THE LAST SAND GRANULES

by

Rick McCormick

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INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

SUPER: NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 1965

A giant hourglass rests on a coffee table. A crucifix and a religious poster entitled "Footprints In The Sand" are on the family room wall.

BRIAN MCCLEAN (8), clean cut, unsure, sensitive, reserved, sits on a sofa frozen in time. A dozen wilting floral arrangements surround him.

Brian stares past the hourglass at the front door. A lone tear exits his red eye.

MARY MCCLEAN (35), diligent, old-fashioned, reassuring, well-intentioned, catches her son out of the corner of her eye. She makes the sign of the cross, wipes away a tear, and gathers herself. She sits down next to Brian.

> MARY He's never coming through that door again.

BRIAN I know. I was just hoping.

She gives him a tight hug.

MARY C'mon, I'll make you a big breakfast.

Mary heads to the kitchen.

Brian picks up the hourglass and gazes closely at the sand. The sand runs out. He turns the hourglass over and places it back on the table. He watches the sand fall.

KITCHEN

The blinding sunlight blasts through a window onto a wooden crucifix, a prayer entitled "AN OLD IRISH BLESSING", and a motto entitled "The Broken Chain."

Plates of steaming eggs, bacon, and sausage are before Brian and Mary as they say grace.

...ever this day be at our side to light, to guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

Brian looks at a family portrait which includes his father in decorated military fatigues.

BRIAN

And please take care of Dad in Heaven.

EXT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

The sun glistens off the ranch-style home with neatly manicured landscape. Brian receives a long hug from his mom on the front porch.

> MARY Have a nice day at school, son.

BRIAN

Thanks, Mom.

She watches Brian bounce down the front steps and onto the sidewalk in his salt and pepper corduroy pants and white dress shirt.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A homeless border collie begs for food. Brian removes his backpack and pulls out his lunch box. He tears a piece of lunch meat from his sandwich and feeds the dog. He pets the dog and continues on.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS STOP - DAY

Brian tries to scurry unnoticed past the public schoolkids waiting for the school bus.

Four of the schoolkids, MORGAN EHLERS (12), smart, analytical, leader, JOHN ANTON (12), even-tempered, coherent, BILL NEWCOMB (11), cool-headed, confident, and OLIVER (OLLIE) GRUNDY (11), scrawny, nervous, cowardly, block his path.

> OLLIE It's the Our Lady Queen of Angels kid.

BILL

Hi, Queenie.

JOHN Same clothes, different day.

Bill takes Brian's backpack and tosses it to Morgan who tosses it to John. The game of keep away goes on until Brian finally intercepts his backpack and runs off.

> JOHN See you tomorrow, Mean Queen!

They laugh.

INT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Brian and several students listen to SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE (28), stern, teach religion. The Ten Commandments are listed on the chalkboard.

> SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE The next commandment is Thou Shall Not Kill. Someone who kills another is like killing the Lord, because the Lord is inside every one of us.

Brian nods in agreement.

SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE There's a camera filming each of you throughout your life. At the end of your life, you'll watch your life's film with God. He'll then decide if you make it to Heaven, or not.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Steaming plates of chicken and corn on-the-cob are on the table. Mary and Brian fold their hands and close their eyes.

MARY Bless us 'O Lord and these our gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord, amen.

Brian reaches for an ear of corn.

MARY

Angel of God...

Brian folds his hands again, peeks through one eye at his mother, and closes the eyelid.

MARY (O.S.)

...our guardian dear to whom his love commits us here, ever this night be at our side to light, to guard, to rule and guide, amen.

Mary watches Brian fidget with the skin on his chicken as she butters her corn on-the-cob.

BRIAN Why are public schoolkids so mean?

MARY

Maybe they haven't learned about God, yet.

BRIAN

Can't they go to a Catholic school?

MARY It's not that easy. Catholic schools are expensive and people have different beliefs.

BRIAN

Will they go to hell if they don't believe in God?

MARY

Only if they do something bad. Even then they could still change.

Brian looks at the family picture on the wall.

BRIAN Did Dad kill people?

MARY

Well--

BRIAN Sister Francis Bernadette says if people kill, they can't go to Heaven. MARY

Well, I'm sure he prayed for forgiveness. God is forgiving, no matter how bad our sins.

BRIAN Do you really think he's in Heaven?

MARY I do. And we'll both be there with him someday.

Brian digs in to the chicken.

BRIAN'S BEDROOM

Mary helps Brian do his homework.

Brian lies in bed as Mary stands nearby. A wooden crucifix hangs on the wall. On the nightstand is a framed photo of his father. Brian reads from a worn memorial card.

> BRIAN You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide, and though we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

> Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same, But as God calls us one by one the chain will link again.

Brian tucks the card into the picture frame.

MARY

Say your prayers.

Mary kisses Brian on the forehead, turns off the light, and exits.

BRIAN Lord, please let my Dad be in Heaven.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A ROLLER SKATER(25), hippie, skates past Brian and Mary holding a sign which reads: JOHN 3:16.

ROLLER SKATER Jesus Christ is your savior!

MONTAGE - MARY AND BRIAN AT THE BEACH

-- Mary and Brian build sandcastles.

-- Mary buries Brian up to his neck in sand.

-- Mary and Brian fly a kite.

-- Mary teaches Brian how to body surf.

-- Mary teaches Brian how to swing a baseball bat.

Brian and Mary play catch with a football. Mary gets distracted. The football hits Mary in the stomach. She doubles over in pain. Brian races over to her.

BRIAN

Are you okay?

MARY

I don't know.

She sits on the sand. Brian holds her.

LATER

Mary and Brian towel sand off their feet. They shake sand from their beach towels.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian and Mary sing in the cavernous church.

BRIAN (singing) Shepherd me oh God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.

Brian sees Ollie with his family. Brian looks up at the giant crucifix behind the altar.

Mary touches her stomach. She grimaces.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Mary uses a towel to dry the dishes. She grabs her abdominal area and grimaces. She lifts her shirt to show a baseball size bruise.

INT. DOCTOR SIZEMORE'S OFFICE - DAY

DOCTOR SIZEMORE (60), diligent, serious, examines Mary's bruised stomach.

DOCTOR SIZEMORE When did this happen?

MARY About a week ago.

DOCTOR SIZEMORE We better run some tests.

ONE WEEK LATER

Mary and Doctor Sizemore look at X-rays on a lighted X-ray board.

DOCTOR SIZEMORE I'm afraid it's not what we hoped for. You have a tumor in a very tricky spot.

Doctor Sizemore points at an X-ray.

DOCTOR SIZEMORE I don't know if we'll be able to surgically remove it.

MARY

Oh, no.

DOCTOR SIZEMORE If we can't remove it, we'll hit it hard with chemotherapy.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A school bell SOUNDS. Hundreds of joyful children in school uniforms spill out from their classrooms. Brian rides his bike next door to the church. Brian kneels in the front pew of the empty church. He makes the sign of the cross and looks up at the giant crucifix behind the altar.

> BRIAN Lord, please make my mom better.

SUPER: SIX YEARS LATER

Brian (14), prays in the same front pew as he looks up at the giant crucifix.

BRIAN Why aren't you making her better?

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

There are several bills on the kitchen table. Brian sees Mary (41), fight back tears as she looks at an Our Lady Queen of Angels tuition bill stamped "PAST DUE."

MARY You'll have to go to the public school.

Brian is petrified.

BRIAN Will I still be able to go to Heaven if I go to the public school?

MARY Sure. You can go to CCD classes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian marches to school in casual clothes and carrying a backpack. He spots Bill.

BRIAN Please help me, Lord.

BILL Where's your uniform, Queenie?

BRIAN

Don't need it.

Bill catches up to Brian.

BILL You're going to the public school?

BRIAN

Yup.

Bill sees Morgan.

BILL Morgan! Look who's going to our school!

Morgan strolls over.

MORGAN Father O'Brian! Didn't know you had any other clothes.

Bill mouths something to Morgan. The two sandwich Brian with hard shoulders to his body. Brian grimaces.

MORGAN You know anyone else who goes to Corona del Mar High School?

BRIAN

Nope.

Morgan mouths the signal to Bill. They smash hard off Brian again. Brian fights through the pain.

MORGAN Think you're good enough to join our group?

BILL What do we need him for?

MORGAN Shut up, Bill. Let's see what he's got.

Brian sees Morgan mouth the signal to Bill. Brian stops abruptly. Morgan and Bill crash into each other.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Brian and Mary eat.

MARY What time's CCD class?

BRIAN

Seven.

LATER

Brian hustles toward the door with his Bible.

BRIAN

Bye, Mom!

MARY (O.S.)

Bye!

Brian pulls a rosary from his pocket and sets it on the coffee table. The giant hourglass is nearly full. He exits.

EXT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Brian hides his Bible on the front porch. He dashes down the front steps.

INT. MORGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill, Morgan, John, and Ollie crumple newspapers into balls and toss them at Brian. Brian stuffs the newspaper balls into a shirt and pants laying on the bed.

> MORGAN Pack 'em tight.

Morgan secures a wig onto a Styrofoam head. He positions the head so that it sticks out of the top of the shirt.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Brian, Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie ride bikes. The dummy rides on the back of Brian's bike. Brian glances nervously over at the church as they pass.

The five arrive at the bottom of a hill.

MORGAN Face down in the gutter.

Brian sets the dummy face down in the gutter. John lays a bike next to it. A car's headlights beam around a corner.

BILL

Spin it!

Brian spins a bike tire. The five run for cover in nearby bushes.

The car SCREECHES to a halt. MAN (40), and WOMAN (40), jump out.

MAN Get back in the car!

WOMAN I used to be a nurse!

Man quickly approaches the dummy. The five cover their mouths to keep from laughing.

MAN Are you okay? I think we're too late.

Man nudges the dummy. The head rolls off. Man SCREAMS, jumps in the car, and BURNS rubber. The five LAUGH.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Brian throws a rope end down a building. He climbs down from the building. He ties the rope to a doorknob. He runs to the others who lie on their stomachs in a field.

Keys JINGLE. A CUSTODIAN walks around the building and sees the rope attached to the doorknob. The custodian looks up, tugs on the rope, and yanks hard. A bucket of water cascades down on him.

The custodian slams the bucket down. The five LAUGH.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Morgan hands Brian a roll of wide masking tape. He hides in nearby bushes with John, Bill, and Ollie.

Brian tapes one end of the masking tape to the street sticky side up. He unrolls the tape across the street and tapes the end down. He sprints to the others.

The five look both ways down the street.

BILL

Uh, oh.

Oh, no.

OLLIE

Shoot.

The five try to contain their SNICKERS.

A police car runs over the tape which sticks to the tires and makes a flat tire KA POO KA POO sound. The police car stops. The OFFICER gets out and sees the tape wound around his tires. The five take off LAUGHING.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Bill and Ollie act as lookouts at each end of the cookie aisle. Brian trembles between Morgan and John. Brian checks side to side like a windshield wiper for customers. Bill signals to hurry up.

Brian loosens his belt and carefully places a bag of Oreos down his pants. Morgan and John grab more bags and shove them down Brian's pants and into his jacket.

Brian waddles out like a bloated astronaut with the others.

SUPER: THIRTEEN YEARS LATER

Brian (27), sports a couple tattoos, earrings, and long hair. He sits at a desk across from SUPERMARKET MANAGER (40).

SUPERMARKET MANAGER

We need someone who shows up once in a while, Brian.

BRIAN I had to take care of my mom.

SUPERMARKET MANAGER That's not my problem.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Brian enters with the mail. The house is unkempt. The worn furniture should have been replaced years ago.

The mail is on the coffee table next to the hourglass which is about two-thirds filled. Brian scans through the envelopes which are mostly stamped "BILL ENCLOSED" and "FINAL NOTICE." He hears COUGHING. A frail Mary lies in bed. She has lost a lot of weight.

MARY Have you been to church?

BRIAN

No.

MARY You wanna go to Heaven? Where have you been?

BRIAN Running errands.

MARY I need my prescriptions filled.

Brian leaves.

MARY And you better go to church!

HALLWAY

Brian rears back to punch the wall, but stops himself.

IN THE KITCHEN

Brian has bills spread out on the table and a telephone to his ear.

BRIAN She needs it for her chemo. She could die if she doesn't get it!

He SLAMS the phone down.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

The cashier rings up several prescriptions. Brian winces when he sees the total on the register.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian passes the church without looking at it. Ollie exits the church. He spots Brian.

Brian!

BRIAN Hey, Ollie. How's it going? You still hanging with Morgan, Bill, and John?

OLLIE I live with them...and kind of work with them.

BRIAN You do? Doing what?

OLLIE I can't really...come over and I'll let them tell you.

BRIAN Come on, Ollie.

Ollie moves in close to Brian.

OLLIE You can't tell anyone.

