

REBIRTH

BY
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INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. EVENING

The room is dark; the lights are off and the drapes have been pulled, giving the atmosphere an overcast, somber look. One ray of light penetrates through a crevice in the drapes, travelling through the musky room to accentuate BRENT'S FACE, almost as a religious painting. BRENT, looking crushed and battered, is on one knee looking up at STEVEN.

We cut to Brent's disturbing view as we look at Steven towering above him. Steven's white hair cascades down his aged, wrinkled face.

STEVEN
You don't realize, Brent, I own
you. Even in my death you cannot
escape me.

BRENT
(hoarsely)

I'll take peace knowing you're in
hell...

Steven gives a short snide laugh

BRENT (CONT'D)
You won't be laughing when Satan is
eating your crisp flesh.

Brent starts to charge at Steven, only to be cut short by a SLAP to the face. We hear a CRACK as Brent's head snaps to the right, DROOL flying out of his agape mouth.

CUT TO: WHITE

TITLE CARD:
REBIRTH

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. SCHOOL, DAY (1988)

Outside the school, the bell resonates as we watch students disperse excitedly. One kid stands out.

BRENT, ten years old, is wearing coke bottle glasses, a plaid shirt, and long straight-legged pants. He bustles out of school, blowing off a couple bigger students that shove him. As he walks off the students point and laugh at Brent.

We follow Brent on a lengthy walk home as he saunters by the GROCERY STORE, some APARTMENTS, a BIG ROAD, a RURAL ROAD and a FARM.

We are now following behind his legs to reveal the shoe laces from his Reebok high-tops are undone, fluttering with every stride.

Brent stops outside of a gate to the entrance of a secluded camp. He stoops down to tie his shoes, revealing to the camera his backpack, which is unzipped.

He tightens his laces and OPENS the gate latch.

EXT. COMMUNE, DAY --CONTINUOUS

BRENT enters into what appears to be a cafeteria on the patio. After walking through the entrance he turns left, neither looking at nor talking to anybody. Brent YELLS alarmed as a hand reaches down and SNATCHES the backpack off him, thrashing Brent to the ground. Brent catches himself on his hands and REELS back to look up and see Steven heaving the book bag at his head. The book bag knocks Brent back, and it rests on the floor with the contents dispersed across the ground. We focus on one item in particular that had fallen out- a comic book.

A couple seconds of complete silence pass until we HEAR STEVEN's FOOTSTEPS as he stands straddling the book. His HAND reaches down to pick the magazine up.

We follow as he lifts it to his face. Steven gives it a long stare as he silently flips through the comic book.

Steven does not say a word, but instead extends the comic book back out to Brent. Brent is hesitant at first, but then makes an attempt to take the comic book.

Right as Brent is reaching for the book; Steven forcefully RIPS the comic book in half. Steven continues to shred the pages, all the while his anger builds up.

We watch as MARTHA, Brent's mother, dashes across the room to the scene. She sees Steven's hands are full of a shredded magazine. By now the magazine is indescribable, and she is not aware of the genre.

MARTHA
(angrily)
Brent! Where did you get that smut!

BRENT
It's the first edition of World
Man; I was borrowing from my
friend!

Steven, clearly remaining highly upset, reels back and LUNGES his hands, FLINGING the ripped up paper at Martha's face.

STEVEN
You need to straighten out that
bastard of a son!

MARTHA
He didn't do anything wrong; he is
just a kid!

STEVEN
I'll be the one to decide that. Why
don't you be the parent and ask him
where he got the comic.

MARTHA
(exasperated)
Brent, where did you get this?

BRENT
My friend Daniel at school let me
borrow it.

STEVEN
Ask him why he feels it is OK to
read this shit!

MARTHA
Brent, why did your friend give you
this? Did you ask him for it?

Brent stammers, but he finds he is unable to assert a response.

STEVEN
The damned kid can't even answer
you, the worthless shit.

Brent strives to speak, but still stammers.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Get out of my sight; I don't want
to even see you.

Steven reels his LEG back and prepares to kick Brent.

MARTHA
Stop! Steven!

Steven's leg comes forward, towards the camera.

We close in on Brent's face; his visage maintains a frozen look of sheer dismay.

INT. BOARD ROOM, PRESENT DAY

Brent's face, now 25 years later, is still subscribed to the same demeanor, terrified yet barren. We pan back to reveal he is in a corporate meeting room. Brent is sitting in front of a board of six well-dressed men. The man sitting in the middle is the head of the board, MR. SAGET.

MR. SAGET

After reviewing your statement, Brent Rexroad, do you accept the allegations of moonlighting for our client's competitor, Sacramento Industries?

Brent once again stammers, just as he did when he was a kid.

BOARD MEMBER ONE

Please answer the question Mr. Saget asked, Mr. Rexroad.

MR. SAGET

Well...? Please Continue.

BRENT

I accept full responsibility for my actions... Please consider- I was unaware of the conflict of interest through our client.

Board Member One snickers to himself. Another board member shoots him a disdainful glance.

MR. SAGET

That will not be necessary, Mr. Rexroad. The cause of your actions has led to a unanimous vote. I regret to inform you-

BOARD MEMBER ONE

(under his breathe)
Regret!

MR. SAGET

-You are hereby indefinitely terminated from Blackstone and Sons Agency with no severance package. This decision cannot be appealed; however we will be sure to give you a positive review. Do you have any further questions, Mr. Rexroad?

Brent sits there for a moment, unsure of what to say. He ultimately finds his voice.

BRENT
(accusatory)
You know damned well the company I
was moonlighting for doesn't even
sell the same products as any of
our clients.

BOARD MEMBER ONE
Now that this meeting's agenda has
been fulfilled, if I may be blunt,
Mr. Rexroad... we can't stand you.

Brent numbly reaches for a GLASS of water, tightly wrapping his fingers around the glass.

INT. BAR, NIGHT.

We see Brent's hands still clutching a glass; now the glass is filled with scotch on the rocks.

We pull back to expose Brent is in a small bar. It has a crowd of about twenty people. Every other patron is busy with their own ventures, whether it is playing pool, shooting darts, or just chattering amongst themselves.

We TIME LAPSE as we fast-forward through different points in the night; as the amount of empty drinks in front of Brent increases, the amount of patrons decreases. The pacing starts out slow and builds up faster and faster as he is seen putting more and more drinks back until -

INT. BEDROOM, MORNING.

The ALARM CLOCK begins loudly beeping as it clicks from 7:59 to 8:00. Brent's hand pounds against it as to hit any buttons at all to stop the piercing noise. Brent rolls out of bed, leaving his wife, Diana, still asleep. Brent looks down at himself, realizing he is still in the same clothes as he was wearing the evening prior.

INT. BATHROOM

Brent scoops up water in his hands, splashing his face. He looks in the mirror; the man looking back is rugged, unkempt with bloodshot eyes and thick stubble.

INT. HALLWAY-- CONTINUOUS

Brent shuffles out of the bathroom into the hallway, beads of water remain settled on his face from the sink. He treads down the hallway to the stairs, as we follow him we hear the sound of Saturday morning cartoons.

Brent squints his eyes as the morning sun breaks through the windows onto his face. He is SCOWLING by the time he has reached the base of the stairwell. He turns the corner into the parlor room, and proceeds to angrily turn off the television which SAMMY, his 8 year old son, is watching.

BRENT
You shouldn't be watching this stuff now. Go get dressed for the day, Sammy.

SAMMY
OK, Daddy

We continue to follow Brent to the kitchen as Sammy jumps off the couch, running up the stairs. Brent opens the fridge, removing a carton of milk. He turns to the cabinet, grabbing a bowl off of the oak shelves. He clumsily drowns the cereal with the milk, spilling some on the counter.

In the background, we faintly hear a television commercial playing. Brent slams the cereal carton down and MARCHES back into the living room to see Sammy sitting on the couch wearing a tee shirt, shorts and no shoes. He marches up to Sammy, SNATCHING the remote from the child.

BRENT
(angrily)
Do you listen to a damned word I say, boy? I said march your ass to your room and get ready for school.

Sammy's face clearly shows immense aversion of his father.

SAMMY
(shakily)
It's Saturday.

BRENT
(snapping)
What?

SAMMY
There's not school on Saturday.

BRENT
Just get the hell to your room where you should be anyway.

SAMMY
I don't-

BRENT
-What did I just tell you!

DIANA (O.S.)
What is the commotion?

We look up to see Diana standing at the base of the stairwell wearing a flowing silk white nightgown. She looks inquisitive, yet confused. Sammy darts past her up the stairs, not bothering to look at her.

BRENT
Your boy doesn't listen to a word I say.

DIANA
Do you think recently you have been getting too hard on him? After all, Sammy is just a kid.

BRENT
The boy has to learn respect; it is my job as a parent to teach that.

Diana shakes her head as Brent walks back into the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM, DAY

Both Brent and Diana are sitting on the sofa, each on opposite sides almost as if they are diverged. We establish some time has passed since the previous incident because they are both dressed for the day. Brent is flipping through the television channels, subsequently stopping on a show portraying scantily-clad women jumping up and down on a trampoline; their cleavage bouncing.

Diana is glaring at him out of the corner of her eye as he sets the remote down, signifying that he has found the channel he wishes to watch.

DIANA
(passive aggressively)
Hey, will you turn it to the news?
I don't want to miss it.

Brent acts as if he does not hear her. She rolls her eyes and reaches over to the day stand, grabbing a book. She opens it and pulls out her bookmark, laying it on the table.

BRENT
Get your nose out of the book.

DIANA
(sarcastically)
Why is that?

BRENT
Does everyone in this family
disrespect me? We are both always
at work and we never can get much
time together.

Diana rolls her eyes; Brent does not notice.

BRENT (CONT'D)
We are both always at work... we
rarely see each other on our free
time. Why do you want to ruin this?

Diana angrily puts her book back on the night stand
forgetting to replace her bookmark.

DIANA
I'll spend some time with you, but
I promised Rachel that I would go
catch a cup of coffee with her in a
couple hours.

BRENT
You don't plan on bringing her back
to this house, do you?

DIANA
What would it matter if I did?

BRENT
I don't want any of your friends
setting foot in this house.

DIANA
Why can't I have my friends over?

BRENT
This is my house and my rules. If
you can't respect that, then get
out and take your boy with you.

DIANA
First of all, he is your son too.
Just because I spent 9 long months
with him incubating inside of me
does not mean that you don't need
to take responsibility for him as
well. Secondly, I pay to keep this
house running.

BRENT
Well if you keep acting the way you
are you can pay to keep another
man's house running, because I am
about to pass you off to the next
hardworking sap that comes along.

DIANA
Hardworking? You don't care about your job. You think I haven't noticed the steady decrease in your monthly commission check?

BRENT
(furious)
Well you better have enjoyed that while it lasted!

DIANA
What are you talking about?!

BRENT
Nothing, just go back to reading your book.

DIANA
No, you are telling me right now. What happened? Did you get re-assigned?

BRENT
I said go back to your book!

DIANA
I am not going to leave you alone until I pry some information out of you!

BRENT
I lost my damned job, OK? Is that what you wanted to hear?!

DIANA
(in disbelief)
You what?

Brent does not grant her with a response. His focus returns to the television. A very busty woman is showing off her skill at opening beer bottles with her cleavage. Diana is distraught, glaring at Brent angrily, yet disappointed.

DIANA (CONT'D)
I'm getting out of here; I don't need this right now.

Brent completely neglects her as she storms out of the room. His attention completely enveloped in the amount of skin he sees on the television.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY-- FLASHBACK

Brent, once again 10 years old, is standing in the hospital with Martha, his mother. They are standing next to a hospital bed with SMALLS laying in it, a skinny older bald

man. The hospital room is dimly lit; most of the light comes from the door to the hallway where workers quickly walk back and forth. There is a surreal feeling to the atmosphere, almost as a darker side of Norman Rockwell.

BRENT
Will Uncle Smalls get better,
Mommy?

MARTHA
(depressed)
I wish I could promise that,
Sammy...

BRENT
The doctors can make anyone better
though, right?

MARTHA
That is their job, I just don't
know if Uncle Smalls wants to spend
the time to get better.

BRENT
(inquisitive)
Why wouldn't someone want to get
better?

MARTHA
His cancer makes him in a lot of
pain, and the stuff the doctors
give him to make his cancer go away
hurts him even more.

BRENT
Uncle Smalls deserves to get
better. I know he can do it, he
wants to play ball with me like he
used to. He told me so.

MARTHA
We will see, but he...

Martha is cut off to the piercing sound of Uncle Smalls SCREECHING in pain. It is obvious that he has awoken as his body seizes. He continues to twitch, alternatively he can no longer scream. Brent watches on as Uncle Smalls GASPS for breath, his spasmodic silhouette amplified on the hospital curtain.

