

A Snowflake Fell

by

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EXT. TOWN CHURCHYARD - NIGHT

A church and graveyard on the outskirts of a large town.

The Church clock strikes twelve.

It is snowing heavily. The ground is already covered with deep snowdrifts. A strong wind blows and whips of the snow.

CAGE, 40s, tough looking, comes along the road, appearing as if from nowhere. He wears an expensive black overcoat, pulled tight against the cold.

He walks carefully on the icy path as he approaches the Churchyard.

He enters the Churchyard and moves amongst the snow covered grave stones, looking for one in particular.

He finds it, bends down and wipes the snow from it. He looks at the inscription for a moment, then pats the stone.

It reads:

Elizabeth Cage 1925-1998

John Cage 1924-1972

Reunited

Cage sits down on the next grave stone, and takes out a brandy flask. He swigs from this, saluting the stone.

CAGE

I'm home Mum.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - HALL - NIGHT

The light flicks on.

Cage stands in the hallway.

The dim light bulb casts a dirty yellow glow on the faded wallpaper that was once gaily coloured.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cage enters the dark room, and flicks on the light. It is as dim as the one in the hallway.

Nothing about this house is welcoming.

He turns on the gas fire and slumps into a worn armchair beside it.

He leans his head back, lets out a long sigh and closes his eyes.

The hiss of the gas fire is the only sound.

EXT. MULTISTORY CARPARK - DAY (DREAM)

Slow Motion throughout.

Gale force winds blow heavy snow through the carpark.

Cage walks through the blizzard, his black overcoat flapping around him like wings.

He carries a gun. He points it at a figure kneeling on the concrete floor, his hands raised in surrender.

He pulls the trigger. The muzzle flashes, a shell is ejected, the retort rolls like thunder.

The man he is shooting looks back in horror and fear.

It is Cage himself.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cage wakes in the chair with a start.

He looks around him, now sure where he is.

Daylight shines through the thin curtains.

Stiffly, Cage gets up and turns on the old TV. He walks into the kitchen as a news report comes on.

TV NEWS

Britain is in the grip of the worst Christmas weather ever recorded as arctic winds and heavy snow...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cage enters, fills an old electric kettle and while the water boils, looks for a cup and some coffee.

TV NEWS (OS)

... batter the country, with more forecast to come. Large parts of the country are without power, and many rural areas are cut off, as authorities struggle to cope with this unprecedented weather.

The jar of coffee has solidified, and looks years past its use by date, but Cage scrapes some grains out of it and pours water on it.

He looks out of the kitchen window at a cold white vista.

He sits at the kitchen table and sips his coffee. It is barely drinkable.

The sound of the TV has faded into the background.

Cage looks through the doorway into the living room.

It looks different now - there are decorations, cheap tinsel, and a pathetic plastic Christmas tree. The TV plays a 1970s TV show.

SIMON CAGE, 10, kneels by the tree, under which there are just two presents.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

MRS CAGE, 50s, stands behind the boy. She looks worn out, old before her time. She smiles down at him, a thin and weak looking boy.

He picks up a present, which is wrapped in cheap paper.

It is obviously a book of some kind. He does not look happy. He unwraps it. It is an Annual.

He looks up at his mother.

SIMON

I wanted the Lone Ranger Man. You said I could have the Lone Ranger Man.

MRS CAGE
I couldn't afford it Simon. It was
£10, and we had that bill...

SIMON
You said I could have the Lone
Ranger Man...

He throws the book down.

MRS CAGE
Maybe next year...

He begins screaming and crying, a full tantrum.

SIMON
I want the Lone Ranger Man. You
said I could have the Lone Ranger
Man.

He rushes out of the room.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The living room is back to the present.

Cage stares through the door way.

He bursts into tears. Uncontrollable sobbing.

He staggers over to the kitchen sink and splashes cold
water onto his face and begins to pull himself together.

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY

Cage walks through the deep snow with determination.

A few hardy souls are making efforts to get out, and one
or two cars are attempting the traverse the roads.

Cage stops, breathing hard.

He looks ahead of him, and sees a black FIGURE clearly
outlined against the white.

It is too distant to make out details, but the Figure
seems to wear a hood and cloak.

It raises a hand and acknowledges Cage's gaze.

Cage looks at the Figure in puzzlement.

Then a car skids on the icy road, and he is distracted by it's squeal of brakes.

When he looks back, the Figure is gone. He looks around, but it is nowhere to be seen.

Cage begins to walk again.

INT. PUB - DAY

Empty.

Christmas decorations. A jukebox plays Christmas muzak.

A LANDLORD, in his sixties, stands alone behind the bar, cleaning a glass absentmindedly.

Cage pushes open the door and staggers in. The walk has taken a toll of him.

He walks over to the bar. The Landlord is obviously glad to see a customer, any customer.

LANDLORD

What can I get you, sir?

CAGE

Whiskey. Double.

He places a £50 on the bar.

CAGE (CONT'D)

There'll be more.

The Landlord looks at the note as if he has never seen one before, which is possible.

Cage knocks back the whiskey and bangs the empty glass back on the bar. The Landlord refills it. He looks at Cage.

LANDLORD

Have we met before? You seem familiar.

CAGE

No we haven't. And no I don't.

The Landlord gets the message.

Cage goes and sits down. He looks around the pub.

INT. PUB - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Suddenly, the pub is full, noisy. The dress styles suggest the late 1980s.

A younger Landlord stands behind the bar, with a young blonde BARMAID, who is chatting up customers.

Simon Cage, 20s, sits with his girlfriend, KIRSTY, laughing and joking.

It is still hard to believe that he will become the older Cage, who sits amongst these ghosts of the past, sipping his whiskey, unseen by them.

A young Police Constable enters, in uniform. No one takes much notice except for Simon and Kirsty, who wave. The PC, DANNY, winks at them.

He talks to the Landlord. Cage watches him with eyes filled with hatred and anger.

He gets up and walks through the crowds of people. He stands next to the unseeing Danny and studies his face.