BRIAN

I won't.

OLLIE We kind of relieve banks of paper.

Ollie sees that Brian doesn't understand.

OLLIE

Green paper.

Brian still doesn't get it.

OLLIE With dead Presidents.

BRIAN No way! You're kidding?

OLLIE I wish I were. Don't tell anyone.

BRIAN

I won't.

OLLIE How's it with you?

BRIAN I'm between jobs.

OLLIE Maybe Morgan will let you in on some jobs.

BRIAN Are you crazy? I can't do that.

OLLIE

Why not?

BRIAN I gotta look after my mom.

OLLIE How's she doing?

BRIAN

Not good.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Morgan sits behind the wheel as Brian rides shotgun. Bill, John, and Ollie are in the back seat. Morgan pulls to the curb near an expensive bike chained to a pole.

> MORGAN You're good to go.

Brian hesitates with his hand on the door handle. He sees his church in the distance.

BILL What are you waiting for?

MORGAN Shut up, Bill! You've gotta do this for your mom.

Brian takes a DEEP BREATH and exits.

BILL How many bikes did we just slide the lock over the pole?

JOHN What? Ten percent, Morg?

MORGAN More like a quarter of 'em.

JOHN Don't ever underestimate the stupidity of the American public.

Morgan and the others watch as Brian takes giant bolt cutters out of his knapsack and cuts the bike chain. Brian rides off on the bike.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brian rolls the stolen bike into a back room. FENCE (50), sleazeball, examines the bike and hands Brian a bill.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Brian uses a screwdriver to pop out the keyhole on a car. He jumps into the car and uses the screwdriver to pop out the ignition. The car starts. He drives off.

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

Brian exits with a shopping bag. He examines the receipt and slams it into the bag.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Brian, dressed all in black and wearing gloves, quietly places silverware into a bag.

BEDROOM

A lady wakes up, hears a SOUND, and dials the phone.

KITCHEN

Brian HEARS a car door shut. He sees a police car in the street and a POLICE OFFICER creeping toward the house.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Brian runs out the back with the loot bag. The policeman gives chase. Brian jumps over a fence narrowly escaping the officer who struggles to get over the fence. Brian hands Fence the bag. In the background, men use a power saw to slice apart a Porsche. Fence pours the contents of the bag onto a table. Silverware falls out. Fence examines the items.

FENCE

A hundred.

BRIAN Come on! I almost got busted!

FENCE I need the good stuff. Take it or leave it.

Fence pulls out a thick wad of bills. He tosses a bill on the table. Brian snatches the bill and storms out.

INT. MORGAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Brian, Morgan, Bill, John, and Ollie watch TV and drink beer. There are ski masks and guns next to a pizza box on the coffee table. Morgan counts large stacks of bills.

> JOHN I still can't get over the teller. Here's a gun in her face and she asks if small bills are okay.

> > BILL

Like we're gonna turn down fives and tens.

JOHN

And Morgan's face! He looks around to see if he's on Candid Camera!

MORGAN Usually, they're shaking and just shove the money into the bag.

JOHN And then as we're leaving, she tells us to have a nice day!

BILL Talk about a creature of habit. BRIAN What are you doing with all your money?

MORGAN

Investing it.

Brian examines one of the guns.

BRIAN Ever had to use one of these?

JOHN Never. How's your mom doing?

BRIAN

Not so hot.

MORGAN Just a matter of time before you get busted, Brian.

BRIAN

And you won't? At least if I get busted I won't spend as much time in prison.

MORGAN Hasn't happened yet.

OLLIE And we only work once a month.

MORGAN Only need a couple big jobs with us, Brian.

BILL We already got four guys, Morg.

BRIAN I can't. Thanks anyway.

Brian leaves.

EXT. SEARS - NIGHT

Brian pulls around the back of a Sears store in his mom's station wagon. He sees an eighteen wheeler backed in to a loading dock.

Brian sees a video surveillance camera on the building. He puts on a pair of sunglasses and a baseball cap.

Brian hops out of the station wagon and jumps onto the loading dock. He peeks into the building.

Brian grabs a TV box out of the truck and slides it to the back of his car. He lifts it into the back of the car.

He runs back and grabs another TV box from the truck. SEARS MAN (30), obese, clumsy, sees Brian.

SEARS MAN

Hey!

Brian slides the box across the ground. Sears Man gives chase for a short distance, then dials a phone. Brian shoves the box into the wagon. He hops in and rockets from the area.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Brian HEARS SIRENS as he GASPS for breath. He rolls the window up to deaden the sound.

A police car with flashing lights passes in the opposite direction. Brian checks his side and rear view mirrors. The police car continues on.

INT. BANK - DAY

Brian observes the tellers, cameras, and bank layout as he fills out a deposit slip. He discards the bank slip into a trash can and exits.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The wind blows clouds of sand. Brian eats a sandwich on a lifeguard tower as he looks out over the ocean.

LATER

Brian washes sand off his feet at an outdoor shower. The sand goes down a drain.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Brian enters with lots of mail marked "FINAL NOTICE." Brian hears COUGHING.

KITCHEN

Brian pulls a beer out of the refrigerator. He stares at the pile of bills while he chugs the beer.

MARY'S BEDROOM

Brian tends to pale and frail Mary who lies in bed coughing. A crucifix is on the wall above her.

BRIAN When's your next chemo?

MARY Tomorrow, if I'm strong enough.

He kisses her forehead. She sees that he's perspiring.

MARY What are you up to, Brian?

BRIAN

Nothing.

MARY

Brian.

BRIAN Get your rest, Mom.

BRIAN'S BEDROOM

Brian stares at the rosary next to the car keys on the dresser. He makes the sign of the cross. He takes the car keys and exits.

EXT. MORGAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie wait with several duffel bags. Brian pulls up in the beat up station wagon. Morgan sees a bumper sticker that reads: "JESUS CHRIST IS MY SAVIOR." He peels it off.

INT. CAR - DAY

A rosary hangs from the rear view mirror. Brian takes down the rosary and tosses it into the glove box which overflows with junk.

The four hop in. Morgan sticks the bumper sticker on the glove box door.

MORGAN No identifying marks.

BRIAN I really appreciate you guys wanting to help.

JOHN It's Bank of America that's gonna help you.

Nervous LAUGHTER.

BRIAN There can't be any shooting.

BILL You're either banks or not banks.

BRIAN I'm serious. No shooting.

BILL Banks or not banks.

BRIAN

I'm banks.

MORGAN Just do what we showed you and everything will be crisp.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The street is nearly empty. The station wagon pulls to the curb. An armed guard stands just inside the front door.

INT. CAR - DAY

Brian shakes. Ollie switches seats with Brian behind the wheel.

BRIAN Why do you get to drive?

OLLIE I don't want to kill anyone.

BRIAN I don't want to kill anyone! Morgan, Brian, John, and Bill put on ski masks.

BRIAN

No shooting.

Morgan checks the passenger side view mirror. A black and white border collie BARKS repeatedly at Brian.

BRIAN

Damn it!

Brian takes off his mask. He springs outside.

MORGAN Brian. Damn it!

BILL What's he doing?

They anxiously look at the armed guard.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Brian chases the dog away.

INT. CAR - DAY

Brian gets in.

BILL What the hell are you doing? We gotta abandon this, Morg.

MORGAN Shut up, Bill. Don't do anything like that again.

OLLIE This bank's got so much paper, it's a fire hazard.

JOHN Let's be good citizens and remove that hazard.

John cocks his shotgun.

MORGAN Ollie, keep the car running.

Brian makes the sign of the cross and closes his eyes.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The two curbside doors open and the four men bounce out.

INT. BANK - DAY

Bill opens the door for the other three who sprint past the armed guard. Bill points his shotgun at the guard before he can react.

MORGAN Everyone lick the floor!

Customers SCREAM. The customers lie on their stomachs.

BILL

Close the drapes.

The guard closes the drapes over the front doors. Morgan points his gun at a teller.

MORGAN Don't do anything stupid!

John and Brian hurry to the tellers' windows and toss the tellers the bags.

BRIAN

Come on! Move it!

He strikes a slow female teller's arm with his shotgun. She speeds up. The tellers throw money into the bags. John passes the filled bags over the counter to Morgan and Brian who set them on a table.

Sirens WAIL in the distance. John jumps over the counter as the other three grab the bags and make their way toward the door.

INT. CAR - DAY

An uneasy Ollie prays.

OLLIE Please help me, Lord. Ollie leans over and opens the two curbside doors. The sirens get louder. Ollie sees a police car turn onto his street and race toward him.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The police car skids to a stop in front of the station wagon. OFFICER GARNER (32), assertive, stern, flings his door open to act as a shield. He aims his gun at Ollie.

OFFICER GARNER Show me your hands!

Bill holds open the door as the others race by. John FIRES at the officer who returns FIRE. Bullets ricochet off the bank building and BLAST out the front doors.

Bill shoots. Brian watches Officer Garner drop his gun and clutch his chest.

BRIAN

No!

Brian pushes Bill's gun away as Officer Garner writhes in pain on the ground. Ollie is stunned. He gets out of the car.

The four gunmen dash toward the getaway car and dive through the open doors.

INT. CAR - DAY

The four are surprised that Ollie is gone.

JOHN Where the hell's Ollie?

They see Ollie tend to Officer Garner.

BILL

Damn it!

MORGAN

C'mon, Ollie!

Morgan slides over and puts the car in gear.

BRIAN I said no shooting! BILL

I had to!

BRIAN He better live!

MORGAN Get in now, Ollie! Damn it!

EXT. BANK - DAY

SIRENS WAIL. Officer Garner chokes up blood and bleeds profusely from the chest area. Ollie takes off his shirt and presses it into the gaping hole.

MORGAN

Leave him!

John opens his door and takes a few steps towards Ollie. He sees an approaching police car and jumps back in.

The station wagon's tires SQUEAL as the car fishtails around Officer Garner's patrol car.

Police cars skid to stops. Officers jump out with guns drawn at Ollie.

An officer tackles Ollie. Ollie tries to go back to Officer Garner. Officers wrestle with him on the ground.

INT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The station wagon races down the highway. Police cars with flashing lights chase in the distance.

INT. CAR - DAY

The police cars quickly gain ground on the station wagon. Morgan checks his rear and side view mirrors. Bill and John ready their weapons while Brian sits in a daze.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The station wagon moves too fast to negotiate a turn. It caroms off a guardrail, rolls over several times, and lands upside down in the middle of the road.

The SOUND of SIRENS.

INT. CAR - DAY

Brian tries to flee, but is trapped by his seatbelt. He sees the "JESUS CHRIST IS MY SAVIOR" sticker on the glove box. The glove box opens and the rosary hangs out.

Brian sees several sets of upside down shoes racing towards him. Police officers point their weapons and bark orders at Brian and the others.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The rear bumper shows glue residue from the bumper sticker.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

Mary prays with her rosary. The five defendants sit at a long table with their lawyers. The PROSECUTOR (50), addresses the attentive jury.

PROSECUTOR Oliver Grundy didn't want any witnesses. He wasn't trying to stop the bleeding. He was trying to strangle Officer Garner with his bare hands.

LATER

Brian, Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie anxiously watch the jury file into the courtroom.

The JUDGE (55), eyes the JURY FOREMAN (60).

JUDGE Has the jury reached a decision?

JURY FOREMAN We have your honor. In count one, bank robbery, we find the defendants guilty.

MARY

No!

Brian shakes uncontrollably.

MARY

No, Lord!

Brian collapses onto the table. He sees Mary BLUBBERING as he's lead out by bailiffs.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Armed guards stand on each side of BERNIE (40), skinhead, flaky, unsophisticated, who wears khaki pants, a white t-shirt, and holds a cardboard box.

The guards and Bernie watch as giant gates open. A bus enters. The gates close. The bus stops near a building.

Brian, Morgan, Bill, John, and Ollie get off the bus heavily shackled. Brian and Bernie make eye contact as they pass.

Brian watches Bernie get onto the bus without guards. A guard JABS a rifle butt into Brian's kidney. Brian winces.

INT. PRISON - DAY

The five new prisoners exit a room with a San Quentin logo. A sign on the door reads "PROCESSING." They walk single file in light blue jumpsuits. Each carries a stack of sheets, towels, and a bar of soap.

GUARD BAKER (35), reassuring, and two other guards escort the five down a corridor lined with cells on each side.

GUARD BAKER We don't want any problems from you guys, you hear?

The five nod.

Black prisoners JOE (30), a mountain of a man, fiery, and JESSE (28), cynical, taunt the five from their cells while DON (25), extremely obese, cowardly, looks on.

JESSE Welcome to hell! You boys scared?

Joe chews gum and blows bubbles.

JOE Which one of you's the cop killer?

JESSE I'm tagging the short one, Joe.

JOE

Bet you don't make it to sunset.