INT. LIVING ROOM, PRESENT DAY

As if he woke from a nightmare, Brent arouses from sleep covered in sweat. He turns off the TV. The programming is now featuring an infomercial pitchman yelling at any viewer that is willing to listen. He sets the remote down and pulls

a cigarette out of his pocket, lighting it. He inhales the smoke and slowly blows it out of his nose.

Off camera, we faintly hear the sounds of an electric guitar.

INT. SAMMY'S ROOM, PRESENT DAY-- CONTINUOUS

We cut to watch Sammy strumming a couple cords on the electric guitar. The instrument is not loud by any means; however it is still plugged into the amplifier. As we hear loud footsteps climbing the stairs, Sammy quickly unplugs the guitar and lays it on his bed.

Sammy's DOOR quickly opens, revealing Brent poised between the frames.

BRENT

Cut the crap, Sammy! You didn't ask me if you could play that. I was taking a nap and you so rudely woke me up.

SAMMY

I'm sorry, yes sir.

INT. DARK ROOM, NIGHT FLASHBACK

Young Brent is standing in a dark room with a coloring book in front of him. We see the legs of Steven in the background. Young Brent picks up his coloring book and walks over to place it on the shelf.

BRENT

I'm sorry, yes sir

INT. SAMMY'S ROOM, DAY PRESENT-- CONTINUOUS

Brent starts to turn away from Sammy as his cell phone rings. He reaches in his pocket, looks at the display screen, and answers it as he begins to walk down the hall.

BRENT

What do you want?

We establish Martha is on the other line; she is talking on a pay phone at a gas station.

DIANA

I need to talk to you, Brent.

BRENT

You mean you are calling to nag me some more?

DIANA
No, I realize I was not exactly
civil with you earlier.

We once again return our focus to Brent.

BRENT
(cynically)
Civil... that would be the polar
opposite!

DIANA
I just wanted to apologize, Brent.
You must be going through a lot. I
mean, you did just lose your job.

Brent is pacing in the hallway. He peeks back in Sammy's room and spies Sammy once again playing the electric guitar inaudibly; it is no longer plugged in to the amplifier.

We close-in on Brent as he slowly pulls the phone down from his face, and can no longer hear his wife talking over the phone.

We cut back to Diana, who is still speaking to Brent, unaware that he can no longer hear her.

DIANA (CONT'D)
(sarcastically)
Even though it seems that your job
is the only thing in life that you
actually loved.

We quickly cut back- Brent gets angry and HEAVES the phone against the nearby wall, smashing into many pieces. He starts to take the first step into Sammy's room.

Diana, still on the pay phone, hears the dial-tone. She rolls her eyes, slamming the phone back into the receiver.

Almost as déjà-vu, Sammy's door once again swings open to reveal the fury of his father.

BRENT
(so furious the veins on
his forehead are sticking
out)
You disrespectful bastard!

Brent charges at Sammy, raising his open hand as if to bring it down with all of his fury to Sammy's skull.

INT. OLD WOODEN SHACK, DAY-- FLASHBACK

Brent is sitting on a plastic container in a wooden storage hut. Standing in direct line of him is Steven. Off to the

corner we see Uncle Smalls, whom seems disinterested in the unfolding events. Steven is hovering over Brent with very much the same ticks and mannerisms as Ledger's portrayal of the Joker. The bright light from the crevices in the wood fan over them and spread out towards the camera, giving an ominous feel.

STEVEN
Boy, you have a decision. You see,
we are about to see how damned you
are as a human.

Steven, over-talking with this hands, is acting much more sporadic, yet enthusiastic than we have seen him before.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You may be stupid, but you are not
ignorant. You know that you have
done a punishable deed. I am posing
to you an acquisition: would you
rather receive your lashings from
myself, or from your lovely Uncle
over there in the corner?

EXT. OPEN FIELD, DAY FLASHBACK

Brent is bent over a bail of hay, Steven wailing on him in slower motion, much like the scene in A Clockwork Orange where Alex and his doogies beat up the rival gang. The strikes come repeatedly from different angles, over and over and over and...

INT. WOODEN HUT, DAY PAST-- CONTINUOUS

We focus on Brent as he is forced to make a hard decision.

BRENT
(stammering)
...Uncle Smalls

We follow Steven as he treads over to the corner of the hut, grasping Uncle Smalls by the arm. Uncle Smalls awakens and staggers to his feet. He trips, almost falling down, but Steven has a strong grip on his arm. Steven pulls Smalls over to where Brent is; Smalls gasps in pain.

STEVEN (O. S.)
Show your nephew you don't condone
his actions!

UNCLE SMALLS
(gasping)
...Brent

STEVEN (O. S.)
Show him!

Brent bends over, exposing his hind end, as if he has done this many times before.

STEVEN (O. S.) (CONT' D)
Do it! Whip the kid!

Uncle Smalls raises a hand, and brings it down on Brent's posterior.

STEVEN (O. S.) (CONT' D)
Again!

Smalls repeats the lashing, in pain.

STEVEN (O. S.) (CONT' D)
Again!

Smalls once again brings his open hand down as quickly as he can muster.

STEVEN (O. S.) (CONT' D)
Turn his ass into grass!

Smalls brings his hand down once again, letting a deep gurgling escape in his throat.

STEVEN (O. S.) (CONT' D)
Common, old man. Put your heart into it! Do it harder and don't stop you old fool!

Smalls uses everything he has to whip Brent. Smalls stumbles to his knees in pain. He continues to slap the boy's buttocks, even though Smalls is in excruciating pain. Uncle Smalls puts his hands down on the floor to stabilize himself, his arms shaking horrendously.

STEVEN (CONT' D)
I didn't tell you to stop!

WIDE SHOT- INT BARN

Steven CHARGES at Smalls with his hand up in the air, and brings his palm down to meet Smalls' left cheek. Smalls crutches over, screaming in pain. The screaming quickly stops as his body convulses for a few seconds before laying completely still.

Brent sits watching in horror, a tear running down his face and his bottom lip quivers. He is making deep noises in his throat; he is too scared to vocalize any real tears or sobs.

STEVEN (CONT' D)
Look at what you did. How are you going to tell your mother that you killed her only brother?

We close in on Brent as he looks down and sobs, finally being able to vocalize his sorrow.

INT. SAMMY'S ROOM, DAY PRESENT --CONTINUOUS

We once again see modern Brent standing over Sammy, his son, with his hand raised about to slap him, Sammy is crouched preparing to take the hit. Brent suddenly drops to his knees, hugs Sammy, and sobs.

BRENT
(almost inaudible)
I'm sorry

INT. NICE RESTAURANT. EVENING

Brent and Diana are sitting at an amiable sit-down restaurant. They are sitting at a table with a clean white cloth, lit by a candle display in the middle. They are awaiting their food. All they have in front of them are crystal glasses of red wine.

DIANA
Why do we only do this once a year?

BRENT
I didn't think it was that important

DIANA
We used to do this all the time, we had so much fun

BRENT
That was back when we were in college when we wanted to live like we actually had money.

DIANA
And now that we do have money after we got married 9 years ago, we just see it as overrated?

BRENT
It was fun while it lasted

DIANA
Brent, is that how you see our relationship?

BRENT
What do you mean?

DIANA
It was fun while it lasted

BRENT

I think we are still going strong. We love one another and we have a kid, what more could we ask for?

DIANA

Brent, you know our relationship has been going downhill the very day after you said "I do."

BRENT

To be honest, I am kind of offended that you would say that, let alone think it.

DIANA

I'm sorry, but it has to be said. We are not the same, but more so, YOU are not the same.

BRENT

Not the same?

DIANA

I feel that you no longer care about us, both as a couple and as a family.

Brent sits silently, listening.

DIANA (CONT'D)

I mean, you used to actually make an effort to spend time with both Sammy and myself. You used to laugh with us. You used to actually want to be around us.

A moment of silence passes as Brent drinks a large gulp of the red wine.

DIANA (CONT'D)

In the past few years you have started to grow colder and colder. I don't even think you like yourself. You have let yourself get out of hand. I mean, you used to be lean and sexy. That was before you put on 75 pounds.

BRENT

So this is what it is about, you no longer find me sexy.

DIANA

You know that is not true. I make a regular effort to initiate sex. I know I can't compare to the women on the after hours specials you watch.

BRENT

You have lost me here; I don't know what you are talking about.

DIANA

I'm not stupid, Brent. We don't even watch the premium channels yet you insist on dishing out all that extra money each month so you can have your evening relief.

Brent looks like he is about to say something, instead he looks around to signify he is in a public place and does not wish to start a commotion.

DIANA (CONT'D)

We need counseling. That is all there is to it.

BRENT

Where is our food, we have been waiting for 45 minutes.

DIANA

I will set up an appointment for next Tuesday. We have to fix this problem of yours. You won't even tell me what has been bothering you.

BRENT

Ok, I understand I am messed up. Can we just enjoy this one meal so we can go home?

DIANA

See what I mean? Even at a nice restaurant on our anniversary you don't want to enjoy our time together.

BRENT

Will you stop nagging me for at least a little bit?

DIANA

You know, I take it back. We don't need counseling-- YOU need counseling. You need to learn how to get over yourself.

Brent angrily pulls out his wallet, throwing a couple twenty-dollar bills on the table.

BRENT
I don't need this.

Brent furiously STORMS out of the restaurant. Other patrons turn their heads to watch him march out of the door.

INT. BEDROOM, MORNING.

The same as earlier, the alarm clock begins beeping as it switches from 7:59 to 8:00. Brent's hand slams down on the clock. As before, Brent gets out of bed, his wife not seen in his place.

INT. BATHROOM-- CONTINUOUS

Brent splashes water on his face and looks at himself in the mirror. As if to show contrast from before, today he looks smooth, clean cut, and clear. He grins at himself in the mirror.

INT. STAIRWELL, MORNING-- CONTINUOUS

Brent walks down the stairs wearing a nice dress shirt under a high-end sports jacket. His hair is gelled and his shoes shine as they catch the morning light. The light from the windows rise up his body as he descends the stairs. When it reaches his face, he looks serene and gives a smile.

Sammy runs by him laughing to himself. Taking notice he almost ran into Brent, Sammy stops dead in his tracks. Sammy looks up with obvious worry on his face. Brent laughs to himself and rubs his hands through Sammy's hair.

BRENT
Have a good day at school today,
Sammy.

Sammy does not vocalize a response, instead laughs to himself and runs out the door. We watch from the doorway as Sammy sprints to the school bus. Sammy stops at the bus doors, turns around, and waves to Brent. Brent waves back, and watches Sammy turn around, get on the bus. Brent continues to watch as the bus starts down the road.

Brent shuts the door, smiling to himself, and turns around. There stands his wife wearing a sundress which emphasizes her slenderness.

BRENT (CONT'D)
Wow, you look amazing, Di.

DIANA
I haven't heard you call me that in years, what are you up to?

BRENT
I'm just in a good mood, I'm about to go out and see if I can network myself so I can start working again... if only by freelancing.

Diana speaks unenthusiastically, but Brent does not notice.

DIANA
Good luck with that, Brent. I hope you find something you can stay with.

Brent buttons up his sports coat and kisses his wife on the forehead. She is surprised by this action, but obviously she does not complain.

Brent turns around and walks out of the door. Diana steps in the door-frame to watch him.

DIANA (CONT'D)
(attempting to sound
enthusiastic)
I love you...

Brent neither turns around nor returns the words. Instead he throws his hand up as if to say 'goodbye.' Diana rolls her eyes and scowls, and turns around shutting the door behind her.

EXT. SACRAMENTO INDUSTRIES, DAY

Brent pulls up to a giant complex; the title Sacramento Industries crosses the face of the complex.

INT. WAITING ROOM-- CONTINUOUS

Brent walks up to the receptionist and asks if DR. MICHAELS is available. In turn, the receptionist pages Dr. Michaels over the intercom. Brent walks over to a chair; however he is only sits a few seconds before Dr. Michaels walks through the doors.

DR. MICHAELS
Brent! Haven't seen you in a few days! Why don't you come back to my office so we can talk?

Brent enthusiastically complies. He gets up and walks through the doorway and starts down the hall, walking beside Dr. Michaels.

DR. MICHAELS (CONT'D)
So what brings you here today,
Brent?

BRENT
I was just wondering how the
current campaign was going... and if
I needed to tweak it.

DR. MICHAELS
I actually have to thank you,
Brent. Your employer Blackstone and
Sons Agency has really come through
for us.

BRENT
What? I am no longer working on
this project?

DR. MICHAELS
Well, I would assume so taking into
consideration your boss Mr. Saget
came to us saying that you had
connections. Now all you have to do
is lay back and gain commission.

BRENT
Mr. Saget stole my work?

DR. MICHAELS
I wouldn't say stole, Brent. Now
you don't have to continue
moonlighting for us- you are now
our liaison between Sacramento
Industries and Blackstone and Sons.

Brent stops in the middle of the hallway outside of Dr.
Michael's office door. He turns away and starts walking the
other way.

