Mirror's Image

Episode I:

New School, New Start, Good Luck With That

by

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FADE IN ON:

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - FOYER - MORNING

Angle on the front door seen from our POV through the oak balusters on the second level of this modest two story colonial.

A 40-something African American couple enters from the kitchen.

MR. HAROLD LEIGHTON is retired military honorably discharged due to a bullet wound to the leg. He walks with a cane, but the injury is mostly psychosomatic.

MRS. AUNJANUE LEIGHTON was once a community college professor.

The couple moves through the foyer as if the other one doesn't exist. Mr. Leighton collects his coats, keys, and bags. He carries a thermos and a bagged lunch.

Mrs. Leighton is already dressed and ready to go.

A GIRL descends the stairs to join Mr. Leighton in the foyer. Her name is SOPHIA LEIGHTON, 7, smart as a whip. She's Walter Leighton's little sister.

Mr. Leighton hands Sophia the bagged lunch and a coat.

MR. LEIGHTON (calling out)
Walter, we're leaving, see you at dinner.

Sophia exits the house.

Mrs. Leighton looks up to the second level at us, smiles. Then she's gone. Ghostlike. Mr. Leighton closes the door behind him.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - BEDROOM -

A teenage boy's room. Full of posters and electronics.

Deeper into the room there is a door that leads into a shared bathroom. As the steam from a running shower dissipates through the a-jarred door it reveals a mirror.

The mirror is fogged up, but we see a bit of movement in it.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOME -

A suspicious BLACK MERCEDES BENZ SL550 with tinted windows parked on the street goes unnoticed.

Sophia breaks away from Mr. Leighton and sprints down to a WHITE MERCEDES BENZ S600. She opens the front side passenger and hops in, leaves the door open.

MR. LEIGHTON

Nope, in the back.

Sophia crawls through the two seats to the back, buckles up.

Mrs. Leighton hops into the front passenger seat before Mr. Leighton closes the door.

Mr. Leighton heads down to the mailbox, drops a letter in the mailbox and raises the flag. He hops behind the wheel of the White Mercedes Benz S600.

The Sedan pulls out of the driveway, past the Mercedes SL550.

Three MEN IN BLACK step out of the SL550 and pull masks on before we see their faces. MIB 1 puts the mailbox flag down.

The three men head up to the front door of the Leighton home...

MIB 2 pulls a small case from his pocket and opens it.

The case contains a small, neat collection of tools.

MIB 2 picks the lock. MIB 1 enters, MIB 3 enters next. MIB 2 enters, closing the door behind him.

Unseen, an OLD ASIAN MAN watches from his large sun room window. He drinks from his favorite coffee mug.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME -

The Men pull their guns, swing them, clearing rooms, talking with eyes and hand signals.

The 3 MIB head upstairs, putting suppressors on their INFRA RED GLOCK 22's.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - BEDROOM -

A TEENAGE BOY dabs cologne on, pulls his shirt on, more cologne.

This is WALTER <u>LEIGHT</u>ON, 16, black. Average. Average height, average looking, and a bit on the skinny side.

Walter grabs his Ipod from his dock/clock and his headphones, next to a picture of Mrs. Leighton and his biological father.

Walter grabs his backpack from his desk chair and opens his door.

The 3 MIB stand in the doorway with guns trained on Walter. Two red dots on his chest. A third climbs up to his forehead.

Walter slams the door closed and dives back against the wall, barely escaping three bullets center mass of a hot girl on the poster on the back of Walter's door.

The bedroom door creeps open. Walter sees a Glock 22 peering into the room from behind the door.

Walter kicks the door closed, knocking the 3 MIB backwards. MIB 2's gun falls to the floor. MIB 3's gun falls through the balusters to the first level.

Walter bursts out the door, flings his backpack at MIB 1. His gun falls to the ground.

Walter dives at MIB 2 and MIB 3, tumbling down the stairs to the first level.

Walter picks himself up, crawls. He reaches for MIB 3'S gun.

MIB 1 leaps the second level bannister, kicks the gun away, kicks Walter. Walter blocks a second attempt, pushes MIB 1 away. He rises, spins, blocks and counters.

The three men attack at the same time. MIB 3 always a kick first.

The fight spills into the living room. MIB 3 reaches around Walter, grabs his neck, choking him out.

Through the living room window we have always seen a small group of high school kids, on the corner, waiting for the bus, but now we notice them. As--

A school bus enters frame, picks up the kids, continues on...

Walter kicks MIB 2 into MIB 1. He drops to his knees, head butting MIB 3 under the chin. Walter scrambles into the foyer, he picks up MIB 3's gun, spins and aims.

The 3 MIB enter the foyer.

WALTER

Enough.

He wipes the blood from his nose on his new shirt.

WALTER (cont.)

I got blood on my shirt now. Do you know how hard it is to get blood out?

He stands, straightens up his clothes, grabs his backpack and backs towards the front door. The MIB inch towards him...

WALTER (cont.)

Stay.

He opens the door and is gone. MIB 1 and MIB 2 head upstairs to retrieve their guns.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOUSE -

Walter slings his backpack over his shoulder.

The Asian man is still in the window, still sipping his coffee.

At the end of the street the bus has stopped, lights flashing. The last kid hops on. The bus continues on, around the corner...

Walter sprints off down the street. He cuts through backyards, free running...

Walter bursts out of a backyard, onto a new sidewalk. He still has MIB 1's gun out, low, concealed.

The school bus has just stopped. Walter slows to a walk, controls his breathing. He takes the gun apart, discards pieces into a nearby garbage can. Safe. Then...

The unmistakable sound of horsepower nearing.

The SL550 turns hard onto this street, hurtling on in a serious pursuit.

Walter sprints off down the street again.

The SL550 picks up speed, almost to Walter.

Walter hops on the bus.

The SL550 screeches to a halt a few yards behind the bus.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -

WALTER

Morning.

BUS DRIVER

Good morning.

Walter moves towards the back of the bus.

A few rows back a TEENAGE GIRL sits alone. Walter searches for a different seat, but there are none. Walter moves towards the Teenage Girl. She moves her bag from the seat next to her.

Walter stares out the emergency exit window, removes his backpack. He sees...

The SL550 waiting behind the bus.

Walter gives the SL550 the finger.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD -

The passenger side door opens. MIB 1 hops out, pulls his gun, aims and empties the clip.

The bullets crash through the emergency window.

Screams, panic. And then--

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Walter opens his eyes.

WALTER (V.O.)

And that's the dream.

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

Incredible. You didn't have to write that down?

WALTER (V.O.)

No, was I suppose to?

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

No. It's just that people don't usually remember more than ten percent of a dream after being awake for more than ten minutes.

Let alone three days.

On Tv, an action movie. A fight scene.

Walter hops out of bed.

WALTER (V.O.)

Do you think that's a super power, remembering dreams?

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

I think you have a real fascination with super heroes and their powers.

WALTER (V.O.)

I do.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - SHARED BATHROOM - SHOWER -

Walter stands under the shower head, the water over his face.

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

Why is that?

WALTER (V.O.)

Because superheroes are special. They're not ordinary.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - SHARED BATHROOM -

From outside the shower. The steam turns Walter's naked body into a silhouette.

INT. DR. NEWIRTH'S OFFICE - DAY

We are now in the office of renowned psychiatrist DR. CYNTHIA F. NEWIRTH. Surrounded by a plethora of important books and distinguished plaques.

Walter sits in a well worn patient's chair across from...

Dr. Newirth in her leather chair in front of her handcrafted oak desk. She leafs through her notebook and takes notes.

DR. NEWIRTH
There are plenty of ordinary people who are
special and have done
extraordinary things.

WALTER

But they can't fly. They don't have spider senses, or claws coming out of their fists.

DR. NEWIRTH
You're right, but you
can't over look that
fact that where there
are superheroes. There
are super villains.

WALTER

Those already exist.

DR. NEWIRTH

And so do heroes.

WALTER

But if they had super powers they could save a lot more of the world, and not die. DR. NEWIRTH That would be nice.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Walter dabs cologne on, pulls his shirt, dabs more cologne.

WALTER (V.O.)

(continuing)

If I had those types of powers do you think I would hero or villain?

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.) What do you think?2

WALTER (V.O.)

I would like to think I would be a hero, but I have the classic villain backstory. Lost my family, nobody understands me, I'm angry.

INT. DR. NEWIRTH'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. NEWIRTH
That's also the classic
superhero story. The
trick is how hey dealt
with it that made them
hero or villain.

Walter stares at Dr. Newirth as she writes notes in her notepad.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING - CONTINUED

Walter exits his room...

Mr. Leighton moves through the foyer collecting his coat, keys, bag. He carries the same thermos and bagged lunch.

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

I understand you're starting back at school next week.

Sophia brushes by Walter. She sticks her tongue out on her way down the stairs.