Danny turns, looks straight at him - and walks through him towards Simon and Kirsty.

Cage swings round and follows Danny with his eyes as he walks over to his younger self.

LANDLORD

They say this is going going to be
the mildest Christmas on record.

Cage swings back round.

INT. PUB - DAY

The pub is empty and the older Landlord stands looking at Cage.

CAGE

What?

LANDLORD

I...I said, they say this is going
to be the coldest Christmas on
record.

Cage glares at him.

Cage leaves.

EXT. PUB - CONTINUOUS

Cage stands outside the pub. It is snowing again.

He pulls his coat tight around himself and begins walking against the wind again.

EXT. BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

An old stone bridge over a grey river.

The blizzard is well and truly underway now.

Cage comes across the bridge, head into the wind. Then he stops, and looks down into the water below.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The water is much calmer. A large old tree lies on it's side just under the bridge.

It is a sunny day. No snow or ice.

Cage stands on the bridge looking down. He turns and finds his ten year old self is beside him, with DANNY ROBERTS, also 10.

They both peer over the bridge at the tree.

DANNY

Go on.

SIMON

I don't want to.

DANNY

You're scared.

SIMON

No I'm not. I just don't want to.

DANNY

You can land on the tree. You won't go in the water.

Danny pushes Simon.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Go on. I dare you.

Simon glares at Danny. But he now has no choice. He begins to scabble up onto the bridge wall.

Standing there, he looks down at the tree and the water rushing past.

He begins to cry.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Go on. Aim for the tree.

SIMON

I don't want to.

DANNY

You big baby. Simon's a big baby!
Simon's a big cry baby!

A well dressed ELDERLY MAN is walking across the bridge, and sees what is happening. He shouts out a warning.

Danny starts, looks terrified, and runs away.

The petrified Simon is stuck on the bridge, looking down, as the Elderly Man comes up to him.

He helps Simon to get down.

ELDERLY MAN

You shouldn't play on the bridge like that, you could get hurt.

SIMON

I'm sorry.

ELDERLY MAN

You run off to your mother now. It's Christmas and you should be at home with your family opening your presents.

SIMON

Ain't got any. Mom said she's buy me the Lone Ranger Man but then she said she didn't have any money.

The Elderly Man looks down at Simon sadly. He takes out a pound note and gives it to the boy.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Here you are. Buy yourself something when the shops open tomorrow. Now, off you go.

Simon runs off.

Cage has stood there through all this. He looks at the Elderly Man as he stands and watches the boy run off with a sad look in his eyes.

EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

And we are back in the present day, with Cage standing on the bridge, the snow now coming down heavily, and the gale blowing fiercely.

Cage suddenly realises that he is no longer alone, and turns to find a WOMAN dressed all in black behind him. She is in her 30s, dark and very beautiful. She wears a hooded cloak.

Her name is ARIEL.

She smiles at him.

CAGE
Do I know you, lady?

ARIEL
We've met, Simon. Though perhaps we have never been properly introduced.

Cage begins to walk away from her.

CAGE
Whatever, lady.

As he walks away.

ARIEL
Why have you come back, Simon?

Cage stops and turns.

CAGE
What?

ARIEL
Why have you come back? After all these years?

Cage cannot answer.

There is a violent gust of wind, which forces Cage to shield his eyes from the icy snowflakes.

When he opens them again, Ariel is gone. He looks round. There is no sign of her.

Cage turns back and continues on his way, more slowly than previously.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

The house is old, not looked after, snow is piled high outside it.

Cage struggles to get to the front door. He rings the bell.

After what seems an age, it is opened by GEORGE ROBERTS, 70s. He looks frail. His clothes are mismatched and tatty.

GEORGE

Yes?

CAGE

Mr Roberts?

George looks at him.

GEORGE

Are you from the Council?

CAGE

Sorry? No. Mr Roberts? I...I knew your son, Danny.

GEORGE

Danny?

He says it as if he isn't sure who Danny might be.

He turns away from the door and walks back into the house, leaving it open.

After a moment, Cage follows, closing the door behind him.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Cage follows the old man into the room. It is a mess.

CAGE

It's freezing in here.

GEORGE

Are you from the Council?

Cage looks at the old man for a moment.

CAGE

No, Mr Roberts. I knew your son.
Danny.

GEORGE

Danny. Oh, yes. How is he?

Cage realises that the old man's mind is gone. He looks at him sadly.

He turns and looks at some photos that are framed and hung on the wall of the room.

They show a tough looking man in Police Sergeant's uniform, and Danny, also in uniform, both alone and with his father.

Looking at these photos, it is hard to believe that George is the man in them.

Cage turns. George stands looking into mid-air.

CAGE

Mr Roberts...

Cage's voice seems to stir him, and he seems to see Cage for the first time.

GEORGE

You look familiar.

CAGE

Yes. We have met many times in the past.

GEORGE

You knew my son.

CAGE

Yes. Very well. He was my best friend.

GEORGE

Were you in the Police with him?

CAGE

No.

GEORGE

Steven?

CAGE

Simon. Simon Cage.

The old man nods. The spark seems to have died.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Tell you what, I'll make you a cup
of tea, and we can talk.

Cage goes to find the kitchen.

George just stands there, not moving.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Cage enters. It is a tip.

He hunts around for some clean cups, and begins to make some tea.

GEORGE wanders in absently. He seems to barely notice Cage.

CAGE
Mr Roberts. Why don't you sit
down. I'm making you a cup of tea.

GEORGE
That'll be nice. A cup of tea.

He sits down at the kitchen table, which is covered with dirty crockery. Cage begins to clean it away into the sink, which is already overflowing.

CAGE
Don't you have anyone to look
after you?

GEORGE
(lucid - harsh)
I don't need anyone to look after
me, boy. I'm not an invalid.

Cage sets down the tea and sits down beside the old man.

CAGE
That sounds more like the man I
remember.

GEORGE
You're a friend of my son?

CAGE
Yes.

GEORGE
Do you know where he is?

Pause.

CAGE
Yes.