BRENT
And I'm sure that the wonderful Mr.
Saget neglected to tell you that
they terminated me just to have a
crack at having your business as a
client.

INT. BAR, DAY

The reflected light off of the tinted glass shines in the
bar leaving a dark aura. Brent walks up to the bar, slumping
down on a bar stool.

BARTENDER
Yer usual? Scotch on the rocks?

BRENT
You know me better than anyone
else, Dave

BARTENDER
D' names Al -Quasami .

BRENT
I'll just call you bartender for
now.

The bartender finishes pouring the scotch on the rocks, and
slides the drink to Brent.

BARTENDER
Yer call, boss

BRENT
The name's Brent

BARTENDER
I'll just call ye boss fer now.

Brent looks down at his drink. He smells it. He looks at it
again. The bartender looks at him inquisitively.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
You ain't gonna drink that?
Somethun wrong boss?

BRENT
You know, I better not. Tell you
what, this one's yours. I'll catch
you at another time.

Brent walks out of the bar. As he opens the door, daylight
floods in, illuminating everything in the establishment.

INT. FLOWER SHOP, DAY

Brent walks into a small flower shop. There are flower
arrangements decorating the whole place, the colors catching
in the light. Brent walks up to the cashier.

CASHIER
(smiling)
How can I help you today?

BRENT
I want the most expensive
arrangement you have.

CASHEIR
Absolutely! Would you have any
preference as to what kind of
flowers?

BRENT
They all look the same to me. Just
give me the best one you have.

The cashier walks to the front of the store and picks up a very large vase filled with an assortment of flowers mixed with fresh babies breathe.

CASHIER
Will this one do?

BRENT
It's perfect

EXT. BRENT'S HOUSE, EVENING.

The sun has reached its peak as it starts to emit an orange glow across the land. Brent pulls up to his house and walks up to his door holding the assortment of flowers that he just purchased. He opens the front door and walks in.

The house is bare.

We see Brent looking at the empty living room. All of the furniture has been removed except for the couch and the television. Even the television is no longer sitting on a stand.

We close in on the flower vase as it drops, falling to the ground in slow motion. Glass shatters and flowers spread across the entrance.

EXT. AMPHITHEATER, NIGHT-- PAST

In a small amphitheater, the face of Steven is lit in the middle by the large bonfire he is standing next to. Like earlier, he is acting sporadic.

STEVEN
(giving a sermon)
I call upon you, Brothers of the
Orange Phoenix, to spread the word
and reach the masses. We must put
ourselves in the hind-ground, and
think in the long term! For how can
we establish ourselves as gods
amongst men if the men neither
believe nor fear us?

I say unto you, we must reel in
converts. Only then can we conquer
both ourselves and establish our
Brothers into the only true
government, one that the good Lord
has created under my name, Steven
Rexroad.

We pull back to the full crowd watching Steven giving his lecture. At the back of the large group, we see Brent sitting silently watching the sermon. The heat of the fire is making his face sweat; each drop glows with the orange of the fire-light.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

My Brothers, we cannot be as an example if we do not purify ourselves. We all must rid ourselves of our pasts, no matter how hard that may be. No matter if you lived the life of a rich man, or the life of a popper. No matter if you are giving up on people that you love, or people that you hate. This process is a hard one, but we must all exorcize our demons.

INT. LIVING ROOM. PRESENT DAY

We once again highlight the emptiness of the house. Brent walks over to the corner, bending over to pick up a landline phone on the ground. He nervously dials a number and puts the receiver to his ear. He hears a voice he has not heard in years, GWYN.

GWYN

Hello?

BRENT

Hello Gwyn.

GWYN

I'm sorry, I don't recognize this number. Who is this?

BRENT

This is your brother, Brent.

GWYN

What the hell, Brent! You haven't talked to me in years. What are you wanting now?

BRENT

I need your help.

GWYN

I guessed that much.

BRENT

(holding back sobs)
I need your help.

GWYN
OK, why don't you start by telling
me what is wrong.

BRENT
(solemnly)
I need to exorcize my demons.

END OF ACT 1

ACT 2

EXT. RAILROAD TOWN, DAY

Brent and his sister pull off the highway onto a dirt road. The path extends behind a set of trees and ends at a clearing. They pull up to the clearing, and Brent turns the engine off. Both are hesitant to get out of the car, instead they sit there for a moment.

GWYN
What do you hope to get out of
this, Brent?

BRENT
Answers.

Brent is the first one to open his door. As he sets his foot onto the ground, he grimaces. Gwyn gets out of the car as well, and proceeds to walk beside him towards the gate.

BRENT (CONT'D)
Now I shall ask you the same, what
do you hope to get out of this?

Brent unlatches the gate and holds it open for his sister. She walks through it and he shuts it behind her.

GWYN
To be free.

BRENT
Free?

GWYN
I can't become free. All I can
remember are the bad times, no
matter how hard I try.

Gwyn pauses as they continue to walk down a path; she turns and looks up at an old outhouse halfway up a hill in the woods.

GWYN (CONT' D)
Never mind, now up there I had my first real good time.

BRENT
What was that?

GWYN
You remember Billy T from junior high?

BRENT
The fat kid with turrets? I hope you aren't going where I think you are going with this.

GWYN
I couldn't help it. I was the odd girl in the class. I had to take whatever I could get.

BRENT
How could he have fit in the outhouse, let alone both of you?

Brent and Gwyn continue walking down the path.

GWYN
I don't know, but it felt pretty good getting to yell out obscenities with Billy T without him getting offended. Even if it did just last less than a minute.

BRENT
That might be the only minute the poor sap's had in his life. He killed himself in the 10th grade, right after you left.

GWYN
(solemnly)
Yeah, I heard about that...

They continue to walk for a while in silence.

BRENT
Earlier you mentioned you have trouble remembering the good times. Is this the same with remembering our mom?

GWYN
It is hard, Brent, to remember anything about her without being flooded of other memories.

BRENT
But do you?

GWYN
I don't know...

EXT. OUTSIDE SCHOOL, DAY FLASHBACK

We see Martha picking up Brent and his older sister, Gwyn from school. She drives up in an old beat up car and the kids hop in the back seat. The car pulls off.

EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP, DAY PAST

BRENT (V.O.)
There are those times when she would go out of her way just to keep us who we were... kids. She would sneak around Steven and the others to let us breathe that refreshing breath of life. We were lucky for her.

Simultaneous with the voice-over, we see the three get out of the car and walk up to the ice cream shop. The shop is an outdoors vendor. They walk up to the window, each ordering ice cream. They sit out on the benches, laughing and enjoying their ice cream.

EXT. FIELD, NIGHT PAST

BRENT (V.O.)
More than once she has kept us out of harm's way. She would go to the extremes to make things better for us, no matter how rough times changed. She was a living incarnation of the definition of optimistic. Any situation could be turned in better light.

Simultaneous with voice-over, we see Martha, Brent and Gwyn all sitting together. Brent and Gwyn are both reading their school textbooks; Martha is sewing. They are highlighted by a small fire they are sitting around, however they are divided from the rest of the commune's field by barrels of hay. They hear a noise and they all look up anxiously. Martha jumps up and directs her children into a large crate. The children get in and peek through the top. They see Steven walk into view, holding a bottle of cheap whiskey with only a splash left at the bottom. Steven is furiously yelling and screaming at Martha. He gets in Martha's face; his temples bulge out as he bellows at her.

Through the opening of the crate, we see the sibling's faces, lit by the orange of the fire light and their eyes wide in horror.

EXT. PATH, DAY PRESENT

Brent and Gwyn are still walking as they come upon an opening in the path. In the near distance we can see buildings in the middle of the field.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. EVENING PAST

BRENT (V.O.)

She never once contemplated the repercussions that she could face. Or maybe she did and she believed that sacrificing herself to save us would be advantageous to her children. Either way I am not sure, but I am thankful.

Brent and Gwyn are standing over a broken lamp in Steven's house. Both children are scared because they knew they would be harshly scolded. Steven walks in the room, looks down at the broken lamp, and then looks at the children. He starts to flip out, but right at that moment Martha walks into the room carrying a dustpan. Martha catches Steven yelling at her kids and she yells something back at him. His anger turns from the kids onto her.

EXT. PATH. DAY PRESENT

We see Brent's eyes as they are off in his memories...

EXT. FIELD. NIGHT PAST

Martha screams in agony as her face is highlighted orange.

EXT. PATH, DAY- PRESENT

Brent lowers his head.

EXT. FIELD, NIGHT- PAST

Martha is slapped across the face, her head jerks to the right.

EXT. PATH. DAY PRESENT

Brent's head droops lower and his brow tightens as he is being flooded with memories that he has tried to push out of his mind.

EXT. FIELD. NIGHT PAST

Martha's arm is grabbed by two men and slung against the car door.

This is followed by more violent flashbacks. The cuts get quicker and quicker, as Brent remembers his mom in agony as she was being tortured, stones thrown at her, and burned.

EXT. PATH. DAY PRESENT

Brent drops to his knees.

EXT. FIELD. NIGHT PAST

Stillness is in the air as we are looking at an empty field.

BRENT (V.O.)
(shakily out of sorrow)
...She tried to save us. Save us
from it all.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. EVENING PAST

Brent and Gwyn are sharing a bedroom. Martha walks in, and sits on the corner of their shared queen sized bed. Gwyn is fast asleep, however her brother lying next to her is only pretending to sleep, his eyes only cracked open.

MARTHA
I love you, kids. I promise to get
you out of here. No matter what it
takes.

Martha strokes her kids' hair, then leans down and kisses both of them on the foreheads. She then gets up and walks out of the room.

INT. SCHOOL ROOM, DAY PAST

Brent is in school, working on an assignment as is every other kid in his class. The teacher is sitting behind her desk in the front of the room. Someone raps at the classroom door, and the teacher abruptly answers it. The teacher sticks her head outside of the door and has a quick,

inaudible conversation. She comes back into the room and looks at the class.

TEACHER

Brent, there is someone here for you. Will you please follow Mrs. Blothman down the hall?

Brent gets up, slightly confused, but obliges. We follow Brent as he walks out of the classroom, takes the hand of MRS. BLOTHMAN, an older woman, and walks down the hall into the office. There he sees AUNT MAGGIE, his mother's sister, as well as Gwyn.

BRENT

Aunt Maggie!

MRS. BLOTHMAN

Ok, before you take a student out of school it is regulation that I verify with the child's parents, so if you will excuse me for just a moment while I call the Rexroads.

AUNT MAGGIE

(nervously)

That's fine, take your time

MRS. BLOTHMAN

Just one moment

Mrs. Blothman walks into a back room with glass walls. We see her pick up the receiver and dial a number on the phone. Mrs. Blothman starts the conversation with a smile; her countenance quickly changes to that of worry. She says a couple more words and hangs up the phone and returns to the room that Aunt Maggie and the siblings are in.

MRS. BLOTHMAN (CONT'D)

I am sorry however the child's parents said this is unauthorized, so I cannot allow him to leave the school grounds during session.

AUNT MAGGIE

I am sorry ma'am, but I was just talking to his mother but an hour ago. She gave me the OK to take him from school. She even gave me a note.

Aunt Maggie pulls a note out of her purse and hands it to Mrs. Blothman. Mrs. Blothman quickly skims it over.

MRS. BLOTHMAN
I do apologize, however that is the child's home phone number that I just called, and if the father says that he is not allowed to leave school grounds, I take full responsibility for him. Do understand, it is just procedure.

AUNT MAGGIE
(holding back tears)
That is fine ma'am. I will talk to them tonight and make sure I get things squared up for next time.

Aunt Maggie takes the note back from Mrs. Blothman and puts it back into her purse. She gets up and walks over to Brent and Gwyn.

AUNT MAGGIE (CONT'D)
I love you kids more than anything. No matter what happens, don't you ever dare forget that.

A tear drops out of Aunt Maggie's eye, as she crouches down to give both of the children one big hug.

EXT. COMMUNE, DAY.

Brent unlatches the gate and we follow him through the outdoors mess hall. Here he runs into Steven.

STEVEN
Have you seen your mother?

BRENT
No, sir.

Just then Martha walks through the doors. Steven looks at her in disgust.

STEVEN
Someone detain her!

Two men rush up to her. Martha runs back out onto the field. A small crowd of people follow. The people run as they reach down and gather rocks from the walkway to pitch at her. Rocks fly in every direction. Martha flinches as a couple of rocks bounce off of her; one stone hits her shoulder blade, another hits her calf. One big rock flies up and finds its mark on the side of Martha's head. Martha falls and quickly staggers to get back up.

By that time, the original two men that started after her catch up and grab her by the arms, SLAMMING her into a nearby beaten-down car. They hold her pinned to the car as Steven approaches her. He is calm in his walk, however once

he is in arm's length of Martha; he reels his arm back and backhands her across the face.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You dumb bitch, we are a family.
How dare you try to break us up
using your sister?