Mr. Leighton hands Sophia the bagged lunch and a coat.

WALTER (V.O.)

It's the first day. I kind of have to.

Mr. Leighton waves to Walter. Sophia exit... Mr. Leighton exits, closes the door behind him.

Walter heads downstairs... moves through the foyer, grabs his jacket and his keys...

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

This is good. There is therapeutic value in returning to a familiar routine. This is a positive step.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOME - MORNING

Walter exits his house, slings his backpack over his shoulders, locks the door.

The White Mercedes Benz S600 heads down the street.

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

(continuing)

But understand it will be difficult. The losses you've suffered are enormous and something most people you encounter won't be able to understand completely.

WALTER (V.O.)

They don't have to.

The Old Asian Man in Walter's dream is staring out of his window, with his favorite coffee mug. This time for real.

WALTER (V.O.)

(continuing)
They added another
school to the district
this year. So some
people had to transfer
and some didn't. As
of next week I am a

The school bus has its blinkers on, emergency stop sign out. Walter runs across the street--

-- and is nearly hit by a familiar Black Mercedes Benz SL550 with tinted windows, backing out of the Sang's driveway.

Two KIDS coming from different directions race towards the bus.

Walter hops on the bus. The other Kids hop on.

Charger.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)
But you won't be the only one who will have
transferred to that particular school from
your old one...

The doors close.

Walter moves down the aisle. No seats. Except one--

-- A few rows back, next to the same TEENAGE GIRL in his dream.

She is JESSICA SANG, 16, pretty, smart, and affable.

DR. NEWIRTH (V.O.)

(continuing)

And there will come a point when you will have to face the things you're trying so hard to avoid in order to move forward.

Walter turns back, but the last two seats in the front have just been taken.

WALTER (V.O.)

Not today.

The sounds of the bus return to our ears. An eclectic mixture of sounds you find on a high school bus.

BUS DRIVER

Find a seat.

Walter turns back. He moves towards Jessica.

Jessica moves her books from the seat next to her.

Walter pulls his backpack from his shoulders and takes a seat.

The bus pulls off...

INT. SCHOOL BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Walter pulls his Ipod and headphones from his pocket. He scrolls through his song catalog.

JESSICA

Excuse me.

Walter ignores her. She taps him on the shoulder.

WALTER

How may I help you?

JESSICA

Do I know you?

WALTER

No.

JESSICA

I know you.

WALTER

I just have one of those faces.

JESSICA

No, I know you. I know, I know you. I just don't-- did you go to Courtland?

WALTER

Yes.

JESSICA

And did we have any classes together?

WALTER

Yes.

JESSICA

So I do know you, but I don't-- I'm usually so good with faces, especially if we had classes together, but I can't remember.

WALTER

That sounds about right. We didn't run in the same circles.

JESSICA

Well, I'm Jessica.

She extends her hand. Walter doesn't take it.

WALTER

I know who you are. I told you we had classes together.

JESSICA

Maybe we'll have classes together again this year.

Walter, annoyed, tries to put his headphones in his ears--

JESSICA (cont.)

Guess you didn't take it well when you found out you had to transfer.

Jessica smiles. Walter continues scrolling through his Ipod. ca

JESSICA (cont.)

JK. I didn't either.
All my friends are back
at Courtland, and I
don't know how many of
them are transferring
too.

WALTER

Do people tell you that you talk a lot?

JESSICA

They do, but this is how I meet people. You can't meet people if you don't talk to people, and I think I need to meet new people, better people. People like you.

WALTER

Like me? From this conversation you've figured out that I'm better people.

JESSICA

Yes.

WALTER

So maybe you can figure out some other things from this conversation.

JESSICA

Like?

I don't want to talk to you.

Things.

Jessica regards him.

JESSICA

You said you went to Courtland. Did my friends-- did we do anything...

WALTER

To me. Yes, but...

The bus stops. Kids rise, step off the bus...

WALTER (cont.)

New school, new start. Good luck with that.

He puts his headphones back on his ears, rises.

Jessica rises, steps into the aisle, a few people back.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - CAMPUS -

The school is teeming with life for the first time in months.

Students are everywhere.

A cacophony of music coming from the student parking lot. Faculty members head inside, students linger.

Walter steps off the bus, bag slung over his shoulders, music in his ears. He heads in one direction...

Jessica steps from the bus, heads in the opposite direction.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - TENTH GRADE HALLWAY - DAY

Walter moves through the crowded hallway. His class schedule visible underneath the plastic cover of his binder.

VOICE

Walter. Walt...

A LATIN AMERICAN KID follows Walter down the hall.

His name is ARTURO "ARTIE" BOLTARES, 15, homosexual, hiding it.

Walter arrives at his locker... opens it. He pulls a small bag labeled: GYM from his backpack and tosses it into his locker.

Artie appears at Walter's side.

WALTER

Hey.

Artie reaches in for a two-step handshake/hug.

A POV: Walter pushes his hand aside and gives him a real hug.

The hug is platonic to Walter, but...

Over the years Artie has developed a crush on Walter and not seeing him in months has brought those feelings to the surface.

WALTER (cont.)

Thank you for being the person I've seen that I'm glad to see.

Artie steps away from the hug before Walter notices.

ARTIE

You're welcome.

WALTER

How have you been?

ARTIE

(shrugs)

You know.

WALTER

Yeah.

ARTIE

You?

WALTER

Same.

[`]Artie regards him, almost transfixed.

ARTIE

You look different.

WALTER

Is that good or bad?

ARTIE

I liked the braids.

WALTER

So it's a bad thing?

ARTIE

No, it's a different thing. I too have gotten more fly over the summer.

WALTER

I see. I would lose the excess though. You'll get laughed at or robbed.

ARTIE

It's not real.

WALTER

You should lose it.

Artie obviously respects Walter. He removes the excess jewelry from his neck and shoves them in his pocket.

Walter gives him a thumbs up.

The morning bell rings.

Everyone knows the first bell is the five minute warning bell. A few students, mainly freshmen, hurry off.

ARTIE

I gotta get to class. I will see you around?

WALTER

Definitely.

Tell mama B and Mr. Boltares. I said hello.

ARTIE

I um-- will, okay. We miss you at the house.

Walter grabs Artie at the collar.

WALTER (cont.)

It's good to see you.

Artie smiles and hurries off, towards the ninth grade hall...

We glimpse FRIENDS chatting at the opposite lockers.

Walter goes back into his locker.

In the background we can see two boys approaching...

One white, one black. The White Kid grabs a class schedule from the Black Kid's hand--

--then grabs Walter's schedule as he passes. This is DYLAN PAU-LUS, 16, skater type. The black kid is...

...KAMDEN 'BIG SEXY' BARCLAVE, 16, chubby. The good looking one. Kamden pushes Walter off balance. It's playful.

Walter quietly reacts, but says nothing. He never says anything.

DYLAN

Look who cleans up.

KAMDEN

Almost didn't recognize you, except the shape of your head is unmistakably funny looking.

Walter and Dylan go through a two step handshake.

KAMDEN (cont.)

You look like you might be trying to get a girl this year.

He and Walter goes through the same two step handshake.

WALTER

I don't need to. Where it might look like I'm a virgin and I haven't had a girlfriend in a while. I'm just hiding the fact that I've been sleeping with your aunt Trinice since I was ten. When I turn eighteen I might become your uncle.

KAMDEN

You're not sexy enough to be in my family.

DYLAN

I can't believe you cut your hair.

KAMDEN

He should've wiped the dirt off your face too.

WALTER

You wish you could grow facial hair.

KAMDEN

My hair is on my balls where it should be.

Dylan has been going over the three class schedules in his hand. Kamden is over his shoulder.

WALTER

TMI.

DYLAN

Walt, we got second lunch together.

KAMDEN

That's my schedule. You see the name Big Sexy at the top of it.

DYLAN

I don't know who that is.

KAMDEN

You know exactly who this is.

DYLAN

Since this is your schedule. <u>We</u>... (me and you)

Have gym together.

Kamden takes his schedule back. Dylan hands Walter <u>his</u> class schedule.

KAMDEN

No, we don't have gym. I don't take gym. I took it last year.

DYLAN

You take it in ninth and tenth grade.

KAMDEN

I'm gonna have to change that. I hate gym.

WALTER

Who hates gym?

KAMDEN

I do.

Why is that?

KAMDEN

Because I'm fat.

DYLAN

Well, you don't graduate without gym so--

-- The final bell rings.

Students have been clearing the halls since the warning bell...

The remaining students scramble to get to class. Dylan and Kamden head their own ways.

KAMDEN (O.C.)

Walt, see you at lunch.

Walter closes his locker and heads to class.

Late.

INT. CLASSROOM - GEOMETRY - DAY

The GEOMETRY TEACHER sits behind her cluttered but somehow organized desk, writing something down.

