

THE THIRD FACE

Written by

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FROM THE BLACK--

THERAPIST (V.O.)
(*English accent, male*)
Close your eyes.

FADE IN:

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

CLOSE UP on a young woman's face, MANDY, 28. Her eyes are shut. She looks uncomfortable while seated in a comfortably padded chair. PULL BACK slowly - She's pregnant.

There's an HOURGLASS on the table in front of her. The sand is nearly full at the top; it trickles down through the bottleneck to the empty lower section. Like a timer.

There are several LAWBOOKS stacked beside the hourglass.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
(*English accent,*
continuous...)
You're relaxing now, letting
yourself sink down deep into the
abyss. Deeper, and deeper still
until you hit rock bottom. When you
look up you see more stars in the
sky than specks of sand on every
beach in the world, each one
twinkling down upon you. Calming
you. Soothing you. Can you picture
it? You're light as a feather here.
Floating. Breathe it all in. Long
and deep...
(beat)
Now exhale.

Mandy EXHALES.

THERAPIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
All of life's stresses dissolve
with this breath. How do you feel?

MANDY
(*child-like,*
continuous...)
Relaxed.

THERAPIST
Good. Now where are you?

MANDY
In my house.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What time is it?

MANDY
Night time.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
And what are you doing?

MANDY
Sleeping...
(beat)
Then I woke up to a sound. The
light was on.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What light?

MANDY
Motion sensor light. Outside.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What happened next?

MANDY
I looked around for my husband...
Then I remembered he's working.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
Then what?

MANDY
I got up and went downstairs.
Looked out the window...

A pause.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
And?

Mandy MOANS softly.

THERAPIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Are you looking out the window now?

MANDY
Yes.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
Tell me what you see.

MANDY
The garden...

THERAPIST (O.S.)
Details, Mandy. Details matter.

MANDY
It's been walked on.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What else do you see?

A pause. Quivering lips.

MANDY
I see a man.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
Where is he?

MANDY
In my backyard.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
And what is he doing?

MANDY
He's just... standing there.
Watching me.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What does this man look like?

Mandy shakes her head slowly, refusing to answer.

THERAPIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(stern)
Mandy, what does he look like?

A tear rolls down Mandy's cheek.

MANDY
Angry.
(beat)
He looks angry.

A pause.

THERAPIST (O.S.)
What happened next?

MANDY
He came inside. I-- I couldn't stop
him.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Then what?

Mandy visibly trembles as more tears stream down her cheeks.

MANDY

He... came inside.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

What does his face look like? Did you see it?

Mandy continues to CRY. Her eyes stay closed.

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

Mandy? Did you?

MANDY

Yes.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Describe him to me.

MANDY

I-- I can't.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

Try.

Mandy fights back tears, her eyes moving back and forth beneath closed eyelids.

MANDY

No.

THERAPIST (O.S.)

(voice rising)

What did he look like, Mandy?

Mandy swallows the lump in her throat.

MANDY

(whispers)

You...

She WHIMPERS.

MANDY (CONT'D)

(whispers)

He looked like you.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

A prison transport VAN stops by the side entrance. Various MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA in COVID MASKS are stacked together behind a distant chain-link fence, *snapping* pictures through cameras with zoom lenses.

Two Armed Officers, CONNORS and NIX, late 20s, both in COVID MASKS and adorned with BODY ARMOR, approach the rear of the van and open the doors.

A PRISONER in a red prison jumpsuit and a BAG over his head is seated on the floor. His hands are cuffed. His dirty white prison shoes are shackled together.

Connors and Nix reach up and grab a hold of the Prisoner, who *wrenches* his arms from Connors grasp before being grabbed again by Nix and secured.

The Prisoner angrily SHOUTS OUT something MUFFLED beneath the bag.

The Driver, REYES, 35, meets the Armed Officers at the rear of the van. He holds a clipboard with paperwork on it. He isn't wearing a Covid mask.

REYES

Enter the Sandman... Sign here,
please.

Connors grabs the clipboard, pops the pen off the top of it and quickly signs his name. He hands it back.

CONNORS

What's with the bag?

REYES

Fucking animal tried to bite me
when I was loading him in.

Nix gives the Prisoner a light shove while maintaining his grip on his arm.

NIX

That true, Sandman?

Something MUFFLED comes from underneath the bag. Probably a profanity.

REYES

He's gagged too. Just to be safe.

Connors grabs the Prisoner's other arm.

CONNORS

Good, I'm not trying to catch Covid again. Speaking of which, where's your mask?

REYES

I don't believe in that shit.

CONNORS

Oh, I see. Hear that Nix? He doesn't believe in that shit...

Nix eyes Reyes suspiciously.

NIX

Got any ID?

REYES

ID for what?

NIX

So we know you are who you say you are.

Reyes SCOFFS at this.

REYES

What, you think I swapped places with this guy mid-drive or something? I'm the crazy killer pulling a fast one, that it?

NIX

You said it.

Reyes glances at the various masked Media Members behind the fence and reaches into his pocket, producing his credentials; a BADGE with his picture. Nix looks it over.

REYES

Satisfied?

It checks out. Nix nods and hands back the badge.

NIX

We'll take it from here.

REYES

Lovely.

Reyes quickly heads back to the van, SLAMMING the door behind him before exiting security and peeling off.

Connors jostles the Prisoner back and forth like it's nothing. He glances at Nix.

CONNORS

So much for the Sandman, huh?

NIX

They're never as advertised...
Let's get him inside.

Connors and Nix lead the Prisoner away, heading toward a side entrance of the courthouse as the various masked Members of the media *snap* more pictures from behind the fence.

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELLS - DAY

From a LOW ANGLE near the floor, a pair of GREY SLACKS and scuffed up BLACK OXFORD SHOES walk briskly down the hallway past the various holding cells. A peeling BROWN BRIEFCASE hangs low below the waist.

The grey slacks and brown briefcase move on ahead. We RISE UP and focus on a SIGN on the wall which reads; '*WARNING! Covid-19 Face Masks Required Beyond This Point.*'

INT. COURTHOUSE, OFFICE - DAY

PAN UP from below the desk. The black Oxford shoes... The brown briefcase on the floor... The grey slacks...

LEONARD COYLE, 42, wearing a cheap suit that doesn't fit, sits behind a desk reading some paperwork from a rather extensive case file. There's a placard on the desk that reads, '**Leonard Coyle, Attorney-at-Law**'.

Leonard flips through his wallet, organizes a few credit cards. Checks the bill flap - No money inside. He SIGHS. *Tough times*. Places the wallet down on the desk.

Leonard sifts through a list of expert witnesses, reviewing the many documents splayed out in front of him. He SNIFFS the air, smelling something that is particularly foul. The search leads him to his own armpits.

He rummages through the various drawers in the desk and finds a half-used deodorant stick. He untucks his coffee-stained shirt and rolls some on.

TEAGAN, 35, dressed for court, no Covid mask, steps into the open doorway. She locks eyes with Leonard who looks like he's been caught red-handed doing something.

Leonard quickly puts the deodorant back, grabs his Covid mask and puts it on.

TEAGAN

Oh, I wouldn't worry about that.
More than six feet of separation
here.

LEONARD

Better safe than sorry.

Teagan glances at the placard then back to Leonard.

TEAGAN

Mister, um... Coyle, is it?

LEONARD

That's what the placard says. But
Leonard's fine.

TEAGAN

You're the lucky one that's
defending the lawyer killer, huh?
The Sandman?

LEONARD

That would be me.

TEAGAN

Fascinating case. Did you find out
his motive, you know, just between
you, me and the tape recorder in my
pocket?

Leonard CHUCKLES.

LEONARD

Honestly, I didn't really want to
ask. Kind of a touchy subject.

TEAGAN

Yeah, no doubt.

Leonard and Teagan both nod at each other, waiting for the
other to speak.

TEAGAN (CONT'D)

Pretty quick turnaround, from the
arrest to the transfer to the
trial...

LEONARD

It's Covid, everything is fucked up. Smaller cases are being pushed back. This one got pushed forward.

TEAGAN

They want to lock your guy up and throw away the key. Be done with it. A little insulting, no?

Leonard shrugs.

LEONARD

My client wants expediency as well. Things gets done when both parties agree.

TEAGAN

Probably why they brought the circus to Kentucky and gave it to Judge Rossum.

LEONARD

Seems to be the case.

TEAGAN

Yeah, the case of the decade... And it just fell right into your lap.

LEONARD

Lucky me.

TEAGAN

Indeed. Anyway, Leonard... this is a temporary office that needs to be booked in advanced.

LEONARD

Okay.

Teagen just stares at Leonard for a moment, waiting for him to catch on... He doesn't.

TEAGAN

I have it booked.

LEONARD

Oh, right! Sure. No problem.

Leonard grabs the brown briefcase and places it on the table, opening it. He gathers up his paperwork and case file and tosses them in. He picks up his wallet, a plastic card falls on the floor, unnoticed, and pockets it.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Just give me a second here.

He grabs the placard with his name on it.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
And I'll be out of your way.

TEAGAN
Take your time. It's not like you
have an entire courtroom waiting on
you or anything...

Leonard quickly checks his wrist - There's no watch. He
glances up at the clock on the wall.

LEONARD
Shit. Lost track of time.

Teagan considers something as Leonard scrambles.

TEAGAN
Have you seen his face?

Leonard pauses and locks eyes with Teagan.

LEONARD
Hm?

TEAGAN
Your client. Have you met him, you
know... face-to-face?

Leonard nods slowly.

LEONARD
Of course I have. He's my client.

TEAGAN
What does he look like? We're all
dying to know. The media hasn't
released anything yet. Seems
Indiana kept its cards pretty close
to its chest.

LEONARD
Yeah, that was definitely a
political move. Probably didn't
want the association that goes
along with prosecuting a case like
this. I mean, look what Dahmer did
to Wisconsin... BTK to Kansas...

TEAGAN
Hannibal Lecter to Maryland...

LEONARD
Funny.

TEAGAN
So come on, spill the beans like
you spilled that coffee on your
shirt.

Leonard SIGHS beneath his mask.

LEONARD
He looks like a two-headed Satanic
demon monster with horns...

Teagan arches her eyebrows at this.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
What do you want me to say?

TEAGAN
Just curious.

LEONARD
He's just a man. Looks like
everybody else.

TEAGAN
That's the scary part.

LEONARD
Your words, not mine. My client is
currently innocent.

TEAGAN
Right.

Leonard heads for the door, half-securing his briefcase.
Teagan steps aside so Leonard can pass her, which he does. He
heads out into the hall.

TEAGAN (CONT'D)
Take care. And good luck.

LEONARD
You too.

TEAGAN
You smell great, by the way. I
should know, that's my deodorant.

Leonard looks back, his briefcase opens, promptly dropping some paperwork out of his case file. The papers go everywhere. He bends down to collect them, GRUMBLING under his breath.

Teagen just shakes her head and closes the door.

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELLS - DAY

CLOSE UP on the SQUEAKY WHEELS of a wheelchair being pushed along a tile floor. The Prisoner's dirty white prison shoes convulse in the footrests, tied laces, legs bound in place by LEATHER STRAPS.

PAN UP to reveal the Prisoner's legs and torso, still adorned in the red prison jumpsuit he arrived in. ROPES have been wrapped around his forearms and secured to the armrests.

Behind him, at the helm, OFFICER RORY BRAND, 30, muscular build, wearing a Covid mask, pushes the wheelchair.

PAN UP past the heaving chest and exposed neck of the Prisoner sitting in it, up to the taped, Covid-masked face of MILES SANDHAGEN, 40s. The tape is wrapped around the Covid mask and looped multiple times around the back of his head.

Sandhagen GRUNTS, sounding MUFFLED and GAGGED by something beneath the mask and tape. He looks pissed.

Officer Brand stares straight ahead, white-knuckled as he holds the handles of the wheelchair.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The door BURSTS open. Various MEDIA PERSONNEL seated on the benches turn and look, all sitting six feet apart and wearing Covid masks.

Leonard moves past the various ONLOOKERS and MEDIA PERSONNEL (no cameras in the court) that all stare at him, up towards the Defendant's table, which is currently empty.

He places the case file on the table, slips his Covid mask down and takes a sip from the pre-poured glass of water, his eyes flicking to the empty jury box.

The court Clerk, LYDIA, 38, sits in front of a laptop at a small desk in front of the Judge's podium. She adjusts her Covid mask and places her fingers back down on the keys.

JUDGE RUDY ROSSUM, 62, old and weathered with reading glasses, looks less than impressed at Leonard's late arrival. He's segregated enough to not be wearing a Covid mask.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Glad you could make it, young man.
Mask on the bridge of the nose,
please.

Leonard adjusts his mask up onto the bridge of his nose.

LEONARD

I apologize, your Honor. I realize
I'm a bit late to the ball here.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Is that why your shirt's untucked,
Cinderella?

A few CHUCKLES in the courtroom, including one particularly intrusive one from the Prosecutor, SOLOMON DELL, 43, no Covid mask, who sits slouched in his chair next to the Assistant Prosecutor, CARMEN HOYER, 29. Carmen has a shaved head. Possibly alopecia. Possibly a choice. She wears a Covid mask.

Solomon looks comfortable in his arrogance. Leonard quickly tucks in his shirt.

LEONARD

Yes, it probably is.

The Bailiff, HAWKINS, 50, Covid masked, an ex-military type, eyes Leonard from his post near the Defendant's table.

Judge Rossum locks eyes with Solomon.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I'm honestly just happy to have a
defence lawyer show up at this
point.

Solomon nods in the affirmative.

SOLOMON

As am I, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM

(to Leonard)

So, Counselor... I assume you've
taken the month I've provided to
brush up on the case file?

LEONARD

I have, your Honor.

JUDGE ROSSUM
And you've met with your client?

LEONARD
I have.

JUDGE ROSSUM
And no objections?

Leonard looks puzzled.

LEONARD
Sir?

JUDGE ROSSUM
You're ready to proceed with the
trial today?

LEONARD
I am, yes.

Judge Rossum nods, impressed.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Music to my ears. Great to hear.

LEONARD
But my client isn't.

Solomon shakes his head, glances at Carmen.

SOLOMON
(quietly)
Here we go.

JUDGE ROSSUM
(to Leonard)
And what does that mean exactly?

LEONARD
It means that my client is refusing
to take part in the proceedings
today.

JUDGE ROSSUM
In what capacity?

Leonard considers something--

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE, JAIL CELL - DAY

The Prisoner, Miles Sandhagen, his arms and chest tied to a chair by rope, Covid mask taped around his head with a gag beneath it, sits across the table from Leonard, who is sweating for some reason.

The case file is on the table next to the brown briefcase, some paperwork out.