Martha struggles to get free, but Steven backhands her with his other hand. Martha stops struggling, and looks at Steven dead in the eyes, her mouth agape and her bottom lip drooling blood.

MARTHA
I will not let you raise my kids

STEVEN
You made your decision when you
ever-so-willingly slept with me all
of those years ago, Martha.

MARTHA
(sputtering)
I don't regret that. You gave me
two kids, I am thankful

STEVEN
Your kids are almost as worthless
as you are

MARTHA
Gwyn and Brent are smart enough to
see through your bullshit, Steven.

Steven doesn't even bother to backhand her on this one. Instead, he releases his anger with a direct punch to Martha's gut. The wind is knocked completely out of Martha, and she can not speak. Steven walks away slowly.

STEVEN
Prepare the pyre. We have to set an
example for anyone else that thinks
they can stand up to the
Brotherhood of the Orange Phoenix.

EXT. OPEN FIELD, NIGHT PAST

It is dark and all we can make out is a crowd that has gathered. We hear terrifying screams of a woman, and see the silhouettes of a little boy and girl in the back of the crowd silently holding hands, relying on one another.

We hear a whoosh as everything comes into view. In the center of the crowd we see a pyre about 4 feet high and a woman, Martha, tied down to the middle of it. The red and orange flames rush up the wood, scorching Martha's flesh. Martha continues her blood-curdling screams as Brent and

Gwyn still sit in the back, their heads resting on one another's shoulders. They are relying on themselves because they no longer have their only protector, their mother.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OPEN FIELD, DAY- PRESENT

Now as adults, Brent and Gwyn are once again sitting in the same position, with their heads on one another's shoulders, their hands are clasped. They are overlooking the same spot their mother had died.

They continue to sit this way for a few moments in silence.

BRENT

What have you been doing the past 17 years?

Brent extends a hand to help Gwyn up.

GWYN

If you would have ever visited then you would know I just got out two years ago.

BRENT

Of the penn?

GWYN

And that is thanks to the shrink. They helped me come to terms with myself and understand my situation more. You know, it turns out I had a form of Stockholm Syndrome.

BRENT

Stockholm Syndrome?

GWYN

It's basically when hostages feel deep compassion for their abductees and are willing to do just about anything for them, no matter how much risk is involved.

BRENT

Fear so strong that it leaves to a love?

GWYN

More-so a defense mechanism.

Present-day Brent looks up to see young Brent standing adjacent to a building. Young Brent's head is lowered and we see a tear fall from his eye.

GWYN (CONT' D)

We both had to find our own ways to deal after mom died.

Present-day Brent is silenced. We close up on him as he follows young Brent turn a corner. Young Brent stops behind the old grocery store and looks around to make sure no-one is around. Young Brent is only a memory, thus he cannot see either present-day Gwyn or Brent.

Gwyn continues to talk, but Brent is not listening. As Gwyn talks, her voice fades out altogether.

GWYN (O.S.) (CONT' D)

When I got out it was hard to re-adjust. I no longer felt needed by anyone. I lost my ambition and my need for life. I don't fit anywhere in society. I'm too uneducated to get a job and too old to be a stripper. Walking with you now is the first time I have felt needed in years.

As Gwyn talks, Present-day Brent speeds up to catch up to his former self. Gwyn neither notices nor comments, instead she involuntarily speeds up herself.

Present-day Brent dodges around the corner behind the store and sees his younger incarnation standing there behind the dumpster. Present-day Brent stands there, his face is empty as if he can tell what is about to happen... as if this is a memory that had long been repressed.

By this time all we can hear is silence. Gwyn's voice is completely drowned out by the raw emotion of the events.

Brent watches as his younger self slips into a dark corner. Young Brent pulls out his wallet from his pocket. He removes a picture of Martha from the wallet, stares at the photo, shuts his eyes tightly and touches it to his forehead, as in hopes to gain comfort from his dead mother.

With a tear running down his cheek, he takes one last look at the photo, kisses it, and returns it to the wallet. Out of the back fold, we watch as Brent removes a shiny razor. Young Brent trembles as he stares at the razor. Using the tip of his thumb, he runs the razor gently across his finger to verify that it is sharp.

Once again, Brent looks one way, and then another to make sure no one is near. As tears continue to pour down his face, we watch Brent raise the razor to his wrist, his hands trembling. He finds the spot, takes a deep breath, and pushes the razor down. He presses harder and harder until he breaks skin.

The bright, rich blood stands out against his pale white skin. Immediately, young Brent heaves the razor into the dumpster. Present-day Brent watches on as his former self drops to the ground, putting his head between his knees and sobbing.

GWYN (CONT' D)
Are you listening to me?!

Brent looks embarrassed as he tries to cover himself up.

BRENT
Of course! You wouldn't want that stripper job anyway.

Gwyn rolls her eyes, but she doesn't look overly-offended.

GWYN
I asked what you have been up to the past couple decades?

Brent scowls, but not so that Gwyn notices.

BRENT
(sounds recited, gives away he is lying)
I've had it lucky. I have a great marriage, an eccentric kid and a high paying job at a mid-sized advertising agency.

GWYN
Do you now!

BRENT
I've made the normal life that I have always dreamt of.

GWYN
That's some great news. I just have one question. How did you lose it all?

BRENT
(surprised)
What!?

GWYN
Why are you lying to me, Brent?

BRENT
(pretending to be dumbfounded)
What makes you think I am lying?

GWYN
(accusatory)
Why are you here?

Brent refused to answer the question. Instead they walk in silence. They pass by a long-deserted drug store. We realize Gwyn understands she should not have said that as she changes the subject.

GWYN (CONT'D)
You know, Steven is in the hospital. He had a minor heart attack.

BRENT
Is he OK?

GWYN
I'm surprised that you asked that.

EXT. WOODS, DAY- PAST

We see a clearing that is cut between the edge of town and a thick field of evergreens. Snow has fallen covering everything in sight, giving the scenery a surreal feeling. Off to the side of the clearing we see Brent, whom is dressed only in a tee-shirt, shorts and tennis shoes.

Brent is chopping wood with much difficulty. Not only is the axe very heavy for a boy Brent's size, but we see that his hands have turned brown and splotchy from exposure to the cold weather.

We watch as Steven comes into view. As if he was in the Third Reich, Steven stealthfully walks up to Brent while we hear the crunch of the snow under his boots. Steven uses the back of his hand to SMACK Brent across the face.

STEVEN
A simple task is all I asked of you. You will never amount to anything.

EXT. WOODS, DAY PAST- CONTINUOUS

Brent looks down at his axe. Then as if he is sizing him up, he raises his head to eye Steven.

All in a split second Brent takes a half a step back, SWINGS the axe in a complete circle and it finds its resting place buried deep into Steven's skull, a look of horror is timelessly frozen upon Steven's long face.

EXT. WOODS, DAY PAST

Brent is once again standing in front of Steven, whom no longer has an axe planted in his skull. We realize that was only fantasy.

STEVEN

I hope you are smart enough to realize you are a useless piece of shit. Everybody, especially you, needs to pick up the slack after your mother decided that she was no longer a part of us.

Steven looks angrily at Brent.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

You had better be done in exactly one hour.

Steven walks out of view the same as he came in. We watch a TIME LAPSE go by as Brent labors and the wood pile gets lower and lower. Even though Brent is completely physically worn, he continues on even after stumbling, until the wood pile has been thoroughly wiped out.

We watch as Steven once again re-appears. He is walking towards Brent in a swift manner, and he looks upset. We watch Brent cringe and squeeze his eyes shut out of fear that he will once again be slapped. He is surprised when no physical violence befalls him. Brent is surprised even more when he opens his eyes to see Steven give him a nod of accomplishment.

STEVEN (CONT'D)

That's how I expect you to do your job every time. Now get out of my sight.

Brent looks up and smiles. We can tell he feels very accomplished and loved.

EXT. DESERTED TOWN, DAY- PRESENT

Brent and Gwyn are retracing their steps as their journey down memory lane comes to an end.

BRENT

So how did you know Steven was in the hospital?

GWYN

I hunted him down. I've already started to exorcise my demons, Brent. The only problem is they have been inside me so long they don't want to move out.

BRENT

I could use an emotional U-Haul right now...

The siblings walk in silence for a moment. Gwyn reaches out and grabs Brent by the hand.

GWYN
You know, our experiences growing up may set us back, but we are able to appreciate so much more because of it.

Brent looks at her inquisitively.

BRENT
How so?

GWYN
We don't take kind words for granted. From anybody.

BRENT
Never thought of it that way. I was just thinking of how good it felt to get Steven's approval when we were kids.

By this time Brent and Gwyn have returned back to the clearing they are parked in. Brent closes the gate behind them and they get into the car.

GWYN
You are tearing yourself apart, Brent

BRENT
There's no suture designed for what we've been through, Gwyn.

GWYN
You know, I believe you can never be true to yourself unless you can learn to fully love or fully hate someone that hurt you. The salvation you are looking for is in yourself.

Brent sits behind the steering wheel deep in thought. He pulls out a cigarette, lights it, and blows the smoke out of the cracked window. His hair blows in the breeze as he pulls onto the highway.

GWYN (CONT'D)
Where are you going...? This isn't the way we came!

BRENT
We are going to see an old friend.

INT. HOSPITAL, DAY

We are in the halls of a hospital following Diana down the corridor. We are able to gather that she is a registered nurse because she is wearing an eggshell blue set of scrubs and holding an IV bag. We continue to follow her down the hall passing other patients and nurses. She sharply turns into a room and replaces the IV bag. An old man lies in the hospital bed. He is awake, but he does not acknowledge her presence. She connects the IV bag to the holster then replaces the IV tube.

In the corner, we see RACHEL, Diana's friend and a fellow RN; poke her head in the door.

RACHEL
Hey Di, could I talk to you a sec?

Diana walks up to Rachel. Rachel talks in a low, hoarse voice.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
Your husband is here

DIANA
To see me?

RACHEL
No, he is with another woman, and damn is she a looker. You didn't tell me he was sleeping around on you as well!

Diana scowls.

Diana pokes her head out of the door and looks down the hall. In the far end she sees Brent and Gwyn. We see a faint sigh of relief befall Diana. Gwyn comes up to the nurse's station and stops to ask questions. Brent does not stop. Instead, he continues on down the hall. Diana blows Rachel off and dodges into a broom closet adjacent to the room that she is in.

Brent did not see Diana nor recognize Rachel as he continued down the hall. We follow Brent as he tunes the whole world outside of his mission out. He is walking stealthfully and quickly, much like we saw Steven do earlier.

Brent comes upon the same room that Diana had just left. We see Diana watch Brent through the slight crack in the broom closet door. Brent looks at the number of the room one last time and then walks in the room. We follow Diana as she opens the door to the broom closet and steps out. Simultaneously Brent closes the door to the hospital room. Diana puts her back to the door with her head up to the wood so that she can hear everything.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EVENING- CONTINUOUS

Unaware Diana is listening; Brent walks to the far side of the room without even glancing at the old man in the hospital bed. Brent grabs a chair and scoots it over to Steven. Brent sits down adjacent to the head of the bed. Steven looks at Brent but quickly looks back when he realizes their eyes have met.

BRENT

You are probably wondering why I am here.

Brent picks up a card on a nearby table, glances at it and puts it back down.

BRENT (CONT'D)

I would have been wondering that as well if I would have seen the future two days ago.

Brent sits contemplating for a moment.

BRENT (CONT'D)

I have to get on with my life. I can't do that with the veil you have put over me. You have painted my life black.

He takes a deep breathe.

BRENT (CONT'D)

Well, Steven, it is time I use some varnish to free myself. Every breathe I take is heavy. Because of my inability to let you go. I have sacrificed my wife, my son, and my job. Now I am left empty. Is that what you wanted?

We see that Brent is carrying a knife in a holster on his belt. We follow his hand as he unsheathes the jagged blade. Brent holds the blade to his lap and runs his thumbs over the edge.

Brent speaks, more-so to himself than to Steven.

BRENT (CONT'D)

I cannot be at peace with myself unless I can either fully love or fully hate you.

We watch Brent's knuckles turn white as his grip on the handle gets tighter. We once again hear him take a deep breath.

BRENT (CONT'D)

I... I forgive you, Steven.

Brent stands up, pauses and starts towards the door.

STEVEN

Son...

Brent ignores him and continues walking. He starts out of the door, but Diana appears from around the corner. Steven accidentally bumps directly into her; however she does not seem to care because she uses this as an opportunity to wrap her arms around him in an embrace. Brent seems to be cold towards his wife, however that is not the case; Brent is only holding back tears.

Diana is greatly saddened. She hands him an envelope that she had folded up in her pocket. Brent folds it once again and sticks it in the pack pocket of his khakis. Diana squeezes him harder, placing her head against his. We finally see Brent break down as a tear rolls down on his face and lands on her cheek.

INT. BRENT'S CAR. EVENING

Brent is driving his car through a dimly lit neighborhood; Gwyn is in the passenger seat.

