

Past Life

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PAST LIFE

BLAST FROM DARKNESS ONTO:

EXT. OLD LEWIS RESIDENCE - DAY.

A JUNKIE WOMAN (40's) sits alone in a car, shuts off the engine and sits in silence for a moment. Our focus is not on her identity, but rather, what is she after?

She is a rough woman, and a junkie. That much is clear.

The Junkie Woman pushes the car door open, steps out, and slams the door shut.

She slowly creeps up toward the house.

The Junkie Woman is holding a large, sharp kitchen knife.

She briskly stomps up the yard towards the front door.

INT. OLD LEWIS RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS.

The Woman carefully enters home brandishing a knife.

She is tiptoeing upstairs. After gliding through the hallway, she carefully peeks through crack of door.

EXT. GIRLS' ROOM - LEWIS RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS.

Three little girls are playing with dolls in the kids' bedroom through the crack in the doorway.

The three daughters are all laughing, giggling, chatting indistinctly.

INT. LEWIS RESIDENCE - HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS.

She stomps through the hallway like a woman on a mission. She busts down the master bedroom door.

INT. LEWIS RESIDENCE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS.

A MAN (30's) flinches and nearly jumps out of his own skin. This man is tall, athletically built, and has dark hair. His face is strong and stern.

The Woman lunges at him with the knife, stabbing him in chest incessantly.

The Man lets out surprised yell, groaning in pain. He is gargling blood after multiple stabs.

The Woman slowly steps away, leaving the knife in his chest.

She breezes through the room and opens door to a baby room.

INT. BABY ROOM - LEWIS RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS.

We see her do this from the perspective of the crib.

The Junkie Woman gently moves to pick up A BABY BOY from the crib.

She carefully places the baby into a car seat.

INT. MAIN FLOOR - CONTINUOUS.

The Woman is now splashing around gasoline on the floor and walls of the house.

EXT. LEWIS RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS.

She scurries away from the home with a car seat in one hand, a flipped lighter in the other.

She tosses it over her head, behind her back.

The flame dances up to the house and ignites.

She meticulously places car seat in the back.

She then leaves the house ablaze in her wake.

SLAM TO DARKNESS.

OPENING TITLE: PAST LIFE

OPEN ON:

INT. HOSPITAL INFANT RECOVERY ROOM - DAY.

A BABY BOY is in a crib dressed in blue looking up to a DOCTOR.

The Doctor looks at the baby with pity.

The Doctor then approaches A MARRIED COUPLE.

DOCTOR

He's stable, but we're gonna keep  
him for at least a few more days.

The Married Couple looks at each other as their hearts sink.

DOCTOR (CONT.)

In the mean time, you can fill out  
the necessary paperwork. No time  
like the present.

BOTH nod in agreement.

DOCTOR (CONT.)  
It's really great what you guys are  
doing.

The Married couple looks longingly back at the baby.

DOCTOR (CONT.)  
But, he doesn't have to know. You  
don't have to tell him.

The Married Couple looks back at each other, mulling it  
over.

DOCTOR (CONT.)  
It's entirely up to you. Obviously,  
you don't have to let me tell you  
how to be his parents.

We slowly approach the baby in his recovery crib...

TRANSITION TO:

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - DAY.

JEREMY LEWIS (CALDWELL) (20) is sitting at a picnic table,  
the wind slightly blowing his hair. Jeremy is a bit of a  
loner and has a silent curiosity and admiration of his  
surroundings. He's of medium build, and has thick brown  
hair.

He looks into the distance, taking in the beauty of the day.

TRACY CALDWELL (40s), a thin, soft-faced middle aged woman  
is standing at the back patio door.

TRACY  
Jeremy, honey, time to come in and  
eat!

Jeremy snaps his head back to her.

JEREMY  
Okay.

Jeremy hops inside.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN/DINING ROOM -  
CONTINUOUS

Jeremy mopes to the dinner table and slides into a seat  
without a word or even a glance.

MARK CALDWELL (late 40s) a dark-haired, handsome, younger-looking man for being almost fifty, cooks dinner. He fancies himself a tough guy, but is quirky and lame at heart.

MARK  
Hey there, Jeremy!

JEREMY  
Hey, dad.

MARK  
What's goin' on?

JEREMY  
Nothing.

Mark looks to Tracy and shrugs. She does the same.

MARK  
So, uh-- anything happening at school?

Mark shoots a glance at Tracy. Hers suggests that he lay off it.

Mark shakes his head.

JEREMY  
School's school, you know?

MARK  
Right, sure.

Mark's face scrunches. Eek.

Tracy winks at Mark.

ARTICLE reads: "20th Anniversary of Cold-Blooded Familial Slayings"

JEREMY  
Did you guys see this in the paper?  
What's this all about?

Tracy approaches the table and looks down at the article with him.

Tracy snatches it away from Jeremy as quickly as she can.

TRACY  
Oh, it's a whole lot of nothin'!

JEREMY

Sure doesn't look that way.

MARK

The news is awfully bleak, you don't need that kind of negativity in your life.

TRACY

Yeah it-- it's so..depressing.

MARK

I don't even know why we even get the paper anymore.

TRACY

Yeah. Seems silly, doesn't it, Mark?

Tracy tosses the paper in the trash.

JEREMY

What's gotten into you guys? It's just a story!

TRACY

And that's all it is!

MARK

(softly to Tracy)

I still can't believe it's been 20 years, though. Can you believe that?

Tracy gives Mark a hard nudge of her elbow.

TRACY

(under her breath)

Would you shut it?

JEREMY

Yeah, that's what it said.

Tracy shoots a sharp glance to Mark. Drop it.

Mark looks pleading to Tracy to put an end to all this. Yikes.

JEREMY

Guys, can you please tell me what that was all about? I'm old enough, I think I'll manage.

MARK

That was never in question, Jeremy.  
I know you can handle it, but why  
do we need to talk about such--  
somber topics?

TRACY

Let's-- steer away from stress if  
we can avoid it, huh?

Mark goes back to cooking. Tracy turns her back to Jeremy as well.

JEREMY

Okay. Maniacs.

An uncomfortable air fills the room.

EXT. DOWNTOWN AREA - NIGHT.

Jeremy drives down the street to the movies.

He parks across the street from cinema.

EXT. CINEMA - NIGHT.

Jeremy purchases a ticket from a smiling BOX OFFICE  
EMPLOYEE. She's especially cute.

BOX OFFICE EMPLOYEE

Enjoy your show.

Jeremy nods to her as he grabs his stub.

JEREMY

Thanks, you too.

The Box office employee tries to stop herself from smiling.  
She cannot.

Jeremy strides away. She watches him go.

JEREMY

(whispering to himself)

What the fuck? Really, Jeremy?

INT. CINEMA - THEATER - NIGHT.

He takes a seat separate from crowd, quiet and reserved.

The Film begins after he misses an absurd amount of  
previews.

He makes himself comfortable.

EXT. CINEMA - NIGHT.

Jeremy now glides out of the theater after the movie ends.

He opens car door and enters.

He is sitting in contemplation in his car.

After a brief moment, he finally turns the key in ignition, and pulls away.

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT.

Jeremy slows as he passes by a college party in his car, he seems noticeably interested.

He makes the quick decision to pass it by. Further on down the road, he eyes a library as he drives past.

He abruptly stops in the middle of the road in deep thought.

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

Jeremy carefully glides in the front door of his parents' house.

He tosses his keys on the table and bounds up the stairs to his bedroom.

He lays on his bed, it's noticeable that his thoughts are conflicting.

He apathetically checks his phone.

PHONE FACE: 9:38 PM. No text messages.

He lets out a long nose breath.

He then directs his attention to an arbitrary spot in his room as if to contemplate his life.

He is only thinking about the current crossroad of his night. What to do?

A KNOCK on the door is heard.

The door swings open after a moment. Tracy stands in the threshold.

TRACY  
Back already, huh?

JEREMY

Yeah, just went to a movie.

TRACY

Oh, how was it?

JEREMY

It was okay.

TRACY

Alright, I thought you were going out.

JEREMY

I was, not sure about it now.

TRACY

Ok, hun. Just checkin in on ya!

JEREMY

Thanks, mom. I'm fine.

TRACY

Good night, sweetie.

JEREMY

Night.

Jeremy lets out another sigh.

INT. OLD LEWIS RESIDENCE - DREAM SEQUENCE

Jeremy creeps down a long, dark hallway.

A DOOR is closed at the end of it, with light inside of it, outlining the door.

Jeremy reaches the door, gently pushes down the door handle, and tiptoes inside.

Giggling and young female laughter can be heard.

Jeremy follows the laughter. He crouches down next to THREE YOUNG GIRLS (4,7&9). They do not address him.

The door suddenly SLAMS behind them. Jeremy's head snaps back to the door. The GIRLS are not fazed whatsoever.

Jeremy looks back to the girls. The room is suddenly, but slowly dematerializing. Like a Polaroid photo turning to ash. One of the girls slowly turns to him.

GIRL  
Don't let us burn, Jeremy.

Jeremy's face turns to horror. The room is now ablaze.

SNAP CUT TO:

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - EARLY MORNING.

Jeremy SNAPS awake. He is horrified. Panting. Nearly hyperventilating. Holding back tears as he gathers his breath.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER.

Jeremy fishes out the NEWSPAPER from the trash. He studies it, in wonder.

INT. LIBRARY COMPUTER ROOM - DAY.

Jeremy sits alone at a computer, researching old newspaper articles about the crime.

ARTICLE FACE: "VEXING DETAILS OF MULTIPLE HOMICIDE LEAVE TOWN, POLICE IN SHOCK."

Jeremy's blank stare at the computer screen.

Furious mouse clicking.

OTHER ARTICLE FACE: "MOTHER OF SLAIN HUSBAND AND CHILDREN CHARGED IN BRUTAL MURDERS AND ARSON."

JEREMY  
(whispering to self)  
No fucking way.

THIRD ARTICLE FACE: "MURDERING MOTHER OF FOUR MOVED TO PSYCH WARD AFTER PERPLEXING VERDICT."

Jeremy sighs through his nose.

He logs off, packs up his things, and ventures on out of the library.

EXT. INSANE ASYLUM - PARKING LOT - DAY.

Jeremy poses at a distance from the building.

Should I stay or should I go?

A BALD HEADED MAN wearing white scrubs pushing a cart outside the building eyes Jeremy from afar, suspicious-like.

After much contemplation, Jeremy shuffles away back toward his car for latter of the two.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Tracy is lounging on the couch, half watching TV, half distracted by something on her mind.

Jeremy abruptly paces through the room and makes a bee-line for the spot on the couch next to her.

Jeremy looks over at her, smiles, looks to the TV and puts it on mute.

JEREMY

Mom, was I adopted?

Tracy takes longer to respond than Jeremy would like.

TRACY

What brought this on?

JEREMY

That article. It's got me wondering.

TRACY

We told you already, it's nothing.

JEREMY

It all makes sense. I've put it together.

Beat.

JEREMY (CONT.)

I don't look anything like--

TRACY

People don't look like their parents all the time.

JEREMY

It's uncanny. Those involved.

TRACY

If you want to waste your time chasing family trees, go right ahead. But it won't change the fact that we are your parents.

JEREMY  
See, but that's exactly what  
adoptive parents would say!