Sandhagen clenches his fists tightly as he attempts to escape his confines. The ropes CREAK and STRETCH as they try to maintain their integrity.

LEONARD

Now, um... mister Sandhagen...

Leonard looks up at the CAMERA on the wall, the RED LIGHT is on, recording. He glances toward the closed door with the small square window on it - Sees no one. He wipes some sweat from his brow.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

I've read the letter you sent me.
Three times, in fact. And I know
it's your wish not to attend court
today but as your lawyer I'm
required to--

Sandhagen *wrenches* himself to the side, TOPPLING OVER in his chair but staying secured. Leonard, clearly startled, stands up and looks toward the door.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Um, Officer....?

Leonard pins his back against the wall as the door BURSTS open. Officer Brand runs in and quickly lunges for Sandhagen, securing him in place.

Connors and Nix rush into the room and help lift up Sandhagen, who is making animalistic GRUNTING sounds beneath his gag.

NIX

Just fucking cuff him already.

OFFICER BRAND

Ropes are better for this guy,
trust me.

Leonard EXHALES a nervous breath and fixes his suit.

BACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Leonard snaps back to the moment as he looks at Judge Rossum.

LEONARD

Every.
(beat)
Every capacity.

Judge Rossum just stares at him, expecting more. Leonard
CLEARS HIS THROAT beneath his Covid mask.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

My client believes this is all some
scripted, pre-determined show put
out there by the media that will
ultimately force the system to lock
him up and throw away the key
without due process.

Solomon slouches back in his chair. *This could be awhile...*

LEONARD (CONT'D)

My client also believes that he
should've received a plea deal from
the arresting state of Indiana, as
he was under the influence of
psychedelics at the time of his
apprehension in South Bend. Deals
of that magnitude have been offered
before within these, um...
stringent guidelines.

Solomon glances at Carmen, not impressed. Carmen shakes her
shaved head and jots down a note.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

But, as of yet, my client hasn't
received any offers, thus rendering
him a little, how shall we say...
apprehensive about appearing today
or any other day for that matter.

JUDGE ROSSUM

So your client doesn't wish to take
part in the court process but still
wants the benefits of said process,
is that it?

LEONARD

I wouldn't put it quite like that,
Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM
How would you put it then?

LEONARD
I'd, um... well... I mean--

JUDGE ROSSUM
It sounds like your client wants to have his cake and eat it too. Must be nice to have that kind of built-in entitlement. I'd like to be married and have a live-in stripper girlfriend, but that ain't happening.

CHUCKLES throughout the court.

LEONARD
I think, your Honor... what my client is saying is... is that he believes--

JUDGE ROSSUM
Regardless of your client's *beliefs*, Counselor, he will be required to be in my courtroom for the already selected and unfathomably patient jury who are chomping at the bit to get started. Our neighbors to the north may have wiped their hands clean of him, sanitized even, but I don't wipe my hands clean of anything. I *like* the germs. I chase the immunities that come along with them. Get my meaning?

LEONARD
Not really, sir.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Well, think harder because it's there.

SOLOMON
I get it, your Honor...

Judge Rossum ignores Solomon, expecting this from him. He keeps focused on Leonard.

JUDGE ROSSUM
This is Kentucky, the state that *fixes* problems. We don't run from them or create new ones.

(MORE)

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Never have and never will. You may be new here but you'd do well to remember that.

LEONARD

I appreciate that, Judge. But as a public defender from out of State, appointed by *this* State, with the limited time and resources that I have and given the enormity of this case, I just don't think I can adequately defend a client that can't or won't tell me anything face-to-face.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Yet you just said you are ready to proceed with the trial.

LEONARD

And I am. But I could be, you know... more ready.

JUDGE ROSSUM

You received the case file thirty days ago, did you not? Even exchanged letters with your client? No issues were raised then. Are you telling me you are too incompetent to mount an effective defence without talking to your client personally?

LEONARD

No, that's not what I'm saying at all. I'm saying, as a public defender, I think that my hands are tied--

JUDGE ROSSUM

Covid protocols have everyone tied up in knots, sir. They have robbed us all of the standard pre-trial hearings that we have grown accustomed to. Because of this, the previously requested and granted expedited process is still expected to be followed. And, quite frankly, I fail to see what being a public defender has to do with anything. I know some fine public defenders.

Leonard SIGHS beneath his mask and looks down at his case file, haphazardly sorting through the paperwork. He adjusts his Covid mask, shifting his weight from foot-to-foot.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

What other issues are you having?

Leonard mulls something over. Looks up.

LEONARD

My client and I don't get along.

JUDGE ROSSUM

That's irrelevant. Your client has gone through two lawyers already. He doesn't get along with anyone.

LEONARD

Your Honor--

JUDGE ROSSUM

I've made my ruling. Now, if your client continues to refuse to participate in the proceedings then he will be forcibly confined to a wheelchair and brought out here against his will.

LEONARD

He's already been confined to a wheelchair, Judge. Bit of an issue in the back.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Well, there ya go.

LEONARD

But it's a whole different ballgame if this is the image I'm forced to present in front of the jury.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Then tell him to behave himself.

LEONARD

My client has made it clear that if he is brought out here to be the sacrificial lamb and served up on a silver platter then he will be a constant disruption to the court.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Very well then. He will be gagged.

LEONARD

He's, um--

JUDGE ROSSUM

What? Already gagged?

Leonard doesn't respond or react. Judge Rossum glances at Hawkins.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Then it looks like I'm not only the right judge for the job but also omniscient.

Hawkins nods at this, squinty eyes betraying a grin beneath his Covid mask.

LEONARD

Being bound and gagged in court presents my client as more of an animal than a man, does it not? It comes with a built-in prejudice that damages my client's right to a fair trial.

JUDGE ROSSUM

For an insanity defense?

LEONARD

For *any* defense.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Regardless, no defendant will control my courtroom just because they don't wish to participate in the proceedings or because they threaten to be disruptive. Your client has already refused to be photographed and fingerprinted upon his arrest, and why Indiana let him get away with such nonsense for as long as they did I sure don't have the foggiest... But, with the heinous nature of the alleged crimes, I'm not exactly going to be regretting my ruling any time soon.

LEONARD

Key word there is *alleged*.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Yes, well... when the *alleged* crimes involve mass murder and cannibalism, why take any chances? I'm sure you agree.

Solomon grabs a pen and begins to spin it in his fingers.

SOLOMON

I would agree, sir.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Yes, Solomon... I imagine you would.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (LATER)

It's quiet in the court aside from a few HUSHED CONVERSATIONS beneath Covid masks. All eyes are on the open doorway as the various Media Personnel await The Sandman's arrival.

A SKETCH ARTIST gets his pad of paper ready, pencil primed to draw. A REPORTER seated next to the Sketch Artist, leans in.

REPORTER

(quietly)

How is it we've never seen this guy's face before? No mugshot released? Isn't that a matter of public record?

The Sketch Artist shrugs.

SKETCH ARTIST

(quietly)

Remember Bruce McArthur?

REPORTER

Who?

SKETCH ARTIST

Serial killer. Toronto. They never released his mugshot either. Took months.

REPORTER

Why did it take so long?

SKETCH ARTIST

I heard it was in effort to ensure the integrity of any new information that may come forward.

REPORTER

What else can come for--?

A female REPORTER leans in, index finger to her Covid mask.

REPORTER #2

Shhh! You'll get us all kicked out.

Squeaky wheels approach. The three sets of eyes snap up to the open doorway as--

Miles Sandhagen is wheeled into the courtroom by Officer Brand, chest, arms and legs bound to the wheelchair and held in place by ropes, his mouth gagged beneath a Covid mask that's been taped around his head.

Everyone on the benches strain to get a look. The Media Personnel frantically take notes. The Sketch Artist begins drawing a COMPOSITE SKETCH of Sandhagen.

A low MURMUR reverberates around the courtroom.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Order, please. Order.

Judge Rossum BANGS his gavel.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Order!

The Murmur begins to die down.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

This is exactly why I didn't allow cameras in the courtroom. Keep it up and I'll remove all media personnel as well.

It goes completely silent as Sandhagen is wheeled to his position beside Leonard at the defense table. Officer Brand leaves with haste.

Sandhagen turns his head and glares at Leonard who, feeling his stare, scratches that side of his face and leans away.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Outbursts equal contempt of court charges. Don't forget that. And, as a reminder, if I see anyone lower their masks or scoot within six feet of one another they will be removed from my courtroom.

(MORE)

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Not really something I believe in,
hence why I remain unmasked atop my
podium here, but others do, so...
that's just how it's going to be.

Leonard glances at Sandhagen, who *struggles* in his
confinements and YELLS OUT what is most likely a profanity,
his disruption MUDDLED by the gag and taped Covid mask.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Mister Sandhagen, it is unfortunate
that we have to apply these rather
extreme measures, but your
reputation proceeds you here.

A two syllable, MUDDLED RESPONSE from Sandhagen; most likely,
'Fuck you'. Leonard stands up.

LEONARD

Your Honor, I'd like it noted on
the record that my client is here
against his will.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Yes, that's certainly how it
appears...

A few CHUCKLES from the gallery.

LEONARD

This is ludicrous. I know I sound
like a broken record here, Judge,
but what's the jury supposed to
think seeing this?

JUDGE ROSSUM

They will be informed of what's
going on.

LEONARD

First impressions make lasting
ones.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Then maybe your client should've
thought about that and behaved
accordingly. I can be a broken
record too, Counselor. And you're
telling me that this won't assist
you in your insanity defence? Think
on it... I'm not sure this works
against you as much as you believe
it does.

SOLOMON

Your Honor brings up a fair point.

LEONARD

Settled insanity, sir. Big difference.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Right. Yet does it negate malice afterthought?

LEONARD

I, um... believe so. But it's not something I think I can accurately get twelve jurors to understand and appreciate. And it's one of the many reasons I would like to call for a bench trial.

Solomon CHUCKLES at his table, glances at Carmen, who just shakes her head. *Easy work...*

JUDGE ROSSUM

That's *your* job to get them to understand. And it's too late to call for a bench trial, sir. The jury pool has already been picked apart and selected. Now I know you're late to the party, even fashionably so with that unique suit of yours--

A few CHUCKLES.

LEONARD

Thank you, your Honor.

Judge Rossum looks up over his glasses, eyebrows arched.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I'm not done. I know you may have been fashionably late but this trial has already been delayed multiple times due to your client's constant upheavals of the righteous system he currently finds himself embroiled in. So much so that this case has been assigned to my desk because Judge Bowers in South Bend, who is a personal friend of mine, didn't want to deal with all the hubbub. But he knows full well that I get things done, one way or another.

(MORE)

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

He knows that I push the pace and expect a speedy trial, and that I expect the same pace to be adhered to by the lawyers who occupy my courtroom. Is that clear?

LEONARD

That *is* your reputation...

JUDGE ROSSUM

Indeed it is. Now, when I bring the jury in here, are you or are you not prepared for opening statements?

LEONARD

Of course I'm prepared. But I can choose to waive that right until after the prosecution states their case, can't I?

SOLOMON

You can also do things like object and cross examine... Judge, what are we doing here?

Judge Rossum ignores this, keeps his focus on Leonard.

JUDGE ROSSUM

You can. And are you?

LEONARD

I'm not sure yet.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I think it's an appropriate time to make decisions, Counselor.

LEONARD

I think I'll wait to hear the State's opening before I decide.

Judge Rossum holds up a hand.

JUDGE ROSSUM

That's all I need to know. Mister Dell, I know you're ready...

SOLOMON

I am, your Honor.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Then let's get this show on the road before it ends up in a ditch, shall we? Bailiff, inform the jury of mister Sandhagen's, um... compromised state and bring them on in.

Hawkins nods and heads out of the courtroom, shutting the door behind him. Tensions rise. Everyone in the courtroom anxiously awaits the Jury.

Sandhagen STRUGGLES in his confinements, making quick, *jerking* motions that move the wheels of the wheelchair back and forth. Officer Brand approaches and flicks on the brake before leaving again.

Leonard places a hand on Sandhagen's shoulder.

LEONARD

(quietly)
Try to sit still.

Sandhagen rolls his shoulder away and STRUGGLES harder, drawing the attention of Judge Rossum and Solomon Dell.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

(whispers)
Please...

A door OPENS. Hawkins leads the way as the JURY enters -- Six MEN. Six WOMEN; a diverse group all wearing Covid masks. They silently take a seat in the larger-than-usual Jury Box, six feet apart.

The Jury stares at Sandhagen who glares right back, his eyes burrowing into them one-by-one. He struggles in his wheelchair and YELLS OUT something MUFFLED.

Hawkins steps toward him, ready for anything.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Mister Sandhagen...

Sandhagen clenches his fists tight and tries to break the ropes, but can't. A nervous MURMUR reverberates throughout the courtroom.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Keep this up? And those ropes will become chains *real* quick. You will *not*, and I repeat, will *not* get yourself kicked out of this courtroom today.

(MORE)

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

You will be here for the entirety of this trial, whether you like it or not. You have my word on that... and I'm a man of it.

Sandhagen SHOUTS OUT something MUFFLED. Three syllables. Probably 'Suck my dick' or something of the like. He seethes beneath his taped Covid mask, shakes his head, but is now otherwise quiet.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Hope you got it all out of your system, because we're moving on. Mister Dell and the prosecution, are you ready to proceed with opening?

Solomon stands up and flattens his tie.

SOLOMON

We certainly are.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Very well. The floor is yours.

SOLOMON

Thank you, your Honor.

Carmen gets up and grabs a WHITEBOARD covered in a sheet from along the wall. She wheels it into place then takes a seat.

Solomon methodically steps up in front of the Jury, looking into the eyes of the twelve faces staring back at him.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. The tension is palpable in here, isn't it? I think I'd like to make an attempt at levity and begin with a joke, if I may.

(beat; clears throat)

What do you call a thousand lawyers chained together at the bottom of the ocean?

(beat)

A good start.

A few squinty eyes beneath Covid masks from select Jury Members means a few polite smiles.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Not a bad little joke, right? It's actually a line from the movie Philadelphia.

(MORE)

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

It's also what the defendant believes to be a truism, through and through. Believes it to his core. So much so that it's no longer a joke to him... It's damn near a motto.

(beat)

My name is Solomon Dell, and it my pleasure to represent the State of Kentucky and to serve as prosecutor on this... incomparable case. Over the course of many horrific years, the defendant in this matter, a serial killer with the apropos nickname of 'The Sandman', brutalized Indiana's communities just as he did his victims. Killing local men and women at an alarming rate in what can only be described as a controlled, calculated frenzy. I have family in Indiana. I'm sure one or two of you do as well. Maybe some close friends. I think we all can agree that, things don't always have to be at home to hit home...