GWYN

OK, now pull in the right lane and make a turn down the alleyway.

Brent checks his rearview mirror and sharply cuts in front of a car to get into the other lane, just before turning down the alley. He eyes the neighborhood.

GWYN (CONT'D)

I am the third house on the left.

Brent pulls up in front of an old house that seems as if it should be condemned. A couple windows in the front have been broken out, and the siding looks as if it has been falling off for a few decades.

On the front steps a figure of a man sits, with a 12 pack of beer in front of him. The man looks up at the car and stumbles to his feet.

BRENT

Who's that?

GWYN

That's Larry, my boyfriend.

BRENT

How long have you two been together?

GWYN
We hooked up right after I made it
out of jail.

Larry, her boyfriend stumbles over to the car and opens her
car door. He grabs her shoulder and jerks her out.

LARRY
Who is this fucker?

GWYN
He is my brother, Larry. I had to
help today!

LARRY
You ain't got no brother you
cheating bitch!

Brent starts out of the car.

LARRY (CONT'D)
You stand right there, bud.

GWYN
His name is Brent Rexroad. I
haven't seen or talked to him in
almost two decades!

LARRY
Rexroad?

Larry lets go of Gwyn's arm. Larry looks Brent in the eye.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Let's see some ID, captain.

Brent reaches in his pocket as Larry walks around to the
driver's side of the car. He pulls out his driver's license
and Larry gives it a good look over. Larry laughs to
himself.

LARRY (CONT'D)
You gave me a good scare, there. I
thought my wife was being a floozy.

Brent looks Larry directly in the eye.

BRENT
Don't underestimate my sister.

LARRY
What's that supposed to mean?

BRENT
Just watch yourself, Larry.

Brent gets back into his car and starts up the engine. Brent
drives off and sees Larry yank Gwyn in his rearview mirror.

He is not sure that is what he had seen, so at first he blows it off and continues driving.

Hesitantly, at the corner he slows his car down and turns around in a parking lot. Brent turns off his headlights and heads back down the road he just came from. A car passes him and blinks their lights at him, warning him to turn them on, he neglects the warning.

Brent quietly pulls back to Gwyn's house to see Larry holding Gwyn's shirt with one hand, and socking her in the stomach with his other.

We watch as Brent quickly puts the car into park and jumps out, leaving the engine on. Larry doesn't seem to notice the arrival of Brent, as he is still holding Gwyn, screaming at her inaudibly.

Brent runs up behind Larry and wraps his arm around his throat in a sleeper hold. Larry continues to hold onto Brent's sister, but yells out in shock and his elbow flies towards Brent's gut. Brent grunts and uses his free hand to unsheathe the knife that we saw him carrying earlier.

Larry lets go of Gwyn and turns around, knocking Brent off of him. We see a bag of cocaine fall out of Larry's pocket.

Brent holds the knife in front of him, almost as if he is aiming a gun. At the very tip of the knife, light from the moon is reflected.

GWYN
No! Brent!

Brent ignores the plea of his sister, not because he wants to, however because he has no choice. At that moment Larry pulls out a small Derringer gun from his pocket and points it at Larry, firing.

We assume the bullet has missed Brent altogether, because we see Brent charge forward with the knife pulled back, ready to make a stab.

Brent thrusts the knife forward, but his arm is knocked to the side by the force of Larry's arm. Larry uses the gun as a blunt weapon and cracks it against the side of Brent's skull. Brent is knocked back about a yard, but is able to keep to his feet.

Larry lifts the gun once again and points it directly at Brent's head. He is cut short by the sound of his girlfriend's voice.

GWYN (CONT'D)
Larry! The cops!

Larry staggers and looks around, but sees no cop cars or flashing lights. Brent takes this opportunity to charge

forward, planting the knife directly into Larry's gut. Larry falls down onto his side, clutching his stomach. Dark blood oozes out, traveling through the cocaine that fell out of Larry's pocket. Larry is breathing rapidly.

BRENT
(out of breathe)
Common, sis, you are going home with me.

GWYN
What about Larry!

BRENT
We'll call an ambulance in the car. They'll just think this was a drug-related incident and will blow it off.

GWYN
But what if he talks?

BRENT
A man with that much coke on him, I don't think he will be able to say very much.

INT. BRENT'S HOUSE. NIGHT

Brent and Gwyn enter the front doors of Brent's house.

GWYN
Nice place you have here.

BRENT
Stay here as long as you need to. I don't ever want to see my sister in those conditions again.

Gwyn grimaces. It is obvious she holds a grudge for Brent almost murdering her boyfriend.

GWYN
I wish you wouldn't have returned.

BRENT
(sarcastically)
So that guy could kick your ass in the privacy of your front lawn?

GWYN
He was just angry I was out so late and didn't make any money. You can't understand- I'm the only one that understands him.

BRENT
Did you understand him as he was
pointing the Derringer to my head?

Gwyn does not know how to respond, and says nothing in reply to Brent's comment.

BRENT (CONT'D)
You can take the master bedroom.
The sheets are clean. And I DO NOT
want to find you gone in the
morning looking for Larry.

GWYN
I love you, bro.

Brent smiles and runs his fingers down her cheek.

BRENT
It's time we get through this
together.

INT. FRONT ROOM, NIGHT

We see Brent as he sits in a lawn chair in front of his television in the front room of his house. He pours himself a glass of scotch and sets it on the day stand, next to an ashtray with a lit cigar that he is not smoking.

We pull back to see that he is watching the climax of Lady Vengeance. Brent brings the glass up to his lips and drinks the full cup in a single sitting. At the last gulp the phone rings and Brent answers.

BRENT
Hello?

HOSPITAL WORKER
May I speak to Brent Rexroad?

BRENT
It matters, are you trying to sell
me anything?

HOSPITAL WORKER
No, sir. We need you to return to
the St. Claude's Hospital, Mr.
Rexroad.

BRENT
What happened!

HOSPITAL WORKER
Due to confidentiality
restrictions, I am unable to tell
you over the phone. But I feel that
you will want to get here as soon
as possible.

Brent stares off into nothingness as he hangs up the phone.

Brent smiles to himself.

INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY, NIGHT

Brent approaches the hospital receptionist. She has her back turned from him, enjoying a personal call on her cell phone.

BRENT
'Scuse me ma'am.

The receptionist turns around and hangs up the phone, devoting full attention to Brent.

RECEPTIONIST
How can I help you?

BRENT
I just received a phone call
telling me to come down here.

RECEPTIONIST
OK, I can help you with this. Do
you know what the patient's name is
you are looking for?

Brent smiles.

BRENT
Steven Rexroad.

The receptionist types the name on the computer and hits the enter key. She looks puzzled.

RECEPTIONIST
Well, he is in room 306, but I
can't find any information about a
requested visit.

BRENT
(shocked)
You mean he's not dead?!

RECEPTIONIST
You don't seem too pleased that he
is alive.

The receptionist quickly changes the subject as she realizes she should have refrained from saying that.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
Let's look this up another way.
What is your name sir?

BRENT
Brent. Brent Rexroad.

The receptionist types his name on the computer.

RECEPTIONIST
Is Diana Rexroad an individual on
your insurance?

BRENT
(alarmed)
Yes! That is my wife. Is she
alright?

RECEPTIONIST
I am sorry, sir. She is currently
in critical condition. She is
undergoing surgery as we speak.

BRENT
What happened!

RECEPTIONIST
She suffers from abdominal stab
wounds that she had received on the
job.

BRENT
(snapping)
Who did this to her!

RECEPTIONIST
She did.

Brent lowers his head to the counter and sobs.

INT. WAITING ROOM, NIGHT

We see Brent still sobbing with his head down. We pull back
to see he is now in the surgical waiting room.

We see Diana's friend Rachel come out and sit beside of him.
Compassionately, she runs her fingers through his hair as
she tries to comfort him.

RACHEL
I'm sorry, Brent.

BRENT
Diana isn't one to try to do
herself in. There is more to the
story I don't know.

RACHEL
I am the one that found her. I
know, it is hard to imagine. I
walked into room 306...

BRENT
306? Steven Rexroad's room?

RACHEL
I think that is the patient's name.
It sounds familiar at least.

There is a slight pause as they both try to catch their
thoughts.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
(sobbing)
I found her... curled up... fetal
position... blood everywhere. I
looked down at her and she was
holding a scalpel in her hand that
she stole from the surgery ward.

Rachel puts her head on Brent's shoulder, soaking his cotton
polo shirt in her tears.

A doctor walks into the room up the Brent.

DOCTOR
Mr. Rexroad, your wife is in
recovery if you would like to sit
beside her. She will be waking up
soon.

BRENT
How did the surgery go?

DOCTOR
It was a good thing that we took
her in when we did. We had to
remove some of her intestines and
re-align the tract. I think she is
going to be fine. I will have a
nurse tell you more later. If you
would, please follow me.

Brent gets up and pulls his hands apart from Rachel.

RACHEL
Make sure she knows I love her more
than life itself.

Brent nods in affirmation as he walks out of the room.

INT. RECOVERY WARD

Brent sits in a chair beside of his wife. His wife is still not yet awake; he holds her hand in his anyway. He sits solemn, and then remembers the envelope that Diana had given him earlier in the day. He pulls it out of his back pocket and takes a few moments to read it. Brent's brow tightens as he holds back both anger and tears.

INT. DORM ROOM, PAST

We now see Brent who is only 18 years old. He is lying in his bed in his dorm room. Across the room is his roommate, JEFFREY, who is surfing the internet on his laptop.

JEFFREY

Man, it's the first day at this place and I am already bored off my ass.

BRENT

I hear you, man.

JEFFREY

Want to score some bud?

BRENT

I'm not a smoker. Don't let me hold you back though.

JEFFREY

I'm not really either. Just a social toker, so to speak.

Jeffrey sits in silence for a moment and we hear the sounds of him chatting online back and forth.

JEFFREY (CONT'D)

Some girls and I are headed out tonight to bar, you ought to come. You might be able to catch yourself some tail.

BRENT

What's tail?

Jeffrey laughs.

JEFFREY

You are definitely going out now, my socially inept friend!

BRENT

To a sushi bar?

JEFFREY
No! You don't know the beauty of
prime underage drinking fun yet, do
you?

BRENT
I guess not...

INT. COLLEGE BAR, NIGHT PAST

We open up showing Brent at a college bar in a booth packed full of people. Brent is sitting between two girls in the middle of the booth. Music is blaring and everyone is hard to hear. Diana, the girl on the end starts to talk to him.

DIANA
You're Brent, right?

BRENT
Err... that's me.

DIANA
I hear you graduated from George
Washington High. How was that?

BRENT
Interesting to say the least.

DIANA
I have to be blunt. You are cute.
Do you want to step outside so we
can talk?

BRENT
Sure!

Brent and Diana stand up from the booth.

JEFFREY
(yelling)
Way to go, Brent!

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT, NIGHT- PAST

DIANA
Sorry, had to get out of there. The
music was so loud it was giving me
a headache.

BRENT
I hear you. Which is exactly the
opposite of what I could do in
there.

Diana smiles at his dumb joke.

DIANA
So you have never had a girl friend before.

BRENT
How did you know that?

DIANA
It's fine. Actually it is kind of cute.

Brent does not respond and Diana notices his lack of social skills.

DIANA (CONT'D)
You know, I think we have a lot in common. I love tennis, I have a huge affection for animals and I would die if I didn't get the latest scores on the last NASCAR race.

BRENT
How do you know so much about me?

Diana ignores him and pushes him against the wall outside of the bar, puts her soft hands on his face. She leans in with her mouth agape and kisses him on the spot.

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. DAY PAST

Brent and Diana pull up in an old car to Steven's house. Steven's house is different from before. Now it is a small house on a residential street.

DIANA
I can't wait to meet your father for the first time.

Diana punches Brent flirtingly in the arm.

DIANA (CONT'D)
I'm going to get all of the juiciest stories from your childhood.

BRENT
Don't count on much.

Brent and Diana step out of the car and approach the front doors. Brent rings the doorbell and Steven answers.

STEVEN
You must be Diana!

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. DAY- PAST- CONTINUOUS

Brent and Diana walk into Steven's house. Brent is feeling very awkward, and it is obvious. He speaks very little and stands perfectly still when he is not doing anything.

DIANA
You have a lovely house, sir.

Brent shoots her a strange look when she calls him sir.

STEVEN
I try. Would you like to take a
tour?

Steven puts his hand on Diana's back as if to lead her down the hall. She complies and they start to walk, as Diana feels compelled by everything Steven is saying.

BRENT
You will have to excuse me; I have
to use the rest room.

STEVEN
Dammit, boy, what did I tell you
about announcing you are using the
bathroom?

BRENT
I'm sorry, sir.

Brent walks off down the hallway into the bathroom, and closes the door behind him. Brent does not actually use the toilet, but instead he looks at himself in the mirror, gaining his composure.

