

Mortimer

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

An old-fashioned dive literally in the middle of nowhere. A wrinkled ATTENDANT finishes filling a STATION WAGON, slaps the back of it to let the owner know he's finished.

Before he has even pulled out the nozzle, the car SPEEDS AWAY, dragging the screaming attendant forward a few feet before the hose reaches its limit and pulls free.

The attendant watches the car disappear, spits a wad of phlegm and tobacco after it. He coughs and gags as the brown goo gets caught in his cracked lips.

He stoops to collect the hose, catching sight of something from the corner of his eye -- a DARKENED OUTLINE in the distance, appearing like a mirage. As it slowly approaches:

ATTENDANT

Son of a bitch...

Finally, shaded under the station's roof, the figure is revealed to be a man who will only be known as MORTIMER. His age is undeterminable. Looks like the hundreds of miles of bad roads he walked to get here.

He carries an army-issued duffel bag and wears a military jacket with the name "PATTERSON" sewn into the left breast pocket. Mangy hair and a beard obscures his face.

ATTENDANT

Stranger, what message did the Lord
send down from Sinai?
(off his confusion)
You look like hell.

MORT

Been there.

ATTENDANT

Let's bless those parched lips.

He bends down to a COOLER, pulls out a glass bottle of root beer, hands it to Mort who effortlessly opens and drains the entire thing in one gulp while the attendant looks on.

ATTENDANT

Well, I'll be damned... You got a
pair of lungs on you, boy.

MORT
Bathroom?

EXT. GAS STATION - SIDE OF BUILDING - DAY

The attendant UNLOCKS the only DOOR with a set of rusty keys, pushes it open to reveal a toilet and urinal. It's filthy, emitting a smell that makes Mort grimace.

ATTENDANT
Ain't got a separate one for
pussies.
(licks his lips)
And I love pussies. But the only
ones we get around here are on
paper.

Mort growls under his breath, finds the man repulsive. Steps inside, his eyes locked on the man as he closes the door in his face.

INT. GAS STATION - BATHROOM - DAY

Mort sets his bag on the floor in front of a spigot that serves as a sink. Turns it on but nothing comes out. He BREAKS the empty BOTTLE over it, takes a shard and begins to shave with it.

MOMENTS LATER - blood trickles down Mort's face from many fresh wounds inflicted by the crude makeshift razor. The beard is now very thin, one side thicker than the other. He moves on to his hair.

INT. GAS STATION - DAY

The attendant now sits behind the counter, chewing jerky, looking at a porn magazine.

ATTENDANT
Yeah... yeah... that's it.

Suddenly sensing a presence, the attendant lowers the magazine to find Mort standing at the counter. It startles him. With his hair shorter and beard trimmed, the attendant doesn't recognize him.

ATTENDANT
Somethin' I can do for you?

Mort slaps down a BLACK MARKER, then dumps a handful of change on the counter.

MORT

Do you mind?

ATTENDANT

Well not at all. Let's see what we got here.

He begins to count it off quietly while Mort watches, expressionless. The attendant finishes.

ATTENDANT

Look at that -- you got some to spare.

As he slides the rest forward, Mort suddenly lashes out -- slams his clenched fist down on the man's hand, SHATTERING the BONES inside. The man screams in surprised agony as blood spurts out of a hole in the skin punctured by bone.

But Mort isn't finished. Grabs both sides of the attendant's uniform, repeatedly SMASHES his HEAD down on the counter.

Every time his face is brought back up to be crushed, it is bloodier and more disfigured until the screams stop. His face is unrecognizable. Just bloody meat clinging to skull.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

There is a CAR sitting idle, its owner nowhere in sight. Mort approaches it, pops the trunk. Debates for a moment. It's scorching outside...

But he crawls inside anyway, pulls it closed just as the OWNER exits the restroom and returns.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAY

The car drives down a seemingly endless stretch of road. Mort struggles to hold the trunk open enough to breathe and watch the asphalt speed by.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION YARD - DAY

The steel skeleton of a massive soon-to-be building towers over a FOREMAN and a WORKER looking over a set of blueprints.

BEHIND THEM - the FEET of an unseen person pound through the dirt with purpose, headed towards something. Whoever they are, they grab a 2x4 and rush off with it.

The foreman peels his eyes away from the plans in time to see a filthy VAGRANT, with long hair and an even longer beard, running out of the yard with the board in his hands.

FOREMAN

Hey!

He takes a few steps forward, but stops. Knows he will never be able to catch him.

FOREMAN

Did you see that guy?

The worker obviously didn't. Stares at his boss, confused about what just took place.

EXT. DOWNTOWN DENVER - SIDEWALK - DAY

The vagrant rushes past a COFFEE SHOP when a middle-aged MAN IN A POLO steps out and spots him running with the board.

Juggling his coffee in one hand, he grabs the back of the board with the other, jerks the vagrant backwards. The vagrant screams and rips the board away, grazing the man's cheek, leaving a pink scratch.

The man lets go. It's not worth it. Watches, pissed, as the vagrant runs out into...

THE STREET

Where several MOVING CARS SLAM on their BRAKES. He narrowly avoids a MINI VAN that misses him by inches. In response to the threat, he uses the board to SMASH out all of the back WINDOWS as the SOCCER MOM inside screams for him to stop.

Once the glass is gone, he rushes past it only to be hit by a car and roll over the hood. The DRIVER exits to see if he is okay, but the vagrant continues on.

FURTHER AHEAD

On the median, in the middle of traffic, an older and filthier DRIFTER sits on a ROLLED-UP MAT, holding up a CARDBOARD SIGN that reads: "Need money! God bless!"

There is a sudden, urgent outburst of CAR HORNS. The drifter turns in the direction of the sound just as the vagrant (the reason for the chaos) rushes him and SMASHES the BOARD across his face, busting his remaining teeth out.

The drifter falls back, CRACKS his SKULL on the pavement while the vagrant takes his stuff and runs as a POLICE CAR turns on its lights, struggling to weave towards him.

As the vagrant continues, he comes to the reason for the traffic -- an OPEN MANHOLE being worked on. Before the CREW can stop him, the vagrant runs under the protective tape and jumps down the hole, leaving the cardboard sign behind.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Walking past blown-up POSTERS of MODELS in underwear is RICK FORD, (44), as ignorant as he is arrogant. A wiry Englishman around the same age, HAGGIS, is suddenly at his side, sipping steaming coffee from a styrofoam cup.

HAGGIS

Did you catch the game last night?

RICK

Nah, the wife was naggin' me to change the oil in the van.

HAGGIS

My wife was naggin' me too. I told her, "Unless it's for liposuction, you can't complain about me gettin' off at halftime".

RICK

Liposuction?

HAGGIS

Yeah, you know where they use tubes to suck the fat out like a straw --

RICK

I know what it is.

Rick stops, faces Haggis. Seems like he needs to ask something serious.

HAGGIS

What?

RICK

Do they charge by the pound?
'Cause that's gonna be expensive.

They laugh, suddenly interrupted as a DOOR OPENS and a pack of smoking hot UNDERWEAR MODELS exit through it. Rick and Haggis ogle them, but the models find the men disgusting.

HAGGIS
I'm gettin' a woody.

He forgets he's holding coffee, dumps it down the front of his shirt. Spins around to hide it, but the models saw. They disappear around the corner, their laughter echoing.

HAGGIS
Do you think they'll find that charming?

RICK
Only if we were in a chick flick.

HAGGIS
That would be so awesome.

MOHK TAR (O.S.)
Fahd!

The head of an INDIAN MAN in his thirties sticks out from a doorway, looking beyond pissed.

HAGGIS
He looks angrier than the flames of hell...

Rick sighs heavily, already knows what's coming.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - MOHK TAR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mohktar paces behind his desk. When Rick enters he stops.

MOHK TAR
Oh, maybe you do care about your job. Sit down, Fahd!

RICK
It's Ford.

MOHK TAR
I know your name. Close the door!

Rick moves back to the door, closes it, then stays still.

RICK
Can I sit now?

MOHK TAR
You do not get to be smart-ass. You are in deep, hot water here.

Rick sits. Struggles to keep from laughing.

MOHK TAR

You have been stealing valuable company time. We cannot afford it, not with the licorice lawsuit.

RICK

Well "Snaps" is a catchy name. Who knew it was already taken...

MOHK TAR

That is not the point, Fahd!

Rick mouths "Ford" with emphasis when Mohktar looks away.

MOHK TAR

You come here to work, not to play these games.

He turns the computer so that Rick can see a LOG showing how many hours have been spent not working.

RICK

(offended)

It's not just a "game", it's WOW. Over seventeen million people play.

MOHK TAR

And how is that wow?

RICK

World of fuckin' Warcraft! It's a second life. In case you don't follow my Twitter-Space-Blog, I'm not too happy with my first one. I haven't had a vacation in over a year. If it weren't for the models, I would have no reason to walk through those doors every day. I feel like I'm losing my mind!

Rather than feel sympathy, Mohktar snorts.

MOHK TAR

You will really be losing your mind when I give away your job and your family has to live on the streets and file for bankruptcy.

RICK

Wouldn't the bankruptcy come first?

MOHK TAR

You are trying to make me feel stupid, but you are the stupid one! You are nothing but a slumdog.

RICK

Now that was a good movie.

Mohktar leans across the desk, gets so close to Rick's face he is forced to turn away from his boss' putrid breath.

MOHK TAR

Not today, but very soon when my brother from New Dehli comes to visit and we take our annual trip to the Burger King, you will be the one taking our orders.

RICK

(barely above a whisper)
Okay...

EXT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

A FOOTBALL PLAYER catches the ball in mid-air, slams it down, scoring a second before the WHISTLE BLOWS, signaling the end of the game.

The CROWD in the bleachers go wild. Some cheer while others view it as a miserable loss.

The player pulls off his helmet to reveal JASON FORD, (19), a good-looking jock. His TEAMMATES rush over to congratulate him.

TEAMMATE

Awesome play, man!

JASON

(turning on them)
Yeah, no thanks to you, dickwads! What was that?! I was out there alone while you all were prancin' around like a bunch of freakin' retards!

His teammates look to one another in astonishment as Jason storms off, throwing his helmet on the ground.

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - HALLWAY - DAY

Jason, cleaner now and out of his dirty uniform, SLAMS his LOCKER closed.

FELDMAN (O.S.)

Jason!

He turns to find DEREK FELDMAN, (18). Where Jason is the good-looking guy, Feldman is the guy who wishes he was.

FELDMAN

What was that about, man? What was that about?

JASON

I'm trying to play the game and their heads are up their asses. And those boners on the benches aren't helping either.

FELDMAN

(trying to calm him)
Okay... okay.

Jason takes a glance back, sees TIFFANY YORK, (18), approaching. She's a perfect blonde beauty, but Jason is not happy to see her.

JASON

Oh my gosh... freaking wow.

He spins back around, slams his palm into the locker door. Feldman looks past him, eyes widening at her sight.

FELDMAN

Dude, you hittin' that?

JASON

I don't wanna talk about it.

FELDMAN

Gee, man, if you're not happy, I'll do her.

JASON

Shut up, banana-pants! Yeah, I know what you do 'cause you can't get it up, you freakin' fag.

Feldman looks hurt.

FELDMAN

That's not cool, man. That's low.

He walks past Tiffany. Doesn't care to look at her.

TIFFANY

Hey!

She leans in to Jason for a kiss. He looks like he is about to oblige when, just before their lips meet, he grabs her cheeks and pushes her head away.

TIFFANY

What is wrong with you?! We're not in Amish country!

JASON

Did you even see it?

TIFFANY

See what?

JASON

Exactly! We were down by two and I stepped up and saved the day. Everyone will be talkin' about it, but you weren't there.

TIFFANY

Why are you upset?

JASON

'Cause it's never about me. Even when we watch a movie, it's always something sappy with Sandra Bullock. I still haven't seen Platoon!

TIFFANY

Alright, we'll watch Platoon! God...

JASON

I don't even care anymore! You make me feel like the bad guy for even having to suggest it.

TIFFANY

(brushing against him)
Well, what if I suggested giving you my virginity tonight?

Jason considers this for a moment. She looks like she really means it. He gives in, but still has reservations.

JASON

Fine, but if I get an infection,
you're dead. I can't afford it.
Not now with the NFL breathing down
my back.

TIFFANY

When has the NFL ever taken an
interest in you?

JASON

More than you ever have.

TIFFANY

(exasperated)
Because everything's about
football!

JASON

It's my life.

TIFFANY

No, it's a part of your life.

JASON

And guess what's not anymore? You!
See ya!

Turning on his heels, he enters the MEN'S BATHROOM. Tiffany
stands alone in the empty hall. What just happened?

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Tiffany suddenly kicks the door open, screams from outside:

TIFFANY (O.S.)

You can forget what I said, 'cause
we are so over!

JASON

I don't care! Leave me alone!

In a blind fury, he throws his backpack at the slowly closing
door, knocks it shut so hard she is forced to jump backward.
He shakes with rage, blowing spit through his clenched teeth.
Goes to the sink, splashes water on his face to cool down.