TRACY  
**We raised you!**

JEREMY  
I have to find out--

TRACY  
I don't want you looking into this  
and that's final.

JEREMY  
You can't--

TRACY  
**I can!** You'll never bring this up  
again. You understand me?

Beat.

JEREMY  
Yeah, understood.

TRACY  
Ok, good.

Tracy nabs the remote from him and unmutes the TV.

Jeremy looks over at her suspiciously. He swings himself off  
the couch and storms away.

Tracy looks back at him, then back to the TV. She sighs.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT.

Jeremy rolls on down the road with purpose.

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT.

Jeremy parks his car across the street.

He eyes the party, with even more interest this time.

He slowly turns the keys to shut off the engine, but he does  
not swing the door open right away.

Jeremy carefully makes his way across the street to join the  
party.

Frat rats and other party animals are causing havoc outside  
with red solo cups, beer bong, and other such nonsense.

A FRAT STAR stops his approach into the house.

FRAT STAR  
Whoa, man. You can't just go in  
there.

Jeremy stops dead in his tracks.

JEREMY  
Can I buy a cup?

Frat star looks down at his wad of cash and cups.

FRAT STAR  
Now you're speaking my language.

Frat Star gives him a red solo cup.

Jeremy exchanges currency with the frat star.

He pumps the keg and fills his cup.

JEREMY  
Thank you kindly.

Jeremy nods to him and takes a sip.

FRAT STAR  
(smiling)  
My man.

Frat star gives him a green light inside with a nod of his head.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT.

Jeremy makes his way through the crowd of people to find his best friend and partner in crime, JARED JESSUP (20). Jared is a short, messy black haired, stocky man. Anything short of party animal and crude would be a falsehood to describe Jared Jessup.

JARED  
I'm not believing what I'm seeing  
right now.

Jeremy can't help but smile.

They give each other a big bear hug.

JARED (CONT.)  
I see you have some catching up to  
do!

JEREMY

I think that can be arranged.

JARED

This is unreal. I'm still processing.

Jared and Jeremy clink their cups together for a cheers.

JARED (CONT.)

It's actually you. You crawled out of your hole!

JEREMY

It's actually me. In the flesh.

JARED

Well, enough fuckin' around. Let's get you wasted off your ass!

SNAP TO:

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - MORNING.

Jared is leaned up against a log.

Jeremy is sprawled out on the ground next to him.

They are gathered around an extinguished fire.

Jared nudges Jeremy awake.

Jeremy groans as if these are his last days.

JARED

Hey, wake up morning glory-hole.

JEREMY

Jesus H. Christ. What in the living fuck?

JARED

I'm not sure, you tell me.

Jeremy leans up, rubs his head and eyes. As if that will make his hangover any better.

JARED

What made you to come out of your days as a hermit to a real college party with real human females?

JEREMY

I need your help with something.

If he wasn't interested before, he is now.

JARED

What is it?

JEREMY

You know the murders that happened twenty years back? The one with the mom and the kids and the dad or whatever?

JARED

You mean, the one thing that our shithole town is actually known for?

JEREMY

Right, yeah. That's the one.

JARED

What about it?

JEREMY

I think my biological family was involved.

JARED

Really?

Jared leans up and brushes himself off.

JARED (CONT.)

Why do you think that?

JEREMY

I put two and two together. It happened twenty years ago and I look nothing like Mark and Tracy.

JARED

You do realize that any twenty year old male could just say the same thing, right?

JEREMY

Right, I get that. But, I just have this feeling. I don't know how to explain it.

JARED

Jeremy, hard evidence goes a lot farther than feelings.

JEREMY

That's exactly what I aim to find.

(beat)

Do you trust me on this?

JARED

Brother, you know I'd go to war with you. But you have to understand, this is the type of shit that you need to be really careful about.

JEREMY

What do you mean?

JARED

There could be all kinds of fucked up shit hidden beneath the surface here.

JEREMY

I know, it's seven different levels of fucked up.

JARED

I just don't want to see you deliberately putting yourself in danger.

Jeremy mulls this over a moment.

JARED (CONT.)

Well, let me just say that I warned you beforehand. If shit hits the fan.

JEREMY

Thanks for your support. I really appreciate the vote of confidence, bud.

JARED

Anytime.

Jared offers his fist for a fist bump. Jeremy stares at it. He does not reciprocate. Jared clamps his other hand over his fist.

JARED (CONT.)  
 Alright! Yeah. Fuck you, too.

Beat.

Jeremy leans away from Jared to puke his guts out.

JARED (CONT.)  
 Ata boy! Get it all out and rally,  
 you slimy dog, you.

Jeremy spits.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON.

Jeremy slugs his way inside the house.

He flings his keys in the basket on the long table in the hallway.

Mark leans his head in the hallway from the kitchen.

MARK (O.S.)  
 Jeremy, is that you?

JEREMY  
 Yeah.

MARK (O.S.)  
 Oh, okay. How was your night?

JEREMY  
 Ugh.

He mopes up the stairs with a long drawn out groan.

MARK (O.S.)  
 Ah, I see. One of *those* nights.

TRACY (O.S.)  
 Poor guy. Must have been quite the  
 bender, huh?

MARK (O.S.)  
 You bet your ass.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - JEREMY'S BEDROOM - DAY.

Jeremy plops on his bed with his one hand on his forehead, the other at his side.

He lets out a tired, hungover sigh. And groans.

He looks out his window.

JEREMY

Agh, fuck it.

Jeremy labors his way out of bed.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY.

Jeremy has multiple newspaper clippings out on the table in front of him.

He looks like a whack-job conspiracy theorist.

ARTICLE READS: "FIRST OFFICERS RESPONDING TO THE SCENE WERE DETECTIVE MIKE HERMAN AND DETECTIVE HERB SHEPARD. OFFICER JEFF CONLEY CALLED IN THE ACCIDENT AT EVERGREEN POND. HE WITNESSED THE CAR CRASHING INTO THE SHALLOW WATER AND PROMPTLY RESCUED THE INFANT BOY, JEREMY LEWIS."

Jeremy's eyes could not be bigger.

He pockets this cut-out article and swiftly scoots out of his seat.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Jeremy is sitting in class, barely paying attention to the lecture, when suddenly...

He can't take his mind off of the cold case.

INT. OLD LEWIS RESIDENCE - DAYDREAM

THE THREE YOUNG GIRLS stand at the center of rubble and ash. A fire dances all around them. But they only stare directly forward.

We push in closer to them. They stare lifelessly through the flames.

Jeremy stands outside the flames, on the lawn. Staring longingly at his supposed SISTERS. He reaches out to them.

GIRL

Why did you get to live?

Jeremy is on the verge of tears.

JEREMY

(shuddering)

I don't know.

GIRL  
Can't you help us?

JEREMY  
I-- I can't.

Jeremy breaks down.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
I can't!

The GIRLS suddenly dissolve into ash. The wind sweeps them away in their ashen form.

SNAP CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Jeremy snaps out of it. He quickly stands to his feet after gathering his things and storms out of the class room.

The whole class stares in confusion, but none more than the professor.

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Jared is sprawled out on Jeremy's bed. Jeremy lounges back in his chair at his desk.

JARED  
I heard you skipped class today.  
Nice.

JEREMY  
I-- I couldn't keep my mind off of  
the--

JARED  
That's not like you, man.

JEREMY  
Take a look at this.

Jeremy slowly nods and hands him the article.

Jared scans the article.

JARED  
Look, I'm all for this. But what  
you're doing, it doesn't seem  
healthy.

JEREMY

I have to know for sure if my real family was involved.

Jared, unsure what to say, pauses in silence. As does Jeremy.

JEREMY (CONT.)

I want to see whomever did this to my family be made accountable for their actions. What they've done needs to be brought to light.

JARED

You are beside yourself, my friend. You need to think about what's really important. If this is getting in the way of your future-- don't you care about that?

JEREMY

Not until I've resolved my past.

Beat.

JARED

Look, I've been thinking.

JEREMY

Oh, no. That's dangerous.

Jared lets out a little laugh.

JARED

Psh, yeah, I know. But listen. I really think that you should just take this up with the police. Who better than them, right?

JEREMY

You may be right, but I can't help but think, did they even get this right in the first place?

JARED

There's only one way to find out.

INT. POLICE STATION DETECTIVE'S OFFICES - DAY.

Jeremy approaches two detectives speaking with each other at their desks.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD (50's) is leaning up against his desk, coffee in hand. He is a good ole country boy, balding with a mustache. He has a calm indifference about him, almost as if he is lazily jaded in his position.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (40's) is kicked back with his feet on his desk, hands interlocked behind his head. He has slick, dirty blond hair. He has a sharp jawline with a confident determination about his face. Herman is a wise-cracker, but good-hearted.

Jeremy reaches their desks. They barely look up to acknowledge him.

JEREMY

Hello, officers, could I trouble you for a moment of your time?

DETECTIVE HERMAN

That's detectives, to you. What's your name, good citizen?

JEREMY

Uh, it's Jeremy. Jeremy Caldwell.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Glad to meet ya. I'm Detective Herman, this is Detective Shepard.

Detective Shepard gives a nod of his head and a cheers of his coffee.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Obliged.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Now what can we do ya for?  
Nothing's the matter, right?  
Nothing dire, I hope.

JEREMY

No, no. Nothing pressing. Just a cold case I'd like some clarity on, if at all possible.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Cold case, huh? Don't get many of those round here.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Only one's that multiple homicide twenty years back. Family was slain and the house was a pile of ash and rubble. Messy business.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Yeah, maybe a thing or two here and there. But that's the big one. Our town's only real claim to fame.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Sad to know your town is only on the map cuz of a massacre of that caliber, know what I mean?

Detective Herman lets out an emphatic chuckle in agreement.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Chyeah, you're not kiddin'.

JEREMY

Yeah, actually, that's the one I wanted to talk to you about.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Oh, well, not much really to discuss now, is there? That case was solved long ago. Wasn't much of a case, let alone of the cold variety as you suggest.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Amen on that, preacher.

JEREMY

The reason I bring it up is because...I think I may have been the one who survived the crash.

Both Detectives taken aback.

JEREMY (CONT.)

The baby saved from the water. The car that plunged into the--

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Yeah, son! We're familiar!

Detective Herman turns back to Detective Shepard in amazement.

He turns back around to face Jeremy.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)

Wow! Is it really you?

Detective Shepard shakes his head as he takes a sip of coffee.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
How do you know this?

Other police officers, detectives, and general office workers gawk at the sight and commotion.

JEREMY  
I can't really be sure.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
As I live and breathe. Wow, man.  
I'll be fucked seven times over.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
May as well spank yer ass and call  
ya Sally too while we're at it,  
huh?

Detective Herman lets out another laugh.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
Well, shit son! You just never know  
what the day will bring.

JEREMY  
I was hoping to find out as much as  
I could about the case.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
I'd imagine you've got a lot of  
questions on your mind.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Damn straight.

JEREMY  
Right, I do. That's why I'd like to  
get right to it.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
Well, let's have at it! Lay it on  
me.

JEREMY  
How did I survive the crash? It  
just doesn't make any sense. That  
kind of an impact would be pretty  
intense, don't you think?

Detective Shepard loudly laughs with a "HAH!"

JEREMY (CONT.)

Especially for an infant. I would have been, like-- six months old at the time.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

If it was really you.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

You're telling us, buddy. That's remained a mystery for everyone in this department for the better part of two decades, believe me.