We watch as he takes a deep breath, flushes the toilet and runs a bit of water to make it sound like he had used the restroom. We follow him as he opens the door and at the far end of the hall he sees Steven and Diana looking at a painting on the wall.

Steven leans down, kisses Diana on the forehead. We see his hand sliding down her back and resting on her ass, pinching her. In return she laughs and pulls away.

INT. RECOVERY WARD- PRESENT

We once again return to Brent waiting beside of his wife, Brent is finishing the letter that was in the envelope for him to read.

Brent folds the letter up, putting it back into its originating envelope. He stands up and returns the envelope to his back pocket.

We watch as Brent walks out of the room, not bothering to look back at his wife.

INT. NURSING HOME

We see Brent walking with a nursing home aide down the bright corridor. They walk past a few elderly people walking with their walkers.

AIDE

Maggie's mind has deteriorated a lot in the past couple months, so I don't know how well you will be able to communicate with her. She goes through her different episodes; you will just have to be patient with her.

BRENT

How bad is she?

AIDE

I like to believe that she is able to understand everything that we say to her. I don't know if that is the case, though. How are you related to our Mags again?

BRENT

I'm her nephew. I haven't seen her in about twenty years.

AIDE

Hmmm. That's a long time to go without talking to family. Don't be surprised if she doesn't believe you are who you say you are. You may be burned into her long-term memory, but only as a kid. Just don't take offense to it.

BRENT

I understand completely.

They come around the corner to an open area for the residents to relax in. The area has a few other old folk sitting around. One old man is mooing at the top of his lungs, others are quiet. When the old man sees Brent walk in, he gets silenced.

Brent instantly recognizes Aunt Maggie, though she is now very old and wrinkled. He walks up to her and sits in a chair at the same table.

BRENT (CONT'D)

Hello, Aunt Maggie.

Maggie looks at him inquisitively.

AUNT MAGGIE
Do I know you, dear?

BRENT
It's me, Brent.

AUNT MAGGIE
Rexroad?

BRENT
That's me, Aunt Maggie.

AUNT MAGGIE
You're not my nephew! My nephew is
12 years old and lives with my
sister at that damned ranch!

BRENT
Your sister has been dead for many
years, Aunt Maggie.

Maggie looks shocked.

AUNT MAGGIE
Why didn't anyone tell me?!

BRENT
I haven't seen you since she was
killed.

AUNT MAGGIE
Killed?!

BRENT
I think you feared she would be at
the time. You tried to help us.

AUNT MAGGIE
Why are you doing this to me?

BRENT
I need to know something, Aunt
Maggie. This isn't easy.

AUNT MAGGIE
I don't trust you.

BRENT
You don't have to worry. It's me,
Brent.

AUNT MAGGIE
See, I don't trust you! You lie!

Brent decides to reformulate the way he talks to his aunt.

BRENT
Do you remember trying to save
Brent, your nephew?

AUNT MAGGIE
Yes, my sister Martha and I tried
to get those kids out of that
hellhole.

Brent stops to think about how to word what he needs to say.

BRENT
Did you have any kids after that?

AUNT MAGGIE
No, I didn't actually have any
kids, but I did foster a lovely
daughter for many years. Did you
bring her?

BRENT
No, Aunt Maggie, but I believe I am
married to her.

Aunt Maggie looks at Brent dead in the eyes taking his hands
in hers.

AUNT MAGGIE
Let me tell you something, son.

She stammers to grab her breath.

BRENT
Yes?

AUNT MAGGIE
Like me... those that don't deserve
to live... deserve to die.

Aunt Maggie puts her head back down and will not speak any
more, as she withdraws into a reclusive state.

END OF ACT 2

ACT 3

EXT. AMPHITHEATER, NIGHT- PAST

We see Steven once again illuminated in the center of the
amphitheater, the glow of the fire behind him makes his look
have that of a demonic, sporadic feel. In front of him lies
a dummy on a pedestal with its arms straight down its side.
At each end of the stage we see Brent and Gwyn kneeling on
one knee, completely still; the orange glow of the fire
illuminates their faces. The siblings are older than the
last time we had seen them. Brent is now 16 and Gwyn looks
in her early 20s.

STEVEN
Brethren, I say to you, it is human nature to love only yourself. All other thoughts or ideals of love stem only from a need of self-fulfillment.

Steven scans the crowd.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Can we break this barrier? Yes! I have the secret! Each of us in The Order of the Orange Phoenix must redefine and re-establish one's own meaning of self. In order to find social and political salvation, you must deny who you think you are. Like a glass of water poured into the ocean, you must pour yourself into The Order. Only then can the word WE become the word I. We can grow; we can live the way God intended. We have the ability to follow His will. Only through this can we once again return to the Garden of Eden and be truly free.

Steven pauses a moment to stare dead into the masses of people surrounding him.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Brent and Gwyn Rexroad, please rise.

The siblings push themselves up to stand, and then remain still.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
We must purge out all that of which holds us back. Six years ago these children could not embrace life the way God intended. We helped these poor kids, purging out those that were holding them back. These individuals standing in front of you are a beacon to how we should all be. They sacrificed their only mother to gain salvation, just as we must sacrifice what we believe we love to fall away from the world.

This is the cue for Brent and Gwyn to walk to the center of the stage, meeting in the middle. They come to a halt behind the dummy and turn around to face the crowd. Steven's illuminated figure towers behind them.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Brethren, salvation is at hand for
us all. Will you accept it?

At these words Brent and Gwyn simultaneously stab the dummy with jagged daggers they had been keeping concealed behind their backs.

INT. BRENT'S CAR, MORNING

Brent is driving in his car in a nice residential neighborhood; we assume he is driving home. He pulls up to a red street light and his car comes to a halt. His cell phone rings, and in turn he pulls it out of his jacket pocket. Brent looks at the screen and answers it.

BRENT
Hello?

NURSE
Mr. Rexroad, your wife is awake and she requests your presence.

BRENT
Thank you, I will be right over.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, MORNING

The morning sun brightens the hospital room. We see Diana laying with her head propped up on the hospital bed, Rachel sitting at her side. Brent walks into the room and Rachel stands up and walks out. On her way out the door, she smiles at Brent, but he does not return the favor. He does not bother to sit down; instead he walks over to the foot of her bed.

BRENT
You don't know how bad your hurt me.

DIANA
I'm sorry, Brent.

BRENT
I just can't understand why...

DIANA
I know.

BRENT
I can't understand why you have lied to me all of these years. Did I ever mean anything to you?

DIANA

You mean more than life itself to me, Brent.

BRENT
You didn't marry me because you wanted to.

DIANA
I fell in love with you, Brent.

BRENT
(cynical)
A forced love.

DIANA
Love is love, nothing can change that.

BRENT
Just two days ago you left me. That was the first taste of freedom you have ever had.

DIANA
I didn't leave you for freedom. I walked out to push you to realize your need to change.

Brent begins to get angry.

BRENT
The only change that has come about is the fact you have finally come clean. You have always been a part of Steven's game.

DIANA
We are all pawns, Brent. No-one is denying this.

BRENT
You owe me...

DIANA
An explanation? I will give you one.

EXT. COMMUNE, DAY- PAST

We see the events unfold to the voice of Diana as she tells her story in real time.

DIANA (V.O.)

My parents were rich. Not on their own doing, but rather my father's father left a substantial inheritance. My parents were already involved in The Order at the time, and you can imagine the amount of interest the cult took to them once they became rich.

We see a lawyer visiting the commune and talking to a couple, their small daughter playing in the background. The lawyer pulls out some papers and the couple becomes excited.

DIANA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

The Order was very socialistic in nature. What is yours is mine; what is mine is yours. My parents did not want to give up the money.

EXT. GROCERY STORE, DAY- PAST

We see young Diana and her parents walking through the parking lot up to a local grocery store. A couple men in white button-up shirts stop them and initiate conversation.

DIANA

That is about the same time my parents discovered Mormonism.

INT. DIANA'S PARENT'S HOUSE, NIGHT- PAST

We see Diana's parents packing their stuff into suitcases frantically, Diana is nowhere in sight.

DIANA

My parents were doing it, they were moving out. But they forgot one thing in the rush.

EXT. FIELD, NIGHT- PAST

Young Diana is playing tag with a couple other kids in the field. Steven and two of his men walk up to her. Steven remains silent as the two men violently grab Diana.

INT. DIANA'S PARENT'S HOUSE, NIGHT- PAST

Steven barges into Diana's parent's house as they are still frantically packing. They both jump up and turn around, like deer in headlights. Steven is followed by the two men clutching young Diana as she screams and kicks.

STEVEN
Going on a trip?

The parents are speechless. They did not think this situation out and cannot rebuttal themselves.

Steven is once again talking and acting eccentric, as we have seen earlier.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Let's cut the crap. I can't let you leave, and I can't let you stay knowing you aren't adding to The Order. I'm a nice guy though, and I will open a window for you. Right now, you sign me over a check for everything in your back account, and you can be on your way out the door. I will keep the girl and treat her as a wife.

Diana's father stammers, but cannot say anything.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Let me make this easier for you to decide. If you even start to negotiate, then the girl dies right here on the spot.

Steven pulls out a long knife, walks behind Diana and holds the blade up to her throat.

Without discussing it, Diana's father turns around, and opens a suitcase. He digs through the suitcase and pulls out a checkbook. He fills out the check and hands it to Steven, whom removes the knife from the girl's throat.

Steven steps out of the doorway, as well as Diana and the two men holding her.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You are free to go.

The couple leaves their belongings and walks directly out of the door. We can only then hear slashes as their throats are slit and the thumps as their bodies hit the ground.

Steven walks over them, crumbles up the check and throws it on their dead bodies.

INT. STEVEN'S OFFICE- PAST

We see Steven sitting in his office. He is surrounded by theology books, as well as a rather extensive collection of guns. Diana is sitting completely silent with tears in her eyes in the corner of the room.

STEVEN
Your parents deserved to die. But
the punishment for their sins
extends far more than simply
worldly death.

DIANA
(stammering)
Are they in heaven?

STEVEN
They are not. They are suffering in
the hottest part of hell.

Diana starts sobbing out loud.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You can save them, by paying
retribution for your parent's
crimes. Only then can they see the
glory of heaven in all of its
wonders.

DIANA
I will do anything! I just want to
see my mommy again!

STEVEN
Do as I will say and you will spend
eternity in all of the riches that
heaven has to offer with your
mother and father.

INT. HOSPITAL, MORNING PRESENT

We once again come back to the present to see Diana propped
up in her hospital bed. Now, we see Brent is sitting in the
same chair that Rachel was originally seated in.

DIANA
Steven pulled some strings and had
me fostered. I don't think it was
luck it was your aunt that fostered
me.

We see that Diana has a single tear streaming down her
cheek.

DIANA (CONT'D)

My job was to make sure that she did not cause any harm to the cult. I was a tool to make sure that she neither made an attempt to steal you nor tried to break up The Order... Many times she talked about doing just that. She was never able to act on it out of fearing for not only her life, but mine as well. She never talked about it again after she was told you and your sister were killed in a car accident.

Steven reaches over and holds Diana's hand, looking down at her sympathetically.

DIANA (CONT'D)

I had made an oath. I swore that nobody would ever find out. My life... that was going to be the consequence. If I had told anybody, I had to take my own life.

BRENT

That's why you...

DIANA

Yes. I stabbed myself in the gut. You see, after seeing you fall apart, I realized the bigger crime was not telling you the truth. I had to make sure you knew, so you could help yourself.

Diana starts sobbing even louder.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Steven pushed me to do it. He threatened the life of our Sammy...

She clears her throat and is able to talk clearer.

DIANA (CONT'D)

The suicide was staged. Steven was going to put me and my family through the same torture as many before. I stabbed myself in the gut, but I knew there would be a low chance of actually dying from the stab wound. Even if I had died, it would feel better than continuing a lie.

Brent breaks down and cries with her. He lays his head next to her and holds her close. Diana's eyes start to shut.

DIANA (CONT'D)
Brent?

BRENT
I love you.

DIANA
I love you too, but I need some sleep. Why don't you go home and get some yourself.

Brent hugs her even tighter.

EXT. BRENT'S HOUSE, EVENING.

A few hours have passed since we have last seen Brent, as the sun is now setting. Brent and Gwyn are sitting on Brent's front porch drinking Guinness.

BRENT
Who are you?

GWYN
I don't understand the question. I am your sister.

BRENT
But who are you? What do you stand for?

GWYN
I think you know just about everything there is to know. I am a very simple person.

BRENT
(creepily calm)
He is using you to get to me, isn't he?

GWYN
(getting angry)
What are you talking about? Why are you being so cryptic?

BRENT
I'm sorry, sis. I no longer feel like I know who I can trust.

GWYN
After we spilled our guts to each other you still feel you can't trust me?

Brent takes a refreshing drink of his beer.

