Inspiring?

Tim takes another shot.

TIM (CONT'D)

Fuck!

JAKE

Looked alright.

TIM

You didn't see the slice?

JAKE

The slice was nice.

TIM

Of course.

JAKE

We got a SNU unit watching
Whitestone?

TIM

Street narcotics? Possibly. Might
not house a unit, but they could
provide information. Why?

JAKE

I'm calling a Hail Mary.

TIM

There a method to your madness?

Jake takes a long chug, finishing his beer, tossing it aside.

JAKE

Whitestone's a small neighborhood,
agree?

TIM

Relatively, yeah.

JAKE

The working theory is that Garrett
Morris was popped by a drug dealer,
am I right?

TIM

Fuck, it's your case Jake, whatever
you say.

JAKE

Well, follow my fucking logic. Do
me a favor just once.

TIM

Hey, I'm engaged.

Tim picks up another golf ball.

JAKE

There shouldn't be many pushers in the neighborhood. Not like they have corner boys. There's probably one group controlling the trade in the area. Maybe I find a name, get lucky.

TIM

Sounds thin, Jake.

JAKE

At this point, there's no time left for sound reasoning.

TIM

A damning statement. On so many levels.

JAKE

Yeah... yeah... let me take a shot. Back off, let me take a shot.

TIM

By all means.

Jake staggers to his feet. He kicks Tim's ball off the tee, setting his beer bottle down instead.

TIM (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Jake swings on the bottle, shattering it, sending Tim sprawling.

TIM (CONT'D)

Fuck is wrong with you?

Jake has a fresh cut on his face, laughing hysterically.

JAKE

Look at tough guy Tim, acting like I just threw a hand grenade!

Tim gets up, throwing half-hearted punches at Jake, who fends him off.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Come on, see what you got southpaw!

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake watches television, a hockey game between the Rangers and the Devils.

He has a drink in hand, a Foster's. Jake stares at the television, contemplating.

EXT. BLEACHERS, HOCKEY RINK -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

A pair of Junior Roller Hockey teams play an intense game on an outdoor wooden rink, Jake and Sandra watching from otherwise empty bleacher seats, elevated slightly above the action.

Sandra is sitting on Jake's lap. He has a beer, concealed by a brown paper bag, in hand.

SANDRA

Oh Jake! Did you just see that?

JAKE

What?

SANDRA

They're mauling my man! The little guy!

Indeed, a pair of goons has trapped the tiniest player on the rink in a corner, not allowing him to escape the boards.

Sandra stands, disgusted.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Hey ref! How bout doing your fucking job?

Jake guides her back into his lap.

JAKE

Calm down, calm down, it's part of the game.

SANDRA

It's fucked up.

JAKE

Hey, I didn't make the rules. But goons need to make a living too.

Jake takes a sip from his beer.

SANDRA
I'm really impressed you brown bagged it. Going that extra alcoholic mile.

JAKE
Look the part, right?

SANDRA
I'm worried.

JAKE
Unnecessary.

SANDRA
Is it work?

JAKE
Maybe.

SANDRA
Talk about it?

Jake shakes his head, takes another sip.

Sandra grabs the beer out of his hand, tosses it down the bleachers.

JAKE
Did you actually just do that?

SANDRA
It was an intervention.

JAKE
It was my fucking beer.

SANDRA
I can't see you like this. It isn't you Jake. Something's wrong.

JAKE
Not your problem.

SANDRA
Of course it is. That's the deal.

JAKE
Look... Sandy... some people are weak. They succumb to the shit that makes up most of life. I'm strong. I would never let you down.

SANDRA
 Don't be afraid of your weakness.
 It's what makes you human.

Jake suddenly breaks out in applause.

JAKE
 Hey! Look! Your hero scored!

The little guy props his stick up in celebration, mobbed by teammates.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 A real moral right there.

SANDRA
 What?

JAKE
 I'll tell you later.

SANDRA
 Jake...

JAKE
 Look at me...

Jake takes hold of her shoulders.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Nothing is wrong.

SANDRA
 Why won't you let me in?

JAKE
 There's time.

Sandra gets up, walking away in disgust.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 What did I do?

Jake is left by his lonesome. He heads down the bleachers, in search of his beer.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Where are you Bud? Bud? Come on...
 know you're hiding somewhere...

The rink's scoreboard buzzes.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake's phone begins to ring. Annoyed, he lets it linger.

JAKE

This better be the fucking
President.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Angelica, cordless phone pressed against ear, slumps into a plush recliner, awaiting a response.

ANGELICA

Why did I bother? They never pick
up. They never fucking pick up...

Angelica's eyebrows suddenly curl.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Detective? Yes, it's Angelica
Morris. They probably told you I
always call... Was worried you
were already ducking me.

She laughs.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

No... of course not. I was
wondering if we could meet
somewhere tomorrow... maybe discuss
whether you've made any progress.
No, I know... you could tell me on
the phone. I prefer meeting in
person. If you have the time, of
course. Yeah, tomorrow night is
fine. I know where it is. See you
there. And Jake... thanks. I
appreciate it.

Angelica places the phone down, on the receiver next to the recliner.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Christ, why can't I just leave them
alone?

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

JAKE

Meet in person... why not? Miss
Real Estate better pick up the
check.

The Devils score a goal. Jake shuts off the television.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- DAY

Jake and Joe reassume their prior positions, Walsh's desk
somehow more cluttered than before.

Walsh removes a plastic bottle of Sprite from his desk,
taking a swig. He tips the bottle toward Jake.

JAKE

Want a gold star chief?

WALSH

For what?

JAKE

Please... give it a few months
before shoving your sobriety in my
face. Fuck, a week.

WALSH

Been two, actually.

Silence. Jake paws at his beard. Walsh clears his throat.

WALSH (CONT'D)

Pursuing new angles?

JAKE

Read my homework?

WALSH

Most of it. Thoughts?

JAKE

My opinion? Reid's good police.
There's a reason this went nowhere
the first time around.

WALSH

Which is...

JAKE

It's the suburban version of Hell's
Kitchen.

WALSH

That bad?

JAKE

Couldn't be worse. Somebody probably knows something, but they won't come forward. And if I happen upon them in the street, they'll tell me to go fuck myself. Canvassing would be a most futile endeavor.

WALSH

So, what's your advice? Pull the plug? That your contribution to the case file?

JAKE

On the contrary. I have a theory.

Walsh perks up.

WALSH

Do tell.

JAKE

I want to have a peek at a few of Whitestone's most unsavory citizens. A plug from Street Narcotics would be excellent.

WALSH

Reid pursued the drug angle.

JAKE

But there was no scent.

WALSH

So, you suggest a shot in the dark?

JAKE

Something to the effect. Hey, I'm giving it a fucking run, here. Making an effort, right? Humor me before the two weeks is up.

WALSH

Skip the files. I can deliver you direct to a small time snitch run by Layden. Got popped for selling H and could hardly contain himself. From the area. Knows people.

JAKE

Name.

WALSH

Danny Brando. Goes by Squeals.

Jake writes the name in his note pad.

JAKE

Wait... wait... they call him Squeals... and he's an informant? Do these fucking idiots know he's feeding us? Or do they just possess an uncanny sense of irony?

WALSH

I'd lean toward the latter. His scheduled meet with Layden is noon tomorrow, at the Moonlight cafe over in Jamaica. You get there at one. Layden will tell him to wait. And the moron better.

JAKE

Sounds good. He a kid?

WALSH

Early twenties.

JAKE

Danny Squeals... must be my lucky fucking day.

WALSH

Plans for now, Jake?

JAKE

What plans?

WALSH

When you leave my office.

JAKE

Well, I was planning on taking a shit. Want me to file the toilet paper in evidence?

WALSH

Funny.

JAKE

Get off my back. I'm meeting with the kid's mother later tonight.

WALSH
She's active.

JAKE
Can't let go.

WALSH
Honorable.

JAKE
This meeting adjourned? You Citrus
drinking mother-fucker?

WALSH
Watch it. Ice is still very thin.

Jake gets up to leave.

JAKE
Just waiting to wade in them good
graces...

INT. THE CLINTON RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Jake and Angelica share a table in the quaint, nearly empty
Queens eatery.

ANGELICA
Used to meeting kin in the flesh?

JAKE
Of course. I acquiesce to your
needs. Plus, I had the hours to
spare. No worries.

ANGELICA
How's the food?

JAKE
High quality. Best pizza in the
city, for my dollar.

ANGELICA
I haven't had an appetite in three
years.

JAKE
Understandable.

Jake downs his water.

ANGELICA
Any breaks?

JAKE
I would have called.

ANGELICA
Really?

JAKE
Man of my word.

ANGELICA
Good to know.

JAKE
That I am?

ANGELICA
That you would have called.

JAKE
You like Mickey?

ANGELICA
Mickey was his best friend. Mickey would have walked through hell for him.

JAKE
Mickey a good kid?

ANGELICA
Far as I know. Though my knowledge is limited.

JAKE
Ever hear rumors? About who he may have been associating with?

ANGELICA
Mickey's smart. That much I can tell. Good head, strong shoulders. Wouldn't be the type I'd picture falling in with the wrong people.

JAKE
Garrett did.

ANGELICA
How do you know that?

JAKE
Because someone shot him.

Angelica squeezes the table cloth.

ANGELICA

Of course.

JAKE

Miss Morris...

Jake searches for the right words.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There aren't any new leads at the moment.

ANGELICA

Feel free to cease and desist with calling me Miss. Are you admitting defeat already, Jake?

JAKE

Defeat? No. But my progress is stalled, unless somebody starts talking, and fast.