Solomon begins a slow, methodical walk back and forth, surveying the Jury as he goes.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

This case is about a deeply disturbed man who chased infamy and found it. His crimes were so deplorable in nature that they will be remembered forever, just as he planned. And in *that* respect, he was successful. But infamy comes at a price. And it is my burden, and the State's burden, to collect the toll.

Solomon drops his eyes and shakes his head.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

So many lives lost...

He looks back up at the Jury. A new resolve.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

One of them in particular, protected and served you and your community. A fellow Kentucky-ian that crossed State lines to capture a murderer.

(MORE)

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

The State would love to call Detective James Maddux to testify during this trial but he is no longer with us. The defendant, sitting ever-so patiently over there, made sure of that. Detective Maddux was killed in the line of duty, from the brutal injuries sustained during the lawful apprehension of one, Miles Sandhagen.

Solomon shrugs.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

So what do we know about the defendant? Well, the truth is we know very little...

Solomon turns to the whiteboard and pulls the sheet off, revealing various NEWSPAPER HEADLINES. *'Lawyers Targeted In Murder Spree'*. *'The Sandman's Kill Count Rises'*.

There are various ARTICLES and CRIME SCENE PHOTOS. Mutilated bodies ripped open. Sand stuffed down throats. Various MORGUE PHOTOS of torn up corpses splayed on steel tables.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

But, ladies and gentlemen, I argue to you that his reputation proceeds him. We know what he did. We know of all the damage and destruction he caused over the years. The countless kidnappings and murders. Brutal murders, in fact. All of his victims either lawyers or law students. Intelligent, good natured people filled with tons of promise and potential. Countless bright futures snuffed out in a blink of an eye. The fact is, he not only slaughtered these decent folks, but he took it one step further by ripping open their chests cavities and feeding on their insides. Some were still alive when he did this.

A few Jury Members visibly recoil at this.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Cannibalism. Stuffing their throats with sand for... whatever reason.

(MORE)

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Maybe as some sick calling card because he knew the media would latch onto it and run with it. Make him famous in the news and on social media. Make him feared. I know this all isn't easy to hear...

(beat)

We know how destructive he's been since being arrested just north of here in our neighboring state of Indiana. Refusing any and all legal procedures that society depends on to keep peace and order in our communities. Threatening violence at every turn...

(points at Sandhagen)

Just take a good look at him.

Sandhagen looks over at the Jury staring back at him and shakes his head, his eyes snapping back to face Solomon.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

A picture's worth a thousand words even when none can be spoken. There's a reason he is bound to a wheelchair, mouth gagged and taped under that Covid mask. And the reason is obvious... It's because he's insane, right?

(beat)

Well, that's what the defence would have you believe. But no, the truth is far worse than that. The reason he's tied to that wheelchair in front of you today is because he's an extremely conniving, narcissistic psychopath *killer*, that only wants to hurt people for no other reason other than his own sick amusement. It's not some inhumane act that's happening here, it's *necessary*. It's the only way Miles Sandhagen would comply with court orders and the only way to ensure everyone's safety here in this courtroom.

Leonard stands up.

LEONARD

I object.

Solomon looks pissed.

SOLOMON

It's my *opening statement*.

JUDGE ROSSUM

The defence will allow the prosecution to complete their opening statement.

LEONARD

Opening statement or not, my client has rights.

JUDGE ROSSUM

And your objection has been typed out on Lydia's fancy laptop there. Now lets move on.

Lydia's fingers stay at the ready, prepared to continue typing. Leonard begrudgingly takes a seat.

SOLOMON

Thank you, your Honor.

(beat; to Jury)

So let's get down to brass tacks here, shall we? Today we all finally laid eyes on the individual charged with these heinous crimes. And here he sits, right here among us, no longer some mythical monster built up by fear, but just a man. The defence, I'm sure, is going to pounce on this and blame everything on drugs and psychedelics and whatnot in pursuit of their insanity plea... Push the blame to the side, away from prying eyes. Try to divert your attention from the *real* issue here. The *real* problem that is staring them right in the face...

(glances at Sandhagen)

But all of that nonsense? It's just smoke and mirrors. A magic trick, if you will. And I don't know about you, ladies and gentlemen, but I don't believe in magic... I believe in cold, hard facts.

(beat)

The defence will claim Miles Sandhagen was certifiably insane at the time of the murders. Every single time, for every single one.

(MORE)

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

However, the State will establish that the defendant has planned and executed his sick blueprint over the course of many years... Deliberately. With malice. And with forethought.

Solomon scans the Jury slowly.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

I ask each of you now, what's the definition of insanity? We all know it... Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result, right? Well, Miles Sandhagen sure did the same thing over and over again, didn't he? But did he expect a different result? I would argue to you that the answer is no. No, he didn't. He expected the *same* result and he got it. After all, Miles Sandhagen *knew* what his drug of choice, which is synthetic cathinones or bath salts, would do to his mind when he decided to heat them up in a bathtub and inhale the fumes through a gas mask. He *knew* what those actions would lead to and he enjoyed it every time. That certainly flies in the face of insanity, doesn't it? Even *settled* insanity, which is a term I'm sure you'll learn more about from the defence throughout this trial. I won't bore you with it here.

(beat)

But again, it's all just an illusion. Repeated behavior, echoed through multiple murders with the same modus operandi. After enough times that becomes a conscious choice. You get to know the effect it has on you. Get comfortable with it. Maybe even grow to *like* it, as Miles Sandhagen certainly did. He knew what would happen, yet he kept on doing it. That removes the, "It wasn't really me" excuse in my book. And not just in *my* book... in the law books, too.

Solomon begins pacing back and forth once again, like a caged predator anticipating freedom.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Now, I'm gonna be honest with you here... We can't provide you with any psychiatric evaluations because the defendant refused to take one. We can't provide the proverbial "smoking gun" because no gun or weapon was ever used outside of the defendant's own hands and teeth. But we *can* provide you the extensive case file and notes from the late Detective James Maddux. We *can* provide you with the blood samples from the crime scene that match the defendant's blood. We have the DNA. We have the bite moulds and the saliva that was forcefully taken from the defendant's mouth because, again, he refused to cooperate with law enforcement. With all these examples that we intend to show you through undeniable science, we can allow for Detective Maddux, and all of Miles Sandhagen's victims, to speak to you from beyond the grave. *They* caught the heinous serial killer that you see before you today. *They* made the ultimate sacrifice to do so. Their final acts on this earth were to drop the breadcrumbs that led detectives to the very monster that took their lives, and that ruined countless families in the process. They did a job that they never should've had to do. That *no one* should have to do...

(beat)

Rest assured, the State of Kentucky, during this trial, will do its job, as I'm sure you will do yours, and find the defendant, Miles Sandhagen, guilty of all charges levied against him. Because that's exactly what he is... Guilty. *Guilty. Guilty.*

The final word hangs in the air. Solomon nods politely at the Jury.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Thank you for your time.

He heads back to his seat. It's quiet throughout the court.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Very well. The defence can now take the floor and make their opening statement, that is, if they wish to do so...

Leonard glances at Sandhagen who stares right back at him.

LEONARD

Yes, your Honor, the defence would.

Sandhagen says something MUFFLED, one syllable, who the fuck knows.

Leonard stands up and makes his way toward the center of the floor, fixing his hair and adjusting his Covid mask up onto the bridge of his nose.

Sandhagen unclenches his fists and relaxes his forearms in the wheelchair, eyeing Hawkins and Officer Brand standing against the wall. He begins to slowly attempt to free an arm as Leonard steps up in front of the Jury...

LEONARD (CONT'D)

I apologize if I seem a little muffled behind this mask. Apparently the defence doesn't enjoy the same luxuries the prosecution does... Regardless, I'll do my best to enunciate clearly and keep things short and sweet.

(beat)

So, um... I'll just ask a rudimentary question to kick things off, I guess...

(beat)

Have any of you ever done drugs?

An awkward silence fills the courtroom. Leonard keeps his focus on the Jury, who look on edge.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Ever been drunk?

Solomon glances at Carmen, confused. He looks up at Judge Rossum, who looks equally baffled.

JUDGE ROSSUM

You're delivering a statement to the jury here, Counselor. Not questioning them.

LEONARD

I am aware of that, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM

As long as you're aware. Continue.

Leonard focuses back on the Jury before him.

LEONARD

We all have at one point of our lives, haven't we? Now, have we done things we are ashamed of in these altered mind states? Things that we regret and hope never see the light of day? Once again, I argue to you that we all have. So the question remains: Where does culpability start, and where does it end? Because if we can be excused for doing something stupid when we had a little too much to drink, or took that wrong drug at a party, then said forgiveness should apply to everything and everyone, no matter what they did. We can't pick and choose. What's good for the goose is good for the gander... and don't worry, I don't know what a gander is either.

A few squinty eyed grins beneath Covid masks from the Jury.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

But *take* a gander, will you? At my client...

Leonard points to Sandhagen, who immediately stops trying to free himself as all eyes fall on him.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Look what they've done to him. Look at how he is being presented to you. Doesn't exactly scream innocent man, does it? So what *does* it scream? Insanity?

(beat; nods)

My thoughts exactly. Now, some people here may believe that this is all some elaborate show that I planned out, to demonstrate how my client is not of sound mind, which I assure you, *is* the case as a result of his many unfortunate addictions...

Solomon glances at Carmen and rolls his eyes.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

But the truth is this was not done by choice. My client, although legally insane when under the influence and even beyond that through the aforementioned long-term effects of said narcotics, maintains all the rights anyone else does. And he *certainly* maintains the right to choose how he appears at trial, or even if he appears at all. This courtroom has robbed him of that right. This is the loaded deck he is up against. This is the crooked game he and I are being forced to play.

Judge Rossum doesn't look pleased.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

But that's fine. Because the burden of proof here lies with the State. And it all comes down to your opinions on the questions that I'm about to pose to you.

Leonard starts rallying off the questions while counting them on his fingers.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Does being under the influence detail and describe a person as they *truly* are? Does it define them accurately? Can one be substantially different off said drugs or substances when of sound mind and body? And what is the *culpability* of the drug that induces this altered mind state?

Sandhagen's eyes flick to Officer Brand, then to Hawkins, who are both looking at Leonard, transfixed by his opening statement. Once again, he starts to subtly work his arm free.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

I'm going to be calling to the stand various experts that will explain the science behind mind-altering drugs, or psychedelics, however you want to label them.

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

They will explain to you how these drugs can change someone's personality at a fundamental, base level. Almost to the point where they aren't the same person at all. Ever again. Even when off them. These are the permanent lingering effects that you will get to know. My experts will tell you how convicting someone in this state of mind is like convicting an innocent person, because they are not responsible for their actions when in this deranged state or in the accumulated effect of the state. Again, *they are not responsible for their actions*. That's important to remember here. It's called settled insanity, ladies and gentlemen, and I'd like to thank mister Dell over there for the kind introduction to the concept. But I can assure you there's nothing boring about it.

(beat)

Now, what is settled insanity exactly?

Leonard begins pacing in front of the Jury, miming Solomon's movements, collecting his thoughts.

Sandhagen slowly pulls his forearm further and further back from his restraints; his hand beginning to squeeze out of the ropes...

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Well, it's defined as a permanent or "settled" condition caused by long-term substance abuse and differs from the temporary state of intoxication. But I don't do well with textbook definitions, I'm more of a visual guy. So picture this...

Leonard makes a frame with his hands.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Picture a sudden disruption in a body of water, like someone threw a large rock into it. It would cause a massive splash, would it not? Obviously, it would. But ultimately, the water would recover, fill itself in and settle. Get back into the flow of things.

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Yet with settled insanity, the water itself is the mind, the rock is the narcotic, and the mind never settles afterwards. The water just keeps on being eternally disrupted and never fills itself in again. It's permanent damage no one in this state ever fully recovers from. *Permanent* damage. And in most cases, it's lethal for either the sufferer or the people around them.

(beat)

Now, I told you I'd keep this short and sweet, so I'll leave you with this...

Leonard slowly looks over the masked faces of the Jury.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

There's an old Japanese philosophy. It states that every human being has three faces.

PAN ALONG the benches filled with various masked Attendees and Media Personnel, the Sketch Artist still sketching away, spaced six feet apart.

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

The first face, you show to the world.

PAN ALONG the masked Jury Members in the larger-than-usual jury box.

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

The second face, you show to your close friends and your family.

FOCUS back on Leonard, who is holding up three fingers.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

The third face, you never show anyone.

Leonard drops his hand.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

I ask you, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, when that third face becomes the first, by no fault of your own other than having a drug dependency, does that not come along with a built-in prejudice? I believe it does.

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

So do my expert witnesses with decades of medical experience. My client's third face was only shown to the world because of the mind-altering drugs he consumed. Were the drugs illegal? Of course they were. But we don't throw away people in this society because they have lost themselves to their demons. We help them. Hold out a hand. Try to understand and forgive. That's what the Bible says to do, doesn't it? To forgive?

Sandhagen quietly *wrenches* his hand out from the ropes and places it gently down on the armrest, masking its freedom.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Ephesians 4:32 - Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. Mark 11:25 - And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you of your trespasses.

(beat)

We all trespass... All of us. Not a single one of us is innocent. We all need a helping hand in our lives at one point or another. So I'm asking you now, to help my client. To help him by sending him to a place that won't exacerbate his symptoms, but nurture them. And you can do that, each and every one of you, as a whole, right here and now in this trial, by finding my client, Miles Sandhagen, not guilty.

(beat)

That's the only fair and just verdict here. The only *righteous* one.

(beat)

Not guilty. Because in the end, when you really consider everything I just told you, and everything I'm *about* to cover over the course of this trial, you will inevitably find yourself at the brink of a surprising revelation...

(points to Sandhagen)

(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

Because it wasn't even him that did it...

(beat; nods)

I look forward to showing you more.
Thank you.

Leonard heads back to his seat beside Sandhagen. Solomon leans in close to Carmen.

SOLOMON

(whispers)

What's he up to?

Carmen slides over her notepad to Solomon. It reads, '*Split personality?*', '*Another killer?*'. Solomon grabs a pen and underlines the second option. ('*Another killer?*')

JUDGE ROSSUM

Okay then. So if there's nothing else, at this point I'd like to--

SOLOMON

I'd like the defence to clarify what they meant by, 'It wasn't even him that did it'. It seems to hint at something counterintuitive to their insanity plea.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I'm going to have to disagree there, mister Dell.

(points to Leonard)

We are still travelling down the insanity road are we not, Counselor?

LEONARD

We are.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Thought so. Just making sure.

LEONARD

But there may be some wrinkles in there that I will want to address later.