JEREMY

Not to mention, someone would have had to fish me out of that pond... It just doesn't seem likely.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

You don't have to tell me that!

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

What are ya askin here, buddy? Some kinda divine intervention saved yer ass or what? I dunno.

Beat.

JEREMY

Who was the first on the scene of the accident?

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Well, you're talking to the right men. We showed up to the home and apprehended the suspect on the front lawn. As for whomever saved your ass, that would be Jeff Conley. And if I'm not mistaken, he may even be here.

Detective Herman tries looking over his shoulder for him.

Detective Shepard shakes his head as he takes a sip of his coffee.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

He's on patrol. That area of town has been his route since long before that ever happened.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Well, you heard the man. Shows how much I'm kept in the loop.

CHIEF (60s), an older gentleman sporting a large handlebar mustache, passes by and hears this. The Chief is gruff, jaded, and no-nonsense.

CHIEF

Need to know basis, Mike. You know too well how that is.

Detective Herman jabs a thumb at Chief.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

That I do, see what I gotta deal with?

Jeremy gives him a sympathy shrug.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)

(clears throat)

Anyway, that'd be a good starting point. See if you can't run him down. We may be able to call ahead to him so he knows that you're seeking him out. Keep us posted on anything you find, I'd be interested to hear about any developments.

Detective Shepard scoffs.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Pfft, you kiddin' me? This case was a slam-dunk. We caught her at the scene with--

Herman gives Shepard a nudge.

JEREMY

Well, thank you guys for pointing me in the right direction. I don't expect to find very much, I just want to know more about it.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Understandable, I would too!

Jeremy nods to both.

JEREMY

Take care.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Oh, we'll probably be seeing more  
of each other.

JEREMY

You can count on it.

Herman notices the strange tension in the room.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Well, thanks for dropping by. Nice  
meeting you!

Jeremy is halfway out the door by the time he says this.

The Detectives glance at each other, wide-eyed.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)

Can you believe that?

Detective Shepard lifts the coffee to his mouth as he shakes  
his head.

EXT. EVERGREEN POND PARKING LOT - DAY.

Jeremy pulls into the parking lot and finds a spot to park.

He glances over to his left and sees a cop car patrolling  
around before coming to a resting spot down the line from  
Jeremy.

Jeremy motions to exit his car, but hesitates a moment.

EXT. COP CAR - CONTINUOUS.

TWO OFFICERS staring down at Jeremy in his car.

Jeremy finally decides to open his car door, hovers outside  
his car, slams the door, and strides over.

MOPEY OFFICER in the passenger seat rolls down his window a  
crack.

BITTER COP sits in the driver's seat.

Jeremy has finally made his way over to the car.

MOPEY OFFICER

Get in.

JEREMY

I assume the detectives told you  
I--

BITTER COP

Just get in the damn car.

Jeremy puts his hands up as if to back off.

He then opens the door to get in the backseat.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS.

JEREMY

So, how are you doing, officers?

BITTER COP

Look, kid, we don't have much time  
for this. What is it you want?

JEREMY

I was hoping I could discuss the  
details of a case back in--

MOPEY OFFICER

We know what case you're referring  
to, what about it?

JEREMY

I'm guessing one of you is Officer  
Jeff Conley?

BITTER COP

I don't know who that is.

MOPEY OFFICER

We're not really supposed to  
discuss details of that case with  
anyone.

JEREMY

Wait, what? I'm sorry, you have me  
at a loss here. Then why did you--

BITTER COP

Listen, we were just doing what  
we're told. We're kind of at the  
will of these guys up the food  
chain.

MOPEY OFFICER

Plus, we owe Herman a favor or two.  
What else were we supposed to do?

JEREMY

This was a huge waste of my time if you aren't willing to discuss this with me.

BITTER COP

Trust me, kid. Waste of our time too.

MOPEY OFFICER

For what it's worth, Officer Conley is no longer with us. That much I will tell you. Beyond that, you're on your own. You're lucky I even told ya that much.

JEREMY

Hold on a second, how did he die? Was it because of the--

BITTER COP

Kid, come on. My partner just threw ya a bone. Why don't you just take that and run?

JEREMY

You're right. Thanks for your help, I appreciate it.

MOPEY OFFICER

Good luck kid, you'll need it.

Jeremy opens the door to leave.

JEREMY

Thank you for your time.

EXT. COP CAR - CONTINUOUS.

Jeremy swings out of the car and gently shuts the door.

He then makes a bee-line for his own vehicle, not wasting any time at all.

INT. JEREMY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS.

Jeremy shutting the door as he slides into his seat.

He quickly pulls out his phone and dials JARED.

The line rings.

JARED  
What's up, fuckstick?

JEREMY  
Where are you now? Can you meet?

EXT. PARTY HOUSE (JARED'S HOUSE) - LATER.

Jeremy swings his door shut and lazily shuffles up the path leading up to the house. He climbs the steps and lets himself in.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

Jeremy is about to approach the steps leading upstairs.

JEREMY  
Jared? Where you at?

JARED (O.S.)  
Upstairs, dickbag!

Jeremy scoffs, shakes his head, and labors up the stairs.

INT. JARED'S ROOM - PARTY HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

Jared is striking a risqué pose on his bed as he waited for Jeremy to enter.

As Jeremy opens the door and spins to enter while simultaneously shutting the door, he is smirking and shaking his head.

JEREMY  
You know, the amount of time and effort you put into coming up with different insults for me is either sad or impressive. I'm not entirely sure which.

JARED  
What did you find out? Anything?

JEREMY  
You know how you told me to take it to the cops?

JARED  
Yeah, should have been the first thing you did, but whatever. I'm flattered you came to me before that. But anyway, go on.

JEREMY

Well, I did that. And it turned out being sketchy as all get-out.

JARED

Yeah, you'd think it'd be the other way around. Strange. But sketchy how, though?

Jeremy nabs a chair, spins it around, and pops a squat.

JEREMY

Well, the cops were super hesitant to share information of any kind with me regarding the case.

JARED

That actually seems pretty normal to me.

JEREMY

One would think that'd be public knowledge though, right?

JARED

Like, in the papers and shit?

JEREMY

Yeah, it is in the papers. I've read up on it. But it doesn't add up. But, one thing that really caught my attention. This officer, see, he--

Jared's phone rings.

He reaches for it, and gives the "one sec" hand gesture to Jeremy.

JARED

(answering the call)

What's goin on?

(beat)

Yeah?

(beat)

No shit?

Jeremy begins to get antsy.

He gestures to Jared to hurry it along.

Jared flies him the bird in return.

Jeremy shakes his head and looks away.

JARED (CONT.)

(still on the phone)

Well, I guess we can handle that many people. I mean, I don't see why not.

(beat)

Fuck the cops, my boy Jeremy here has been keeping 'em busy enough lately. I don't foresee them being an issue tonight.

Jeremy throws his arms up in bewilderment mouthing "What?"

Jared shrugs him off.

JARED (CONT.)

Okay, yeah, let's do it then! Don't be such a limp dick pansy noodle about it. We'll be fine.

(beat)

No, you don't need to know why and how he's been keeping them occupied. The less you know, the better. Believe me.

(beat)

Okay, got it. Understood. 10-4. Roger roger. Copy. Over and out.

Jared hangs up and tosses the phone to his side on the bed.

JARED

Ok, alright, you were saying?

JEREMY

Yeah, so, wait, what was that about?

JARED

Oh, nothing important. Our party we're having later on this week is just gonna be a bit larger scale than expected. Nothing I can't handle. Anywho, I'm focused now. I promise. What's up?

JEREMY

What was that bit with me keeping the cops busy?

JARED

That was just a joke, thought you might appreciate it.

JEREMY

I didn't. But anyway, this cop. One who was said, in the paper, to have been the first on the scene of the accident--

JARED

The scene of the accident? Or the scene of the crime?

JEREMY

It said he was the first responder to the car barreling into the pond. At Evergreen.

JARED

Right, that one. What about him?

JEREMY

The cops I met with said he was dead.

JARED

How'd he die?

JEREMY

I don't know, that's the sketchy part! They wouldn't tell me.

JARED

Well, what were their names? Officer Sketchville and Sheriff Ratchet?

JEREMY

Might as well have been. I didn't catch their names.

JARED

Well, shit, dude! How are you supposed to back up your story now? Didn't college ever learn ya to cite your sources?

JEREMY

Look, it doesn't matter now. The point is, the newspaper listed the wrong name in the story. Right there, already, it's suspecty as fuck.

JARED

Dude, bro, no. The newspaper fucks shit up like that all the time. They said that the Cubs won in overtime last night.

JEREMY

So?

JARED

So?! Dude, they-- it's called extra-- You know what? Never mind. Not important. My point is, newspapers have typos all the time. Can't expect them to report it perfect every time.

JEREMY

Right, only when it comes to the latest blood drive or the exact date and time MarySue died playing shuffle board at the geriatric home. But not the biggest multiple homicide this county has ever--

JARED

Okay, okay I get it, Larry King. Message received. Accurate and precise journalism is very important to you. So, now what? What's the next step?

JEREMY

Well, I was hoping you could answer that for me. But I was thinking I would confront the cops about it, tell them to get their story straight.

JARED

Well, that's definitely risky. Calling law enforcement out on their shit. Right to their faces.

JEREMY

Someone has to do it.

JARED

I would consider other options first. You could ask people around town about it. People who lived in that neighborhood. That'd be cool, wouldn't it? A trip down memory lane.

JEREMY  
Although I have no memory of it.

JARED  
Oh, right. Well, you could also  
seek out your mom.

Jeremy gives him a sharp stare.

JARED (CONT.)  
Your real mom.

JEREMY  
You really think that's a good  
idea?

JARED  
Not if she's a whack-job, like they  
say.

JEREMY  
I have no idea how that's gonna go.

JARED  
That's one perspective on this  
whole thing that's gonna change the  
game. You know that, right?

JEREMY  
I'm not sure I can even face her,  
after all these years. I've never  
met her.

JARED  
Look, bud, I know it's gonna be  
tough. But I think it's something  
that you've gotta do.

Jeremy nods slowly. Looks to Jared.

JEREMY  
You're probably right.

JARED  
Of course I'm right, I'm always  
right.

Jeremy turns to leave.

JARED (CONT.)  
Well, best of luck to ya. Hopefully  
she doesn't chop your fingers off,  
or something.

Jeremy gives him a "fuck off" side-glare. Then finally swivels to march on out of the room.

INT. DETECTIVE'S OFFICES - DAY.

Jeremy storms up to the desks of Detectives Herman and Shepard who are in their usual posts.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
Back again, huh?

JEREMY  
There's something-- a lot of things  
that you guys aren't telling me  
about this whole thing.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
We can't tell you if we don't know  
what you want.

JEREMY  
The cop who was first on the scene  
of the accident, according to the  
newspapers. Jeff Conley. He's dead.

Herman and Shepard share a glance.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
(sarcastically)  
Your cop friends were very helpful.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Glad to hear it.

JEREMY  
What exactly happened to him?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Unaccounted for.

JEREMY  
What do you mean by that?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Means we don't know. What more do  
you want?

JEREMY  
How did he die?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
We don't know.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
What are you asking?

JEREMY  
I'm asking how he died. What does  
it sound like?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
He disappeared. Gone. No one knows  
what happened to him.