GEORGE
I haven't seen him in so many
years. Is he coming home?

CAGE
No. No, he isn't. I'm sorry.

GEORGE
It's Simon...isn't it?

CAGE
Yes.

GEORGE
I remember you. You've changed.

CAGE
We've all changed, Mr Roberts.

Pause.

GEORGE
He used to bully you.

CAGE
He was my best friend.

GEORGE
He was a bully. And that girl...

CAGE
Yes?

GEORGE
What was her name?

CAGE
Kirsty.

GEORGE
Yes. Poor girl. Wasn't she...

CAGE
Yes.

GEORGE
Your girlfriend?

CAGE
Yes. She was. Before Danny.

GEORGE
Danny. Danny?

His brief grasp of the present is loosening and he begins to drift off again.

CAGE
Mr Roberts. I need to tell you something...

George looks at him with vacant eyes.

GEORGE
Are you from the Council?

Cage lets out a sigh.

CAGE
No, Mr Roberts. I'm not.

He gets up to go. He pauses, then places his hand on the old man's shoulder.

CAGE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

He exits, leaving the old man sitting vacantly at the table. He does not even notice Cage's departure.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Cage comes from the kitchen and heads towards the front door.

He turns, and finds things have changed. The hallway is tidier, Christmas decorations have appeared.

Danny, aged 10, runs into the hallway from the living room, with George coming after him.

This is the tough Sgt. Roberts of the photos - he wears his uniform trousers and shirt.

He catches hold of Danny and shakes him.

GEORGE

I heard all about it from old Mr Edwards, so there's no point in you denying it, boy.

DANNY

I didn't do anything. Simon did it himself.

GEORGE

Don't you lie to me, boy. You put him up to it. That Cage boy wouldn't say boo to a goose.

DANNY

I didn't do anything!

George clips his son's ear.

GEORGE

Go to your room. And stay there until you are told you can come out.

DANNY

(crying)

What about the party?

GEORGE

You can forget that. You don't deserve to go to any parties. I'll take that Cage boy instead.

DANNY

I hate you!

He runs up the stairs and slams his bedroom door.

FLASHBACK ENDS

Cage stands in the cold hallway, back in the present.

George comes wandering out of the kitchen. Cage goes over to him.

CAGE

Mr Roberts.

George looks at him without seeing him.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Do you remember, many years ago,
you took me...you took a little
boy called Simon to a Christmas
Party.

GEORGE

A Party. I...

CAGE

It was one of the happiest days of
my childhood...well, I didn't have
many...

GEORGE

A party.

CAGE

Yes. Thank you. I don't know if I
said it then. Kids don't always.

George nods, but doesn't seem to have understood what was
said. He goes into the living room.

The front door opens, a blast of cold air whistles
through the hallway.

FRANK, 40s, overweight, enters. He has a key.

He looks in surprise at Cage.

FRANK

Who the hell are you?

CAGE

I could ask you the same thing.

FRANK

I'm George's care worker.

CAGE

Care worker?

FRANK

Yes. Now, who the hell are you?

Cage suddenly pins Frank against the wall.

CAGE

The name is Cage. And I'm an old
friend of Mr Roberts.

FRANK

Let go of me! I'll call the Police.

CAGE

That'll be difficult with the phone stuck up your arse. Listen to me, fatso, you're going to get Mr Roberts warmed up and fed, and you're going to get this place cleaned up...

FRANK

I haven't been able to get in... the weather...

CAGE

This pigsty didn't get like this in a couple of days. Now, get it sorted, because if it's still like this when I get back, I'm going to rip your balls off and feed them to you. One at a time.

(beat)

And remember this. It's Mr Roberts to you, not "George". Show him some respect.

Cage lets him go and heads to the door.

FRANK

Who are you?

CAGE

I'm the Ghost of Christmas Past. The Jason Statham version.

He exits.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - HALL - DAY

Cage stands in the hall of his mother's house.

He takes his coat off and hangs it up. He is very tired.

He begins to climb slowly up the stairs. Music begins to come from a room at the top. Something from the 1980s.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - LANDING - CONTINUOUS

Cage stands outside the door to the room that the music is emanating from.

He opens it and goes in.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room has not been used for a long time.

It has a fairly sizable vinyl record collection, a record player, some books by the bed - mostly action thrillers of the Ludlum kind - and a stack of old music magazines.

The music has stopped.

Cage goes over to the records and flicks through them, smiling at some of the choices his younger self made.

This is the first time we have seen him smile.

He sits on the bed. Puts his head in his hands.

He lies down on the bed and drifts off to sleep.

Standing in the doorway is Ariel. She looks at the sleeping Cage.

The music starts again.

Ariel is gone.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Simon, 20s, and Kirsty are lying on the bed, kissing. Music plays.

The music can't cover the sound of shouting from elsewhere in the house.

Simon breaks away from Kirsty, and sits up.

SIMON

Damn it. Listen to him.

KIRSTY

Leave it - there's nothing you can do.

There's a woman's cry.

Simon jumps off the bed and rushes from the room.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Christmas decorations are scattered around. The TV blares out.

Mrs Cage is being roughed up by TED, a big, brutish man in his fifties who is clearly drunk. She has been hit in the face.

Simon rushes in, Kirsty not far behind him, and jumps on Ted.

Ted throws him off. Mrs Cage and Kirsty tries to pull him back as he turns on the boy.

Simon cowers under the attack. Kirsty manages to pull him out of harm's way.

TED

Get that little shit out of my way, or I'll smash his head in.

MRS CAGE

Ted! Please, don't hurt him.

TED

Get off me.

He pushes her aside, and storms out of the room, slamming the door behind him.

KIRSTY

Are you alright, Simon?

He nods, more shaken than physically injured. He goes to his mother and looks at her face.

SIMON

Why do you let him do this, mum.

They are both crying.

MRS CAGE

It's the drink, love. He's alright when he's not drinking.

SIMON

If Dad were still alive...

Mrs Cage pushes him away, crying.

KIRSTY

Come on, Simon.