BRENT
Steven still has an underground following. I don't know who he is using to get at me. Look at me, today I found out my wife has been his puppet for the last two decades.

GWYN
Brent, do you really think people are still following him? It sounds to me he is controlling you, but not the way you think.

BRENT
How so?

GWYN
Through fear. Now loosen up and enjoy your beer.

Gwyn looks off at the horizon in front of them and takes a drink.

GWYN (CONT'D)
You don't want to regret ruining this beautiful evening.

EXT. HOSPITAL DAY

We are able to tell it is the next day because the sun is up. We watch Brent as he pulls up to the hospital entrance. He gets out of the car and hands his car over to a valet attendant, along with a couple dollars.

INT. HOSPITAL DAY

We see Brent in the gift shop. He picks up a card and walks to the cashier.

BRENT
I need some flowers as well, if you don't mind.

The woman at the cashier smiles.

CASHIER
No, that's what I am here for. Do you know which ones you want?

BRENT
I've never been good on picking flowers out. I need something lighthearted and promising, as opposed to something that says 'I'm sorry.'

CASHIER
I think I can hook you up there.

The cashier turns around and opens the fridge the flowers are kept in. She pulls out an assortment of fresh lilies and daffodils.

CASHIER (CONT'D)
I always thought roses were too basic. People expect those. When you walk into a room with color, I believe it expresses so much more.

Brent smiles and hands her money.

INT. HOSPITAL DAY

Brent walks into Diana's hospital room holding the flowers and card he just bought. Diana is asleep, and as to not wake her Brent sets the gifts on the table beside the bed. He looks down at her and notices she is very pale and her lips are turning blue.

BRENT
Help! Nurse!

Brent runs out in the hallway and notices nurses walking back and forth, but none of them are paying any attention to him.

BRENT (CONT'D)
NURSE!

Brent runs up to the nurse's station, and has to use his hands to grab the table to slow his momentum.

BRENT (CONT'D)
Diana! Diana is cold as ice and her lips are blue. I need help now dammit!

The two nurses at the table look shocked. One of them jumps up and runs down the room to Diana's room, the other pages for more help.

Brent runs back to Diana's hospital room and meets up with several nurses surrounding her.

NURSE 1
Someone call for a gurney!

NURSE 2
We need to stabilize her! I think she is bleeding internally.

Another nurse in the corner runs out the door to go get more help.

NURSE 1
Stay in there, Di!

Nurse 2 runs to the closet and grabs more blankets, turning around and covering Diana in order to keep her body temperature warm.

Two people run back in the room carrying a rolling gurney. Each person starts to lift Diana onto the device.

INT. COMMUNE RITUAL HALL, EVENING- PAST

We come into a large room set up like a basic church. In the front there is a stage where Steven stands with Gwyn, and in front of them there are many rows of pews. Behind them towers a stained glass window featuring Christ's ascension to heaven.

STEVEN
We gather here today, brethren to celebrate the coming of age of my daughter, Gwyn Rexroad. Today, on her 22nd birthday she becomes one of us, married to I, Steven Rexroad just as all of you are.

Gwyn smiles longingly at Steven on the stage. She brushes his arm with her hand.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Yesterday, Gwyn was just a girl. Yesterday she was a girl restricted by threats of society. Yesterday she was one person.

Steven looks Gwyn dead in the eye.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Give me your hand.

Gwyn smiles and holds her hand towards Steven with the palm up. Steven reaches on the podium and grabs a knife. Steven holds the knife up to his chest and bows his head for a moment as if in prayer.

Steven raises the blade to his lips to kiss the shiny metal. He takes Gwyn's hand in his, and then takes the tip of the knife to trace Gwyn's heart line on her hand, gently cutting her skin to reveal bright red blood.

Gwyn cups her hand to contain the build of blood. Steven grabs a cup of water on the podium and places it under her hand. With Steven's other hand he tilts her cupped hand to make drops of blood fall into the water. Holding the cup, Steven turns back towards the crowd.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Yesterday she was one person. Today
she is one with The Order of the
Orange Phoenix.

Steven reaches over to a small fountain to the left of the podium and pours the contents of the glass into the rest of the water.

Steven turns back, facing Gwyn, holding her outstretched hand once again.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Gwyn Rexroad, on the charge of
death, do you agree to enter an
unbreakable union with myself and
your fellow Brother's?

GWYN
I do.

STEVEN
Gwyn Rexroad, on the charge of
death, do you agree to sacrifice
your whole self to better The
Union?

GWYN
I do.

STEVEN
Gwyn Rexroad, on the charge of
death, do you agree to follow
myself, Steven Rexroad as a
daughter does to her father and as
a wife does to her husband?

GWYN
I do.

STEVEN
It is sealed. To lock in this
union, Gwyn Rexroad, I will now
taste your virgin blood.

Steven takes her bleeding hand, raising it to his mouth. We watch as Steven drinks, Gwyn smiling still longingly at him, smiling.

INT. RECOVERY WARD PRESENT

We are once again in present day in the recovery ward. We see Brent sitting next to Diana, Brent's head is bowed and he is crying. Diana comes out of sleep and looks up at him. Brent does not notice that she has awakened until after she speaks.

DIANA

Brent?

Brent looks down at Diana anxiously.

DIANA (CONT'D)

Why are you crying? What happened?

Brent wipes the tears from his eyes.

BRENT

I almost lost you, Di.

DIANA

I'm right here; I'm not going anywhere anytime soon.

BRENT

I mean you almost died on me.

Diana is shocked. She was not aware of this until right now upon waking.

DIANA

What!

BRENT

You were bleeding internally. They had to pump 4 units of blood back into you.

Brent starts sobbing out loud.

BRENT (CONT'D)

You were on the road to becoming brain dead when I found you.

DIANA

You found me?

Brent reaches over to the table where the gifts he purchased earlier are.

BRENT

Yes, I wanted to give you these.

Brent shows her the flowers and the card that he had bought her. Diana smiles softly, for she does not have much energy.

DIANA

I love them, Brent. The flowers look happy, almost promising. You didn't pick those out yourself, did you?

Brent finally cracks a smile.

BRENT
I...err... It's all me, beautiful.

Diana laughs to herself.

DIANA
You are such a bad liar, Brent. But that is one of the things I love about you.

Brent sits in silence for a moment before working up the ability to speak.

BRENT
I am sorry, Diana.

DIANA
Sorry for what?

BRENT
The way I have been treating you. I have put you on the backburner of my life. Both you and Sammy were the least of my priorities.

DIANA
You know, Brent, I am actually glad all of this happened. In fact, I am more than just glad.

BRENT
Why is that?

DIANA
This whole incident has brought you and me closer together. We now can look past the shadow that Steven and the whole Order has caused and sees each other for the first time, through our own eyes and not that of which we are pretending to be.

BRENT
Wow, that's pretty deep. True, but deep.

Diana reaches over and grabs Brent by the hand. We see the white of her knuckles as she grips his hand in hers.

BRENT (CONT'D)
I love you, Di. Things should not have turned out this way. You became involved in my life. Everything about my existence has been falling apart since day one.

DIANA

Yes, but you are trying everything in your power to build your foundation. You have been doing that since day one as well.

BRENT

Exactly. I have been trying many years, but it seems I am getting nowhere. Neither of us are free. We are not free to live our lives as we please; we are not free to enjoy our family; we are not free to enjoy life itself.

DIANA

But we are free to love each other.

BRENT

Not even that, Diana. How can we fully love each other when we are answering to something bigger than both of us? How can we fully love each other when Steven and The Order possess a control over our thoughts and even our actions?

DIANA

I understand, Brent. You know, it is a horrible thing for me to say, but I was hoping Steven would die when he was admitted to the hospital. I was hoping another blood clot would come loose and go straight for his brain.

Diana takes a deep breathe.

DIANA (CONT'D)

But I am not a lucky person, Brent. Whether we can live and love freely under the fear of Steven is not something that we can change. We must learn to live with it, and fully come to terms with ourselves.

BRENT

I've been living with it all of my life, Diana. It is time I figure out something to do to take action.

DIANA

You have already started taking action. I was listening when you forgave him.

BRENT
Forgiveness only works if it is
mutual. I can't fully forgive
someone that shows no desire for
it.

They sit a moment in silence, neither sure what to say.

DIANA
Brent, I have to tell you
something...

Brent looks at his wife hard.

DIANA (CONT'D)
When Steven... finds out I am alive

Diana pauses. Brent squeezes her hand.

BRENT
He won't find out you are alive,
Di. I promise this.

EXT. RECEPTION AREA, EVENING- PAST

We flash back to the reception area set up in the field. There are tables lined up full of food buffet style. Many people are enjoying their meals, talking amongst each other jovial.

We follow dancers, pagani stically dancing and clapping around the campfire to unheard music.

Steven and Gwyn are sitting in seats in front of the celebration, as if they are a king with his queen. They share laughs at the celebrations.

We then see it is later in the evening and the party has died down. Many people have gone home and left the party deserted. Steven grabs Gwyn by the hand and looks her dead in the eye.

STEVEN
Gwyn, now that you are a part of
The Order, we need your services.

Gwyn smiles at Steven.

GWYN
I'm up for anything.

STEVEN
We will see about that.

Steven looks down at his lap, then back up to match Gwyn's eyes.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Do you know Mrs. Aickres?

GWYN
Jacob's mother, of course! She is
such a sweet lady.

STEVEN
On the outside only. Have you ever
seen into her heart?

GWYN
I don't understand

STEVEN
I have been blessed, Gwyn. God has
gifted me to see the hearts of
every man and woman once they have
entered The Order.

GWYN
I believe I am following you...

STEVEN
Her heart is dark. If she continues
on, she has the abilities to
violate the sanctity of this union.

GWYN
What does she want to do?

STEVEN
I can't discuss that, Gwyn. All I
will tell you is that she feels you
are replacing her and she will soon
want revenge.

GWYN
Revenge? As you always say, revenge
stems from a selfish attitude.

STEVEN
Yes, you are a smarter girl than
you lead on. I need you to teach
her that she must change the way
she thinks.

GWYN
You want me to kill her?

STEVEN

No, you can never kill somebody without first trying to help them. You must show them love and compassion. Gwyn, you need to set her straight; teach her how to think like we do. I don't think she is unable, I just think she has forgotten how. Without actually telling her to, you must make her beg forgiveness.

INT. OLD SHACK. PAST

We return to the shack that we had seen Uncle Small's die earlier in the film. Now, instead of the bright light of the sun shining through the cracks in the wood, we see the orange glow of the sunset piercing through and over the individuals in the shack.

We see Gwyn standing over a middle aged woman whom is tied to a chair. The woman, Mrs. Aickers is squirming and trying to scream, but she is unable to do so due to the duct tape over her mouth.

GWYN

I can't tell you what to do, but I believe I can help you.

Mrs. Aickers pulls her wrists tight, but only to make the rope tighter.

GWYN (CONT' D)

A change of heart is always a good thing.

Gwyn walks over to a nearby hay stack where there are some tools laid out. She grabs a box cutter and walks back over to the struggling woman.

GWYN (CONT' D)

You know, when Van Gogh wanted to tell a woman that he was in love with her, do you know how he proved it?

Mrs. Aicker's eyes get wide as she sees the box cutter Gwyn is holding.

GWYN (CONT' D)

That's right, ma'am, he gave her a present. He gave her a part of himself.

Gwyn approaches Mrs. Aickers.

GWYN (CONT' D)
In order to be one with The Order,
you must give yourself. Do you
understand?

Mrs. Aickers violently nods her head.

GWYN (CONT' D)
I don't think you do, Mrs. Aickers.
You can't just give yourself
physically, but you also have to
give your spirit and become one
with all of us.

Gwyn uses one hand to stabilize the woman's head. She wraps her fingers around her hairline, much as a basketball player would hold a ball.

GWYN (CONT' D)
You broke our marriage with
adultery. You cheated on The Order
by loving yourself in place of
others.

Gwyn remains calm and in one easy slice she cuts off the Mrs. Aicker's left ear. Mrs. Aickers tries to scream, but has completely lost her voice.

GWYN (CONT' D)
Repent!

Mrs. Aicker's already-oval eyes get wider, as if she is begging for mercy.

GWYN (CONT' D)
Let yourself go! Own up to your
sins and swear by them no more!

Mrs. Aickers frantically nods her head in agreement, blood from her ear oozing down her face.

GWYN (CONT' D)
I can tell you do not yet fully
understand. I am going to freshen
up, but I will be back. And when I
do, I will help you decide your
fate.

Gwyn walks back over to the bale of hay. She picks up a rag to wipe the box cutter clean. As she walks out of the shack, she spits in Mrs. Aicker's face.

Mrs. Aickers watches as Gwyn leaves the room. She tries everything in her power to get loose, but she only makes the rope tighter. She struggles, moving her hands and feet in every direction, but to no avail. She realizes that the rope binding her legs is loose, and with work is able to slip one

leg out, which makes just enough slack for her to have some lee-way with her wrists.