Prisoner SYD (30), a lanky black man with a shiner, religious, honest, stands outside his open cell. He looks up at WARDEN JOHNSON (57), who nods at him. Syd approaches the five with Bibles.

Syd extends a Bible to Morgan who walks by. Bill and Ollie accept Bibles.

Syd offers a Bible to Brian who SLAPS it out of his hand. Syd picks up the Bible and carefully dusts it off.

> SYD May God be with you.

LATER

A bell RINGS. Cell doors open, the prisoners stand at attention outside their cells. Prison guards write on clipboards as they do a headcount.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

The prisoners are in self-segregated groups throughout the bland yard.

Brian, John, Bill, and Ollie survey all the sketchy characters. Several prisoners, including Joe, Jesse, and Don, stare down the convicted bank robbers.

MORGAN

Don't stare.

BRIAN (To Bill) Forty to life, because you had to kill a cop.

Brian grabs a fistful of Ollie's shirt.

BRIAN And all you had to do was drive the damn car. A tower guard snaps to life and keeps an eye on Brian.

MORGAN Don't cause waves. I don't want forty years of problems.

BRIAN I'll cause all the problems I want! I'm not hanging in this hellhole with these lowlifes.

Morgan covers Brian's mouth with his hand.

MORGAN What are you gonna do? Walk on out of here?

Guard Baker approaches the five.

GUARD BAKER I strongly recommend you keep to your own kind. Except Syd. He can be a big help to you.

BRIAN I won't be going outside my kind.

MORGAN How do we find this Syd?

GUARD BAKER You already have.

Guard Baker points to the man who tried to give them Bibles preaching to a group in the center of the yard.

BILL What's he in for?

GUARD BAKER Don't ever ask him. Only the warden knows.

Guard Baker strolls off.

BILL Let's check it out.

BRIAN Why? To thank God for putting us here? I have no use for Him anymore. Brian leaves.

MORGAN I wouldn't go far. I'm staying right here.

JOHN

Me, too.

BILL I don't mind the protection.

Bill keeps a look out as he wanders over to Syd's group.

MORGAN I don't know if that's protection or makes him a target. We shouldn't be splittin' up.

Joe, Jesse, and Don lift weights. Joe spots Bill.

JOE

Cop killer.

They eye Bill.

JESSE Gotta be worth a lot of cigarettes. How much the Orange County cops pay'n?

JOE One year supply. Any brand you want.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian writes a letter addressed to his mom.

PRISON GUARD ONE

Lights out!

The cell lights go out. A cockroach scoots across the floor.

Brian takes a spoon and knife out of his pillow case. He uses the spoon to scrape at the cement between the bricks. It bends in half. He chisels with the knife. It snaps.

Brian slides under his blanket and fights back tears. BLUBBERING CRIES ECHO off the cell walls. EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian scopes out the guard towers. Some black prisoners walk toward him. He moves in a different direction.

Brian surveys the strong perimeter wall topped with ample barb wire. Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie head over.

MORGAN Don't even think about it.

JOHN

Every guy who's stepped foot in here has thought of escaping.

BRIAN

I'm not staying.

BILL You're wasting your time.

BRIAN

Time's all I got, thanks to you!

JOHN

Relax.

BRIAN

You relax! Who's gonna take care of my mom?

Brian storms off.

BILL

Should've thought of that ahead of time!

MORGAN Everyone's gotta be responsible for their actions.

OLLIE Think we're gonna make it, Morg?

They scan the sleazy inmates.

MORGAN Forty years is a long time. I'd say no. INT. PRISON MESS HALL - DAY

The five new prisoners slide their trays along the steel flashing. Servers slap slop into bowls. The five make disgusting faces at the sight of the food.

Joe, Jesse, and Don stand behind them. Joe SMACKS his gum.

JOE Ain't no way you guys make forty years.

Jesse slaps Ollie on the rear.

JESSE I'll help you enjoy the forty.

John looks back at Joe and Jesse. Joe blows a bubble. Jesse blows an imaginary kiss.

JOHN Great. Now we gotta deal with Gumby and Pokey.

JESSE (Sings to the Humble Pie tune) Forty years in the hole! Forty years in the hole!

Brian wheels around, but Morgan turns him back.

MORGAN

Low profile.

BRIAN This isn't happening.

BILL Yeah, it is. Get used to it.

BRIAN You probably wanna shoot the food.

BILL

Or you.

BRIAN Bet now you wish you had floored it instead of helping the cop. OLLIE I couldn't go to Heaven if he died.

BRIAN Well, he died. So we're not going to Heaven.

MORGAN Knock it off you guys.

Syd watches Brian take the long way around the black prisoner section to get to the white section. Brian sits down at a long table with the others. He examines his food.

Brian dips his spoon into his soup.

BILL

Say goodbye to home cooking.

Brian sips the soup and makes a disgusting face.

MORGAN You'll acquire a taste for it.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd walks to the center with Bill at his side. Syd's group follows.

Jesse and Don lift weights. Joe pops a stick of gum into his mouth as he studies Syd's group.

JOE The cop killer's getting too cozy with Syd.

Guards watch Joe, Jesse, and Don get up and approach Syd's group. The guards turn and walk away.

SYD There will always be those who spit on you, but your ultimate goal is eternal life.

Some followers spot Joe, Jesse, and Don, and quickly move away. Joe pushes his way through the group. He wallops Syd on the cheekbone sending him to one knee.

> JOE He's sending you down a wrong road.

The frightened followers watch as Syd struggles to stand. Don watches with a concerned look.

> JOE You're supposed to turn the other cheek.

Joe punches Syd's other cheek sending him to the ground.

JOE (To the followers) You're wasting your time. You can't change. We're criminals and we're all going to hell.

Joe, Jesse, and Don walk off. A concerned Don looks back at Syd.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian sits at a long table with several open books and a legal pad. A puffy-faced Syd walks over with a Bible.

BRIAN You've got a lot of guts, or no brains.

SYD

Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good. Romans, Twelve, twenty-one.

BRIAN Take a hike. Brian, Four, twenty-three.

SYD I'd like to read you a passage from Matthew.

BRIAN Get lost, Syd.

SYD

Change is a bad word because we have to leave our comfortable world behind.

Syd sets the Bible down. Brian shoves the Bible, which zips across the table and onto the floor. Syd picks up the Bible and dusts it off with his shirt.

Armed guards watch the prisoners from their towers.

Brian and the other four stand in the white prisoner section keeping a lookout for ambushers. The Hispanic and black groups do the same. Bernie walks over.

BRIAN

Didn't you just leave this place?

BERNIE

Yeah, but I always end up doing something stupid. Name's Bernie.

BRIAN

Name's Brian. The preacher took quite a beating the other day.

BERNIE

Syd? He gets beat up all the time. Won't hit back...something about God inside each of us.

JOHN

Why beat him up?

BERNIE

He keeps the prisoners in line. That's their job.

Bernie points at Joe, Jesse, and Don.

BERNIE Guards give 'em treats for keeping us in line...makes their job easier.

JOHN Can't they just kill him?

BRIAN Yeah, Bill will do it.

BERNIE

No one wants to stay here longer than they have to.

BRIAN A lifer's got nothing to lose.
They don't hate Syd. That'd be cutting off their meal ticket.

Syd walks by with his followers. Bill follows. Brian heads toward the library.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian reads a letter from his mom. He looks at a photo of his mom. He gets out a pen and paper.

GUARD BAKER

Lights out!

The lights go out. Brian slides into bed with the picture. A mouse scurries across the floor. He CRIES. Other CRIES ECHO throughout the prison.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian plays poker for cigarettes with Morgan, John, and Ollie. Brian is low on cigarettes while Morgan has lots of cigarettes in front of him.

Morgan deals the cards. Brian looks at his cards, makes a disgusted face, and SLAMS his cards down on the table.

BRIAN

Fold!

MORGAN You give up way too easily.

JOHN At least take some cards.

BRIAN

I'm out.

Brian leaves the table. He watches Syd and Bill walk to the center of the yard with Bibles. Very few followers gather. Prisoners keep a watch on Joe, Jesse, and Don.

JESSE Wanna growl 'em?

Joe rubs his knuckles.

JOE Syd's head must be made of Nah. concrete. More prisoners gather around Syd and Bill when they see the three lift weights. SYD We've all sinned. It's never too late to ask for forgiveness. INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY Syd watches Bill stride over to Brian seated at his usual table. BILL Wanna do some preaching with Syd and me? BRIAN So I can get worked over? No, thanks. BILL You're not gonna get worked over. Then at least join us. BRIAN No thanks. Syd marches over. SYD I'd like to read you that passage from Matthew. BRIAN I'm busy. SYD Too busy for God? BRIAN He did a lot of good having me sent here. BILL Maybe you sent yourself. You can't stay angry at God forever.

Syd and Bill walk over to other prisoners at another table. Prison Guard Baker strides over to Brian.

GUARD BAKER Your mom's waiting for you in the visitor's box.

Brian darts off.

INT. VISITOR'S BOX - DAY

A large, Plexiglas partition separates Brian from a gaunt Mary. Each puts a palm against the glass in the hopes of touching the other. They each pick up a telephone.

MARY

How are they treating you?

BRIAN

Lousy. I have to plug my nose to eat the food.

MARY

Why, Brian?

BRIAN What else could I do? We were strapped.

MARY So you'd rather rot in hell for killing a police officer.

BRIAN

Mom--

MARY

It's true!

BRIAN

If God exists, he wouldn't have let me get caught...or given you cancer...or taken Dad. If he really exists, why does he let anything bad happen?

MARY

We don't know his overall plan. You have to have faith, Brian.

Mary pulls out the worn memorial card and holds it against the glass.

MARY

I pray that somehow you'll be with me and Dad. Please, Brian. Our family chain must link again.

The guard escorts Mary away. Brian and Mary lock eyes until she leaves the room.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A hand reaches into a mailbox and pulls out letters. In his uniform, PRISON GUARD DONALDSON (50), dishonest, thumbs through the letters on the way to the front door.

Prison Guard Donaldson flips over a letter which has no return address. He rips open the letter. Inside are several large bills.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd and Bill preach to their followers in the center of the yard. Joe, Jesse, and Don lift weights.

Joe, Jesse, and Don get up from the weight benches. They conceal shanks in their hands. The three march toward Syd's group. Don stops, tosses his shank, and goes back.

Joe and Jesse close in on Syd's group. Some of the followers spot the two men and hurry off.

Joe stabs Bill in the side. He drops to the ground gasping for air. Joe and Jesse stab Bill repeatedly. Bill tries to block the rapid strikes with his hands, but is overpowered.

EAR-SPLITTING ALARMS BLARE. Don drops his head.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

A guard races past Brian. Brian looks out a window. He rushes out the door.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Tear gas canisters bounce off the ground sending out plumes of white smoke.

Prisoners lie down on their stomachs. A large CROWD CHEERS.

Brian races to the crowd. He gets a glimpse of Bill bleeding profusely.

Brian pushes his way to Bill who looks up at Brian. Bill lies in a pool of blood with his arms straight out from his body and bloody palms facing up.

> BILL Sorry for changing your life, Brian.

> BRIAN It's alright. I forgive you.

BILL I'm going to meet my maker.

BRIAN Don't talk, Bill.

BILL You can still change, Brian.

Bill's face gets white. His eyes glass over.

Guards in gas masks restore order.

Guards haul away Joe and Jesse.

INT. DON'S CELL - NIGHT

The cell door opens. Don enters. Several cartons of cigarettes are on his bed. He rips apart the cartons.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian walks over to his usual table carrying several law books. He sees a Bible on the table. He tosses the Bible onto another table.

A bruised Syd limps over to Brian.

SYD Still too busy for God?

BRIAN How do I get a knife? SYD Why do you want--

BRIAN How do I get a knife?

Syd points at Brian's chair.

SYD

You're sitting on about twenty knives, but if you kill someone don't expect to go to Heaven.

BRIAN I'm not going to Heaven.

SYD You don't know that.

BRIAN

How long are they gonna be in solitary?

SYD

A long time.

BRIAN Can't believe he's gone.

SYD

I've seen men have their throats slashed right in front of me. When you see a man lose his life, it changes your life forever.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian sits alone at a table. The workout area is empty. Morgan, John, and Ollie listen to Syd preach. Don listens to Syd from the back of the group. He walks over to Brian.

> BRIAN What do you want? Fat piece of...

DON I didn't know they were going to kill him.

BRIAN Don't give me that! You could've stopped it! DON And have them do the same to me? I'd be dead a long time ago if I wasn't hang'n with them.

BRIAN You let a guy die for some lousy cigarettes.

DON You let a cop die for a few bucks.

Syd's group breaks up. Morgan, John, and Ollie hustle over to Brian and Don.

OLLIE Syd says you got a shot at Heaven!