Her TEACHER'S ASSISTANT (T.A.) stands at the center of class. He takes role from the Geometry Teacher's grade book.

The students answer with a "here" or "present" response.

T.A.

... Hidinger. James.

Leighton.

(silence)

Walter Leighton.

Walter arrives in the classroom, breathing heavily.

WALTER

Here.

The Geometry Teacher looks up from her desk.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

Welcome to geometry class Mr. Leighton. Is there a reason you're late?

WALTER

Sorry, I couldn't find the classroom.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

You seem to be the only one.

The other students giggle.

GEOMETRY TEACHER (cont.)

Have a seat.

Walter notices an open desk in the back of the classroom--

-- Next to Jessica.

Walter moves through the aisle and takes a seat. He pulls a notebook and an unopened bag of pens from his bag.

The T.A. continues the role call...

JESSICA

Look, I'm sorry if me and my friends picked with you back at Courtland. We tend--

WALTER

You didn't "pick" with me, and just because we didn't hang together doesn't mean you were the only cool kids on the block.

JESSICA

I didn't say we were. What is your problem with me?

Why do you feel the need to meet better people?

JESSICA

That's personal.

WALTER

So is mine.

The Geometry Teacher hears chatter. She looks up from her work.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

You have something to share with the class Mr. Leighton?

WALTER

No.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

And your friend?

JESSICA

No ma'am.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

I assume this is a new school to you correct.

WALTER

Yes.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

And because of that I gave you a pass for being tardy to my class, even though you were probably hanging out until the last minute. But no talking is not a new concept. It applies to every classroom across A-merica.

GEOMETRY TEACHER (cont'd)

Including the ones at your old school, and you're talking in mine. Get out of my classroom and go stand in the hall, both of you.

Walter rises... Jessica rises. They head for the door...

GEOMETRY TEACHER (cont.)

(to T.A.)

Continue.

The T.A. continues to take role.

INT. HALLWAY - OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM -

Walter and Jessica exit the classroom. They stand on either side of the door, staring out.

The classroom door remains open.

Walter closes his eyes. He can feel Jessica staring at him, he opens them.

WALTER (cont.)

What?

JESSICA

I want to know what your problem is.

WALTER

You just got me kicked out of class

JESSICA

Before that. Since you saw me you've been rude. Like I killed your cat or something. What is your deal--

We have been watching the T.A. approach the doorway, grade book in hand. He pokes his head out the door.

T.A.

(to Jessica)
Jessica Sang?

JESSICA

Yes.

The T.A. marks her name off the grade book, and turns back. He takes a seat in the chair, next to the Geometry Teacher's desk.

We see the Geometry Teacher stand, she introduces her T.A. and herself before she begins the lesson.

WALTER

I gave you my answer.

JESSICA

I told you it was personal.

WALTER

And I gave you my answer. I can tell a few things about people too. Like I know you're gonna tell me what's so personal anyway, so you might as well get it over with.

JESSICA

Why is that?

WALTER

Because I know your type. You're the type that everyone has to like, and when someone doesn't, you go out of your way to find out why, so you can go out of your way to try and fix it.

And if you want to know what my deal is.
(shrugs)

In the background the Geometry Teacher takes a seat behind her desk. The T.A. is in a chair at her side.

JESSICA

Last year a group of us went to a college party for my boyfriend's brother. It was a big celebration for him because he decided to stay in state and play football. We got wast-None of us were okay to drive home, but we thought we were, and we did. We made it all the way from up north on 95 to a stop light near my grandfather's neighborhood. thought we had the green light when-- I took it. I ran the light, hit a car, and killed a family. Are you happy now?

WALTER

Why would I be happy that you killed a family?

JESSICA

(barely audible)
You're a jerk.

She looks forward... then glances back over at Walter.

WALTER

Oh, you're waiting for me to-- we had just gotten our report cards.

I get A's and B's so that's not a story, but Nate got one D, and if you know Nate getting only one D on his report card is a big deal. My mom was so proud of him. When she got home from work she took us out to dinner and we got to see the midnight showing of-- I can't remember what we saw. I remember on the way home my mom saying, "put your seatbelt on, put your seatbelt on, Walter put your seatbelt on." I didn't put my seatbelt on. What was the name of the movie. We get outside of my neighborhood and a car runs a red light and crashes into us.

Jessica reacts. His family was the family killed.

WALTER (cont.)

I go flying through the window and hit the street. I broke my collarbone, leg, and got a concussion. My mom died instantly. Nate died a week later from complications, so not a cat.

Jessica regards at Walter. I'm sorry.

WALTER (cont.)

And that's not the worst part of it.

I lost my father to drugs, so I know death happens. What pisses me off is my stepfather signing a contract waiver that gets me a little money now and a lot of money when I turn eighteen, for any physical and emotional damage, but prevents me from telling anybody who was responsible for killing my mom and best friend, or I face jail time. Ain't that a bitch. You'll probably pass Nate's little brother in these halls so many times and he won't even know who you are, because everybody settled, and nobody went to court. All so your boyfriend's brother can keep being a football star.

We see the Geometry Teacher stand and approach the doorway...

WALTER

And what else pisses me off is that I know you weren't driving the car that crashed into us. I was concussed, but I know what I saw--

-- The Geometry Teacher pokes her head into the hallway.

Walter and Jessica straighten up, eyes front. Never talking.

The Geometry Teacher regards them.

GEOMETRY TEACHER

You can come in now.

Jessica enters the classroom... Walter walks in behind her--

GEOMETRY TEACHER (cont.) Not you, when the bell rings you can come in

and get your things. We'll try again tomor-row.

She turns back and enters the classroom.

Walter backs up against the wall.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM -

Jessica heads to her seat. She turns and glances out the door.

Her POV: Walter's arm is visible in the doorway.

Jessica turns back and takes a seat at her desk.

We can hear The Geometry Teacher getting back into her lesson.

Jessica pulls her cell phone from her pocket, puts it on silent. She goes through her name catalog, finds the name RYAN MILNER.

Her texts will be superimposed near her phone as she texts, mistakes and all.

Superimposition: Texts:

JESSICA: "Hey, do u know who Walter is? Walter Leighton?"

RYAN MILNER (EX): "No. Why? Should I?"

JESSICA: "Yes, his family died n the crash last year.

He survived."

RYAN MILNER: "Don't worry about it. I will handle it."

JESSICA: "Don't handle anything. Please don't."

Jessica takes a look outside the door.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - OUTSIDE OF CLASSROOM -

Walter, alone, stares out into the middle distance.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MEN'S BATHROOM - HANDICAP STALL - DAY

Walter steps into the handicap stall. He locks the stall and takes a seat on the toilet, implodes.

We hear the bathroom door swing open...

Two young men enter the bathroom. We've seen them before.

The first guy is $\underline{M}AC$ NEIL $\underline{R}OBERT$ GLAUS (Pronounced Glass), 17, white, sports karate student and a letterman in baseball.

The next guy in is his best friend BRIGHTON H. AND ERS.

MAC NEIL

...I got Hirsch and Toms. And I got stuck with Stuckey again for American History.

Walter puts his feet up on the toilet, covers his mouth.

BRIGHTON

Again? What did you flunk?

MAC NEIL

Never. She teaches tenth and eleventh grade history.

BRIGHTON

I thought somebody told me she died over the summer?

MAC NEIL

I heard the same thing, but I didn't believe it, because evil never dies.

They share a laugh...

-- Walter slips, one foot falls into the toilet, shoe soaked.

Mac Neil hears this. He doesn't know what, but he hears it.

He walks down the line of stalls, peaks underneath each one. Brighton regards him.

BRIGHTON

What's happening? What are we doing?

He shushes Brighton.

MAC NEIL

Washing our hands.

Brighton turns to the sinks. He turns two faucets on.

Walter braces himself against the wall of the stalls.

Mac Neil peeks underneath the handicap stall... he watches as a few sporadic drops of water hit the tile.

Walter peers through the crack of the stall door.

His POV: Mac Neil and Brighton are washing their hands. They grab paper towels on the way to the exit.

BRIGHTON (V.O.)

What are we doing after school...

Walter steps down from the toilet. He exits the stall--

-- Mac Neil and Brighton stand near the dryer. Mac Neil moves over to the sink, washes his hands again. He stares at Walter through the mirror.

MAC NEIL

You okay?

WALTER

Yes.

Mac Neil and Brighton share a moment in the mirror. Walter glances down at Walter's shoes.

MAC NEIL

Your shoe is all wet. Are you sure you're okay?

I'm fine.

MAC NEIL

Good. I thought maybe something happened between you and your boyfriend...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - TENTH GRADE HALLWAY - FLASHBACK

Mac Neil stands near his locker, talking with Brighton and two other friends $DONEVAN\ T.\ HUGGINS$ and sister $DAWN\ T.\ HUGGINS$.

Mac Neil casually glances up...