JEREMY  
Did he die as a result of the case  
or not?

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
No one knows that either.

JEREMY  
How does no one know? Do officers  
typically just "disappear" in this  
department?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Look, kid, we don't really  
appreciate the inquisition--

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
It remains a mystery to us, too.  
You're asking us things that we  
don't know either. We're in the  
same boat on that one, believe me.

JEREMY  
Alright, I just need you to be  
straight with me, that's all.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
Fair enough. Now, was there  
anything else?

Jeremy hesitates a moment.

JEREMY  
No, there doesn't seem to be  
anything you guys know that will  
help me. Thanks anyway.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
You know where to find us!

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
(chuckles)  
Heh. Ain't that the truth.

EXT. SMALL TOWNHOME - DAY.

Jeremy approaches a townsperson's home and timidly knocks on the door. An elderly woman answers.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Yeah, and what do ya want?

JEREMY  
Hello, ma'am. My name is--

ELDERLY WOMAN  
The hell do I care what yer name is?

JEREMY (CONT.)  
--Jeremy Caldwell. I was hoping you might have time to speak with me about my father.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
I don't have a lot of time left.

Jeremy just stares blankly at her.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT.)  
So whatcha want? Let's get to it then.

JEREMY  
Did you know my father? Trenton Lewis?

ELDERLY WOMAN  
I thought you said your name was Caldwell?

JEREMY  
It is possible to have different last names, ma'am.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Don't get all wise-ass on me now.

JEREMY  
My apologies. Won't happen again.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
You're damn right it won't.

Brief pause.

JEREMY  
So, uh, did you know him by chance?

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Know him? Who didn't know the  
bastard?

JEREMY  
Actually, I never knew him. Nor my  
mother. Which is why I ask.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Really?

JEREMY  
No, ma'am.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Oh, wow. Well, how did that come to  
be?

JEREMY  
They all died when I was very  
young. I don't remember a thing  
about them. You knew them well?

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Everyone knew them, honey.

JEREMY  
What do you mean?

She steps outside, walks down her path leading up to the  
house, and looks to the horizon.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
See that?

She points to a nuclear power plant way out in the distance.

Jeremy sees it after a brief moment of looking hard.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT.)  
Your father ran it for years.

JEREMY  
I had no idea.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh but how could you? He'd been  
fucking us for years.

Jeremy turns sharply to her, in shock.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT.)

And now someone else is in his  
place. They've since continued the  
trend, so it doesn't seem to matter  
who runs the damned thing.

JEREMY

Pardon me, but he was, as you say  
it, "fucking you", um, in what way?

ELDERLY WOMAN

He was grabbing up our land, useful  
farm land. And now it's barren.  
Nothing will grow here as long as  
this plant continues to run.

Jeremy looks down, acting like he's taking notes so as to  
not face her.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT.)

Not to mention, he cut a deal with  
the local government to tax us  
more to fund that shit. That toxic  
filth came from our own money. Our  
paychecks, our health, our  
well-being, our way of life  
consumed by that poison.

JEREMY

I am truly sorry to hear about  
that.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Sorry to hear your father was a  
heartless monster or sorry for the  
irreparable damage he's caused us?

JEREMY

What do you want me to say? This is  
all news to me. I had nothing to do  
with this.

ELDERLY WOMAN

But you will, whether you want it  
or not.

Jeremy now motioning to leave.

JEREMY

I'll try to make this right.

ELDERLY WOMAN

It's already been done. There's nothing to make right.

Jeremy turns and scoots away.

The old woman turns back to pull open the screen door to her house.

ELDERLY WOMAN (CONT.)

(softly to herself)

It will never be the same again.

Jeremy lifts his head to see the Elderly Woman struggle back into her home. He continues on.

EXT. OLD RUNDOWN TOWNHOUSE - DAY.

Middle aged man answering a question asked by Jeremy.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

Oh, that was your father? I hate to say it, but he was part of some very scummy dealings. No offense taken, I hope.

JEREMY

No, not at all. I've been hearing that more and more lately. Can you be more specific?

MIDDLE AGED MAN

There was some back door politics going on for sure. I couldn't get into the juicy details, but he was a pretty slimy fellow if I'm remembering correctly. It's been decades, you know.

Jeremy, nodding, not surprised and not at all fazed responds.

JEREMY

I'm well aware. But is there anything more you could tell me? That's not much to go on.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

Well, when I say back door, I really mean *back-door*.

Middle-Aged Man gives Jeremy a wide-eyed look.

MIDDLE AGED MAN (CONT.)  
Fucked women in the ass and the  
like.

JEREMY  
Okay, *alright*, that's enough.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
YOU said you wanted to know this.  
You asked, buddy.

Jeremy lets out an annoyed sigh.

JEREMY  
So what, then? That's what he was  
known for?

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
Like I said, slimy dude.

JEREMY  
Okay, I'll bite.

Jeremy looks down to his pad and paper, begins scribbling notes.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
So with whom, exactly? Do you know?

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
That's not the question, better  
question is who didn't have a go at  
the guy?

Jeremy raises his head to make eye contact.

JEREMY  
Really? That bad, huh?

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
You've got *no idea*.

JEREMY  
That's why I'm asking.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
Mmmhmm.

Jeremy scribbling, still.

JEREMY

So why am I supposed to believe you? How do I know you're not just making this up?

MIDDLE AGED MAN

You tell me, son.

JEREMY

I'm not your son.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

You don't know that.

JEREMY

What?

MIDDLE AGED MAN

Huh?

Both stare at each other in utter confusion.

MIDDLE AGED MAN (CONT.)

You're the one askin' questions so you either take my word on it or get the hell out!

JEREMY

Alright, fine. Maybe he was like that--

MIDDLE AGED MAN

He was.

JEREMY

Right. So, is that why everybody hated him? He just caught a bad reputation getting around town and back again?

MIDDLE AGED MAN

Everybody hated him because he always got his way. Whether that was with the nuke-u-lar plant or when he was beddin' folks.

Jeremy scribbles away.

MIDDLE AGED MAN (CONT.)

Anyone he couldn't have his way with were always able to be bought. This man always found a way to get people to speak his language.

Jeremy looks up, eyes narrowed on the man.

MIDDLE AGED MAN (CONT.)  
Politician through and through.  
Without actually being one if  
you're catching my stench here.

Jeremy taken aback.

JEREMY  
Odd way to put it, but yeah. I do.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
I'm surprised you're his blood, you  
don't seem it much.

Jeremy raises his head from his notepad.

JEREMY  
Is there anything else you can tell  
me?

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
What's in it for me if I do?

JEREMY  
You get the satisfaction of true  
justice being served at the end of  
it all.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
Justice *has* been done, my naive  
little friend.

Jeremy is noticeably upset by this comment, but doesn't let  
it show in the tone of his voice.

JEREMY  
Not in my eyes.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
Don't matter one way or the next  
way. The only way has spoken. And  
it's carved in stone.

Jeremy, a bit creeped out, inches away.

JEREMY  
Yeah, uh, tha-- thanks for your  
time.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

I don't mind giving my time, it's  
your time that should worry you.

Jeremy, even more creeped out, looks suspiciously behind him  
as he now picks up his pace a little bit as he walks away.

INT. ABANDONED SHACK - NIGHT.

Jeremy nervously awaits Detective Herman's arrival.

He sees headlights swing past the house and finally in a  
resting place straight ahead.

A car door shutting is heard.

The front door creaks open.

A shadowy figure enters.

It's Detective Herman, his face shows in the dim light.

JEREMY

Thanks for agreeing to meet me.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

You need to drop this.

JEREMY

I'm so close to breaking through, I  
can't quit now.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

I'm doing this for your own safety.  
Please, just--

JEREMY

I've heard that before. You're just  
trying to protect and serve me, I  
get it.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

I wouldn't be telling you this if I  
wasn't absolutely sure.

JEREMY

What are you talking about?

DETECTIVE HERMAN

There's forces at play here that  
you don't want to test. You don't  
want to delve deeper into this.  
Believe me.

JEREMY

I know that you're trying to protect me, but my mind will always be on this. I have to figure it out now or else I'll never stop thinking about it.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Alright, well, if I can't convince you--

JEREMY

You won't, so don't try.

Beat.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

I can promise you one thing. I won't tell the Chief or anybody. But I can't help you. I'm sorry.

Jeremy finally looks to him. He nods.

JEREMY

I understand.

Beat.

Jeremy turns to walk away before prompted to turn back around.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Oh, and Jeremy?

Jeremy looks back behind him at Herman.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)

No saying I didn't warn you.

JEREMY

I know.

Detective Herman nods, his hard glance unwavering.

EXT/INT. PSYCH WARD - DAY.

Jeremy and Jared walk through the automatic doors at the entrance to the building.

He crosses the threshold, signs in at the front desk and indistinctly asks for his mother.

The RECEPTIONIST points down the hallway and mutters something to him.

Jeremy looks to Jared.

JEREMY  
Wait right here.

Jared gives him a bitterly confused look.

JARED  
(sarcastically)  
As it pleases you, master.

Jeremy rolls his eyes and turns to stride down the hallway.

JARED (CONT.)  
Jesus, like a fuckin' dog.

He scoffs, shakes his head, and turns to grab a seat in the lobby.

The journey down the hallway is a long one. Is he really about to meet his mother?

Jeremy pauses at the door, staring at the name across the threshold.

DOOR FACE: "LEWIS - 1019"

A nurse slowly approaches and stands at a distance to his side.

NURSE  
(nervously)  
A-are you her son?

JEREMY  
Uh--yes, yes I am. I mean, I think so.

Beat.

NURSE  
You should let me go first. I need to administer some dr--uh meds.

Jeremy gives her a suspicious look.

JEREMY  
I would like this exchange to be unadulterated. Please.

NURSE  
That's not the best idea. I don't know how she would get.

JEREMY

Please, just let me do this. I've never met her before.

The nurse bows her head in agreement and reluctantly lets him pass through as she opens the door for him.

Jeremy softly tiptoes his way through the small entryway before the room begins.

His approach mirrors that of a man entering a haunted house, crossing into the great unknown.

His mother lies on the bed under the sheets, her head turned out towards the window.

Light shows through the partially drawn curtains. The lights are off, but the room is well-lit by natural light.

Jeremy finally reaches her side, kneels down in front of where she is looking. She does not recognize him and is perturbed as she must face this mystery guest.

MOTHER

Who are you? Who let you in?

Jeremy looks side to side, then looks down, and back up to her before answering.

JEREMY

You'll never believe this. But, I'm your son. Jeremy.

Could it really be?

MOTHER

Impossible. How can this be?

Jeremy cracks a smile as his eyes well up.

JEREMY

It's me, mom.

Short beat.

MOTHER

You're lying. Tell me who you really are!

JEREMY

It's really me, I promise!

She needs a moment to process this.

JEREMY (CONT.)

I didn't think this day would ever come. And I had no idea my life would bring me here. I didn't know this part of my life existed.

She tries her best not to be an emotional wreck.

JEREMY (CONT.)

I can't believe that you were hidden from me for twenty years.

Jeremy's mother is still having trouble with all this. It's a lot to take in at once.

MOTHER

They told me you were dead. And that I had killed you.

(shaking her head)

My life.

(sniffles)

Our lives came crashing down in an instant.

She cannot hold it back any longer. She breaks down.

Beat.