Morgan gets in Don's face.

MORGAN Get out of here you fat tub of goo.

Don leaves.

JOHN He says you'll probably have to spend some time in Purgatory.

OLLIE Maybe we all have a shot.

BRIAN We can't get to Heaven.

OLLIE

Why not?

BRIAN You went to church. Thou shall not kill.

JOHN Is that what you think?

MORGAN I always thought if you did more good than bad you went to Heaven.

OLLIE Bein' golden. Some have confused looks.

OLLIE Live by The Golden Rule.

JOHN There's gotta be more to it than that.

BRIAN Obey the Ten Commandments.

MORGAN No one in here has.

OLLIE No one outside has.

JOHN

You say'n nobody's going to Heaven? I'm not buying it.

MORGAN If that's the case, why have a Heaven?

OLLIE I thought God wants us all with him.

BRIAN Not murderers.

Syd strolls over.

SYD Maybe not, but he forgives those who believe.

BRIAN Face it. We're damaged goods.

SYD

Maybe prison's Purgatory on Earth and then we go straight to Heaven.

BRIAN

Dream on.

JOHN Doesn't anyone know what it takes to get to Heaven? OLLIE Guess we'll know in the end.

JOHN Isn't it worth the chance to be with your mom and dad, Brian?

INT. PRISON CHURCH - DAY

Several prisoners, including Brian, Morgan, John, Ollie, and Syd watch CLERGYMAN (30), well-intentioned, use an aspergillum to sprinkle holy water on Bill's coffin.

LATER

Brian meets with Clergyman at the back of the church.

CLERGYMAN Bill's in Heaven with his maker.

BRIAN He can't be. He killed a police officer.

CLERGYMAN He repented his sins and preached the word of God.

BRIAN

Yeah, but--

CLERGYMAN Who are we to say who God keeps out of His kingdom?

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian uses a large book to conceal the Bible hidden inside. The Bible is opened to Exodus 20, The Ten Commandments.

Brian runs his finger down The Ten Commandments. He pauses at number six: Thou Shalt Not Kill. He runs his finger down to number eight: Thou Shalt Not Steal.

Brian slams the Bible shut.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian enters. The steel door slams shut. An envelope is on his bed. He opens it and takes out the worn motto card he INSERT THE LETTER

Dear Brian McClean,

You have our deepest sympathy as we regret to inform you that your mother, Mary Geraldine McClean, passed away Friday, November 26 due to a heart attack.

Sincerely, Gerald Johnson, Warden

He falls on his bed and clenches his fist around the letter. A rat runs across the floor.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie sit at a table with their backs to each other as they watch for ambushers.

MORGAN Sorry about your mom.

JOHN

Sorry.

Brian wheels around.

BRIAN Why couldn't we just get jobs like everyone else?

JOHN You can't change that now.

He looks around at all the questionable characters.

BRIAN Now my parents are in Heaven and I'm here with this scum.

JOHN Way to love one another, Brian.

MORGAN We have to be rehabilitated. BRIAN Prison isn't for rehabilitating! It's to punish you! People don't change.

MORGAN People in here change.

BRIAN

Bullcrap.

JOHN What? Ten percent, Morg?

MORGAN

More.

OLLIE Maybe even make it to Heaven.

BRIAN

Bull.

MORGAN You don't know.

BRIAN This is hell on Earth before we go through hell in hell.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A hearse leads a small caravan.

A prison bus with steel bars across the windows parks. Guard Baker and ANOTHER GUARD, both in black suits, help Brian exit the bus. Guard Baker removes Brian's ankle shackles, but keeps him in handcuffs.

LATER

Brian and the small group of people watch Mary's casket get lowered into the ground.

Guard Baker sees Brian constantly looking around.

GUARD BAKER Don't even think about it...unless you want to join her.

People leave. The guards escort Brian away. Brian looks back at his mother's final resting spot.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - EVENING

Brian enters. The steel door CLANGS shut. He notices a Bible on his bed. He slides the Bible between the steel bars and sets it on the ground outside his cell.

Brian stares at the Bible. He turns to the cell next door.

BRIAN

Hey, Bernie.

BERNIE (O.S.)

Yeah.

BRIAN How well does Syd know the Bible?

BERNIE (O.S.) Knows it better than anyone in here. Why?

BRIAN Just wondering.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian reaches for a law book on a book shelf. He notices several Bibles mixed in with the law books.

LATER

There are several piles of legal books on Brian's table. Syd watches an agitated Brian write on a legal pad and quickly erase what he just wrote.

Brian frustratingly scratches over what he just wrote, tears the sheet off the pad, crumples it into a ball, and heaves it across the room. Syd approaches Brian.

> SYD Face the fact. You're gonna be here awhile.

BRIAN I could just end it all.

Syd is shocked.

SYD If you kill yourself, you can't go to Heaven. If I breathe, I can't go to Heaven.

SYD God isn't for bailing you out when times are tough and ignored when times are good.

BRIAN

Why me?

SYD No one said life was gonna be easy. All these books, but you're missing the most important one.

He taps his Bible.

BRIAN

I was involved in a murder. I can't go to--

SYD

I know!

Prisoners look over.

BRIAN

God's not gonna like what He sees when He watches my life's film.

SYD

He already knows what you've done. He doesn't have to wait till your life's over. Who knows what he'll decide?

BRIAN

Hell. That's what.

SYD

You think because you sinned you might as well give up? We're all sinners. That's why he died on the cross for us.

BRIAN

Yeah, but--

SYD Don't you want your film to show you in the best light from this point forward?

Brian ponders this. He rests his hand on the top of the chair next to him for what seems like an eternity.

SYD Look, if you don't think you've got a chance, at least help others try to get to Heaven. Maybe it'll help you get to Heaven.

Brian pulls the chair out. Syd sits down and slides the law books away.

Brian reads the Bible. Prisoners SNICKER at him. He slides a large book back and hides the Bible inside the large book.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - DAY

Brian lies in bed. A prisoner pushes a book cart outside his cell. Brian points at the cart. The prisoner passes him a Bible between the steel bars.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian and Syd read their Bibles. Syd notices Brian's Bible hidden inside a larger book.

SYD Does God embarrass you?

Brian sets the larger book down exposing the Bible. He gets antsy in his chair.

BRIAN This is too hard.

Syd slides Brian's legal pad toward Brian. He tears off Brian's law notes and crumples them up.

SYD Take your time. Make some notes.

Brian looks blankly past his Bible. His eyes get moist.

BRIAN Are any of us going to Heaven? Syd slips a tasseled bookmark into his Bible.

BRIAN I mean, if He loves us, why can't we all go to Heaven?

SYD

I don't know. Maybe we're examples to others to not do the things we did.

BRIAN Are we going to Heaven?

SYD Almost all of us can if we have faith.

BRIAN Almost all? God doesn't take murderers, does he?

Syd shifts in his chair.

SYD Maybe not the actual killer.

BRIAN Bill's not in Heaven, is he?

SYD I prayed for him since he got here.

BRIAN

Is he?

SYD He changed his ways...had faith at the end. It's up to God now.

Brian places a tasseled bookmark in his Bible and closes it.

SYD We're only spinning through space on this blue and white marble for a short time. What we do on Earth for seventy years is nothing compared to what awaits us in Heaven for eternity.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

A much slimmer Don jogs alongside the perimeter wall.

Morgan, John, and Ollie watch for ambushers as Brian and Syd read their Bibles.

BRIAN You really think there's a God?

SYD

Guy, Brian. You sure you were raised Catholic? Come here.

Syd and Brian march across the yard and up several concrete steps.

SYD We've all had strange miracles happen to us, so there's a God.

The two reach the top. Brian tries to catch his breath. They observe an extraordinary sunset over the harbor.

> SYD Who do you think made that? It sure wasn't man.

INT. PRISON - DAY

Guards escort four prisoners out of the room marked "PROCESSING." They carry blankets, sheets, and soap as they approach Brian. Brian looks up at Warden Johnson who nods.

Brian offers a Bible to each of the four prisoners as they walk by. The first three decline the Bibles. The last prisoner accepts a Bible.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd and Brian preach to several prisoners including Don.

Don's eyes fill with fear when he sees Joe and Jesse exit a building. He immediately heads for the weight benches. Other followers see Joe and Jesse and quickly leave.

Joe and Jesse glare at Syd and Brian. Brian abruptly leaves for his usual table.

Syd marches over to Brian.

BRIAN I can't do it Syd.

SYD Not even for God?

BRIAN I don't want to get killed.

SYD You promised you'd help the others get to Heaven.

BRIAN

Sorry, Syd.

LATER

Syd and Brian preach to a tiny group far away from Joe, Jesse, and Don. Brian anxiously keeps an eye on the three.

Brian and Guard Donaldson see Joe, Jesse, and Don head toward the group. Brian zips toward his table. Guard Donaldson turns and walks away.

Joe and Jesse push their way through the group while Don acts as a lookout. They knock Syd to the ground and kick him. Don spots a guard. He WHISTLES. The three leave.

Brian hustles to Syd. He pauses when he hears him mumbling.

SYD Lord, please forgive them, for they know not what they do. Help me show them your truth and light.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian and bruised Syd read their Bibles.

BRIAN Why'd you get into preaching?

SYD Guys would get out, and end up right back in here. I wanted them to make a real change...to find God.

BRIAN Any of 'em change? SYD

Some.

BRIAN Why are you here, Syd?

Syd swallows hard.

SYD

I looked all over for a job. Nobody would hire me. We had no food. One Sunday after mass, I stole the collection money. Father McCarthy startled me. There was a struggle. He slipped and hit his head.

Brian is stunned.

BRIAN You killed him?

SYD

I promised God I'd try to be like Father McCarthy and change every man that walked in here.

BRIAN You can't go to Heaven?

SYD It's in His hands now. I pray He'll show mercy on me when it's my time.

LATER

Syd and Brian preach to a group. Joe, Jesse, and Don burst through a door. Brian tries to leave, but Joe throws him against a wall. Joe and Jesse punch and kick Brian and Syd while Don acts as a lookout.

ALARMS BLARE. Guards rush in. They haul off Joe and Jesse. Morgan, Bill, and Ollie tend to Brian and Syd.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

SUPER: THIRTY-THREE YEARS LATER

Brian (61), has a scowl expression etched on his face that looks like it's been there for decades. He, Morgan (64), John (64), and Ollie (63), watch for ambushers.

A large, mixed group assists frail Syd (64), to the center of the yard.

Morgan, John, and Ollie head toward Syd's group. Brian stays.

Joe, Jesse, and Don (58), show the wear and tear of long prison lives. Ollie approaches.

OLLIE

Come on, Joe.

JOE No thanks, Ollie.

OLLIE

Jesse?

JESSE

Nope.

Ollie and Don head over to Syd's group.

PRISON GUARD ONE (40), cautious, notices a large group of Hispanics studying Syd's group. He passes Syd.

PRISON GUARD ONE Hispanics are planning something.

Syd scans the Hispanic group.

Armed tower guards, sensing something, keep a keen watch over the yard.

The large Hispanic group eyes Joe and Jesse. Several of the Hispanics walk in one direction while others walk in the opposite direction.

The remaining Hispanics speed walk straight toward Joe and Jesse who show panic for the first time. All three groups pick up speed as they converge on Joe and Jesse like killer bees. The Hispanics kick and thrust shanks into the men.

ALARMS BLARE. Tear gas canisters bounce on the asphalt sending out contrails of white smoke. Joe tries to run, but is quickly kicked, beaten, and stabbed.

Prisoners lie on their stomachs as an army of guards regains control. Joe's and Jesse's battered bodies lie unrecognizable in pools of blood.

Don watches as Joe's and Jesse's blood snake downhill towards Brian. Brian does a push-up to let the blood run under him. He fights to hold the push-up. He collapses into the blood. The blood soaks into his clothes.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Syd and WARDEN SEGERSTROM (55), blissful, look out a window at the active prison yard.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM We've always appreciated your help in keeping a peaceful prison, Syd.

SYD Morgan's group wouldn't hurt an ant.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM I'll see what I can do.

SYD Thank you, sir.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM You sure you don't want a hearing for yourself? I could set up--

SYD My work's not done here. Never will be.

EXT. PRISON HEARING BOARDROOM - DAY

Morgan, John, and Ollie pace anxiously. An ecstatic Brian bounces out and hugs the three.

INT. MESS HALL - DAY

Syd and the four are jovial.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER (25), condescending, heads over.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER You're only being let out because we don't have space for you. You'll never contribute anything to society.

BRIAN Better hope we don't find out where you live. Prison Guard Snider stares Brian down before leaving.

MORGAN You didn't need to do that.

BRIAN

I don't care.

JOHN

I'm not going to miss this place one bit.

OLLIE I'll be the first one out. Where are we going?