They leave the room as Mrs Cage slumps down in a chair, sobbing.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - HALL - CONTINUOUS

An angry Simon is restrained by Kirsty from going after Ted.

SIMON

Did you see what he did? And I just let him. Every time.

KIRSTY

Simon, you've got to calm down.

SIMON

Calm down? After that. I'm going to...

KIRSTY

What? What are you going to do? He'll kill you.

SIMON

Am I that weak? Is that what you think of me?

KIRSTY

It doesn't matter what I think of you. Let's go back upstairs.

He pulls away.

SIMON

No. No.

He storms out, slamming the door behind him.

END FLASHBACK

INT. CAGE'S APARTMENT - LOUNGE - NIGHT

Slow motion and silent throughout.

An expensively furnished apartment.

It is in disarray. There has been one hell of a fight taking place here.

LINA, 20s, attractive, well dressed, flies through the air and lands on the leather couch, before bouncing off and landing on the floor, amongst debris of the fight.

Blood runs from her her nose and mouth, and an eye is already puffing up from a blow.

Cage, roaring with anger, stands over her body and shouts at her, his face contorted with fury.

Then he suddenly stops, the hatred draining from him.

He looks at the prone, semi-conscious girl, at his blood stained hands, and then he lets out a howl of despair, throwing his hands in the air, and falling to his knees next to the girl's body.

INT. CAGE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Cage wakes with a start.

Cold sweat soaks his clothes, and he breathes heavily.

It is dark now, and apart from the white glow of the snow from outside, the room is unlit.

Cage looks at his hands.

Then he begins to smash up the room, the records, the player, the furniture, in a frenzy of anger.

When he finishes, he slides to the floor and begins to sob violently.

INT. CAGE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

Cage sits on the bed as Lina packs a suitcase. He looks ashamed.

Her battered face shows the signs of a lot of crying as well as the beating she has taken.

When she speaks it is with difficulty.

CAGE

I'm...

LINA

Don't say it. You've said it before.

CAGE

I know.

LINA

Over and over.

CAGE

I know. She shuts the case and prepares to leave.

LINA

Don't tell me you'll change. He shakes his head. She begins to move towards the door. She stops as he speaks.

CAGE

When I was younger... my mother had this boyfriend. He beat her. And me, if I tried to stop him.

LINA

Are you trying to excuse...

CAGE

No. You don't understand. I hated him. I hated what he did. What he was.

(beat)

But I have become exactly what I hated.

Pause.

LINA

Goodbye, Simon.

Cage nods.

Lina exits.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cage walks through the snow up to the house. A bit of the path has been cleared now. He rings the bell and after a pause, Frank opens it. He does not look pleased to see Cage.

FRANK

What do you want?

Cage does not answer, but pushes his way into the house.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Things look a lot tidier. Frank has been hard at work.

FRANK

Hey! I can call the Police, you know.

Cage picks up the phone which is on a stand by the door.

CAGE

Here, why don't you?

Cage rips the phone lead from the wall and hands the phone to Frank.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Now, why don't you close that door. There's a draft.

He goes into the living room. Putting the phone down, Frank follows him.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

George is sitting by the fire, wrapped up, and drinking cocoa. Cage looks pleased.

Frank stands in the doorway.

FRANK

I've been here all night, cleaning up.

CAGE

What you want? A round of applause? Get me a coffee.

Frank glares at him. And exits.

Cage sits down opposite George.

CAGE (CONT'D)

Hi Mr. Roberts. How are you today?

George looks at him vacantly.

CAGE (CONT'D)

I wanted to make sure you were alright.

George sips his cocoa.

Cage stands up, pats him on the shoulder and goes from the room.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Frank is making coffee when Cage enters. Cage takes it off him - black and hot.

CAGE
Thanks.

FRANK
Who are you?

CAGE
I told you. The ghost of ...

FRANK
Yes, I know ... But I mean ...
Really, who are you.

CAGE
I knew George's son. Many years ago.

Frank looks puzzled.

FRANK
He had a son? Well, where is he?
He should be looking after his Dad
...

CAGE
He's dead.

FRANK
Oh.

Pause.

CAGE
I killed him.

Frank starts with shock.

Cage puts down the coffee and exits.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Cage comes out. It is snowing again.

Frank appears in the doorway.

FRANK
If you come back here again ... I
will call the Police.

Cage turns and looks at him.

CAGE
Do I look like a man who cares?
(beat)
You just remember this, fatso, you
look after that man. Because, if
you don't ...

Beat.

Then he turns and walks away down the path. As he walks
away:

CAGE (CONT'D)
Good job with this path, by the
way.

Frank looks after him, terrified.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Cage is walking through the snow. The snow falls, but the
strong winds have died down.

He realises he is not alone. Ariel is walking alongside
him.

CAGE
You again.

ARIEL
Hello, Simon.

CAGE
I've decided you're a figment of
my imagination.

She laughs.

ARIEL
Perhaps this is all just in your
mind.

CAGE
Perhaps it is.

Beat.

ARIEL
And where are you going now?

Cage stops. He looks around him.

CAGE

I ...

ARIEL

Why did you come back, Simon?

Beat.

CAGE

I had things to do. People to see.

ARIEL

Mr Roberts?

CAGE

Yes.

ARIEL

To tell him about his son?

Cage nods.

CAGE

But he wouldn't understand. I don't know if he even remembers he has a son anymore.

ARIEL

Perhaps you can tell me, instead.

CAGE

I have a feeling you know already.

ARIEL

Maybe.

(beat)

Well, if you ever want to talk ...
I'm listening.

She turns away from him.

CAGE

Where are you going?

ARIEL

Oh, don't worry Simon, I'll be around.

CAGE

I know who you are, you know.

ARIEL

A figment of your imagination?

Cage shakes his head.

Ariel smiles. And is gone.

Cage begins to walk again.

INSERT - FLASH CUT - EXTREME CLOSE UP -

Danny being punched in the face, blood already flowing from his nose and mouth.

INT. HOSPITALITY BOX - DAY

A luxury hospitality box at a modern football ground - a game is in progress below on the pitch.

