

DEATH CHAMBER: THE ESCAPE

by
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1.

FADE IN:

INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DUSK

On the third floor of cell block 6, clanking chains bashing the concrete floors are the only sounds that echo as shackled prisoner 054767, CARL THOMPSON, mid 30s, walk down the endless prison corridor. Two GUARDS, one on each side with their hands glued to his arm, and a male CLERGY holding an open Bible reciting the 23rd Psalm, accompany him. Carl who is on his way to the death chamber is expressionless.

INT. PRISON - GROUND FLOOR - OPEN HALL - CONTINUOUS

GLADYS, mid 40s, chubby African American female guard crosses the hall of the cell block. She stops abruptly as she hears the clanking sounds. She turns to look up at the third floor knowing exactly what the sound means. A tear rolls down her cheek.

Other death row inmates, on the same floor, one by one approach their cell doors looking on with sadness in their eyes.

Carl Thompson, guards, and clergy continue the walk down the corridor.

INT. DEATH CHAMBER - DUSK

Male MEDIC straps Carl Thompson to the execution gurney.

An outdated and antique looking red phone hangs on the wall.

FAMILY MEMBERS of the victim sit in the observation room looking on.

Through the glass Carl can see the victim's mother, DIANNE, early 50s. She sits erect and clenches her jaws. She is looking intensely at the execution chamber as if not to miss one second of the proceedings. She reaches over and rests her hand on her HUSBAND'S, who is sitting next to her.

MEDIC

Carl, you have a chance to say a few
your last words.

Victim's parents cling to each other's hands even tighter
and look on in anticipation for an apology.

CARL

(to Medic)

I have a few last words. Can you
bend your ear toward me?

MEDIC

(puzzled)

What?

Carl looks at his gurney strapped hand, moves them around,
as if to remind the medic that they are strapped.

CARL

What, afraid I'm going to escape?

With that, the medic, against all protocol, draws his right
ear close to Carl's mouth, having a clear view of the
observation glass.

Carl whispers in the medic's ear. Medic's eyes open in
shock.

INT. UPSCALE BATHROOM - MORNING - THREE YEARS EARLIER

The shower is running. Through the frosted steamy glass the
shape of a man taking a shower peaks through.

Bathroom door opens. Tall, beautiful, slim, but full
brunette, JO-ANNE THOMPSON, early 30s enters. Her flattering
figure does immense justice to the long black tights and
tank tops she's wearing.

JO-ANNE

Want some company, Honey?

CARL

(poking his dripping wet
head out)

You know I never say no to my Baby!

Jo-Anne approaches Carl. She kisses Carl so tenderly that the few seconds it lasted seemed like eternity to his lips.

JO-ANNE

I'm just teasing you Honey, you know
I would if...

(he kisses her again)

JO-ANNE

(pulling away)

Got to go, Honey.

EXT. FRONT YARD - MORNING

Jo-Anne does a few quick stretches before beginning her morning run.

EXT. JO-ANNE'S JOGGING TRAIL - MORNING

Jo-Anne runs her routine jogging trail. She runs past trees, she runs past a small creek, over a small bridge and ends up in a park.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

A HUSBAND and HIS WIFE, both in their 30s, are walking and holding hands. ANOTHER HUSBAND AND WIFE both in their 80s are feeding the pigeons. A man is walking his dog.

A MOTHER is playing catch with her 4 year old BOY.

Jo-Anne stretches different muscles - legs, arms, calves and back then heads home.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Carl is dressed for work wearing a seemingly expensive suit. He is drinking his coffee hurriedly.

Enters Jo-Anne through the kitchen door. She's out of breath. She dumps her keys on the counter which land close to Carl's.

Carl hands Jo-Anne a cup of coffee.

JO-ANNE

Thanks.

Carl adjusts his tie, grabs his keys, walks over to Jo-Anne who is sipping her coffee and kisses her goodbye.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Carl starts the car, turns on the radio and drives off.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - GROUND FLOOR - MORNING

Carl is in the lobby of the office building.

AMANDA, the receptionist is sitting behind the desk.

CARL

Good morning Amanda.

AMANDA

Good morning Mr.Thompson.

Carl makes his way to the elevator. He presses the UP button. The elevator opens. Carl enters and presses the CLOSE button. The elevator begins closing.

JOHN, early 30s, hurries to catch the elevator.

JOHN

Hold the elevator!

Carl stops the door. John enters. John presses the CLOSE button.

INT. ELEVATOR - MORNING

JOHN

Thanks, man.

CARL

Don't thank me, pay me.
(they both chuckled)

JOHN

Man, I called you yesterday, to see if you wanted to play a game, you know, to spare me, your best friend, a little time.

CARL

Man, you should know better than to disturb a newly married man.

JOHN

It's been two years!

CARL

It's like yesterday.

JOHN

Don't start with that "she's my soul mate" thing again. I've been hearing that from the time you met Jo-Anne, what I want to know is, when will the honeymoon be over, so I can have my best friend back, like I use to.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - THIRD FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Elevator door opens. John leads the way and goes right, Carl goes left toward his office.

CARL

This weekend.

JOHN

Whatever.

Carl smiles and enters his office.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Carl rests his briefcase on the floor beside his chair.

He arranges his already neat desk, turns on the computer and
and pulls out some files from a filing cabinet.

Carl leaves to get some coffee in the office kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Carl pours himself some coffee and returns to his office.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Carl stands behind his desk, sips his coffee then sits down.

INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - MORNING

CHARLES STEWART, 61, sits on a very expensive chair in his
office. As he reaches for the phone on his desk, there's a
knock on the door.

STEWART

Come in.

Door opens. Enters MICHELLE SANFORD, 37, a tall confident
looking Caucasian woman wearing six inch heels and a well
pressed suit.

MICHELLE

Hi Charles.

Michelle closes the door.

STEWART

(gesturing to sit)

This company will miss you Michelle,
but I am very happy for you.

MICHELLE

Thanks Charles

STEWART

It will take sometime to get a
replacement for you.

MICHELLE

We have a full month to do so.

STEWART

We should get the interviews on the way.

MICHELLE

I think it's time to make an announcement. The rest of the office needs to know.

STEWART

Yes I agree. I will send a memo for an impromptu meeting later today.

MICHELLE

(standing to leave)

I have to round up some loose ends.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Carl, too worried to eat the burger peering up at him dials his wife.

CARL

Hi Honey.

JO-ANNE (O.S.)

Hi Baby. Are you at the office?

CARL

(sounding worried)

No, I'm having lunch.

INT. JOANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - LAUNDRY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JO-ANNE

What is it, Honey?

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

CARL

Oh Baby, I don't mean to worry you,
but we received a memo today.
There's an emergency meeting. I'm
scared that it might be to inform us
that they are laying off workers.
You know how the economy is.

INT. JOANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

JO-ANNE

(sorting laundry)

Baby, there could be a million
reasons for that meeting. I don't
think you should worry. I know you
are relatively new to the company,
but you were junior Vice President
at the last company, too bad they
went under. What I'm trying to say
is that you are very valuable to
them. Don't worry. Everything will
be ok.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

CARL

Maybe you're right.

JO-ANNE (O.S.)

I know I'm right.

CARL

(lying)

Thanks Honey. I feel better after
talking to you.

JO-ANNE

Well save your strength for later.

CARL

(Forcing a smile)

Yes Maam.

JO-ANNE (O.S.)

Love you Honey, bye.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Workers sit waiting for the president of the company, Charles Stewart.

Door opens, enters Stewart. He occupies the head table.

STEWART

(worried look)

Well, I called you here to inform you that vice president Michelle will be leaving us to head another company. I think that I speak for all here when I say we will miss her, and wish her much success.

(everyone nods)

STEWART - (CONT'D)

The company now has to replace her. We will be reviewing resumes. If you feel you are qualified, you are welcome to apply, however, we will be reviewing applications from outside the company also. Thank you very much for your time. (pause)
Well people,

(jokingly) It looks like you still have a job, so go do it.

(they laugh in relief)

Stewart exits the room.

FEMALE WORKER

(to another).

I'm glad that's all it was.

JOHN

Well Mr. Vice President, you going to apply?

CARL

That was from another company, in another life. But you, my friend, are like Prince Charles...next in line.

JOHN

Whatever!

CARL

John, I'm just happy to have a job, I thought we were being laid off. Man let's go release some stress later, let's go boxing.

JOHN

Count me in!

INT. GYM - EVENING

Carl and John punch boxing bags.

JOHN

I feel like I have my best friend back.

(Carl chuckles)

They are fiercely punching when Carl's cell phone rings. It's his wife.

CARL

Hello Honey. I'm sorry, I just took a spin at the gym with John. I will be home soon. Love you.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Asleep in a king size bed with his wife, Carl fidget in his sleep. Huge drops of sweat burst on his forehead. His T-shirt is drenched at the chest. Carl suddenly gets up holds his abdomen, as if in pain, and runs to the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Carl is kneeling in front of the toilet vomiting. Jo-Anne opens the bathroom door and finds Carl on the floor. She dials 9-1-1.

9-1-1 DISPATCHER (O.S.)
9-1-1, what's your emergency.

JO-ANNE
My husband is very ill. Please send
an ambulance.

EXT. CARL AND JO-ANNE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Ambulance lights are flashing.

Carl is being wheeled out on a stretcher with oxygen mask and IV fluid hooked up. Jo-Anne accompanies him in the ambulance.

INT. AMBULANCE - NIGHT

JO-ANNE
Hang on, Honey.

INT. HOSPITAL - WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

Jo-Anne looks worried. She bites her nails as she paces the room. A FEMALE DOCTOR, 30s, approaches her.

DOCTOR
Mrs. Thompson?

JO-ANNE
Yes.

DOCTOR
He is stable now. He probably got a
stomach bug. We ran some tests which
were all normal. I don't think it's
anything to worry about. We will
keep him overnight for observation.
You may see him now.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Jo-Anne tiptoes into the room. Carl's head is turned away from the door. He turns towards the door when Jo-Anne enters.

CARL

Baby! I'm sorry Baby, to put you through this.

JO-ANNE

Oh no, Honey,

Jo-Anne reaches down and kisses him on the forehead.

JO-ANNE - (CONT'D)

How are you feeling?