Jake waves off the waitress, approaching from behind Angelica.

ANGELICA

You have to do something.

JAKE

You have to understand.

ANGELICA

You have to do something!

Jake recoils, surprised.

Angelica attempts to collect herself, squeezing her eyes shut.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I'm diseased.

JAKE

Excuse me?

ANGELICA

I'm diseased. You know... people treat me like I'm sick. At parties, all eyes on me. At work, compliments I don't need and didn't ask for, reassurances that pass for pity.

(MORE)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I can't have a second of
contemplation without someone
inquiring whether my whole world is
falling apart. The damage is done.
People don't help.

Jake hesitates before holding Angelica's right hand.

JAKE

People don't know how to help. It
isn't their fault.

ANGELICA

I have no friends. I thought I did,
before this nightmare. But they
vanished quick. A call here, a
visit there, but nobody stays the
night.

JAKE

Have you sought grief counseling?

ANGELICA

Why? I feel alive when I cry. Dead
when I smile. Fighting for my son
drags me through the days.

JAKE

I don't know what to say right now.

ANGELICA

I took advantage of your good
nature. Manipulated it to suit my
needs. We could have taken care of
this on the phone. You were the
only excuse I had to leave my
fucking house. How pathetic is
that?

Jake twitches, uncomfortable.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Knew where you were headed.

JAKE

Where?

ANGELICA

On your little train of thought.
Getting ready to suggest forgetting
my only child, right? You talk
about me with your cop friends? You
wonder why I can't move on?

(MORE)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

You get together and curse my junkie son for having the indecency to die?

JAKE

No.

ANGELICA

Maybe not. Because I saw it in your eyes.

JAKE

What did you see?

ANGELICA

What happened to your wife?

JAKE

Miss Morris... Angelica, I'm going to reiterate this for the last time...

ANGELICA

It isn't productive. Yeah, emotions aren't productive in society. I'm well aware. They damage the image. And we are forever in pursuit of preserving that.

JAKE

My work isn't a mirage.

ANGELICA

But are you?

Jake lets go of her hand. He sighs.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Well?

JAKE

Join me for a drink?

INT. THE CLINTON RESTAURANT, BAR -- NIGHT

The bar is located at the front of the restaurant, near the entrance.

Jake and Angelica sit next to each other in stools, afforded privacy by the setting.

The bartender, EDDIE HORTON, a fat man in his forties, minds his own business near the taps, on the opposite end of the panel.

Jake drinks a Jack and Coke, Angelica a scotch on the rocks.

JAKE

This is a place from a better time
in my life.

ANGELICA

When?

JAKE

My fourth date with Sandy.

Jake sips his drink.

JAKE (CONT'D)

We spent most of our time at the
bar. Right here, these same seats
maybe. Kids. Young and dumb. But we
had each other's heart. It was over
the second we locked eyes. Met her
at this Nightclub in the Bronx,
must be shut down by now...

ANGELICA

Your wife?

JAKE

Was. 'Till death.

ANGELICA

Never offered my condolences.

JAKE

Why insist on this?

ANGELICA

What?

JAKE

Commiseration. Just wish I could
forget.

ANGELICA

Your heart would never allow it.

JAKE

I'm not used to someone listening.
People tend to tune out a broken
record.

ANGELICA
Jake... your wife...

JAKE
What happened?

ANGELICA
You don't have to--

JAKE
Aren't I obligated?

ANGELICA
Shouldn't feel that way.

JAKE
I've already crossed the line.
Making it a habit.

ANGELICA
We can talk about something else.

JAKE
We shouldn't be talking about
anything beside your son. I must be
losing my mind. Eddie, help me out
here!

Eddie turns from washing a glass.

EDDIE
You're losing it, Jake.

JAKE
Thanks.

They turn to their drinks. Jake puts his head down, resting it in his hands. Angelica runs her fingers through his hair. Jake picks his head up.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Stop.

They share another silence.

Jake finishes his drink.

JAKE (CONT'D)
My wife was taken from me.

ANGELICA
How?

JAKE

They called it a terrorist attack.
I prefer mass homicide. And the
suspect is still at large.

ANGELICA

Jesus...

JAKE

Beautiful day, not sure if you
recall. There wasn't a cloud in the
sky.

ANGELICA

What did she do?

JAKE

To deserve it?

ANGELICA

No... Her work, Jake.

JAKE

She was a secretary... Hated it,
actually. With a passion. I
encouraged her not to quit. Trying
to be supportive. I didn't listen,
you know... I just didn't listen
enough.

Jake laughs, helpless.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There wasn't a body, afterward.
They couldn't find...

Jake slumps forward.

JAKE (CONT'D)

They couldn't find her body...
see... they just couldn't... Find
her body. So, what can you bury?
What can you bury, when there's
nothing left? We, me, her family
and mine, buried dust... ashes of
New York.

Jake pounds the bar with his fist.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Have I been healed? Just say the
word...

Angelica brushes her hand across Jake's face.

ANGELICA
(whispering)
I'll heal you... You heal me.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Jake and Angelica enter through the front door, kissing passionately. They bump into the piano, Jake yelling in pain. Angelica leads the way, toward the couch, lying herself down. Jake stands over her.

ANGELICA
What are you waiting for?

JAKE
I can't.

ANGELICA
Nobody has to know.

JAKE
I can't do this.

ANGELICA
Please. Please, I need to feel something.

JAKE
I'm going to get fired.

ANGELICA
Just... just...

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE
After... the case.

ANGELICA
It never ends.

Jake kneels, in front of Angelica. He kisses her.

JAKE
I'm going to find out.

ANGELICA
Swear to me.

JAKE
I swear.

ANGELICA
Don't go.

JAKE
I'm a cop.

ANGELICA
You can't drive.

JAKE
I drove here.

ANGELICA
Don't leave me. You can't leave me.

JAKE
I have to.

Angelica takes hold of Jake's hand.

ANGELICA
I won't let you.

Jake falls onto the couch. Angelica nestles her head into his chest. He is asleep almost immediately.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Jake, sleeping soundly, the couch to himself, is woken by the whistle of a coffee pot.

He tries moving, before grabbing his head in agony.

Angelica, wearing a silk robe, emerges from the kitchen carrying a porcelain cup steaming around the edges.

She hands it over to Jake, delicately.

ANGELICA
Careful.

JAKE
I like it hot.

Jake drinks.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Black. Nice.

ANGELICA
I figured. Move over.

Jake makes room for Angelica. She sits next to him.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)
We couldn't make the bedroom.

JAKE
Good thing.

ANGELICA
Rules and regulations?

JAKE
Basic human decency.

ANGELICA
Not sure I follow.

JAKE
It isn't right. On numerous levels.
I couldn't even explain. Never been
in this situation. Not even close.
A few terms come to mind. Ethics
and responsibility. Duty.

ANGELICA
We share something deeper.

Jake smiles.

JAKE
What do we do, now?

ANGELICA
Talk some more, maybe.

JAKE
About what?

ANGELICA
You ever feel guilt?

JAKE
Sure. For not taking advantage of
every second. For not appreciating
how much she cared about me. For my
own stupidity.

ANGELICA
Life's always getting in the way of
how we feel about each other.

JAKE
You speak the truth.

ANGELICA
Never will know who killed my son.
Tell me I'm wrong.

Jake doesn't answer.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)
It's OK. Just be honest.

JAKE
I need a miracle.

ANGELICA
Not sure those exist.

JAKE
You're beautiful. Can't be alone.

ANGELICA
I am. Personal confinement.

JAKE
I come to set you free.

ANGELICA
Oh yeah?

Jake leans forward.

JAKE
Yeah.

They grab hold of each other, and kiss.

ANGELICA
You're too easy, Detective.

JAKE
Tell me about it.

Jake suddenly pulls back.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Fuck. What time is it?

INT. MOONLIGHT CAFE -- DAY

The establishment is overflowing, an afternoon deluge. Jake and Danny "Squeals" Brando share a booth.

SQUEALS, 22, is tall and gangly. He is totally disheveled, unshaven, deep red sores brightening both nostrils. He wears a stained, grey hooded sweat shirt.

Jake hasn't changed since last night, appearing similarly haggard.

SQUEALS

You smell.

JAKE

My ears working right?

SQUEALS

It's offensive. You should really consider other people. All I'm saying.

JAKE

Well, look who's fucking talking. Could have sworn I seen you pushing that cart on The Wire.

SQUEALS

Fuck if I know. I don't get HBO.

Jake laughs.

JAKE

Well done. I owe you a Latte.

SQUEALS

Really?

JAKE

Maybe.

Jake flips a Polaroid on the table. It's facing down.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Have a look.

Squeals turns the photo over.

SQUEALS

Picasso.

JAKE

Street name?

SQUEALS

Something personal between us. I was a fan of his work. So much soul.

Squeals' nose begins to bleed. He covers it with table napkins, tilting his head upward.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

This will pass.

After taking a deep breath, Squeals releases the napkins, dropping the whole lot on the table.

JAKE

Oh, no, you ghastly mother-fucker!

Squeals scrambles to shove the napkins in his pocket.

SQUEALS

Sorry, sorry, wherever are my manners dear detective...

Jake is visibly disgusted.

JAKE

Tell me something.

SQUEALS

What do you want to hear?

JAKE

The sky is blue. Cigarettes kill.
All dogs go to heaven. Anything...
so I can file this report, get the
fuck out of here, and never see you
again. No offense.

SQUEALS

None taken.

Jake opens his note pad.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

It was a shame what happened to
Picasso. He had a good heart.
Violent temper, but a good heart.

JAKE

Temper?