MOTHER

Oh, but I'm so glad you're here!  
You came to see me!

The tears come flooding in as she pulls him close.

Jeremy pushes her off.

JEREMY

Mom, what they say about you--

MOTHER

I know, honey-- I know--

JEREMY (CONT.)

I want you to look me in the eye and tell me you didn't kill them. Tell me it isn't true.

MOTHER

You think I'm crazy!

JEREMY

(snapping)

I don't know what am I supposed to think!

MOTHER  
 (sobbing)  
 You have to trust me!  
 (frantic)  
 I was set up! Now they keep me here  
 and-- It's awful here, Jeremy.  
 (grabbing Jeremy)  
 You have to help me!

Jeremy pulls away from her grasp.

JEREMY  
 How am I supposed to believe you?!  
 I only just met you. You have to  
 understand.

She lets the sadness overcome her once again.

MOTHER  
 I don't know. I don't know, honey,  
 I don't know what to do!

JEREMY  
 I have absolutely no reason to  
 trust you!

Jeremy's mother puts her face in her hands, still sobbing.

MOTHER  
 (frantic)  
 You can't just come here after  
 twenty years and start accusing me  
 like this!

JEREMY  
 What am I supposed to believe? The  
 truth, or your lies?!

MOTHER  
 You can't just come in here and  
 call me a liar.

JEREMY  
 I don't know what you are to me.

There is a long moment of silence before it is broken by the  
 Nurse in the doorway.

NURSE  
 Is everything alright in here?

JEREMY  
We're fine! Go away!

The nurse abides.

MOTHER  
(softly)  
Jeremy, honey, I'm not crazy. You  
have to believe me.  
(whispering)  
Please!

Jeremy thinks carefully a beat.

JEREMY  
So if not you, who set you up then?

MOTHER  
I don't know.

JEREMY  
So am I just to believe that this  
was all some sort of conspiracy?

MOTHER  
This had nothing to do with me. I  
had just shown up by the time the  
house was ablaze. Everything  
crumbled to the ground as I sat  
there, I just--

JEREMY  
You have to understand, this is a  
lot for me to take in right now.

His mother can't speak past the tears.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Why haven't you told anyone then?

MOTHER  
You think I haven't tried? They  
labelled me insane so I-- I'm stuck  
here. **That** is why you **have** to help  
me get out of here!

JEREMY  
But what about dad? Haven't you  
heard he's the talk of the town?  
Everyone says you killed him  
because--

MOTHER

I don't listen to that filth. And neither should you.

Jeremy hesitates a beat.

JEREMY

There has to be some truth to it, otherwise he wouldn't have made so many enemies. Why would they lie about that sort of thing?

MOTHER

Anyone will say anything to discredit him and take down his organization. That was the whole idea!

JEREMY

What do you mean? I-- I don't--

MOTHER

They wanted him dead so they could take over.

JEREMY

Yeah but who is they? You keep saying they!

MOTHER

I told you. I don't. Know.

JEREMY

We can't prove anything without--

MOTHER

It's up to you. You have to uncover it. Reveal it to the world.

JEREMY

You honestly think the whole town would gang up on him like that?

MOTHER

You have to believe it because it is the truth.

Jeremy takes it all in.

Beat.

JEREMY

I have to go, mom.

Jeremy's mother breaks down in a terrified cry. She shakes her head.

MOTHER

Jeremy, please don't leave me!

Jeremy swings his head around before he leaves.

JEREMY

I'll be back. I promise.

Jeremy strides on out the door.

We see Jeremy's mother from the doorway with her arm reaching out towards Jeremy as he goes while he and the nurse trade places.

Distant cries from his mother can be heard.

INT. PSYCH WARD - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS.

Jared stands outside the door, waiting for Jeremy.

JEREMY

The hell, man? I told you to wait--

JARED

I know what the fuck you told me, dickshit.

Both begin to pace together back towards the lobby.

JARED (CONT.)

But here, check this out. Does the name Peter Beverly mean anything to you?

Jared presents Jeremy with a CHECK-IN LIST.

JEREMY

How did you--?

JARED

None of that matters right now. Answer the question.

Jeremy takes a gander at the list.

JEREMY

Well, no. I mean-- I have no idea.  
I--

JARED

Apparently he's been coming to see  
your mother. Quite a bit.

They both glance at the LIST again together.

Jared throws him a stare with a cheeky smirk.

JEREMY

Don't-- don't you even make that  
joke.

JARED

Just sayin. He's the only one who's  
ever come to visit her.

Jeremy continues to survey the list.

They've finally arrived at the front desk.

JARED (CONT.)

Until you.

Jared hands over the clipboard to the receptionist, without  
breaking his stare with Jeremy.

Jeremy looks cold now.

JARED (CONT.)

So the question remains. With no  
family left but you, who else would  
come to visit her?

JEREMY

And why?

Jared shrugs.

INT. DETECTIVE OFFICES - DAY.

Jeremy storms up to their desks.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Looks like we've got ourselves a  
regular Rust Cohle here now don't  
we?

Detective Shepard, not batting an eye, continues reading his  
newspaper.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
I still don't know what the hell  
you're on about with that shit.

Detective Herman shrugs. Points his thumb over his shoulder  
at Shepard and leans in close to Jeremy.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
(whispering)  
Uncultured swine.

Shepard leans up from his newspaper and gives a narrow glare  
to Herman.

Jeremy cracks a half smile.

Herman leans back away from Jeremy.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
Now, what brings you back here  
already?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
(apathetically)  
Dare we ask?

Detective Shepard glares at Herman.

JEREMY  
Is there any possibility that my  
mother was wrongfully accused?

That got Shepard's attention.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Alright, no, kid. We got her. It's  
done. I'm all for helping you  
understand this case better. But  
you come in here making accusations  
like that. Uh-uh. Not a chance. I'm  
not gonna let that fly.

JEREMY  
She says she was set up.

Chief looks up from his desk, eyes narrowing on Jeremy.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Set up? God, you really are her  
son.

ANOTHER DETECTIVE at a desk behind them chuckles.

JEREMY

What do you mean by that?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

She's crazy man! We locked her ass up and it didn't take long before she was in the funny box. Or, what is it? What do they call it, Herm?

DETECTIVE HERMAN

The looney bin.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

That's the one! She was so outside her mind that they transferred her over to the Looney Bin!

Jeremy shakes his head and folds his arms.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD (CONT.)

Didn't take much. Wadn't no time at all.

JEREMY

But that doesn't prove anything.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

I mean, that's the kind of people you're dealin' with. Crime of passion, or some sorts.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

See, exactly. That's what really fascinates me about this case. I mean, what would drive someone to do something like that? It boggles the mind. What caused her to do some of the most fucked up shit imaginable?

Detective Shepard shakes his head, Jeremy shrugs.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)

Like, I mean, was it some boring shit like infidelity? How vanilla is that? We get it all the time. That's why wives are always killing their husbands.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Not always.

JEREMY

It's probably not that simple.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Or maybe it is! Who knows? We don't know! Nobody does!

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Your family's case might not be as special as you want it to be. We may never know if your real mom actually turns out to be koo-koo! She's the only one who would truly know what actually happened that day. The only other witnesses we could've had are ashes in the rubble.

OTHER DETECTIVE

(butts in, eavesdropping)

Ya hate to see that.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Even if she wasn't, why would she tell you the truth? You may never get a straight answer out of her.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

She was hoping you'd never make it out of that pond.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

She was probably counting on it.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Look, clearly she wants you to think this was a set-up. She wants you to be in her good graces again.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Exactly. Why would she ever admit to you what really happened? Odds are, she's probably too afraid to even face you at this point.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

I guarantee the prospect of you still being alive never even crossed her mind.

JEREMY

She never knew we were both pulled out of the car alive. I just went

(MORE)

JEREMY (cont'd)  
to see her and she had no idea I  
was even alive.

Chief glares up from his desk.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
She blacked out when you hit the  
water. She nailed the steering  
wheel on impact.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Right on the noggin.

JEREMY  
But the timeline doesn't match up!  
How can she be in two places at  
once?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Simple. She walked from the car to  
the house after dumping it in the  
drink. That's where we found her.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
You have to understand. We found  
her. At the scene. The house was in  
flames. Murder weapon on the ground  
next to her. Blood still dripping  
off the damned thing.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
She's the killer. Beyond the shadow  
of a doubt. And she burned it all  
to ash-- covering up her actions.

Chief has had enough. He scoots out of his chair and wades  
around his desk and the others to make it over to Shepard,  
Herman, and Jeremy.

CHIEF  
Why are you so interested in this  
conspiracy theory, anyway?

JEREMY  
Because my mother stands accused  
here. And I'll not rest until I've  
proven her innocence.

CHIEF  
Accused? She did it. Period. End of  
story.

JEREMY

She is trapped-- in a crazy home.  
Against her will. Wrongfully  
detained!

CHIEF

I won't stand here and allow you to  
tell us you think your know our  
line of work better than we do.  
We've been at this longer than  
you've been alive.

Jeremy does not back down.

JEREMY

Is this how justice is done around  
here? The true killer still may be  
out there. And you all sit here so  
convinced you did it right.

Beat.

JEREMY (CONT.)

You're all pathetic. Do I really  
have to do your job for you?

Detective Shepard chuckles before taking a sip of his  
coffee.

CHIEF

The job's already done, kid. It's  
over. We got her.

Detective Herman can't help but smirk.

Jeremy takes note of this.

CHIEF (CONT.)

You must be crazier than her,  
shooting off nonsense like this.

JEREMY

She was just at the right place at  
the wrong time. And I'll prove it  
to you.

CHIEF

Now you look here, son. You're  
grabbing at straws here. It's easy  
to see you're desperate to prove  
your mama's innocence. But, it's  
time to face the reality of it all.  
She's the killer. I'm sorry you

(MORE)

CHIEF (cont'd)  
have to live with the fact that  
your own mother is a murderer. I  
get it. No one wants to be the  
child of a criminal.

Chief leans in closer to him.

CHIEF (CONT.)  
But give it a rest. Please don't  
waste your young years chasing  
something that simply isn't there.

Detective Shepard shrugs his shoulders and looks smugly at  
Jeremy.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
Man's got a point.

Shepard lifts his coffee to his mouth.

Chief glares at Jeremy and wags his finger at him.

CHIEF  
Now, I don't want to ever see you  
in here again. 9-1-1 exists for  
emergencies, not bullshit.

Chief doesn't allow anyone to say a word before he's already  
back at his desk.

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
You do realize you were talking to  
the Chief that way, right?

DETECTIVE SHEPARD  
I hope not.

JEREMY  
You two are the worst excuses for  
cops I've ever seen. And you'll  
regret covering this up for people  
who probably don't even give a shit  
about you.

Jeremy is pointing at them all the while, until he turns to  
leave.

Before abruptly turning back around to face them again.

JEREMY  
Oh, and one more thing.

Both look up at Jeremy.

JEREMY (CONT.)

The simplest explanation is good enough for those who want to believe in lies. But, the truth always finds its way.

Jeremy turns back to walk away.

Detectives Herman and Shepard but quickly glance up at one another.

Detective Shepard takes a sip of his coffee and goes back to reading his paper.

Detective Herman kicks back and tosses his feet back up on the desk and relaxes his hands behind his head.

Jeremy turns the corner. They watch him all the way. Especially Chief.

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - NIGHT.