(she passes her hand through his hair.)

CARL

(still weak)

It actually started at work but I tried to endure it because I had so much work. By the time I left work, I was feeling a little better, so I did not say anything to you.

I know how you like to worry.

It started again after I went to bed.

JO-ANNE

Oh Honey, you need to rest. I will sleep in the chair.

CARL

Oh no, Honey, go home and get some rest.

JO-ANNE

Okay, but I will stay until you fall asleep.

CARL

You were always a lousy liar.
(Jo-Anne smiles.)

When Carl falls asleep Jo-Anne goes to sleep in the chair.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Carl is lying on the sofa. Jo-Anne covers him with a blanket.

JO-ANNE

I'll make you some ginger tea.

CARL

Ginger?

JO-ANNE

Yes, it settles the stomach.

Door bell rings. Jo-Anne looks through the peephole to see John standing there. She opens the door.

JO-ANNE

John.

They greet each other on the cheek.

JO-ANNE - (CONT'D)

He's in the living room.

Jo-Anne goes to the kitchen while John makes his way to the living room.

Jo-Anne is watching them from the kitchen as she makes the tea. She does not hear the conversation.

After a few minutes John leaves. Jo-Anne follows to close the door.

JO-ANNE

Thanks for stopping by.

JOHN

No problem. Take care of him.

JO-ANNE

I will.

John kisses Jo-Anne on the cheek then she closes the door.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - MORNING

When Carl steps out of the elevator the workers applaud.

CARL

Thank you. It's nice to be back.

Carl enters his office where a meadow of flowers welcomes him.

INT. CARL'S OFFICE - MORNING

Carl is sitting at his desk when Stewart knocks and enters.

CARL

(standing)

Mr. Stewart!

STEWART

(gesturing for Carl to
stay seated)

I wanted to personally welcome you
back and to tell you that you don't
have to stay the entire day because
you are still recuperating.

CARL

I'm fine Sir, I have a job to do.
But thanks, I appreciate it.

STEWART

We are losing Michelle, we don't
want to lose you too. Just between
us, you are very valuable to the
company. Welcome back.

CARL

Thank you, Sir.
(Stewart leaves.)

EXT. PARK - MORNING

Carl and Jo-Anne are sitting on a park bench. They are looking at the scenery.

JO-ANNE

What a lovely Saturday.

CARL

(looking worried)
I agree.

JO-ANNE

What is it, Honey? Is something wrong?

CARL

I don't want to spoil our park day, Baby.

JO-ANNE

I know, Honey, but if there's something on your mind, you must talk about it.

CARL

I was sick again last night. I just tried not to wake you. The stomach cramps was a bit less, the vomiting too, but still very ill.

JO-ANNE

How are you feeling now? What could be causing that? Do you want to go to the hospital?

CARL

No. What puzzles me is that I was feeling fine when I left for work, and very shortly after drinking some coffee from the office, I felt sick again. I think that someone is poisoning me.

JO-ANNE

Carl, I think that this is a stretch. You are being paranoid. Why would someone poison you? What motive would somebody have?

CARL

Mr. Stewart came into my office the day I went back to work two weeks ago and he told me I was very valuable to the company and that he didn't want to lose me too.

JO-ANNE

Referring to the VP leaving?

CARL

Yes. I think he's considering me for the job. He didn't say it but there was this reassurance in his voice. I can't really explain it but it was as if he was saying to me, "you have the job".

JO-ANNE

But poison, Honey?

CARL

It's hard for me to believe too, but I was fine before the coffee. The other day, again after taking a sip, I had stomach problems soon after. I really cannot see any other explanation.

JO-ANNE

What about coincidence? That could explain it.

CARL

I knew I shouldn't have said anything.

JO-ANNE

I want you to talk to me if something's not right, Honey, but in a case like this, I cannot help but think of your father's paranoia and what it almost did to him, I just don't want the same thing to happen to you. Thank God, he got some help in time.

CARL

(Raising his voice)

I'm not being paranoid.

A MAN and a WOMAN sitting nearby on different park benches turn to look at Carl and Jo-Anne.

CARL

I think we should leave.

They leave the park.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Palpable silence.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - MORNING

Carl seemingly in a pensive state and wearing only a towel was about to open the shower when the sound of his cell phone penetrated the still air.

CARL

Hello? Oh hi Mr. Stewart.

STEWART (O.S.)

Carl, I just called to tell you
that you have the day off.

CARL

What? I had this home appointment
today.

STEWART

I know, because it's a couple hours
drive, I thought you would not be
strong enough given what you've been
through. I assigned the task to
Marie. But don't worry Carl, this is
all in my efforts to keep you
healthy.

(Both chuckled)

CARL

Thank you Sir.

STEWART

Get some rest, Carl.

INT. MODEST HOME - DAY

ALICE SILVER, Caucasian female, 55, tidies up.

Bell rings. Alice walks to the door and looks through the
peephole. She opens the door leaving the chain on. MARIE, 28
year old Caucasian female, is standing outside.

ALICE

Yes?

MARIE

I am Marie from Stewart and Company.

ALICE

They told me that a Carl something
was the one coming.

MARIE

They assigned me the case because
Carl could not make it.

ALICE

Give me a minute.

Alice closes the door. She checks with Stewart and company.
She hangs up the phone.

INT. ALICE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Alice gestures for Marie to sit.

MARIE

Alice, when we first contacted you
about the trust that had matured,
you first refused it and later
changed your mind, which is why I'm
here.

ALICE

Well, the person who opened it
years ago did so out of guilt, for
leaving us.

MARIE

Also, it was for you and your first
two boys, but you said that you only
had one boy. The person who opened
it, your husband or boyfriend, I
presume, seem to be very sure that
there were two boys.

Alice's teary eyes stare at Marie.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Door opens. Enter male Caucasian, JONATHAN SMART, mid 30s,
who has a huge hair and beard, his wife, NICOLE, Caucasian
female, early 30s and their two children MARY, seven, and
JONATHAN Jr., five.

ALICE

My son is here, I don't want him to know about the two boys theory.

MARIE

Okay.

CHILDREN

Grandma!

They ran into the welcoming arms of their grandmother who hugs and kisses them.

ALICE

Who wants a cookie?

CHILDREN

Me!

The children are quietly sitting in front of the TV eating their cookie.

INT. LIVINGROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Marie hands some papers to Alice.

MARIE

You just have to sign these papers and the check is yours.

Alice reluctantly signs the papers and hands them to Marie.

ALICE

Thank you very much.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Alice closes the door after Marie leaves.

When Alice turns around she finds Jonathan's curious eyes on her.

JONATHAN

What was that about?

ALICE

It's your father. He opened a trust
in my name years ago for you boys.

JONATHAN

Boys?

ALICE

(trying to take back her
words)

I mean for you and me; to appease
his conscience for leaving us.

(changing the subject)

Nicole, why don't you cut that beard
off when he is asleep?

NICOLE

(smiling)

I have given up a long time ago
trying to get rid of that thing.
(Sarcastic) He feels he should wear
it because he wants to hide from the
world, though he doesn't know why.

(everyone laugh)

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

An extremely secure and large area, complete with exercising
equipments, fake grass and lots of light is where death row
inmates at San Quentin exercise and meet with other inmates.

Two death row inmates are in a violent fight. The other
inmates are cheering on. The guards try almost
unsuccessfully to stop the fight. Guards take the fighters
away, revealing Carl and his friend, Chuck, 35 year old
African American male.

CHUCK

I know you've been here just two
years Carl, but I'm a veteran here
and I can tell you that this place
gets to you, especially when you are
innocent, don't get me wrong, I'm

CHUCK (cont'd)

not saying that these guys are innocent, oh no, no, god no. That's really not what I'm saying,

(Both laugh)

Guilty or not, this place gets to you after some time.

CARL

You don't have to be a veteran here for this place to get to you, Chuck, (folding his arm)

I don't know how I end up here. One day I was a free man working to make a living, in love, very happy, and the next day I was in handcuffs.

CHUCK

Don't give up Carl. I'm as innocent as innocent gets...

An INMATE passes by.

INMATE

If you are innocent, my mother is a virgin, (pause) and she has six kids.

With Chuck's utter disregard of his comment, the inmate puts a twig in the corner of his mouth and continues on his way.

CHUCK

And after ten years, I still have hope. I pray every night that God would send a miracle and every morning I wake up with more hope. It's like God is telling me I have a purpose in here.

CARL

I wish I had your faith, man, but they have so much evidence, I am still baffled at how they got there.

CHUCK

What type of evidence?

CARL

DNA, a personalized tie, my hair
under the victim's finger nails...

CHUCK

Your hair?

CARL

Yeah.

CARL

I will never forget the day when
Jo-Anne came home from jogging.

Carl relates the story.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

The cool air rushes against her face as Jo-Anne jogs through her favorite section of the park. The light breeze rustling through the tall trees that are home to many chirping birds are the only sound that breaks the tranquility of the air. When suddenly.....Jo-Anne screamed.

JO-ANNE

Oh my God! Oh my God.

Jo-Anne approaches a profusely bleeding Caucasian GIRL, barely 17 years old.

JO-ANNE

Hello, are you okay?

No response. Jo-Anne dials 9-1-1.

Momentarily, an ambulance and cop cars arrive. A female paramedic feels for a pulse. The girl is dead.

The police secures the scene.

OFFICER

Maam, I understand you were the one who found the body?

JO-ANNE

Yes, yes I did.

OFFICER

Don't leave before you give a statement. The detectives working the case will be here shortly.

JO-ANNE

Okay, Officer.

The FORENSICS team, wearing disposable gowns and boots are working the scene.

Jo-Anne watches in horror. She finds a park bench and sits. Jo-Anne does not hear when a detective approaches.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN, African American male, 40s, tall, with deep voice, approaches Jo-Anne.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Hello Maam, I'm Detective Sherman.

JO-ANNE

Hello, Jo-Anne Thompson.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

I understand you found the body?

JO-ANNE

There really isn't any more than what I've already told the officer. I go jogging every other day in this park, occasionally I go on consecutive days, and today, this.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

What time was it when you found the body?

JO-ANNE

About the same time I called 9-1-1,
about 6:15am.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Did you see anyone in that section
of the park?