Present in the box are Cage, BRAND, another tough, a little older than Cage, and CARLISLE, 50s, their boss, who is very expensively dressed.

With him, looking bored, is an bimbo blond in her 20s, MIRANDA, barely dressed.

Carlisle is watching the game, swilling whiskey and puffing on a huge cigar.

CARLISLE

Come on! Passing the bloody ball!
Jesus. What do they pay these
poofs for? None of them want to
get dirty.

He turns to Cage without warning.

CARLISLE (CONT'D)

You're not happy, are you, son?

Cage starts, as this comes out of the blue.

CAGE

Excuse me, Mr Carlisle?

Carlisle walks over to Cage and looks at him.

CARLISLE

Your mind doesn't seem on the
game anymore?

CAGE

I never have been into football.

CARLISLE

I'm not talking about that bunch of nancy boys down there. As you know full well.

INSERT - FLASH CUT - EXTREME CLOSE UP -

Danny being punched in the face, blood already flowing from his nose and mouth.

He falls to the ground. It is wet bare earth. His head bounces off the ground.

END INSERT

Cage looks at Carlisle, all suntan and gold rings, flicking his cigar ash on the expensive carpet.

CAGE

Is there a problem, Mr Carlisle?

CARLISLE

I don't know. Is there?

Tense silence.

Carlisle turns away and goes to watch the game again.

CARLISLE (CONT'D)

That jumped up little shit Peterson is at it again. He just won't take notice of the warnings.

(beat)

So it's time, I think, he was dealt with once and for all. Teach people that they don't cross me.

CAGE

What do you want us to do, Mr Carlisle?

Carlisle doesn't turn round, his eyes never leaving the game.

CARLISLE

Take care of it. That's what I want you to do, Cage. Do I have to write it out in orange crayon for you?

BRAND

No, Mr Carlisle.

CARLISLE

Good.

Pause.

CARLISLE (CONT'D)

Oh for Christ's sake. What do we pay this goalkeeper for? My blind auntie could have got to that ball quicker.

It is obvious the conversation is at an end. Brand and Cage turn to leave, when Carlisle turns from the game.

CARLISLE (CONT'D)

Oh, by the way, lads ... Merry Christmas.

BRAND

Merry Christmas to you too, Mr Carlisle.

They exit.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Brand and Cage walk down the hallway outside the hospitality box.

BRAND

Christ's sake, Cage, what's wrong with you, asking him what he wanted us to do?

CAGE

I've got things on my mind.

Brand's mobile rings a totally inappropriate jaunty tune. He answers it, stops, as Cage walks on.

BRAND

Yes ... Yes ... I understand ...
No, no it won't be a problem.

He puts the phone away, and looks at Cage as he walks down the hallway with a cold look in his eyes.

EXT. CAGE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cage comes walking up to the house.

A Police Car stands outside the house, with two OFFICERS looking through the windows of the house.

CAGE
Can I help you, officers?

OFFICER #1
Is this your house, sir?

CAGE
Yes, as it happens, it is.

OFFICER #1
Have you any proof of that sir?

CAGE
Not on me. Why?

OFFICER #1
Some of your neighbours have reported seeing you coming and going.

CAGE
Is that a crime?

OFFICER #2
It is if it's not your property.

CAGE
I was born here, grew up here.
When my mother died, I kept it on.

OFFICER #1
Perhaps you'd like to come down the station with us, sir ... we can clear it up there.

CAGE
No.

OFFICER #1
Excuse me, sir?

CAGE
You heard.

The two Officers tense, preparing for a fight.

OFFICER #1
We don't want to make this a problem, do we, sir?

Cage grins.

CAGE
Then there's a simple answer. Get
in your noddy car and leave.

Officer #2 glares at Cage.

OFFICER #2
I think he's going to need
teaching a lesson.

Cage stares him down.

CAGE
And you think you're the one to
teach it me?

Suddenly, without warning, Cage flattens Officer #1.

Officer #2 stares at him open mouthed.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Well? Are you?

Officer #2, using his baton, comes at Cage.

Cage flattens him with ease.

He looks at the two unconscious Police Officers lying at
his feet.

CAGE (CONT'D)
Amateurs.

INT. PUB - DAY

There are a few people in this time when Cage enters. The
Landlord does not look pleased to see him.

Distantly the sounds of Police sirens are heard.

CAGE
Whiskey. Double.

He puts down money on the counter.

MIKE, beer bellied, similar age to Cage, comes over and
puts an empty beer glass on the counter.

MIKE
Another one, Fred.

He looks at Cage.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You look familiar, mate.

CAGE
Do I?

MIKE
Yeah. Do I know you?

Cage looks at him.

CAGE
Do you?

Mike drinks his beer, still looking at Cage.

MIKE
I definitely know you mate.

Cage sighs.

CAGE
We went to school together.

MIKE
Nah. That's not it.

CAGE
Yes it is. The name's Simon Cage.

Mike shakes his head.

MIKE
Nope. That don't ring any bells.

Cage looks at him coldly.

CAGE
You used to beat me up for my
pocket money. Every day.

Mike starts.

MIKE
Oh. Well. Well, kids, you know.

Cage puts a twenty pound note down on the counter.

CAGE
Maybe you'd like to try it now.

MIKE
What?

CAGE
There's the money. Why don't you
try and take it?

LANDLORD
Look, I don't want any trouble in
here.

MIKE
I'll buy you a drink, mate. Show
there's no hard feelings.

Cage finishes his whiskey. Indicates to the Landlord he
wants a refill.

CAGE
No thanks.

Mike turns to go, happy to get away.

CAGE (CONT'D)
But if you are so willing to spend
your money ...

Mike turns back.

MIKE
What?

CAGE
Hey, everybody ... The drinks are
on Mike here.

A cheer goes up.

MIKE
Hey, I never said ...

He looks at Cage. The words die in his throat.

The customers come up and start ordering as Mike looks at
what he has in his pockets.