SOLOMON

Told you. Your Honor--

Judge Rossum holds up a hand, silencing Solomon.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Let me be clear, the only wrinkles allowable in this courtroom are the ones on my pleasantly aging visage. Meaning, you *will* stay the course. Is that understood?

Leonard mulls something over for a moment. Eventually, he nods.

LEONARD

It's under--

Sandhagen suddenly grabs Leonard with his free hand and *rips* him down out of his seat. Leonard CRIES OUT as he hits the floor. Sandhagen's wheelchair tumbles on top of him. CRASH!

COMMOTION in the courtroom. The various Attendees and Media Personnel all stand up at once. Officer Brand takes a step forward but hesitates, like he's scared to make a move...

Leonard struggles with Sandhagen on top of him. Sandhagen's free hand grips Leonard's tie as he YELLS SOMETHING MUFFLED.

Leonard looks to Officer Brand who finally charges into the fray and begins pulling Sandhagen off of Leonard. Hawkins rushes in behind him. Judge Rossum stands up out of his seat.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Bailiff, remove the jury! Now!

Hawkins halts his momentum and rushes back to escort the Jury out of the courtroom. Lydia shoots up out of her chair and hurries to a side wall, out of harms way.

The wheelchair is righted by Officer Brand, who pins Sandhagen's free arm down as he quickly wheels him out of the courtroom. Sandhagen lets out an angry, MUFFLED SCREAM.

Leonard stands up and fixes his suit. Runs a hand through his hair. Glances over at Solomon and Carmen, who are both standing and eyeing him suspiciously, like it was all a ruse.

The many Attendees and Media Personnel CHATTER amongst themselves; an excited yet nervous MURMUR pulsating throughout the room. Judge Rossum BANGS his gavel.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Order! Order! Maintain your distance! Six feet apart, all of you!

The many Bystanders slowly separate from each other. Judge Rossum looks down at Leonard.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)
Are you okay?

LEONARD
I'll live.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Good, let's take a recess. Sixty
minutes. Counselors, in my chambers
immediately.

Judge Rossum steps down from his podium and heads to the back. Solomon and Leonard glance at each other.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Judge Rossum is seated in a comfortably padded chair, his robe hung on a hook along the back wall. He lights a cigar and turns over an HOURGLASS full of sand that sits on his desk, beginning the slow filtering process. Like a timer.

There's a LAPTOP and a FRAMED PICTURE on his desk, the contents of which we are not privy to. He leans back in his chair and puffs on the cigar.

JUDGE ROSSUM
So?

Solomon and Leonard, the latter with his Covid mask down below his chin, stand at attention at the other side of the desk, looking lost.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)
What am I supposed to do here?

SOLOMON
Keep him out of the courtroom, sir.
Simple.

LEONARD
Agreed. My client is here against
his will. This is what happens.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Is it? Or maybe you and your client
are indeed putting on some
elaborate show to try and
demonstrate how insane he is to the
jury.

SOLOMON

My thoughts exactly, Judge. It's all very cute but it won't work, mister... what was your name again?

LEONARD

Coyle. Leonard Coyle. And I don't think I've had the time to stage anything so elaborate, mister Dell. Or teach my client how to Houdini out of being strapped to a wheelchair.

SOLOMON

You can get a lot done in a month.

LEONARD

Even prepare an insanity defence for a litany of first degree murder charges? I don't think so.

SOLOMON

Indiana doesn't have first degree murder. It's intentional or felony murder there.

LEONARD

But not here.

SOLOMON

The arresting State's laws still apply.

LEONARD

If you say so.

Solomon CHUCKLES.

SOLOMON

You're out of your depth, Leonard. But you can give up if you're overwhelmed. No shame in it. Everyone else has.

LEONARD

Nah, not me. I'm bound and determined.

SOLOMON

Your *client* is bound and determined. Literally.

Judge Rossum holds up a hand.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Okay, okay. Enough.

He ashes out his cigar in an ashtray on the desk.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Mister Coyle, I know you've yet to have the pleasure of trying a case in my courtroom, but you should know by now that I do things a little differently than most. I don't bend or break for *anyone*, most of all disruptive defendants. It's my ship and I'll run it through the choppy waves how I see fit. Clear?

LEONARD

Clear.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Good. Now, do you know the real reason why I kept the gag order on your client in place?

LEONARD

I think we covered that already.

Judge Rossum shakes his head.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Silent is just listen rearranged.

He takes a puff of his cigar, blowing the smoke into the air out of the corner of his mouth.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

Silence, even *mandated* silence, forces someone to take note and really absorb everything. Like sensory deprivation, the body craves sustenance. And why do I want your client to listen, you may ask? Why do I care? It's simple, really... I despise appeals. And I particularly despise when appellate courts allow half-assed appeals to go through so another judge with no context other than the court documents can overturn my carefully considered decisions.

LEONARD

Apologies, but I'm not sure forcing anyone to do *anything* is a viable and effective means to get them to comply.

JUDGE ROSSUM

That is where we differ, Counselor.

SOLOMON

Your Honor, I'm still fairly concerned about the impact mister Coyle's last words had with the jury. These, um... *wrinkles*, he alluded to.

JUDGE ROSSUM

And we clarified that in court, did we not?

SOLOMON

I'm just trying to avoid mixed signals here.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Mister Coyle has been warned. I take it that's good enough for you?

SOLOMON

Of course, sir.

JUDGE ROSSUM

You don't seem convinced...

(puffs cigar)

Regardless, you're more than welcome to rectify any further concerns you have with the statement in front of the jury.

SOLOMON

Oh, I plan to.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Wonderful. Now, is the State prepared to proceed with their first witness after break?

SOLOMON

The State is always prepared.

JUDGE ROSSUM

And that would be the odontologist Dennis Lacroix, am I correct?

SOLOMON

Officer Rod Everett, sir. I've changed the order in light of recent statements. Miss Hoyer is informing the witnesses as we speak.

Judge Rossum nods and turns his attention to Leonard.

JUDGE ROSSUM

And are you prepared to cross examine said witness, mister Coyle?

LEONARD

Honestly? I was hoping to call it a day after what just happened...

Judge Rossum stares at him, clearly not happy hearing this.

LEONARD (CONT'D)

(off his look)

But sure... why not?

JUDGE ROSSUM

You're not injured, are you?

LEONARD

If I said I was would it matter?

JUDGE ROSSUM

I doubt it.

LEONARD

Then no.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Splendid. That will be all, gentlemen. I suggest putting the rest of this recess to good use.

SOLOMON

I always do, your Honor.

Solomon leaves the Chambers. Leonard stays put for a moment.

LEONARD

I, um... don't really want to walk back with him.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I get it.

Leonard looks at the hourglass, focusing in on the sand falling through the bottleneck into the bottom section below.

LEONARD
Nice hourglass.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Isn't it?

Judge Rossum winks at Leonard.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)
I like me an hourglass figure.

Leonard smiles politely.

LEONARD
Who doesn't?

Judge Rossum leans back in his chair and puffs on his cigar.

JUDGE ROSSUM
The sands of time are coming for
all of us, aren't they? At least,
according to your client...

Leonard nods and makes his way toward the door.

LEONARD
See you after break, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Close the door on your way out.

Leonard does just that. *Click*. It's quiet. Judge Rossum takes another puff of his cigar and stares at the sand slowly falling through the hourglass...

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY

Sandhagen *struggles* against Officer Brand's grip, whipping his head from side-to-side as Brand applies more tape to his Covid mask and wraps it multiple times around his head.

Once complete, Officer Brand tightens the ropes, adding LEATHER ARM STRAPS, *yanking* them down as tight as they can go. He wraps the straps with rope, doubling down on the confines.

OFFICER BRAND
You really shouldn't have done
that.

Sandhagen SCREAMS OUT something profane beneath the mask and tape. Connors and Nix enter the holding cell, looking over Officer Brand's handiwork.

NIX
You got him?

OFFICER BRAND
I got him.

CONNORS
He was probably flexing the first
time, that's how he had room to
wiggle out.

OFFICER BRAND
Yeah, I know that now.

Officer Brand backs away. All three Officers stare at
Sandhagen breathing heavily in his chair.

CONNORS
Fucking animal.

NIX
Well, Rossum's courtroom has always
been more of a kennel than a court.

CONNORS
I would just leave him in here if
it were up to me. He's getting
convicted either way.

NIX
Judge holds people accountable to
their face... I like it.

Sandhagen *struggles* against his confines one more time, like
a final tremor of defiance.

OFFICER BRAND
He'll calm down once he realizes
he's not going anywhere.

Nix checks his watch.

NIX
You sure?

OFFICER BRAND
I'm sure.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The Covid-masked Attendees and Media Members are once again
seated and silent on the benches, six feet apart. The Jury is
back in the jury box, Covid masks on.

Leonard is at the defence table with a freshly bound and gagged Miles Sandhagen by his side in the wheelchair.

Sandhagen seems calmer now. His head is slightly lowered towards his chest, his eyes up, like he's trying to stay awake but failing.

Hawkins and Officer Brand stand along a side wall, both keeping an eye on the Defendant. Both wear their Covid masks.

Solomon and Carmen are seated at the prosecution's table. Carmen is masked. Solomon is not.

Judge Rossum, reading glasses on, is atop his podium with a Covid-masked Lydia back on her computer.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Now, Mister Sandhagen, regardless of your futile attempt to escape and harm the very person defending your freedom, you will not be permitted to leave this courtroom and go back to your cell, as I'm sure was the goal. You will be here for the entirety of the proceedings, even if it means chaining your whole body to that wheelchair and upping your security detail. Do we understand each other?

A MUFFLED rebuttal from Sandhagen. Slow. Less forceful.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

I'll take that as a yes.

Judge Rossum flips through a few papers on his podium. Solomon leans in close to Carmen, flicking his head toward Sandhagen.

SOLOMON

(quietly)

What did they give him?

Carmen writes a '?' on the notepad.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Alright, then. Now that all parties are in place, back to business. Mister Dell, please call your first witness.

Solomon stands up.

SOLOMON

The State calls officer Rod Everett
to the stand.

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - DAY

OFFICER ROD EVERETT, 36, stands beside Judge Rossum on the
witness stand, which has a small microphone on it to amplify
sounds. He wears a Covid mask. Hawkins is swearing him in.

HAWKINS

Please raise your right hand.

Officer Everett complies.

HAWKINS (CONT'D)

Do you swear that the evidence you
will provide to this court, and all
statements hence forth, will be the
truth, the whole truth, and nothing
but the truth, so help you God?

EVERETT

I do.

HAWKINS

Please be seated.

Officer Everett takes a seat. Hawkins makes his way back to
the side wall to watch over Sandhagen.

Solomon approaches Officer Everett.

SOLOMON

Mister Everett, good day, first of
all.

Officer Everett leans in close to the microphone.

EVERETT

Good day.

SQUEAL. FEEDBACK.

SOLOMON

You don't have to lean in. Even
with the mask the microphone can
pick up your voice just fine.

EVERETT

Got it. Sorry.

SOLOMON
That's quite alright.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Hold on a minute, mister Dell. I think, going forward, I'm going to ask that all witnesses be unmasked in the interest of clarity. I don't want any hiccups halting the momentum of questioning. Is that alright with you, mister Everett?

Officer Everett takes off his Covid mask.

EVERETT
Works for me, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Very good. Continue.

SOLOMON
Thank you, your Honor.
(beat)
Now, on the night of May 9th, 2020, were you working in your capacity as a law enforcement officer?

EVERETT
I was.

SOLOMON
And were you on the scene of 18 Ogden Drive in South Bend, Indiana, on that night?

EVERETT
I was.

SOLOMON
So then describe to the jury what happened on May 9th, 2020, at 18 Ogden Drive, if you please.

Everett shifts his weight.

EVERETT
Well, it was a long night, put it that way. Detective Maddux tipped us off that the Sand-- um, the defendant, was holed up at that address and called for backup. I was part of that backup.

FLASH CUT TO:

NT. ABANDONED HOUSE, HALLWAY - NIGHT

DARK lighting, mixed BLUES and deep PURPLES. STROBE LIGHTS *blink* rapidly. Somewhere on another level below, loud CLUB MUSIC pulsates, causing a slight VIBRATION in the walls.

There are BODIES on the sticky floor. Well dressed. Preppy. Rich law students with drug habits. Some are MOANING, others *twitch*, some don't move at all.

SOLOMON (V.O.)

Can you tell us what you saw when you arrived at the scene?

EVERETT (V.O.)

Sure. So it was shady neighborhood that we all knew well... Plenty of drug deals happen there. Rich white kids slumming it with the dropouts, you know? There were constant robberies. Stray gunshots. Some deaths. Things had already spiraled out of control when I got there. SWAT was preparing to make their move...

DETECTIVE JAMES MADDUX, 41, rough and grizzled, edges toward a room at the end of the hall, the door half-closed. He keeps his HANDGUN trained on the door ahead, never once glancing down at the many Bodies at his feet.

Maddux slowly approaches the half-closed door - WET SOUNDS beyond, somewhere within the room. Several primal GRUNTS. Something is EATING.

The CLUB MUSIC seems to get LOUDER with each step Detective Maddux takes. He stops just in front of the door, his outstretched gun a few feet from touching it.

DETECTIVE MADDUX

Police!

The MUSIC drowns out his voice. The wet, EATING sounds continue.

DETECTIVE MADDUX (CONT'D)

Sandman!

The eating sounds stop.

DETECTIVE MADDUX (CONT'D)

Show yourself!

Detective Maddux nudges the door open with his gun, scanning the bathroom lightning quick amidst the *blinking* strobe lights -- No signs of movement.

SOLOMON (V.O.)

And did you enter the residence at 18 Ogden Drive before SWAT arrived?

EVERETT (V.O.)

No, I did not.

Detective Maddux glances down at a FEMALE BODY splayed out on the tile floor atop a thin LAYER OF SAND. Her stomach cavity has been RIPPED OPEN, intestines removed.

There are BITE MARKS in the intestines that are stretched out and lead toward a clawfoot bathtub.

Detective Maddux's eyes widen then flick to the tub, which is filled with what looks like small, WHITE ROCKS. Epsom Salts? No... *Bath Salts*...

There's a lone GAS MASK nearby with a long hose attached to the ventilator portion which leads down into the bathtub. The white rocks are SMOKING from a portable heater pointed up underneath the tub. *Someone was inhaling this*...

A NOISE from the corner--

Detective Maddux swings his gun toward the sound, towards the shadows, where he's instantly overtaken. An exerted GRUNT. The gun goes off. BAM!

A desperate *struggle* ensues. Another GUNSHOT rings out. BAM!

BACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

SOLOMON

Approximately what time did SWAT make entry?