JO-ANNE

No, most people stay in the less
isolated section, but I come here
for the tranquility.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

(Looking at her ring)

You ever go jogging with your
husband?

JO-ANNE

He sometimes jogs here, but when he
does, he goes at 4am because of his
work. That's too early for me.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Did he go jogging today?

In the distance Jo-Anne sees a forensic guy pick up a tie
using a pen. She recognises the tie. The tie looks exactly
like one she bought Carl for his birthday.

(Then)

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Maam, Maam? Are you listening?

Jo-Anne snaps out of a deep pensive state.

JO-ANNE

Yes, yes, off course.

(lying)

No, he did not go jogging today.

Detective Sherman realises her hesitation.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Are you sure?

JO-ANNE

Yes, yes I'm sure, can I go now?

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Give me your number and you can go.
If anything comes up, or if we have
any more questions, I'll contact
you.

JO-ANNE

Okay.

Jo-Anne leaves.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Jo-Anne runs into the master bathroom and closes the door.

Carl is in the master bedroom putting on his work shirt. He
hears vomiting. He walks over to the bathroom door.

CARL

Baby, are you okay?

More vomiting. The door opens momentarily and Jo-Anne comes
walking out, crying.

JO-ANNE

I found a dead body in the park, a
young girl. It was horrible.

CARL

Oh my, Honey, who was it? Did you
call the police?

More crying.

Carl pulls her gently to his chest. He holds her head to his
chest with one hand and the other he puts on her waist.

CARL

I'm sorry you had to see something
so horrible, Honey.

They stay in that position a minute or so.

JO-ANNE

Don't worry about me, I'll be fine,
you have to go to work.

CARL

I just have to put on my tie and
grab my jacket.

JO-ANNE

Honey, why don't you wear the tie I
got you for your birthday?

CARL

Okay.

Carl walks over to the closet and searches among his tie
collection. He does not find it. Carl turns to Jo-Anne.

CARL

Baby, I'm sorry, I did not find it
but I know it's there somewhere.
I'll wear it tomorrow for my Baby,
ok?

Carl kisses her. Jo-Anne forces a smile. Carl finishes
dressing and hugs Jo-Anne.

CARL

You'll be alright, Honey?

JO-ANNE

Yes. I'll be fine. Still shaken up
but I'll be fine.

CARL

I'll call you later to check on you.

INT. - HOUSE- AT THE DOOR. (CONTINUOUS)

They embraced tightly at the door as Carl leaves for work.
Jo-Anne closes the door.

Jo-Anne rests her back against the door. She begins crying
again. She slides slowly down until she lands on the floor.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

CHUCK

Oh my God, Carl, what a horrible
thing for a person to encounter.
What happened next?

CARL

Well, my never ending nightmare
began.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - EVENING

Carl closes the door behind him and throws his keys on the
table in the foyer. He walks towards the living room.

CARL

Honey, I'm ...

Carl sees Jo-Anne in the living room. Jo-Anne looks worried.
Carl advances and sees a man looking in his direction. A
FEMALE wearing a lab coat is also present.

Palpable silence.

JO-ANNE

Honey, this is Detective Sherman.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

(Putting out his hand)

Hello.

CARL

(Ignoring the hand)

What's going on?

JO-ANNE

Honey, I think you should sit down.

The detective shows Carl a tie in a ziplock bag.

CARL

Where did you get my tie?

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

So this is your tie.

CARL

Well, it looks like my tie. What is going on?

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Well, it has your name on it and it was found at the scene of a crime.

CARL

What! That's impossible, how did that happen?

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

You tell me. Did you go jogging this morning?

CARL

Yeah, why?

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Your tie was found at the scene of the crime, hair was also found under the victim's nails which were sent to be analyzed. Are you willing to give a hair and DNA sample? Or do I have to get a warrant.

CARL

No that won't be necessary. I have done nothing wrong.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Well you have nothing to worry
about, then.

The lab tech that accompanies the detective plucks samples
of Carl's hair and takes swabs of cheek cells, then she
bagged them.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Thank you.

CARL

The faster you eliminate me, the
faster you will find the killer of
this poor girl.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

Girl? How did you....

CARL

My wife told me this morning before
I left for work.

DETECTIVE SHERMAN

(To Jo-Anne)

I'll see myself out.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

CHUCK

And so here we are. I believe you,
man, I can see it in your eyes. It's
obvious that someone framed you.
Someone wanted you out of the way.
Next step, find out why, and you'll
find out who.

CARL

The thing is Chuck, I don't have an
enemy in the world. I always try to
do good. I treat everyone with
respect.

CHUCK

Obviously you had an enemy
somewhere, you just didn't know it.

CARL

Obviously.

CARL

Well, on a happier note, my wife
visits tomorrow. I don't know what I
would do if my family could not
visit, but at the same time, I hate
what it is doing to them. My parents
are coming next week.

CHUCK

Have you contacted the Innocence
Project?

CARL

You mean BARRY SCHECK? I heard about
them but because the evidence is so
strong, I don't hold much hope.

Gladys and a male guard, interrupt the inmates.

GUARDS

Time's up. Everyone get ready to
return to your cell.

INMATE

(rolling his eyes)

You mean back to hell.

Everyone unwillingly cooperates.

INT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Jo-Anne, smiling, sits with tremendous anticipation. As she
waits for her beloved husband. She fixes her hair. She rubs
her hands together, as if she has some good news.

The guard drops Carl off, takes off the handcuffs and
stands outside the door.

CARL

(Smiling)

How are you, Baby?

JO-ANNE

I'm fine. How are you keeping? I know this is not easy, but I'm doing everything I can to get you out of here.

CARL

Honey, you should start accepting the fact that I may never get out of here I think you should go on with your life, forget about me. Be happy, Honey.

JO-ANNE

Would you forget about me?

CARL

No, I couldn't. What really keeps me going is the time we had together. But you have to move on. I'm never getting out of here.

JO-ANNE

Don't talk like that. When I said 'till death do us part, I meant it, I will stand by you through thick and thin. Besides,

(rubbing her belly)

You have another reason, maybe more, to continue fighting.

CARL

(puzzled but smiling)

What, what do you mean?

JO-ANNE

We are Pregnant.

CARL

How can that be? I've been in here
for two years.

JO-ANNE

Remember when I convinced you to
store away some sperm? Well, I had
stopped taking the pill for an
entire year but just did not get
pregnant.

CARL

You were trying to get pregnant an
entire year and did not tell me?

JO-ANNE

I felt I was ready and I wanted to
give you a baby for your birthday. I
knew if I told you, you would tell
me that we were not ready, because
you were just settling down in the
new job.

CARL

(smiling, he hugs her)

Gush, Honey, we are having a baby!

Carl's excitement abruptly fades as he remembers he's on
death row.

CARL (CONT'D)

I will never be around to see him
grow up.

JO-ANNE

Yes you will. I go to church every
Sunday now to pray for us.

Carl chuckles.

CARL

You? Church?

Carl laughs hard.

JO-ANNE

And I'm liking it. It makes me feel hopeful.

CARL

You sound just like Chuck.

JO-ANNE

Chuck?

CARL

Yes, a friend I met in here, thought I mentioned him before.

JO-ANNE

Speaking of friend, I saw John the other day at the supermarket he looked so tired I asked him what was wrong and he said he was the Vice President of the company now and that was keeping him on his toes.

CARL

Wow!

JO-ANNE

Yap! John is the new vice president of the company.

CARL

So he was the one who got the job. I wish we could celebrate with some video games. There are many things I wish I could do, (softly) like have a very romantic night with my beautiful wife.

JO-ANNE

We will be together again, and you will play with your best friend, I promise.

CARL

Baby, there's such, such,... faith,
if you will, in your eyes it's
exciting.

JO-ANNE

I love you so much. Honey.

CARL

I love you too, and our son.

JO-ANNE

Daughter

They both laugh.

INT. CARL'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

Carl is lying on his bed with feet crossed and hands under his head deep in thought and wearing a huge smile on his face. After a few minutes, he gets up, grabs paper and pen and begins writing.

CARL'S LETTER

*Dear Mr. Barry Scheck, my name is
Carl Thompson*

INT. OFFICE OF THE INNOCENCE PROJECT - DAY

Barry Scheck continues reading Carl's letter to some members of the Innocence Project.

BARRY SCHECK

I was convicted of murder two years ago and sentenced to death. My hairs were found under the victim's fingernails, a RUNAWAY, girl. A personalized tie which my wife bought me was also found near the body. The victim's body was found in a park where I go jogging sometimes. I never go in that specific area where the body was found because I'm so pressed for time in the morning.

BARRY SCHECK (cont'd)

Mr. Scheck, I know you get these letters all the time and I also know there's overwhelming evidence against me but I swear, Sir, I am innocent.

SCHECK, chairman of the Innocence Project addresses the five MEMBERS present at the meeting:

BARRY SCHECK

He goes on to give a bit of background about himself. He's married, he was up for a Vice President position where he worked. What strikes me about this letter is that there's a note of sincerity (pause) but there's so much evidence...

FEMALE MEMBER OF INNOCENCE PROJECT

As much as we love to help the innocent, with all that evidence I don't know there's anything we can do.

MALE MEMBER

I agree, I think we should channel our energy on the cases we know without a shadow of a doubt to be innocent.

BARRY SCHECK

Okay, that's settled, on to the next case.

SAME FEMALE MEMBER

(Sarcastic)

Gladly.

INT. PRISON - CARL'S CELL - EVENING

A male guard walks toward Carl's cell. Carl is lying on his bed.

GUARD

Thompson, you've got mail.

Carl hesitates to open the letter. He then takes a deep breath musters his courage then opens it. He starts reading the letter silently.

He sits down slowly on the bed and places his elbow on his thighs, slumps forward and envelopes his face with his hands.

INT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

Carl meets with his lawyer, SAM LOGAN, 60s, with graying beard and hair.

SAM

Carl, you do understand by giving up your rights for appeal, the state can speed up your execution date?

CARL

Sam, I don't want to wait around just to die. I did not commit this crime but I cannot prove that I didn't. The Innocence Project will not take my case.

SAM

Is that what this is about, the Innocence Project will not take your case? Carl, that's not the only way you can prove your innocence I am working very hard on your appeal.

CARL

I have made my decision, Sam. It's final.