The door opens and Ariel enters in a gust of snow and
ice. She is striking enough to draw the attention of
everyone in the bar, apart from Cage, who barely looks at
her.

ARIEL
Hello, Simon.

MIKE
Hey, good looking, can I buy you a
drink?

Ariel looks at him. His cheerful manner dies away. There is something even colder about her than Cage.

ARIEL
That will kill you, you know.

Mike gives a nervous laugh.

ARIEL (CONT'D)
In about two years. I can give you
the exact date, if you want.

Mike scuttles off.

CAGE
You must be a riot at parties.

ARIEL
I have moments. So, Simon ... You
seem to be wandering aimlessly. Is
there anything with which I can
help you.

Cage looks at her.

ARIEL (CONT'D)
You can't stay here forever. You
know that.

CAGE
How long have I got?

ARIEL
Do you know what day it is?

CAGE
I ... No. I have lost track.

The Landlord has been eavesdropping.

LANDLORD
It's the twenty-third.

CAGE
Already?

ARIEL
And we must go by Christmas Day,
Simon.

CAGE
That soon.

She nods.

ARIEL
Are you afraid, Simon?

CAGE
Of what?

ARIEL
The future? The past? Yourself?

She turns and heads for the door. She pauses at the door.

ARIEL (CONT'D)
I'm here for you, Simon.

Then she exits.

LANDLORD
She's some looker.

CAGE
Drop dead gorgeous.

Cage laughs madly at this and the Landlord looks at him as if he is nuts.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

PETERSON 50s, well dressed, walks along the street with a tough GOON at his side. It is snowing heavily, but the pavements are passable.

Standing across the street are Cage and Brand. They watch Peterson.

Nearby a BUSKER plays Greg Lake's "I Believe in Father Christmas" quite well, but people rush by without noticing as the cold bites.

BRAND
How do you want to handle this?

CAGE
What?

BRAND
Which one? Do you want Peterson or his bodyguard?

Cage shrugs.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Well ... OK then. I'll take the hired help. You take Cage.
(MORE)

BRAND (CONT'D)

We'll follow them to where they've
parked the car ... Do it there.

(beat)

OK?

CAGE

Yeah. Whatever.

Cage wanders over to the Busker and deposits a wad of
notes in the man's guitar case, which he has set open at
his feet for contributions, and which is almost empty.

BUSKER

Wow! Thanks. Merry Christmas.

Cage nods. Then turns and follows the scowling Brand as
they move off down the street.

EXT. CHURCHYARD - DAY

Cage stands by his parents grave.

Ariel walks up.

ARIEL

It all comes back to here, doesn't
it?

CAGE

Doesn't everything. Eventually.

Pause.

ARIEL

Where is she?

Cage nods.

CAGE

Over there somewhere.

He begins to walk across the graveyard.

As he does so, the VICAR appears, well wrapped up. He is
an old man, but vigorous in mind and body.

VICAR

Hello!

He comes over.

Ariel is gone.

CAGE

Vicar.

VICAR

Happy Christmas to you. Is there anything I can help you with?

CAGE

No. I'm ... just visiting ...

VICAR

Ah. Yes, I see. I am sorry to have troubled you.

CAGE

No trouble, Vicar.

Pause. As Cage is about to move away.

VICAR

You seem very familiar, do I know you at all?

CAGE

We met when you buried ... well, last time, when you buried my mother over there.

(beat)

My name is Simon Cage.

VICAR

Ah. That would be it.

CAGE

You visited my mother a lot in hospital, when she was dying.

(beat)

Which is more than I ever did.

VICAR

Yes. I remember. Poor woman. She spoke of you often.

Cage starts.

CAGE

Really?

VICAR

Yes. She ... perhaps this is not my place ...

CAGE

No. Tell me.

VICAR
She feared for you. She felt your
... way of life ...

CAGE
Yeah. I had those conversations
with her.

VICAR
She felt it had brutalised you.

Cage nods.

VICAR (CONT'D)
And ... that you would die
violently.

Pause.

CAGE
She was right.

VICAR
I am not sure ...

CAGE
I have something to tell you ...
there is something I need to tell
you.

(beat)
I wish I was a Catholic sometimes,
so I could confess my sins. I have
things I need to say. It's partly
why I came back. But the man I
wanted to tell ...

Cage begins to walk away. The Vicar follows. Cage talks,
but is now inaudible.

They come to a gravestone under a tree. They stop. The
Vicar looks at Cage in horror.

He turns and walks quickly away.

Ariel stands beside Cage.

ARIEL
That went down well.

Cage bends down and shifts some of the snow that obscures
the gravestone.

It reads:

Kirsty Jones

Taken from us too soon

1967-1988

Cage looks at the inscription.

CAGE
This is where it all ended. And
where it all started.

He breaks down in tears and collapses against the gravestone.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A car drives erratically and at speed, takes a turn too fast, and over turns, skidding across the road on it's roof until it hits a tree that stands at the side.

There is silence, shocking after the noise and fury we have just heard.

The driver's side door opens, and Danny falls out. He is a mess - covered in blood. He crawls away from the wreck.

Behind him comes a female cry of pain, and whimpers for help. It is Kirsty.

Danny crawls back. Looks into the car.

I/E. CAR - CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK)

Kirsty is on the passenger side, trapped upside down by her seat belt.

Danny reaches in and struggles to undo the belt, Kirsty trying to help. If it is possible, she looks in worse shape than him.

They manage to undo the belt, and she falls from her seat. She screams. She coughs up blood, and passes out.

Danny pulls her from the wreckage.

Nearby Cage and Ariel stand and watch.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

Cage walks through the snow to the door of the old man's house.

He rings the bell.

George answers it momentarily.

He looks at Cage as if for the first time.

GEORGE

Are you from the Council?

CAGE

No, Mr Roberts. It's me, Simon Cage. Remember, I have been here before.

George looks bemused and just walks away. Cage enters.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

They enter the room.

CAGE

On your own again, Mr Roberts?

GEORGE

What?

CAGE

Frank not here?

GEORGE

Frank?

CAGE

Your carer.