EVERETT

Wasn't soon enough, I know that. Before SWAT could breach the home Detective Maddux came out of it. He was... bleeding. Profusely. Definitely had been in a fight for his life.

(MORE)

EVERETT (CONT'D)

I thought he got mauled by a dog at first, his injuries were that severe...

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door is closed. Police LIGHTS and SIRENS are right outside. We slowly PUSH IN towards the front door until it--

-- SLAMS open abruptly. Detective Maddux stumbles out of the house, clothing ripped to tatters, BLEEDING profusely from multiple neck and shoulder wounds. The CLUB MUSIC pulsates within.

Several ARMORED OFFICERS brandishing AUTOMATIC WEAPONS storm up to the open door. They wear pitch-black Covid masks. One stops to check on Detective Maddux.

ARMORED OFFICER

Where is he, Maddux?

Maddux presses a trembling hand tight to his neck wound and attempts to catch his breath.

ARMORED OFFICER (CONT'D)

Maddux! Where is the Sandman?!

Maddux points into the house and up the stairs before collapsing on the stoop.

DETECTIVE MADDUX

(weakly)

I got him. He's down. He's down...

The Armored Officers rush into the house.

Officer Everett scampers up and grabs Detective Maddux, dragging him away from the door. Maddux smiles a bloody smile as he's being moved, his body leaving a TRAIL OF BLOOD behind.

DETECTIVE MADDUX (CONT'D)

(weakly)

I got him...

EVERETT

You did. You got him.

The many police LIGHTS circulate around the dark neighborhood as Detective Maddux passes out, still smiling... *Mission accomplished...*

BACK TO:

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

SOLOMON

And, according to all reports, you were the one to assist Detective Maddux after SWAT made their entry, is that correct?

EVERETT

That's correct.

SOLOMON

And did Detective Maddux say anything to you?

EVERETT

He did.

SOLOMON

What did he say?

EVERETT

He said, "I got him."
(beat)
Said it with a smile.

SOLOMON

And did anyone outside of Detective Maddux have more knowledge about the serial killer known as 'The Sandman'?

LEONARD

Objection. Speculation.

SOLOMON

Officer Everett would know, your Honor.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Overruled.

Solomon nods at Officer Everett to continue.

EVERETT

No. No one knew this case better than him.

(MORE)

EVERETT (CONT'D)

He had obsessed over it for years. Probably the reason he ended up catching him.

SOLOMON

So one could assume, when Detective Maddux said the words, "I got him", he would indeed know who, in fact, he got, correct?

EVERETT

Yes.

SOLOMON

So it's reasonable to assume then, even though Detective Maddux wasn't physically in the best shape, that his mind was still present and alert?

EVERETT

Unfortunately, yes.

SOLOMON

Why unfortunately?

EVERETT

Because he knew what had happened to him. I'm sure he felt everything.

Solomon allows those words to linger over the Jury's heads for a moment.

SOLOMON

Did Detective Maddux say anything else to you while you were tending to him?

EVERETT

I wasn't with him for long. The paramedics took over fairly quickly, but yes, he did.

SOLOMON

And what did he tell you?

EVERETT

He said, "That man is a monster. Make sure he's dead or he'll never stop."

Solomon looks over the Jury's masked faces. They all stare at Sandhagen slouched forward in his wheelchair, coming to terms with the monster in their midst.

SOLOMON

And when Detective Maddux said,
"Make sure he's dead", what did he
mean by that exactly?

EVERETT

I think you know.

SOLOMON

But the Sandman didn't die, did he?

EVERETT

He did not.

SOLOMON

And did you see this Sandman fellow
being brought out of the house at
18 Ogden Drive?

EVERETT

I did.

SOLOMON

And is that same man in the
courtroom today?

EVERETT

He is.

SOLOMON

Can you point him out?

Officer Everett points to the defendant, Miles Sandhagen.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

And did Detective Maddux survive
his injuries that night, Officer?

EVERETT

No... No, he did not.

SOLOMON

Thank you. No further questions.

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

Leonard on cross. He pulls his Covid mask up onto the bridge of his nose. Behind him, Sandhagen's tired eyes stare up at Officer Everett, who avoids his gaze.

LEONARD

Mister Everett, you said just a few moments ago that you were able to catch a glimpse of the alleged, "Sandman", on the night of May 9th, 2020. Is that correct?

EVERETT

It is.

LEONARD

Get a good look at him?

EVERETT

I believe so.

LEONARD

How far away were you?

EVERETT

Um, not sure exactly. It was about from the street to the front door. Saw him on a stretcher getting hauled out of there.

LEONARD

Did you see his face clearly from this distance?

EVERETT

Define clearly.

LEONARD

Unobstructed.

EVERETT

Then no, not clearly.

LEONARD

Why not?

EVERETT

Well, it was dark and he was covered in blood for starters... Paramedics had an oxygen mask over his face.

LEONARD

So, mister Everett, can you tell me what facial features this man has in common with the defendant? And I remind you, you're under oath.

Everett glances over at Sandhagen. They lock eyes.

EVERETT

Hard to say.

LEONARD

How so?

EVERETT

I mean, he looked similar I guess, especially with that Covid mask over his face like that, but... again, it's hard to say.

Leonard glances over at the Jury.

LEONARD

So you can't actually say, with any degree of certainty, that the defendant in this courtroom today is the same man you saw getting hauled out of 18 Ogden Drive on the night of May 9th, 2020, can you?

EVERETT

It's the same man.

Leonard steps forward, capitalizing on the opportunity.

LEONARD

How can you be so sure? You just told this court that you didn't get a clear look at him.

EVERETT

They had his blood and DNA from a previous victim, all of which were present at 18 Ogden Drive.

LEONARD

But you only knew that after the fact, correct?

EVERETT

Correct. Yes.

LEONARD

And 18 Ogden Drive is a known trap house, is it not?

SOLOMON

Objection.

LEONARD

I'll rephrase. Is that address a known trap house?

SOLOMON
Objection. Vague.

Leonard looks visibly annoyed by this.

LEONARD
A little leeway, sir?

Judge Rossum considers this for a moment.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Overruled. Continue.

Leonard looks back at Everett, nods.

LEONARD
Go ahead.

EVERETT
It is a known location for drug
addicts to congregate, yes.

LEONARD
So the Sandman's DNA being at the
scene doesn't directly imply that
my client is the man it came from.

SOLOMON
Objection. Judge, this is getting a
little out of hand.

LEONARD
That's exactly the point...

JUDGE ROSSUM
Sustained.
(to Everett)
You don't have to respond to that,
sir.

SOLOMON
It wasn't even phrased as a
question, Judge.

EVERETT
(to Leonard)
What are you saying, exactly? That
we've got the wrong guy?

LEONARD
I'm saying you can't tell me for
sure that it's him.

SOLOMON
Objection. Asked and answered.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Sustained.

EVERETT
It's him.

LEONARD
You *think* it's him.

SOLOMON
Speculation.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Sustained.

LEONARD
(to Judge Rossum)
He didn't say objection.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Mister Coyle, I suggest you get
back on track, and quick.

LEONARD
I'm right on the track I want to
be, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM
And does that track lead to the
settled insanity defense you put
fourth to all of us in your opening
statement? Because this
misidentification scenario doesn't
exactly support that.

LEONARD
I'm merely establishing the
credibility of the witness, sir. Or
lack thereof. This will all make
sense in the end. The sands of time
fall slowly, right?

Solomon SNICKERS at this and glances at Carmen, who flips
through the list of witnesses for the day. Her pen drops to
the bottom, underlines a name. 'Plask, Gunther'. Solomon
nods.

JUDGE ROSSUM
As long as you know what you're
doing...

LEONARD
I do, your Honor.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Then proceed.

LEONARD
No further questions.

Solomon almost laughs and tosses his pen on the table. Judge Rossum audibly SIGHS.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Right.

Leonard walks back to his table and takes a seat beside Sandhagen, whose head droops before snapping back up again.

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)
Mister Dell, will there be anything more for this witness?

SOLOMON
No, your Honor.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Very well. Mister Everett, you are excused. The State may call their next witness.

Officer Everett stands and rebuttons his suit jacket. He steps down from the witness stand, glancing at Sandhagen and Leonard before walking out of view.

Solomon stands back up.

SOLOMON
The State calls Gunther Plask to the stand.

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

A well dressed old man, GUNTHER PLASK, 73, is seated, waiting patiently. Solomon approaches and leans on the edge of the witness stand.

SOLOMON
Mister Plask...

GUNTHER
Gunther, please.

SOLOMON
Gunther. How long have you been a
forensic pathologist?

GUNTHER
41 years now.

SOLOMON
That's quite the career...

GUNTHER
Yes, sir. It is.

SOLOMON
One you're proud of?

GUNTHER
Without a shadow of a doubt.

Solomon nods and walks back to the prosecution's table. He grabs a BOOK that Carmen is holding out for him and makes his way back in front of the witness stand and holds it up. The cover reads, *'Off the Beaten Pathology'* by Gunther Plask.

SOLOMON
And you are also the author of,
'Off the Beaten Pathology', are you
not?

GUNTHER
I am.

SOLOMON
And is this book considered to be
canon in your field?

GUNTHER
It is.

SOLOMON
It's actually a textbook used in
Universities to teach forensic
science to students, is it not?

GUNTHER
It is. And I'm very proud of that.

SOLOMON
You should be.
(beat)
And you were, in fact, the forensic
pathologist assigned to this case,
correct?

GUNTHER

That is correct.

SOLOMON

Now, we all heard the defence rattling on about how this may be a case of misidentification. About how DNA isn't as reliable as simply laying eyes on someone. Would you agree then, that DNA is the most reliable identifier we have at our disposal in today's society?

GUNTHER

I would. Of course I would.

SOLOMON

So, Gunther, in your 41 years of vast experience, how many times has DNA, when matched to the individual it came from, been wrong?

GUNTHER

Well, that's a rather complicated question. There are false matches, for sure. But it all depends on the amount of DNA recovered from the scene.

SOLOMON

What percentages are we talking about here? Give us an example.

GUNTHER

Well, at around, say... seven centimorgans, 50% of your matches are false matches.

SOLOMON

And what is a centimorgan exactly? For the layman like myself...

Solomon winks at the Jury.

GUNTHER

A centimorgan is a unit of measure for the frequency of genetic recombination.

(beat; blank looks)

It's a unit for measuring genetic linkage.

SOLOMON

And how much DNA did you recover from the crime scene at 18 Ogden Drive?

GUNTHER

I recovered a full profile.

SOLOMON

And did you compare that full profile with the defendant's profile?

GUNTHER

I did.

SOLOMON

And was it a match?

GUNTHER

It was.

Solomon lets that sink in with the Jury for a few seconds.

SOLOMON

Now, what are the chances that a full single DNA profile, when matched to the individual in question, could be wrong?

GUNTHER

A forensic DNA match with a full single profile obtained would have roughly a one in a billion chance of being wrong, identical twins notwithstanding.

Leonard makes a note. Solomon turns to the Jury.

SOLOMON

One in a billion...

(beat)

And Gunther, to your knowledge, is the defendant, Miles Sandhagen, an identical twin?

Gunther leans in closer to the microphone.

GUNTHER

No, he is not.

SQUEAL. FEEDBACK. Leonard stands up from his chair.

LEONARD
Objection. Speculation.

Solomon CHUCKLES.

SOLOMON
Speculation?

JUDGE ROSSUM
Overruled. I appreciate your
enthusiasm, Counselor, but please
take a seat.

LEONARD
I move to strike.

SOLOMON
Most of us do, just with a balled
fist...

Leonard points an accusatory finger toward Solomon.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Let's keep it professional,
gentlemen.

SOLOMON
No further questions, your Honor.
(nods to Gunther)
Thank you, Gunther.

Solomon straightens his tie and heads back to his seat beside
Carmen, eyeing Leonard as he goes.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Mister Coyle, seeing how you're
already on your feet... Would you
like to cross examine the witness?

LEONARD
You bet I would, Judge. Just...
just give me a second here.

Leonard shuffles through some papers on his desk, flipping
them over, looking for something. Eventually, he just gives
up and fixes his hair.

Sandhagen's head is lolling; his eyes drift open and shut.
Solomon is watching him closely.

Leonard, noticing Solomon's fascination, steps out from
behind the defence table, moving closer to Solomon
purposefully as he leans down toward him.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
(whispers)
You can't wake a person who's
pretending to sleep.

Solomon curiously looks up as Leonard continues on toward
Gunther Plask on the stand.

Leonard takes his place in front of Gunther, staring at him
for a moment. He adjusts his Covid mask then tucks his hands
casually in his pockets.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Gunther...

GUNTHER
Mister Plask.

Leonard pauses for a moment, annoyed.

LEONARD
Mister Plask. How can you be so
certain that my client, Miles
Sandhagen, is not an identical
twin?

GUNTHER
I imagine that would've come out by
now, mister Coyle.

LEONARD
You certainly seem to have a vivid
imagination...

SOLOMON
Objection. Badgering.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Sustained.

LEONARD
That was more of a compliment
actually.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Not in the context it was
delivered. Tread carefully.

Leonard nods at Judge Rossum and returns his attention to
Gunther.

LEONARD
Do you know my client's family
history?

GUNTHER

I do. Such is the nature of my job.

LEONARD

Perfect. Any twins dangling from the family tree?

GUNTHER

No twins, no.

LEONARD

Is it possible that the defendant has an identical twin and perhaps doesn't know it?

GUNTHER

No.

LEONARD

No?

GUNTHER

I mean it's possible, I suppose. Not likely, but possible.

LEONARD

And do identical twins share the same DNA?

GUNTHER

Identical or monozygotic twins share 100% of the same DNA, yes.

LEONARD

So it's possible then, that my client's unknown identical twin is in fact this Sandman character and not him?

SOLOMON

Objection.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Sustained.

LEONARD

That's all I have. Thank you, mister Plask.

Leonard heads back to the defence table. Carmen stands up from her seat.

CARMEN

Redirect, Judge?

Judge Rossum nods, waves her along.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Go ahead, miss Hoyer.

CARMEN
Mister Pl-- Can I call you,
Gunther?

GUNTHER
You can call me anything you want,
my dear.

CARMEN
Gunther... is it possible that
Bigfoot exists?

Leonard hasn't even taken a seat yet.

LEONARD
Objection. Relevance?

JUDGE ROSSUM
Overruled. Color me curious.

CARMEN
Go ahead, Gunther. If you please.
Is it possible that Bigfoot exists?

GUNTHER
Is it possible? Yes... yes, it's
possible.

CARMEN
No further questions, your Honor.