SAM

How about Jo-anne? Have you told her yet?

CARL

I'm doing this for her too. Her hope is climbing everyday and mine is declining. The sooner I get this over with, the sooner they can get on with their lives.

SAM

They?

CARL

Jo-Anne is pregnant.

Sam looks puzzled.

CARL

Long story!

SAM

Carl, that's more reason to fight. You owe it to that child.

CARL

They will move on. They should move on. It just hurts me more everyday I wake up in that hell hole. I can't do this to them, I can't.

Sam puts his hand on Carl's shoulder.

SAM

I will wait a few weeks before filing the papers to give you some time to calm down.

CARL

Wait all you want, but I've made my decision.

Sam gets up and leaves.

INT. ALICE'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Alice is watching the evening news. CBS News anchor Dana Tyler reads the news. A picture of Carl flashes on the screen.

DANA TYLER

In breaking news convicted murderer
Carl Thompson who was sentenced to

die by lethal injection, has given
up all rights to appeal his
conviction. His execution could be
carried out any day now. In other
news...

Alice begins sobbing. She turns off the TV.

ALICE

Oh my God, what have I done? What
have I done.

Alice dials Jonathan's number.

ALICE

We need to talk. It can't wait.

JONATHAN (O.S.)

Mom, are you okay?

ALICE

We need to talk now.

INT. ALICE'S HOUSE - EVENING

Jonathan enters the house hastily.

JONATHAN

Mom! Mom!

Jonathan searches the kitchen, then the living room.

INT. LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jonathan finds Alice sitting on a chair. She is sobbing uncontrollably.

JONATHAN - (CONT'D)

What's the matter, Mom?

Jonathan sits slowly on the sofa with a perplexed look on his face.

JONATHAN

All my life I've felt that something was missing. I could never quite put my finger on it. I've asked you so many times why I was feeling that way, so many times, Mom, each time, you looked me in the eye and told me, you had no idea why I was feeling that way.

ALICE

I'm sorry, Johnny. I ... I Just could not take care of both of you when your father left us.

JONATHAN

Mom, you don't just toss one of your children aside and keep one. If You had never separated us, my twin brother would not end up in prison, on death row.

ALICE

I know in my heart that he did not do this. I cannot explain it but I feel he's innocent. He was raised by a good family.

JONATHAN

I don't understand it myself but I don't just feel it, I kinda know it. (Pause) Are we identical?

ALICE

Without that horrible hair and beard, no one can tell you apart. You look like Willie in Duck Dynasty. Sorry Willie, I love you very much, but I rather see my son's face.

JONATHAN

Mom we have to save him.

ALICE

But how?

JONATHAN

I don't know, let's figure out something.

ALICE

So you forgive me?

JONATHAN

Mom, now is not the time to think of forgiveness. I don't know that I will ever forgive you, you lied to me. You gave my brother away. I missed out on so much time with him. He missed out on time with us. We may never get to really know him. I don't know Mom. That is almost unforgivable, but now's not the time to think about that. We have to find a way to help him.

ALICE

(Teary eyes)

Okay Baby.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

Three PRISONERS are having a conversation about the new inmate.

PRISONER #1

You heard about the new prisoner?

PRISONER #2

Yeah, I heard.

PRISONER #1

Boy, I thought I was bad.

PRISONER #2

I'm bad but I would never hurt my wife, let alone my children.

PRISONER #1

Poor wife, I heard she didn't stand a chance. They say a neighbor saw a fire in the back yard the night before. Apparently, that's how he completely incinerated the bodies. The bones left were turned to charcoal.

The new inmate is standing in the yard by himself, his back turned and he is partially hidden by another inmate who stands conversing with his friend.

PRISONER #3

(to new inmate)

Hey, what you in for?

The new inmate does not answer nor turns around.

PRISONER #3

(walking up to the inmate)

You know what happens to people who don't answer questions 'round here?

The new inmate continues to ignore prisoner #3.

Prisoner #3 walks closer to the new inmate, pounding his right fist into his left palm.

Carl who stands some distance away, to prisoner #3

CARL

Hey!

Prisoner #3 looks in the direction of the voice, ignores Carl and advances toward the new inmate.

The new inmate turns around. It's Jonathan.

JONATHAN

They said I chopped up my wife and children and burnt them in my back yard. This means back off or you'll be next.

Stunned, Prisoner #3 starts backing off.

Carl draws closer to Jonathan.

CARL

Are you okay?

Jonathan, stares at Carl and holds back tears.

JONATHAN

I'm, I'm, I'm fine.

Carl does not notice the resemblance because of the beard.

CARL

What's wrong?

JONATHAN

Oh my God!

Chuck walks up to where Carl was standing.

CHUCK

(to Jonathan)

Don't worry, man, it gets easier.
Just be careful with these guys.

Carl and Chuck walk away.

CARL

Man, it was like a deja vu moment.
I had a warm feeling inside, like I
was supposed to protect him or
something.

CHUCK

Man, an innocent man on death row
have a lot of warm feelings.

CARL

I'm sure that's it.

EXT. DUCK DYNASTY'S WILLIE ROBERTSON'S HOUSE - MORNING

The Press camps outside WILLIE ROBERTSON'S house.

Willie ventures out of the house. There is a flood of
questions by the Press.

FEMALE JOURNALIST

Willie, would you care to comment on
your look-alike Jonathan Smart
being sent to death row?

WILLIE ROBERTSON

If he's my look-alike then he's
innocent, I bet my beard on it.

Willie strides off.

INT. BAR - EVENING

Some MEN are sitting in the bar section of a diner. The TV
is on. The blurry eyes of the drunken men are watching
anchor woman Dana Tyler read the news.

DANA TYLER

*Willie Robertson of the mega hit
show Duck Dynasty today bet his
beard that convicted murderer
Jonathan Smart is innocent as he is
his look-alike.*

DANA TYLER (cont'd)

*It it not clear whether or not this
was a serious statement. In other
news...*

DRUNK MAN #1

(Slurred)

If this guy is innocent, then I'm
sober right now.

DRUNK MAN #2

And I'm sober.

His head falls in a plate of spaghetti and tomato sauce.

The slightly more sober men at the bar all laugh.

INT. PRISON - BARBER SHOP - DAY

JOE, Caucasian male, 40s, a model prisoner from the non-death row section of the prison, works in the prison barber shop.

The guards stand outside the door of the barber shop and lock the inmates in. Two inmates are allowed inside at any one time.

Enter Carl, and Jonathan. The guards secure the door. One by one, the men put their hand in the slot to have their handcuffs removed.

Carl and Jonathan sit on the worn out barber chairs.

JOE

(to Jonathan)

Wooohoo! I cannot wait to get my
shaver into this. This is a barber's
dream.

JONATHAN

Oh no, no, I just wanted to explore
the grounds

Joe looks confused.

JONATHAN - (CONT'D)

I'm new here.

JOE

Oh!

JONATHAN

(to Carl)

Thanks for standing up for me the other day, although you really did not have to.

Carl looks pensive. He looks at Jonathan in the mirror.

CARL

I don't know why, but I felt compelled to.

They both look at each other intensely in the mirror.

JOE

(to Carl)

How short do you want it?

CARL

Just a touch up, Joe.

JOE

Anything you want. You know how much I like my job.

CARL

I know, Joe, I've been here over two years.

JOE

For me it's therapy.

CARL

Yes, Joe, I know the story.

JOE

(to Jonathan)

I use to get hallucinations. I use to see things that weren't really there. But it's been many, many years that I haven't had one. I take my medication and I'm cured.

JONATHAN

I am so happy for you. You seem fine to me, I wouldn't have guessed.

Joe starts whistling as he continues to trim Carl's hair.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

The inmates are bursting a sweat doing different types of vigorous exercises.

Carl who is by himself, takes it easy. He looks around for Chuck, he does not see him. Carl then looks in the direction of Jonathan who was also looking intensely in Carl's direction. Jonathan walks to where Carl is standing.

JONATHAN

Hi, again. Where's your friend?

CARL

He stayed in today.

Jonathan's penetrating stares make Carl visible uncomfortable.

CARL

You are staring again.

JONATHAN

(teary eyes)

You are my brother.

CARL

What! I don't have a brother.

JONATHAN

It's a long story, you might want to sit down.

They sit on a bench.

JONATHAN

Our mother's name is Alice, Alice Silver. She had twins, you and me. Our father is a businessman who was not ready for children, but when Mom got pregnant, he felt he could not handle it. He stayed around during the pregnancy, to see if he would want the child. He did not know that there were two babies at first, Mom did not tell him. During the time that Mom was pregnant, his business really took off. He spent less and less time at home and more and more time at the business, there was no time to bond with us. When we were born, he used Mom not telling him she was having twins, as a scape goat to leave us. He sent child support checks to Mom a few months and then stopped. Mom did not know where he was, if he had died or something. When she could not manage, she gave one twin up. The couple was the one who chose. The agreement was to change your name. Anyway, our father must have made it real big and open a trust for us under Mom's name. There was a few hundred thousand in it. Mom thinks that he was just trying to appease his conscience.

CARL

Oh my God, this must be a dream. Tell me all this is a dream.

JONATHAN

It's not. We are identical twins.

CARL

But how did you end up here on death row too, I mean, that's weird.

JONATHAN

That, too, is a long story.

Carl surveys the grounds.

CARL

Luckily, we have all the time in the world, that's technically not true since we're on death row.

Jonathan laughs.

JONATHAN

Six months ago when we saw that you were on death row and gave up your rights to appeal your case, we had to act fast because we knew you were innocent. It's something I cannot explain, we just knew. We had to come up with a plan.

CARL

I still don't understand how you ended up here, on death row. I know you didn't just ask a judge to send you here.

JONATHAN

Well, there were several ideas until we settled on the one that worked. It was not easy pulling it off, we did not even know that I would get death, we really had to make it heinous. Luckily, we are not going anywhere for a long time. So little brother, fasten your seat belt.

CARL

Little brother?

JONATHAN

Oh yeah I'm the older one.

CARL

Let's get back to the story.

JONATHAN

Well little brother, brace yourself.

INT. UPSCALE HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT - THREE YEARS EARLIER

Jonathan, deep in thought and standing in a mirror, breathes deeply. Nicole enters.