A stall DOOR SQUEAKS OPEN behind him. He looks up to see the
reflection of a well-built, AFRICAN-AMERICAN PLAYER from the
opposite team standing shirtless with his arms crossed.

One by one, all five of the stalls open to reveal the same
thing: massive FOOTBALL PLAYERS glaring him down.

OPPOSITE PLAYER

Well, well, well, if it isn't
Number One... both on your jersey
and on the field. That must make
you proud.

On the verge of pissing his pants, Jason splashes again,
trying to buy time as the team slowly advances.

JASON

I don't know what you're talking
about...

OPPOSITE PLAYER

But our coach does. You cost us
the whole season, motha-ass-fucka.
We had a lotta bets on that game.
Now it's back to the bench.

JASON

I had obligations too. People
expect me to win. I'm sorry.

That was so routine, there was no hint of thought or
sincerity behind it. The player takes offense.

OPPOSITE PLAYER

No, you're not.

JASON

What?

OPPOSITE PLAYER

Sorry?! You ain't sorry till we
teach you sorry, you pansy-assed,
breast-fed, white-collared, son-of-
a-motha-fuckin-bitch! You vine-
swinging piece of monkey
shittin'...

Even the player is stumped by his own sense of poor cursing
formation. His teammates shares questioning looks.

OPPOSITE PLAYER

Just get him!

INT. COMMUNITY COLLEGE - HALLWAY - DAY

A silent beat, then Jason bursts out of the door as the
hulking players chase him down the empty hall. In a poor
attempt to delay them, Jason pulls a locker open.

One of the rhino-like players charges through it, RIPS THE DOOR off its hinges. Jason trips, rolls and skids before stumbling back onto his feet just in time to avoid the rhino catching him.

INT. JANET'S MINIVAN - DAY

KEVIN FORD, (16), an attention hungry teen whose personal interests change monthly, sits in the backseat, his eyes glued to the "Lego" magazine in his hands.

It is only a decoy, cleverly concealing the magazine he is really interested in: "Tits & Tires". It's like it sounds -- topless, voluptuous women draped over motorcycles.

Sitting behind the wheel up front is his mother, JANET, (40). She's pretty, but with little makeup and even less time to herself. A little naive as she believes there can be good in anyone, no matter how bad they seem.

She looks in the rearview, eyes Kevin suspiciously.

JANET

Getting enough cold air back there?

KEVIN

(mesmerized)

Uh-huh.

JANET

So you're not too hot?

KEVIN

Uh-huh.

JANET

What do you want for dinner?

KEVIN

Uh... sure. Okay. Yeah.

And now Janet is convinced he is not really looking at a kiddie magazine.

JANET

How's her ass?

KEVIN

Awe-some!

Kevin looks up in shock as he realizes what he just responded to. Janet turns in her seat to face him, reaches back, snatches the magazine from his hands, furious.

KEVIN
Mom, it's not what it looks like!

She flips through the pages.

JANET
It's filled with naked women!

KEVIN
Only the tops of 'em!

JANET
Where did you get this?

KEVIN
From Dad.

JANET
Your father would never have something like this!

KEVIN
You obviously haven't looked inside his spare tool chest.

As Janet's face reddens further, her full wrath about to be unleashed, Kevin catches sight of something in the rear view.

KEVIN
What's that?

Janet follows his gaze to find Jason running towards them, waving and screaming for Janet to start the van as the players gain on him.

She wastes no time in doing so. Slowly begins to DRIVE as Jason runs along side it, pulls the side door open. Rhino grabs the edge of his shirt, dragging him. Jason manages to twist away and jump inside.

Rhino grabs the back bumper in an attempt to drag the van to a halt, but Janet SCREECHES AWAY, knocking him on his ass. His teammates hoot and holler, laughing at him as he stands and brushes asphalt from his pants.

RHINO
(threatening a punch)
Shut up!

EXT. DOWNTOWN DENVER - DAY

The car from the gas station stops in heavy traffic.

INT. CAR - DAY

The driver looks in the rear view, sees his trunk opening. It closes... and Mort is standing there.

DRIVER
What the hell...?

EXT. DOWNTOWN DENVER - DAY

Mort stays behind the car, taking in his unfamiliar surroundings. The driver rushes up to him, too pissed to keep a distance despite Mort's size and expressionless face.

DRIVER
What the fuck are you doing, man?!
Were you in there? Were you in my
fucking trunk?!

Without acknowledging the man, Mort places his entire palm over his face, shoves him back then runs through the traffic.

INT. JANET'S MINIVAN - MOVING - DAY

Jason sits backward in the passenger seat, flinging his jockstrap at Kevin who swats it away. Janet is on her cell, talking over Jason's laugh and Kevin's protests.

JANET
What do you mean 'overtime'?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - RICK'S CUBICLE - DAY

Rick, wearing a headset, sits in front of a computer. The nameplate on the desk reads: "RICK FORD - DATA ENTRY CLERK."

A half-finished list of people's names, phone numbers and other personal information is on the screen.

RICK
My boss offered me the extra hours,
so I took them.

JANET
Why?

RICK
Why?! Because you and the kids are
financially gangbangng me.

JANET

I said I would go back to work.

RICK

(scoffs)

And do what?

JANET

Anything! Most companies prefer woman because we can multi-task.

RICK

What you really are is Kryptonite to the Supermen of the workplace. With all the PMS, maternity leave, skipping out early to pick up the kids... Equal rights doesn't mean equal efficiency. Men can do twice the work of the most qualified woman.

JANET

Bull-S-H, Rick! What about Sarah Palin? Look how close we were to a woman president.

RICK

Failure before launch. All just over-publicized sex symbols. Case in point: Hilary Clinton. They'll drag that dead goat for the years to come. And it's all because you can't keep your focus.

The computer screen suddenly flashes, the list being overtaken by an ONLINE FANTASY GAME that was forgotten at the bottom of the screen.

Rick pumps his fists triumphantly in the air as a pixilated centaur flaunts around a virtual arena. The speakers echo "You are victorious!". Rick is affirmed.

RICK

(whispers to himself)

I am victorious.

JANET

Are you still there?

RICK

Oh, yeah, what was I saying about focus?

JANET
Damn you, Rick!

She snaps the phone shut. Rick removes his headset, feels nothing from the conversation's abrupt end as he engages in a new round of the game.

The intercutting is over now. The mood tense enough for the boys to notice and fall silent. Jason puts the jockstrap back in his bag while Kevin starts up his ipod.

JASON
Where are we going?

JANET
Getting victory ice cream. We always do this after you win a game...

JASON
Yeah, and it was nice when I was five.

JANET
So you don't want ice cream?

JASON
I want a burger.

JANET
I'm going to make dinner.

Jason grows more irritated, raises his voice:

JASON
If I have to wait for you to get home and thaw some chicken, I'll die. I want a freaking hamburger!

JANET
I just said I'll make dinner as soon as we get home.

JASON
Did you not hear the part where I said I would die?!

JANET
I don't have the money.

JASON
You don't have a freaking dollar?! Take the dollar you were going to use for the ice cream!

JANET
It's not going to be enough.

JASON
They have a ninety-nine cent menu.

JANET
No, they don't.

JASON
They do there!

He points at a FAST FOOD RESTAURANT that flashed by, but Janet isn't stopping. Isn't going to give in to him.

JANET
A burger is not dinner.

JASON
It is for me! Now freaking turn around and stop depriving me of food!

Not listening, Janet keeps going. Jason groans through his teeth, pulls on his seatbelt as if in agony.

KEVIN
Shut up!

Jason whirls around, slaps the music player out of Kevin's hand then turns back, kicks wildly at the dashboard.

JANET
Jason! Stop it! Put your seatbelt on!

JASON
No!

They come to a halt at a red light. Jason jumps out of the van. Janet chases after him. They meet at the front of the vehicle. Kevin watches their muted mouths, worried.

Janet explodes with rage, slaps Jason's cheek. He returns the gesture, then takes off running back the way they came.

The light is green, all of the CARS HONKING as Janet gets in the van and performs a very illegal U-turn.

EXT. BACK OF BUILDING - DAY

The vagrant from earlier sifts through a DUMPSTER. Pulls things out, puts them in his burlap satchel. Suddenly feels a presence behind him.

VAGRANT

Find your own damn spot! This is mine!

A beat. The mysterious presence doesn't move. This time, the vagrant grabs a BEER BOTTLE, BREAKS IT against the dumpster, rushes the presence...

To discover it's Mort. He anticipates the vagrant's attack, slaps the bottom of his hand upward to send the serrated edge of the bottle back into his throat.

The vagrant gasps, stares at Mort with wide eyes as he falls down choking on blood, wind escaping his sliced pipes.

Mort watches impassively as the man breathes his last, then stoops down to remove his TAN JUMPSUIT.

EXT. FAST FOOD RESTAURANT - DAY

Janet's minivan is at the window.

INT. JANET'S MINIVAN - DAY

She thanks the EMPLOYEE as he hands her a paper bag. Jason rips it away from her, inspects it. As Janet drives away:

JASON

Oh my god...

JANET

What now?

JASON

I thought you told those morons no pickles?

JANET

You never said no pickles. Just take them off.

JASON

I'm still gonna taste the pickles and puke all over the side of the car.

KEVIN
I thought I was gonna get ice
cream...

JASON
Shut up, fag, I need it more than
you!

JANET
Jason!

Jason thrusts the burger at Janet. She leans back to avoid the red and yellow condiments touching her shirt.

JASON
Get me a new one! One without
pickles. If I can't get a friggin'
hamburger without pickles, I swear
to God, I will reign fire.

JANET
You're acting ridiculous.

He rolls down the window. Afraid of what he is about to do, Janet splits her focus between him and the road.

JANET
Jason... Jason, don't--!

But he throws the burger out anyway. Janet SLAMS on the BRAKES, sending everyone forward.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Mort wears the vagrant's jumpsuit with the military jacket overtop. Watches from a distance as Janet exits the van to retrieve the burger, despite passing driver's protests.

INT. JANET'S MINIVAN - DAY

Janet gets back in, too out of breath to do anything more than dump the filthy burger into the bag.

JANET
You know, Jason, some days you make
me proud and others... I just have
to effin' wonder.

A sudden POUNDING on the WINDOW startles them. It's Mort, his hands up to show he's not a threat. Janet looks to the boys.

JANET
What should I do?!

KEVIN
Don't, Mom, these guys kill you!

JASON
Just ignore him. The window's are tinted.

MORT
(muffled by the glass)
Um, actually they're not.

Janet has to roll down the window now. Smiles to cover her unease. Mort finally shows some emotion: mild desperation.

MORT
I'm sorry if I frightened you -- that wasn't my intention -- but maybe, if you've got a few minutes, you could help me out...? I'm a war veteran -- honorably discharged, of course -- and I was just wonderin' if --

There is a line of cars behind her, HONKING for her to move. Janet becomes flustered, throws her hands up before driving away. Rolls the window back up.

JANET
I feel bad...

JASON
Fuck the hobos!

JANET
Jason!

JASON
What?

JANET
Language.

They stop at a RED LIGHT.

KEVIN
(incredulous)
Oh my god... he's coming back!

Sure enough, Mort rushes up out of breath, rips open the door, jumps in next to Kevin.

KEVIN

Mom!

MORT

I'm sorry, little fella, I didn't mean to scare ya. If I was gonna do ya'll any harm, I would've slit your throats back at the first light. Ma'am, I just need someone to hear me out. Let me speak my piece and I'll go.

JASON

Get out of our car! I'll freaking kill you!

MORT

Son, there's no need for impoliteness. I'm not like these other guys out there. I didn't quit my job or abandon my family. I am a victim of this unsaturated economy.

Now Mort's desperation has gone from mild to extreme. On the verge of breaking down:

MORT

Everyone tells you to fight for your country or you'll burn in hell, so I fight for my country, and what do I come back to? Hell! If I had known this is what I'd come home to, I would've stayed back in 'Nam and died with my friends.

JANET

I'm sorry, but you need to get out of my car. Right now.

MORT

Would you just... listen to me for a second? That's the problem with people these days -- no one wants to listen for five minutes.

She forces herself to be calm just to get rid of him.

JANET

Alright. I'm listening.

MORT

Thank you! I ain't askin' for money. I ain't a beggar. I learned my lesson. I'm willing to work for it. Anything I can do to help me get back on my feet -- anything at all -- I'll do it. Just give me something to do.

She opens her mouth, but Mort cuts her off, fearing the worst:

MORT

Tell me something that can help me, ma'am. I don't need another excuse.

JANET

You seem very kind, and I want to help you, but I don't think I can make that decision.

MORT

I don't understand...

JANET

I'll need to talk it over with my husband.

MORT

Right! Of course you do! You go run it by him then let me know.

JANET

Do you have a number I can contact you at?

MORT

Actually, ma'am, I don't.