Carmen sits back down. Solomon jots down a note and slides it towards her. It reads, '*Bigfoot?*'. Carmen adjusts her Covid mask and shrugs.

CARMEN (CONT'D)
(quietly)
I like 'em with a lot of hair...

Solomon's eyes flick up to her shaved head; he suppresses a laugh and sits back in his chair, confident as ever.

Leonard stares at the pre-poured glass of water in front of him; the water is *rippling*, like it's been disturbed. He looks at Sandhagen beside him -- He's fast asleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (LATER)

Carmen sets up a flat screen TV on a stand then plugs it into the wall using an extension cord. Once done, she moves back to the prosecution's table.

Leonard eyes her the whole time, his gaze flicking up to her shaved head. Sandhagen blinks slowly beside him, still out of it, but now very much awake...

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

A well-dressed man, DENNIS LACROIX, 45, is seated in the witness chair. Solomon steps up to the stand, casually flattening out his tie.

SOLOMON

Mister Lacroix, you are considered to be one of the founding fathers of a cutting-edge branch of forensic science known as bite-mark analysis, would you agree with that assessment?

Lacroix flashes his pearly whites.

LACROIX

I suppose I would, yes.

SOLOMON

So could you tell us a little about that, please? What your job entails, etcetera. A quick overview is fine.

LACROIX

Certainly. So I identify violent criminals by matching their unique dental patterns to the bite wounds on victims bodies.

SOLOMON

How many years have you been an odontologist?

LACROIX

20 years and counting.

SOLOMON

And did you receive the defendant's bite moulds when you were brought on to investigate this case?

LACROIX

I did.

SOLOMON

Where did you receive these bite moulds from?

LACROIX

From the ABFO office in Indiana.

SOLOMON

Who specifically took the moulds?

LACROIX

A colleague of mine, Nathaniel Sprague. A very talented odontologist in his own right.

SOLOMON

Yet mister Sprague never examined detective James Maddux's body in order to make any direct comparisons to the moulds he took from the defendant, is that correct?

LACROIX

It is. I believe by that point the decision had been made to transfer the defendant here to Kentucky.

SOLOMON

And that's when you took over?

LACROIX

Correct.

SOLOMON

Now, is it safe to assume that you read Daniel Sprague's full report when this transfer occurred?

LACROIX

Very safe. I read every word he wrote. Thrice.

SOLOMON

And did this report detail anything that may have happened before said moulding took place, or did it stick strictly to the procedure itself?

LACROIX

It detailed everything from the defendant's arrival to when he left. Dan is pretty thorough...

SOLOMON

And, based on this thorough report, was it made clear if the defendant cooperated with the moulding process?

LACROIX

It was. And he did not. The defendant actually had to be brought in confined to a wheelchair while surrounded by the ISP.

SOLOMON

And not only did he not cooperate with the Indiana State Police, but he actively fought them during this moulding process, do I have that right?

LACROIX

You do. Fought them every step of the way. Well, I mean... as much as he could while confined to a wheelchair. Maybe "fought" is a strong word. He was uncooperative, is the point. In the end they had to use a gag to get the job done.

Solomon flashes a mock-sense of confusion.

SOLOMON

A gag?

LACROIX

It's not what you're thinking, I assure you.

SOLOMON

Well, please... enlighten us.

LACROIX

Certainly.

Lacroix slightly turns in his seat to face the Jury.

LACROIX (CONT'D)

In the context of dental surgery, a gag is a device commonly used to hold the patient's mouth open when working in the oral cavity, or to force the mouth open when it cannot open naturally because of forward dislocation of the jaw joint's intraarticular cartilage pad.

SOLOMON

Any other reason a gag could be used?

LACROIX

Yes, it could also be used when an individual refuses to open their mouth for a lawfully ordered procedure.

SOLOMON

And, based on Doctor Sprague's report, was that the case with this defendant?

LACROIX

Yes, it was.

LEONARD

Objection. Speculation.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Overruled. The aforementioned report has already been submitted into evidence. You received your copy a week ago, mister Coyle.

LEONARD

Just seems like a case of broken telephone, Judge.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Doctor Sprague's account was witnessed by the 4 other ISP officers present on that day. All of them signed off on this being the case.

LEONARD

Ah, must be true then...

JUDGE ROSSUM

(flustered)

Your objection has been noted.

(MORE)

JUDGE ROSSUM (CONT'D)

The State may continue its questioning of this witness.

SOLOMON

Thank you, your Honor.

Solomon turns back to face Lacroix, jutting a thumb out toward Leonard.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Mister Coyle makes quite the impression, doesn't he?

LACROIX

He does. And I would know all about those...

Some polite CHUCKLES throughout the court. Leonard throws his hands up at Judge Rossum who just shrugs.

SOLOMON

Now, mister Lacroix, were you able to view Detective James Maddux's body in person or just in the photographs you were provided?

LACROIX

Both, actually.

SOLOMON

And how would you describe the bite injuries he sustained?

LACROIX

Um, gruesome.

SOLOMON

Were you able to do any comparison tests when you examined the body?

LACROIX

I was, yes.

SOLOMON

Tell us about your findings, if you please.

LACROIX

Well, the defendant's bite marks revealed some identifying characteristics, that's for sure.

(MORE)

LACROIX (CONT'D)

The set of teeth that created the marks had a chipped right incisor with three peaks and a distinctly crooked third set of molars, or wisdom teeth, if you will. This perfectly fit the mould of mister Sandhagen's teeth provided by Doctor Sprague.

SOLOMON

And who took the pictures?

LACROIX

I believe the coroner did.

SOLOMON

Perfect. Let's see a couple of them for ourselves, shall we?

Solomon points at Carmen, who points a remote control at the flat screen TV and turns it on. *Click*.

On SCREEN is two IMAGES; a photo of Miles Sandhagen's BITE IMPRESSIONS taken via mould and a MORGUE PHOTO of the actual BITE MARKS left on Detective Maddux's body, specifically his right shoulder and neck area.

Solomon approaches the flat screen TV, pointing at the images.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Now what we are seeing here, mister Lacroix, is the bite-mark mould taken directly from the defendant's mouth by Doctor Daniel Sprague and the actual bite-mark injuries left on Detective James Maddux from the night he was murdered, correct?

LACROIX

That's correct.

SOLOMON

And when we overlay them...

Carmen *clicks* a button. The images SHIFT and are OVERLAYED on top of one another -- They match.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

We get an exact match. Enhance please.

Carmen *clicks* another button. The image ZOOMS and ENHANCES, showing more detail. Solomon turns back to face Lacroix.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

And according to your expert opinion, based on 20 years of experience in the field, along with this visual aid we are all seeing now, would you concur, doctor, that both images are virtually identical?

LACROIX

I would, yes.

LEONARD

Objection. 'Virtually' is the key word there.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Overruled.

Solomon makes his way toward the masked Jury Members.

SOLOMON

Well, hold on a second, let's indulge mister Coyle, shall we? He may have a point. Because sometimes, even with enhanced visuals, our eyes can deceive us, can they not? I mean, who knows what's real nowadays... So, mister Lacroix, can you tell us why we should take these images at face value and believe what we are seeing?

Solomon turns around and faces Dennis Lacroix while leaning on the edge of the Jury Box, making himself one of the jury members.

LACROIX

Gladly. So forensic odontology works much like fingerprinting. Each person has unique rings on the tips of their fingers and each person also has characteristic chips, spacing, and other details that set teeth apart from those of others. Because of this, matching bite marks to wounds based on these differences is a fairly straightforward practice. One that is widely accepted and inherently dependable.

Solomon nods, glances at Leonard, who's furiously making notes, then makes his way back toward the flat screen TV where the overlaid images are still displayed.

SOLOMON
Separate the images, please.

Carmen *clicks* a button on the remote and the images SEPARATE. Solomon points to the bite mark injuries on Detective Maddux's right shoulder.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)
Are these marks on the right
shoulder teeth marks, doctor?

LACROIX
Yes, they are.

Solomon points to the bite marks on the neck.

SOLOMON
And these marks on the neck...
Teeth marks?

LACROIX
Yes.

SOLOMON
So in your expert opinion, based on
the report presented to you by your
esteemed colleague Doctor Sprague,
along with your own personal
findings, were these teeth marks
made and left by the defendant
Miles Sandhagen?

LACROIX
Yes, they were. 100%.

Solomon glances at the Jury.

SOLOMON
That's all I have for this witness,
your Honor.

Solomon steps away from the witness stand, cocky as ever.

INT. COURTROOM, WITNESS STAND - CONTINUOUS

Leonard steps up to the witness stand in front of Dennis Lacroix, awkward as ever. He opens a file and looks down at it briefly, fumbling with a paper within.

LEONARD

"Widely accepted and inherently dependable"... Hm.

(beat)

I must say, mister Lacroix, I'm a little disappointed. I was expecting your testimony here today to be a little more, how should I say... nuanced.

LACROIX

How so?

Leonard pauses for a moment.

LEONARD

Glad you asked...

(beat)

In your initial report, you were fairly cautious about what could be deduced from the puncture marks found on the right shoulder and neck of Detective James Maddux, were you not?

LACROIX

I wouldn't say cautious, no.

LEONARD

No? You're not on record saying the injuries were insufficiently distinct to allow a positive match with the perpetrator?

LACROIX

I did say that at one point, yes.

LEONARD

But that's not what you just told this jury, is it?

LACROIX

New things come to light all the time. Especially in forensic science. I merely took a second look.

LEONARD

Quite the about face...

LACROIX

I'd call it being thorough.

LEONARD

I see. And is that a usual occurrence for you? Doing a complete 180 and changing your opinion after looking at the evidence for a second time?

LACROIX

It's been known to happen.

LEONARD

Right. So, mister Lacroix, reminding you that you are under oath, would you be prepared to admit that odontology, although somewhat reliable under the right circumstances, is also not 100% infallible?

LACROIX

I would admit that, yes. But also add that nothing is.

LEONARD

Because you have in fact, in other murder trials, admitted that your work is a mixture of, and I quote, "art and science", and that you had merely presented your opinion and not indisputable facts. Is this correct?

LACROIX

It is. But that's all I was asked to do in those cases.

LEONARD

So is it true then, in those previous cases, that you started out with a desired solution then worked backward to the science that would support it?

LACROIX

No, that's not true at all. That's not how good science works.

LEONARD

Ah, but we're not talking about good science here, are we?

SOLOMON

Objection.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Sustained.

LEONARD

I'll withdraw the question, Judge. Now, mister Lacroix, is it not possible that an enterprising prosecutor such as, say... Solomon Dell, might think, 'Hey, maybe I could match the suspect's teeth to the bite on this victim's neck and shoulder, thus proving the suspect is the murderer'? Then, convinced of this, off he goes to find a paid expert witness who could back the theory up?

SOLOMON

Objection.

LEONARD

I mean, you *were* paid were you not, mister Lacroix?

LACROIX

I was. As were all the witnesses here today.

Leonard steps up closer to Dennis Lacroix, leaning in.

LEONARD

Because you'd sort of have to be, wouldn't you? I highly doubt you'd do this for free...

SOLOMON

Objection. Badgering.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Sustained. I'll warn you again to tread carefully, mister Coyle. I *will* dismiss this witness...

LEONARD

Understood, your Honor.

(to Lacroix)

So, if you were asked and pressed to tell the truth, doctor, like you were, say, under oath or something... You'd probably have to admit that bite mark analysis isn't much like fingerprinting at all, wouldn't you?

Lacroix doesn't respond, just shifts in his seat as he searches within himself for an answer.

LEONARD (CONT'D)
Some might even say it's more akin
to a polygraph, right? Widely
unaccepted and inherently
undependable.

Solomon stands up out of his chair.

SOLOMON
Your Honor, this is an expert
witness.

LEONARD
(focused on Lacroix)
Just an unsubstantiated whim on the
part of whoever is paying for it,
am I right?

SOLOMON
Objection!

JUDGE ROSSUM
Mister Coyle, I've had just about
enough of this...

Leonard keeps his focus on Lacroix.

LEONARD
Because the truth is, in regards to
bite moulds, there's no direct
evidence of an existing scientific
basis for identifying an individual
to the exclusion of all others, is
there?

LACROIX
What's your point?
(to Judge Rossum)
Judge, what's happening here?

JUDGE ROSSUM
You don't have to answer that.

LEONARD
My *point* is that I have a problem
with your testimony today, sir.
(MORE)

LEONARD (CONT'D)

And the problem is that bite mark analysis is founded upon so much hot air it could raise a balloon sky-high carrying 6 overweight passengers in a rickety wicker basket.

SOLOMON

Objection! In *triplicate*. This witness needs to be excused.

LEONARD

The witness asked me a question.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Doesn't mean you should indulge it.

LEONARD

Doesn't mean I shouldn't either.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Actually, that's exactly what it means.

LEONARD

If you say so.

Judge Rossum's eyebrows raise at this.

JUDGE ROSSUM

I do say so. The Jury will disregard the entire line of questioning by mister Coyle. This *expert* witness is excused with the court's sincerest apologies.

Solomon takes a seat and begins fidgeting with his pen, fuming. Dennis Lacroix stands up and straightens his tie.

Leonard looks over at the Jury.

LEONARD

You can disregard but you can't ignore.

JUDGE ROSSUM

Counselor...

LEONARD

Bite mark analysis is just junk science, ladies and gentlemen. A means to a fabricated end...

(points to Lacroix)

And *he* knows it.

Solomon tosses his pen on the table.

SOLOMON
Your Honor... *Please!*

Judge Rossum BANGS his gavel. Leonard keeps his gaze locked on the Jury.

LEONARD
Unequivocally dangerous to anyone
it sets its sights on, guilty or
not. In the end it doesn't matter.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Mister Coyle, you will *not* address
the Jury directly--

LEONARD
The fact is, in *this* system, with
methods like this at my disposal--

JUDGE ROSSUM
Mister Coyle!

LEONARD
-- if I wanted to prove Santa
Clause was a pedophile I probably
could.

Judge Rossum BANGS his gavel as loud as he can, over and over.

JUDGE ROSSUM
That's enough! Any more from you
and you will be held in contempt of
court. I draw the line at Santa
Clause, young man...

LEONARD
Nice to know you draw it somewhere.

JUDGE ROSSUM
Pardon me?

LEONARD
No, I don't think I will. No
further questions.

Leonard heads back to the defence table amidst HUSHED MURMURS within the courtroom. He takes a seat, glances at a drowsy Miles Sandhagen beside him, then takes a sip of *rippling* water from the glass...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COURTHOUSE - EVENING

Afternoon gives way to the Evening as the sun lowers in the sky. Various Covid-masked PEDESTRIANS come and go, in and out of the courthouse, busy as anonymous ants in the sand.