NICOLE

(Hugging Jonathan from
behind)

Are you sure about this?

JONATHAN

I am more concerned about you
sweetie. Are you okay with this?

NICOLE

You know I love you, right?

Jonathan turns around and kisses her gently on the lips.

JONATHAN

And I love you.

His lips seem to melt in hers as he kisses her again.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

It will not be easy, though, being
away from you for so long.
Especially not knowing for sure how
long this will take.

NICOLE

It's the right thing to do. It's the only chance Carl has. It's the only chance you have to feel whole. I've seen first hand what this has done to you, you were hiding from the world, you've felt emptiness all your life. Now you can have the person you grew up with in the womb, now you can be happy and fulfilled. Now you can be whole.

JONATHAN

And above all, I feel I should save him. Our Mom kept me and gave him away, no child should have to go through that.

NICOLE

I thought you said it was the couple who chose Carl.

JONATHAN

Yes, but I think it's the same thing. (Pause) Enough about that. We need to take advantage of our last night together.

NICOLE

Mmmm, I couldn't agree more. Now what did you have in mind?

JONATHAN

(putting his arms around
her and jolting her
toward him)

Well Mrs. Smart. I can think of one way.

Their lips embraced in a kiss.

INT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - GARAGE - 3AM

Jonathan and Nicole are parking things into the SUV. They go back and forth through the kitchen door which opens into the garage to avoid being seen. Nicole goes back into the house to wake the children.

INT. BOY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

NICOLE

Honey, wake up, we got to go.

The son stretches and turns the other side.

NICOLE

Honey

(Nicole pulls him out of
bed and dresses him)

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Nicole emerges from inside the house with the children while Jonathan continues loading the SUV. Jonathan looks at Nicole with admiration.

JONATHAN

You deserve a medal for getting
these sleepy heads out of bed.

NICOLE

It wasn't easy.

They strap the children in their car seats. Jonathan and Nicole kiss. He hands her an untraceable cell phone.

JONATHAN

Do not call me. I will call you.
Only answer to the number we
discussed.

NICOLE

Baby, we went through this a million
times already...

NICOLE (cont'd)

remove my cell phone battery, use
only the disposable phone. Yady,
yady yady.

JONATHAN

Okay Baby

Jonathan kisses Nicole. He goes to kiss the children, but they are asleep in their car seat. He kisses them anyway. He embraces Nicole tightly and kisses her.

Nicole enters the car and closes the door. Jonathan kisses her again. She drives a short distance with the lights off. Jonathan watches as the car disappears. He goes back into the house to complete the plan of action.

INT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jonathan goes for the small red cooler containing the vials of blood which were collected over a period of time and stored in the fridge. The vials contain Nicole's and the children's blood.

INT. GIRL'S BEDROOM

He splatters blood in the bedroom. He creates high velocity blood splatter using two pieces of board. He creates medium blood splatter and cast off blood splatter. He puts Mary's blood on the floor and steps in it.

INT. BOY'S BEDROOM

Jonathan trashes the boy's bedroom and creates blood splatter and bloody footprints.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Jonathan puts Nicole's blood on the couch. He trashes the house to simulate a struggle.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jonathan puts, cooler and empty vials of blood into a garbage bag and goes into the garage.

INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Jonathan puts the garbage bag in his truck. He grabs a large bottle of bleach from the floor and puts it in the truck.

He takes a plastic bag containing charred animal femur bones from the floor and goes to the back yard.

EXT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - 4AM

Jonathan puts the charred femur bones, some old clothes and a few logs into a pile, pours lighter fluid and lights a match. He watches as everything is consumed.

INT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - 4:30 AM

MARIANNE TAYLOR, plump female, mid 40s, makes her way down her stairs and advances into the kitchen. She goes to the refrigerator. She reaches for a piece of chocolate cake.

Marianne sits at the kitchen table. She is about to take a bite of cake when she notices smoke at the back of her neighbor's house. She looks at the clock on the wall, it shows 4:30am. She sees a male silhouette by the fire. She brushes it off and goes back upstairs.

INT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAWN

Jonathan surveys the list in his hands. All items on the list are crossed. He looks around one last time, closes the kitchen door, enters his truck and drives off.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAWN

Jonathan stops on a bridge, he pours bleach over the content of the garbage bag before throwing it over the bridge. The rough waters carry the bag downstream.

INT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Jonathan returns home some hours later and calls 9-1-1.

9-1-1 DISPATCHER (O.S.)

9-1-1, what's your emergency?

JONATHAN

(Calmly)

I came home and there was blood
everywhere. The house is ransacked.
My family is gone. I live at 345
West Drive Road.

9-1-1 DISPATCHER (O.S.)

Help is on the way, but please stay
on the...

Carl hangs up the telephone, goes to the mirror and
scratches himself with a twig, he cleans it with rubbing
alcohol then puts on make up haphazardly.

EXT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Police car lights are flashing. Sounds of siren permeates
the air. Several police officers make their way to the front
door. Just as one of the officers is about to knock,
Jonathan opens the door. DETECTIVE SONY, late 30s, is among
the officers standing at the door.

JONATHAN

(Emotionless)

Hello officers.

DETECTIVE SONY

I'm detective Sony, these are my
colleagues. Can you tell me what
happened?

JONATHAN

I came home and there was blood
everywhere and my wife and kids are
all gone.

DETECTIVE SONY

Did you call your wife's cell phone?

JONATHAN

I panicked and called 9-1-1 for
help.

The detectives look at each other.

DETECTIVE SONY

You come home to find your family missing and you did not try to contact them?

JONATHAN

(calmly)

I panicked.

DETECTIVE SONY

(to Jonathan)

Stay here, we are going to take a look around the house.

Detective Sony ventures into the livingroom. His gun is drawn. The other officers with their guns drawn carefully go to other parts of the house. A bloody mess awaits them all.

DETECTIVE SONY

(to Officers)

Secure the scene and call in CSI.

EXT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - DAY

The Forensic team leaves with bags and bags of evidence including Jonathan's clothes and shoes.

As Detective Sony leaves and heads toward the car, he stops abruptly.

DETECTIVE SONY

That's it, that's what did not fit.

INT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

JONATHAN

I thought you guys took all you needed from the scene.

DETECTIVE SONY

Well one thing's missing to complete our evidence.

DETECTIVE SONY (cont'd)

Would you clean off the make up so
we can take pictures of the
scratches?

The forensic team takes pictures of the scratches on
Jonathan's face and the rest of his body.

EXT. NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE - DAY

Detective Sony rings the bell of the neighbor's house.
Marianne opens the door.

MARIANNE

Yes?

DETECTIVE SONY

Hello Maam, sorry to disturb.

(showing his badge)

My name is Detective Sony. I just
want to ask you a few questions.
Would you mind telling me your name?

MARIANNE

Why, did I do something wrong?

DETECTIVE SONY

No Maam. Three people from this
house are missing. they might have
been murdered because there is blood
everywhere, I just wanted to know if
you saw anything unusual.

MARIANNE

No I did not.

DETECTIVE SONY

Anything. Even if you think it might
be insignificant.

MARIANNE

Well, I don't know if that is
important but early this morning I
got up and went downstairs for a...
a...a...

MARIANNE (cont'd)
snack, and while sitting at the table, I saw smoke and someone standing nearby. I could not make out who it was, but I'm pretty sure it was a man. I even remember the time...4:30 am. I remember the time because I looked at the clock.

DETECTIVE SONY
Are you sure what you are telling me is accurate?

MARIANNE
One hundred percent, detective....?

DETECTIVE SONY
Sony. Are you willing to give a statement?

MARIANNE
Sure detective, anything to help.

DETECTIVE SONY
Okay. I will take your name and number and give you my card.

Detective Sony turns to leave.

MARIANNE
Detective, I don't want to seem like a tattler, but word on the street is that the wife is having an affair with a Buddy Gray.

DETECTIVE SONY
Well what do you know?
(almost to himself)
Motive. (pause) Well thank you very much Ma'am, you have been a great help, we will keep in touch.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - OPEN OFFICE- DAY

Detective Sony hangs his jacket on the back of his chair. Wearing his suspenders, gun and holster, he paces up and down.

Enters Detective CHO, an Asian American male, early 30s.

DETECTIVE CHO

You think he did?

DETECTIVE SONY

He killed them, the son of a gun killed his family. When I present evidence, to the DA, there's no stopping him seeking the death penalty.

DETECTIVE CHO

Without the bodies, it might be difficult.

DETECTIVE SONY

No, it won't. This scene leaves no guess work. As soon as the evidence is analyzed by the lab, it will be very easy to get the death penalty. Cho, can you to call the lab and see what they have for us?

DETECTIVE CHO

Okay boss.

Detective Cho sits at his desk and dials the lab.

DETECTIVE CHO

This is detective Cho, we need to know if you have any results for us. Yes, yes, okay, thank you.

Cho hangs up the phone.

DETECTIVE CHO

We got him. Now I think the death
penalty is a piece of cake.

Detective Sony smiles, folds his hands behind his head and
puts his feet on his desk.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Everyone, including the JURY is waiting for the judge.

The defense team comprises of a public defender and
Jonathan. The prosecution team comprises of the head
prosecutor MARIA SANCHEZ, Hispanic female, late 30s, and
male ASSISTANT PROSECUTOR.

JUDGE SOMMERS, African-American male, early 50s, who wears
glasses enters the courtroom.

Everyone ceremoniously stands.

JUDGE SOMMERS

You may be seated.

(to defense team)

Mr. Jacobs, I understand that your
client has pleaded not guilty.

JOHN JACOBS

That's right Your Honor.

JUDGE SOMMERS

(sarcastic, to Jonathan)

Do you wish to change your plea?

JONATHAN

No Your Honor.

JUDGE SOMMERS

(Sarcastic, lowering his
glasses)

Are you sure?

Jonathan rolls his eyes.

JUDGE SOMMERS

Very well, then. Let's hear the opening statements.

The trial is going on. WITNESS after WITNESS take the stand.

Closing statements are now read.

MARIA SANCHEZ

We have sat through a very painful trial which leaves no doubt Jonathan Smart killed his family, no, butchered his family, and disposed of their bodies somewhere we may never find them. They fought for their lives.

She shows pictures of the scratches on Jonathan's face.