It's time to move. The cars erupt all around them. Janet is forced to drive with Mort still inside. He closes the door.

MORT

You know what? That's alright. I can just come over.

KEVIN

Mom, you don't know anything about him!

MORT

Now he's got a point fine enough to cut a neck, but I swear: I'm not a psycho-killer or anything. Go look me up on a database, you won't find nothin' on me.

JANET

I'm sure I won't. You seem too nice.

(to Jason)

Can you hand me my purse?

Jason picks it up off the floor, but keeps it away from her when she reaches for it. She manages to rip it away, digs out a pen and her checkbook, struggles to scribble an address on the back while steering.

She finishes. Is about to tear it off when Mort stops her, leans forward to read aloud:

MORT

"Three-forty-four, John Adams Way, Jefferson Plantation". I got it.

JANET

Are you sure you can remember it?

MORT

Oh I can remember things for a long time.

(then; abrupt)

Toodles!

With that, he yanks the door open... and jumps out while the van is moving! The family watches in the rear view as he lands on his feet with too much momentum. He is knocked off balance, rolls along the side of the road.

JANET

Oh my god! Is he okay?

KEVIN

Yeah, he's getting back up.

JASON

When Dad finds out about this, he is going to friggin' kill you.

EXT. FORDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

An establishing shot of a middle-class home in a suburban neighborhood. Janet's van is in the driveway. A newer PICKUP TRUCK is parked next to it.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT

Janet sits on the edge of the tub, rubs lotion on her legs, watches with disgust as Rick gurgles and spits at the sink.

JANET
How was work?

RICK
It was work. How do you think it was?

JANET
You seem angry.

RICK
(unconvincing)
I'm not angry.

He wipes his hands off and exits. Janet contemplates whether or not to go after him. Finally...

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Janet enters, sits in a chair. Rick is on the edge of the bed, setting the digital alarm clock. She gets comfortable, picks up a book. Rick slides into bed, turns off the lamp.

RICK
How much longer are you going to be up?

JANET
I don't know.

A long pause. Janet continues to read while Rick silently lies there. Taking charge, Janet throws the book down, goes over to the lamp, turns it on. Rick squints up at her.

RICK
What are you doing?!

JANET
We need to talk.

RICK
About what?

JANET
Did Jason tell you what happened earlier?

RICK
Those black kids chasing him? It sounded deserved.

JANET
No, after that.

RICK
I'm sure if it was important, I would've heard all about it.

JANET
I need you to not say anything and just listen.

It's serious. Rick sits up, dreading what's about to come.

RICK
(groans)
I can only imagine where this is going...

JANET
We stopped for a burger on the way home when this man ripped open the door and jumped inside the van --

RICK
Whoa, whoa, whoa! What does a burger have to do with anything?

JANET
Did you not hear the part where a stranger jumped inside the van?

RICK
Yes, I heard. What did he... what did do? Did he touch you?

JANET
No!

RICK
(quietly)
Did he touch Kevin?

JANET

No! He just wanted to talk.

RICK

Okay...

JANET

He said he needed help. He was a war veteran and he came through hell --

RICK

Oh, geez! They pull that con on everybody. He's not a hard-working "Yes, Senorita" Mexican, he's Richard of Pudlicott looking for a place to rob!

JANET

What was I supposed to do?

RICK

What do you mean, what do you do? You turn him down. You turned him down, right?

Her lips quiver. He slides out of bed, stumbles around, hands on his knees, overwhelmed.

RICK

Oh, god, Janet! God!

JANET

He was in the van, Rick!

RICK

You didn't give him any personal information about us, did you?

JANET

Our address.

RICK

I'm calling the police!

JANET

He said he's not in the database...

RICK

How ignorant can you get?! This goes back to our conversation earlier about women -- and you've proven every point.

JANET
How dare you, Rick?! You weren't
there!

He holds up a hand, shushes her.

RICK
When is he coming over?

JANET
I don't know. We didn't discuss
that.

RICK
So he could just pop over at any
second?

JANET
I told him to let me talk it over
with you, so I'm guessing tomorrow.

RICK
Okay. When he comes, I will deal
with him.

Janet is not convinced he can. He doesn't get it.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Rick stands at the counter, reads the paper while refilling a
glass of orange juice. Checks his watch. It's 8:15.

RICK
I hope he steals a watch.

He looks up in time to see a SHADOW move past the window.
Someone is on the porch. Alert, Rick rushes out into the...

LIVING ROOM

Where his shin connects with a small decorative footstool,
tripping him. He grunts, rolls on the ground, clutching his
wound. The DOORBELL RINGS twice. He is still in pain.

It RINGS three more times in quick succession. Jason walks
right past it, heading up the stairs.

JASON
Someone freaking answer that!

RICK
I swear to God, Jason, you're going
to start paying rent!

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Rick steps out, looks all around. Whoever was there is gone. He suddenly senses something behind him, turns to find Mort standing there. It's a tense face-off.

MORT

I rang the doorbell. Figured ya'll were out back... or hidin' from me.

RICK

Are you the guy?

MORT

Depends. Are you the husband?

RICK

Yeah, yeah I am.

MORT

I assume your wife told you about me possibly doing some work for ya?

RICK

I'm not really sure about that yet.

MORT

Well, I don't like takin' stabs in the dark. I gotta go where there's definite work.

Just as Rick is about to let him down, the SPRINKLERS pop up. The one nearest them is still stuck in the ground, straining to release its liquid. Mort bends down to take a look.

RICK

We just got 'em installed. Some haven't been working right. I'm gonna have to call the guys back out to --

Mort does something to make it work perfectly, forcing him and Rick to back away to avoid being drenched. Mort is handy to have around, which disappoints Rick.

RICK

(quietly)
Shit.

INT. ENTRY HALL - DAY

Rick enters first, closes the door behind Mort.

MORT
What a mighty fine residence.

RICK
Yeah, well, it's a roof over our heads.

MORT
It's better than nothin'.

RICK
(doesn't get it)
So tell me about yourself, Mort.
Where are you from?

Mort looks around, distracted.

MORT
Somewhere north of Alabama, south of Mississippi. You know, around there.

RICK
No, I don't. But I was never any good with geography.

MORT
I'm always relocating. Haven't really been stable the past couple of years.

RICK
I know what you mean. I moved all the time when I was younger.
(by way of explanation)
The army.

MORT
What a coincidence. I was in the army too.

RICK
Oh yeah? What year?

MORT
'Seventy-five.

RICK
That might have been around the same time that I --

Mort immediately turns his attention to Rick, all business.

MORT

I don't mean to offend you, but I'm not much of a small talker. "The backbone of surprise is fusing speed with secrecy." I learned that in my first FBI briefing.

RICK

You were in the FBI? My wife said something about you being a Navy Seal...

MORT

I've been a lot of things, sir.

RICK

No kidding.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Mort and Rick stand in front of the GARAGE DOOR as it slowly rises. Mort's spirits sink when he is able to see what a mess it really is. Every inch is taken up with boxes and unneeded junk. Rick points in all directions.

RICK

The mower's in the corner somewhere, the tools are all over -- kids never put 'em back where they find 'em -- all lawn care and paint are along the walls. I gotta get to work. If you need anything, Kevin and Jason are inside.
(pats Mort's back)
Good luck.

As Rick goes to his truck, Mort looks at his awaiting task with contempt.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

The sun is going down. Mort, jumpsuit darkened with sweat, puts the mower back together. There are VOICES approaching. Mort stands as Janet, Kevin and Jason come into view.

He's suddenly self-conscious. They are clearly going out. The boys look him over as if he's gross.

MORT

The front's all done, but I must've hit a rock or somethin' 'cause the mower stopped on me.

(MORE)

MORT (CONT'D)

It should be fine now, but I won't
be able to cut the back till
tomorrow...

Rick's truck pulls in. He exits, curiously walks over to the group.

JANET

Don't worry about that. I'm just
happy it got done at all. It
hasn't looked this good since we've
lived here.

That hits Rick. He's instantly offended, feels Mort's to blame.

JANET

We were going out for dinner. Why
don't you join us?

MORT

Oh, I wouldn't wanna impose...

JANET

No, it's fine. Right, Rick?

She shoots him a look: Say yes.

RICK

You might wanna clean up a bit
first.

MORT

Absolutely. Won't be two minutes.

Mort goes to the house. Janet shakes her head at Rick.

RICK

What?

INT. CHINESE BUFFET - NIGHT

A little dive that still manages to conjure up decent business. The Fords enter with Mort, who looks slightly cleaner, wearing his army jacket.

They are next in line to pay. Mort pulls out a leather wallet on the verge of disintegrating.

JANET

Oh, no, put that away. We'll get
it.

MORT
I really don't mind payin' my own
way, ma'am.

RICK
I've got it, Mort.
(mutters to self)
It's all my money anyway.

Everyone heads to the buffet while Rick pays. Mort picks up a plate, goes down the row, selects whatever looks good. Rick is suddenly on the opposite side doing the same.

RICK
My god! Can't chicken just be
simple? Look at all these --
Mongolian, Sweet and Sour, Sesame,
Kung Pao-- What the hell is a Kung
Pao? It sounds like a Bruce Lee
movie.

MORT
Everybody has their preferred
flavors.

RICK
Yeah, but how's the average guy
supposed to choose?

MORT
Think of it like women, Rick:
They're all different, but they all
taste the same.

That angers Rick. He thinks it was a subtle threat. Stoops down to glare at Mort.

RICK
You screw my wife... I'll kill you.

MORT
Not if I kill you first.

He shapes his hand to look like a gun, imitates shooting Rick, making a soft "pow" noise to accompany the gesture. Rick doesn't find it amusing. Stares Mort down until a SERVER interrupts to replace the rice dish.

SERVER
Need rice?

RICK
(keeping his eyes on Mort)
No. We're good.

AT THE TABLE

Mort is the first to return. Gets comfortable. About to take a bite when he catches sight of an ELDERLY WOMAN sitting at the opposite table with her HUSBAND who is falling asleep.

She seems to be staring at Mort. He takes a look around. She really is focused solely on him. He nods to acknowledge her, then takes a bite. She's still looking. He slams his silverware down, confronts her:

MORT

Ma'am, there has got to be somethin' better for you to look at, and I suggest you find it because you're being very rude.

He takes another bite. Thinks that got through to her, but she's still staring.

MORT

Okay, ma'am, you're just crossing too many lines now. There are some countries where it is disrespectful for a woman to even lay eyes on a man. Now, I realize we don't live in one, but there is still a level of courtesy that you can offer. One more time -- and I'm gonna ask you as kindly as I can -- to focus on your own fucking plate, or I will find another use for this steak knife.

Scared, the woman looks to her husband for help, but he appears to be in a food-induced coma. The Fords arrive with their plates. Mort is suddenly all smiles.

MORT

You have to try the crab legs. They are amazing.

The woman watches the Fords as they sit. She's going to complain to them. But Mort holds the knife up to his lips, shakes his head as a warning for her to keep quiet or else...

INT. JANET'S MINIVAN - MOVING - NIGHT

Rick drives. Kevin and Jason are in the back. Janet sits next to Rick, reeling from what just happened.

JANET

"Take care, Mort"? Do you have any idea how that sounded? How exactly do you take care as a hobo?

RICK

I was treating him like a normal guy. That's what they want, Janet. And they prefer to be called "vagrants", not hobos.

JANET

No matter what you call them, it doesn't change the fact that they're homeless.

RICK

He's a tough guy, Janet. It's not his first night on the streets.

(then)

What do you want me to do, go back and find him? Maybe ask him to stay the night?

By the look on her face, that is exactly what she wants.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

A bad part of town. Gangs, prostitutes, drugs... and Mort. Walking aimlessly down the street when BLINDING HEADLIGHTS appear behind him. The vehicle they belong to stops.

Mort looks over his shoulder, stops, curiously walks over. It's the Ford's minivan. The window goes down. Mort leans against it. Nods to whatever is asked of him, then reaches inside to shake hands. A deal has been struck.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD - VIETNAM - DAY (1975)

An endless sea of dead bodies, unceasing GUNFIRE and EXPLODING LAND MINES. A shocked SOLDIER stands in place, screaming at nothing when he is suddenly silenced by an EXPLOSION that literally BLOWS HIM TO PIECES!

As blood and guts rain down, Mort jumps through the shower, instantly covered in the red grime. He is much younger now. Just a boy in NAVY SEAL uniform.

He races toward a DOCK where a GROUP OF SOLDIERS are about to escape on a small military BOAT. He waves his arms, yells repeatedly for them to wait, keeps firing behind his back. One of the men spots him.

They are going to wait for him until a BULLET BLASTS through his right THIGH. Mort hits the ground, clutching the wound. Thinking he's dead, the soldier motions and the boat leaves.

Mort's eyes well up as he watches his only chance of escape disappear from view. Something CRUNCHES nearby. Mort looks up, finds TWO ENEMY SOLDIERS upon him. Before he can defend himself, a boot smashes down on his face, knocking him out.