His POV: Artie arrives at Walter's locker. He extends his hand for the two step handshake. Walter pushes his hand away and gives him a hug.

Mac Neil sees this and reacts.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Walter washes his hands. He turns the water off, moves around Mac Neil. Mac Neil steps in front of him, grabs a paper towel, hands it to Walter, with a smile.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

I know what it's like to lose your first love.
Not a guy obviously, but I'm guessing it hurts just the same. Maybe not the <u>same</u>.

Brighton laughs.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

But the concept is the same.

Walter quickly moves around Mac Neil and past Brighton. He exits the bathroom...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - TENTH GRADE HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is desolate.

Walter sloshes down the hallway... he opens his locker--

--his gym bag falls into his arms. He pulls out a pair of socks and old shoes from the bag...

He removes his wet socks and shoes, tosses his backpack in his locker...

Walter pulls on his socks and shoes, grabs his gym bag. He closes his locker--

--his backpack strap gets stuck. He opens his locker, tosses the strap in and closes his locker--

-- his strap is again stuck.

Walter opens the locker, slams it closed... again... and again. He calms, pushes his bag strap into the back of his locker and closes it...

Walter heads down the hall, drops the wet socks in a trashcan...

We hear the school bell ring. Bringing us to...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Three groups of about ten co-ed students in burgundy and white PFUs each occupy a third of the gym.

COACH GREEN, gym teacher/head football coach leads Walter's group in warm up exercises.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - FOOTBALL FIELD/TRACK - DAY

All three groups run laps around the track.

Walter is middle of the pack and losing ground...

INT. LUNCHROOM - 3RD LUNCH - DAY

Walter and Kamden sit at a table surrounded on all sides by students coming and going. Kamden surveys the lunchroom.

Looking for something?

KAMDEN

Yes. There's a girl in my second period. Oh, my goodness. I was hoping she had third lunch.

Something off camera also catches Walter's eye.

Walter POV: Mac Neil, Brighton, and Donevan stand in line behind Artie. Artie says something. It doesn't seem to go over well.

KAMDEN (cont.)

(mouth full)

This chick is a quarter black, a quarter American Indian, a quarter French, and a quarter Spanish. I don't think you understand the severity of a combination like that bro. That is a quarter of everything sexy. I didn't think that was possible—

-- He senses Walter's attention is elsewhere. He turns... and turns back.

KAMDEN (cont.)

I'm talking about possibly...

He snaps his fingers in Walter's face. Walter snaps back.

KAMDEN (cont.)

The hottest girl that I've seen since girls stopped having cooties.

WALTER

I hear you.

KAMDEN

Do you?

Hottest girl since cooties.

KAMDEN

I didn't say it like that.

Something off camera catches Kamden's eye.

WALTER

That's exactly how you said it.

KAMDEN

You make it sound like the plague. Oohh, that's my que. I'll be right back.

He hops up and walks off camera...

Walter eats and watches the situation in line.

His POV: Donevan, Brighton, and Mac Neil brush past Artie just out of line. Mac Neil says something to Artie in passing. Artie drops his head. He dumps his tray and exits the cafeteria.

Walter continues to eat and watch.

His POV: Mac Neil, Brighton, and Donevan join Dawn at a round table in the corner.

Kamden returns to his seat. Walter snaps back.

WALTER

Did you find your 'everything,' girl?

KAMDEN

I found a girl. Caught her looking over here. She said she wasn't looking at me, but... (look at me)

I'm Big Sexy.

Stop it.

KAMDEN

She said she knew you though...

Walter turns back and see Jessica at a table with her friends.

His smile fades and he turns back, continues to eat.

KAMDEN (cont.)

I'm like I'm not here because you know Walt. What does Walt have to do with me and you...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - SPANISH I - DAY

The SPANISH TEACHER paces along the front of the class. She hands out a stack of papers to the first student in each row.

SPANISH TEACHER

Take one, pass it back.

Walter peruses the sheet.

His POV: A column of boy names and a column of girl names.

SPANISH TEACHER (cont.)

What you're looking at is a list of common Spanish names. I will give you five minutes to pick out your favorite name. That will be your name in this class for the entire year...

She grabs the remaining sheets passed back up to the front rows.

Three seats back and a row over from Walter we just glimpse the 'quarter of everything sexy' girl that Kamden was talking about.

We hear the final bell ring. Bringing us to...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - QUAD AREA - DAY

The end of the school day.

Crowds of students push through the quad area to reach the student parking lot and the student bus line...

Walter bursts out of the building, heading towards the buses, his eyes taking in everything.

A crowd has gathered in the grass near the student parking lot, forming an octagon cage of bodies around two fighters.
Walter surveys the scene from a distance.

His POV: Out of a karate stance Mac Neil launches a kick to--

- -- Artie's face. His nose explodes. He falls--
- -- Walter rushes across, not seeing that he just ran through--
- -- Jessica, who is also surveying the scene from a distance.

Walter pushes through the circle. He sheds his backpack and tosses it in Mac Neil's face, he lunges.

He and Mac Neil roll around on the ground.

Mac Neil's grappling technique is good enough against the untrained.

MAC NEIL
You're attempting to rescue your boyfriend, cute.
Don't be upset with me.
He started this.
(barely audible)
How come you f*ggots
think it's okay to rub
it in our faces?

He releases his arm bar hold and stands.

Artie gets to his knees, blood gushing from his nose and soaking into his shirt.

Walter picks himself up off the ground. He hurls himself at Mac Neil with a wild attack.

Each attack blocked and countered with a kick first combination.

Jessica has pushed her way through to the front of the crowd.

Walter's necklace rips through the air and falls in front of a STUDENT, who is one of many holding out camera phones. The Student slides his foot over the necklace, unnoticed. Except...

Jessica sees him. She keeps one eye on him and the other on the fight. She watches intently, dissecting Mac Neil's fighting style, seeing his moves in advance. We see what she sees.

JESSICA'S PRE VISUALIZATION OF FIGHT AT VARIOUS SPEEDS

Walter launches with a combination right jab and left cross--

- -- Mac Neil steps back from Walter's right jab and blocks his left cross. He counters with a low kick to Walter's back leg--
- -- Walter's leg buckles and he goes down to one knee. Mac Neil meets him with a knuckle punch to the bottom of his jaw.
- -- Standing him up for a roundhouse to the face.

BACK ON JESSICA

REPEAT ABOVE ACTION - IN REAL TIME

Walter launches with a combination right jab and left cross--

Step back and block-Low kick to back leg-Knuckle punch to the jaw-Roundhouse to the face--

Walter crashes to the ground. He might be unconscious

A GROUP OF ADMINISTRATORS make their way through the crowd.

LEAD ADMINISTRATOR Break it up!!!

Walter climbs to his feet, beaten, but standing tall.

To the surprise of Jessica... and Mac Neil, whose smile fades.

LEAD ADM. (PRINCIPAL PARKER)

(continuing)

You know better than to start a fight Mr. Glaus.

(to other adm.)

Take him to my office.

Mac Neil snatches his bag from the ground and follows an Administrator towards the building.

PRINCIPAL PARKER

(re: Walter and Artie)

Get these two to the nurses office and get all of their parents on the phone.

(to crowd)

If you aren't on your buses or in your cars in the next thirty seconds--

The crowd quickly disperses.

An Administrator helps Artie to his feet and towards the building.

Walter stands there, paralyzed. As the world moves around him. An Administrator tries to help him towards the building.

WALTER

Don't touch me.

The Administrator grabs Walter's backpack and follows him towards the building.

The Random Student we remember from earlier discretely picks up Walter's necklace, walks away when--

A hand pulls on his arm. The student struggles forward against-- Jessica's grip.

JESSICA

That's not yours.

RANDOM STUDENT

What's it to you? It's not yours.

He turns back. Jessica moves-- so fast and surreptitiously we don't know what she's doing--

The hand with the necklace in it is grabbed, pulled, twisted, into a wrist lock.

RANDOM STUDENT (cont.)

Okay! Okay, take it!!

He releases the necklace. Jessica snatches the necklace from his hand and heads towards the buses.

RANDOM STUDENT (cont.)

(barely audible)

B*tch.

The last students reach their buses or cars.

The buses trundle through the parking lot onto the main road.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY

Walter sits at the center of three connected seats near the entrance door, his eyes closed.

The blood and the dirt from the fight replaced with ice packs and swelling of the post fight.

Walter reaches for the necklace around his neck, but it's gone. His eyes snap open. He panics, searches--

-- his bags, pockets, under the chairs, his neck again.

From behind a large counter in the secretary area the girl from Walter's Spanish Class, watches Walter.

Her name is TEAGAN GABNER, 16.

TEAGAN

Lose something?

WALTER

Yes.

TEAGAN

Can I help you find it?

WALTER

No.

TEAGAN

What did you lose--

Mac Neil along with his PARENTS and Principal Parker exit from one of the back offices.