SQUEALS

His mood swayed with the wind. One
of those cats.

JAKE

What pissed him off?

SQUEALS

From what I saw... the world at
large.

JAKE

You want to translate that into something concrete?

SQUEALS

Everyone and everything. So he'd run. Disappear. Wouldn't go home. His mom didn't understand.

JAKE

Alright Squeals... you ready for Final Jeopardy?

SQUEALS

Lay it on me.

JAKE

Who supplied Garrett Morris with drugs? And keep in mind, I know the fucking neighborhood. I know there aren't many dealers trafficking the heavy shit. If the victim had been copping dime bags from a cast of thousands, we'd never have the great fortune of crossing paths.

SQUEALS

It's a courier. With muscle. Caters to the upper class.

JAKE

Give me a fucking name.

SQUEALS

Ask nicely. I'll consider.

Jake slams Squeals head into the table, drawing looks from concerned customers.

JAKE

Drug dealing cunt! I want a name!

Squeals verges on tears.

SQUEALS

What the fuck man? I was going to give it! I was just playing!

Jake is concerned. He wipes his brow. Full of sweat.

JAKE

Sorry Squeals, let me have a look there...

Jake attempts to check Squeals' forehead.

SQUEALS

Back off, just back off! It's Sal, alright. Sal Bianchi, you fucking psycho!

JAKE

Making a scene isn't in your best interest.

Squeals calms himself.

SQUEALS

Too late. Why the fuck you do that?

JAKE

The good cop... that gaping asshole had the day off.

SQUEALS

Right. You're lucky I give you that much. Happy hunting.

Squeals, indignant, gets up to leave.

Jake won't allow it. He grabs his arm.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

Let go.

JAKE

What's a matter, skipping on the bill?

SQUEALS

You're a section eight. Off the reservation. Let go of my fucking arm.

JAKE

What do you prefer? Dislocated shoulder? Popped elbow? Maybe two for the price of one?

Squeals sits back down, on his own accord. Jake lets go of his arm.

SQUEALS

What more do you need?

JAKE

Where's Sal hang?

SQUEALS

Shamrock... you know, that Irish dive near the Village. He's there practically every night. Proving he can slum it.

JAKE

Our village?

SQUEALS

None other.

JAKE

(standing)

Enjoy the drink. You earned it champ.

Jake leaves a few dollars behind.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

The definition of a dive. Dimmed lights cloak the diehard alcoholics and dirty, discolored floor, chewed up wooden walls.

There's a pool table in the back, peeling green felt ripped, covered with duct tape, yet readily played upon.

SAL BIANCHI circles the pool table, cue in hand, sizing up a shot. There's a small crowd around him, a loyal pocket of fellow teenaged followers, all dressed impeccably, mirroring their leader. They appear entirely out of place within this surrounding, lost.

SAL is 19, a dark skinned Italian. He carries a trim, spry build. His hair is spiked, face spared a single blemish.

He wears a red and black Nylon warm-up vest, matching pants.

A large gold cross hangs from his neck, sparkling.

Just as he lines up the seven ball with the left pocket, a minion taps him on the shoulder. He glances up, obviously annoyed, though maintaining a totally placid demeanor.

SAL

Never interrupt me in the middle of a shot.

The minion is Walt, Mickey's friend. He steps backward, respecting Sal's space.

WALT
Sorry, Sally. There's a cop at the
bar, asking about you.

SAL
How can you be sure?

WALT
Same guy questioned me and Mickey,
few days ago. Could see it anyway,
way he moves, talks, can smell the
bacon.

SAL
You had dialogue with a cop and
didn't tell me?

WALT
It's nothing. He's following up on
Garrett. Neither us felt it
warranted mentioning.

SAL
He speaks my name.

Walt points toward Jake, sitting at the bar, absently
consoling a sobbing drunk.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake, now sitting alone, drinks a beer.

His cell phone rings.

He ignores.

Sal approaches. Jake calmly wheels his seat around.

JAKE
And you are...

SAL
The guy you been asking about.

JAKE
Sal.

SAL
And you?

JAKE
Call me Jake.

SAL
What's your business?

JAKE
You're the alpha dog.

SAL
What's that?

JAKE
Was intrigued by your play. Do you wait for me to find you, or try taking control of the situation? I got my answer. You lead that pack of wolves.

Jake nods toward the pool table, where the group is still congregated, making plenty of noise.

SAL
I could never lead. Nowhere to go.

JAKE
They lower the drinking age?

SAL
We're the only reason this place makes payments.

JAKE
How noble.

Sal extends his arms.

SAL
So take me in. Condemn the Shamrock. Not a bad night's work.

JAKE
Maybe you get a pardon.

SAL
Sparing me?

JAKE
What do you know about Garrett Morris?

SAL
I know somebody blew him up.

JAKE
So do I. But why?

SAL

This is a crazy world we're living in. I always thought why was incidental.

JAKE

I know a thing or two.

SAL

Bout what?

JAKE

You gave him drugs. He was your customer, and you didn't have to be much of a salesman, am I right?

SAL

Somebody's been slandering me. Lot of jealousy in this neighborhood. I'm a young Italian kid with money, so I must be a drug dealer, right? Defamation.

JAKE

You find a pot of gold? Want to lend me a map?

SAL

I'm a mechanic.

JAKE

You look it.

SAL

Want to take me in? Otherwise, this conversation is over.

JAKE

I could give two shits about your wheeling, dealing, scheming or dreaming, all I want is what you know about Garrett Morris. You're immune from my touch.

SAL

Well, it's like I said. I never met the guy. Not once. A ghost then and now. No difference.

JAKE

You should reconsider this course of action. Very mistaken.

SAL

No more than you. Been misinformed.
Garrett Morris was no friend of
mine.

Sal walks back toward the pool table.

Jake notices Walt, having a cue fight with another drunken
teen.

JAKE

Strays.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Samantha is sitting on a radiator puffing a joint, blowing
the smoke outside her window, legs stretched onto the fire
escape.

Her modest pad is a real mess, clothes and other assorted
junk littered about, several bongos forming a circle on her
kitchen's counter, a sink filled with dirty dishes.

Immediately right of the kitchen is her front door, beckoning
with a knock.

Samantha reluctantly ashes the joint on the window pane.

She strolls across the room, to the door, opening it.

Sal strides in, kissing Samantha on the cheek. He closes the
door, softly.

SAL

How are we, darling?

SAMANTHA

Never call me that. Otherwise, I'm
spectacular.

SAL

Happy to hear it.

SAMANTHA

What do you want?

SAL

Your dad at work?

SAMANTHA

What's it to you?

SAL
Nothing. You just leave the place
in shambles. Feel sorry for the
guy.

Sal wanders toward the window, closing it, drawing the
blinds.

He walks back toward Samantha wearing a broad grin.

SAMANTHA
You looking for a quick bump? All I
got is herb.

SAL
Quit the candy?

SAMANTHA
Trying.

SAL
Never know. Maybe the eighth time
will be a charm.

SAMANTHA
You're slime.

Sal chuckles.

SAL
Slime... that's good...I Had
something funny happen to me, last
night.

SAMANTHA
What do you mean?

SAL
Met somebody. A face so
unfamiliar... guy's name was Jake.

Samantha's eyes widen.

SAMANTHA
Why would I care?

SAL
Am I boring you? Well, that's to be
expected. I haven't gotten to the
best part. Want to take a guess?
What is... the twist?

Sal slaps Samantha in the face, knocking her to the floor.

He crouches down, wrapping his hands around her neck.
Samantha struggles to stand, but Sal forces her prone.
He climbs on top of her, keeping the grip tight.
He lets go her neck, opting to pin her arms back.
Samantha gasps for air.

SAL (CONT'D)
Tell me what you told them.

Samantha can barely talk.

SAL (CONT'D)
Tell me what you told them, you
stupid bitch.

SAMANTHA
Nothing.

SAL
Wrong answer.

Sal gives Samantha another vicious slap. Samantha tries
clawing at his eyes with her free right arm.

Sal pins it down again.

SAL (CONT'D)
Look at you, look at you, look at
you... this is why I loved you.
This is why I fucked you. So much
fight, it's amusing.

SAMANTHA
I fucking hate you! I fucking hate
you!

SAL
Where did we go wrong? Tell me.

SAMANTHA
You're fucking crazy!

SAL
Think it happened by accident? That
the police pulled my name out of a
hat? They press for a reason. You
have to be squealing. I should kill
you right now. Tell me!

SAMANTHA

A different cop talked to me this time! But I didn't say anything. I never do!

SAL

Cause why?

Samantha spits in his face.

Sal collects the phlegm with his finger tips, rubbing it all over her.

SAL (CONT'D)

Cause me and my friends would kill your family. Your father, your relatives, anyone close enough. You telling me the truth? Let me see it. Let me see it.

Sal pulls open Samantha's eyelids. She shrieks in pain, pulling his hair.

He examines, focused.

SAL (CONT'D)

Honest eyes never lie.

Sal pulls Samantha to her feet, shoving her into the front door.

SAL (CONT'D)

Who did this to you?

SAMANTHA

Someone... someone...

SAL

Someone you didn't know, that's right! Smart girl! They jumped you, huh? How many were there?

SAMANTHA

I don't know! I don't fucking know just let me go, please!

SAL

Three. There were three. Yeah, three works. You're a fighter.

Sal leans in close.

SAL (CONT'D)
Wasn't this how you used to like
it? Face to face, right?

Sal plants a forced, ugly kiss on her. He backs away, as
Samantha slumps downward, petrified.

Sal admires his work.

SAL (CONT'D)
I'll see myself out. Take care.