INT. GUEST ROOM - DAY (PRESENT)

Mort shoots awake, dripping with sweat. Breathes slowly, steadily. The dream doesn't frighten him as much as it angers him. He's had it before.

MORT

Dammit.

He throws off the covers, gets out of bed to face a new day.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

Mort mows the grass. For the first time, he takes notice of the neighborhood life -- LITTLE GIRLS running through a sprinkler; an attractive WOMAN jogging with her DOG; a HAPPY COUPLE following a REALTOR up to a beautiful house...

For whatever reason, Mort glares at all of the carefree energy with a strong repulsion.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Janet watches Mort from behind the curtains. Afraid she will be caught, she quickly pulls them closed.

EXT. FRONT YARD - DAY

The mower suddenly STALLS on Mort. He furiously tugs at the cord to restart it. Doesn't see Janet coming up behind him. She places a hand on his shoulder to get his attention.

JANET

I'm sorry, did I startle you?

MORT

No, it's perfectly fine, ma'am.
I'm just trying to get this damn thing started.

JANET

Why don't you take a break from that and come inside...

MORT

I don't need a break. I just started.

JANET

(the real reason)

Rick called. He's not coming home for lunch. Again. And I don't want to eat alone.

Oh. Mort leans against the mower, tries to be gentle.

MORT

I really don't see any good coming from that, ma'am. It's not that I don't appreciate the invitation, but... everything eventually leads sexual.

JANET

Oh! No! No, it was strictly a friendly gesture.

He is embarrassed. Janet smiles warmly to ease it.

MORT

I'm sorry, ma'am, I guess I got the wrong idea.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mort and Janet eat in silence. He looks around the room, searching for a conversation starter. Spots a PHOTO of Rick on the fridge.

MORT

So how'd you meet him? The love of your life.

JANET

(after a moment)

Oh, you mean Rick?

MORT

He is your husband, ain't he?

JANET

Sometimes I wonder why I said yes...

(MORE)

JANET (CONT'D)

It's like I don't know if he still cares, but I think that's the way he's always been. It's just Rick.

Silence again. It's clearly the first time she's confided this in someone. Feels sorry she did. Now she's vulnerable.

MORT

Sometimes a man doesn't always take or have the time to evaluate the things most important to him.

JANET

Do you have someone?

MORT

No. No, I'm the man that never had the time. And who could put up with me, right?

JANET

(smiles)

Maybe they just never took the time to know you.

MORT

I'd like to complain, but I've learned so much. Especially about people -- how cruel and two-faced some of them can be. When you're out there in the real world, it really shows. And it makes you wanna do somethin', ya know? The things you see and hear just shows you what kind of sick world we live in, and it almost makes you wanna be a monster. But you can't give in. It's like how people beg you for the truth, but when you give it to them, they hate you for it.

Janet doesn't understand, but nods anyway. He needed to say it more for himself than for her.

MORT

I'm just ramblin' now.

JANET

It's okay. Things have obviously been hard for you. Sometimes you need to let the things you're feeling out.

MORT

Ma'am, sometimes I feel some dark stuff.

JANET

We all do. And that's okay.

She gently places her hand over his. He doesn't fight it.

INT. MASTER BATHROOM - DAY

Janet is in the shower, enjoying the cleansing stream too much to notice someone else is in the room. The shower door opens and she whirls around... as Mort steps inside.

He's completely naked. Just an aged dog tag around his neck. She can't bring herself to say anything. She's shocked but not repulsed. Allows herself to indulge in a moment of weakness as he caresses her face with the same gentleness she showed earlier. His hands move lower as he closes the door.

The steam covers all but enough bare skin to tell their passionate kissing is about to rapidly escalate to more.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Rick pulls in, exits. Mort is finishing the interrupted lawn mowing. Their eyes lock in an intense stare as Rick walks past. He can sense something. Before Mort gives himself away, he breaks the tension with a polite nod.

DISSOLVE TO:

"TWO WEEKS LATER"

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

A raging party is in progress. Pick up VARIOUS SHOTS of the slightly drunken celebration:

-- A GROUP OF GUYS dance to BLARING ROCK MUSIC with GIRLS in bikini tops.

-- A GOOFY TEENAGER does a cannonball in the pool, causing both laughs and angry screams.

-- TWO KIDS run around the pool, beating each other with foam noodles until one slips and CRASHES onto a SNACK TABLE. People rush over to him, concerned. The kid stands up, laughing. Varied insults are called out.

Rick makes his way through the mayhem carrying an empty tray over his head. Takes it to the GRILL where Haggis and FERGUS, (43), a sardonic asshole, barbecue.

Haggis takes the tray from Rick, piles awaiting hamburgers and hotdogs onto it. Fergus sits on a cooler smoking a cigarette.

FERGUS

If I would've known there would be so many hot bitches here, I would have brought a pack of rubbers.

RICK

For what, to give to your shower-rape buddies in jail? Half these girls aren't even eighteen!

FERGUS

What can I say? They like 'em old, I like 'em young.

RICK

Stick to your hand, it won't get you arrested.

FERGUS

(still watching the girls)
Fuck you, Rick. Fuck you.

Rick rips the cigarette out of Fergus' mouth, throws it out into the yard.

RICK

Don't smoke around the food.

He takes the tray, fights his way back into the crowd. The second Rick is out of sight, Fergus puts three cigarettes in his mouth, goes down the line, lighting them all up. Haggis shakes his head.

FERGUS

I like smoked meat.

Several feet away, Kevin finds the discarded cigarette in the grass, wipes it on his shirt. Takes it to...

THE SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Where a small GROUP of STONERS suck on lit joints, nervously trying to avoid passing neighbors or parents. Kevin approaches them with forced confidence.

KEVIN

You guys got a light?

Despite their incapacitated state, they find Kevin amusing.

STONER

You can't smoke that thing, little chief. You're not old enough.

KEVIN

So you're going by the law now?
Then maybe you should rethink what
you're smoking.

The stoner just got burned and his friends let him know, laughing and making a chorus of "ooooh's".

STONER

Alright, smokey, here you go.

He flicks a lighter to life, holds it up. Ignoring his wavering confidence, Kevin stuffs the cigarette into his mouth, allows the stoner to light it. He takes a puff. It gags him. He spits the cigarette out, coughs with red eyes.

The stoners find it hilarious. Humiliated, Kevin rushes away with them still laughing behind his back.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mort stands in front of a cake that reads: "Happy 17th Birthday Kevin!". A large CUTTING KNIFE lies next to it. Mort stares out the window, deep in thought.

EXT. VILLAGE - VIETNAM - DAY (1975)

Mort is dragged down a pathway of VIETNAMESE SPECTATORS who spit and boo at him. His shirt is wrapped loosely around his bloody leg wound, leaving him naked from the waist up.

In the middle of a collection of bamboo houses on stilts is a LARGE ARENA much like an animal pen. Inside are American soldiers Mort immediately recognizes: WALKIE and JIMBO, a middle-aged guy of average size and a terrified skinny kid.

The spectators crowd around the arena as Mort is shoved in to join his buddies. He rushes to them, relieved to see them.

MORT

How'd you guys survive?

WALKIE

That's not gonna matter.

Walkie is looking past him. Mort follows his gaze and the wild CHEERS of the crowd to find a GIANT of a man headed towards them. He's a "Goliath" compared to the soldiers.

He acknowledges his fans, shakes his massive fists over his head. His neck is adorned with U.S. DOG TAGS taken from his previous victims. Even against three highly-trained Navy Seals, it is doubtful they stand a chance.

Walkie prepares himself along with Mort, but Jimbo only shakes.

MORT

What do they want us to do, fight this son of a bitch?

WALKIE

They wanna watch him kill us.

MORT

Alright, listen: We stick together and we'll be fine. We can take him. We just have to be strategic about it.

WALKIE

I'm with you.

MORT

Jimbo?
(nothing from him)
Jimbo? You got that?

Still trembling, his breathing rapid, Jimbo nods. He's ready. The gate opens, unleashing Goliath. He charges at the group. Mort and Walkie dodge him, run to the other side.

MORT

Jimbo!

He's frozen in place as Goliath plows into him. He falls on his back. Goliath sits on his chest, punches his head on both sides at the same time, crushing his skull. He hoists Jimbo's body up with one arm, rips the dog tag off and finishes by tossing the dead kid into the crowd.

Mort and Walkie look to one another: This is it. Goliath rushes at them. Walkie ducks under Goliath's outstretched hulking arm, throws a punch into his meaty side.

It has no affect as Goliath wraps his arm around Walkie's neck, drags his struggling body over to an area of BROKEN FENCE. Mort can tell what's coming, tries to stop it...

But Goliath's fist connects with his jaw, sending Mort to the ground. He looks up in time to watch Walkie be IMPALED through the STERNUM on the sharp wood. The crowd loves it.

It's Mort's turn to die. To make things interesting, a rusty MACHETE is tossed in. Mort and Goliath look from it to one another, then race towards it.

Mort slides into the mud, his fingers reaching it first. Before he has a chance to use the weapon, Goliath picks him up by the hair. Mort bears the pain, slashes wildly.

Goliath uses his free hand to smash Mort's face, breaking his nose. Mort goes down for a moment, but finds a new energy to get up and throw blind punches that do not faze Goliath.

The giant's foot sweeps under Mort, sends him on his back. Goliath walks around the arena, taunts the crowd to cheer him on even further. Mort squints up at him, eyes full of rage.

He runs full-speed at Goliath with the machete. The crowd alerts him. Goliath turns, ready with his fists, but Mort jumps early. His body falls low enough for him to kick Goliath's knee caps. He falls on them in agony.

Mort lifts the machete to Goliath's head. The crowd screams at him while several men run inside the arena to stop him from killing their hero... but Mort SLICES HIS HEAD OFF!

Blood soaks him. He breathes heavily, spent. Seems to be in shock until the men rush up to restrain him and a violent monster is released. Mort hacks them to pieces.

He hops the fence, slashes the men who attempt to fight him, including one with an AK-47. Mort takes it. The villagers are no match as he RAINS BULLETS even on the women and small children. No one is excluded in his rampage.

It's like he's moving in FAST MOTION -- slashing and shooting like a mad man -- until he is the only one left. Suddenly the monster is gone, leaving only a trauma victim.

Mort looks around at the gruesome bodies, down to his feet, standing in the river of their blood that flows through the village. He throws his head back, screams at the top of his lungs in anguish. Already haunted by this surreal nightmare.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY (PRESENT)

Mort comes out of the memory to find his shaking hand gripping the cutting knife. A DOOR SLAMS off-screen, stopping him from doing anything with it.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Kevin sits on the couch, fuming. Mort sits next to him, holds out a can of beer.

MORT

Beer?

KEVIN

No.

MORT

I won't tell. I know you can handle it.

KEVIN

I don't drink.

MORT

That's alright. I was just testin' you. I know you're a good kid, Kevin.

He pops it open, takes a sip.

MORT

It's so hard to find good kids these days. All turned into wretched little vagabonds after parents stopped beating 'em. But you can't let these kids make you feel less for havin' standards. High school's not the hardest thing, 'cause soon it'll all be over. All the drinkin' and parties and popularity isn't gonna matter. I guarantee you: The worst thing you'll face in school is nothing compared to what you'll face in life.

KEVIN

Like what, working some mundane job to support your pregnant wife in some piece-of-shit apartment?

MORT

Well, that's one of them, Kevin, but I'm talkin' more along the lines of some of deep-shit stuff. The kind of stuff that makes a grown man shit and piss simultaneously in his pants right where he stands.

Mort has captured his attention now.

KEVIN

What kind of stuff?

MORT

I don't know how weak of a stomach you have, Kevin, but the truth of the matter is: this stuff really happens. Like this one time -- a buddy of mine that fought alongside me -- the enemy was playin' jump rope with his intestines. His dried-out intestines. And it was my duty to retrieve those intestines and deliver them to his wife and kids, 'cause that's all that was left of him. Well, there was his head too, but that was bein' used as a soccer ball. I didn't dare barter for it. And I don't think his family would've appreciated it. Just wasn't respectful, especially with a bunch of tennis shoe tracks all over his face.

(takes another sip; then)
Besides, I couldn't get it past customs.

Kevin stares, mouth open. Is he for real? After a long moment of silence:

MORT

Well... nice talkin' to you, Kevin.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Mort exits the living room to nearly collide with Janet, holding Kevin's cut cake.

JANET

There you are! You want the first slice?

MORT
Ma'am, what happened... we can't pretend like it did.

JANET
I don't under --

MORT
I'm sayin', shit happens, Janet. But it was stupid. It can never happen again. Your family took a big chance on me bein' here, and why would I wanna rip that apart? Do you understand?

She begins to cry. Mort places his hands on her shoulders, speaks softly:

MORT
Things just need to go back to the way they were. It's probably best that we keep our distance, maybe a little more than usual.

He is suddenly on edge. Looks around like a paranoid schizophrenic. The complete opposite of the way he just was.

MORT
No!

JANET
What?

MORT
He'd probably suspect that.