Jeremy laying on his bed staring at the ceiling.

Jared is kicked back in a chair, on leg on his desk, throwing a ball in the air and catching it with one hand over and over.

JARED

You must have some really fucked up desire to reside in a jail cell.

Jared shakes his head.

JARED (CONT.)

You can't just challenge them like that.

JEREMY

That's not at all what I did. Besides, someone has to call them out on their shit.

JARED

You know how in movies they had the kick me sign on their back and kids would kick the shit out of 'em? Even at school and whatnot? They didn't give a fuck.

JEREMY

Yeah, what are you on about anyway?

JARED

Well, you just put a nice 'fuck me right in the ass' sign up on the small of your back for those detectives. And that police chief.

Jeremy shakes his head.

JEREMY

I'm keeping them in check.

A beat.

JEREMY

All I want is to do something right. If my mom is truly innocent, the world has to know.

Jeremy has a revelation.

JEREMY (CONT.)

I can't believe this is happening. I'll never have a normal life now. Not after this.

JARED

That was lost the moment you started digging up your past life. The life you never had.

JEREMY

I didn't want this.

JARED

If you left this well enough alone, you could've kept living the way you wanted. Curiosity tends to get the best of us. We uncover secrets we wish we'd left buried.

Jeremy looks to him and throws his arms out in disgust.

JEREMY

So, what then? You'd have me remain ignorant?

JARED

This is your life now. You have no choice but to see this through.

JEREMY

I can't keep going on like this. I don't think I can do this anymore.

JARED

I don't know what to tell ya, man.  
Honestly, you just have to solve  
this now. It's the only way this  
will ever end.

Jeremy sits up in bed and gives Jared an empty stare.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S PLACE - NIGHT.

Tracy, Mark, and Jeremy all sit at the dinner table.

MARK

Jeremy, we've noticed that you  
haven't been the same lately.  
What's going on?

JEREMY

I'm fine, really.

Tracy sees right through him.

TRACY

Jeremy, we know. You'd better just  
tell us now.

Jeremy remains silent, but wears his guilt.

TRACY (CONT.)

I told you not to look into this.

Mark waves her off. He leans in closer.

MARK

Jeremy, you need to leave the dead  
where they lie. They'll never reach  
peace with you poking around like  
this.

JEREMY

I'll never find my own if I don't  
see this through to the end.

Mark and Tracy give each other a brief glance.

Beat.

TRACY

I can't imagine what you're going  
through right now. This has to be a  
lot to take in, and I know this  
isn't what you want to hear right  
now, but the truth you seek just  
isn't out there.

JEREMY

I need to know for certain. I can't allow them to keep my real mother locked away in a pale white room treated like she's some sort of psycho!

Mark calmly settles himself and looks at Jeremy intently.

MARK

Jeremy, it's clear that your mother-- she-- the evidence is quite staggering. You have to see that.

JEREMY

That's the thing, there is. No. Evidence. It all burnt up in the house fire! There are no witnesses!

Tracy looks deeply into Jeremy's eyes.

JEREMY (CONT.)

No one knows the truth. I have to get it out there.

TRACY

Jeremy, honey, I'm sorry this happened. Truly, I am. But, we're your family now. We always have been. You'll do right by your blood to leave this alone.

MARK

You must. Please, don't dishonor their memory by running around on this witch hunt. There's no use.

JEREMY

I have to take the stain off my family name. I don't want them remembered like this. Finding the truth is how I will honor their memory.

MARK

You don't carry the burden of that name anymore. You lost that burden the day we brought you into our lives.

Jeremy gives a sharp glare to Mark.

JEREMY

My name isn't a burden. It's who I really am.

Jeremy gets up and slams his chair in.

He leaves the room, Tracy puts her face in her hands, and Mark watches in disbelief as he goes.

Tracy finally looks up at Mark.

TRACY

You have to tell him.

MARK

I know.

INT. JEREMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT.

Jared is sitting on Jeremy's desk. Jeremy is laying on his bed.

JARED

I'm sorry that this is the way it is. I'm sorry you have to live with the reality that *this* is what your family was.

JEREMY

Nothing to be sorry for. It's not your fault, man. It's no one's, really. None but my father. And all who had a hand in fucking up my life.

Beat.

JARED

I was four when I lost my brother. We were just playing on the driveway. The ball went out into the street and he--

Brief pause.

JARED (CONT.)

I understand the feeling of not really knowing what it could be like if he was still here. I get it. Those who could make a difference in our lives given the chance. I know it's hard. You think up moments, scenarios.

Jeremy shakes his head.

JEREMY

You think you know. You think you understand. But this is my *entire* family. This is three little girls who were prevented from truly experiencing anything. Everything! It isn't about moments. It's about living. It's about life! They never had the chance. Any possibility they ever had, *gone!*

JARED

I didn't mean-- I--

JEREMY

You can't even imagine. There's no way you could ever know--

JARED

Don't act like you know! You lived! You have no idea either, same as me, same as anyone!

Beat.

JARED (CONT.)

So don't pin this on me. Don't take it out on me, okay? What happened was tragic. It's disgraceful what they've done. So much that I barely have the words to describe it. Can we please get past the fact that I don't know and couldn't ever possibly know. I'm trying to help you in any way that I can. Because we are friends. Brothers, even.

Jeremy's eyes well up.

JARED (CONT.)

I won't stand here and allow you to tell me that I have no right to try to sympathize with what you're going through. That's all I can do. I'm doing everything I can, to the best of my ability to be a good friend. We're gonna make this right.

A beat.

JEREMY

Every night, I'm forced awake. Thinking about the flames eating away at their clothes, scorching their bodies. Choking on the thick smoke. Do you even realize what that must be like? To be subjected to one of the most horrific ways to die. How much did they suffer? Or did they go softly? No one has the answer. And I will never know. But I do know this. If I find out what waste of life had done this, who truly did this, I will end what pathetic time they have left on this place they don't deserve.

Jared shakes his head.

JARED

I can't keep doing this, man. I don't know what you want from me. It's like you didn't even hear a word I said.

Jared storms out of the room.

JEREMY

Just wai- hold up. Oh, come on!

Jeremy makes a poor attempt to stop him from leaving.

JEREMY (CONT.)

Damn it.

Overhead view of Jeremy as we...

TRANSITION TO:

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - MORNING.

Jeremy is frantically typing on his computer.

Suddenly, there is a soft knock at the door.

Jeremy ignores it and continues on.

The knock is slightly louder this time.

JEREMY

I'm still not talking to you.

MARK (O.S.)  
Please open the door. Let's just  
talk.

Nothing from Jeremy.

MARK (O.S.)  
Come on, Jeremy. There's something  
I have to tell you.

JEREMY  
Don't wanna hear it.

MARK (O.S.)  
I think you would if you knew what  
it was.

Jeremy's eyes widen.

He shuts the computer off, slides out of his chair, opens  
the window, removes the screen, and climbs out onto the  
ledge.

MARK (O.S.)  
Jeremy?

He struggles his way down and drops safely to the ground.

MARK (O.S.)  
Jeremy!

Jeremy then glides across the yard towards his car.

INT. PSYCH WARD - MOTHER'S ROOM - DAY.

Jeremy sits beside his Mother who lies in bed.

Jeremy is holding her hand.

MOTHER  
It's so good to see you. I'm so  
blessed you come to see me.

JEREMY  
Have they been treating you well?

His Mother takes a bit longer to answer than she should.

MOTHER  
It's okay.

Brief pause.

MOTHER (CONT.)  
I'm okay, really.

JEREMY  
Does anyone else come to visit you?

She can't muster a response.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Other than me?

Mother shakes her head.

MOTHER  
No. It's just you.

Jeremy knows that's bullshit.

MOTHER (CONT.)  
And I'm thankful for that.

JEREMY  
Mom, just tell me. I know that's  
not true.

Mother sighs.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Who is it?

MOTHER  
Someone comes in to check on me  
every so often.

JEREMY  
What does he talk to you about?

MOTHER  
He just asks me how I am. Just like  
you.

JEREMY  
What else? Anything?

Beat.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Mom, what else does he ask you?

She shakes her head.

MOTHER  
He asks if anyone else visits me.

JEREMY  
Have you told him about me?

She looks to him, teary-eyed.

She shakes her head.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Mom, did you tell him I've been  
coming to see you?

She looks up, trying desperately to calm herself down and  
stop crying.

Beat.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Mom...

She finally looks to him.

MOTHER  
He won't let me keep anything from  
him.

He struggles to face her.

MOTHER (CONT.)  
I'm sorry.

She can't hold back the tears.

He looks toward the doorway.

JEREMY  
Am I in any immediate danger?

Brief beat.

MOTHER  
You were from the moment you  
decided to come here...

Jeremy is still not facing her.

MOTHER (CONT.)  
The first time.

Jeremy finally makes eye contact.

EXT. ABANDONED SHACK - NIGHT.

Jeremy anxiously awaits the arrival of his guest in the creepy old shack.

Car lights pour in through the cracks between the wood and holes in the shack.

Jeremy is fidgeting as he waits for the man to enter.

A REPORTER (30's) sneaks through the doorway, careful to make any noise or sudden movements.

The Reporter is young looking, skinny and fair haired.

JEREMY

Thanks for meeting with me.

Reporter extends his hand for a shake. They shake firmly.

REPORTER

Tell me I'm not wasting my time.

Brief pause.

JEREMY

I promise you, it can be your biggest story if you--

REPORTER

I read your message.

(brief beat)

What do you have for me?

JEREMY

You know the family that was murdered about twenty years ago?

Reporter nods.

REPORTER

There's not a single person in this town who doesn't know every detail of that case.

JEREMY

Not every detail.

Beat.

REPORTER

Try me.

The Reporter fishes out a pad and pen.

JEREMY

My mother was set up in the whole thing. And I can prove it.

REPORTER

Go on...

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT.

There is noticeably more party-goers at the house this time around.

FRAT RATS are getting wild out on the lawn.

STUDENTS file in and out the front door.

ASSORTED DRUNKARDS stumble for a few steps and fall to the ground.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - BAR - NIGHT.

Jared is having a grand old time, but looks like he is in control.

He counts a large sum of money in his hands.

He is juggling a cigar, drink, and his phone is pressed between his shoulder and ear.

JARED

Yeah, no yeah, it's a banger.

(beat)

Yeah, you gotta get over here, man.

They've taken over. And I love it.

Bring on the chaos!

(beat)

Oh yeah, yeah. Just do it, man.

Don't be a pansy.

PARTY-GOERS are ravenous.

Jared struggles to accommodate them all.

JARED (CONT.)

Alright, good. That's what I like to hear!

(beat)

Alright, alright, gotta go! They're all up in my business!

PARTY ANIMAL 1 spills a beer all over the bar.

Jared points at Party Animal 1 to draw attention to the crime she just committed.

JARED  
 Hey, now! That's sacred grass water  
 you're wasting over there! You hear  
 me? Cut the shit! Lest you wanna  
 make a beer run for me!

Jared extricates himself from the situation.

He weaves his way through the crowd, and emerges as if he  
 was suffocating.

JARED (CONT.)  
 Agh, Jesus. Fucking peasants! That  
 was perfectly good--

Jeremy has arrived. He stops Jared in his tracks with his  
 gaze.

JARED  
 Well, if it isn't Douche-Face Jones  
 himself!