Mac Neil now stands over Walter. The adults stand a few feet behind.

Walter turns back... looks up at Mac Neil. He sits in his seat.

MAC NEIL

So, I want to apologize for fighting. As an athlete and someone that people look up to. I know better and I hope we can get past this and move on.

Mac Neil extends his hand. Walter takes it. Mac Neil smiles and squeezes his hand, lightly 'this is not over.'

Walter quickly takes his hand away.

PRINCIPAL PARKER

Good, good, good, good, good start.

(seeing the Glaus family out)

Mr. and Mrs. Glaus thank you for coming in. As always it's a pleasure though not under ideal circumstances.

Mac Neil and his Parents exit. Mr. Leighton enters.

MR. LEIGHTON

Excuse me.

He shoots a glance over at Walter.

PRINCIPAL PARKER

Mr. Leighton.

MR. LEIGHTON

Call me Harold.

PRINCIPAL PARKER

Principal Eugene Parker.

He extends his hand. Mr. Leighton takes it.

PRINCIPAL PARKER (cont.)

My office is this way.

Walter grabs his bag and hope up. He and Mr. Leighton follow Principal Parker towards the back offices...

Walter glances over at Teagan. She smiles. He continues on.

INT. WHITE MERCEDES BENZ S600 - DAY

Mr. Leighton is behind the wheel, talking, but we can't hear him because...

Walter is in the passenger seat, listening to his Ipod.

Mr. Leighton notices Walter listening to music. He gets more animated.

Walter turns his Ipod off.

MR. LEIGHTON

Take those damn things out of your ears.

WALTER

It's off.

MR. LEIGHTON

Out.

Walter removes the visible earpiece.

MR. LEIGHTON (cont.)

I was actually telling you that I admired you sticking up for yourself.

WALTER

I got my ass kicked.

MR. LEIGHTON

But you defended your-self.

WALTER

But I got my ass kicked.

MR. LEIGHTON

If you want. I was boxing champion seven years straight in my unit, until my discharge. I could teach you how to defend yourself if you would like--

WALTER

We don't have to do this, bond. You took care of my mom and I respect that. We're good. You don't owe me anything.

Mr. Leighton is taken aback. He stares at the road ahead.

MR. LEIGHTON

Neither one of us are in ideal circumstances...

Walter puts the earpiece back in his ear, restarts his music, again drowning out Mr. Leighton's words...

Walter rests his head against the window, looks out.

His POV: On the corner. Two roadside crosses surrounded by flowers: In memory of Aunjanue Leighton and Nathan Boltares.

EXT. STREETS - CONTINUOUS

The White Mercedes Benz S600 pulls into the neighborhood.

WALTER (V.O.)

You were right.

INT. DR. NEWIRTH'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Newirth sits in her chair in front of desk, Walter's folder open in her lap.

Walter sits in his normal three times a week chair.

DR. NEWIRTH

What was I right about?

WALTER

At Chancellor they do block scheduling, so instead of have classes for like forty five minutes. We have four classes for like an hour and a half.

DR. NEWIRTH

That sounds long.

WALTER

It is. I hate it. Except gym, and lunch.

DR. NEWIRTH

I bet. I don't think I could last that long in one class. Is that what I was right about?

WALTER

No. In three of my four classes, including lunch, excluding gym. There are at least two people I know from Courtland. But they never say anything to me.

WALTER (cont.)

They just stare.

DR. NEWIRTH

How does that make you feel?

WALTER

Like a freak show. Say something or stop looking at me.

DR. NEWIRTH Have you said anything to any of them.

WALTER

No, why would I?

DR. NEWIRTH (cont.)

Because it obviously bugs you...

(re: bruises)

And it stops you from fighting.

WALTER

No. This was something else.

DR. NEWIRTH

Your stepfather?

WALTER

No-- no.

DR. NEWIRTH

Then what was it?

WALTER

It wasn't a big deal, and now it's over.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Walter, Mr. Leighton, and Sophia are seated at dinner.

MR. LEIGHTON

How was school?

SOPHIA

(looks up)

Me.

MR. LEIGHTON

Yes, you.

SOPHIA

It was okay.

MR. LEIGHTON

Just okay.

SOPHIA

I didn't learn anything.

WALTER

You're in the third grade.

SOPHIA

So.

WALTER

<u>So</u> you're not suppose to learn anything, but how to color inside the lines and pick up after yourself.

MR. LEIGHTON

(to Walter)

Be nice.

SOPHIA

Nuh. Unh.

WALTER

Yuh. Huh.

MR. LEIGHTON

Sophia, use your words.

Sophia folds all of her limbs.

MR. LEIGHTON (cont.)

You're not really suppose to learn much on the first day of school.

It's more for introductions.

SOPHIA

If you say so.

Mr. Leighton smiles. He looks over at Walter. A long beat.

MR. LEIGHTON (cont.)

How was school for you, besides fighting?

SOPHIA

Is that what happened to your face?

WALTER

I told you we didn't have to do this thing.

MR. LEIGHTON

"This thing" is what families do.

WALTER

Yeah, well I don't want to do the family thing. May I be excused?

He rises and starts towards the kitchen.

MR. LEIGHTON

No, sit down. Sit.

Down.

Walter returns to his seat. Everyone eats, not making eye contact.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

On the Tv: Madden 25 on Xbox One.

Walter sits in his desk chair, playing Madden.

From elsewhere in the house we can HEAR the doorbell ring.

MR. LEIGHTON (O.C.)

Walter, it's for you.

Walter pauses his game and exits his room...

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - HALLWAY -

Walter trots downstairs...

Mr. Leighton waits for him at the bottom of the stair. He grabs Walter's arm as he tries to brush past him.

MR. LEIGHTON (quiet, sternly) Don't ever undermine me in front of you sister again. We do that in private. Like it or not I'm the only parent you've got, and I demand order in my home. When you turn eighteen you're welcome to leave and you're more than welcome to stay, but until that decision needs to be made. You live in my house. You follow my rules. Do I make myself clear?

WALTER

Yes, sir.

He pulls away from Mr. Leighton and heads for the door. Walter opens the door wide--

-- Jessica stands on the bottom step of the stoop.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOME -

Walter takes a step out of the house. He holds the door.

WALTER

What-- Why are-- How are you here?

JESSICA

I was in the neighborhood.

Walter scans the streets.

JESSICA (cont.)

Found this, thought it was yours.

She pulls Walter's necklace from her pocket--

WALTER

It is.

-- He snatches the necklace as if she weren't allowed to touch. He puts the necklace around his neck.

Though we've seen the necklace before. This is first time we've notice that the necklace his a hemp rope with a damaged MERCEDES R320 BLUTEC key as its charm.

JESSICA

I noticed the guy you were fighting was into martial arts.

WALTER

I noticed that too.

JESSICA

Karate, sports karate.
I could tell by his
stance and fighting
style.

WALTER

Good for you.

JESSICA

It means everything he knows is based on rules of competition.

JESSICA (cont.)

Where you attack. I counter. I attack. You counter. Someone scores, and you reset. There are no rules in a street fight.

Walter regards her, not interested.

JESSICA (cont.)

Can I show you something?

WALTER

I'd rather not.

JESSICA

It'll only take a minute, and I'll leave you alone.

Walter closes the door behind him and steps down off the stoop.

JESSICA (cont.)

Do you know how to fight?

WALTER

Yes.

JESSICA

Get into your fighting stance.

Walter takes a moment. He gets into a Southpaw fighting stance.

JESSICA (cont.)

Are you left handed?

WALTER

Right.

Jessica puts him into an orthodox boxing stance. She explains as she puts him into a fighting position.

JESSICA

If you're right handed you want your right hand to be your back hand so you can use it for power. Your off hand is out in front closer to your opponent to jab with. Spread your legs shoulders width apart. Relax. Left foot up, slide your back foot over. Put most of your weight on your back leg. Not too much. Chin tucked in. Look straight ahead. Hands up. Loosen up, don't grip too tightly, elbows in, relax.

WALTER

How am I suppose to relax with all this stuff you're telling me to do?

JESSICA

You just do it. It will come.

She stands beside Walter. Mirror's his stance.

JESSICA (cont.)

From this base every move you make your feet stay the same distance apart. You move back, back foot slides, front foot slides. Forward, left, right, you pivot and turn. Your feet stay shoulder width apart.

She moves around in front of him... back into her fighting stance.

JESSICA (cont.)

I want you to kick me.

Walter stands up.

WALTER

I'm not gonna kick you.

JESSICA

I can take it.

WALTER

You're a girl. I'm not kicking you.

JESSICA

You can't get into a fighting stance. I'm not worried about you kicking me?

Walter reaches back and launches a back leg swing kick--

-- Jessica unleashes a quick teep kick to Walter's mid section that pushes him back and to the ground.