JANET
Expect what?

MORT
What we did, Janet! What we did! He's gonna know! Either way, no matter what we do, it don't make a damn difference!

Janet is scared by his sudden change in demeanor. He's like a raging lunatic, stomping off down the hall.

JANET
It's okay. He'll never find out --

MORT
You can't promise that, because you don't know how these things work!

He turns, goes back to her.

MORT

You can spend your whole life
runnin' from somethin', but it
always catches up. It doesn't
matter who you try to become. Your
past... it always drags you back.

The rant is over. He's left breathing heavily. Janet is speechless, and so is he. Frustrated, he walks away.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The messy aftermath. Paper plates and cups litter the counters and floor. Rick and Jason each have a garbage bag, attempting to pick it all up.

Rick catches Jason kick a plate under the dishwasher, then continue cleaning.

RICK

You retard -- pick that up.

JASON

Shut up, wrinkly bitch!

RICK

I will beat you. I swear to God, I
will beat you.

Jason pulls down his pants and underwear, turns his bare ass to Rick. He slaps it several times to taunt him.

JASON

Take a shot, take a shot!

RICK

Oh, you think I won't? Hold still,
you little asswipe.

Rick pulls off his belt, reaches over the counter, swings with so much momentum he not only misses Jason completely, but SMACKS his own face with it. He falls on one knee.

RICK

Ahhh! Ah, god! Son of your
mother's bitch!

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Kevin stands outside the GUEST ROOM. Takes a look around to make sure no one is watching, then steps inside.

INT. GUEST ROOM - NIGHT

It is immaculate. Mort's jacket hangs in the open closet. Other than that everything else seems to be a decoration belonging to the family.

For the thrill of getting caught, Kevin snoops through Mort's jacket pockets, pulls out a piece of aged paper, shoves it back in with no interest. Sits on the bed, bounces up and down several times...

Until -- CLANK! -- something fell out from beneath the mattress. Kevin bends over at the waist, lifts it up to the moonlight to discover he holds a MILITARY KNIFE.

It's more cool than shocking. He spins the blade around. There is a name engraved on the side: "PATTERSON". He frowns. Doesn't mean anything.

He checks the door. No one is there, so he stuffs the knife into the waistband of his pants.

INT. KEVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A backpack lies open on the bed. Doing her best to take her mind off what happened earlier, Janet rummages through Kevin's dresser, pulling out and packing his clothes.

Kevin suddenly bursts in holding his toothbrush, shocked to see her. That shock quickly turns to rage. He rips the pack away from her.

KEVIN

What are you doing?!

JANET

I'm making you outfits.

KEVIN

I don't need 'em! I'm only gonna be there for one night! I'll probably just wear my boxers.

JANET

You wear boxers...?

KEVIN

Stay out of my life, faggot.

JANET

"Faggot" means a bundle of sticks.
Do I look like a bundle of sticks
to you?

KEVIN

Not with those thighs. A bundle of
logs, maybe.

JANET

I was just trying to help you,
Kevin. You don't have to act like
such a little rebel.

KEVIN

So why don't you help yourself out
of my room!

Janet throws the clothes she was holding down onto the bed,
storms past him before he can see her cry.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Rick and Jason still going at it. Rick is up, taking random
swipes at Jason from across the counter. Mort walks in.
Rick and Jason don't even notice him. Mort takes the
abandoned bags and walks out, shaking his head.

MORT

(to self)
Messed up shit.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mort dumps the bags into the garbage bin, turns towards the
house just as Kevin, the backpack slung over his shoulder,
exits. Mort intercepts him in the FRONT YARD.

MORT

You goin' somewhere?

KEVIN

My friend Jeremy's house.

MORT

Need a ride?

KEVIN

He lives three doors down.

MORT
Good band.

KEVIN
Never heard of 'em.

MORT
Really?

Kevin walks away. Mort looks after him.

MORT
They play on the radio twenty-four-
seven. "Citizen Soldier"?
"Kryptonite"?

KEVIN (O.S.)
Nope!

MORT
Shame.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Janet walks in. Rick is gone. Jason eats out of the cake pan with his fingers while reading the "Sports" section.

JANET
Are you still going to the concert?

JASON
Was the ticket seventy-five bucks?

JANET
What?

JASON
Yeah!

JANET
How are you going to get there?

JASON
I'll take the truck.

RICK (O.S.)
No, you're not! Have him take the
van.

JANET
(yells back)
Did you change the oil?

RICK (O.S.)
Gosh-dammit!

JANET
I told you weeks ago!

RICK (O.S.)
I'll do it now!

He appears, holding the rest of the newspaper. Throws it, the pages coming apart and scattering in the air. He storms out while Janet stoops to collect them.

JANET
Call Feldman, have him give you a ride.

JASON
Dad said he's gonna fix it...

JANET
He'll be out there for days.

JASON
Why don't you just cut his balls off and be done with it?

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The only light comes from the TV. Kevin and his loser of a friend JEREMY, (17), sit on the couch playing a video game.

JEREMY
My god! Will you freakin' stop it?!

KEVIN
What?

JEREMY
Stop freakin' killin' me!

KEVIN
It's part of the game, dumbass.

JEREMY
Then face me like a man and quit shootin' me from behind, ya butt-hole-fag.

KEVIN
Stop makin' excuses because you suck.

JEREMY

Yeah, your mom.

KEVIN

You're sick!

JEREMY

Not as sick as your mom was last night.

Unbeknownst to the boys, Mort is there. His footsteps cannot be heard over the BLARING SOUND and their shouts. He moves behind the couch, picks up Kevin's backpack, goes through it.

He does not find whatever it is that he's looking for. Is about to set it back down when he pulls out a CELL PHONE, tucks it in his jumpsuit and moves into the KITCHEN.

INT. FORD'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janet, now in her pajamas, slips into bed with a book, turns the nightly NEWS on for background noise. The camera is on a MANAGER, standing in the middle of a GROCERY STORE.

MANAGER

... we'd catch him in here two to three times a week. He'd come in drunk, fall asleep behind the deli counter -- I don't know! I even caught him urinating two feet from the toilet. When I confronted him, he'd scream in my face. I don't think he was altogether there.

ANCHORWOMAN (V.O.)

Witnesses have identified him as being the same man who assaulted a fellow vagrant in downtown traffic.

The footage cuts to a CONSTRUCTION WORKER in DOWNTOWN DENVER.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER

I saw him run by with a big board, right up to the guy and -- bam! -- smash his face in. The guy didn't even see it coming. Then he took the guy's stuff --

(points to the road)

-- ran by where I was workin' and just... jumped down the open manhole. We didn't go after him.

(a beat)

There's shit down there.

(MORE)

CONSTRUCTION WORKER (CONT'D)

Plus we just wanted to make sure
the other guy was alright.

Now the camera is in a HOSPITAL ROOM.

ANCHORWOMAN (V.O.)

He did survive. He's still in the
hospital, but was well enough to
speak with us.

The drifter from the very beginning of the film lies on the
bed, his face purple and half-banded. He's still filthy,
all of his teeth gone.

He speaks with a passionate anger, but his words are
indistinguishable. Slurred beyond understanding.

Now the final location -- the DUMPSTER AREA where the vagrant
was murdered by Mort. A MALE NEWS ANCHOR stands next to an
OLD VAGRANT who repeatedly tries to talk into the microphone
before his turn.

NEWS ANCHOR

Police went searching for the
attacker only to find his body in
this very dumpster behind me. Only
hours after his attack on a fellow
vagrant, the suspect himself wound
up dead. Further examination
revealed he died after his throat
was slashed with a broken bottle,
found in the dumpster along with
the victim.

(turns to the vagrant)

I have here with me Irvin, who
claims to have been close to the
victim.

The microphone is finally tipped towards the man. Though the
anchor holds it, the vagrant puts his hands on it as well,
talks so closely his lips rub against it.

OLD VAGRANT

We met at --

His lips are too close, causing bad feedback. Every time the
anchor pulls it a few inches away, the vagrant gets closer.

OLD VAGRANT

We were both Catholic, used to go
to the food drive. The church --
they'd give us a place to stay on
Tuesday nights, and that's where we
met.

(MORE)

OLD VAGRANT (CONT'D)

I was the only one he'd talk to.
He had a rough life... a lot of
anger. I don't know why he did
what he did, but sometimes you just
get desperate. It's a tragedy,
man.

NEWS ANCHOR

You're referring to his death?

OLD VAGRANT

Life's a tragedy, man.

NEWS ANCHOR

Yes, it certainly is.
(to the camera)
Back to you, Brenda.

In a STUDIO, an ANCHORWOMEN sitting behind a desk wraps up:

ANCHORWOMAN

Police have released the name of
the attacker-turned-victim as
"Mortimer Jones".

Janet is too in shock to hear the rest. Jumps out of bed,
rushes to the WINDOW. It is black, trees swaying from the
strong breeze of an approaching storm.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The boys still playing the game. Jeremy throws his
controller across the room. It hits a LAMP, knocks it to the
floor with a LOUD CRASH.

JEREMY'S MOM (O.S.)

Jeremy, what the hell did you
break?!

JEREMY

Shut up, whore!

JEREMY'S MOM (O.S.)

You little demon, I will come down
there and beat the Satan out of
you!

Jeremy "pfffts" by blowing air out of his half-closed lips.
Walks off. Kevin notices.

KEVIN

Where are you going?

JEREMY
Don't worry about it.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jeremy opens the freezer, pulls out a BOX of FUDGESICLES. There is one empty wrapper. He throws it, pissed.

JEREMY
I hate it when you do that!

KEVIN (O.S.)
Do what?!

But Jeremy is already heading down the STAIRS into...

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

It's pitch-black. The only light comes from the inside of a massive IGUANA TANK. Jeremy presses his face up to the sleeping creature, makes a hissing noise and beats the glass, but it doesn't stir.

JEREMY
Dumbass.

He continues past into a BLACK ROOM, opens a DEEP FREEZER. Blue light escapes, revealing Mort. Waiting in the shadows behind him. Jeremy finds another box of fudgesicles, pops one in his mouth, turns to come face to face with Mort.

JEREMY
Who the fuck are you?!

MORT
(advancing)
Don't worry about it.

In a flash, Mort wraps a strand of CHRISTMAS LIGHTS around Jeremy's neck, pushes him against the freezer. Jeremy struggles wildly as he chokes, but he can't overpower Mort...

MORT
Shhh. You'll wake your parents.

Finally, Jeremy's breath stops coming. Mort waits a few extra moments to be certain he is actually dead. Satisfied that he is, Mort holds the body up with one hand, plugs the green-and-red lights into the wall with the other.

Were they wrapped around a tree and not a teenager's dead neck, it would be beautiful. But Mort still finds it captivating. Quietly sings:

MORT
 Oh Christmas kid, oh Christmas kid,
 you died way too easily...

He releases his grasp around the lights, dropping Jeremy's body.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mort walks up to the counter, opens a BAG of BREAD, sticks a slice in the nearby TOASTER. While it heats, he takes a peak in the LIVING ROOM to make sure Kevin is still there. He is.

The toast pops up. Mort puts it in his mouth and exits.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Jeremy's DAD is in the shower. Mort slips in, examines his disheveled appearance in the mirror. Smooths his hair back. Notices a HAIR DRYER plugged into the wall.

Jeremy's dad sees Mort's shadow through the curtain. It looks like anyone.

JEREMY'S DAD
 Do you wanna join me?

Mort looks over at the waiting silhouette, contemplates something before moving over and ripping the curtain open. Jeremy's dad barely has time to register shock before --

MORT
 No, thank you.

-- Mort turns the dryer on, tosses it in. It makes contact with the water, shoots SPARKS and SMOKE, ELECTROCUTING Jeremy's screaming father. He is dead in seconds.

MORT
 (looks down; surprised)
 She settles for that dick?

He pulls the CURTAIN ROD down. Takes it with him out into...

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Where Jeremy's three hundred pound bitch of a MOTHER confronts him with the nastiest look of disdain. She opens her mouth --

MORT

Don't wanna hear it.

-- but Mort swings the rod like a bat, CRACKS her across the face, instantly drops her. A large spray of BLOOD SPLATTERS across the wall.

INT. JEREMY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin still plays the game. Someone suddenly sits next to him. He forces himself to look over. It's Mort. Just staring at him. Kevin is confused and a little frightened by Mort's silent appearance. Looks him over...

Sees he is spattered with blood. Kevin reacts, whips out the knife he stole. But Mort anticipated this, grabs Kevin's wrist, happy to see the blade.

MORT

So that's where it is...

INT. FORD'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janet is in panic-mode. Picks up the phone to find the LINE is DEAD. She opens her purse, pulls out her cell phone, dials a number and waits until...

CLICK. Someone on the other side has picked up. She is flooded with relief.

JANET

Kevin?

MORT (V.O.)

(monotone)

Kevin's not here right now. If you'd like to reach him, please hang up and try again. If you'd like to leave a message, wait until after the beep.