GEORGE

Oh. No. Gone to the shops.

He has sat down by the fire. Cage sits down opposite him.

CAGE

I need to speak with you, Mr Roberts.

GEORGE

He won't like you being here.

CAGE

Who?

GEORGE

Frank. He told me ...

CAGE

Yes?

GEORGE

I forget. But not to let you in.

Cage looks around. He is clearly in.

CAGE

I came back to tell you something.
I know you won't understand me ...

GEORGE

Who says I won't?

CAGE

But it is important to me to tell
you this. I don't have long left
now ... I'll be going tomorrow.
Christmas Day ...

GEORGE

Going where?

CAGE

Good question. God knows. But I
won't be coming back. That I am
sure of. So this is the last
chance for me to tell you ...

Pause.

CAGE (CONT'D)

To tell you what happened to
Danny.

GEORGE

Danny?

CAGE

Your son ...

GEORGE

Yes, I know who he is. I am not
stupid you know.

CAGE

Do you know who I am?

GEORGE
Of course. You were his best
friend, you are ... s ... s ...

CAGE
Simon.

GEORGE
Yes. Simon. I know.

CAGE
Mr Roberts. This is not easy. What
I have to say.

GEORGE
Well, spit it out. It's about
Danny, you say? What's he done
now?

CAGE
Not much. He hasn't done much of
anything for a long time.
(beat)
He's dead, Mr Roberts. He's been
dead for over twenty years.

George stares at him.

GEORGE
I thought. After the crash. After
that poor girl ...
(pause)
I thought he'd just gone away. I
always hoped he'd come back one
day ...

CAGE
I'm sorry.

GEORGE
When did he die?

Pause.

CAGE
Not long after Kirsty. After her
funeral.

George stares at him again. Even in his lucid state, this
is hard to understand.

GEORGE
After her funeral?

EXT. CHURCHYARD - DAY (FLASHBACK)

It is a miserable day. Heavy rain. Pitch black sky. It may as well be night.

The funeral is over. The Vicar, a much younger version of the man we saw earlier, walks with the grieving parents of the girl, holding an umbrella, as they head away from the grave.

Danny, who walks with crutches and has a severely bruised face and bandaged head, stands at a distance.

Simon stands by the grave. He is soaking

MRS JONES, Kirsty's mother, sees Danny and shouts at him.

MRS JONES

You bastard. You've killed my baby girl.

The Vicar and her husband hustle her away.

Everyone is gone now except the two young men.

Danny hobbles over to where Simon stands.

SIMON

Why did you come here?

DANNY

I wanted to pay my respects.
(beat)
I loved her you know.

Simon glares at him.

DANNY (CONT'D)

She chose me over you. I know that
...

SIMON

This isn't the time or the place.

Silence.

DANNY

I've been thrown out of the Police
you know. I might get sent down
for this. And ...

Simon turns to him. Fury rising in his face.

SIMON

And?

DANNY

I may never walk again. This is a tragedy, I know ... but she wasn't the only victim.

Simon grabs him by his jacket lapels.

SIMON

What?

Danny looks scared.

DANNY

Calm down, Si ...

Simon hits him. It is not a powerful punch.

DANNY (CONT'D)

OK! I deserved that.

Simon hits him again. This is more powerful. Danny looks surprised, but it is still not enough to hurt him much yet.

DANNY (CONT'D)

Look, Si ... I am going to let this go, because of what has ...

Simon hits him again. This time it hurts and he cries out in pain.

Simon drags him behind the nearby tree, punching him all the time. The floodgates have opened.

The attack is brutal. Even if Danny were in a state to defend himself, he would find it hard, and in his weakened state he cannot do much.

Simon batters him to a pulp, holding him upright all the time, his heart pounding and his breath rasping in his lungs as he exerts himself.

He drops Danny to the floor and stares down at him, the other man's bloody face looking up at him. He pants with the effort of the beating.

And then he stamps down on Danny's face.

And keep's stamping. His face is a picture of savagery.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

George sits, staring at Cage dumbly.

CAGE

I killed him, Mr Roberts. The day of the funeral. I beat him to death because of what he had done.

Pause.

GEORGE

My boy.

CAGE

He didn't care that he'd killed Kirsty. And I couldn't let him live with her having died because of him.

(beat)

I'm sorry.

GEORGE

Where ... where is he?

CAGE

I put the body in the grave with Kirsty's body. Covered it up and left the grave diggers to fill it in.

Pause.

CAGE (CONT'D)

I've told the Vicar. He'll no doubt get the Police to dig it up again. You can bury him properly now.

GEORGE

My boy.

Cage turns to find Frank standing in the doorway, shopping bags in hand.

He drops the bags.

CAGE

How long have you been there?

FRANK

Long enough.

Cage stands up.

FRANK (CONT'D)
I'm calling the Police.

He gets a cellphone out.

CAGE
Good idea.

GEORGE
He was a bastard.

CAGE
What?

GEORGE
He was a bastard. Danny. No good.
Never was. A bully, a cheat.

Pause.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
But he was my boy.

He looks at Cage with tears in his eyes.

CAGE
I'm sorry.

He heads towards the door. Frank jumps out of the way and scuttles off, talking to the Police on the phone (AD LIB).

Cage stops in the doorway.

CAGE (CONT'D)
He wasn't the only person to die
that day. I killed him. But what I
did killed me.
(beat)
I just took twenty years to die.

INT. MULTISTORY CARPARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cage and Brand are walking through the carpark, on the lookout. The weather is getting worse, and strong winds blow snow through the open sides of the structure.

CAGE
Do you remember that Pub Landlord?

BRAND
Ssh. What? What landlord?

CAGE

When I'd just started working for Carlisle. We went to see this Landlord. He did want to pay up.

Brand looks at him.

BRAND

What the fuck are you talking about?

CAGE

He had a pretty little girl.

Brand rubs his eyes.

BRAND

Look. We've got a job to do and it's about time you pulled yourself together and got your mind focused on what is happening here and now.

(beat)

Or fuck off home.

CAGE

OK. OK.