WALTER

What was that? What? Was? That--

He rolls over and sees the GPS MONITOR/SCRAM BRACELET on Jessica's ankle. She pulls her pant leg down.

JESSICA

A teep kick.

WALTER

Yeah, well I wasn't expecting you to hit me so...

JESSICA

You should always be expecting to be hit in a fight. Do it again.

Walter puts his hands up, gets into a Southpaw stance-- he switches to an Orthodox stance.

JESSICA (cont.)

Are you ready to be hit?

MONTAGE OF FAILURES -

Walter attacks-Jessica counters with a teep kick-Walter falls backwards and to the ground-Walter attacks again-Jessica's steps back then counters with a teep kick--

Parts of the above actions are repeated in the montage.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - LEIGHTON HOME - NIGHT

Walter takes a knee, worn down.

JESSICA

The guy you fought my Sifu would call a counter attack fighter who is in love with his own ability to kick.

She extends her hand. Walter stands on his own.

JESSICA (cont.)

That means he's never gonna attack first, he will lead with a kick, and he will kick a lot.

WALTER

And that thing you did will stop him?

JESSICA

No. It's just to keep him out of his kicking range.

WALTER

What do I do after that?

JESSICA

You run.

Walter stares at her. Running is not an option.

JESSICA (cont.)

Or you jump on him and keep punching until you can't anymore. Because he won't attack first you're going to have to show him a feint.

She shows him a feint kick. Walter flinches... Jessica uses a teep kick... just short of touching him.

JESSICA (cont.)

When he counters you anticipate his kick with your own kick.

(illustrates)
You take the ball of
your foot and thrust
it into his mid-section and push him away.
Work on the technique
of it, then work on

the speed. Then stop thinking about it and you just do it.

There is an awkward pause between them.

JESSICA

Goodnight. I will see you tomorrow.

WALTER

No, you won't. Suspended until Friday. For my part in the fighting.

JESSICA

I'm sorry.

She turns and walks away...

Walter watches her cross the street... and into the Sang House. He has to smile.

INT. THE SANG HOUSEHOLD - FOYER - NIGHT

Jessica enters the house. She tosses her coat on the coat rack and heads upstairs...

VOICE (O.C.)

(in Cantonese)

What were you just doing?

Jessica steps back downstairs, peeks into the the living room.

The same OLD ASIAN MAN is staring out his living room window.

This is LI-JUNG-SANG (American name HAL-LI) mid 50's, fit. He is a modern version of the old kung fu masters.

Hal-Li is a master in four martial arts styles. He speaks excellent English, but prefers his native Cantonese in his home.

JESSICA

He lost his necklace-(in Cantonese)
He lost his necklace at school today.

This conversation is in Cantonese.

JESSICA (cont.)

I was returning it.

HAL-LI

Is that how you return a lost item? Is he a friend?

JESSICA

No, not-- no.

HAL-LI

What's going on?

JESSICA

I'm helping him through
something.

HAL-LI

You can't help everyone you come across through something. And you can't give a crash course in martial arts. It's a life long discipline, and if someone is not willing to put in that time it's gonna hurt more than help.

JESSICA

He needs my help.

HAL-LI

No, he doesn't.

JESSICA

Yes, he does... (barely audible)
I owe him that.

She heads up the stairs...

Hal-Li turns back to his window again. Stares out.

Walter works on moving in his stance and teep kicks.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - LEIGHTON HOME - NIGHT

Walter moves around in his front yard. His head jerks up and looks into the Sang window, as if he is being watched.

His POV: It's too, but he knows someone is watching.

Walter heads inside. The porch light goes out.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Walter fights to stay asleep. His eyes snap open. He glances over at his dock clock... it's 4AM.

Walter slides out of bed and enters the shared bathroom.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - SHARE BATHROOM -

Walter stands in front of his mirror, he stares into his own eyes. The split on his lip reopens. He spits blood into the sink and runs his face under the water.

Walter rises back to the mirror--

-- he's now staring into the eyes of MIB 3. Walter throws an elbow. MIB 3 blocks the elbow and kicks Walter in the back...

...sending Walter crashing head first into the mirror.

Walter staggers backwards into MIB 3's choke hold.

In a desperate move Walter jumps onto the sink and launches himself backwards.

He and MIB 3 smash into the connecting door... then to the floor. Walter gasps for air.

The connecting door swings open...

Walter notices a face in the opposite room (Sophia's bedroom), sitting next to a sleeping Sophia, stroking her hair. Mrs. Leighton looks at us, smiles.

MIB 3 senses Walter's lack of focus. He kicks him in the back. Walter roll through, back to one knee. He looks for Mrs. Leighton, but she's gone.

The connecting door swings closed...

Walter blocks MIB 3's second kick. He pushes his foot away and reaches his feet first. Walter kicks MIB 3 except--

-- it's checked by MIB 2.

MIB 3, MIB 2, and now MIB 1 trade punches and kicks with Walter, most of which are blocked or ducked by both sides.

Walter pushes MIB 1 into MIB 2. He teep kicks MIB 3 in the midsecion, moves in, and removes MIB 3's mask--

-- it's Mac Neil Robert Glaus. Walter hesitates. MIB 1 knocks Walter down with a right to his jaw.

The three men unleash combinations of punches and kicks at Walter. Mac Neil drags Walter to the toilet and shoves his face into the porcelain toilet.

INSIDE TOILET -

Walter tries to wriggle free from Mac Neil's grasp.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - SHARED BATHROOM -

Walter reaches for the lever. MIB 2 launches a kick against his hand.

INSIDE TOILET -

Walter's screams are swallowed by the water.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - SHARED BATHROOM -

Walter quickly pulls the toilet lever.

MIB 2 launches another kick against Walter's hand.

INSIDE TOILET -

The water swirls down the drain. Walter gasps for air--

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - WALTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Walter snaps awake, still gasping for air. He glances over at the dock clock... it's 4AM.

Walter slides out of bed and enters the shared bathroom. He opens the door to Sophia's bedroom. Sophia is sound asleep, but no Mrs. Leighton. Walter closes the door behind him.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOME - DAY

Walter steps onto the stoop, surveys the scene.

A few high school kids from around the neighborhood arrive at the corner bus stop.

Hal-Li, as always, stares out his window, drinking coffee. He turns and acknowledges someone off camera.

Walter steps from the stoop and heads towards the bus stop...

Jessica steps out of the Sang house and down the hill to the bus stop.

Mr. Leighton and Sophia step out of the house. Sophia breaks away from Mr. Leighton and heads down to the Mercedes S600. She opens the passenger side door.

SOPHIA

Bye Walter.

Walter turns, regards Sophia, back peddling across the street.

MR. LEIGHTON

In the back.

Sophia climbs through the two seats to the back and fastens her seatbelt. Mr. Leighton closes the passenger door and hops in behind the wheel.

Walter turns back and continues towards the bus stop.

Walter and Jessica arrive at the bus stop simultaneously. They stand side by side now at the back of the line.

Mr. Leighton honks his horn as the Mercedes S600 drives past the bus stop.

Walter turns back and looks at the Sang House.

JESSICA

Welcome back.

WALTER

Just in the neighbor-hood?

The bus pulls up and stops in front of the kids.

JESSICA

Yes.

The doors open. The kids push onto the bus.

Jessica steps onto the bus. Her pant leg rises and we see the GPS Monitor/SCRAM bracelet. Walter hops on the bus.

The bus pulls off...

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - TENTH GRADE HALLWAY - DAY

Walter, Kamden, and Dylan are mixed in with other students in the overcrowded hallway.

A few kids recognize Walter as they move past.

KAMDEN

He did you a disservice. You weren't good looking to begin with and now. I can't call it.

DYLAN

It didn't look that bad when I first saw it.

WALTER

Wait, when you first saw it? Like, you were there?

Dylan sees something off camera.

KAMDEN

Like, it's on youtube and facebook, vine, instagram--

DYLAN

Heads up, Walt' let's go.

Walter peeks out from behind his locker...

Mac Neil and Brighton approach.

Kamden and Dylan move along.

Walter closes his locker--

- -- his bag gets stuck. He opens his locker and closes it--
- -- his bag gets stuck again. Walter panics--

-- Mac Neil appears at his side. He opens Walter's locker, calmly pushes the strap in and closes the locker.

MAC NEIL

You are welcome. How was your vacation?
Is it your first day back--

He takes a step back.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

Sorry, I don't want to crowd you. It looks like I'm a bully.

Brighton smiles.

Kamden and Dylan stand off to the side, watching.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

I haven't run into your "friend" yet. How is he doing?

Walter stares up, into Mac Neil's eyes for the first time.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

I asked, because I am really concerned about what I did, and...

The warning bell rings.

Mac Neil adjusts his backpack on his shoulder. Walter flinches.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

You okay? You seem a bit jumpy. That u-sually happens when you don't get enough sleep. Get enough sleep. It's going to be a long year.