(a beat; high-pitched)

Beeeeeeeeep.

JANET

Mort...?

MORT (V.O.)
How'd you guess?

JANET
Where's Kevin? Why do you have his
phone?

MORT
Better question: Why are you
botherin' him? Did he forget to
wipe his ass?

Janet musters all the courage she can, tries to hide the
shaky terror in her voice.

JANET
Where is he?

MORT
Oh, he's right here with me.

JANET
I want to talk to him.

MORT
What, you don't believe me? Look
out the window if you want proof.

She rushes to it, peers out to find Mort standing in the
DRIVEWAY. Kevin is indeed next to him, frozen still,
grimacing as Mort combs his hair with the knife. Janet
covers her mouth to keep from screaming.

MORT
All I want is a favor, Janet. I'd
get no satisfaction hurting you or
your boy. The way I see it, the
both of you can still make it out
of this alive.

JANET
What do you want?

MORT
I always admired that about you,
Janet -- you get straight to the
point. Just like when we fucked.

Janet bites her lip, wanting to cry more than ever. What was
once a good mistake is now a painful memory.

MORT

But it's quite simple, really. All I want are the names and addresses of all the people who were at the party. Have your boy bring 'em to me. You'll see him real soon.

That brings some momentary relief for her.

JANET

Why now, Mort? After all we did for you... I protected you because I thought you were different.

MORT

No, Janet, you knew exactly the kind of person I was from the start.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Haggis and Fergus exit, both exhausted and strangely exhilarated, their clothes and hair askew. Fergus sticks a victory cigarette in his mouth, lights it up.

HAGGIS

I cannot believe we tag-teamed that bitch.

FERGUS

She put up quite the fight, didn't she? I never thought of incorporating bungee cords...

They reach an old loser wagon of a car. Fergus gropes himself.

HAGGIS

What?

FERGUS

I don't have my keys on me...

HAGGIS

Did you leave them up her ass?

FERGUS

(dawning on him)
I left 'em at Rick's.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - SIDE YARD - NIGHT

Mort and Kevin are hidden in the shadows. Mort is about to send Kevin inside when they hear VOICES approaching. Haggis and Fergus are coming up to the house, which infuriates Mort.

Haggis RINGS the DOORBELL while Fergus waits behind him, still casually sucking on the cigarette. Mort dials a number on the cell phone, waits as it rings.

MORT
 (quietly to self)
 Don't even think about it...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Janet is on her way to answer the door when her cell vibrates. It reads: "Kevin calling". All of her hopes for rescue are obliterated.

She senses something, turns to the BACK DOOR to find Mort staring through the glass. And by the expression he wears, it's clear Kevin is dead if she squeals. She nods. Gets it.

Mort makes sure she stays put. Janet is losing it as the DOORBELL RINGS several more times. Trying desperately to refrain from crying out. She checks the back door again... but Mort is gone.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Fergus grows impatient as Haggis continues to press the bell.

FERGUS
 It's obvious no one's home.

HAGGIS
 Then why are all the lights on?

FERGUS
 Maybe they're all out back havin'
 an orgy... I'll go check.

HAGGIS
 I'll wait here.

FERGUS
 Don't need a play-by-play.

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Fergus is nearly to the backyard when he stops, backs up. Spots something sticking out of the BUSHES. He stoops, pulls out a ROLLED-UP MAT. Opens it to discover a BLACK MACHETE. What the hell--? Reaches out to touch it when:

The BUSHES SHAKE, followed by Mort bursting out. He knocks Fergus onto his back, uses his knees to pin him to the ground. Goes ape-shit all over his face with clenched fists.

The SPRINKLERS suddenly pop up. Mort stops the brutal beating. Lifts a barely-conscious Fergus by his collar, slams his head down onto the sprinkler, IMPALING it. A stream of crimson splashes up through the hole in his skull.

MORT

Well now, if there was one lesson
learned tonight, it's to never
interfere in another man's
business.

Mort looks to his prize -- the machete. Picks it up, holds it to the light, examines it. Brings the blade close to his face, admires its beauty before giving it a quick lick.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Haggis still waiting. Irritated, he stomps off towards the opposite side of the house.

HAGGIS

My god... can't do the simplest of
things.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

There is no one in sight. Haggis makes his way up the DECK, following the blazing lights in the kitchen, to find Janet frozen in place. He raps on the glass with his knuckles.

Janet startles, her terror mounting when she sees Haggis... and Mort coming up behind him. But Haggis is unaware of his presence, motions for her to unlock the door.

She won't budge. Shakes her head tensely: No. He doesn't understand she is subtly trying to warn him. Haggis pulls on the knob, angry now that she won't respond. He shrugs. What's going on? Janet shakes her head more fiercely as:

Mort raises the machete, swings it to the back of Haggis' NECK, pushes his entire body against the glass. Janet's screams are MUTED as blood covers the glass.

Haggis' body slowly slides down, away from his severed head, the glass completely red now, obscuring the violence. Janet turns away, sobbing.

A soft SQUEAKING makes her dare to steal a glance back. Mort's finger draws two circles and an upward curved line beneath them to create a crude smiley face. Mort aligns his eyes behind the circles, makes them "blink".

As Janet covers her mouth to muffle her cries, Mort turns away, holds the head up.

MORT

Alas, poor fucker...

He lets it drop, punts it like a football into the pool. Something BANGS close by. Mort looks out towards the UTILITY SHED. The rickety door gently opens and closes on its own, blown by a mild wind.

INSIDE THE SHED

Kevin hides behind a tool chest, cowering in the darkness. There are enough cracks in the wooden structure to allow plenty of moonlight in. A figure suddenly blocks the silver rays out.

MORT (O.S.)

(sing-song)

Kevin...

KEVIN

Stay away from me! I know what you did!

Mort pushes the door aside, stands in the doorway, offended. Kevin squints away as light pours in.

MORT

Now why would you say that, Kevin?
All I ever wanted was to be your friend. I recognized your talents.
(sharply)
Something your father never had the time for. I guess he was always disappointed that his little boy couldn't throw a ball as far as his brother...

KEVIN

Shut up!

Kevin bolts up, fists shaking with rage.

MORT

It's okay to be angry, but don't hate me because I'm right.

KEVIN

You said you were my friend, but friends don't lie.

MORT

I never did lie to you, Kevin. Never once.

KEVIN

How can I know that?

MORT

Because I have nothing to hide.

KEVIN

Then tell me... did you kill them?

MORT

Kill who?

KEVIN

Haggis and Fergus -- Jeremy -- did you kill them?!

MORT

(sighs)

Why would I lie to you now, Kevin?

Kevin suddenly tries to make a break for it, but Mort grabs him, shoves him up against the shed.

MORT

Listen to me, Kevin!

Mort has him effortlessly pinned. Kevin is no match. Stops struggling. Is all ears.

MORT

This can go one of two ways, and one of those ways prevents me from doing something I really don't wanna do. So I'd advise that you listen closely... and focus intently.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Classic 80s ROCK MUSIC BLARES from a stereo. The minivan is parked inside. Rick lies under it on a sliding cart, half of his attention on changing the oil and the other half devoted to a girlie magazine taped next to the drain plug.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Mort finishes what is clearly an intense conversation with Kevin, made even more intense by the blood-soaked window behind them. Kevin's eyes find Haggis' mutilated corpse.

MORT

... Do you understand?

KEVIN

Yes.

MORT

Good.

Kevin is about to walk away when:

MORT

And Kevin?

(he turns back)

If you do somethin', I'll know.
I'll slit your throat faster than
you can scream "help".

Understood. Mort watches Kevin make his way up the deck.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Janet can barely contain her relief as Kevin enters through the doors.

JANET

Kevin! Are you okay--? Did he
hurt you?

She rushes him, but he holds her away at arms length, stoic.

KEVIN

They're dead -- Jeremy and his
parents -- he killed them.

JANET

Oh god...

KEVIN

We have to do this. We have to do
what he says.

Janet sees Mort watching through the window, waiting for them to do what he says, anticipating if they don't.

As Kevin follows Janet to the kitchen drawer, Mort follows them from window to window...

EXT. SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Mort has a better view. Watches Janet produce a pen and pad of paper, begins writing.

Lights suddenly stream across Mort's face. He follows them to find a car pulling in the driveway... then they pull back out, much to his relief. Just turning around.

Once they are gone, Mort goes back to the window just in time to see Kevin and Janet halfway up the stairs.

MORT

Unbelievable!

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Janet bursts in, rushes to the bed, pulls a LARGE BOX out from underneath. Kevin watches as she removes a SHOTGUN and TWO SHELLS. She fumbles with them.

JANET

I don't know what I'm doing!

KEVIN

Just put the bullet in!

JANET

Where?!

KEVIN

Give it to me. Let me do it!

JANET

You are not touching this.

She manages to put it halfway in.

KEVIN

Pump it, pump it!

The WINDOW suddenly SHATTERS apart as Mort smashes through it, rolls onto his feet in front of Janet. She swings the gun up. Mort grabs it, wrestling until overpowering her.

He shoves her back with such force she flies onto the bed. Her head smacks against the backboard, knocking her out. Mort pumps the gun, spitting the shell out. He grabs it in mid-air, puts it in correctly.

Kevin rushes him, yelling. Throws a punch at Mort's face, which makes contact. A trickle of blood escapes his lip. Mort sucks it up, spits it away. Looks back to Kevin, disappointed by the betrayal.

MORT
Really, Kevin?

Mort HEADBUTTS him.

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Jason exits the BATHROOM, dressed for a night out, when Kevin stumbles backwards out of his parent's room. Falls to the ground. Mort stands over him, rubbing his sore lip.

JASON
Hey!

As Jason makes his way towards Mort, he reaches in his room and grabs a BASEBALL BAT, comes at Mort with it held high.

Mort turns in his direction, revealing the shotgun that has been obscured behind his leg.

JASON
Shit!

He runs in the opposite direction, but Mort SHOOTS HIS LEGS! Jason goes down, screaming. Rolls over to face Mort.

JASON
I'll never play football again, you piece of fuck!

MORT
When an animal breaks its leg, you gotta put it out of its misery.

Jason watches in horror as Mort calmly lifts the shotgun to his face and gives it a final pump.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Despite the still BLARING ROCK, Rick hears a faint but distinct POP. Turns the stereo down. Waits for another... but a second never comes.

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

What is left of Jason's face seeps blood. Mort walks away from the mess, towards the STAIRS when they CREAK. Someone is coming up them.

Just as Rick's head begins to appear, Mort tosses the gun aside and charges. Rick doesn't have time to react as Mort, with a warrior-like yell, TACKLES HIM back down the stairs.

They hit a few steps before rolling over and SMASHING THROUGH the BANISTER, splitting it to pieces. They end up in:

THE LIVING ROOM

Mort is the first to recover, able to stand while Rick lies on his back, too in pain to do any more than groan between clenched teeth. Mort releases a pained cry...

Because one shoulder is higher than the other. Dislocated. Mort holds the wrist of his wounded arm, leans forward and SMASHES IT up against the wall, POPPING it back into place.

Once the agony subsides, Mort pulls his jumpsuit down to reveal his bare, rippling chest. The DOG TAGS still hang from his neck. There is a colorful military TATOO on his back, surrounded by tiny dots of blood from splinter flecks.

MORT

Old wounds, Rick -- they never
heal, do they?
(screams)
Do they?!

Mort walks towards Rick, ties his sleeves together, keeping the top of the jumpsuit wrapped around his waist.

MORT

Get up.

But Rick can barely breathe.

MORT

If I can do it, so can you.

A few moments pass, but Rick is no closer to standing, so Mort hoists him up.

MORT

It's not easy, is it? Bein' the
one left behind.

Mort's rage kicks back in at Rick's silence. He SLAMS Rick's head down onto the COFFEE TABLE. Pulls him back up, shoves him against the WINDOW. His hair and blood fill the cracks.

Rick takes a feeble swing at Mort, who grabs his incoming fist with one hand and his throat with the other, slams him back down onto the ground. Mort grabs his legs and runs, drags him through the FOYER, down the HALLWAY and into the...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

... where he releases Rick, who gasps faint words. Mort stoops to hear him.

MORT

Sorry, I didn't catch that?

RICK

If you lay a finger on my family...

MORT

You'll do what, Rick? Really, I'd like to know. What would you do?
(nothing from him)
Yeah, that's what I thought.

CRACK! Mort's elbow slices across Rick's face, knocking him out cold. Interrupting once again, much to Mort's disbelief, is the RING of the DOORBELL.

INT. FOYER - DAY

The door swings open to reveal Feldman, standing with his hands in the baggy pockets of a gray hoodie.

FELDMAN

Yo, you dat dude, right? The bum
they got workin' for 'em?

Mort scowls. The kid is obviously high. Behind him is an awaiting STATION WAGON, the wood paneling replaced by graffiti. No one else is in sight.

MORT

Can I help you with somethin', sir?

FELDMAN

Yo, man, you don' gotta be all serious with dat "sir" and shit. I'm just here to pick up Jason.