BRAND

You want to get yourself killed, fine ... but I am not dying because of you. Got it.

Cage nods.

BRAND (CONT'D)

Right. I'm going to work my way round the back and I'll deal with his gorilla. You deal with Peterson.

Cage nods. Brand heads off. Cage keeps walking.

INT. PUB #2 - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Simon and JAMES BRAND enter the pub. It is a small but busy city pub. They both wear suits and ties, overcoats. They are twenty years younger.

Simon looks much the same as before - but there is now a hardness about him. His transformation is underway.

The YOUNG LANDLORD is serving. He looks at the newcomers with distaste.

YOUNG LANDLORD
Can I help you Gentlemen?

JAMES is very much the leader here.

JAMES
Maybe. Where can we talk?

YOUNG LANDLORD
Anything you have to say, you can say here.

James glares at him. Then turns to the pub patrons.

JAMES
Right, you lot. Out. Time's been called.

There is a pause. Then everyone rushes for the door.

YOUNG LANDLORD
I'm calling the Police.

Behind him, the YOUNG BARMAID looks terrified.

JAMES
Listen to me, you little shit. You touch a phone, and that little bitch behind you won't be so pretty any more.

She starts crying.

YOUNG LANDLORD
Leave her alone.

James looks at him.

JAMES
Bitch, get out.

She runs for it.

Cage locks the doors.

YOUNG LANDLORD
I'm not paying. I pay rates for the cops, I'm not paying money for a bunch of thugs too.

James hits him.

James and Cage move behind the counter and drag the Young Landlord kicking and shouting into the back of the pub.

EXT. CHURCHYARD - NIGHT

Kirsty's grave has been exhumed, and Police tape has been tied around it.

The church clock stands at a few minutes before twelve.

It is snowing again.

Cage sits on a gravestone next to his parents grave, smoking a cigarette.

Ariel appears out of the shadows.

ARIEL

All done?

CAGE

I have told Mr Roberts about Danny. He understood, I think. But he probably forgot it by time I left his house.

ARIEL

He'll remember it again. And forget it again. And remember it again. Over and over, the shock of finding out what happened to his son.

CAGE

Maybe I shouldn't have told him then?

ARIEL

We are all responsible for our own actions, Simon. You did what you did, twenty years ago, and you did what you did today.

CAGE

But did I do the right thing?

ARIEL

Are you asking me?

CAGE

I thought you might know.

She smiles. She has a beautiful smile.

ARIEL
Do you think you did the right
thing? For the right reasons?

CAGE
Yes.

ARIEL
Then you have your answer.

The clock begins to chime midnight. Ariel looks up.

CAGE
Time's up.

ARIEL
Yes.

CAGE
What happens now?

ARIEL
We have to go.

CAGE
Yes. But where?

Ariel touches his face tenderly.

ARIEL
Don't worry. The only hell is the
one you make for yourselves on
earth.

(beat)
God is love. God is forgiveness.

Cage throws away his cigarette.

CAGE
You know I don't believe in God,
don't you.

Ariel smiles.

ARIEL
It's alright. He believes in you.

They walk away into the falling snow and the night.

INT. MULTISTORY CARPARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cage turns a corner, and sees Peterson and his Goon
standing by a BMW.

Brand appears behind them and walks carefully down towards the car.

When he is close, he pulls a gun, and takes the Goon by surprise, knocking him unconscious.

Peterson goes for a gun, but is disarmed by Brand. He puts his hands up.

PETERSON

Look - I can pay you a lot of money. All you have to do is turn round and walk away. I can make you rich.

BRAND

It's not me who needs convincing.

Peterson turns to find Cage behind him, gun in hand.

PETERSON

Oh, shit.

CAGE

On your knees.

Peterson gets on his knees.

PETERSON

Please. Don't.

Cage aims his gun at Peterson's head.

BRAND

Well, come on.

Cage looks at him. Then at Peterson.

INT. PUB #2 - BASEMENT - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The Young Landlord has been tied to a chair in the pub's basement.

James is working him over.

The door to the pub is open. A movement at it attracts Simon's attention. He turns to find a LITTLE GIRL, 5 or 6, standing there, holding a doll, looking at what is happening with incomprehension.

The Young Landlord sees her too.

YOUNG LANDLORD
Please. My daughter.

James turns and see her. He does not blink.

JAMES
Simon?

Simon turns to him. James holds out a knuckle duster.

JAMES (CONT'D)
About time you were blooded.

Simon looks up at the Little Girl, who is now crying, terrified at what is happening.

Then he turns and begins to hit the Young Landlord.

INT. MULTISTORY CARPARK - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Cage snaps back to find Peterson kneeling before him.

BRAND
Do it!

CAGE
No.

Brand looks at him shocked.

CAGE (CONT'D)
(to Peterson)
Get out of here. It's your lucky day.

Peterson can't believe it. He runs off. But he does not get far before a shot rings out.

He stumbles and falls dead. A bullet in his back.

Cage swings round to Brand, who holds his still smoking gun.

CAGE (CONT'D)
You shot him in the back.

Brand looks surprised.

BRAND
Who are you, John Wayne? We had our orders.

Cage puts his gun away.

CAGE
I've had enough of this.

He begins to walk away.

BRAND
Simon.

He stops. He turns. Brand still has his gun in his hand.

BRAND (CONT'D)
I have my orders.

He shoots Cage.

Cage sprawls on the cold wet concrete, a bright red stain spreading on his shirt.

Brand comes and stands above him.

BRAND (CONT'D)
Sorry.

He walks away. As he passes Peterson, he puts another bullet in him to make sure.

Cage stares up at the roof above him.

He coughs, and this turns into a stuttering laugh. Blood runs from his mouth.

Ariel appears nearby and walks to where Cage lies.

His lifeless eyes stare up at her.

EXT. CHURCHYARD - NIGHT

The church clock chimes midnight. Snow falls.

It is Christmas Day.

The churchyard is empty.

Somewhere distantly, a Christmas Carol can be heard.

RUN END CREDITS