MARIA SANCHEZ (CONT'D)

These children

(she shows pictures of the children)

will never graduate from college, will never marry and have a family. Their grandparents, aunts, uncles, will never have the pleasure of seeing them grow up and do all these things. All they will remember are these.

(showing pictures of the bloody rooms)

We are the voices that were taken from them. We have presented evidence that should leave no doubt in your minds that Mr. Smart brutally murdered his family and burnt their bodies in his backyard. They will never have a proper burial. We ask that you find

MARIA SANCHEZ (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Mr. Smart guilty of the crime of capital murder and show him the same mercy that he showed his wife and children, we ask that you give him the death penalty.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

JUDGE SOMMERS

Has the jury reached the verdict?

FOREMAN

Yes, Your Honor. We find the defendant Jonathan Smart guilty of the crime of capital murder and set the penalty at death.

JUDGE SOMMERS

You are the most heartless person I've ever come across in my twenty five years of being in the justice system. The jury's recommendation of the death penalty stands. And as per the family's request, and granted by the court, an enlarged photo of your family will be hung in the roof of your cell. Their faces will be the first thing you see in the morning and the last thing you see at night. May God have mercy on your soul.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

CARL

(Teary eyes)

You did that just for me?

JONATHAN

And for me. I'm half a person, Carl.

(Teary eyes)

And I've felt that way all my life, even being very happily married. I just couldn't quite understand it.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

I mean, I love Nicole, and I don't have to tell you how much she loves me...

CARL

Yeah, no need.

JONATHAN

Carl, the part that landed me here was planned. From here on, I don't have a script. We must figure it out. A good place to start is to figure out who set you up.

CARL

No one I'm close to would ever do this to me, so that's a short list to eliminate.

JONATHAN

I know how you feel, man, but from where I'm standing, no one is off limits. You'd be surprised the lengths that someone can go to protect what they love.

Both smile.

INT. WENDY WILLIAMS SHOW STUDIO - MORNING

WENDY WILLIAMS

Today our special guest is Jo-Anne Thompson. She's here to call attention to her husband Carl Thompson's case. Carl was convicted of the murder of a teenage girl who ran away from home, and was sentenced to death. Let's welcome Jo-Anne Thompson.

Applause. A very pregnant Jo-Anne Thompson walks onto the stage. She sits with Wendy on the couch.

WENDY WILLIAMS

So you believe that your husband is innocent.

JO-ANNE

I don't believe, I know! My husband is not capable of such a heinous act. There's not a violent bone in his body. He was raised in a wonderful home. He has never been in trouble a day in his life.

WENDY WILLIAMS

And your husband has given up his right to appeal?

JO-ANNE

(teary)

Yes, Wendy, he has given up, and he thinks that's the best thing for us.

WENDY WILLIAMS

Congratulations. Really, what made you and Carl freeze your sperm, you guys are pretty young.

JO-ANNE

As it turned out that was the best decision of our lives. She has really helped me hold on. I had been secretly trying to get pregnant for an entire year but was unsuccessful. When I threw out the idea of freezing the sperm, well, let's say a little tears can go a long way.

Wendy and the audience laugh.

WENDY WILLIAMS

Why are you here, Mrs. Thompson?

JO-ANNE

I'm here to call attention to Carl's Case.

JO-ANNE (cont'd)

I just want them to take another look at the case. Find out who had a motive and maybe Carl will have a chance.

INT. UPSCALE HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - MORNING

Someone is watching the show on TV. We don't see their face.

WENDY WILLIAMS

You seem to really believe that someone set him up.

JO-ANNE

Yes.

WENDY WILLIAMS

What would you like to say to the person who you believe sent your husband to death row?

JO-ANNE

(directly into the camera)

Your days are numbered. You'll get what you deserve. It's just a matter of time.

The person sitting on the couch suddenly stands up. his face is not visible. He's male. He is wearing an expensive masculine robe and an expensive gold watch. He paces the room. Furious, he smashes the vase sitting on the coffee table.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

The perpetrator meets with a MALE CRIMINAL in his 20s, in a dark alley. He hands him an envelope.

PERPETRATOR

Here, it's all there.

CRIMINAL

So you want him scared.

PERPETRATOR

Rough him up a bit too.

CRIMINAL

(opening the envelope)

Well you gonna have to be a little more generous than that, don't you think?

PERPETRATOR

Okay

He hands him a few more bills.

CRIMINAL

Done! I just have to give the order and it will be carried out.

PERPETRATOR

One more thing, make sure you tell him these words.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

Wack! Wack! An tall muscular inmate in his 30s with hairy chest, is beating up Carl using his knees. Jonathan is conspicuously absent.

The some inmates are just watching the fight unfold, some cheering.

Carl colapses to the ground.

INMATE

Let sleeping dogs lie.
(he spits on the ground)

Guards finally penetrated the crowd of onlookers.

Gladys reaches down and helps Carl. Carl agonizingly tries to speak.

GLADYS

You don't have to say anything I saw everything.

GLADYS

(to inmate)

You on the other hand, will not be exercising for a very long time.

Inmate is unfazed.

INMATE

It'll be worth those doritos and lays potato chips.

A male guard leads the inmate away to solitary confinement.

GLADYS

(to other inmates)

One more disturbance from any of you and everyone goes back in their cell, understood?

GLADYS

(to Carl)

Let's get you to the nurse.

She helps Carl as they walk away.

INT. CARL'S CELL - DAY

Carl paces back and forth in the tiny cell. He pulls back his hair with both hands.

CARL

Someone's getting scared. Jo-Anne going on tv this week... Someone's scared.

(Pause)

But who? Think Carl, Think! Who could have a motive for wanting you in here.

Carl abruptly stops pacing. He opened his eyes as he remembers a conversation he had with his wife.

INT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY - FLASHBACK

Jo-Anne is visiting Carl.

JO-ANNE

Speaking of friend....John is the new Vice President of the company.

CARL

Wow!...I wish we could celebrate with some video games.

JO-ANNE

John is the new Vice President of the company.

CARL

Some video games. Some video games.

BACK TO PRESENT.

CARL

Oh my God!

Carl pulls his hair back.

CARL

Oh....my...God! That's when he did this. That's why he was so insistent on having that game at my house, even if it was his turn to host.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - DAY - THREE YEARS EARLIER

Door bell rings. Carl comes down the stairs and opens the door. John is at the door.

JOHN

(inviting himself in)

It's about time.

Carl closes the door then follows John.

CARL

Hello to you too.

JOHN

(walking toward living
room)

Girl's day out is already on it's
way?

CARL

Yes, they left about twenty minutes
ago. We have the house all to
ourselves.

JOHN

It's about time man. I curse the day
you got married.

CARL

I bless that day. Jo-Anne is the
best thing that ever happened to me.
Don't worry, man, I'll fit you in.

JOHN

You got those new games you told me
about?

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Carl is preparing some snacks: juice, water, chips while he
continues to converse with John who is now in the living
room.

CARL

Yes, these just came out. I cannot
wait to crush you. You'll regret
that you did not host the game at
your house, that probably would have
given you the edge. I'm in my
comfort zone, so watch out. I never
did understand why you could not
host, after all it's your turn.

John looks stunned by the question.

CARL (CONT'D)

Dude, you look like you just seen a ghost. Relax, it's okay, I don't mind hosting.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - GAME ROOM - DAY

John and Carl are involved in an intense game but still try to insert a conversation.

JOHN

So Mr. Vice President, you ready for the job?

CARL

What are you talking about? Stop talking nonsense. I'm the last person they will consider, I'm new to the company. I'm not thinking of that, I'm just grateful to have a job.

They continue to play while they talk.

JOHN

But you use to be junior VP the last place you worked. You have a lot of experience, so I will not be surprised if they gave you the job.

CARL

You will be chosen for the job, I guarantee it.

JOHN

I don't think so, I had a little run in with Stewart. Nothing big, I forgot to turn in a file to him one day. He was angry, but luckily, he did not need it again that day. After that, everything has been fine.

JOHN (cont'd)

There has been more respect from me,
you know, trying to make up.

CARL

John, I think that you have more
than made up for it, besides,
Stewart is not one to hold a grudge
especially over a file that he did
not need the same day.

JOHN

What if they offered you the job,
will you take it?

CARL

Well, I would have to talk it over
with Jo-Anne first, but I will cross
that bridge if I get there.

(then)

CARL

OOOH!! I won!. In your face, I won!
You should have hosted the game. Oh
boy, victory tastes good.

JOHN

Damn it! I'll get you on the next
one.

CARL

You say that every time.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

Carl opens the door, John is standing behind him.

CARL

Man, I forgot how much fun it is to
win.

JOHN

Show-off!

(Then)

I think I need to use the bathroom.

INT. PRISON - CARL'S CELL - DAY

Carl is now sitting on his bed.

CARL

That's it, that's when you took my
tie and hair. (pause) You will not
get away with it.

EXT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - MORNING

Carl is doing exercises: sit-ups, push-ups, jumping-jacks.

Inmates are standing in small groups, looking on. Inmates
from one group speak.

INMATE #1

What's gotten into him?

INMATE #2

Don't ask me, but whatever it is,
whoever it is...

INMATE #3

I would not want to be the reason.
(they laugh)

Jonathan and Chuck are standing at a safe distance talking.

CHUCK

You know anything about this?

JONATHAN

(smiling)

Your guess is as good as mine.

Jonathan walks over to where Carl is.

CARL

(doing push-ups)

Forty-three, forty-four, forty-five

JONATHAN

You know who it is, don't you?

CARL

Jonathan, you are not going to believe this.

(standing up)

Remember, I told you about my best friend?

JONATHAN

John? John did this? Why?

CARL

There was an opening for vice president at the company. He somehow knew that I was the one getting the job. Even I had gotten some vibes from Stewart, the president, that I might be the one, but I did not give it much thought, I was just grateful to have a job. I did not want to be disappointed so I did not think about it.

JONATHAN

If you got a vibe that you might get the job, John must have gotten more than a vibe to actually go through with such a despicable plan. He probably knew for sure, how he knew is another mystery, but he knew.

CARL

That's true.

(Carl sits on a bench)

Just before that happened, he was relentless about playing video games. It was his turn to host but he was insistent that we have it at my house. I did not think much about it at the time, so I was happy to play. He even asked me if I would take the job if it was offered to me.