Sal leaves.

Samantha can't move.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT, SHOOTING RANGE -- DAY

Jake fires off a few rounds in the indoor shooting range,
aiming at a target fastened about 100 feet away.

His hand is steady, the bullets flying in a controlled burst
of three.

He is wearing earplugs.

The clip is empty.

Walsh enters the range.

He points toward the demolished target.

WALSH
Sorry bastard never had a chance.

JAKE
He made a move, I swear... You've
been a busy man, Boss.

WALSH
What can I say? Your case is a mere
speck on the landscape.

JAKE
As am I.

WALSH
What was your request?

JAKE
Surveillance.

WALSH

No shit?

JAKE

I want a watch on Sal Bianchi.
Young scum, drug dealer. Lied to
me.

WALSH

You want him spooked because he
lied to you?

JAKE

I want him spooked because he's a
drug dealer.

WALSH

A drug dealer who lied to you.

JAKE

Exactly.

WALSH

And what the fuck, may I so humbly
ask, does it have to do with
Garrett Morris?

JAKE

Sal got him high.

WALSH

A suspect?

JAKE

Maybe.

Walsh wrings his hands.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Want it solved, or not?

WALSH

You blowing smoke up my ass? Buying
yourself time? Clock ticking, maybe
you're reaching.

JAKE

Not for me to decide.

Walsh frowns.

WALSH

One car. Two days, the most.

JAKE
Could do it myself, if necessary...

WALSH
Yeah, cause subtlety is your
strongest suit. You and that broken
down fucking Corvette.

Jake fires a no look shot toward the target.

Walsh recoils, covering his ears.

WALSH (CONT'D)
Jesus Holy Christ, you crazy son of
a bitch!

JAKE
(laughing)
Always one in the chamber, Cap.

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

A black BMW sits in the abandoned lot of a sprawling shopping
center.

Behind the driver's seat is Sal Bianchi, waiting.

A golden silhouette splashes across his face, headlights
belonging to another car pulling in. This is a red Saturn.

The Saturn parks close, three spots away. Mickey steps out,
carrying a can of beer.

He joins Sal in the BMW, sitting passenger side.

INT. SAL'S BMW -- NIGHT

SAL
You drive with that?

MICKEY
The beer? Fuck man, I'm drunk.

Sal shoves Mickey's head into the passenger side window.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
Fuck! What are you doing?

SAL
Stupid son of a bitch. You can't
afford getting pinched right now.

MICKEY
What the fuck you talking about?

SAL
See Walt today?

MICKEY
Family dinner.

SAL
A cop visited Shamrock's.

MICKEY
He wanted you? How the fuck that
happen?

Sal pulls out a gun from under his seat. He presses it to Mickey's temple.

SAL
Been wondering the same thing.

MICKEY
Fuck Sal! After all I've done, this
is how you treat me?

SAL
Why not?

MICKEY
I feed them shit. Piles. I act
cool, calm, and stupid, just the
way you said. And there hasn't been
any heat.

SAL
Until now.

MICKEY
Maybe you should visit Sam or
something man. At least she has a
reason. Fuck Sal... you're my best
friend. I would never sell you out.

Sal laughs, his eyes registering a foreign thought.

SAL
Best friend?

MICKEY
Please, put the gun down. You're
scaring me, bro. You're fucking
scaring me.

SAL
Giving me orders?

MICKEY
No. I'd never do that.

SAL
How could they come so close, after
all this time?

MICKEY
Maybe Sam--

SAL
Sam can't lie. Not to me. That
narrows the field.

MICKEY
Some rat--

SAL
Word hits the street now, years
after the fact? I should blow your
head off for even suggesting that.

MICKEY
Don't kill me Sal. You're like a
brother. I'd never do nothing to--

SAL
Get the fuck out of my car.

Sal places the gun back under the seat.

Mickey lingers.

SAL (CONT'D)
Before I change my mind.

Mickey opens the door. He has one foot out when--

SAL (CONT'D)
Hey Mick.

MICKEY
(hopeful)
Yeah?

SAL
Lose the fucking drink.

Mickey drops the beer.

EXT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, FRONT DOOR -- NIGHT

Jake hesitates, before ringing the doorbell.

Angelica opens.

ANGELICA

Why aren't you answering my calls?

Jake walks into her house.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake is sitting on the couch, Angelica standing in front of him, arms crossed. '

ANGELICA

Stop changing the subject.

JAKE

This is why it can't be personal.

ANGELICA

What does that mean?

JAKE

Time had it, I used to take a case and force myself to drum up some empathy. Yeah, the sympathy was there, but it's not enough. Something fleeting as sympathy can get lost in the procedure... nullifies the will.

ANGELICA

The will?

JAKE

To set something wrong right. I'd look at pictures of the departed. They always wore these doomed smiles. Man's far too flawed for judgment. See, we live with this. Everything, and I mean everything in this world is fucked up, upside down, we're walking in a hall of mirrors. And we accept it, in order to scrounge a life out of all this... madness. Even the empathy doesn't last. It becomes a game. Solve this, handle that, kiss some ass, shine your badge, and the beat goes on.

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

A crime scene becomes routine. Adaptation. This was my perch, before Sandra was murdered. Before they took her from me. After that, well, everything was personal. I became a crusader. I wanted to stop them. Abolish self-created kings who see other human beings as nothing more than their subjects. The righteousness made me blind. Suddenly, the rules didn't seem as important. Nobody noticed. Not until Ron Masterson killed his wife, without any apparent reason or motive. He just... he just killed her. He tried spinning it as a break-in, of course. An unidentified black male. It was him. He murdered the mother of his children. And we knew. He was a rich guy, bought a dream team of lawyers. The evidence against him was so strong, so fucking strong, he shouldn't have had a chance. But I wasn't taking any. So I manipulated some DNA. Just to be sure. Because, he needed to go, Angelica... he needed to go. He needed to face justice in this life, because... I wasn't even sure a God in heaven existed anymore. I was caught. Chalked it up to sloppiness. It was a passable excuse. My mentor, Joe Walsh, knew it was a lie, he knew I'd never make that kind of mistake, but he protected me. And I did the same. When IA came down hard, I wouldn't say a word. Even though I knew a lot. Turned out, I got hit with a suspension. Lengthy one, believe it or not. During this time, I did nothing but drink. A functioning... but full blown alcoholic. They gave me this case to keep me out of everyone's way, because now... Now all I make are mistakes. Probably planning to fire me, unless I miraculously discover who murdered your son.

ANGELICA

Jake...

JAKE

The thing of it is... I might actually be getting somewhere. Just a feeling. I left your house, that last morning we were together, because I had an interview set with this informant. Kid was supposed to hand over info, but he was stalling, so I took his head, and slammed it into a wooden table. I did this, because your pain had invaded my mind. Taking it personal. Carrying your cross. I can't work like this. I can't see you again, until it's over.

Jake gets up, heads toward the front door.

ANGELICA

You won't be back.

Jake turns to respond, but doesn't say anything.

He walks out.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT, DETECTIVE'S FLOOR -- DAY

Jake, enclosed in a cubicle, rifles through a folder. Activity springs all around, other detectives hard at work, multiple conversations blending into an indecipherable din.

Tim steps into Jake's work space, spreading photos on his desk.

JAKE

Intel?

TIM

From a couple of uniform. Who'd they piss off to do your dirty work?

JAKE

Must have been the Almighty.

Jake skims through the photos.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ah, the life of a drug dealer. Well, this just about breaks the case.

Jake suddenly freezes, staring at a photo, a black and white shot displaying Mickey entering Sal's BMW.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Cloak and dagger.

TIM
Something suspicious?

JAKE
A late night rendezvous. Fucking Mick... what were you two talking about?

TIM
Could be a simple exchange. A dime for dough.

JAKE
No. Sal's too bigtime for dimes. I need someone picked up. Do me a favor, make the call.

TIM
Who's feeling lucky?

JAKE
Mickey Reynolds. He'll be in Whitestone. Have them try his home address... failing that, a park.

TIM
And what's the reason?

JAKE
Reason? He seems a close personal friend of my only suspect. That enough?

TIM
For me? Fuck yeah.

JAKE
You got an hour?

TIM
Had my eye on the back nine.

JAKE
Cancel that. Down for a return of the tag team champs?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Jake is now through the looking glass, seated across a bare metal table from Mickey.

Tim stands passively behind Mickey, leaning on the wall behind him, yawning.

Mickey is visibly nervous, tugging at the strings hanging from his hood.

Jake hands him the surveillance photo.

MICKEY

(incredulous)

So the fuck what? Wow, I'm getting into a fucking car... That why you interrupt me at point game?

JAKE

Come on, try honesty. Hell of a drug. Who owns the ride?

MICKEY

I don't know.

JAKE

You don't know?

MICKEY

Yeah, I drank a ton last night. I don't remember. Could have been Santa Claus.

TIM

A 2008 BMW? Damn, that piece of shit Kringle must be rolling in the hay these days.

MICKEY

Maybe so.

JAKE

It's Sal fucking Bianchi. Wasn't aware he was such a trusted colleague. A parking lot at two in the morning? You two blowing each other or what?

MICKEY

What's it matter?

JAKE

How you know the guy?

MICKEY
He's a friend.

JAKE
That your social circle? The
leeches, the poison?

MICKEY
Why do you care?

JAKE
What did you talk about?

MICKEY
Why do you care?

JAKE
Sal getting nervous? He not used to
feeling any heat? His behavior
getting erratic, you starting to
question his leadership, Mick?

MICKEY
Why the fuck do you care?

Mickey slams his fist on the table, once, twice, three times,
the sound reverberating.