JEREMY  
 We need to talk.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - JARED'S ROOM - NIGHT.

Jeremy backs into the door, sealing it.

Jared is sprawled on his bed, bathing in his drunk.

JARED  
 What's on your mind, dickbag?

JEREMY  
 First of all, I'm sorry.

JARED  
 Noted.

JEREMY  
 Secondly, we have a problem.

JARED  
 What kind of problem?

JEREMY  
 A big one.

JARED  
 (sarcastically)  
 I'm blown away. Tell me more.

JEREMY  
It appears that--

JARED  
Have you figured out who that  
Beverly fellow is yet?

JEREMY  
Uh, no. I--

JARED  
Now, before you tell me anything,  
we should pour some liquor down our  
throats.

JEREMY  
This is not the time for--

JARED  
This is precisely the time--

JEREMY  
Don't you realize what's going  
on? Our lives are at stake here! I--

JARED  
All the more reason to drink. Now,  
come on.

Jared gestures for him to follow.

JARED (CONT.)  
Let's go party our dicks off.

Jeremy reluctantly takes a step back, but begrudgingly  
abides.

JARED (CONT.)  
Take our minds off this shit  
awhile.

Jared trows his arm around him as they make their way  
towards the party.

INT. PARTY HOUSE - JARED'S ROOM - MORNING.

Jeremy is face down on Jared's bed.

Jared shakes him awake.

Jeremy groans.

JARED  
Come on, get up. Big day for ya,  
Rick Blaine.

Jeremy shoos him away.

JEREMY  
Ugh, what does that even mean?

JARED  
You were really laying it on thick  
with the ladies last night.

JEREMY  
Yeah, but he never-- forget it.

JARED  
Seriously, what's on the agenda?

JEREMY  
There's someone I need to talk to.

JARED  
Who is it?

JEREMY  
This is what I wanted to tell you  
last night.

JARED  
Well, out with it then!

JEREMY  
My mom, real mom, seems to think  
they murdered my dad to replace him  
at that power plant.

JARED  
How can you be sure this guy will  
help you even if he does know  
anything?

Short beat.

JEREMY  
I don't.

Jared's skeptical stare into Jeremy's eyes.

EXT. NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - DAY.

Jeremy carefully pulls up to the parking lot and finds a  
spot.

He shuffles toward the offices.

INT. NUCLEAR POWER PLANT - OFFICES.

Jeremy glides on down the hallway towards the President's Office.

The name tag on the door reads: "BRYAN CALDWELL - PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS"

Jeremy knocks on the door.

BRYAN CALDWELL (40's) answers the door. He is a spitting image of Mark.

BRYAN CALDWELL  
Can I help you?

JEREMY  
As a matter of fact, you can.

Bryan steps aside to allow him to come in the door. He shuts it behind him.

OTHER WORKERS down the hall stare from afar.

INT. BRYAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS.

Bryan scoots around his desk and spins in his seat.

BRYAN  
You know, it's not very often I let strangers into my office.

Jeremy lands himself in a seat across from him.

JEREMY  
Believe me, I'm no stranger.

Bryan is intrigued.

BRYAN  
Who are you, then?

Jeremy waits a short beat.

JEREMY  
Name's Jeremy. I'm your nephew.

BRYAN  
Mark doesn't have a son.

JEREMY  
It's complicated.

BRYAN  
What do you mean?

JEREMY  
I'm adopted. You never knew?

Bryan shakes his head.

BRYAN  
He never told me.

JEREMY  
But how-- in 20 years he never--  
Bryan leans back, now upright in his chair.

BRYAN  
We haven't spoken in 20 years.

Beat.

JEREMY  
Do you know the name Peter Beverly?  
Brief pause.

BRYAN  
Who are you, really?

JEREMY  
I just told you. I--

Bryan comes to a revelation.

BRYAN  
You're supposed to be dead.

JEREMY  
What? I don't--

BRYAN  
Mark was--

JEREMY  
Mark was what?

BRYAN  
You need to leave. I've said too  
much already.

JEREMY  
No-- You can't-- I still need you  
to tell me--

Bryan rises from his seat, stomps over to Jeremy.

BRYAN  
These are very dangerous men. I  
can't--

Bryan picks up Jeremy by his shirt sleeve and lifts him to the door.

JEREMY  
Who is dangerous? What men?

Bryan swings open the door.

BRYAN  
I said you need to leave. Now.

Bryan shoves Jeremy out the door.

JEREMY  
But won't you testify? We can get  
these men!

BRYAN  
They won't let you run.

JEREMY  
What?

Bryan slams the door.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

Mark knocks on Jeremy's door.

MARK  
Jeremy? Open up.

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Jeremy's head snaps to the door.

Jared lying on his bed.

JEREMY  
What do you want?

MARK (O.S.)  
We need to talk.

Jeremy sighs, looks to Jared.

JEREMY  
What about?

Beat.

MARK (O.S.)  
It's really important.

Jeremy throws his arms up. Rolls his eyes.

JEREMY  
Can't it wait?

EXT. JEREMY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

Mark puts his head on the door and shuts his eyes.

MARK  
No, Jeremy. It can't.

INT. JEREMY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS.

MARK (O.S.)  
Please open the door.

Jeremy glares at Jared. He nods.

Jared nods back.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER.

Jeremy, Jared, Mark, and Tracy all sit at the table.

MARK  
Are you sure? Even with--?

Tracy nods.

MARK (CONT.)  
Jeremy. There's something I have to  
tell you.

JEREMY  
You lied to me.

MARK  
What?

JEREMY  
I went to see him.

Brief pause.

MARK  
See whom?

JEREMY  
Bryan.

Tracy looks to Mark.

JEREMY (CONT.)  
Your brother.

Mark takes this in. Oh shit.

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

SWAT Team exits van brandishing M4A1 Carbines.

They get in tactical positions outside the house.

All guns are trained on the house.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS.

Mark leans in to speak.

MARK  
This is exactly why I have to tell  
you this.

JEREMY  
Tell me what?!

Mark waits a beat.

MARK  
I was there. At the scene of the  
accident. The accident.

Jeremy processes this.

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

SWAT LEADER and his men take up positions behind cars.

Swat Leader nods to them.

SWAT team proceeds to light up the house in a hail of  
gunfire. The sound is deafening.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Bullets toss about dishes, glasses, and furniture.

Mark dives in an attempt to protect Tracy.

Bullets rip through Tracy as she is tossed in the opposite direction of Mark.

Mark can only look on in horror.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT.

Jared is urging for Jeremy to get down.

Both somehow find some cover.

All the while, shrapnel is flying every which way around them.

Jeremy and Jared are bracing behind cover and fragments scatter about.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Mark makes a desperate move to the kitchen before being peppered with .556 rounds.

He flails before he drops to the floor.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT.

Jeremy sees the chaos unfolding before him.

He cannot help but hopelessly stare at the motionless bodies of Mark and Tracy.

JEREMY  
(softly)  
Fucking shit--

Jeremy fights off breaking down.

Jared makes a motion to Jeremy for them to move out the back of the house.

Both are covering their ears. They attempt to communicate, but to no avail.

The back sliding glass door shatters to the floor.

Jeremy and Jared make a run for the backyard running through their new opening.

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

After a seemingly endless barrage of gunfire, the SWAT team approaches the house.

The SWAT team breaches the front door.

INT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS.

They clear the rooms on the main floor.

A team makes their approach upstairs.

Two SWAT members stake their claim over Mark and Tracy.

They know full well that they are dead, but they stand over their dead bodies all the same. Just in case.

SWAT 1 (O.S.)  
All clear!

SWAT 2 (O.S.)  
Clear!

SWAT LEADER  
Sweep the floors! We cannot come  
back empty-handed!

SWAT 3  
Roger that!

SWAT 4  
Affirmative, sir.

SWAT 3 approaches SWAT LEADER.

SWAT 3  
Nothing here, boss. Just the  
adoptive parents.

SWAT LEADER  
Set a perimeter! No one in or out  
within a ten block radius! I want  
this done an hour ago!

SWAT 4  
On it!

The Swat Leader approaches SWAT 1.

SWAT LEADER  
Did you check the back.

Swat 1 can't muster a response. He knows it won't be good.

SWAT LEADER (CONT.)  
You didn't check the back, did you?

SWAT 1  
Sir, no one could have escaped  
this. I mean, look at--

Swat Leader pistol whips Swat 1 in the face.

SWAT LEADER  
Out the back! You--

Swat Leader points to Swat 2 and 3.

SWAT LEADER (CONT.)  
--with me. Let's go. Now!

SWAT 2  
On you, sir!

SWAT 3  
Right behind you.

Swat Leader, 2 and 3 all rush out the back patio.

Swat 1 lifts himself off the ground, clutching his face.

He heads to the kitchen for a paper towel under cold water.

Swat 4 heads down the stairs and posts up next to Mark and Tracy's corpses.

EXT. MARK AND TRACY'S HOUSE - NIGHT.

Police cars swarm to the home.

Radio chatter is frantic.

OFFICERS exit their cars and take aim with their handguns at the home.

EXT. WOODS BEHIND NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT.

Jeremy and Jared desperately struggle to navigate through the woods behind the house.

SHOOT TO DARKNESS.

The sound of a door opening can be heard.

SMASH TO:

INT. INSANE ASYLUM - MOTHER'S ROOM - DAY.

The Nurse scoots in.

Mother looks up to Nurse and turns her head away.

INT. INSANE ASYLUM - HALLWAY - DAY.

TWO MEN in dark suits and identical shades pace the hallway on their way to a room.

INT. MOTHER'S ROOM - DAY.

The door suddenly opens.

Nurse and mother immediately raise their heads and direct their attention to the doorway.

AGENT 1 allows AGENT 2 to brush past him as he keeps the door open for him. Both have expressionless faces behind their shades.

The Nurse can only watch.

Mother's expression never falters.

Agent 2 scoots across the room over to the corner near Nurse.

The Agents turn their attention to the Nurse, only briefly.

AGENT 2

Leave.

The Nurse frantically shakes her head and scurries away.

Agent 1 grants her safe passage through the door, promptly locking it behind her.

Agent 2 makes his way bedside.

Agent 1 now files into the room, takes up his place bedside, to the left.

MOTHER

Do it. I'm dead already.

Agent 1 and 2 both give each other a stern look.

Agent 2 suddenly holds her arms down.

Agent 1 shoves a rag down her throat and places his hand over her mouth.

They don't stop until the struggling ceases.

Agent 1 removes the rag as soon as he's sure.

Agent 2 pops open prescription pills on the nightstand and shoves them in her mouth.

He drops the empty bottle on the bed next to her motionless corpse.

INT. HALLWAYS - DAY.

Agents 1 and 2 swiftly glide on out of the room.

The petrified Nurse looks on from afar.

A name badge reveals a familiar name on it as Agents 1 and 2 passes by.

FBI BADGE FACE: "AGENT BEVERLY"

OTHER FBI BADGE FACE: "AGENT PETERS"

The nurse cautiously approaches the room.

The Agents have vanished.

The Nurse briskly tiptoes into Mother's room once she's sure she's safe to do so.

Nurse escapes our view once she has let herself in the room.

She gasps.

INT. BRYAN CALDWELL'S OFFICE - DAY.

Bryan Caldwell sits upright at his desk, shuffling papers.

He sits briefly in thought, runs his hand over his face, and lets out a sigh.