The sound of RUNNING WATER leads us into--

INT. COURTHOUSE, BATHROOM - EVENING

Leonard is reflected in a mirror as he washes his hands at a sink, his tie slung over his shoulder to keep it from getting wet. No Covid mask on.

The door OPENS. Solomon saunters into view. He glances at Leonard before stopping at a urinal to do his business.

Leonard dries his hands with some disposable towels and eyes Solomon's back in the mirror. Solomon lifts his head up to the ceiling as he relieves himself, looking at nothing in particular.

SOLOMON

Good job today, Leonard. A little abrasive, but... good, nonetheless.

Leonard's eyes flick back towards Solomon.

LEONARD

You too, um... Solomon.

Solomon finishes and begins zipping and buckling back up.

SOLOMON

Make sure to get some sleep tonight. Big day tomorrow, with all your expert witnesses and all...

LEONARD

No rest for the wicked. You should know that better than anyone.

Leonard starts to leave. Solomon turns his head, smiling a practised smile that more than a few Judges have seen.

SOLOMON

See you later.

Leonard points at Solomon as the door shuts.

LEONARD

Not if I see you first... Keep an eye out for me.

The door closes. Solomon CHUCKLES and flushes the urinal. He heads over to the same sink that Leonard was using. He stops, staring down at something...

There is a glass in the sink. The same one that Leonard was drinking from in the courtroom; soap suds still running down the side of it. *He was washing it?* Confused, Solomon looks back at the closed door...

EXT. ROAD - EVENING

The prison transport van speeds alongside the waterfront, a vibrant city in the background.

INSERT - **SOUTH BEND, INDIANA**

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT VAN - CONTINUOUS

ROCK MUSIC blares on the radio. Reyes taps his hands along to the heavy guitar riff on the steering wheel. A notification PINGS on his cell phone that sits in a cup holder. He grabs it and hits a link, which opens an app.

A NEWS HEADLINE appears: '*First Image of The Sandman - Artist's Depiction*'. A hand drawn SKETCH is shown below of Miles Sandhagen bound and gagged in a wheelchair in the courtroom, Covid mask on.

Reyes looks closer, squinting his eyes at the screen. He scrolls down with his thumb to another composite SKETCH of Solomon Dell and Leonard Coyle talking to the Jury during their opening statements. He focuses in a little closer...

Then he quickly closes the app and dials a number.

INT. MANSION, STUDY - EVENING

Dark stained walls. Elegant wood panelling. Law books line a massive shelf. A cell phone is RINGING.

JUDGE BOWERS, 68, thick glasses, answers the call from a comfortable leather chair behind a Mahogany desk.

JUDGE BOWERS

Yes?

INT. PRISON TRANSPORT VAN - CONTINUOUS

Reyes holds the cell phone in front of him with his free hand, the speakerphone function activated.

REYES

Sorry to bother you, sir. But have you seen the news on 21 Alive?

INT. MANSION, STUDY - CONTINUOUS

JUDGE BOWERS

I have not. Why?

REYES (O.S.)

Check your phone. I just sent you a link.

JUDGE BOWERS

A link? Great... Hold on.

Judge Bowers hits the speakerphone button and closes the call screen with an awkward swipe. He brings up his text messages with an unsure press and clicks on the link Reyes sent. He shakes his head, frustrated. *Technology...*

CLOSE UP on Judge Bowers cell phone screen - On 21Alive.com, the COMPOSITE SKETCH DRAWINGS of Miles Sandhagen, Solomon Dell and Leonard Coyle are below a headline that reads, '*Trial and Error*'.

Judge Bowers GRUNTS in frustration, adjusts his glasses, and looks closely, confused by what he sees.

JUDGE BOWERS (CONT'D)

I don't understand... Are these sketches authentic?

REYES (O.S.)

They seem to be.

Judge Bowers shakes his head.

JUDGE BOWERS

What in God's name...?

REYES (O.S.)

Yeah, I thought it was a joke.

JUDGE BOWERS

This can't be right. Let me get in touch with Rudy Rossum. Give me a minute here...

INT. COURTHOUSE, OFFICE - EVENING

Teagen, deep in concentration, looks over her case file. She EXHALES a breath and leans back in her chair; something small MOVES SLIGHTLY beneath her high heeled shoes as she does.

Teagen pushes the chair out from the desk and looks down - A PLASTIC ID CARD is on the floor. She bends down and picks it up. Looks at it strangely...

EXT. COURTHOUSE - EVENING

Leonard makes his way down the courthouse steps toward street level. A lone female REPORTER in a Covid mask approaches him holding out a microphone. She quickly gets in lockstep.

REPORTER

Mister Coyle, can I get a few words?

LEONARD

No, no comment. There's three.

Leonard speeds up and walks away before another question can be asked. The Reporter watches him leave, disappointed, then turns and jogs up the steps toward the courthouse.

INT. COURTHOUSE, HALL - CONTINUOUS

Teagen, plastic ID Card in hand, makes a b-line towards a now Covid-masked Solomon Dell as he's being interviewed by the various masked Media Members that were in the courtroom. They all stick microphones in his face.

SOLOMON

All I can say is that it was a good first day for the prosecution. And I very much look forward to what tomorrow brings.

Teagen closes the distance.

TEAGAN

Solomon!

Solomon looks up from the throng of Reporters and spots Teagen heading his way. She looks concerned.

SOLOMON

(to Media Members)

Well, that's my cue. Thank you, everyone. That's all I got for now.

The microphones drop away in unison as the masked Media Members scatter toward some other poor soul. Teagen takes their place as she sidles up next to Solomon.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)

Teagen, I know I'm the man of the hour but I still enjoy my fifteen minutes every now and then. What's got you all worked up?

Teagen passes Solomon the plastic ID Card -- It's a DRIVER'S LICENCE; her thumb is covering the picture as she hands it to him.

TEAGAN

I ran into Leonard Coyle earlier.

SOLOMON

Okay...

Confused, Solomon looks down at the driver's licence in his hand.

TEAGAN

That's... not the guy I spoke to.

(beat)

What's going on here?

Solomon looks up from the driver's license, eyes wide. He drops the licence, turns on a dime and begins running down the hallway.

TEAGAN (CONT'D)

Solomon?! What's happening?!

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - EVENING

Judge Rossum is seated behind his desk, robe hung up on the hook behind him. He leans forward holding his cell phone to his ear. The sand in the hourglass has run its course - It's all piled up at the bottom.

Judge Rossum looks as if he's hearing news that is beyond his comprehension. He shoots up from his chair, his arm KNOCKING OVER the hourglass on the desk, sending it rocketing toward the floor, where it SHATTERS into a thousand shiny pieces.

He runs out of his chambers. We stay FOCUSED on the broken hourglass -- PULLING IN closer and closer toward the small pile of SAND on the floor...

INT. HOLDING CELL - EVENING

Miles Sandhagen, slumped forward, still confined to his wheelchair in the holding cell, shakes his head slowly, MUTTERING to himself.

Connors and Nix stand nearby, no Covid masks, eating hamburgers from some fast food place.

NIX

Not so much as a whimper from this guy since that initial outburst. Good job.

CONNORS

(chewing)
Yeah.
(beat)
Wait, what?

NIX

What did you give him?

Connors swallows his mouthful of burger.

CONNORS

Me? Nothing. I thought you gave him something...

Nix slowly turns toward Sandhagen. His eyes shift down to the floor, spotting something near the wall. He heads over, bends down and picks up THREE NEEDLE CAPS. Examines them closely.

CONNORS (CONT'D)

What do you got there?

NIX

Needle caps.

Connors furrows his brow, confused. Nix glances at Sandhagen, considering something...

NIX (CONT'D)

Where's Brand?

Connors shrugs.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. HOLDING CELL - DAY (EARLIER)

Miles Sandhagen *struggles* in his wheelchair after the initial escape attempt in the courtroom.

Officer Brand makes sure the coast is clear and removes THREE SMALL NEEDLES from his pants pocket.

He pops the three small lids off of all of them with his teeth, spits them out towards the wall, and injects the contents of the needles into Sandhagen's arm, pressing the plungers down in unison.

Sandhagen *struggles* against Officer Brand's grip, whipping his head from side-to-side as Brand applies more tape to his Covid mask and wraps it multiple times around his head.

Once done, Officer Brand tightens the ropes, adding leather arm straps, *yanking* them down as tight as they can go. He wraps the straps with rope, doubling down on the confines.

OFFICER BRAND

You really shouldn't have done that.

Sandhagen SCREAMS OUT something profane beneath the mask and tape. Connors and Nix enter the holding cell, looking over Officer Brand's handiwork.

NIX

You got him?

OFFICER BRAND

I got him.

BACK TO:

INT. HOLDING CELL - EVENING (PRESENT)

Nix slowly looks back toward Sandhagen.

NIX

Remove the gag. I want to get a good look at this guy...

CONNORS

(reticent)

You sure? He, uh, he eats people.

NIX

He's tied to a wheelchair, Connors. I'm sure.

Connors and Nix put down their burgers and approach Sandhagen.

Nix rips off the tape and half-removes the Covid mask and gag, which is just a small cloth, nearly exposing the bottom half of Sandhagen's face for the first time...

INT. COURTHOUSE, HALL - CONTINUOUS

Teagen looks down at the driver's licence Solomon dropped. CLOSE UP on the LICENCE -- It's a PICTURE of who we know to be Miles Sandhagen with the name, 'Coyle, Leonard' underneath...

BACK TO:

INT. HOLDING CELL - CONTINUOUS

Connors and Nix take a step back in unison.

Sitting in the wheelchair is the man from the driver's licence -- The REAL Leonard Coyle. He is breathing heavily, COUGHING, catching his breath after being gagged for so long.

LEONARD COYLE
(raspy, weak)
Lawyer...

Nix leans in closer.

NIX
What was that?

CONNORS
I think he said water.

LEONARD COYLE
(raspy, weak)
No... I'm... the God damn...
lawyer...

Connors and Nix stare at him in awe.

LEONARD COYLE (CONT'D)
My name... is Leonard Coyle, you
fucking morons...

He slowly looks up.

LEONARD COYLE (CONT'D)
What the fuck did you just let
happen?

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELLS - DAY (EARLIER)

From a LOW ANGLE near the floor, a pair of GREY SLACKS and scuffed up BLACK OXFORD SHOES walk briskly down the hallway past the various holding cells. A peeling BROWN BRIEFCASE hangs low below the waist.

But instead of panning up to the Covid-19 sign, we PAN UP to reveal who we knew to be Sandhagen, the REAL Leonard Coyle. Covid mask on.

Officer Brand is waiting for him at the end of the hall. He holds out a hand, stopping him in his tracks.

OFFICER BRAND
You the lawyer?

LEONARD COYLE
How'd you guess?

OFFICER BRAND
How long have you been in the
courthouse?

LEONARD COYLE
Excuse me?

OFFICER BRAND
Have you been roaming around? You
know, talking to anyone?

LEONARD COYLE
It's Covid, I've been keeping my
distance like everyone else. And I
came straight here, as requested.

Officer Brand nods.

OFFICER BRAND
Got anything on you that could be
used as a weapon?

LEONARD COYLE
Just a few needles in my briefcase.
Three, to be exact.

Officer Brand stares at him.

LEONARD COYLE (CONT'D)
Insulin. I'm diabetic.

INT. HOLDING CELL - CONTINUOUS

Leonard Coyle takes a seat in front of the tied up Prisoner with the bag over his head from the prison transport van. He lowers his Covid mask so that it rests underneath his jaw.

Officer Brand glances up at the camera near the ceiling; the power cord is dangling from the wall. *No one is watching...*

LEONARD COYLE

Would you kindly take the bag off my client's head, officer?

OFFICER BRAND

You're on your own, Counselor...
I'm sorry.

Leonard exchanges a look with Officer Brand, who seems genuinely sorry for something.

Leonard reaches forward and snatches the bag off the Prisoner's head - It's who we knew to be Leonard, the REAL Miles Sandhagen, wearing a Covid mask.

Leonard removes Miles Sandhagen's mask and looks over the face of the once faceless monster. Sandhagen spits out a familiar small cloth being used as a gag. He INHALES a deep breath.

LEONARD COYLE

Hello, Miles. I'm your court appointed attorney, from out of State, as requested. Name's Leonard Coyle. Nice to meet you.

Sandhagen looks Leonard up and down.

MILES SANDHAGEN

You've gained a little weight since I last saw you, but... this should still work. I mean, probably. Who knows, right?

Leonard raises his eyebrows at this.

LEONARD COYLE

When did you last see me?

MILES SANDHAGEN

Tell me, Counselor... Have you ever tried a case in front of this judge before?

LEONARD COYLE

No, sir. As I said, I'm new here.
But there's a first time for
everything, am I right?

MILES SANDHAGEN

You're right about that...
(beat)
You couldn't have worn a better
suit?

Leonard smiles, gives himself a once over.

LEONARD COYLE

What? You don't like this one?

Sandhagen shrugs.

MILES SANDHAGEN

It'll have to do.

Sandhagen flexes his arms and easily breaks free from his ropes. *Almost like they were loosened...* He lunges forward and attacks Leonard, whose SCREAMS go unanswered.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR, Officer Brand turns his back on everything. He stands guard, looking up and down the hallway.

FLASH CUT: A sweating Miles Sandhagen switches clothes with an unconscious Leonard Coyle. He dresses Leonard in the red prison jumpsuit.

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELLS - CONTINUOUS

Miles Sandhagen steps outside the cell in a new suit that doesn't exactly fit him. He carries a familiar brown briefcase. He makes some final adjustments, wipes his brow and stops beside Officer Brand.

MILES SANDHAGEN

(*English accent;*
continuous)

Now remember, stick to the plan or
your precious wife and unborn child
go night, night. And life as you
know it goes right down the drain
with it...

OFFICER BRAND

I unhooked the camera and loosened
the ropes, didn't I?

MILES SANDHAGEN
 One step in the right direction
 does not make a path, Officer.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

THERAPIST (O.S.)
 (voice rising)
What did he look like, Mandy?

Mandy swallows the lump in her throat.

MANDY
 (whispers)
 You...

She WHIMPERS.

MANDY (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 He looked like you.

Miles Sandhagen, who we knew to be Leonard, looking a little more unkempt, is seated in a chair across from Mandy, legs crossed, at ease.

MILES SANDHAGEN
 Very good, my dear. Honesty is
 everything, after all. I just
 needed to know I could trust you.
 (beat)
 Open your eyes.

Mandy's eyes blink open -- They're wet, filled with tears.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
 Now, I need you to listen close,
 okay? Even closer than you have
 been. It's of the utmost importance
 that you grasp all the details I'm
 about to tell you so you can relay
 them accurately. Do I make myself
 clear?