TIM
Calm down, my main man. You want a
drink? A coke?

MICKEY
I could use some fucking coke right
about now.

TIM
Not that kind. Though I could talk
with someone in evidence, maybe
find a surplus. It depends.

MICKEY
I'm not saying shit, you hear me?
I'm not saying shit! I want a
lawyer, now! Right fucking now!

JAKE
Lawyer?

TIM
You haven't been arrested. Not yet,
anyway. Fuck, you could walk out of
here, we'll roll a red carpet.

JAKE

Just know, this is your last chance to cooperate.

TIM

Before we know everything.

JAKE

And we will know everything.

TIM

Because we're good. This is what we get paid for.

JAKE

And we like making money. You're our paycheck, bitch.

TIM

Straight cash, homey.

MICKEY

Who the fuck you think you're fucking with? You think this is my first fucking time around the block? That what you think? You going to intimidate me? You know my life, where I've been what I've seen? You know nothing, you have nothing!

JAKE

Who said there was something to get?

TIM

We're just talking. Fuck, we can talk sports if you like. Mike and the fucking Mad Dog, us two.

MICKEY

Fuck this. I'm out of here.

Mickey stands up.

JAKE

Sal kill your best friend, Mick?

MICKEY

I don't know no one named Sal.

JAKE

Sure, Sal was trying to establish himself, and he made an example of your boy, that right?

MICKEY

Fuck you!

JAKE

Of course, of course, and you rolled with the tide, didn't you? You let him drink your boy's blood, get famous on the street off that shit, am I right? You took it.

TIM

Like a good little whore. Legs spread.

JAKE

Maybe Garrett was holding your sorry ass back anyway. What a future you've made for yourself without him!

Mickey kicks his chair aside.

MICKEY

I should kill you, fucking pig! I should kill you for saying that shit! You're reaching! You're reaching and saying straight up blasphemous shit! I loved that fucking kid! I fucking loved him!

Mickey turns the table over.

JAKE

Poor fucking table...

MICKEY

Am I under arrest?

Jake and Tim don't respond.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Am I under the fuck arrest?

Mickey flees the room.

JAKE

I'm onto something.

TIM

Not sure.

JAKE

Have faith.

TIM

Your next move?

JAKE

Press the girlfriend. Shine a light. The truth's calling. I hear it begging.

INT. BACK ROOM -- DAY

The room is poorly lit, a single fluorescent light flickering on the ceiling.

Three men sit at a table.

VINCENT ROMANO is slim and elderly, his age upwards of 60. Despite his frail appearance, he indulges in a cigar. He wears tinted glasses that hide his eyes.

Vincent is joined by associates RAY and TONY.

Ray, 67, has liver spots dotting his bald head. Tony, 68, has silver white hair.

All three are dressed in suits.

TONY

He's a good kid.

VINCENT

I'll set him straight.

RAY

He made promises.

VINCENT

The arrogance of youth.

RAY

Said he could handle it.

TONY

He did. For a time. But they never close the book on a murder.

RAY

He never had the authority in the first place--

VINCENT

He made his play. We noticed. That much you have to admit, Ray. Sal has served us well. Now he can really show something.

TONY

Way I see it, he takes care of this, we open the books.

RAY

Easy, Tony.

VINCENT

Never enough praise for the protege...

TONY

You see any other prospects out there?

RAY

Danny Brando. Son of the baker. Runs H. Real respectable. Never near this type of mess. A very trustworthy young man...

Sal enters, from behind a curtain in the corner.

He is greeted with hugs from both Ray and Tony, while Vincent remains seated.

VINCENT

Leave us.

Ray and Tony depart.

Sal sits across from Vincent.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I've been appraised of your situation, Sal.

SAL

What should I do?

VINCENT

What's your opinion?

Sal thinks before he answers.

SAL
I can't be sure where this came
from.

VINCENT
But you have a general idea.

SAL
Yes.

VINCENT
When a man is blinded by
circumstance, he should minimize
risk. Be swift, and decisive.

SAL
(dumbfounded)
So...

Vincent frowns.

VINCENT
You fucking idiot. I mourn the
future...

SAL
I need to be sure.

VINCENT
Those who know? They have to go.
That clear enough, Einstein?

Sal nods.

SAL
Your will is mine.

VINCENT
Good.

Vincent stands, Sal does the same.

Vincent hugs Sal, kisses him on the cheek.

VINCENT (CONT'D)
This is make or break. Execute, and
doors open. But in this business,
there are no second chances.

SAL
I understand.

VINCENT
Fail, and you pay with your life.

Sal looks away. Vincent smacks the cheek he just kissed.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Sal

I'm sorry.

VINCENT

Use reliable people. Don't make me front the payment for your funeral's floral arrangement. I would hate to do that, kid. Now go.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Samantha sits on her couch, face swollen and bruised.

Tim and Jake stand at opposite ends of the couch, Jake to the right, near the radiator beneath the window, Tim to the left, close to the front door.

JAKE

Why won't you tell us?

Samantha doesn't answer.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Who did that to your face?

Silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)

A man should never raise his hands to a woman. It was a man, right?

No response.

TIM

Who did it?

JAKE

Was it Sal? Did he meet with you, like he met with Mickey?

TIM

You remember Mickey, right?

JAKE

Course she does. Garret's best friend. Or were they as close as we were led to think?

TIM

You shouldn't have let us in if you were going to play mute. I have better things to do with my time. Other cases where people care enough to open their mouths.

SAMANTHA

I don't know what to do. I don't know what's right anymore.

TIM

Feel free to indulge in our point of view...

INT. MICKEY'S SATURN -- NIGHT

Mickey and Walter are baking out the car, passing a blunt, heavy smoke trapped within.

They have found seclusion, parked under a bridge.

MICKEY

Regrets, Walt?

WALT

Hell of a fucking thing for you to ask me.

MICKEY

Figured.

WALT

Power corrupts. Thought the piece of shit was a friend.

MICKEY

Taking my side?

WALT

'Till the end of time.

MICKEY

You ever think Sal might have taken Garrett out?

WALT

Why would I think that?

MICKEY

Never crossed your mind? Not for a second?

WALT

I knew the two of them had their problems, but Sal would have never touched Garrett, out of basic respect to you. You vouched for Garrett, God rest him.

MICKEY

Damn right. Must be getting paranoid. Smoking too much of this shit.

Mickey rolls down his window, disposes of the blunt.

WALT

Mick... you vouched for Garrett, right?

A car approaches in front of them, shrouded by darkness, lights turned off.

It stops about ten yards away, hooded figures emerging.

MICKEY

Fuck is this?

WALT

A robbery?

The figures reveal automatic weapons.

MICKEY

No!

Walt tries starting the car.

Mickey jumps in the back seat.

The figures open fire, bullets slicing through the window shield.

Walt gets the car in reverse before being hit with a barrage, blood spilling out of his mouth as he slumps over the steering wheel.

His foot, though, remains on the gas pedal, rocketing the car backward, out of control.

Mickey tries steering from the back seat, as the fire continues.

He is hit in the shoulder and leg.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Mickey climbs over Walt, dumping him out the driver's side.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Sorry man, I'm fucking sorry!

The bullets have stopped.

VOICE (O.S.)

Reload!

Mickey slams on the brakes, puts the car in drive.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Mickey's Saturn has been blown apart. Both rearview mirrors are missing. Smoke spews from the engine. The tail lights have been shot out, as has the window shield.

Despite this, it soldiers forward, popped left tire spraying sparks.

Mickey, behind the wheel, is barely maintaining consciousness.

Cars honk, speeding by.

Mickey manages to pull the vehicle into a roadside gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION -- NIGHT

Mickey staggers out of the Saturn, doesn't need to put it in park.

It has simply broken down, the hood flying off, a good five feet in the air.

He is bleeding badly, barely able to walk.

MICKEY

They're going to kill me! They're going to kill me!

He collapses.

An attendant races over to help.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Jake and Tim continue their questioning, manner becoming more aggressive.

JAKE

Listen, we're cutting the bull
shit! No more games! We'll take it
behind the one-way glass.

TIM

Off that comfy couch.

JAKE

The reason this case hasn't been
solved is simple. I--

TIM

Jake!

Tim points to the window.

A gunman crouches on the fire escape, taking aim with an UZI.

He is black, wearing a ski mask. This is JACKSON.

He begins shooting.

Tim dives to the floor.

Jake leaps toward Samantha, carrying her over the couch with
him.

They crawl on their stomachs toward the kitchen, which
provides cover behind the counter.

Jake protects Samantha, shielding her.

Tim also crawls, toward the front door.

The shots from the window continue.

Tim returns fire. He is hit in the hand, losing his gun. It
slides across the floor, toward the kitchen, out of reach.

He continues toward the door.

Jake and Samantha have reached the kitchen, ducking behind
the counter.

JAKE

Stay down! Down!

SAMANTHA

We're going to fucking die!

Samantha is hysterical, but she does as told.

Jake leans over the counter and shoots back toward the window.

Jackson enters the apartment, taking cover behind the couch.

JAKE

Get out Tim, get out now!

Tim heeds the advice, standing up, racing to the front door.

Another gunman is on the other side, waiting.

This is BROWN.

He is white, also wearing a ski mask, also wielding an UZI.

He unloads on Tim, burying shots into his stomach.

Tim falls to the floor.

BROWN

Who the fuck is this? Where's the girl?

JACKSON

He's a cop! There's another one in the kitchen! She's with him! They're trapped! We got 'em, baby!

BROWN

Cap two cops on one job, and a fucking rat? What is this, Christmas?