MORT

He's asleep.

FELDMAN

No shit!

MORT

No, no shit. He was dead-tired.

FELDMAN

Well go wake him up!

MORT

It's like wakin' the dead, but feel free to try.

He turns back inside with Feldman following. Mort discreetly drops his WALLET but continues on. Pretends he doesn't know it fell. Feldman stoops to pick it up. When he is bent over in the doorway:

Mort SLAMS the DOOR, smashing it against Feldman's head which slams into the frame. He collapses. Mort drags him in, looks back up to find little shadows moving under the door.

He opens it, but nobody is there. At least it seems that way until a throat clears and he looks down to see THREE BOY SCOUTS standing there, eye level to his waist. Mort seems indifferent to them.

BOY SCOUT

(reciting from memory)

Excuse me, sir, would you like to help support the Boy Scouts of America?

The indifference vanishes instantly. Mort is overly friendly. Blocks Feldman's body from their view.

MORT

Well sure! And how might I go about that?

BOY SCOUT

We're selling cookies.

MORT

Not the popcorn tins ya'll did last year? I liked them.

BOY SCOUT
No, it's cookies. We have a wide selection.

MORT
Well what'dya got?

Boosting their confidence, the boys are excited now, warmed up to this seemingly kind stranger.

BOY SCOUT
Ginger snaps and chocolate mint.

MORT
What happened to them peanut butter ones in the shape of flowers?

BOY SCOUT
They were discontinued 'cause of the salmonella.

MORT
Oh, that's not good... Not good at all.

(then; back to business)
I like the mint. How much for a box?

BOY SCOUT
Eight dollars.

MORT
That is highway robbery! But put me down for two boxes. It's for a good cause.

He is handed a CLIPBOARD with a barely full list of names.

BOY SCOUT
I just need you to sign this.

MORT
You're not gonna steal my identity now with this information, are ya? 'Cause some people are fucked up enough to do that.

The boys don't even react to the curse word. They laugh with him, shaking their heads. Liking him even more.

BOY SCOUT
We won't.

Mort looks across the street, noticing for the first time a MINIVAN with watching PARENTS. He gives them a wave then signs the boy's list.

MORT

So when can I expect these?

BOY SCOUT

Two to three weeks.

Hearing that makes Mort switch right back to impassive. They gave the wrong answer. He shoves the clipboard back into the confused boy's hands. Brusque:

MORT

Won't be here.

And with that, he SLAMS the DOOR in their pale little faces.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mort exits the house, walks towards RICK'S PICKUP wearing Feldman's hoodie and sweatpants, looking like Eminem.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

The boy scouts are halfway across the street when HEADLIGHTS blind them. They scream like girls as Mort swerves the truck at the last second to avoid hitting them.

As the mortified parents watch from the safety of their van, Mort rolls down the window, yells:

MORT

Cancel my order!

EXT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Even at a late hour, all spaces are taken.

INT. RICK'S PICKUP - MOVING - NIGHT

Mort has obviously been circling for a while. Finally, beyond frustrated...

EXT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - CONTINUOUS

... he pulls up to the CURB, parks and exits. Walks past a BLACK MAN from the Salvation Army, ringing a bell.

SALVATION ARMY GUY
Yo, man, you can't park there!
It's for firefighters and shit.

But Mort isn't stopping.

MORT
Just goin' in to find my wife.

SALVATION ARMY GUY
Well, hurry up before they tow your
ass.

Now Mort stops, goes back, gets up in the stunned guy's face.

MORT
If you stand by idle and let
someone tow my vehicle, so help me
god, sir, I will personally take
your little money box and use its
funds to sue your company into the
ground. It'll fuck your life up.

SALVATION ARMY GUY
How dare you, man?! This is for
charity.

MORT
(turns away; growls)
Yeah...

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - 2ND LEVEL - NIGHT

Mort rides the ESCALATOR up, steps off, walks past aisle
after aisle of outdoors equipment.

THE GUN DEPARTMENT

A few guys who know something about guns and the rest just
pretending they do. Mort is amongst them, holding a RIFLE,
lining SHOPPERS up in his sights and pretending to shoot
them, making soft "pow!" noises to mimic gunshots.

A SALES ASSOCIATE spots him. Has to approach Mort like a
customer though he looks like a deranged bum.

SALES ASSOCIATE
Can I help you with something?

MORT
Yeah, you got suppressors?

SALES ASSOCIATE
No, we don't. They actually
require a special license.

MORT
And where might I acquire one of
those?

SALES ASSOCIATE
I don't know... it's something
you'll have to look into.

MORT
I just might do that.

SALES ASSOCIATE
What are you going to use it for?

Mort is caught. Tries to shrug it off innocently.

MORT
Rabbits.

SALES ASSOCIATE
If you're hunting rabbits, you
don't want to use this. There
won't be anything left of it.

MORT
Ain't that the point?

The associate doesn't know how to respond. Watches Mort
place the gun back on the rack.

MORT
What do you think it'd do to a
human? Be pretty sick, right?

SALES ASSOCIATE
I, uh, don't...

MORT
Thanks for your help.

Mort walks away, leaving the associate speechless.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - CHECKOUT - NIGHT

Mort is next in line. Patiently waits while an overly
confident SLICK GUY pays for a BAG of GOLF BALLS. Mort
discreetly flicks open a POCKETKNIFE on his keychain, cuts a
small tear in the netting of the bag.

SLICK GUY

Yeah, yeah, thanks. I don't need the receipt.

The man is finished paying, picks up the bag, turns away when it shreds open, spilling the balls all over.

MORT

Gotta keep your balls in order.

Mort chuckles, amused. The man glares at him. Mort's face goes hard and he turns back to the register. Puts an old MILITARY SATCHEL on the counter. A pretty CASHIER scans it.

CASHIER

Is this all for you?

MORT

If I had somethin' else, I woulda put it up there, wouldn't I?

CASHIER

Yeah, dumb question, right?

MORT

Wrong. There's no such thing.

CASHIER

Nineteen seventy-five.

Mort pays with cash.

MORT

Tough year.

CASHIER

I wouldn't know. I wasn't born then.

MORT

Probably a good thing. 'Lotta men died that year... and I would've hated to have seen your pretty little face rottin' in some piss trough.

(then; looks her over)

Yep, I can see 'em now -- the enemy castin' lots to rape your corpse.

He's not kidding. The cashier contemplates how to confront him when he suddenly snaps back into a cheerier mode.

MORT

Where's your bathroom?

The frightened girl points him in the direction, eager to get rid of him. As Mort takes his bag and goes, the others in line watch him with disgust.

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - RESTROOM - NIGHT

Coming from one of the few stalls are the violent screams of a man desperately trying to relieve his bowels.

He will be called "COWBOY" due to his pointed leather boots, wildly kicking out and spreading underneath the stall.

COWBOY

Oh god... oh god... Son of an
unholy fuckin' bitch!

As the wave subsides, Mort enters, stands in front of the stall door and knocks. Cowboy looks up, red-faced, trembling. Through the straining:

COWBOY

It's occupied.

Mort knocks again, more aggressively now.

COWBOY

Fuck you and your firstborn child!

BAM! Mort kicks the door in -- the lock flying off -- smashing it into Cowboy's knees. He cries out yet again as Mort hoists him up and out of the stall.

Cowboy spins, pants around his ankles, into the sink. It SHATTERS from the impact, spraying water, instantly flooding the floor. Cowboy slips and slides out of the room, pulling up his shit-stained pants.

IN THE STALL

Mort stands on the toilet, pushes up a ceiling tile, removes several SMALL PACKAGES from the hiding space and places them in his new bag.

EXT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - NIGHT

The Salvation Army guy still rings his bell, stares Mort down as he walks back to the untouched truck.

SALVATION ARMY GUY

(defiant)

Where's your wife?

MORT

It's over.

SALVATION ARMY GUY

Probably 'cause you so uptight.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick's pickup stops out front. Though it is late and there is no one in sight, the turn signal goes on before the truck pulls into the drive.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mort sets the bag on the counter, removes the hoodie. Using his nearby knife, he slices down the crotch of the pants to easily rip them off.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Complete darkness. The heavy THUD of BOOTS coming down the steps. Mort turns on the lights, faking surprise at the sight before him --

MORT

Right where I left ya!

-- The Fords, still very much alive. Janet and Kevin are bound and propped up against the wall along with Jason's horribly mutilated corpse.

Rick is duct-taped to a LAT PULL DOWN MACHINE in front of them, his hands securely fastened to the bar. Currently, the weight is minimal. Easy for Rick to keep held down.

MORT

Kevin... I know you think your brother didn't care much for you, but he had some final words for ya that I'm sure he wanted me to share.

Janet can hardly contain her tears as Mort uses Jason's body like a puppet, moving his arms up to touch Kevin's face.

MORT

(in a high voice)

I love you, little brother. I always will.

(MORE)

MORT (CONT'D)

You can even bone my girlfriend,
but make sure you wrap it up before
you do, 'cause teen pregnancy is
rampant in this country.

Kevin turns every which way, trying to get away from the dead hands.

JANET

Stop it! Stop it, you sick fuck!

Mort is appalled. Still holding Jason's arm, he points it in her direction.

MORT

It's a good thing I didn't let you
go down on me with that mouth.

Rick's eyes flare to Janet, who hangs her head in shame. Mort catches the discovery moment of betrayal between them.

MORT

You heard right: We did it. In
your shower, Rick.

RICK

(through gritted teeth)
I'll kill you.

MORT

That was the deal, wasn't it?

Mort walks around to the side of the machine, removes the pin. Rick strains to see what he is doing.

MORT

But I distinctly remember I said,
"Not if I kill you first".

RICK

Don't... don't...

MORT

Oh I'll start out gentle.

He places the pin back in, taking it to fifty pounds. As Rick cries out in exhausted pain:

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Dead in the middle of the day. Mort enters, walks past TWO BUSINESS MEN striking a deal over hot wings and beer. They glare at Mort as he walks past and sits at the counter.

An average BARTENDER in his fifties turns around, wiping off a mug.

BARTENDER
What can I get ya?

MORT
Whiskey.

BARTENDER
Are you sure? That's a pretty hard-core drink, 'specially at this hour.

Mort glares at him with tired eyes. Doesn't want to ask again. Not going to push his luck, the bartender surrenders. He turns his back, begins pouring the drink.

Reaching into his pocket, Mort retrieves a piece of FOLDED PAPER, sets it on the counter just as the bartender returns with the drink.

The bartender looks on as Mort drinks the entire thing in one swallow. Rather than being intimidated, he is interested in this obviously tormented soul.

BARTENDER
Don't take offense in me sayin' this... but you look like you've been wadin' through some waist-high shit.

MORT
I got a list of the men responsible for fuckin' up my life.

BARTENDER
And this is how you're gonna handle it, drowning yourself in alcohol? Do something about it.

MORT
There ain't a damn thing I can do.

BARTENDER
And who decides that?

That gets Mort's attention. He looks right at the man now, his interest beyond piqued. Didn't think there were other options.

BARTENDER

You know how many men take their grievances out against the innocent 'cause they don't know who to blame? Well you do, so go after 'em.

(repeats with passion)

Go after 'em. Get yourself some sweet vengeance.

MORT

There's an entire list. I ain't gonna go after 'em all.

BARTENDER

Then make it simple: Pick one.

Mort shakes his head. This seems crazy, but...

MORT

And how do you suppose I go about that?

BARTENDER

When I had to pay my water, gas and electric and only had enough for one, I did what any smart man would do.

(a beat)

I left it to fate.

MOMENTS LATER

The paper is unfolded, revealing a LIST of TWELVE NAMES. The bartender tapes it over a DARTBOARD.

Mort stands back, holding a single dart. The bartender watches from a distance.

BARTENDER

Make it a good one.

Mort takes a breath, raises the poised dart, focuses then lets it fly. It impales a name: "PATRICK FORD".

It brings instant relief to Mort to know who to take all of his pain out on. The bartender stands behind him, reads the name over his shoulder.

BARTENDER

That's him.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Rick has stopped screaming, whimpering now as his arms falter. Mort is inches from his face, studying him.

MORT

How does it feel, Patrick? It's tearin' you apart inside, isn't it? Little by little. With each passing second.

(then; quietly)

Tick-tock, tick-tock...

JANET

Why are you doing this?!

Mort looks to her, amazed at how she could ask such a thing. Scratches his chin with sarcasm.

MORT

"Why am I doin' this?" You mean you really don't know? I figured your husband would've told you after all these years.

Looks between the Fords are exchanged all around. If they have any idea what Mort is talking about, they're doing an award-winning job of not showing it.

KEVIN

Told us what?

MORT

That is a good question. You are the clever one!

Now it's just Mort and Rick. All of Mort's emotion is stripped down to nothing but deep, tormented sadness.

MORT

You remember all them young boys servin' in Vietnam, dyin' thousands of miles away from home? Stories are always circulating about the ones that never got out -- the MIA's. Whatever happened to them. No one knows for sure. Most people wanna disregard the whole thing as nothin' but a bad dream. They wanna forget.