His phone ringing shatters the silence.

He doesn't miss a beat in answering.

He lifts the phone to his face.

BRYAN  
Bryan Caldwell speaking.

VOICE ON PHONE (V.O.)  
You shouldn't have talked.

BRYAN  
May I ask who--

Suddenly, a crack in the distance is heard.

A bullet whizzes through the back of his skull and out the front of his face.

A whole mess of Bryan ends up all over the desk, the floor, and chairs in front.

Bryan's torso, head, and arms are sprawled out all across his desk.

He lies motionless next to the dial tone.

INT. JARED'S ROOM - DAY.

Jeremy sits at Jared's desk, trying to occupy his mind.

He is sifting through online articles.

He attempts to read an article about the murders.

He can't muster enough strength to read any further.

The thought of Mark and Tracy overcomes him.

He breaks down.

Jared cannot bear to look at Jeremy any longer.

We still hear Jeremy sobbing from across the room.

EXT. EVERGREEN PARK - FLASHBACK - DAY.

A COP sits alone in his squad car.

Suddenly a car comes racing into the parking lot and heads directly for the pond.

The vehicle crashes into a block of concrete just between the parking lot and the pond.

The car bumps up and the front half is flirting with the pond. The back half is resting on the concrete block on the parking lot.

COP  
(whispering)  
What the actual fuck?

He quickly jumps up out of his car and races to the wreck.

He carefully opens the passenger door to find A BABY in the car-seat.

The baby is crying.

He gently unfastens his buckles when--

THE WOMAN in the driver's seat wakes up.

She eyes the kitchen knife below her.

COP  
Are you alright?

She swipes at him with the knife, slicing his arm.

He quickly, by reflex, draws his pistol and FIRES!

The bullet catches her forehead, she slumps over.

The Cop is Mark Caldwell!

MARK  
Come on, buddy. We'll get you out  
of here.

Mark is calculated with his approach bringing the baby out and carrying him.

He spins around the car onto the parking lot when--

BOOM!

Shotgun fire skims the back of the vehicle.

Mark staggers backward, cradles the baby boy even closer, and takes cover behind the wheel of the vehicle.

MARK  
Shit!

An AGGRESSIVE COP is behind Mark's squad car, pumping shotgun pellets into the car and all around him.

Mark softly places the baby back in the car.

Mark spins out of cover, raises his pistol, takes aim, and lets out a round.

Aggressive Cop ducks behind cover.

Mark retreats back.

Aggressive Cop lets loose his last round.

Mark doesn't waste a second.

He lines up his shot.

He fires. The bullet smashes into his face.

Blood sprays as he flops backward.

Mark places the baby back in the car-seat and carries the whole thing back to his vehicle.

INT. MARK'S SQUAD CAR - CONTINUOUS.

He secures the precious cargo in the backseat.

MARK

Don't worry, buddy. I'm gonna get you back safe. I promise, just hang in there!

The radio cues with static and faint voices.

CHIEF (O.S.)

3-1, come in. What's going on over there? What's your status?

Mark starts the car.

He reaches for the radio.

MARK

Chief, she took the boy. The infant.

CHIEF (O.S.)

Call me.

MARK

Copy.

Mark pulls out of the parking spot.

He calls the Chief on his massive cell phone.

CHIEF (O.S.)

The boy dies, Mark.

MARK

I don't understand why we can't just--

CHIEF (O.S.)  
 We cannot allow him to take over  
 the company when he comes of age.

MARK  
 But he's just a--

CHIEF (O.S.)  
 His father should have thought  
 about his children before he fucked  
 the whole town. It's for the best.

MARK  
 I don't think I can--

CHIEF (O.S.)  
 This just ceased to be a request.

Chief hangs up. Dial tone.

Mark drives as quickly as he can, but under control.

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Jared is laying on the couch, enjoying a beer.

The door suddenly swings open.

It's Herman and Shepard.

JARED  
 Who the fuck? What are you doing in  
 my house?

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
 Where is he?

EXT. INSANE ASYLUM - DAY.

Jeremy is looking through binoculars.

He sees Two Agents striding away from the front doors.

Through a window, he sees Nurse panicking as two ASSISTANTS  
 in white scrubs checking the pulse on his Mother.

Jeremy lowers his binoculars and storms away.

EXT. LONG COUNTRY ROAD TO ABANDONED SHACK - DAY.

An undercover police vehicle driving on the road.

It is transporting Jared, along with Detectives Herman and  
 Shepard. Detective Herman is at the wheel.

The abandoned shack is barely standing with broken windows, wood 2x4's hanging off, and showcases sizable holes in its roof.

INT. UNDERCOVER POLICE INTERCEPTOR - DAY.

JARED

Oh, because only good things happen  
in creepy abandoned old shacks.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Shut your mouth.

EXT. ABANDONED SHACK - DAY.

Detectives Herman and Shepard exit the vehicle and softly shut the doors in unison.

INT. ABANDONED SHACK - CONTINUOUS.

Jeremy nervously awaits the arrival of the Detectives.

He takes a few steps back, and stands in the middle of the bare room.

The door opens suddenly with a SLAM.

Jeremy flinches. He is confronted by Detectives Herman and Shepard.

Detective Shepard shoves Jared inside.

Detectives Herman and Shepard shuffle across the room so that they're on either side of Jeremy.

Jared can only watch from the corner.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Anyone else here?

Jeremy shakes his head.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

You armed?

JEREMY

I'm not as dumb as I look.

Detective Herman nods to Detective Sherman.

Shepard waltzes over to Jeremy and pats him down.

Shepard nods to Herman.

He retreats to where he was.

JEREMY

If you're gonna kill me, do it quickly. You've taken everyone closest to me. People I'll never know. I've no one else left to lose.

He takes in a deep, shaky breath. He's close to letting out a good cry, but fights it off.

JEREMY (CONT.)

No one but him.

(points to Jared)

Please, just leave him out of it. He never did a thing. He's just being a good friend!

Detectives Herman and Shepard give each other a side-eye.

Beat.

JEREMY

Just fucking do it already!

Herman inches forward, putting his hands out in an attempt to calm Jeremy.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Relax, we wouldn't be here if--

JEREMY

That's exactly why you would be here...to kill me. That would solve a lot of problems for you.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

I need you to trust me. We are not going to kill you. We want to help get you out of here.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

Hold on a minute, Herm. The hell d'you mean, help? Whose side are y--

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Now wait-- Just let me speak a moment.

DETECTIVE SHEPARD

--You on anyway? You know what we  
have to-- We have orders t--

Detective Herman lowers his pistol but swiftly shoots  
Detective Shepard in the leg.

Detective Shepard in a desperation attempt swings his pistol  
arm towards Herman and fires.

Shepard's shot misses Herman, but lands somewhere else.

Herman just as quickly pops off two rounds. They hit Shepard  
square in the chest and head.

Shepard flops backward and lies motionless in a pool of his  
blood, skull fragments and brains.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

I believe you kid, something never  
felt right about this whole thing.

JEREMY

What, but wh-- I just don't-- why  
did you--

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Never mind that now, you have to  
leave.

JEREMY

But, you didn't have to.. He.. I--

Jeremy finally spots Jared. Dead. Blood spattered all up the  
wall behind him.

JEREMY

Jesus fucking--

Jeremy shaking his head, hopelessly holding back tears.

Herman spots Jared's corpse propped against the wall.

After he's processed what just happened, he looks Jeremy  
dead in the eye.

DETECTIVE HERMAN

Jeremy, I'm sorry about your  
friend. All this death...needless.

Herman shakes sense into him, forces him to make eye  
contact.

DETECTIVE HERMAN (CONT.)  
But I need you to focus right now.  
You will not make it out of this by  
mourning your friend.

Jeremy shakes his head. On the verge of breaking down.

JEREMY  
This can't be happening--

DETECTIVE HERMAN  
But it is happening. You need to  
get this story out there. It's the  
only chance of ever--

BANG! A shotgun blast suddenly interrupts Herman, causing him to come crashing down on top of Jeremy.

The walls behind Jeremy painted with Herman, including Jeremy himself.

Herman's deadweight pins Jeremy to the ground.

Chief comes busting through the hole in the wall he just made brandishing a shotgun.

Herman's pistol falls to Jeremy's side.

Chief towers over Herman's motionless corpse, and Jeremy's trapped body.

Jeremy quickly, gracelessly reaches for the handgun.

Chief racks in another load and takes aim down at Jeremy.

Jeremy grips the pistol, tilts it upward, and squeezes the trigger as many times as it allows him to.

Most of the shots miss all around Chief until one finally enters his forehead and whizzes out the back, painting the walls and the ceiling red.

Chief topples to the floor.

Jeremy lets out a sigh of relief.

He finally lets his emotions take hold.

He lets out a brief cry to mourn the loss of his friend, everything that's happened.

But then he realizes what he must do.

The sound of police sirens flood the landscape.

Time to go.

Jeremy slowly turns toward the backdoor, cocks the pistol back, looks at the chamber, checks the magazine.

Empty.

Jeremy scans the floor for a fresh one.

He slams one home, pulls the slide forward, and makes his way toward the back. Away from the distant sirens.

Jeremy pinches the bridge of his nose, clearing the way for his eyes. Ridding himself of any excess tears.

Now looking determined, he paces toward a window.

EXT. ABANDONED SHACK - DAY.

Jeremy maneuvers out a window in the back.

He then start sprinting with determination, and tears in his eyes. He leaves the abandoned shack in his wake.

Sirens growing louder still...

SLAM TO DARKNESS.

The sound of Jeremy bursting through the front doors is heard.

SMASH TO:

INT. BROADCAST STATION LOBBY - DAY

Jeremy frantically approaches the front desk at a news media outlet...

JEREMY

This will sound nothing short of insane, but please hear me out.

A SECRETARY at the desk sits with her mouth agape.

SECRETARY

We've heard about your story.

JEREMY

I didn't think anyone would believe me.

REPORTER (O.S.)  
Oh, I think we might.

Reporter comes into view. He gives a smirk to Jeremy.

A SUITED MAN stands in the hallway leading up to the front desk. Arms folded.

He nods to POLICE OFFICERS who are standing outside, waiting to enter.

The Officers barge in and march across the room straight to Jeremy who clutch his arms from behind and restrain him.

JEREMY  
No-- wait. What the f-- What are  
you doing?!

The Suited Man smoothly glides over to Reporter who is standing speechless as the officers take Jeremy away.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
Stop! You can't-- You can't do  
this!

The Suited Man is the Reporter's BOSS. He leans in.

BOSS  
(to Reporter)  
If you value your position at all,  
you will not publish this story.

The Reporter takes this in.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
Somebody help me! Please!

Boss strides on back to his office.

Secretary covers her mouth with her hand.

JEREMY (O.S.)  
Don't let them take me!

The Reporter can only watch as the police shove Jeremy out the front doors.

SMASH TO DARKNESS.

The sound of jail cells slamming shut.

OPEN ON:

INT. INSANE ASYLUM - DAY.

Jeremy is showcasing a white jumpsuit while he is escorted down the halls flanked by TWO NURSES.

They briskly pace down the hallway until they show him to his cell.

Jeremy is scooted into solitary confinement. Straight jacket and all.

Jeremy's blank, emotionless stare as we back away from the room, the door slams, latches shut, and we...

FADE TO BLACK.

**THE END**