Jake closes his eyes, crosses himself.

JAKE

Fuck it.

SAMANTHA

What are you doing?

Jake leaps over the counter.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

No! No!

Jake tumbles on the floor, toward Tim's gun.

Brown, surprised, squeezes wild shots, missing from close range.

Jake caps him, with one shot through the head, using Tim's gun.

Jackson emerges from behind the couch, ready to fire.

He has Jake dead to rights.

Jake turns to face his fate.

Jackson's gun is jammed.

JACKSON

No, not now, not fucking now!

Jackson desperately slams on the jammed gun's barrel.

Jake searches his person for blood, stunned.

He quickly regains his senses, aiming both guns and shooting Jackson in the heart, killing him instantly.

A smoke alarm is buzzing.

Sounds of hysteria echo outside, crying and screaming, panic.

Jake breathes heavily.

He drops both guns.

Samantha runs toward Jake, from the kitchen.

She throws her arms around him.

SAMANTHA

Is it over? Is it over?

Jake steps out of her grasp, in a haze.

He approaches the body of Tim, face down in a pool of blood.

He turns him over.

Tim is dead, eyes wide in terror.

Jake closes them shut.

JAKE

No... no... why? Why?

Jake holds Tim in his arms.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Your wife... Tim... your wife...

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- NIGHT

Ambulances, a fire truck, news vans have all converged on the building, joining hundreds of onlookers peering from behind police tape.

Jake sits on a small stone staircase, face ashen, covered with a thick blanket.

Walsh emerges from the throng, forced to identify himself to the overmatched uniform officers, struggling to contain the burgeoning crowd and media.

Walsh sits next to Jake.

WALSH
Tim?

Jake shakes his head.

WALSH (CONT'D)
How could this happen?

JAKE
Don't bother asking. You'll never get an answer.

WALSH
Who were they?

JAKE
Didn't get a chance to ask for identification, actually.

WALSH
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to...

Walsh puts his arm around Jake.

WALSH (CONT'D)
You need to go home.

JAKE
Can't figure why I'm still breathing. I should be dead.

WALSH
Jake... just go home.

JAKE
Where's the girl?

WALSH
We'll take care of it, now.

JAKE
You put her in a safe house. Had to. Where?

WALSH
You're covered in blood. Go home.

JAKE
Home? Home? I don't have a fucking home! I don't have anything anymore! I'm finishing it for Tim!

WALSH
This doesn't end tonight.

JAKE
I'm finishing the interview. I'm finishing the fucking interview!

Walsh sighs.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Where?

INT. PIER -- NIGHT

Sal is awaiting word, alone on a dock.

A small boy, his messenger, scampers toward him, whispering something in his ear and scurrying away, into a waiting car.

SAL
I'm dead.

He reaches into his pocket, pulling out a cell phone.

He accidentally drops it into the frozen pond beneath his feet, hands shaking.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Two guards blocking the door step aside for Jake.

Splotches of dried blood line his shirt.

Samantha is near a state of shock, hardly reacting upon seeing Jake again.

JAKE
Are you ready to tell me
everything?

SAMANTHA
The other officer...

JAKE
No.

SAMANTHA
A friend?

JAKE
Yes.

SAMANTHA
I'm sorry.

JAKE
It isn't your fault.

SAMANTHA
It is. If I'd come forward
sooner... I was scared. After
Garrett, I believed anything.

JAKE
Sal?

Samantha nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)
He did that to your face?

Samantha nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Who is he working for?

SAMANTHA
Mafia connections. Not sure who,
exactly.

JAKE
How do you know?

SAMANTHA
I was... cheating on Garrett. I was
cheating on Garrett with Sal. Years
ago. When he just started out.
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
He sent messages, eventually pushed
drugs. Kept us supplied.

JAKE
Did Garrett ever find out?

SAMANTHA
Why do you think he's dead?

JAKE
Who pulled the trigger?

SAMANTHA
I'm not sure.

JAKE
Samantha!

SAMANTHA
I don't know, I swear to God! Sal
wanted Garrett dead.

JAKE
Did he make him dead?

Samantha doesn't answer.

SAMANTHA
I--

JAKE
Don't tell me you don't know! Don't
say that!

Samantha shrugs helplessly.

She begins to cry.

SAMANTHA
I'm sorry... I'm sorry... I'm
sorry...

JAKE
It's alright. Everything's...

Jake leaves the room.

INT. JAKE'S CORVETTE, HOTEL PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Jake pounds on the steering wheel, in a complete rage.

JAKE

Sal, you motherfucker, I know it's you! I know it's you! Not many places to hide, not many places to hide.

Jake's police rover buzzes with cop jargon. He screams, ripping off the handset, tossing it in the backseat, ending communication with his brethren. He slams a fresh clip into his gun.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I know where you are tonight, you piece of shit. I know it. Having a celebratory drink? Fuck that shit. Fuck your drink, fuck your piece of shit bar.

Jake starts the car. It stalls. He tries again. No luck.

Hail is beginning to pound the windshield, a major storm in the offing.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Great! Fucking great!

Jake continues to gun the ignition, which refuses to respond. The hail outside intensifies.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fuck it... fuck it... you win God! I'm fucking miserable! You happy? I'm Job you sick fuck! I'm your only misbegotten son out of his fucking mind! And I can't fucking win!

Suddenly, the car roars to life. Jake pulls out of the lot, his car nearly spinning out.

JAKE (CONT'D)

We're not even close to even, you sick bastard.

Jake flashes on his headlights, accelerating ahead, tires squealing.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Mickey is laid up, wrapped in bandages, an IV in his arm.

A nurse adjusts his pillow. This is AMANDA.

MICKEY

Nurse?

Mickey is weak, his voice barely audible.

AMANDA

Yes, Mickey?

MICKEY

I need to talk with someone.

AMANDA

I thought you refused to see family?

MICKEY

Not family... police. Tell them I need to see Jake... only Jake... tell them I'll give up everything.

EXT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake's Corvette nearly jumps the curb as he parks beside the bar.

He slams shut the driver side door three times before entering, the violent winds of the swirling storm prying it ajar.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake storms into the bar, brushing shards of ice from his hair, a thinned out crowd of downtrodden drunks staring at him.

Jake takes a moment to appraise his audience, before pulling out his gun, pointing it toward the bartender, CHRIS ROBERTS. Chris is in his twenties, totally unkempt, lint tangled within a bushy brown beard.

JAKE

Hey barkeep!

CHRIS

What is this, a fucking full moon?

JAKE
Any other visitors tonight, acting
strange?

CHRIS
You call this strange? I call it
assault, motherfucker!

JAKE
I'm a cop.

CHRIS
Yeah, and I'm a fucking chemist.

JAKE
He's here. I can feel it.

CHRIS
Who the fuck you talking about?

JAKE
Junior kingpin.

CHRIS
No shooting, you fucking understand
me?

JAKE
Where is he? Where the fuck is he?

Chris' eyes glance toward the bathroom, adjacent from Jake. The door leading in is near unhinged, rusty nails hanging perilous, red spray paint warning: 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here'.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

The facilities are a crawl space, dried urine adorning cracked white tiles. Sal Bianchi sits on the toilet, seat down, face buried in cupped hands, snorting.

SAL
My kingdom... my kingdom... what
will happen to my kingdom? I'm
fucking dead... they're going to
find me... they're going to find
me...

Sal tilts his head backward, sneezing a gob of blood. A credit card, traces of heroin lining the plastic, falls limply from his hand.

Sal reaches into his waistband, pulling out a handgun. He stares at the flimsy bathroom door, eyes bloodshot, vacant.

SAL (CONT'D)

I kept the view... I kept the...
view... but where are my barefoot
servants? Where are my barefoot
servants?

He slaps himself in the face.

SAL (CONT'D)

You think I'm scared? I'm never
scared! I'm never fucking scared!

The bathroom door is completely torn off by Jake. He tosses it aside, sizes up Sal.

Sal observes Jake's clothes, the blood stains.

SAL (CONT'D)

Fuck happened to you?

JAKE

Drop the weapon, step out of the
bathroom.

SAL

And one-two, it's off with his
head...

JAKE

Drop the weapon, step out of the
bathroom.

Jake steadies his fury, aiming the gun directly at Sal.

Sal returns the threat.

SAL

Let me ask you something cop...
what's the difference between me
and you?

JAKE

The world.

A flying beer bottle slams into the side of Jake's head. He is knocked off his feet.

Sal springs up, leaping over Jake's body and scrambling out of the bar, barely able to proceed in a straight line.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake collects himself quickly. A drunk at the bar, old and fat, laughs uproariously.

JAKE

What did you do? What did you
fucking do?

CHRIS

Joker, you fucking kidding me,
throwing bottles at fucking cops?

The drunk, JOKER, continues laughing, shrugging his shoulders, doesn't have a clue.

Jake minds the blood now gushing from his head wound, before racing off in pursuit of Sal.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

The hail storm has increased in violence and volume. Jake spots the silhouette of Sal, dissolving into the obscured night horizon.

Jake takes a quick look at his Corvette, as if considering climbing in.

JAKE

You stalling on me again? Are you?
Fuck it!

Jake makes his decision, taking off toward Sal on foot, closing the gap quickly.

Sal is struggling with the hail, shielding his eyes, screaming into the wind. He peeks over his shoulder, falling down upon catching sight of Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Freeze Bianchi! It's fucking over!

Sal squeezes off three shots at Jake, from a crouched position. Jake keeps coming, ignoring the bullets whizzing over his head.

Sal runs toward an intersection, firing careless shots behind his back. Jake is closing ground, shooting at Sal's legs, barely missing.