MORGAN We can pool the money they're gonna give us.

OLLIE Where are we going to stay?

MORGAN We can grab a cheap place. Our moving expenses shouldn't be much.

JOHN It's called jump on a bus and go.

They laugh.

SYD Either that or hitchhike.

BRIAN Nobody hitchhikes anymore.

OLLIE

Too many bad guys.

JOHN

We just spent thirty-seven years behind bars. We are the bad guys.

SYD

There's going to be a lot of people racing to work, getting the kids to school. Don't let 'em forget about God. Where you headed? MORGAN Back to Orange County, I guess.

OLLIE Don't know anywhere else.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian lies in bed reading the worn memorial card. He looks at the photo of his mother.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER

Lights out!

The lights go out.

SNIFFLES grow into BLUBBERING CRIES echoing off the walls.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

The four grinning prisoners are dressed in white t-shirts and khaki pants. Each holds a cardboard box.

Morgan, John, and Ollie have a dirt, cross shape on their foreheads. Syd bends down and rubs his thumb in the dirt. He makes the sign of the cross on Brian's forehead.

SYD Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Brian and Syd shake hands.

BRIAN Thanks for everything, Syd. I'll never forget you.

MORGAN Don't ever change, Syd.

Brian and the others hug Syd.

SYD Get to confession and receive the Eucharist right away.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER

Let's go.

Prison Guard Snider escorts the four prisoners toward the giant gates.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER (To Brian) You'll never make it to Heaven.

Morgan steps between Brian and the guard.

MORGAN (To Brian) Keep moving.

The inmates have their eyes fixed on the threshold.

JOHN This is unbelievable.

OLLIE What's the world gonna look like after so long?

BRIAN

My dad used to take me camping every summer. Home always seemed so different after only being gone a week.

Their pace slows. The gates open and the four walk through.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER See you shortly, ladies.

Brian waves goodbye to Syd, who makes the sign of the cross. Prison Guard Snider goes back inside the compound as the giant gates close behind him.

Morgan barely touches the massive wall.

MORGAN The last time I saw this side was when they brought us in.

A prison bus approaches. It waits for the gates to open. Brian sees Bernie on the bus. Bernie looks at Brian. The bus enters. The gates close.

The four creep down the street into their new world.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie scan their new surroundings as they ramble along a storefront sidewalk. Passersby and store owners eyeball the four. John looks inside his box. JOHN We got enough old stuff to open an antique shop.

OLLIE Let's pool the eight hundred bucks and try our luck in Vegas?

The other three give him "You idiot" looks.

A lady walking a dog approaches. The four find it difficult to make eye contact.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie climb aboard a bus with a destination sign which reads: LOS ANGELES.

INT. BUS - DAY

The four gaze at the rural landscape.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie step off the bus.

SUPER: COSTA MESA, CA

Well-dressed people with sleek cell phones and I-Pods rubberneck at the four.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The four spot a sports bar.

JOHN We haven't had hops in four decades.

BRIAN Let's hoist one for Bill.

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The four enter and immediately receive funny looks from the patrons. Like scared rabbits, they head straight to the men's restroom.

MEN'S RESTROOM

The four do their business.

They look around for the flush handles.

OLLIE How do you flush this thing?

They step away and the toilets flush automatically.

BRIAN

Wow.

They squirt soap on their hands. They look for faucet handles. They watch a man swipe his hands under a faucet and see water pour out. The man puts his hands up to a paper towel dispenser and paper towels spring out.

AT THE BAR

The four sit at the long bar on bar stools. Dozens of TVs play.

OLLIE Look at all the TVs.

JOHN Look how clear the pictures are.

BARTENDER (40), impatient, peers at the four.

MORGAN Four Falstaffs.

BARTENDER Falstaff? What's that?

MORGAN How 'bout four Lucky beers?

BARTENDER Never heard of it.

JOHN

Pabst?

OLLIE

Brew 102?

BRIAN

Look, bud--

BARTENDER

Got Bud.

Bartender reaches into a small refrigerator, opens, and disperses four Budweiser beers. The four raise their bottles.

MORGAN

To Bill.

JOHN

Here, here.

BRIAN I hope you're in Heaven with your family.

MORGAN I'm glad I'm on the right side of dirt.

OLLIE When I go, I don't want you guys spending a lot on my funeral.

JOHN We'll just throw a sheet over ya.

They laugh. John looks over a menu and almost spits out his beer.

JOHN Five bucks for a beer! We used to get a case for that!

Morgan grabs the menu from him.

MORGAN We gotta watch every dime from here on out.

EXT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The four exit. Three kids, including RICARDO (12), tattoos, carry spray paint cans as they're chased by HARDWARE STORE OWNER (50).

HARDWARE STORE OWNER Damn kids! You're gonna end up in prison!

Morgan spots a Wells Fargo bank across the street.

MORGAN

Wells Fargo!

Morgan runs across the street. A car HONKS and narrowly misses him. The others follow.

OLLIE I hope we're not gonna rob it. Cause I don't have another thirty-seven years.

INT. BANK - DAY

The four sit at BANKER'S (30) desk. Ollie points at the monitor on his desk.

OLLIE That's a computer!

Banker looks at Ollie funny.

BRIAN

He doesn't get out much.

A secretary delivers a check to Banker who hands the check to Morgan.

BANKER Here you are, Mr. Ehlers. We always wondered what happened to you.

The four grin at the check with wide eyes.

INT. PRIMERICA OFFICE - DAY

The four sit across from PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE (50).

PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE American Express bought E.F. Hutton and then we bought it from them.

A secretary hands a check to Primerica Executive who looks it over before she hands it over to Morgan.

> PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE You're an excellent example of buy and hold investing, Mr. Ehlers. A long-term investor today is someone who holds a stock for an

hour.

Morgan and the others gasp at the check.

MORGAN I thought Chevron and Exxon would do well.

EXT. PRIMERICA OFFICE - DAY

The four exit.

JOHN Now we can get a place!

OLLIE And have all the women and booze we want!

BRIAN Wait a minute. This is Morgan's money.

They stare at Morgan.

MORGAN I've lived with you guys for so long. I'm not going to leave you now.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Brian kneels at his mother's and father's graves.

BRIAN Sorry, I'll never be with you.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at his old house from the sidewalk.

Brian KNOCKS on the front door. AUNT ELIZABETH (85), quarrelsome, opens the door.

BRIAN Hi, Aunt Elizabeth. It's me, Brian. AUNT ELIZABETH I know who you are. What do you want?

BRIAN I just wanted to stop by and see how you're doing.

AUNT ELIZABETH I'm fine. Please, don't ever come back here.

She SLAMS the door. Brian walks slowly down the front steps.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at a house with an American flag out front. He slowly walks off without taking his eyes off the house.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian saunters along the sidewalk. A car waits at a red light. A young girl in the back of the car smiles at Brian who forces a smile back.

Brian watches several well-dressed people hustle past his old church with sparse, bland landscape. The dirty sign out front reads: OUR LADY QUEEN OF ANGELS CATHOLIC CHURCH. Brian continues on.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - DAY

John, Brian, and Ollie move a sofa into place against a wall.

They flop down on the sofa with LOUD EXHALES.

MORGAN

Here.

Morgan hands each of them an envelope. They open the envelopes to expose large bills.

JOHN Holy cow, Morgan!

MORGAN

We were ordered around for so long, I want you to enjoy the time you have left.

BRIAN

A little girl in a car smiled at me today. It made me think how I missed out having a wife and kids.

MORGAN

I'm afraid we all missed out on that.

OLLIE Maybe we're lucky. Seen how snooty people are?

BRIAN We hurt our families.

MORGAN

How many times were they asked where we were? How come we don't see Morgan anymore?

BRIAN What'd they tell 'em?

MORGAN

My family said I was an international banker...always out of the country.

JOHN I was overseas in the military, or something.

OLLIE I was a pitcher for the Baltimore Orioles.

BRIAN

You?

OLLIE That didn't last long, cuz they couldn't find my name on the team roster.

They laugh.

EXT. STREET - DAY

An HISPANIC GARDENER (50), smiles at Brian who walks along a store-lined street. Graffiti is spray painted on buildings. Some windows are broken.

Brian spots a fruit stand owner, WENDY (40), glum, in front of her store.

BRIAN

Good morning.

Wendy glances at his clothes and looks away. Brian looks at his clothes and moves on.

A lady, JUDY (35), and her daughter SARAH (10), approach from the opposite direction.

BRIAN

Hello.

Judy and Sarah look at Brian's unkempt hair and look away.

Brian rambles sullenly along a sidewalk. He looks over at his old church. He continues on.

INT. PRODUCE STORE OFFICE - DAY

Wendy stews at a desk with several envelopes marked "FINAL NOTICE." With one swoop of her hand she flings the envelopes off the desk.

EXT. THRIFT STORE - DAY

Brian exits wearing nicer clothes.

EXT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Brian exits sporting a new haircut.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Brian sees a schoolgirl, CAMI (10), waiting on the bench.

BRIAN

Hi.

Cami glances at Brian's tattoos and looks away. Brian looks over the bus schedule.

BRIAN Do you know how to read this thing?

Bus Twenty-three approaches.

BRIAN I guess I'll take this one.

The bus pulls to the curb.

INT. BUS - DAY

JESUS (8), Hispanic, needy, warmhearted, sees well-dressed kids JOSH (10), unfriendly, and CORY (11), cruel, get on and approach down the center aisle. Jesus pulls out a red, heart-shaped box from his backpack. He rubs the box.

Cory smacks Jesus on the head.

CORY Illegal alien.

JOSH

Nice clothes.

Brian gets on. He scans the packed, quiet bus. A notice at the front of the bus reads: PASSENGERS MUST BE SEATED AT ALL TIMES.

Brian pulls a bill from his wallet and tries to give it to the driver, DAVID (30), fat, short-tempered, uptight.

DAVID I don't take it! Put it in there!

He points at the bill acceptor. Brian tries to figure out where to put the money into the machine. In the side view mirror, David sees an old lady jogging toward his bus. David snatches the bill from Brian and feeds it into the machine.

DAVID

Sit down!

Passengers SNICKER. Brian sits in the front row next to DELORES (50), heavy makeup, guarded.

BRIAN Hello, I'm Brian. Delores looks out the window. The old lady catches up to the bus. David floors it leaving a plume of black smoke in her face.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Brian steps off the bus. He gapes at all the trees, buildings, and people. A man approaches.

BRIAN

Good morning.

The man walks past. Brian sees CINDY (40), with her daughter KENDRA (7).

BRIAN

Nice day, isn't it?

Cindy notices Brian's arm tattoos. She pulls Kendra in close to her side as they walk by. Another lady approaches.

BRIAN

Morning.

The lady sees his tattoos and looks away.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Pedestrians give Brian plenty of room on the sidewalk. There's more graffiti and broken store windows.

Hardware Store Owner surveys the vandalism.

HARDWARE STORE OWNER

Damn kids!

Brian observes busy people hustling past the church. He sees a sign which reads: CONFESSIONS THURSDAY 6:00 P.M.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Brian stands on the sidewalk staring at a house.

Brian knocks on the front door. His UNCLE BILL (85), reluctant, uncooperative, answers the door.

BRIAN Hi, Uncle Bill. It's Brian. I just wanted to say--

UNCLE BILL

Do you realize all the embarrassment you caused? Don't come around here anymore. You hear me?

BRIAN

Yes, sir.

Uncle Bill closes the door. Brian glumly turns and leaves.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian gawks at the house with the American flag.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

JOGGER (25), cases beachfront houses. He notices a home with the drapes closed and a heavy dusting of sand on the patio furniture.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Brian enters the dim, cavernous building.

He sees short lines of people outside of confessional boxes. He walks over and fidgets in one of the lines.

The door opens and a young girl exits. The girl stares at Brian's tattoos. Brian looks at his arms.

CONFESSIONAL BOX ONE

Brian kneels down. FATHER O' MALLEY (70), old-fashioned, intolerant, slides open an opaque window revealing another opaque window with several small holes.

BRIAN

Bless me father for I have sinned. The last time I went to confession was over forty years ago.

FATHER O' MALLEY Forty years! Don't you love the Lord?

BRIAN

Yes, Father.

FATHER O' MALLEY Don't you ever read the Bible?

BRIAN When I get a chance.

FATHER O' MALLEY What do you do for work?

BRIAN

I'm not working.

FATHER O' MALLEY Then you have plenty of time to read the Bible. Do you have a family?

BRIAN

No, father.

FATHER O' MALLEY So you have no wife, no kids, and no job? What have you been doing the last forty years? Sitting in prison?

BRIAN

No.

Brian drops his head. He leaves the confessional.

OUTSIDE CONFESSIONAL BOX ONE

Brian sees another confessional box.