JONATHAN

What did you tell him?

CARL

I told him I would cross that bridge if I got there.

JONATHAN

And you were never the least bit suspicious?

CARL

I know I look stupid for not suspecting but who was to know that my best friend would frame me for murder to get a job? (Pause)
Jonathan, I still think this is some never-ending dream and I'll wake up any moment.

JONATHAN

I can assure you this is no dream so we have to plan the next step.

CARL

What ideas do you have.

JONATHAN

Well I have been thinking very hard and I did come up with something.
Well, I think.....

They engage in conversation.

CARL

Wake me up Jonathan. Please wake me up.

JONATHAN

I would if this were a dream because I'm not liking the dream either. I miss my wife and kids. I must tell you though, I did not foresee this going so fast.

JONATHAN (cont'd)

I'm barely here a couple months.

CARL

(Smiling)

Are you complaining.

JONATHAN

Oh god, no. This place does something to you. It gets to you in a way that's hard to put into words. Love is the only thing that keeps you going but it's still so difficult. I wish this were a dream that everyone would have... Being in prison, you know, when they wake up they would know that this was a place that they absolutely didn't want to be.

CARL

Yeah, I agree.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Carl is in the courtroom. He presents his case for pushing up his execution. His lawyer is present.

CARL

Thank you Your Honor.

Carl sits down besides his lawyer.

JUDGE

Are there any objections by the prosecution?

PROSECUTOR

No objections Your Honor.

JUDGE

In all my years as a judge, I have never seen anything like this,

JUDGE (cont'd)

Mr. Thompson first gave up his rights to appeal his conviction, and now he wants his execution date pushed up. He has been evaluated by several psychiatrists who have declared him mentally competent and very sane and in complete control. In light of this and all the evidence, recovered at the scene of the crime, I see no reason not to grant the defendant's request. Request granted.

Judge raises his gavel.

JUDGE

Court is adjourned.

INT. CARL'S CELL - DAY

Carl is doing vigorous exercises: push-ups, sit-ups, air boxing, side push-ups, jumping jacks.

INT. PRISON - EXERCISE AREA FOR DEATH ROW INMATES - DAY

Carl continues the exercise routine.

INMATE

(to another)

For someone who is going to die in two days he sure is exercising.

PRISONER #2

Well I guess he wants to go in shape.

(laughs)

Carl stops exercising and walks over to where Chuck is standing.

Chuck looks worried.

CARL

Cheer up Chuck, I'll be fine. I'll never forget you where I'm going, I promise.

CHUCK

You gave up too easily, man. You should have fought. You are the only one I connected with.

CARL

Did they ever investigate anyone else?

CHUCK

I even told them who I believe did it, Joseph Wells, but they had made up their minds about me. But Hope lives on.

INT. PRISON - BARBER SHOP - DAY

Jonathan and Carl are sitting silently in the barber chair. Joe is enjoying the task of shaving Jonathan's hair and beard.

When Joe finishes, the brothers stare at each other in the mirror.

JOE

Oh no, not again, it's happening again. I'm seeing things again. Oh no!

Joe covers his face.

JONATHAN

(Following the plan)

Calm down, Joe. Close your eyes and breathe. Don't open them until you are fully calm. Breathe deep, Joe.

The two guards outside the barber shop door are engaged in conversation.

Carl and Jonathan, following the plan, change clothes quickly so their prison numbers are switched.

Jonathan, posing as Carl leaves the barber shop first, according to the plan. The guard opens the door. The prison number is clearly visible.

Jonathan's eyes pierced the guard's to see if he would notice. The guard does not know notice. They walk away.

INT. BARBER SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Carl is still sitting in the chair.

CARL

Are you feeling better now, Joe?

JOE

I think so.

CARL

Open your eyes, now.

JOE

Wh...wh...where is the other one?

CARL

Which other one? What are you talking about?

JOE

There were two of you.

CARL

I came here alone, Joe. (pause) Joe, did you miss your medicine today, you know you are not supposed to miss your medicine.

JOE

I could have sworn I took it, but probably that's it.

CARL

I think that's it. You are fine, you just had a bit of panic. You need to take the rest of the day off. Get some rest. You work very hard. Trust me, you are fine.

JOE

I'm sure you are right. I did work many more hours this week than usual because they freed quite a few prisoners from my block this week, they all wanted to go home looking look good.

CARL

When you feel stressed, always close your eyes and take deep breaths. I must go now, Joe. Thank you very much for the touch up. As you know, I like your work, you are an artist, You should call your wife tonight, that'll help you relax.

JOE

Good idea.

Carl, posing as Jonathan, walks through the door with his handcuffed hands covering his face. His prison number is clearly visible.

FEMALE GUARD

(thinking it's Jonathan)

What, you regret cutting that shrub?
I must say this morning when you told me that you were going to do it I did not believe, but now that I see it...

A voice comes over her walkie talkie.

Carl keeps his face covered and his head down until he reaches Jonathan's cell on the top floor of the cell block.

Carl and the guard reach Jonathan's cell. The guard opens the door and Carl enters the cell. He puts his hands through the slot to have his handcuffs removed.

INT. PRISON - JONATHAN'S CELL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Carl looks around and familiarizes himself with Jonathan's cell.

Carl looks at the large picture of Jonathan's family on the ceiling.

CARL

I can't believe a family's wish to
torture someone becomes the route
for my escape, the route to freedom.
And Jonathan did a heck of a job
leaving everything spotless.

Carl picks up a book and the weapon used to carve the hole in the roof falls out. Carl picks it up, then smiles. He puts the weapon back in the book, closes it and puts it back on the small desk in the room.

INT. PRISON - OUTSIDE CARL CELL - EVENING

Jonathan, posing as Carl returns from his final physical exam. Gladys accompanies him.

GLADYS

(Awkward)

Well the doctor says you are in very
good health.

Jonathan looks at Gladys funny.

GLADYS - (CONT'D)

Though I wish that were not the case
right now, because that would mean
you might have some more time, and
who knows, during that time a
miracle could happen.

Jonathan remains quiet.

GLADYS

Carl, I usually don't do this but,
between us, I really wish things
were different for you. You seem to
be a very good person. I will be
praying for you tonight and
tomorrow. Miracles can happen.

Jonathan nods.

Gladys opens the cell door. Jonathan enters. Gladys takes
off the handcuffs through the slot in the cell door.

The twins sit on each other's the bed.

INT. DEATH CHAMBER - DUSK

Medic straps Jonathan, to the execution gurney.

INT. JOANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DUSK

Jo-Anne is sobbing uncontrollably. Her MOTHER and three
SISTERS are present consoling her. Her head is resting on
her Mom's lap who is gently patting her back.

INT. DEATH CHAMBER - DUSK

MEDIC

Carl, you have a chance to say a few
last words.

The victims parents are present.

The parents both cling to each other's hand and look on in
anticipation for an apology.

JONATHAN

I have a few last words. Can you
bend your ear towards me?

The medic has a puzzled look.

Jonathan looks at his gurney strapped hands, moves them around, as if to remind the medic that his hands are strapped.

JONATHAN

What, you're afraid I'm going to escape?

With that, the medic, against protocol, draws his right ear close to Jonathan's mouth, having a clear view of the observation glass.

Jonathan whispers in his ear.

Medic opens his eyes in shock. He runs to the alarm and sounds it.

Alarm bells echo all over the prison.

PARENTS OF VICTIM

What is happening? What is happening?

INT. PRISON - DUSK

The inmates in their cell are uneasy.

Guards are racing up the stairs to Jonathan's cell on the fourth floor.

The entire prison is on lock down.

Gladys shouts from a distance to a male guard.

GLADYS

What is happening?

GUARD

Carl Thompson has escaped. Hurry, we think he's heading to the roof.

Gladys, who does not process the information right away starts running, takes a corner and stops abruptly.

GLADYS

What, did he say Carl Thompson?

Gladys smirks, starts walking at normal pace, whistling.

Momentarily, a male guard runs past Gladys, heading to the roof.

MALE GUARD

Gladys, haven't you heard, an inmate has escaped.

GLADYS

(to herself)

So I heard.

INT. JONATHAN'S CELL - CONTINUOUS

A guard arrives at Jonathan's cell. He hastily unlocks the door. The door crashes open. He sees a large hole in the roof and the picture of Jonathan's family on floor.

GUARD

(on his walkie Talkie)

He has escaped to the roof, repeat,
he has escaped to the roof.

EXT. PRISON - ROOF - DUSK

Three male guards finally get to the roof. They see the guards unconscious but unhurt. They are clutching their weapons. The three guards look at each other confused.

One calls the incident on his walkie talkie.

GUARD

Guards down, repeat, guards down,
location roof top, repeat roof top.

Two other guards make their way to the tower. The tower guard is also unconscious and unhurt. She has her weapon clutched in her hands.

GUARD

Who would escape prison, put a guard
to sleep and leave the weapon?

INT. PRISON - JONATHAN'S CELL - DUSK - ONE HOUR EARLIER

Carl sitting in Jonathan's cell hears the clanking of the chains and knows that Jonathan was on his way down. All prisoners are in their cell according to procedure.

He looks at the plastic bag containing some snacks and a change of smuggled clothing on the tiny desk. He looks at the roof. He stands and goes to the door to see if the coast is clear. The coast is clear.

Carl quietly aligns the bed to the corresponding hole in the roof. Without thinking, he makes a run for it. He climbs the bed post, rips the picture, revealing a hole in the roof, barely big enough for him to fit. He then jumps, holds the jagged edge of the concrete and compels his body through. He makes his way through the crawl space, following the duct work.

He searches for an exit. He sees one. With a small tool, he quietly detaches the cover of the vent and carefully peeps out. There's a male guard a few meters away with his back to Carl.

The guard turns around. Carl docks and quietly replaces the cover of the vent. The guard walks over to where Carl is and steps on the vent cover. Carl freezes in place.

(Then)

The guard hears movement. He looks around. He steadies his gun. He relaxes when he sees a rat.

GUARD

Oh it's just you, you little rascal.

The rat races away. Now the guard is standing two feet away from the vent, with his back to Carl. Carl quietly leaps out of the opening, and sneaking behind the guard holds him in the jugular and puts him to sleep.