EXT. INTERSECTION -- NIGHT

Jake follows Sal across the intersection, suddenly blinded by the approaching headlights of a Suburu, skidding to a stop.

He leaps, rolling over the hood, back hitting the frozen pavement.

The car slides to a halt. The driver steps out, a medium sized female, features shrouded by the blinding conditions.

She helps Jake off the ground, saying something unintelligible.

Jake searches for signs of Sal. A burst emanates from the street up ahead. Jake yanks the driver down, shielding her body from the shots. She tries to fight him, punching and thrashing to no avail.

Satisfied in her safety, Jake lets the driver loose.

She kicks him in the face, bewildered, speeding off.

JAKE

I saved your life you idiot! This
some kind of fucking joke?

Wiping the blood from a busted lip, Jake continues forward.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

Jake arrives upon a fenced in construction site, sunken below the street's surface.

He climbs the fence, dropping off the top, momentum carrying him down a steep hill and into the construction pit.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Jake, walking now, approaches a concrete structure at the site's center. It appears to be a walkway, leading into a dark passage, surrounded by three steel pillars.

JAKE

Fucking rat's hiding in the
sewer...

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Sal hides himself behind the center pillar, Jake visible, nearing his position.

Jake, unbeknownst to this dangerous proximity, stops to take a cursory glance at his surroundings.

Sal seizes his opportunity.

He twists into plain sight.

Jake weaves just as Sal pulls the trigger.

Sal barely misses Jake, who finds refuge behind a pile of cinder blocks.

SAL

Fuck!

Sal takes a step forward, before reconsidering. Spraying buffering fire at the blocks, he makes a run for the sewer passage.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Sal, desperation evident, hurries through the winding, dank corridors of the channel, searching for an exit.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Jake tentatively emerges from behind the cinder block stack.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Sal finds a gaping gutter to climb through, elevated no more than four feet from the sewage oozing at his feet.

Using an exposed pipe as leverage, he maneuvers himself into the gutter, crawling toward freedom.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

Sal crawls from the gutter, crying in pain, shoulders cracking as he tenaciously squeezes through.

The roads and sidewalks are deserted, hail storm persisting.

Sal staggers forward, clutching his left shoulder.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Jake slogs ahead, gasping. He suddenly hunches, vomiting profusely. Nearly keeling over, he leans on the slimy channel wall for support.

JAKE

He's gone.

Jake's legs are covered in liquid waste. His clothes are awash in blood. The wound from his head is dripping. His lip is swollen and cracking.

JAKE (CONT'D)

He's fucking gone!

With a twisted, sardonic laugh, Jake empties his chamber into the darkness.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- NIGHT

Jake is sprawled out on the backseat of a NYPD squad car, separated from Walsh, the passenger, behind metal mesh. A middle aged trooper named IKE THOMPSON drives carefully in deference to the weather.

Jake has changed into clean clothes. A bandage is wrapped around his head.

WALSH

Don't say a fucking thing. In case anything crossed your mind.

JAKE

I had him. If it makes a difference.

WALSH

If... if... never fucking matters. You know that! Or you used to.

JAKE

I mean some drunk, probably can't even remember his own name, manages to execute a perfect Olympic toss of his Budweiser, right into my fucking skull. What are the odds?

WALSH

No backup?

Jake shakes his head.

WALSH (CONT'D)

No fucking backup? To apprehend a potentially armed and dangerous suspect? You have ceased being a cop.

JAKE

Whatever that means.

WALSH

Well, the killer went free. On your account.

JAKE

He walks anyway. Testifies. Gives up his big brothers in the syndicate. All in the game... right Cap? Fuck justice.

WALSH

Well, no worries, you took care of that. We got an APB out on a kid who just had a fucking Wild West gunfight with a decorated homicide detective. He could know where the weapons of mass destruction are in Iraq, and it still won't mean shit. What were you planning? To shoot him? That the next step up from planting evidence?

JAKE

I don't know what I was going to do.

WALSH

You haven't in years. Your wife... she'd be ashamed.

JAKE

So you can read my dead wife's mind? How 'bout that? Want to organize a seance sometime?

WALSH

Why did it have to be Tim?

The color drains from Walsh's face.

WALSH (CONT'D)

I didn't mean that.

JAKE

Who knows Joe... maybe fate's asleep at the wheel. Where's Mr. Trooper taking us, anyway?

WALSH

Hospital. You are a fucking mess gauze can't fix.

JAKE

Fuck the hospital.

WALSH

You don't want to go to the hospital? Fine! Fuck it! We'll take you home! Because you aren't my fucking problem anymore! Any other attempt to intercede in this investigation, God help me, I will place you under arrest.

JAKE

There's nothing left to fight for.

The squad car's rover cackles. Walsh motions for Ike to ignore.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Name was joker.

WALSH

Who?

JAKE

Hell of a thing. This case took me over, it was everything. And he will never, ever realize the debt... The world will turn, Joker will drink tomorrow, maybe remember enough fragments to form a narrative. He can tell a friend, if he has any left. My life, essentially, boiled into a tale told by a drunk, all that sound and fury... signified nothing.

Walsh answers the radio, ignoring Jake.

WALSH

(into radio)

And he'll only cooperate with that officer? He refuses to compromise?

Walsh slams down the radio.

WALSH (CONT'D)

Jake, you most definitely are going to the hospital.

JAKE

This again?

WALSH

You have work. Does the name Mickey Reynolds ring a bell?

JAKE

What's the deal with that punk?

WALSH

He got shot. And he wants to talk tonight.

JAKE

Yeah, put a few holes in 'em... snitching suddenly becomes fashionable. Mickey Reynolds is a pawn. I just lost the triggerman in this fucking storm.

WALSH

Your precious insights aren't worth shit at the moment.

JAKE

So tell your man here to sound the sirens.

Ike looks to Walsh for approval.

WALSH

Do it.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake strolls through the crowded hallway, Walsh following closely behind.

They stop at room 28, the nurse Amanda waiting outside.

JAKE

Mickey Reynolds inside?

AMANDA

We've stabilized his condition. It's a miracle he even survived. What happened to your head?

Amanda attempts to peel away the gauze, but Jake presses her hands aside.

JAKE

I'm fine. Is he coherent?

AMANDA

Yes. Amazingly enough. His tolerance is through the roof. The patient requested someone named Jake, specifically. He was insistent on talking to him alone. I'll leave you to it. Did you have a CAT scan?

JAKE

Hey. I'm alright. Could do cartwheels.

AMANDA

You cops are crazy.

Amanda proceeds down the hall.

WALSH

Jake... just for the record... What I said before...

JAKE

Joe... go fuck yourself. He was my best friend, you piece of shit.

Jake enters the room, leaving Walsh in the corridor.

WALSH

Love you too.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake pulls up a seat at Mickey's bedside.

MICKEY

What do you know... a cop when you need one. Your night rough as mine?

JAKE

They got us good.

MICKEY

Not good enough.

Jake smiles.

JAKE

Tough.

MICKEY

All I have. Sad thing.

JAKE

Mickey... you don't have to protect Sal anymore.

MICKEY

Trust doesn't exist.

JAKE

He put the fear into you? That why you never told us what he did to Garrett?

MICKEY

Fear...

JAKE

Don't be afraid. Sal is over. He's either getting popped by a button man or pinched by plain clothes. Either way, he's finished.

MICKEY

I was young and dumb. Back then. Garrett was starting to fade from us. With his art. Running with a new crowd. Becoming unreliable. Doing more drugs. Like he wasn't even the same person anymore. The living dead. Samantha was a slut. Always will be. Sal fucked her. Sal and I were getting closer. Sal, you could count on. We didn't care Sal was fucking Garrett's girl. Garrett sold out. One day, he just stops using. Reverses the inevitable. Wants to settle down with Samantha, have a serious relationship. He was a new man, reborn. But he could never regain the respect he lost. Gone forever. Samantha kept fucking Sal, of course she did. It burned Garrett. He had a temper... one night, he's at the Shamrock, talking loud about Sal. He didn't realize... he wasn't among friends anymore. Sal couldn't let it pass.

(MORE)

MICKEY (CONT'D)

He couldn't let this junkie disrespect him. He wanted to know if he could trust me.

JAKE

What the fuck are you saying to me?

MICKEY

I act like I have Garrett's back. What reason did he have to doubt me? I had always been there. Through all the relapses, a rock. I told him we should meet up late, in a private place, plot revenge. Murder wasn't on his mind... he wanted his pride back. I was setting him up, and brilliant as that kid was, loyalty got him killed. Loyalty. He wanted Sam to be loyal. He wanted me to be loyal. But loyalty is a lie. We're all out for our own survival... all else is... vanity.

JAKE

What the fuck are you saying to me?

MICKEY

Sal didn't kill Garrett. He ordered the hit. I carried it out. I put a gun to my best friend's stomach, I stared into his eyes... and pulled the trigger. I killed my best friend.

Tears fall from Mickey's eyes, though he tries to fight it.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I killed my best friend. And Sal thanked me with a 30 spot... Betrayal should be priceless...

Mickey sighs.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

So tell me, cop, why am I still alive? Why did Walt have to die?

Jake removes a tape recorder from his pocket.

JAKE

Wish I knew. Wish you knew.

MICKEY

Kill me. Kill me. One bullet. Do it. I don't deserve life.

Jake rises.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Please... I'm begging you, kill me. Please, I'm begging you... kill me.

JAKE

I'm all out, Mick. How far can we fall?

Jake walks out of the room.

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- NIGHT

Sal enjoys momentary cover from the storm.

His clothes are soaked.