(then; harsh)

But I can't forget, Rick. I can't forget those who left me for dead.

He pauses, expects that to land... but Rick looks at him with such confusion it takes Mort's anger to fury.

MORT

Do I have to spell it out for you?!

From a pocket of his jumpsuit, he produces a crumpled piece of paper that is slightly discolored from age. Holds it up to Rick's face.

MORT

"Patrick Ford. Served nineteen seventy-nine. Vietnam."

Rick stares at him for an intense moment, then lets out a strained laugh, which confuses Mort.

RICK

My name's "Richard Ford", ya dumbass. Check my license.

Mort is hesitant, but reaches into Rick's pocket, pulls out his wallet.

MORT

I hope it's just because of the cold, otherwise...
(looks to Janet)
... I can see why you're so unsatisfied.

He flips the wallet open and, sure enough, under Rick's license photo is the name "Richard Ford". Mort stumbles away, his world turned upside down.

MORT

You weren't on the boat...

RICK

What?

MORT

Vietnam! You weren't one of them bastard fucks that left me for dead!

He calms, suddenly realizes something that makes him soften.

MORT

But you would've had to been in the army too, right? A lot of boys were drafted. And there's no way the numbers would've been in your favor.

Rick's silence and hung head makes Mort realize something else that takes him back to hardened.

MORT

No... say it ain't so, Rick.

RICK

I was scared. I'd heard those stories about kids dying and ending up in camps. I just couldn't bring myself to face it.

But it only makes things worse. Mort repeatedly kicks the wall, yells "Dammit, dammit!" with every kick. The Fords cringe until the rage finally subsides. Mort faces them.

MORT

Well guess what, Rick? Unlike you and all them other yellow-bellied bastards, I had to face it. I was one of those kids!

(to Janet)

Did you know? When you married him, did you know he was a deserter?

By her silence and inability to look him in the eye, it's a yes. Mort laughs. Has to it's so ridiculous.

MORT

You hear that, Kevin? The old man isn't G.I. Joe after all, and your momma might as well piss on apple pie.

(a breath; lost)

Well, what am I supposed to do now?!

RICK

Let us go. We'll forget this ever happened --

MORT

Nice try, Rick, but I've got too much time invested in this to just "let it go". No, somebody's gotta pay for what's been done to me.

While Kevin and Janet lose hope, Rick becomes hard to the point of downright defiant.

RICK

Go ahead! Do it! Load it up!

MORT

(amused)

You thrive on pain, don't ya, Rick?
But every man has his breaking
point.

In a series of rapid movements, Mort yanks the pin out and places it as high as it will go, causing Rick to cry out in anguish. Janet and Kevin scream with him, yelling for Mort to stop and that he's hurting him...

But Mort sets his face like stone. Walks up the steps and, tuning out their desperate pleas, closes the door.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Mort nails plywood over the windows as if preparing for a hurricane. Even the front door has crisscrossing boards. He pounds the nails with fury.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

The family is still screaming. Rick strains, about to give in and let go when the CHAIN suddenly SNAPS! It releases him so quickly he gasps for air.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As Mort finishes with the final window, an OUTDATED CAR pulls into the drive across the street. Mort sighs heavily. Yet another interruption.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Janet manages to work herself free, then helps Kevin. Together they help Rick. Kevin rips the tape off too fast, making Rick scream like a little girl.

EXT. FORD'S HOUSE / MRS. JOHNSON'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Over Mort's shoulder, an elderly nuisance of a woman, MRS. JOHNSON, exits the car and waves wildly at his back.

MRS. JOHNSON

Mortimer!

MORT

(under his breath)
Go to hell.

MRS. JOHNSON
 Would you be a dear and help me
 carry my groceries into the house?
 I can't with this arthritis...

MORT
 Why sure! Lemme just finish this
 up here and I'll be right over.

He turns away and tucks the hammer into the waist of his
 jumpsuit.

EXT. FOYER - NIGHT

Janet supports Rick, helping him along while Kevin tugs at
 the front door.

KEVIN
 I can't get it open!

Rick notices how much darker it is even with the lights on,
 sees the covered windows.

RICK
 My god...

JANET
 What?

RICK
 (overly dramatic)
 He's sealing us in. He's gonna
 torch the place.

EXT. MRS. JOHNSON'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mrs. Johnson smiles gratefully as Mort approaches. Her trunk
 is popped, every inch packed with bags.

MORT
 'Evening, gorgeous. What are you
 doing out so late? Isn't it past
 your bedtime?

She laughs like a giddy school girl.

MRS. JOHNSON
 Oh, stop it!

MORT
 I intend to.

He's instantly dark. The change frightens her.

MRS. JOHNSON
What do you mean?

MORT
You were always one hell of an
obnoxious bitch.

MRS. JOHNSON
Dear lord!

With the hammer raised --

MORT
You're about to meet him.

-- he swings, smashes the side of her head with enough force
it knocks her into the window, SHATTERING it.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

The Fords rush in a large room filled with boxes and junk
that should have been tossed long ago. Rick closes the door
behind them and wedges it shut with a PLASTIC BABY CHAIR.

KEVIN
Nice going, douche bag, now we're
trapped!

RICK
No, we're not. There's a ladder in
the corner -- the one we use to
hang Christmas lights.

KEVIN
You mean the one you fell off and
busted your nut?

RICK
It was a tear in the scrotum!

JANET
Stop it, you two! We don't have
the time.

Janet finds the ladder, drags it out. Rick goes to a SMALL
WINDOW covered in decades of dust.

RICK
Help me out here, Kev.

But Kevin doesn't. Stands behind Rick as he attempts to pry it open. He strains before crying out and grasping his lower back.

RICK
Ahh! Spasms!

He turns to find the ladder coming at his face. Janet has it aimed at the window like a battering ram. He ducks as it goes over his head and THROUGH THE WINDOW! Janet loses her grip. She tries to grab it, but it falls to the ground.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

A young male JOGGER witnesses the ladder's escape. Curious, he moves towards the house to investigate.

I/E. ATTIC / SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Rick looks away from the ladder, confronts Janet who is on the verge of more tears.

RICK
Nice going, Jan.

JANET
I was just trying to help!

RICK
You wanna help? Stay in the kitchen.

KEVIN (O.S.)
Hey! Over here! Help us!

Janet and Rick join Kevin at the window. The jogger spots them, stands directly below.

JOGGER
What the hell are you folks doin' up there?

KEVIN
Help! A psycho's after us!

Unknown to them, the jogger has earplugs in. Didn't hear the last part. He pulls them out.

JOGGER
What?

RICK
Just send the ladder up!

The jogger struggles with it, but manages to get the ladder upright and fully opened. The top just barely makes it below the roof.

RICK
You first, Jan.

KEVIN
Screw it -- I'm goin' first!

He tries to crawl out, but Rick pulls him back.

RICK
No, Kevin, let her go first. I don't want you falling and breaking your neck.

Janet gets out, cautiously makes her way down the sloped slate towards the edge.

JOGGER
Careful... it's right in front of you.

She finds it, steps down. It shakes. She cringes, closes her eyes.

JOGGER
It's okay, I got it.

Mort's feet slice through the grass with speed. Dashes past the jogger while holding the machete low to the ground. It SLICES clean through his ANKLES as he goes.

The jogger screams, his blood-spurting stumps hit the ground. He keeps hold of the ladder. It lifts away from the house, swaying with his wild motions. Janet clings to it, screaming with him.

In seconds, shock overcomes the jogger and he passes out. Janet falls with the ladder, both landing in the grass. Her head rocks, fighting past disorientation to stay conscious.

Mort calmly strides back, removes the jogger's shoe, holds it up to his ear, pretending it's a phone.

MORT
Nine-one-one, man in distress.
(pulls the shoe away)
That's one way to deal with athlete's foot.

Kevin suddenly JUMPS off the roof, lands and rolls across the ground. He is up and running away before Mort can react.

MORT
Dammit, boy!

He places the ladder upright, taunts Rick.

MORT
You gonna try to be a hero too?

It's tempting, but Rick kicks it down, crawls back through the window. Mort looks from him to the direction Kevin went, then down to Janet. Has to decide which is worth pursuing.

INT. 2ND FLOOR HALLWAY - NIGHT

Rick stumbles through the darkness, careful to avoid Jason's blood trail, when he collides with something. He hops forward, grunting through the pain in his stubbed toe. Picks the culprit up -- it's the SHOTGUN.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Rick follows the faint sound of SINGING, echoing throughout the house.

MORT (O.S.)
Mississippi hot dog, ready set go,
plant the explosives and watch them
blow...

Keeping the gun raised, he cautiously enters the...

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

... to find Mort standing in front of the refrigerator, stacking the packages from the sporting goods store. They are bundles of C-4. He senses Rick's presence, closes the door but does not turn around.

MORT
I wouldn't do that...

RICK
There's nothing you can say that
will stop me from killing you.

Now Mort faces him.

MORT

Then what's takin' you so long,
Rick? Be a damn patriot. Blow my
brains out like the fuckin'
American hero you never were.

(then; finished taunting)

But word of advice: Before you do,
you might want to take the safety
off.

Rick takes the safety off. Stays like stone. Won't allow
himself to be humiliated.

MORT

You've never shot a gun in your
life, have ya, Rick?

RICK

All I care about is spitting on
your fucking corpse.

MORT

Wow, Rick... that's low, even for a
man of your stature.

(then)

Are you sure you can pull that
trigger? You ain't a killer. It
takes a real man to slit a throat
and not think twice about it.

RICK

I'm not like you. You're nothing
more than a sociopath.

MORT

Are you sure about that, Rick?
What makes us so different? We're
both men who lost something. And
now that same hate that's been
eating away at my insides all these
years is doing precisely the same
thing to you.

RICK

I was right about you from the
start. I knew no good could come
from a guy like you.

MORT

And knowing that, you still let me
into your home. What's that say
about you, Rick?

(MORE)

MORT (CONT'D)

You couldn't protect your own family, even as I slaughtered the people closest to you, including your own son. So I really don't see myself as the only bad guy here.

That strikes a major nerve. Rick takes a strong step forward, shoves the gun in Mort's face.

RICK

Fuck you.

Mort takes a step forward as well, his lips so close to the barrel the skin is nearly grazing it.

MORT

Do it, Rick. Blow us both to hell. You wanna do it? So do it. After all I've put you through, how could you not? Do it.
(screams)
Do it!

EXT. NEIGHBOR'S YARD - NIGHT

Janet and Kevin are far enough from their home they feel safe to stop and look back to it.

KEVIN

Where's dad?

As if in answer, the FORD'S HOUSE EXPLODES in a BALL OF FLAMES! The ground shakes violently beneath Kevin and Janet. They fall back as debris flies in every direction...

Then it's over. The flames burn bright, absorbing any last shred of their home. All debris has fallen. Janet manages to push herself up, reeling from shock. Then she screams and wails in emotional agony.

KEVIN

Daaaaad!

He cries with her. Can't believe his eyes. Doesn't know what to do with himself. Janet grabs him and holds tight. He doesn't try to break free.

In the distance, a choir of SIRENS WAIL. Help is on the way, but a little too late.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Under a gray sky, a REVEREND recites a passage of Scripture while Janet and Kevin solemnly stare at TWO COFFINS before them. Wind attempts to tousele them, but they are numb to it.

Janet is so engrossed in sorrow that she startles when a MAN IN A SUIT taps her shoulder. He smiles, speaks softly. Understands her delicate state.

MAN IN SUIT

Excuse me, miss, these were sent to you.

He holds out a beautiful BOUQUET of ROSES. She warily takes them, notices there is no card attached.

JANET

Sent by whom?

MAN IN SUIT

They asked to remain anonymous. I'm sorry for your loss.

She's growing more desperate by the second. Before she tries to coerce an answer he clearly does not have, he excuses himself. Janet looks from the flowers to the surrounding area.

Suddenly it's not enough to just live with it. She needs closure. A real ending to this unexplained misery. So she runs, releases the flowers that leave a trail behind her.

She breaks away from the priest and her son, who pause momentarily to watch her go then continue on. She runs past row upon row of new to aging headstones, screaming Mort's name over and over...

But apart from her son, she is truly alone.

EXT. DESERTED ROAD - DAY

A lone MOTORCYCLE cruises down the abandoned road that stretches out in the distance.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

The same station from the very beginning of the film. The motorcycle stops in front of a pump. As the driver gets off, the only other visible PATRON at the next pump watches them.

The helmet is removed, but the wearer's face is obscured as they fill up the bike.

PATRON

You look like hell...

And now the face is revealed as Mort. And he does indeed look like hell. Worn and unkempt with dead eyes. He looks to the patron without emotion. The patron grows nervous, wishing they hadn't said anything. But Mort smiles.

MORT

I've been there.

He hops back on the bike, gets back onto the road. And as the station is pulled away from, leaving Mort to continue on whatever new path he has embarked...

FADE OUT.