Just then, Gwyn barges back into the room. She walks over to the bail of hay, this time grabbing a woodcarving blade. She picks it up, analyzes it and walks back over to Mrs. Aickers. Gwyn squats down to the bound woman's eye level, holding the carver up to her face.

GWYN (CONT'D)

Have you ever seen someone with a tear tattoo? It represents losing a dear friend while in jail. Today, you are going to lose your closest friend-- yourself.

Gwyn raises the blade with intention of sculpting Mrs. Aicker's face. Mrs. Aickers does not hesitate and HEADBUTTS Gwyn square in the forehead. Gwyn falls back, knocked temporarily unconscious.

Mrs. Aickers slips her hands out of the rope that is bounding her, and uses her hands to undo the other leg that is still tied to the chair.

We watch as Mrs. Aickers sprints out of the shack and into the night.

INT. BRENT'S HOUSE, DAY- PRESENT

We watch Brent as he climbs his stairs and enters his bedroom, leaving his door open. He walks over to the dresser and starts to shift through the drawers frantically. After opening five drawers and emptying their contents on his bed, he finds what he is looking for.

Brent reaches down and picks up a shiny revolver.

GWYN (O.S.)

What are you doing?

Brent did not notice Gwyn standing in the door, the sound of her voice making him jump slightly. Brent then turns to see her in the doorway, leaning against the framework with her arms crossed.

BRENT

Have you ever seen The Exorcist?

Gwyn stares at him inquisitively.

BRENT (CONT'D)

I'm preparing the Holy Water.

INT. BRENT'S CAR, EVENING

We see that Brent is stuck in traffic. Yards ahead of him we can see road constructors working frantically to finish their job and move on. Brent is looking anxious. He puts his hand to his jacket pocket where he feels the outline of the gun.

INT. HOSPITAL, EVENING

Brent walks back into the reception area of the hospital and walks by the receptionists. The woman behind the desk stops him.

RECEPTIONIST
Mr. Rexroad!

Brent stops and turns back to her.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
It is after hours, I just need you to sign in.

BRENT
I just need to make a quick trip upstairs to see my father.

RECEPTIONIST
Steven Rexroad?

BRENT
That's him.

RECEPTIONIST
He was checked out about a half hour ago. I just saw him leaving in a wheelchair.

Brent doesn't even take time to process this information; instead he immediately runs back out of the hospital doors.

EXT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING

Brent pulls up in his car at Steven's house. He has his headlights already turned off to not make any noise. He parks his car a couple of houses down and gets out, leaving his doors unlocked and his keys in the ignition. He reaches in his jacket and grips the gun.

We follow Brent as he approaches the house. Instead of going straight to the front door, we watch as he crouches up to the living room window and peers in, a look of shock washing over his face.

Through the window, we see Steven lying on the couch, asleep with a blanket tightly wrapped around him and an oxygen tank

by his side. Adjacent to the couch, we see Gwyn sitting on the reclining chair, nervously gripping a cup of coffee as the blue light from the TV illuminates her face.

Upon further investigation, we discover that her other hand is clutching a revolver.

INT. COURTROOM, DAY- PAST

We snap back in time to a courtroom. We see Gwyn sitting on the defendant's stand as she is being questioned.

PROSECUTOR

You mean you acted alone, torturing Mrs. Aickers with no reason or no direction?

GWYN

Are you implying I'm not smart enough to do this? I'm rather offended.

JUDGE

Answer the question, Ms. Rexroad!

GWYN

Yes, it was my decision and no-one else's. She deserved it.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING

Brent stealthfully makes his way to Steven's door and silently tries to open it. He is surprised as the door gives way, and he gently walks in, his gun pointed ahead.

We watch as he takes a few steps forward down the hallway and hears the door SLAM shut behind him. Brent quickly turns around, his gun still pointed in front of him.

There he sees the silhouette of Gwyn, with her gun pointed at him. She steps forward and her face is revealed in the light of the window.

GWYN

I knew you would come, brother.

BRENT

I knew you were a liar, sister.

GWYN

Now what would make you think that?

INT. COURTROOM, DAY, PAST

We are once again in the courtroom. Gwyn is no longer on the box beside the judge, but this time she is sitting at the table awaiting her sentencing.

JUDGE

Gwyn Rexroad, the jury has come to a conclusion and found you unanimously guilty. With much thought, I sentence you to twenty years in the state penitentiary.

The judge's hammer comes down.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING- PRESENT

We are once again back in present day, watching the climatic events unfold at Steven's house. Their guns are pointed at each other. As if it is a game of chess, each of the siblings is trying to figure out what to do next to get the upper hand.

BRENT

You are letting yourself fall slave, Gwyn.

GWYN

We are not slaves, Brent. We are part of something larger. I, as a person, am not in control. You see, I, being The Order, am.

BRENT

The Order put you through a decade and a half in jail because you acted alone.

GWYN

I took the fall, Brent. It was the only way to preserve The Order.

BRENT

Much good that did.

GWYN

You don't fully understand. The Order still exists. It will always exist. Even with no members, it is in all of us.

Brent SWINGS his fist at Gwyn, trying to hit her in the head with the gun. Gwyn quickly steps out of the way, closely avoiding the butt of the gun slamming into her temple. Gwyn crouches down and CHARGES at Brent, tackling him. Brent is knocked on the ground and Gwyn lands on him, strattling his chest.

Brent attempts to jump back up, but her backhand flies across his face. He shakes it off and uses his free hand to grab her by the throat. She chokes a moment before jerking her head back out of his reach.

Gwyn jumps to her feet and before Brent can register, she kicks the gun away from his hands. She turns around, towering over Brent. The light from the window casts a shadow over him.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EVENING

We snap to Diana's hospital room. Diana's face is very pale and her lips are once again turning blue. Diana squeezes her eyes shut in pain, taking a series of very hard, very short breathes.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, DAY- PAST- CONTINUOUS

We return to Gwyn pointing the gun at Brent's head, Brent lying on the floor at her feet.

GWYN
I'm sorry...

Gwyn begins to pull the trigger and we hear a gunshot.

Gwyn falls to the floor, blood oozes out of her head.

As she falls, we see a frail Steven standing behind her. Though his complexion is very poor, his posture remains straight and intimidating.

Steven looks at Brent and smiles mischievously.

EXT. COMMUNE, NIGHT- PAST

Steven, years younger, is looking at Brent the same way, with the creepy grin on his face. Young Brent is looking up at Steven with fear in his eyes as Steven undoes his belt. Steven removes his belt and prepares to swing it at Brent.

He is cut off by the sound of sirens and flashing red and blue lights reflecting off of the surrounding bales of hay.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. EVENING

We return to present day where Steven is still standing over Brent.

BRENT
You bastard...

Brent jumps up to his feet, retrieving his gun simultaneously.

BRENT (CONT'D)
I lost all because of you. I sacrificed everything.

STEVEN
You sacrificed everything for yourself. For your self-pity. Tell me, Brent, what brings you here today?

BRENT
I come to kill you.

STEVEN
That is good. You are doing exactly what you should.

Brent looks at Steven, trying to make sense of his words.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
The fury that burns inside of you, it is exactly what I need to continue my ministry. Do you see?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EVENING

A nurse walks in to check up on Diana. By now, Diana's breathe is cutting shorter and shorter, her body convulsing.

The nurse frantically hits the call button.

NURSE
I need some help in room 310 immediately!

The nurse puts her fingers on Diana's neck to check her pulse; we see her worried look. Diana stops convulsing and lays completely still, as more nurses rush into the hospital room.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING

We return back to Steven's house, as before.

BRENT
Why did you kill Gwyn?

STEVEN
Your slut of a sister was no use to me. The only reason she was on parole is because she put out to everyone there.

BRENT
Liar!

STEVEN
There, there is that raw fury again. Even with my death, the fury cannot burn away. You will always be mine, Brent. Nothing can change this.

EXT. COMMUNE, NIGHT- PAST

Steven puts down the belt that he was about to use to beat young Brent. Steven stands in silence as armed federal agents pour into the vicinity. Through looking at Brent's face, we cannot tell if he is feeling fear or relief. The federal agents are yelling, inaudibly. All except for one man, wearing a suit.

MAN WEARING A SUIT
Everybody load into the vans. We are evacuating this area under Code 817.9. This land is hereby condemned. All of you are under arrest for fraudulent activity and child neglect. Your rights will be read to each of you individually in the van.

We see the armed feds approach the crowds in the commune. The members of the cult do not fight back, instead they oblige, putting their hands in the air and following the federal agents.

Surprisingly, Steven does the same.

The man wearing a suit stops at Brent and looks down at the boy and smiles, then continues on.

Brent watches as Steven gets loaded into the back of a van with others in The Order.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING

The room is dark. The lights are turned off and the drapes have been pulled. One ray of light breaks through an opening in the drapes and travels through to highlight BRENT'S FACE, almost as a religious painting. BRENT is on one knee, looking bruised and battered up at STEVEN.

We cut to Brent's disturbing view, looking at Steven standing above him, Steven's white hair falling upon his old, wrinkled face.

STEVEN
You don't realize, Brent, I own you. Even in my death you cannot escape me.

BRENT
(hoarsely)

I'll take peace knowing you're in hell...

Steven gives a short snide laugh.

BRENT (CONT'D)
You won't be laughing when Satan is eating your crisp flesh.

Brent starts to charge at Steven, but Steven cuts him short with a slap to the face. Brent's head snaps to the right and DROOL flies out of his mouth.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EVENING

We see Diana once again, this time surrounded by nurses. She is hooked up to the EKG machine and her heart is beating very slowly. One of the nurses start to pump her chest, but it does not help. The beeping gets slower and slower.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE. EVENING

Brent is sprawled out on the floor. We see that his lip is bleeding, from the hit he took from Steven.

STEVEN
You are my son; it is your responsibility to continue my ministry long after my death.

BRENT
After today, you will have no more ministry. You will be erased out of the books. No more.

STEVEN
Even if you kill me today, you embody everything I stand for. I have noticed this about you ever since you were a kid. You will take shit from anybody, but your anger inside grows. If you kill me, it will explode and you will not be able to stop.

Steven pauses a moment to collect his thoughts.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
Diana, your wife. Lovely girl. She always has been. I can't kill her, she is too useful to me, but you can.

BRENT
I would gladly kill myself before I see her suffer any more!

STEVEN
Really now?

EXT. COMMUNE, NIGHT- PAST

Brent stands alone with fear as the last of the people load into the van. He is hiding behind a bale of hay, where no one can see him. We watch tears fall down Brent's face as the cars pull down the road, leaving Brent behind, alone.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM, EVENING

The nurses now have Diana hooked up to an oxygen mask, still frantically pumping her chest, trying to save her.

In a wave of sorrow, we hear the machine flat-line and Diana's face becomes still and calm.

INT. STEVEN'S HOUSE, EVENING

We pick up at Steven's house where we left off.

STEVEN
You would protect your wife, Diana to all ends of the earth? Through thick and thin? Through health and sickness?

BRENT
Damned right I would. Nothing you can do can stop me.

Steven looks at Brent and laughs.

STEVEN
What about that dear kid, Sammy? Would you protect him?

BRENT
Don't you dare bring my kid into this!

STEVEN
Sammy? Do you mean your brother?

Brent looks at Steven with obvious shock on his face.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
You heard me right. Diana has been
with me for years.

Steven smiles.

STEVEN (CONT'D)
And I want to thank you for raising
my son.

Steven's crooked white teeth show as his smile gets bigger. Brent flips around, holding his gun to Steven's face. Steven chuckles.

We hear a gunshot as the back of Steven's head covers the wall behind him. Steven's lifeless body hitting the floor.

EXT. GRAVEYARD, MORNING

We are looking into a graveyard covered with the bright morning light, green grass blowing in the soft wind. We watch Brent carry flowers as he walks through, with his head down.

BRENT (V.O.)
I realize now that Steven only did what his diseased mind honestly believed was the right thing to do, no matter how hard he had to push to get it done. People died that day, but not in vain. It was necessary to purge this world of the evil that Steven had brought into it. Without people dying, I and many others would still be under his control... Even in Steven's death, he casts a veil over my life. That day I thought I lost everything, but it was only a taste of losing it all. But you know something? I gained the world that day as well.

Young Sammy runs up to Brent. Brent laughs and messes up Sammy's hair.

BRENT (V. O.) (CONT' D)
Diana, my beautiful wife, ... she
lost a lot that day as well. She
died that day...

We see Diana roll behind her family in a motorized
wheelchair. We are surprised to see that she is alive.

BRENT (V. O.) (CONT' D)
But with a great team of
clinicians, she was resuscitated.
In doing so, she lost all nerve
functions from her chest down.

Brent pauses once again.

BRENT (V. O.) (CONT' D)
On that God took my life away from
me. In its place he gave me a
family.

We fade out to
home video
scenes from
Brent and Gwyn's
childhood.

FIN