Mandy nods.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
 Good.

Miles Sandhagen brushes off a small piece of lint from his pant leg.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

So, in the next day or two, a rather chaotic event will occur that will end with me being apprehended. More specifically, there will be a mass murder spree in one location. Think Ted Bundy in Florida... You know what I'm referencing, right?

(beat; blank look)

Anyway, doesn't matter. When it's all said and done, I will be arrested in South Bend, Indiana. But I won't be there long. Shortly after my arrest, I will invoke my right to a speedy trial, which is guaranteed to me by the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. After this is granted, and I've caused enough headaches, I will be transferred back here to Kentucky. Now, this will all happen rather quickly, Covid protocols and all, but that's neither here nor there. What matters here is your husband.

Mandy is visibly trembling, still under the influence of whichever synthetic cathinones Sandhagen gave her.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

Your husband's name is Rory Brand, am I right?

Mandy SNIFFS. Nods.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

Yes. Rory works as a court officer at the very courthouse I'll be sent to. I'll be needing his help. Or more specifically, you are going to need him to help me. If he doesn't, it won't be good for him or you. Or your baby boy. You following me?

Mandy glances down at her pregnant stomach. Sandhagen considers something; He uncrosses his legs and leans forward in his chair.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

I need him to help me send a message, Mandy. A very important message. Do you understand?

Mandy looks up and nods.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
You want to ask, 'to who?', don't
you?

Mandy nods again.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
I know you so well...
(beat)
To everyone, my dear. Everyone. You
see, passed a certain point, no one
responds to violence anymore. They
get numb to it. It becomes normal.
At *some* point, the only thing that
trumps violence is humiliation,
which means the only way to truly
change things is by attacking egos.
Beating the players at their own
game, so to speak. That's how you
expose a broken system. And that's
exactly what I plan to do.
(beat; pulls out a pen)
Take this pen, for example. It will
always be mightier than the sword.
Do you know why that is, Mandy?

Mandy stares at Sandhagen; a tear rolls down her cheek. She
shakes her head no.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
Because a pen never seems like a
weapon until it's lodged in your
throat. And at *that* point, I think
we can both agree, it's too little
too late.

Sandhagen flashes a creepy grin. Mandy looks away.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
Now, I need you to take this pen
and write your husband a letter...
A *convincing* letter. Not a text
message on a piece of paper type
letter, get me? But don't worry
your little head of yours, I'll
tell you what to say, word-for-
word. Your only job is to write it
like you normally would. No
alterations. Like everything is
going to work out just fine...

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Mandy is seated on a concrete floor, tied to a support beam. Her stomach is flat. The baby is gone. There's a DIGITAL CAMERA pointed directly at her, the RED LIGHT is on.

An IV stand is next to her, a cord feeding a conspicuous MURKY FLUID from a large transparent bag into her veins. There's not much left. Mandy's head is slumped to her chest. Her breathing is raspy. It doesn't look good...

BACK TO:

INT. COURTHOUSE, HOLDING CELLS - CONTINUOUS

Miles Sandhagen nods confidently at Officer Brand's compliance.

MILES SANDHAGEN

It will all be so bloody brilliant if we pull it off, mate. Something they'll talk about forever. So no funny business in the mean time, yeah? One word or sideways glance in the wrong direction and not only do you lose your family but I'll release the footage of you soliciting an underage prost--

OFFICER BRAND

I get it, okay? I *fucking* get it.

MILES SANDHAGEN

Good. You'll get Mandy's location when I'm through here, as promised.

Officer Brand leans in close to Sandhagen, his jaw clenched.

OFFICER BRAND

How can I trust you?

Sandhagen leans right back.

MILES SANDHAGEN

You can't. But, when you really think about it, what other choice do you have?

Officer Brand shakes his head and looks away.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

You can relax, I'm not interested in either of you.

(MORE)

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

But Mandy's counting on you not to screw this up. So is your freedom. Not to mention your unborn baby... Don't let all three of them down at once.

Sandhagen pats Officer Brand on the shoulder.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

There's a good lad. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to go practice your dreadful American accent...

Sandhagen walks off down the hall with his new suit and briefcase, looking bound and determined as ever.

Officer Brand watches him make his way into the courthouse hall. He glances back into the cell at Leonard Coyle, who is still unconscious in the prison jumpsuit...

LEONARD (V.O.)

There's an old Japanese philosophy.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (EARLIER)

The door BURSTS open. Various MEDIA PERSONNEL seated on the benches turn and look, all sitting six feet apart and wearing Covid masks.

LEONARD (V.O.)

It states that every human being has three faces.

Leonard moves past the various ONLOOKERS and MEDIA PERSONNEL (no cameras in the court) that all stare at him, up towards the Defendant's table, which is currently empty.

He places the case file on the table, slips his Covid mask down and takes a sip from the pre-poured glass of water, his eyes flicking to the empty jury box.

LEONARD (V.O.)

The first face, you show to the world.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY (EARLIER)

Leonard struggles with Sandhagen on top of him. Sandhagen's free hand grips Leonard's tie as he YELLS SOMETHING MUFFLED.

Leonard looks to Officer Brand who finally charges into the fray and begins pulling Sandhagen off of Leonard. In the chaos, Leonard hands Officer Brand the three diabetic needles that were kept in the suit. They exchange a quick look.

LEONARD (V.O.)

The second face, you show to your close friends and your family.

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Miles Sandhagen readjusts his Covid mask onto the bridge of his nose as he walks casually down the street, putting distance between himself and the courthouse.

LEONARD (V.O.)

The third face, you never show anyone.

Sandhagen loosens his tie and removes his suit jacket as he goes, tossing them both into a nearby garbage bin.

An elderly HOMELESS MAN wearing a dirty, blue Kentucky Wildcats hat, sits near a bus stop bench, a hand out, begging for change.

Sandhagen stops near him and drops the briefcase on his lap.

MILES SANDHAGEN

Case of the decade... And it just fell right into your lap.

The Homeless Man looks up, puzzled.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

I'll take that hat.

The Homeless Man slowly removes his hat and hands it over. Sandhagen puts it on and pulls it down low, nodding his thanks before leaving.

And Miles Sandhagen keeps walking... Merging into a CROWD all wearing Covid masks; becoming lost in a sea of anonymous, diseased-ridden humanity...

DISSOLVE TO:

INSERT: **ONE YEAR LATER**

FADE IN:

A beach with miles of sand and water. It looks beautiful. Pristine. But something is off - The image isn't moving.

PULL BACK to reveal a LAPTOP SCREEN. It's a screensaver. The screen blinks off in an instant as someone *clicks* a button and takes a seat in an always-audible leather chair.

The laptop screen now shows a NEWS HEADLINE: '*Sandman Still At Large After Courtroom Stunt*'. There's a composite SKETCH of Miles Sandhagen playing the part of Leonard Coyle in the courtroom, talking to the Jury.

Below that, the real Leonard Coyle, now in a new suit and tie, stands in front of a throng of Reporters who hold microphones to his face. No one wears Covid masks. The restrictions have been lifted.

Scrolling down, a news article: A PICTURE of Leonard Coyle bound and gagged in the wheelchair in court. The headline reads, '*Would the Real Leonard Coyle Please Stand Up*'.

More scrolling. More HEADLINES. '*A-rested Sandman*'. '*The Unusual Suspect*'. '*Leonard Coyle Springs Loose*'. '*Sandman Exposes Legal System - A Ton of Holes to Fill*'.

Below that is a PICTURE of Solomon Dell being interviewed. The scrolling stops here, as if, this was always the intended subject matter. PULL BACK from the screen into--

INT. SOLOMON'S HOUSE, OFFICE - NIGHT

Solomon Dell, dressed casually at home, stares at his own image for a moment. He shakes his head and *clicks* off the laptop screen. BLACK. His reflection stares back at him.

The large window behind him shows a starry night sky. Solomon gets up out of his leather chair and leaves the office.

INT. SOLOMON'S HOUSE, FOYER - NIGHT

Solomon double-locks the front door. He checks the side windows, peering through the shutters.

INT. SOLOMON'S HOUSE, 2ND FLOOR - NIGHT

Solomon gazes out of a 2nd floor window towards the backyard with a pool, looking into the dark for any signs of movement. There is none. Security cameras line the property.

INT. SOLOMON'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Solomon lies in bed staring at the ceiling. A SHADOW tucked under the blankets SNORES lightly beside him. A shaved head, facing away. Carmen.

Solomon looks over in her direction and softly nudges her.

SOLOMON
Carmen... You up?

She doesn't move.

Solomon stares back up at the ceiling. He SIGHS and sits up in bed, positioning himself so that his feet touch the floor. He looks at his bedside table, the clock reads, '3:03am'.

His eyes shift down to something strange near the clock. He squints and leans closer -- It's a PILE OF SAND.

Solomon freezes. He looks up slowly towards the open bathroom door ahead - A BARE FOOT lies motionless on the tile floor near a clawfoot bathtub. A familiar, slender foot. *Female*.

All the color drains from Solomon's face. The bedroom seems to suddenly get quieter. Smaller. His breathing picks up pace to match his heart rate. His eyes widen.

SOLOMON (CONT'D)
(whispers)
You can't wake a person who's
pretending to sleep...

Solomon spins around -- Miles Sandhagen is in his bed staring at him with a freshly SHAVED HEAD. Before Solomon can react, Sandhagen injects a needle straight into his neck, pressing the plunger down all the way.

MILES SANDHAGEN
Night, night.

And Solomon Dell's world goes BLACK... It's BLACK for a long while... Some slight JOSTLING sounds... MUFFLED GRUNTS...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

A dull, artificial LIGHT returns slowly.

Solomon is bound to a leather chair by CHAINS. His mouth is GAGGED, made evident by something protruding from beyond the duct tape around his mouth and head. SAND flakes down from the sides of the tape.

MILES SANDHAGEN (O.S.)
Wakey, wakey.

Solomon shakes his head, slowly coming to. As he moves, more SAND flakes out from beyond the tape.

MILES SANDHAGEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You lawyers... always with your
heads buried in the sand.

A low, ominous CHUCKLE.

MILES SANDHAGEN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Don't tell me you haven't wondered
about that... the sand...
(beat)
Sand is often associated with time,
as grains of sand represent the
passage of it. But sand can also
symbolize instability, shifting
circumstances and the impermanence
of life... Which you're about to
find out about first hand.

Miles Sandhagen, with his newly shaved head, steps into the dull, artificial light in front of Solomon, who is suddenly even more petrified. He begins to *struggle*.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
Now, now, mister Dell... all that
fussing about is rather pointless.
You see, I was hoping my temporary
associate, Officer Brand, would use
chains such as these when binding
mister Coyle to his wheelchair,
but, alas, he's just a cop. What
does he know, right? It takes a
monster to catch a monster...

Solomon GRUNTS something inaudible out from beneath the tape. One syllable.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)
Save your breath. You'll need it.

Sandhagen moves behind Solomon and begins pacing along the back wall of the basement, much like lawyers do in front of a Jury; disappearing and reappearing in the shadows.

Solomon's head turns in the direction of Sandhagen as he stalks, like prey on high alert from a nearby predator.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

We are all given a name... yet only the *truly* exceptional make a name for themselves. The catch is, most times? You have to go away before you can come back as something different. *Absence*, as it turns out, is life's true power... It's death's dirty little secret.

A tattoo'd forearm suddenly shoots out from the shadows and wraps around Solomon's neck from behind, enclosing it. The arm *squeezes* slowly, methodically, like a snake slowly digesting its still-alive prey.

Solomon's eyes instantly shut as he feels the pressure. Veins pop from his forehead.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

(straining)

It's easy to escape and disappear, mister Dell. Justice is blind, after all. The real trick is to escape in plain sight, right under everyone's watchful eye. If you can muddy the waters, make people question what they know to be true, then you have created reasonable doubt. You turn the narrative on its head, like an hourglass, and all that's left to do is wait for the first speck to fall and the rest will follow. Because if you can convince one then you can convince them all... And they will make your lies real.

MUFFLED GRUNTS escape from Solomon's throat. A final GASP.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

You're out of your depth, Solomon. But you can give up if you're overwhelmed. No shame in it. Everyone else has.

Miles Sandhagen keeps *squeezing*, tilts his head, and leans into Solomon's face.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

I told you to keep an eye out for
me, didn't I?

Sandhagen opens his mouth, showing his teeth, and begins to *rip* and *tear* into Solomon's eye.

Solomon's other eye goes wide; he shakes uncontrollably in his seat as he lets out a desperate, MUFFLED SHRIEK.

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - NIGHT

Judge Rossum's framed picture on the desk contains a PHOTO of himself in a judge's robe, smiling for the camera. A still-smoking cigar sits in the ashtray. A pair of reading glasses sits near the keys of the laptop. No one is here.

A VIDEO plays on the laptop screen. The screen BLIPS and resets itself. The video is on a loop.

ON SCREEN: Miles Sandhagen, shirt off, exposing TATTOOS and three old BULLET WOUNDS in his left shoulder and pectoral, his face bloody and sweating, stands over the MUTILATED CORPSE of Solomon Dell.

Solomon has been STRETCHED and *twisted* into a HUMAN HOURGLASS. Intestines removed. One eye has been completely CHEWED OUT of its socket.

Sand pours down a MAKESHIFT FUNNEL that leads directly into Solomon's throat, goes down through his thin and *twisted* midsection and comes out his ripped open bottom.

Beside him lies Carmen Hoyer. Dead. Half her shaved skull CAVED IN from some blunt force impact.

Miles Sandhagen glances back at his handiwork then looks at the camera in front of him.

MILES SANDHAGEN

There's plenty of two-faced people in the world... but it's the third face you have to worry about, isn't it? I can see your face now, Judge... You really shouldn't be so surprised. After all, I'm just giving you what you want. Like you expect from everyone who applies their trade in front of you.

(MORE)

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

I mean, you said it yourself...

(beat)

You like you an hourglass figure.

Sandhagen sticks his bloody face closer to the camera.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

What was the other thing you said?

Silent is just listen rearranged?

That's aces. So listen to this, I have a joke for you. But I've got a sneaking suspicion that you've heard it before...

Sandhagen's eyes flick up as he ponders something only he can know. He nods to himself, self-assured, and looks back into the camera.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

What do you call a thousand lawyers chained together at the bottom of the ocean?

(beat)

A good start.

(beat; smiles)

Funny, right? But you know what else it is?

He pushes himself closer to the camera, his smile fading.

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

It's an even better ending.

Miles Sandhagen stares at us for a moment, letting everything sink in...

MILES SANDHAGEN (CONT'D)

The defence rests.

He reaches up and presses a button.

CUT TO BLACK.