His left arm is dangling, shoulder dislocated. Agony etches his face.

He contemplates, before dialing a three digit number.

SAL

No choice.

He presses the receiver to his ear.

SAL (CONT'D)

This is Sal Bianchi... I know I'm out of options. I want to surrender. I'm willing to cooperate, get put in witness protection. I'll say whatever they want. And just for the record, that fucking cop shot at me first! If he hadn't acted so unprofessionally, this may have been resolved in a more dignified manner. I hate running. Look, I think I'm being followed... can't be sure. You need to pick me up. You need to pick me up now.

A tap on the booth's door.

Sal turns, finding a double barreled shotgun staring at him.

SAL (CONT'D)

Not me.

Sal is blasted in the face, his body bursting through the booth, out onto the sidewalk.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake closes the door to Mickey's room behind him, Walsh eagerly awaiting word.

WALSH

What did he say?

Jake hands Walsh a cassette tape.

JAKE

Place him under arrest.

Jake heads down the hallway.

WALSH

For what?

Jake turns.

JAKE

He confessed to killing Garrett Morris. Now take care of it.

He continues.

WALSH

Jake... wait.

JAKE

What?

Walsh pockets the tape.

WALSH

They just found a body.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- NIGHT

Jake, Joe, and trooper Ike drive upon a crime scene, police tape encircling a destroyed phone booth. There's a body, covered by a white sheet, just beside it.

A crowd surrounds the area, despite the hail. They are Whitestone, it's mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, feigning shock and outrage, a sturdy wall of cops shielding their view, some teenagers snapping pictures with their cell phones.

EXT. CRIME SCENE -- NIGHT

Walsh and Jake are allowed to pass through, crouching under the yellow tape.

Jake has a look under the sheet.

WALSH
That your man?

JAKE
Could have sworn. If this world
made any fucking sense.

WALSH
What do you feel?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE
Long live the king.

He conceals the body, once more.

EXT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Jake stands on Angelica's lawn, engulfed by the tempest.

Angelica emerges, a rolled up newspaper over head.

She rushes toward Jake, holding her robe closed.

ANGELICA
Jake? What's wrong?

Jake caresses her face.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)
What's wrong? Something happened at
Samantha's? A shooting?

JAKE
Mickey Reynolds betrayed your son.
Mickey Reynolds killed your son...
I was wrong... Everything is wrong.

Jake collapses into her arms.

Angelica, stunned, manages to keep him upright.

FADE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD BARBECUE -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Dog days. Jake, Tim, Sandra, and Tim's wife EILEEN DALY, a total knockout of a blonde in her twenties, sit at a picnic table, enjoying burgers and hot dogs.

Tim keeps stealing food from Eileen's plate. His wife is tall and slender, hair curled into a ponytail, wearing oversized Gucci sunglasses.

SANDRA

We still need to take a group picture.

JAKE

Jesus Christ, would you stop busting everyone's balls about this photo opportunity already?

Tim laughs, the juices of his burger sliding down his hairless chin.

TIM

He's got a point Sandy. Where you find that patience, Jake?

Eileen smacks Tim on the shoulder.

TIM (CONT'D)

I take that back. She probably doesn't need to be negotiated into bed, unlike some people I could mention at this table.

JAKE

What the fuck is wrong with you?

EILEEN

He's trying to make me cry.

TIM

I love making her cry.

EILEEN

He says whenever I cry, the makeup sex is phenomenal. His own words... Phenomenal. Fucking deviant.

SANDRA
You two are type crazy.

TIM
Well, it's true. Right? Look at her
blush!

EILEEN
No comment.

Eileen can't help but laugh.

TIM
There's my dirty girl! Where you
been all day? Welcome to the party!

EILEEN
Manners Tim?

TIM
(singing)
Come on Eileen, come on and see...
at this moment... you mean
everything!

JAKE
Alright, alright, I'm trying to
fucking eat here.

SANDRA
Animal carcass.

JAKE
Excuse me dear, but I don't see any
broccoli on your plate.

SANDRA
At least I acknowledge it's wrong.
When I think of the poor cow that
had to be slaughtered so you could
enjoy your burger...

JAKE
And do I!

Jake takes a hearty bite.

TIM
At least he died a hero.

Jake and Tim high five.

EILEEN

Stop Sandy... you're making me sad.
Why you always bring that up?

Eileen fronts an exaggerated pout.

Joe Walsh, younger and slimmer, enters the scene, planting a camera on the table.

WALSH

There Jake. Now tell your wife to
get off my back already.

JAKE

You too, boss?

Sandra claps, excited.

SANDRA

One last thing Papa Joe... you have
to snap the picture.

WALSH

Joy.

Sandra, Jake, Eileen, and Tim smile for the camera. A flash,
and the moment's frozen.

Walsh starts heading back toward the grill, steaming behind
him.

JAKE

Wait a second, Joe. You better take
one of my queen, all by her
lonesome. She deserves a glamour
shot.

TIM

Intoxicated already, partner?

EILEEN

Stuff it Tim. He's really romantic.

Tim rolls his eyes.

TIM

He's really drunk.

Sandra poses as Walsh zooms in.

WALSH

Here's one for Jake... on the next
stakeout!

The whole table laughs.

Walsh snaps the photo.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- DAY

A meeting between Joe and Jake.

Walsh sits behind his desk. Jake opts to stand.

He is clean shaven.

JAKE

You remember that barbecue at your house, back in 2000?

WALSH

Can't say I recall.

JAKE

Hot summer. Had the Subway Series that Fall. Derek Jeter.

Jake pumps his fist.

Walsh smiles.

WALSH

Good time for the city. Real good time...

Silence.

WALSH (CONT'D)

How was the sabbatical?

JAKE

Refreshing, I guess.

WALSH

Think about Tim?

JAKE

Not a day goes by. If I just would have let him play golf... he'd still be alive. It wasn't his case.

WALSH

That was Tim. Doing the job. Helping a friend. You didn't pull the trigger.

JAKE

No. I just guided him into the crossfire.

WALSH

Blaming yourself excuses the scum.

JAKE

He was a good man. He was a good man who didn't deserve that.

WALSH

Amen... how's his wife doing?

JAKE

Alright. Eileen's hanging in there. Strong lady. You were right in the car that night. It should have been me. Would have been fair.

WALSH

I've regretted many things said in this life. But the memory of that... Who the hell am I to decide who lives or dies?

Walsh takes out a nearly depleted bottle of Jack, downing it straight.

JAKE

Sprite giving you the shakes?

WALSH

I tried.

JAKE

All they can ask.

WALSH

Ready to work again?

JAKE

I'm quitting, Joe.

WALSH

What? Wait... no... you're a cop, Jake. Make no mistake, this is what you were born to do. I'm willing to forgive any past transgressions. This is the NYPD. Fuck that, this is America. Our country was founded on a clean slate.

JAKE
This job kills me. I can't let it
own my soul anymore.

WALSH
Well, what will you do?

JAKE
I was thinking of teaching.

WALSH
Teaching what?

JAKE
(smiles)
Something.

WALSH
Something... be a start, wouldn't
it?

Walsh gets up from behind his desk.

They share a hug.

WALSH (CONT'D)
Godspeed.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Angelica awakes with a start, sharing the bed with Jake.

He rests beside her, already wide awake.

JAKE
How was yours?

ANGELICA
I don't remember.

JAKE
Lucky.

ANGELICA
Tell me what you see.

JAKE
When I sleep?

ANGELICA
Yeah.

JAKE

It's the same scenario every time.
My only escape is drinking into
oblivion. It was my excuse, I
suppose. Those dark days.

ANGELICA

Get it off your chest.

Jake hesitates.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

It'll help.

JAKE

You better be sure.

Angelica kisses his hand, takes hold.

ANGELICA

Trust me.

JAKE

Alright... I'm in a stairwell... or
some sort of dark place... Sandy's
there. The world's falling apart
all around us. No way out. I run
toward her, trying to offer some
comfort, because she's afraid,
she's so afraid... and I can't
stand it. I just can't stand seeing
her so scared. It's tearing up my
insides. I'd walk through hell to
spare her from feeling that fear.
And I try to hold her, I try to
calm her down, but she doesn't see
me. She needs me, but I'm not
there. She tries talking, but
this... black smoke is pouring out
of her lungs. And I'm begging, I'm
pleading with God to save her,
because she never hurt anybody. She
never hurt anybody. But I guess God
can't hear me either. Eventually,
she keels over, coughing, crying.
And I can't stop it. I can't do a
damn thing. Finally, her eyes turn
lifeless... And I wake up. It's all
wrong... and I'm powerless,
understand?

Jake gets out of bed. He walks toward his drawer, removing a
picture. He hands it to Angelica.

It's Sandra, at the barbecue, vibrant, full of life, as they all were that day.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Before I met you, that nightmare would chase me into morning. I'd stay up, see the sun rise. Staring at that picture. Occasionally call Tim. Now, I can sleep. Most times.

ANGELICA

You'll see her again, Jake.

JAKE

Afterlife?

ANGELICA

We never die. Maybe in time you'll understand the love can save us.

Jake smiles, wipes away a tear.

JAKE

I don't know what you saw in me. I couldn't see it in myself.

ANGELICA

Your heart, Jake. You made me believe.

EXT. GRAVEYARD -- DAY

Jake and Angelica wind their way through the burial grounds.

Jake is holding flowers, and Angelica's hand.

He stops in front of a white headstone, kneeling, placing the flowers down.

He kisses his hand, touches the stone, eyes closed, reflecting.

Jake stands.

He holds Angelica.

They continue along together, arms locked.

FADE TO BLACK.