CONFESSIONAL BOX TWO

Brian kneels down. FATHER KEN (40), black, thoughtful, analytical, slides open an opaque window revealing another opaque window with small holes.

BRIAN Bless me father for I have sinned. The last time I went to confession was thirty seconds ago.

OUTSIDE CONFESSIONAL BOX TWO

Brian waits as Father Ken exits. Father Ken puts his arm around Brian. The two sit in a pew.

BRIAN

I used to go to this school. I never thought I'd have the life I've had.

FATHER KEN

I commend you for wanting to change your ways. To love others is to love God.

BRIAN

Father Ken, how can I love others if they won't even say hello?

FATHER KEN If you wait long enough, people will show you their good side.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

An hourglass, with over half the sand in the bottom half, rests on a table. Brian lies on a doctor's lounge chair with a bright light on each arm. A doctor uses lasers to remove Brian's tattoos.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John enters with pizza boxes. He sits next to the others on the couch watching TV. He looks at Brian's arms.

JOHN Hurt, didn't it?

BRIAN Like getting splattered with hot grease. You gonna do it?

JOHN I'm thinking about it.

They dig in to the pizza. The TV NEWSCASTER reports.

TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.) A ten year-old girl was the victim of a drive-by shooting today...

BRIAN Let's kill the TV and eat together at the table.
They turn off the TV and bring the pizza to the kitchen table.

BRIAN I'd like to say grace.

The three stare at Brian. They set their pizza down. They watch Brian make the sign of the cross, fold his hands and bow his head. They do the same.

BRIAN

Bless us O Lord and these our gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord, amen.

The other three raise their heads and reach for their pizza.

BRIAN Angel of God our guardian dear...

The three fold their hands again.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian looks at the church. He continues on.

Two boys approach tattoo-less Brian from the opposite direction.

BRIAN

Hi.

The boys look away. Brian crosses the street to the produce store. Wendy arranges apples out front.

BRIAN Everything looks so fresh.

WENDY

We get this stuff all the time.

Brian chooses an apple and hands Wendy some change. She watches Brian cross the street.

Brian walks spiritlessly through an alley. He looks up at the sky with moist eyes.

BRIAN

Why, God?

Brian KICKS a commercial trash can. He hears WHIMPERING. He looks behind the trash can. He sees a dirty, bloody border collie tied to a chain link fence with barbed wire.

Brian carefully frees the dog from the barbed wire. The dog licks Brian.

Brian carries the blood-soaked dog to a nearby house. He hoses it down. The skinny dog drinks a lot of water and shakes water off its body. Brian takes off his shirt and pat-dries the dog.

Brian shakes out his shirt and puts it back on. He walks away. The dog follows.

Brian notices the dog following him.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Cami is on the bench. Brian reads the bus schedule.

BRIAN

Do you have the time?

Cami looks at Brian's bloody shirt and the somewhat bloody dog. She looks away. Brian pets the dog. Bus Twenty-three pulls up.

BRIAN

Stay away from your owner.

The dog watches Brian get on the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

The bus is packed, yet quiet. Jesus looks at the dog and then Brian.

BRIAN

Good morning.

David looks out the window and honks the horn at a car blocking the road.

DAVID

Come on! Move!

Brian slides a bill into the bill acceptor. He sits down in the first row next to Delores.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

The dog watches the bus leave until it's out of sight. It lies down.

INT. BUS - DAY

Delores looks out the window.

BRIAN Good morning.

DELORES You wanna meet for dinner tonight?

BRIAN

Yeah.

DELORES Where do you wanna meet?

BRIAN

I'm new around here. You tell me.

Delores turns to Brian wearing a Bluetooth earpiece.

DELORES Did you say something?

A smile disappears from Brian's face.

The bus stops and Delores gets up.

DELORES Have a nice day.

A hint of a smile appears on her face.

INT. BUS DEPOT - DAY

Brian hops on a bus which reads: CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST.

EXT. BUS - DAY

The bus kicks up a cloud of dust along a rural road.

Brian enjoys the scenery. The bus slows down. A flock of sheep blocks the road. The bus stops.

Brian watches a border collie corner a lone, black sheep in the distance. A shepherd catches the black sheep and carries it back to the flock.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Bus Twenty-three pulls to the curb. Brian exits. The dog he rescued rushes over.

BRIAN You gotta be kidding.

The dog licks him wildly. Brian pets the dog.

BRIAN Have you been here all day?

INT. MORGAN'S HOME - DAY

Brian gets a bowl out of the cupboard. He opens the refrigerator and puts leftover sausage and ham in the bowl.

BRIAN

Here you go.

He places the bowl on the floor. The dog gulps down the meal in no time. Brian gets more food out of the refrigerator and places it in the bowl. The dog eats.

BATHROOM

Brian gives the dog a bath.

BRIAN Why would anyone tie you to a fence with barbed wire?

John and Ollie poke their heads in. Brian dries the dog with a towel.

JOHN Why would anyone rob a bank and pop a cop?

OLLIE People do stupid things. JOHN Are you going to keep him?

BRIAN If it's okay with you guys.

The dog slides out from the towel and licks John and Ollie.

BRIAN She's trying to talk her way in to it.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Cami waits at the bus stop. Her face lights up when she sees the newly-bathed dog.

CAMI Your dogs looks terrific...compared to before.

BRIAN I rescued her. Isn't she beautiful?

CAMI

She sure is.

Bus Twenty-three arrives. From their windows, Jesus and Delores see the dog and smile.

BRIAN See you later, Blacky.

The doors open. Brian gets on. The doors close.

INT. BUS - DAY

The bus is packed with the usual people and quiet.

BRIAN

Good morning.

Brian puts a bill in the machine.

DAVID

(mumbles)

Morn'n.

Brian sits down in the front row next to Delores.

BRIAN

Hi.

DELORES

Hello.

Jesus gets out of his seat and sits across the aisle from Brian.

JESUS

Hi.

BRIAN

Hi. I'm Brian.

JESUS I'm Jesus. Do you think I can play with your dog when I get back from school?

BRIAN Sure. Did you see Blacky yesterday?

JESUS Yeah. I wanted to play with her, but she just waited for buses.

Brian pulls a dog biscuit out of his pocket and hands it to Jesus.

BRIAN Give her this so she knows you're a friend of mine.

The bus stops. Brian gets off. The passengers observe Jesus wave goodbye to Brian.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Blacky waits. Bus Twenty-three approaches. Blacky perks up. The doors open and Jesus gets off.

JESUS

Hi, Blacky!

Blacky watches the doors until they close. The bus leaves. Blacky lies down and waits. Jesus takes the dog biscuit out of his pocket. Blacky wags her tail. Jesus gives her the treat. Blacky picks up an old tennis ball and drops it in front of Jesus. Jesus throws the ball, and Blacky blazes after it.

INT. BUS - DAY

Brian looks out the window.

BRIAN

Oh my God.

A crowd gathers to watch as Blacky leaps high and catches the tennis ball.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Blacky and Jesus run over to the bus stop. Brian gets off Bus Twenty-three. Blacky leaps into Brian's arms and licks him wildly.

> JESUS Blacky can do a lot of tricks Brian! Watch!

Jesus gets down on all fours, taps his back and simultaneously throws the tennis ball up in the air. Blacky runs at Jesus, jumps off his back like a springboard, and catches the ball. More passersby stop to watch.

> BRIAN That's terrific!

JESUS That's nothing. Watch this.

Jesus pulls a Frisbee out of his backpack. The red, heart-shaped box falls out. Jesus carefully brushes it off and places it back into his backpack.

Jesus flings the Frisbee. Blacky takes off after it, tracks it down, and makes a leaping catch.

BRIAN

Unbelievable!

JESUS She gets every one I throw!

Brian notices other passersby, including Josh and Cory, stop to watch. A BUTCHER (40), turns to Wendy.

79.

BUTCHER Aren't you the produce lady?

WENDY

Yes, I'm Wendy.

The two shake hands.

Others converse and point at Blacky. Josh and Cory walk over to Jesus.

CORY

Can we play with her?

JESUS

Sure.

Jesus hands the Frisbee to Josh. Josh throws the Frisbee. Blacky retrieves it. Brian observes all the smiling faces.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ollie enters with the mail.

OLLIE Hey, a letter from San Quentin.

JOHN If they made a mistake, I'm not going back.

Ollie hands the letter to Morgan who opens it. Brian, John, and Ollie gather around Morgan who reads the letter.

MORGAN

Shoot.

BRIAN

What?

Morgan hands Brian the letter. Brian reads the letter. His eyes could burn the house down as he HYPERVENTILATES.

Morgan puts a bear hug on Brian who thrashes about trying to escape.

BRIAN

Let go of me!

John reads the letter.

BRIAN

Let me go, Morgan!

Morgan releases Brian.

JOHN Syd's in a better place now.

BRIAN No, he's not! He killed a priest!

Brian storms out.

OLLIE What happened?

JOHN The young Hispanics killed Syd.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The full moon and abundant stars cast light on beachfront homes.

From atop a lifeguard tower, Brian watches waves crash against a jetty.

Brian wipes tears from his eyes. He steps down from the tower. He heads for the houses.

INT. BEACHFRONT HOME - NIGHT

There are large trash bags, TVs, and stereo equipment just inside the front door. Jogger hustles to the front door with trash bags swung over his shoulder.

Jogger quietly opens the front door.

EXT. BEACHFRONT HOME - NIGHT

Jogger pokes his head out and checks to see if the coast is clear. He exits and tosses the trash bags into the back of a van. He dashes back into the house.

Jogger pokes his head out. He doesn't see Brian approach from the beach. He dashes out with the TV. He places the TV inside the van and darts back to the house.

Brian sees the van with the back doors open. He checks it out.

A stereo CRASHES into the back of Brian's skull. Brian drops to his knees. Jogger kicks Brian hard in the stomach. Brian rolls onto his back.

Jogger holds the stereo over his head. Brian rolls out of the way. The stereo SMASHES onto the pavement. Brian grabs a sharp, broken piece of the stereo.

ELDERLY MAN walks his dog. He sees Brian stab Jogger in the torso. Elderly Man quickly punches three numbers on his cell phone.

Brian GASPS for air next to motionless Jogger.

Fear fills Brian's eyes. He quickly presses his hands onto Joggers wounds to stop the bleeding. He checks Joggers pulse. He performs CPR on Jogger as SIRENS WAIL.

Police cars SKID to stops. Police officers draw their guns at bloody Brian.

Elderly Man points at Brian. Officers handcuff Brian at gunpoint. They place him in the back seat of a patrol car.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

An ambulance SCREECHES to a halt. Brian watches with great concern as PARAMEDIC checks Jogger's pulse. He sees Paramedic shake his head. Brian kicks the steel caging.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A bruised Brian paces the small jail cell. He lies down on the bed. He looks at the photo of his mom and the worn memorial card with moist eyes.

> MARY (V.O.) Please, Brian. Our family chain must link again.

POLICE OFFICER (35), unlocks his cell. Brian pops up.

POLICE OFFICER We got ahold of a neighbor's surveillance video. Your story checks out.

Brian exits the jail cell.

Brian kneels in a pew. Father Ken walks over. They sit in the pew.

BRIAN Someone finally said hi to me.

FATHER KEN Good, Brian! Hey, I was wondering if you'd like to be our sexton.

BRIAN I'm not that kind of guy.

FATHER KEN You'd take care of the church and school.

BRIAN

Oh.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Jesus, and Blacky walk down a street. Jesus tosses the tennis ball into the air and Blacky catches it. An Hispanic WINDOW CLEANER (22), smiles at Brian.

WINDOW CLEANER Love your dog.

BRIAN Thanks. I'm Brian.

The two shake hands.

BRIAN I'm going to be working at the Catholic church. You're welcome there anytime.

Brian and Blacky continue on. WILBUR (40), black, a mountain of a man, races up to them.

WILBUR

That's my dog!

Blacky jumps into Brian's arms and snarls at the gigantic figure.

WILBUR You stole my dog! BRIAN I didn't steal her! I rescued her.

Wilbur lunges for Blacky who barks and snaps at his hands. Wilbur backs away.

> BRIAN Why'd you tie her up?

WILBUR Because she stopped doing tricks.

BRIAN So you tied her up with barbed wire?

WILBUR

That's my dog!

Blacky barks at Wilbur.

BRIAN It doesn't look like she wants you.

Brian turns and takes a couple steps.

WILBUR I want five hundred bucks for Killer!

Brian turns around.

BRIAN Killer? I'll get your money. And her name's Blacky.

Brian strides off. Blacky gets in one last snarl before licking Brian's face.

INT. MORGAN'S HOME - NIGHT

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie eat pizza at the table. Brian gives Blacky a piece of pepperoni.

BRIAN I'm moving to the church tomorrow. They hired me to watch over it and the school in exchange for room and board. JOHN Will they let you take Blacky?

BRIAN

Yup.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian takes several dying plants and flowers off the altar steps.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian plants the dying plants and flowers in the garden by the front steps.

Brian fertilizes and waters the garden.

Blacky spots Wilbur. She walks up to him. He pets her.

WILBUR

Please forgive me.

Blacky looks up at the church. Wilbur looks up at the church. He walks up the church steps.

Several uniformed students watch Brian clean the "OUR LADY QUEEN OF ANGELS" sign as they walk to school.

Brian polishes the giant steel cross. The blinding sunlight blasts off the cross and catches Wendy's attention. Wendy walks up the steps and enters the church.

Wilbur exits the church. He spots Brian.

WILBUR You wouldn't let me have her back, would you?

BRIAN She likes being with me.

WILBUR

I know.

BRIAN There's no excuse for abuse.

WILBUR

I know.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Schoolkids play. The church is in the background. Brian washes classroom windows. He sees a MOTHER (40), walk out of the principal's office with her MISCHIEVOUS SON (8).

MOTHER

How do you ever expect to get to Heaven?

MISCHIEVIOUS SON I'll just keep running in and out and slamming the door until Saint Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, come in or stay out.'

Several schoolkids, including STUDENT (10), approach Brian.

BRIAN

Hi. How are you?

The schoolkids pass Brian. SISTER ROSEMARY (30), meddlesome, observes the schoolkids snub Brian.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Sister Rosemary sits at her desk while the students take an exam. Student approaches Sister Rosemary with her test. Student points at her test. Sister Rosemary shrugs her shoulders.

Sister Rosemary watches Student return to her desk with a perplexed look. Sister Rosemary smiles at Student who smiles back. Student gets up from her desk and races out of the classroom.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Student runs across campus to a shed filled with mops and cleaning supplies. Brian is startled to see Student.

STUDENT What's your name?

BRIAN

Brian.

STUDENT Nice to meet you, Brian.

Student takes off. Another student runs past Student in the opposite direction toward Brian's shed. Several students run toward Brian's shed.

STUDENTS What's your name?

BRIAN

Brian.

STUDENTS Hi, Brian! Nice to meet you!

More students run up to Brian.

STUDENTS What's your name?

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Brian and the priests are at the dining room table with hands folded and heads bowed. Salad, fish, bread, and wine are on the table.

BRIAN

...ever this night be at our side to light, to guard, to rule, and guide, amen.

Brian and the priests make the sign of the cross.

FATHER KEN How's it going so far?

BRIAN

Okay, I guess.

They dig into the food.

FATHER KEN If you love one another as yourself, you'll have no problems.

FATHER O' MALLEY The ultimate measure of a human is their love. FATHER KEN You were put here for a reason, Brian. We're all part of His master plan.

FATHER O' MALLEY He gives each of us a special purpose.

FATHER KEN If we don't seek it, it's like spitting in God's eye.

FATHER O' MALLEY Our lives are God's gift to us and what we do with our lives is our gift back to God.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Brian dusts the altar in the dim church. A candle flickers in a red vase. He mops using a back and forth motion.

Brian kneels and looks up at the crucifix.

BRIAN I hope I'm serving you the way you want. Please help me get to Heaven, Lord.

He hears one of the rear doors open and close. Brian hides in an area just off from the altar. He watches a small figure enter and warm himself against the radiator.

The giant crucifix attracts the attention of the small figure who moves up to the front of the church. Brian sees that it is Jesus. Jesus kneels in the front pew and folds his hands.

JESUS

Lord, please have my brother leave the gang so he doesn't get in trouble.

Jesus makes the sign of the cross and gets up. He kneels back down.

JESUS Just so I know you've heard me, please leave me a toy car. I'll pick it up tomorrow. And could you please put a man in it? Thanks. He makes the sign of the cross and leaves. EXT. BUS STOP - DAY Bus Twenty-three pulls to the curb. Brian pets Blacky. BRIAN Be a good girl. CAMI Have a nice day, Brian. BRIAN You too, Cami. Make someone smile today. Brian gets on the bus. INT. BUS - DAY The people are more talkative. BRIAN Good morning. DAVID Good morning. Brian puts his bill in the bill acceptor and sits in his usual front seat. BRIAN Good morning. DELORES Good morning. Jesus sits across from Brian. JESUS How's Blacky? Hi, Brian. BRIAN Great. Jesus, do you have any brothers or sisters? JESUS I have a big brother, Ricardo. BRIAN

How about your parents?

Jesus glumly looks away.

JESUS My dad's never home...works three jobs. My mom died of cancer.

BRIAN I'm very sorry to hear that.

Jesus unzips his backpack. He takes out the red, decorative, heart-shaped box, and a wallet. He opens the wallet and shows a picture to Brian.

Brian studies the photo.

BRIAN I'm sure she was special.

Jesus gazes at the red box.

JESUS She still loves me, even from Heaven.

BRIAN I'd like to meet your brother.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian and Blacky walk along a tree-lined, residential street. Brian sees a girl with a missing arm.

BRIAN (V.O.) Lord, please watch over this girl throughout her life.

Blacky stops and looks down the alley where Brian rescued her. Brian follows Blacky past the large, commercial trash can where she was tied up.

Blacky stops on a house doorstep. Brian rings the doorbell. Wilbur opens the door.

BRIAN I've got your money.

Brian opens his wallet and hands Wilbur the money. Wilbur pets Blacky.

WILBUR My wife passed away recently. I guess I took it out on her.

BRIAN Sorry to hear about your wife.

Brian sees several bags of dog food inside the house.

BRIAN

You still got some dog food. Why don't you rescue a dog from the pound? And this time take good care of it.

Brian walks away. He observes Blacky licking Wilbur's hand.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian plants flowers. Passing students wave to Brian.

A passerby admires the new landscape. Blacky guides the passerby up the church steps as others descend the steps.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The candle flickers in the red vase. Father O'Malley observes Brian from just off the altar.

Brian pulls a toy car out of a bag. He puts a small man in the car and places it on the altar steps.

He dunks a mop into a bucket and squeezes the excess water out. He mops the marble floor around the altar using a back and forth motion.

Brian looks up at the crucifix. He kneels on the altar steps and folds his hands. He EXHALES deeply.

> BRIAN Lord, please forgive me about Officer Garner.

Brian hears the back door open. He hides behind the area just off the altar.

Wendy walks down the center aisle and kneels in the front pew. She looks up at the giant crucifix and CRIES. Brian marches over.

> BRIAN What's wrong, Wendy?

WENDY They're foreclosing on my house. Brian comforts Wendy.

LATER

Brian mops. He hears the back door open and close. He hides behind the area just off from the altar. A small figure enters and warms himself against the radiator.

The small figure strides toward the altar. Jesus moves faster as he makes out the toy on the altar steps. He picks up the toy and grins up at the giant crucifix.

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Brian looks in a mirror. A picture of Jesus Christ on the wall behind him reflects in the mirror.

The Eight Beatitudes are posted next to the mirror. Brian reads the Beatitudes.

DINING ROOM

Brian and the priests sit at the table with lots of food. Blacky lies on the floor near Brian. Brian tosses Blacky some food which she chomps on.

> FATHER KEN Turning around gang members is a great idea.

> FATHER O' MALLEY You've asked for forgiveness for the officer shooting, and you've received it.

> > BRIAN

How could I?

FATHER KEN You may think you hurt God by the things you did in the past.

FATHER O' MALLEY God's love leaves no one behind, but how strong is your love for God?

FATHER KEN What's the most important commandment? BRIAN Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

FATHER O' MALLEY And with all your soul and with all your mind. Do you?

BRIAN

No.

FATHER KEN You love your parents so much you want to be with them in Heaven, but you're suppose to love God even more.

FATHER O' MALLEY Life's short, Brian. Heaven's forever.

INT. BANK - DAY

Morgan, Brian, and Wendy sit at Banker's desk. The four stand and Banker shakes Wendy's hand.

INT. BUS - DAY

Brian places a bill in the bill acceptor. There is more talking and even some laughing on the bus.

DAVID Good morning, Brian.

BRIAN Good morning, David.

From the side view mirror, David sees the same old lady running to catch his bus. Brian sits in his usual front row seat next to Delores.

DELORES

Hello, Brian.

BRIAN

Hi, Delores.

David waits for the old lady to reach his bus. He gets up and helps her onto the bus.

Jesus sits across from Brian in the front row.

JESUS

Hi, Brian.

BRIAN Hi. Are you going to play with Blacky today?

JESUS

Sure.

BRIAN Let's take her over to your place so Ricardo can play with her.

JESUS

Well...

BRIAN I'd like to meet him.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Jesus, and Blacky walk along a tree-lined street.

JESUS How old's Blacky?

BRIAN I'll have to ask Wilbur. Dogs don't live very long.

JESUS That's too bad.

BRIAN

Your time is your life, don't waste it. You can't get it back.

JESUS Ever since Mom died Ricardo isn't very nice.

BRIAN

How so?

JESUS He's always getting in trouble.

EXT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Jesus, Brian, and Blacky walk up the dilapidated steps. Paint is missing off the building. An oxidized Chevy is parked on the front lawn behind a rusty, chain link fence.

INT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Jesus enter the dingy structure. Several Hispanic men wearing t-shirts, blue jeans, and work boots watch TV and sleep.

JESUS They rent rooms.

They move down a hallway. Jesus KNOCKS on a door at the end of the hallway.

RICARDO

What!

RICARDO'S ROOM

Jesus and Brian enter. Ricardo lies on his bed. There's a beer on his desk next to him. There are several cans of spray paint throughout the untidy room. Brian picks up one of the cans.

> BRIAN Gonna do some painting?

> > RICARDO

Who's he?

JESUS This is Brian, the one with the dog.

RICARDO Can you pick me up some beer?

BRIAN Nope. I just wanted to talk to you. Let me talk to him.

Jesus exits and closes the door. Ricardo takes a sip of his beer.

BRIAN

Your brother's worried about you. He doesn't want you to end up in prison. RICARDO I don't need this.

BRIAN

I don't want you in prison.

Ricardo tries to take a swig of his beer. Brian grabs the bottle.

BRIAN You wanna end up in prison like me...always worried someone's gonna stab you in the back?

RICARDO

Leave.

BRIAN I spent thirty-seven years in prison. I'm only doing what I wish someone had done for me.

RICARDO

Get out!

HALLWAY

Brian exits with the beer bottle.

JESUS You were in prison?

EXT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Brian walks down the front steps as the screen door closes in front of Jesus.

BRIAN It's not something I'm proud of.

JESUS God will forgive you, right Brian?

Brian's moist eyes can't face Jesus.

BRIAN

I don't know.

He pours the beer out, tosses the bottle into a trash can, and leaves.

Brian, Father Ken, and Father O'Malley enjoy fish, bread, and wine.

FATHER O' MALLEY

Even when I was wrong, God showed me so much patience. He always waited for me to return to Him.

FATHER KEN

That's the great thing about God...He forgives all our sins. He wants us all with him in Heaven.

FATHER O' MALLEY Have you shown the same compassion for your enemies, Brian? It's easy to love those who love you. It's a lot harder to love those who have done you wrong.

FATHER KEN

When you forgive others and pray for your enemies, you remove the blackness from your heart so you can love again.

FATHER O' MALLEY

He made your life the way it is for a reason. Shed your past. It'll help you move forward.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at the house with the American flag. He finally moves up the pathway towards the front door.

BRIAN

Please help me, Lord.

Brian KNOCKS on the door.

The widow of slain police Officer Garner, MARGARET GARNER (65), compassionate, forgiving, answers the door.

Brian's moist eyes and quivering lips signal Margaret that something is seriously wrong.

BRIAN Mrs. Garner, I...I... Margaret gives Brian a tight hug. Brian is surprised. He puts his arms around her. The two weep.

INT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Margaret sit at a table covered with photo albums. On the wall is a crucifix, a photo of Officer Garner, and a poster entitled "Footprints In The Sand."

> MARGARET GARNER I always wondered what I'd do if one of you knocked on my door.

> > BRIAN

Now you know.

MARGARET GARNER And now I know. I'm so sorry about your mother, Brian.

BRIAN Thanks, Margaret. Thanks for being so forgiving.

MARGARET GARNER For many years I wasn't. The pain was so overbearing. I finally realized the hate I carried inside was not what God wanted. So I started praying for you. I felt the pain being lifted almost immediately.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Margaret hug on the front porch.

MARGARET GARNER Please tell the others to stop by.

BRIAN

I will.

MARGARET GARNER See you in Heaven, Brian.

Brian leaves.

Brian sweeps around the altar. The candle flickers in the red vase. Blacky sits next to the mop bucket.

BRIAN

Bring me the bucket, girl.

Blacky nudges the mop bucket across the floor with her snout.

Blacky looks up at the giant crucifix. Brian looks up at the crucifix, kneels, and makes the sign of the cross.

BRIAN Lord, thanks for giving me Blacky, my life, everything. Forgive me for leaving you. Please let me get to Heaven.

The SOUND of WIND. The candle in the red vase FLICKERS rapidly.

Brian mops using an infinity sign motion, instead of his usual back and forth method.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Brian, Morgan, John, Ollie, and Blacky hide behind the hardware store. They see Ricardo and another boy with spray paint cans. They roll up their sleeves to expose tattoos. Morgan sees Ollie struggle to make his bicep bulge.

> MORGAN We wanna scare 'em, not make 'em laugh.

They sneak up on the boys and grab the paint cans. Blacky BARKS at Ricardo as the other boy runs off.

BRIAN

Get him!

Blacky chases after the other boy.

BRIAN This is how I started down the wrong road...doing pranks.

Blacky catches up to the other boy.

Ricardo tries to walk away. John blocks his path.

JOHN Where are you going?

Ricardo stops. Morgan gets in Ricardo's face.

MORGAN We know about prison...wasting away with no end in sight.

Ollie gets in Ricardo's face.

OLLIE

Our friend was killed in prison.

BRIAN Is that what you want?

Blacky corners the other boy using her ranching instincts.

BRIAN

You're not a good example for your brother. You want him to end up in prison?

RICARDO

No.

Brian points at the graffiti.

BRIAN Think your dad wants to pay for this with his hard earned money?

RICARDO

No.

BRIAN Would your mom be happy?

Ricardo's lips quiver as he holds his breath.

BRIAN It's okay, let it out.

Ricardo EXHALES LOUDLY.

BRIAN My mom died of cancer, too. We don't want you to end up like us.

RICARDO

I know.

BRIAN

Stop the vandalism, study in school, and get a part-time job. You take care of the first two, I'll work on getting you a job.

RICARDO

Okay.

Blacky brings the other boy back. Ricardo and the other boy walk away.

INT. BUS - DAY

The usual passengers are on board and in a jovial mood. Jesus and Brian sit in the same row.

BRIAN Didn't you say you worked for the downtown association?

DELORES

That's right.

BRIAN What are the odds of getting some kids jobs cleaning up downtown?

DELORES I'm sure we can find them something.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian wears a florescent yellow vest and holds a red "STOP" sign as he walks kids across a street. Blacky sits on a corner next to a fold up beach chair.

BRIAN Have a nice day at school. Make someone smile.

INT. BUS - DAY

Everyone talks, laughs, and sits up front with Brian.

DAVID Why do you always say hi to everybody? It gets quiet as they wait for an answer.

BRIAN

I don't like the feeling that I'm missing out on meeting a new person...since God's inside each of us.

DELORES

Don't you ever get angry at people?

BRIAN

Once in awhile, so I do what the priests do; eat extra Eucharists to get more of Christ in me.

They all laugh. Brian scans all the smiling faces.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Brian, Ricardo, and Jesus stand in the checkout line with various cleaning supplies.

BRIAN How much money do you have?

RICARDO

Twenty bucks.

BRIAN

Pull out ten.

Ricardo reaches into his wallet and pulls out a bill.

BRIAN There's consequences to everything we do in life.

EXT. STREET - DAY

MONTAGE - BRIAN, RICARDO, AND OTHER KIDS CLEAN THE TOWN

-- They wash windows.

- -- They paint over graffiti.
- -- They sweep the sidewalks and gutters.

-- They help store owners replace broken windows.

Wilbur walks up with a black Labrador. Blacky and the dog get acquainted.

BRIAN Hey! You took my advice.

WILBUR

This is Lexie.

Brian pets Lexie.

BRIAN She's beautiful. She's counting on you to take good care of her.

WILBUR I'm going to, Brian.

EXT. STORE - DAY

People pet Blacky. Brian, Ricardo, and Jesus exit with shopping bags.

Brian sees the Hispanic gardener hard at work. Ricardo watches Brian take a can of soda out of a bag and place it near the gardener who waves.

Brian sees an elderly man trying to hang a sign. He nudges Ricardo toward the elderly man. Ricardo helps the man hang the sign.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

MONTAGE - RICARDO AND HIS FRIENDS FIX UP THE CHURCH

- They sand and stain the pews.

- They paint the church.
- They polish the floor with a buffer machine.

Brian watches Ricardo cross the center aisle wearing a breathing mask. Ricardo stops, genuflects at the crucifix, and makes the sign of the cross.

RICARDO You're low on sandpaper. EXT. CHURCH - DAY

The well-manicured garden is fresh and bursting with color. Brian greets parishioners. Wendy and Delores walk up the steps.

> BRIAN Hello, Wendy! Hello, Delores!

WENDY

Hello, Brian.

Cami walks up the steps in a choir outfit.

BRIAN

I want to hear you loud and clear.

CAMI Okay, Brian. Make someone smile.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The church is immaculate. Cami walks up the back stairs and joins the rest of the children in the choir loft. The conductor waves her hand and the children sing.

> CHILDREN'S CHOIR God of great and God of small, God of one and God of all...

Several seated parishioners including Wendy, Judy, Delores, and the window cleaner turn their heads back toward the choir and smile.

> CHILDREN'S CHOIR ...God of land and sky and sea, God of life and destiny...

Brian ushers people into pews.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (V.O.) ...God of silence, God of sound, God of whom the lost are found, God of day and darkest night, God whose love turns wrong to right...

More smiling faces including Cindy and the Hispanic gardener turn around. Brian smiles up at Cami who smiles back.

> CHILDREN'S CHOIR ...God of Heaven and God of earth, God of death and God of birth, God of now and days before, God who

CHILDREN'S CHOIR reigns for evermore...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian holds his red "STOP" sign as he walks schoolkids across a busy street. Brian waves to parents and kids who call his name from all directions.

> WENDY Hi, Brian! SARAH Hi, Brian! BRIAN Hi! JOSH

Make someone smile today, Josh.

JOSH

I will.

LATER

Brian folds up his beach chair. A wave of panic comes over him. He drops the "STOP" sign. He clutches his chest as he falls to the ground.

Brian's trembling hand reaches into his pocket and pulls out a rosary.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A few elderly people kneel in prayer in the dimly-lit church. A female, CHURCH SINGER (35), pleasant, and a PIANIST (30), practice while Father Ken listens nearby.

YOUNG GIRL hustles over to Father Ken. Father Ken quickly genuflects, makes the sign of the cross, and exits. Church Singer and Pianist hurry over to Young Girl.

People hurry over. Sobbing people trickle into the church and talk amongst each other. Some people kneel in pews.

Pianist sits down at the piano and PLAYS. More people enter. Church Singer steps up to the microphone and SINGS. CHURCH SINGER Shepherd me, o God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life...

INT. RECTORY - DAY

Father Ken rushes over to Father O'Malley in the hallway. Father O'Malley makes the sign of the cross.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Father Ken gets into a car with a wooden crucifix and rosary. The window cleaner and others hustle over. They speak briefly with Father Ken. Father Ken drives off.

> CHURCH SINGER (V.O.) God is my shepherd, so nothing shall I want, I rest in the meadows of faithfulness and love, I walk by the quiet waters of peace...

INT. CHURCH - DAY

More concerned people enter including the Hispanic gardener, the butcher, and the hardware store owner. People WEEP and hug one another.

> CHURCH SINGER Gently you raise me and heal my weary soul, you lead me by pathways of righteousness and truth, my spirit shall sing the music of your name.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

A crowd surrounds Blacky. Bus Twenty-three pulls to the curb. The doors open. Jesus jumps off the bus and runs to the crowd.

> CORY Brian's not coming back today Blacky.

CINDY He may never come back.

Confused, Blacky tilts her head from side to side. JESUS What happened? JUDY Brian had a heart attack. He's at Hoaq Hospital. Jesus takes off running. INT. CHURCH - DAY More visibly shaken people, including Wilbur and Delores, enter the church. Father O'Malley consoles the people. CHURCH SINGER Though I should wander the valley of death, I fear no evil for you are at my side ... EXT. STREET - DAY Jesus races down the store-lined street. People gather in clusters in front of the stores and talk on cell phones. CHURCH SINGER (V.O.) Shepherd me, o God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life. MONTAGE - JESUS THINKS OF TIMES WITH BRIAN -- Brian waves to shop owners. -- Bus passengers laugh with Brian. -- Brian and Jesus play catch with Blacky. -- Crossing guard Brian walks children across the street. Jesus runs toward the hospital. INT. HOSPITAL - DAY Jesus runs down a long, polished corridor.

CHURCH SINGER (V.O.) You have set a banquet of love in the face of hatred, crowning me with love beyond my power to hold.

BRIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Jesus enters winded. Brian lies in bed with tubing coming out of his nostrils. Jesus watches Father Ken give Brian the Eucharist. There are two burning candles in an open wooden crucifix and an hourglass low on sand on a table.

> FATHER KEN Lord, may our brother Brian safely reach your kingdom of light and life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen. (to Brian) May the Lord Jesus protect you and lead you to eternal life.

Jesus watches Father Ken dip his thumb in holy water and make the sign of the cross on Brian's forehead. Father Ken holds Brian's trembling hands.

> BRIAN I tried to touch a lot of people.

Father Ken looks at the hourglass.

FATHER KEN

Coaches practice for the final two minutes of a game, because they're the most important. It's the same with life, because you have to make amends before you meet your Creator.

BRIAN

But no one knows when they're gonna die.

FATHER KEN Like a burglar in the night, we have to be ready for Him.

A doctor enters and reaches for the hourglass. Father Ken grabs the doctor's wrist. The doctor and Father Ken lock eyes. The doctor puts the hourglass down without turning it over, and leaves.

FATHER KEN

To get to Heaven, you have to accept Jesus Christ, you have to repent your sins, and you have to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is your savior to someone.

BRIAN I haven't done the last one.

FATHER KEN

Say it to me.

With moist eyes, Brian EXHALES LOUDLY.

BRIAN Jesus Christ is my savior.

Father Ken blows out the candles and packs away the crucifix.

FATHER KEN Put in a good word for me with the man upstairs.

A grin disappears from Brian's face.

BRIAN You gotta tell Morgan and Ollie and John how to get to Heaven!

FATHER KEN

I will.

BRIAN Tell everyone!

FATHER KEN That's why I became a priest.

Father Ken leaves. Brian takes the photo of his mom and the worn memorial card out of his Bible and places them over his heart.

BRIAN I want you to have this.

He hands Jesus his Bible.

BRIAN

We spend so much time worrying about every little thing, when this is nothing compared to the big show.

JESUS

Is this the last time I'm going to see you?

BRIAN

I'll see you in Heaven. Treat people well and don't ever hurt anyone. Do what is right and you'll never go wrong.

Jesus unzips his backpack and pulls out the red, heart-shaped box.

JESUS I want you to have this.

BRIAN

I can't have chocolate.

Jesus forces Brian to take the box.

JESUS

My mom gave me it before she died.

Jesus smiles broadly as Brian opens the empty box.

BRIAN

What is it?

JESUS

It's love. It'll keep you warm when you're lonely and safe when you're scared.

Brian gives Jesus a long hug.

BRIAN Did you save enough for yourself?

JESUS Sure. Besides, that hug just gave me a lot more. Tell my mom I miss her.

BRIAN

I will.

The last sand granules fall in the hourglass.

CHURCH SINGER (V.O.) Surely your kindness and mercy follow me all the days of my life, I will dwell in the house of my God forevermore.

ALARM BLARES. The doctor and nurses rush in and work on Brian. The heart monitor flat lines. Brian's hand goes still over the photo and worn memorial card. Jesus SOBS.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Empty, cold, and dark. A despondent Blacky lies on the sidewalk. She perks up when she HEARS a distant bus.

A nearly-empty bus pulls to the curb. The doors open and a man gets off. The doors close and the bus leaves. Blacky lies down.

LATER

A bus approaches. A hopeful Blacky wags her tail. The empty bus continues on. A glum Blacky lies back down.

LATER

Bus Twenty-three approaches. Blacky sits up. The bus pulls to the curb. The doors open. Jesus gets off.

Blacky darts past Jesus and springs onto the bus.

JESUS

Blacky!

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Blacky WHIMPERS LOUDLY. Jesus hops on the bus. The bus driver turns around. Blacky runs up and down the center aisle checking the rows of empty seats.

JESUS Blacky, come here.

Blacky finally obeys and the two step off the bus.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Blacky lies down and waits. Jesus pets her.

JESUS

It's okay.

Jesus takes Brian's Bible out of his backpack and let's Blacky sniff it.

JESUS It's gonna be alright.

The two take a few steps. Blacky stops and looks back. Blacky takes a few more steps and looks back.

JESUS It's never too late to change.

Jesus walks with Blacky down a tree-lined street.

FADE OUT.