He and Brighton continue on, down the hall...

PHONE CAMERA POV: Walter stares watches them walk away, angry and helpless. Unaware. He turns and looks directly into the camera phone.

A GIRL holds the camera on Walter, recording.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - SPANISH III - DAY

The Spanish Teacher goes through her lesson.

Walter sits in his normal seat, scribbling in his notebook.

IN NOTEBOOK: A graphic drawing of Walter shooting Mac Neil in his face with a gun. Blood is everywhere.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - SPANISH III - LATER DAY

The class bell rings. The students pack up and exit...

SPANISH TEACHER

Your first assignment, due on next Monday, you will be asked to prepare a Spanish dish and bring it into class for your classmates to sample. Be creative, authentic Spanish dishes only. This will be for a grade. Easiest A you will receive in my class. Take advantage.

Students stream out of the classroom.

Walter and Teagan bring up he rear, exiting at the same time--

TEAGAN

Excuse me.

Walter takes a step back to allow Teagan passage first.

TEAGAN (cont.)
Did you find your thing
you were looking for?

WALTER

Yes. Somebody found it and returned it.

TEAGAN

Lucky you.

The Spanish Teacher moves past them to stand outside her room.

SPANISH TEACHER

(in Spanish)

Don't be late to class.

TEAGAN

Yes ma'am.

(to Walter)

See you Monday...

She searches for a name.

WALTER

Walt-- Alejandro. Alejandro.

TEAGAN

Hermosa.

She turns and heads down the hall. Walter regards her, smiles.

SPANISH TEACHER (cont.)

Get to class.

Walter turns back, embarrassed. Without looking at the Spanish Teacher is heads in the opposite direction.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - MAIN HALL - DAY

Walter moves through the crowd, up the spiral staircase...

Mac Neil converses with Donevan and Dawn, at the top of the stairs.

Walter turns back and heads down stairs. Passing...

Artie heading up the spiral staircase.

Walter grabs his arm and spins him back downstairs.

ARTIE

What are you doing, my locker is upstairs?

WALTER

And my class is upstairs. We're taking the elevator.

ARTIE

Why would we do that, we're halfway to the--

Artie glances up and sees...

Mac Neil making direct eye contact with him.

WALTER

Because we can.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - QUAD AREA - DAY

Students push through, towards theirs buses and cars.

Walter exits the building, makes a quick beeline for his bus.

Kamden rushes up behind him smacks him lightly on the head.

KAMDEN

Are we going to the game tonight?

WALTER

No-- I don't know-- yeah.

KAMDEN

Pick me up at Dylan's. See if you can get the Benz, because Big Sexy will be fly and has to travel in style.

WALTER

Stop that.

Kamden hops on his bus.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -

Walter hops on his bus, heads down the aisle.

Jessica sits near the back. She makes eye contact with Walter.

Walter takes the first seat available, near a SCRAWNY KID who carries a violin.

SCRAWNY VIOLIN KID

(wide smile)

Hi.

Walter feigns a smile and nods.

INT. LEIGHTON HOME - FOYER - NIGHT

Walter enters from the kitchen, feeding on a bag of chips...

WALTER

Sophia, let's go.

He puts on his jacket, grabs a set of keys from the wall hook.

WALTER (cont.)

(calling out)

Harold, can I take your car?

MR. LEIGHTON

No, you can't. You have a car.

WALTER

I have a mini van. You can't impress girls with a mini van.

MR. LEIGHTON

It's more impressive than walking.

Walter puts the keys back on the wall hook.

WALTER

Sophia, let's go!!!

He grabs his own keys.

Sophia descends the stairs with her backpack. A doll peers out at us from her bag.

SOPHIA

I'm coming. Hold your horses.

WALTER

You're gonna make me late.

SOPHIA

Sorreeee.

Walter tosses her a jacket. Sophia puts it on.

SOPHIA (cont.)

Bye daddy.

MR. LEIGHTON (O.C.)

By sweetie, have fun at the game.

SOPHIA

We will.

WALTER

I will.

MR. LEIGHTON (O.C.)

Walt, if you're running late call and let me know.

WALTER

Okay.

Walter opens the front door.

WALTER (cont.)

(to Sophia)

Let's go.

He exits behind Sophia, closes the door behind them.

EXT. LEIGHTON HOME - NIGHT

We have always seen the 2005 HONDA ODYSSEY EX-L parked next to the Leighton mailbox, but now we notice it.

SOPHIA

Howcome I can't go to the game with you?

WALTER

Because you want to go to Carly's house.

SOPHIA

No, I don't.

WALTER

Yes, you do.

He hops behind the wheel. Sophia hops in the passenger seat.

INT. HONDA ODYSSEY - EX-L -

WALTER (cont.)

Every time I'm doing something it's about Carly. I'm going to the store you want to go to Carly's. I'm heading to the mall, drop you off at Carly's first. Now, I'm dropping you off at Carly's and you want to go to the game.

SOPHIA

Yes.

WALTER

No, but if you promise not to get on my nerves for the rest of your life...

He notices something off camera, down the street.

Someone, bundled against the cold, walks down the side of the street. Walter continues on...

WALTER (cont.)

Maybe I'll take you to a game this year.

Until he notices--

-- the bundled 'someone' that he sees in his mirror is Jessica.

Walter stops his car at the all way stop for to long.

SOPHIA

What are you doing? Why did you stop? Did you change your mind about taking me to the game?

WALTER

No.

Sophia turns and looks out the back window.

Jessica crosses to the opposite side of the street

SOPHIA

Is that your girlfriend?

WALTER

Yes, she's my girlfriend. That's why I'm making her walk.

SOPHIA

You don't have to get smart. I'm only seven.
(a moment)

Do you know her?

WALTER

Yes.

SOPHIA

Are you gonna give her a ride?

WALTER

No.

SOPHIA

Then why did you stop?

She takes another look out the back window.

Jessica is nearing them. Sophia can clearly see her face.

SOPHIA (cont.)

She's pretty.

WALTER

Is she?

SOPHIA

You know she is.

She unbuckles her seatbelt and hops out of the car.

WALTER

What are you doing? Get back in the car. Sophia.

SOPHIA

Hey, you! Hi, do you need a ride?

WALTER

Sophia, get in the car. You're making me late.

JESSICA

Do I know you?

SOPHIA

No. You know my brother. I'm Sophia.

WALTER

If you don't get in the car. I will leave you.

SOPHIA

If you leave me I'm telling daddy.

WALTER

Tell him.

SOPHIA

I will. Get out of the car. You're being rude.

WALTER

I said if you don't get on my nerves for the rest of your life, and you couldn't go five minutes.

Walter hops from the car. He and Jessica share a look.

INT. HONDA ODYSSEY EX-L - MOVING - NIGHT

Jessica sits almost directly behind Sophia.

Sophia turns, smiles. Jessica smiles back.

SOPHIA

What's your name?

JESSICA

Jessica.

SOPHIA

How do you know my brother?

JESSICA

We go to school together--

SOPHIA

Is he your boyfriend?

WALTER

Shut up.

JESSICA

(smiles)

No.

SOPHIA

Don't tell me to shut up. You shut up. I can say what I want. (to Jessica)
Do you have any brothers or sisters?

JESSICA

I have two brothers and one sister.

SOPHIA

Are you the oldest?

JESSICA

I'm the second.

SOPHIA

If one of the younger ones were say... seven and she-- they wanted to spend time with you... Because they love you. Would you take them to the football game with you?

Jessica and Walter share a brief look in the rearview mirror.

JESSICA

Unless I had a good reason not to.

Walter pulls his minivan up to the curb in front of a random house in some random suburban neighborhood.

WALTER

See, she agrees with me Now get out of my car. game either way... SOPHIA

Of course she does she's your girlfriend.

She smiles.

Walter finds something to throw...

WALTER

Get out.

Sophia grabs her bag and hops from the car. She darts off, towards the house, leaving the passenger side door open.

SOPHIA

(calling out)

Bye Jessica.

JESSICA

Bye.

WALTER

I'll pick you up after the game. I'll call when I'm on my way, be ready.

(calling out)
Thank you for closing
my door.

SOPHIA

(calling back)

You're welcome.

Walter watches, waits... Sophia knocks on the door.

The door opens. A LADY steps out on the stoop, waves. This is MS. BURKE. Walter waves back.

Ms. Burke and Sophia disappear behind the door.

WALTER

You mind sitting up front. I'm not a chauffeur.

Jessica closes the back door, hops in the front seat.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD -

Jessica closes the back door, hops in the front seat.

INT. HONDA ODYSSEY - EX-L -

WALTER

Seat-- belt.

Jessica puts on her seatbelt.

Walter puts the car in gear and pulls off.

INT. HONDA ODYSSEY - EX- L - LATER

Kamden and Dylan are now in the backseat. Trying to get Walter's attention, making faces and gyrations.