He moves quietly to another part of the roof hiding occasionally behind different obstacles on the roof, to where another guard, also male, is standing. He holds him in the jugular and puts him to sleep.

Now he's in the tower and does the same to the guard.

He escapes his way down the roof and into the bushes.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Guards and police holding scent dogs and flashlights are running through the forest. The air is saturated with dogs barking.

EXT. FOREST - MILES FROM THE PRISON - NIGHT

Carl is running through the forest when suddenly he hears sounds of helicopters hovering above. He quickly ensconces against a tree. In a short distance he sees a lifeline, a large tree that is hollow at the bottom. He races towards it, hiding behind trees as he makes his way toward it.

Safe at last.

CARL

(leaning against the wall
of the tree)

I think I will stay here a couple
hours 'till the helicopters go away.

Carl takes out a bottle of water and a pack of doritos. He eats and drinks and then goes to sleep.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - CHIEF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

SENATOR MORGAN, Caucasian male, early 60s, wearing an expensive suit enters the chief's office. The chief, CARTER JOSSLYN, is an African American male in his 50s. His TV is on. He mutes the TV when the senator enters the room.

SENATOR

Carter, how on earth could you let something like that happen? We cannot let this get out. We have to catch him and get him back to that gurney where he belongs. If this gets out, the press will eat us alive. What did you tell the victims family who were present?

CHIEF

We apologized to them and told them there was a setback and that the execution cannot be carried out tonight but they don't know the details.

SENATOR

If they get to know we let a murderer escape the execution chamber, we can kiss our reelection goodbye because we'll never hear the last of it. How incompetent can these guards be?

CHIEF

We are doing all we can to recapture that bastard, and when we find him I'll push that lethal injection myself, if I have to. This is a nightmare, somehow I don't think we can prevent it from getting to the media.

SENATOR

We as hell better try.

The TV in the chief's office shows a picture of Carl. Chief turns up the volume. The news of his escape is out.

CHIEF AND SENATOR

Damn it!

EXT. FORREST - NIGHT

Carl wakes up three hours later. The air is still. The helicopters are gone. Carl resumes his journey through the forest.

He crosses various streams. He climbs rocks. Other times he is just walking through the forest.

Carl finally reaches the road. He climbs up the embankment and lays in wait. He sees a cop car pass by. A short moment later a truck passes by.

He hears an eighteen wheeler coming in the distance and he takes a chance to hitch a ride. The truck stops.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

CARL

Thank you, thank you very much.

TRUCK DRIVER

Where you heading? I'm going South.

CARL

That's perfect, I'm also going South.

TRUCK DRIVER

Man, you look like you have not slept in months. If you were wearing orange I'd say you escaped the hell hole.

CARL

(laughing)

I feel like I've not slept in months, but I assure you I did not escape from anywhere.

TRUCK DRIVER

Let's get you home.

The truck stops at an intersection and Carl hops down.

CARL

Thank you.

Truck driver waves and drives off.

Carl is in a familiar area. He is about two miles from his house.

EXT. JO-ANNE'S AND CARLS HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl takes the spare key from under a flower pot, opens the door and enters.

INT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Carl looks around. Everything seems the same.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Carl makes his way to the study. He opens the desk and pulls out a small digital recorder. He puts it in his pocket then walks quietly upstairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

He opens the bedroom door quietly. A very pregnant Jo-Anne is sleeping in her mother's embrace. One sister is sleeping at the foot of the bed, the others are asleep on the chairs. Pleased that she had company, he smiles affectionately and quietly closes the bedroom door and leaves.

INT. UPSCALE HOUSE - JOHN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

John is lying in bed, the lights are off. Large drops of sweat bursting on his forehead. He is restless in his sleep. He sits up abruptly, as if waking up from a nightmare. He notices a silhouette sitting on a chair in the room. He turns on the light. Carl is sitting there. John desperately rubs his eyes.

CARL

Was I in the nightmare, John.

John rubs his eyes again.

CARL (CONT'D)

(Angry)

This is not a dream, John.

JOHN

Are you tormenting me from the grave? You were executed today.

CARL

I take it you haven't heard.

JOHN

Heard what?

CARL

I escaped the execution chamber....
I know, impossible, right?

Carl turns on the TV. Breaking news of Carl's escape is on.

JOHN

But how? How's that possible?

CARL

I had a little help, but you don't get to ask the questions. Now sit down and shut up. You were my best friend.

JOHN

You were in the way of my promotion! You were with the company less than a year and you were going to get the job.

CARL

What are you talking about, they were still considering applicants.

JOHN

Well even if they told us that, they already had you in mind.

JOHN (cont'd)

After the meeting I heard Stewart and Michelle discussing you and it was pretty much a done deal. I had to do something.

CARL

So you murdered somebody?

JOHN

Someone who would not be missed. She was out there sleeping on the benches every night. I knew in that section of the park, I would not be seen, and nobody would care whether or not you jog in that section, the fact is, you jogged in the park.

CARL

She had family who cared for her even if she was a runaway. Runaway or not, she was a person. I cannot believe you ever called yourself my friend. You are a monster. You are a psychopath. I bet I was not paranoid about my coffee being poisoned.

JOHN

But you still would not die.

CARL

You could have killed people at the office, John, did you even think about that?

JOHN

Everyone knows exactly when you get your coffee, that's no secret, you are a creature of habit. I just brewed a new pot after you drank.

CARL

You sent me to hell. But the fact that I'm here and not in a body bag, means that you will not get away with it.

JOHN

I have already gotten away with it, and you are just an intruder that I shot.

John opens the night stand and pulls out his gun. He aims and pulls the trigger. The gun does not fire.

CARL

You're looking for these?

Carl puts his hand in his pocket and pulls out the cartridges.

Realising that he is unarmed, John launches at Carl. John hits Carl. A fight ensues. Carl is winning the fight. John gets a bloody nose. John manages to get away. He runs to the bathroom, locks the door and calls 9-1-1.

JOHN

There's an intruder in my house.
Please help me.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Flashing lights of cop cars are seen. A police officer comes to the door. He rings the bell.

POLICE OFFICER

Police! Open the door.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Upon hearing the police, John launches toward the bedroom door and runs downstairs.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

John dives for the door knob. The door flies open.

JOHN

He's in the bedroom, he's a prison
escapee he wants to kill me.

POLICE OFFICER

You are bleeding, do you need a
doctor?

JOHN

No. I'm fine. Go get him.

Officers make their way up the stairs, guns drawn. They
approach the bedroom cautiously.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

An officer slaps handcuffs on Carl. They search his pocket
for weapons. They find cartridges and a small digital
recorder.

CARL

He framed me for murder.

They walk Carl away.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

They stop to talk to John.

OFFICER

He said you framed him for murder.

JOHN

Officer, I don't know what he's
talking about. We worked together,
that's it. He murdered someone and
he is a fugitive. Look him up, and
you'll see I'm telling the truth.

OFFICER

(to Carl)

Let's go.

CARL

Officer, he confessed, I have it all
on tape. Play the tape. Play the
tape.

John turns pale.

The officer plays the part of the tape where John confesses.
John is wearing handcuffs and sitting in a police car.

OFFICER

(To Carl as he puts him
in the car.)

You were obviously set up but you
are a fugitive, I must take you in,
this matter has to be settled by a
judge.

EXT. JO-ANNE AND CARL'S HOUSE - DAY

Jo-Anne is standing on the step. Her arms are folded. She is
waiting impatiently.

The taxi pulls up in the driveway. Carl gets out. Carl runs
towards Jo-Anne. She walks, since she is hugely pregnant.

CARL

(kissing Her)

I missed you so much, and you.

(touching Jo-Anne's
belly)

JO-ANNE

Oh baby, I miss you too.

As they go in what seems a lengthy embrace, Jo-Anne's water
breaks.

INT. HOSPITAL - DELIVERY ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Carl is present. He is video taping the birth.

NURSE

Push, push a little more.

(then)

I see the head.

The baby cries fiercely as if to ensure that her presence is not missed. Jo-Anne smiles. Carl who is holding the camera kisses Jo-Anne's forehead.

The nurse hands the baby to Jo-anne.

NURSE

Congratulations, you have a son.

Jo-Anne holds her baby. She kisses him.

CARL

I told you it was a boy.

Jo-Anne smiles.

EXT. REMOTE CABIN IN THE WOODS - DAY

Jonathan's children are playing in the yard while Nicole looks intently at the driveway.

Jonathan emerges, walking up the driveway.

The children turn, and seeing their father, run toward him.

CHILDREN

Daddy!

He hugs and scoops them up. Nicole joins them a few seconds later and Jonathan, with hands occupied kisses her.

JONATHAN

My dear Baby. I will love you forever. Thank you.

They go inside.

EXT. PRISON GATE - DAY

The press awaits outside.

Chuck emerges. Carl waits outside. Carl's T-shirt has the words : HOPE LIVES ON written on it.

Chuck sees these words as he walks toward Carl. They man hug.

CHUCK

(teary eyes)

Indeed man, indeed.

(Holding Carl's shoulders
with both hands)

Thank you my brother, thank you.

A male journalist interrupts the reunion.

JOURNALIST

Chuck, how does it feel to be a free
man?

CHUCK

How do you think it feels?

Chuck turns his attention back to Carl.

CHUCK

Shall we leave this place now?

They walk away.

EXT. JONATHAN AND NICOLE'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

Jonathan's children are playing with a beach ball.

Jo-Anne is breastfeeding while she engages in conversation with Nicole by the pool side.

Stewart and Chuck are conversing.

STEWART

You know Chuck, I might be able to squeeze you in somewhere. As the VP Carl would need some help. What do you say?

The identical twins Carl and Jonathan are on the grill.

CARL

So what would have happened if the plan with Joe didn't go as we hoped?

JONATHAN

Well they would have two half naked identical twins on their hands and some orange jump suits in their faces and a very tedious task of finding out who is who since we have the same genetics. Then they would give up and dismiss your case altogether.

CARL

Remind me again why we did not choose that plan instead?

JONATHAN

Well little brother you would not have this juicy steak in front of you right this minute just waiting to be devoured.

They both laugh hard.

Alice appears, admiring the scene.

FADE OUT.