Unbeknownst to them Jessica can see them in the rearview mirror.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - BACK PARKING LOT - NIGHT

High school football is a religion in Virginia and everybody in town is here heading to church.

Bumper to bumper traffic, man cars cruise through the parking lot searching for a few parking spaces.

The Mini Van pulls into a parking spaces. Everyone steps out.

WALTER

(reluctantly)

If you need a ride home meet me back here after the game.

(searching)

Row M, spot thirteen.

JESSICA

I'm meeting up with some friends. I'll catch a ride with one of them. But thank you.

She turns and mixes in with the crowd heading towards the field.

In the b.g. people all around are heading in the same direction.

KAMDEN

Wait, I can't be seen getting out of a mini van. That's not sexy.

WALTER

Next time we'll take your car.

He and Dylan share a laugh.

KAMDEN

I don't have a car--

WALTER

Exactly.

DYLAN

Who was that?

KAMDEN

Okay, go.

He, Walter, and Dylan sneak in and mix with the crowd.

DYLAN

Who was the girl?

KAMDEN

Ooh, was that the lunch girl? That was the lunch girl. You made a move. Color me impressed. Didn't think you had that in you. I'm glad I decided to step back for you.

WALTER

(to Dylan)

She wasn't feeling him.

KAMDEN

She was feeling me.

KAMDEN (cont'd)

She just seemed too sweet

to be on my arm. I thought she was more your speed, so I took a step back. Just being a good friend. I could step back in if you want me to, because she was definitely feeling Big Sexy.

DYLAN

Can you stop calling yourself Big Sexy.

KAMDEN

Am I not big? A better question would be. Am I not sexy?

WALTER

You can't give yourself a nickname.

They now stand in line of a makeshift ticket booth.

The booth consists of two FEMALE TEACHERS at a fold out table.

The First Teacher collects the money and places it into a lock box. The Second Teacher stamps hands after payment.

A THIRD TEACHER, stands near the ticket booth, drinking coffee. He is the security for the high school game.

Walter's POV: Jessica meets friends, pays, and enters the game.

Walter, Kamden, and Dylan move forward in line.

KAMDEN

I can, did and the whole world will know me by it.

DYLAN

The whole world?

KAMDEN

The whole school.

(to Walter)

Let's put something on it.

WALTER

Name it.

KAMDEN

Name it. By homecoming, every girl that knows me. Sexual or other will refer to me as Big Sexy. Loser buys the winner's tickets to all the games we go to. Here, JM, Courtland.

WALTER

Deal.

DYLAN

I want in on this bet.

KAMDEN

Who's side?

Dylan regards Walter... then Kamden...

DYLAN

(to Walter)

I think he can do it.

Our boys pay, get their hands stamped, and enter the game.

WALTER (cont.)

Rules, no paying, no asking them to call you Big Sexy just in front of me. No...

We PULL BACK to see the expanse of the high school field.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK/FOOTBALL FIELD -

An award winning band plays. The perky Charger cheerleaders lead the crowd in the fight song.

The lone concession stand has a line wrapped around its building.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK/FOOTBALL FIELD - ON THE FIELD -

The head referee blows his whistle.

The crowd quickly fills the home team stands and ground level.

Walter, Kamden, and Dylan are mixed in at the far end of the stands. Walter is visibly unnerved by all around him--

RABID FAN

Come on ref. That's a bullshit call!!!

Walter is startled in his seat.

DYLAN

You okay.

KAMDEN

He's fine.

DYLAN

You speak for him?

WALTER

I'm fine.

KAMDEN

See he's fine.

DYLAN

We can leave if you need to leave.

KAMDEN

No, we can't. I spent ten bucks to get in here. I had to borrow said ten bucks from my father and have to pay it back by doing extra choirs around the house. I'm not a trust fund baby like you two.

Pause. He realizes what he said. Dylan realizes it. Walter heard it but he stares out at the football game, not watching.

KAMDEN

I didn't mean it like--

WALTER

I know. I'm gonna go to the bathroom. I'll be back.

DYLAN

You need me to go with you.

WALTER

No, I don't need you to hold it.

DYLAN

I'm serious.

Walter heads down the aisle to ground level...

Dlyan smacks Kamden on the shoulder.

Walter moves through the crowd and towards the bathroom/concession stand.

Beyond the concession stand line is a sign for the men's bathroom.

Mac Neil, Brighton, Donevan, and Dawn enter the gates.

Walter sees them. He throws his hood over his head and turns towards the game.

Just over his shoulder. Mac Neil, Brighton, Donevan, and Dawn move past Walter and head towards the stands.

Walter turns and moves hastily towards the men's bathroom...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - MEN'S RESTROOM -

Walter bursts into the restroom... and into the handicap stall.

INT. HANDICAP STALL -

Walter closes and locks the door behind him.

WALTER

Man up, man up, man up!!!

He flushes... takes a moment and steps out of the stall.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - MEN'S RESTROOM -

A MAN stands at the corner urinal, staring at Walter.

Walter moves to the sinks, washes his hands, and exits.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK/FOOTBALL FIELD - CONCESSION STAND LINE -

Walter collects his soda. He heads towards the bleachers...

The crowds near the bleachers has since grown. Walter pushes through... but to no avail.

He takes a step and looks over the crowd--

-- A high fence lines the underneath bleachers, preventing any student from disappearing underneath the bleachers. But--

-- A corner of the bleachers has been peeled back.

Walter scans the crowd carefully. He ducks under the bleachers.

IN THE STANDS

There is a HEAVYSET MAN in glasses and a Charger hat, cheering.

Mac Neil peeks out from behind the Heavyset Man.

UNDERNEATH BLEACHERS

Walter climbs the open section of the fence. His eyes adjust to the darkness. He walks...

In the background: We see four figures climb the fence and approach. They are in silhouette... but we know who they are.

Walter continues walking. He feels a presence, turns--

-- and is met with a kick to the face. Walter falls hard. His soda, in it's foam cup, flies. He soaks himself.

Walter pushes himself up off the ground. Dawn pushes him down.

Mac Neil and Brighton pick Walter up off the ground.

MAC NEIL

How you doing?

Walter swings... misses. Mac Neil knees Walter in the stomach, and picks his head up.

MAC NEIL (cont.)

All you had to do was keep moving like everyone else, but you wanted to play hero.
I gave you a pass. E-ven after you disrespected me in the bathroom...

He punches Walter in the gut... then the face...

MAC NEIL (cont.)

And getting me suspended.

Walter reels and falls to all fours. He picks himself up from the ground. Brighton swipes his hands out from underneath him. Walter falls on his face.

BRIGHTON

Stay down.

Walter moves... he picks himself up, stands.

WALTER

(to Mac Neil)

Why don't you fight me yourself.

MAC NEIL

I would love to.

Walter charges with a storm of wild punches--

Mac Neil block/ducks and counters with a kick first combination.

The final kick sends Walter crashing to the ground.

Walter grasps for grass to pick himself up... but he falls flat.

FLASHBACK - VOICES ONLY-

JESSICA (V.O.)

I noticed the guy you were fighting was into martial arts.

WALTER (V.O.)

I noticed that too.

JESSICA (V.O.)

Karate, sports karate. I could tell by his stance and fighting style.

WALTER (V.O.)

Good for you.

JESSICA (V.O.)

It means everything he knows is based on rules of competition. Where you attack. I counter. I attack. You counter. Someone scores, and you reset. There are no rules in a street fight. Can I show you something?

Mac Neil stands over Walter, steps on his hand.

MAC NEIL

Stay out of my business.

He and his friends turn and walk away-- WALTER

Aaaahhh!!!

Mac Neil and his friends turn back.

Walter, with his last bit of strength, picks himself up from the ground and gets into an Orthodox fighting stance.

MAC NEIL

(smiles)

You have some balls. Or you're stupid.

Mac Neil gets into his fighting stance.

Walter throws a feint punch.

Mac Neil moves, launches a kick--

--Walter puts a teep kick into his mid-section -- preventing his counter. Walter rushes Mac Neil and takes him to the ground. He throws a storm of wild punches, some landing.

Donevan pulls Walter off of Mac Neil--

He, Dawn, and Brighton attack Walter with punches and kicks to the body and head.

Mac Neil stands and shakes his head clear.

Brighton and Donevan pick Walter up to his knees.

Mac Neil kicks Walter square in the face. His nose explodes before he hits the ground.

Brighton and Donevan bring him up to his knees again --

FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)

Leave him alone.

MAC NEIL

Walk away. This isn't your fight.

Walter goes in and out of consciousness so the figures are blurred and the sounds non distinct.

Walter's POV: A silhouette moves in. Mac Neil, Brighton, Donevan, and Dawn surround the shadow. In an instant the silhouette unleashes a super fast combination of different types of martial arts.

Walter now goes out of consciousness for good...

FADE TO BLACK: