

ASHES OF NEW YORK

by  
MATT WATERS

FADE IN:

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS -- DAWN

GUS WHEELER, a slovenly bum in his late sixties, sporting ragged clothes and carrying a bagged bottle of Malt Liquor, staggers alone down a winding rail line. In between intermittent burping and incoherent mumbling, he maintains the rhythm of a melody.

GUS

It's the same old song they sing...  
I love you! The boys are all mad  
about Nellie, daughter of officer  
Kelly, and it's all day long they  
bring flowers, all dripping with  
dew.... And they join in the chorus  
of Nellie Kelly, I love you!

Gus suddenly halts his gait, noticing a body on the tracks up ahead, face down. He initially approaches with apprehension, manner relaxed after a long, sloppy swig from the brown bag.

GUS (CONT'D)

Come now, vagabond, haven't you a  
home, a bed, a warm breakfast  
waiting? Aren't you lucky?

Gus kneels down beside the body, belonging to a young male, flowing blonde hair escaping beneath a beanie cap. Gus taps his shoulder, receiving no response.

GUS (CONT'D)

Must be a fortunate one, my lad.  
I've passed out round here before,  
been robbed, used as a fucking  
toilet. You get a wake up call.  
What a world...

Gus turns the body over, revealing a face bloodied, a stomach ripped apart by bullet holes. This was GARRETT MORRIS.

GUS (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ... Jesus Christ...  
just a kid... just a fucking kid...  
Jesus...

Gus stares at his hands, caked in crimson. He feels for a pulse.

Nothing.

GUS (CONT'D)

Help.

There isn't another soul in sight.

GUS (CONT'D)

Help! Help! Somebody help!

The accompanying echo is nearly deafening.

FADE TO:

INT. STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT

A circular bar encloses a raised platform, where the scantily clad MOLLY dances, her calculated gyrations bouncing off flashing fluorescent lights.

Molly is 22. A very petite girl, she has short, black hair.

She notices a spectator watching her every movement intently, sitting alone in a drunken malaise.

Molly crawls toward him, his features becoming sharper, defined, light brown hair, a thin beard. He's wearing a faded, black leather jacket. Shadowy bags hang underneath his green eyes, belying an age of 35.

This is JAKE MOORE.

She extends her tiny hand toward his, taking hold, kissing it, winking. Jake smiles, producing a 20 dollar bill. Molly tenderly takes hold of the cash. She spins the ring on his index finger, whispering something inaudible, before slinking away.

EXT. STRIP CLUB -- NIGHT

Jake smokes a cigarette in solitude, leaning against a dumpster. Spilled alcohol lines his jacket. Molly emerges from a side door to his left, wearing a small fur coat. A light snow falls.

MOLLY

A little sloppy, I see.

JAKE

Who, this guy?

Jake points toward himself, peers over his shoulder.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Guess I'm guilty.

MOLLY  
Spare a cigarette?

Jake fumbles removing the box from his pocket, dropping it to the pavement, cursing under his breath, before finally handing one over.

MOLLY (CONT'D)  
Very smooth. I'd ask for a light,  
but I'm not carrying a fucking fire  
extinguisher.

Jake lets out a loud, uncomfortable laugh.

JAKE  
Well, I thought it was a good line.

Molly lights her cigarette, lets out a puff of smoke, exhaling.

MOLLY  
So... come here often?

JAKE  
A comedian, I see.

MOLLY  
Is it beneath you?

JAKE  
We have a moment, back inside?

MOLLY  
I share a million moments a day.

JAKE  
For a price.

MOLLY  
Well, maybe not a million.

JAKE  
Hopefully.

MOLLY  
But we did share something.

JAKE  
A cosmic connection.

MOLLY

No.

Molly stamps out her smoke.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

A cigarette.

JAKE

I wasn't smoking. But you do owe me one.

Jake beams.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Pretty and witty. A rare combo. When's your shift finished?

MOLLY

Really?

JAKE

Why not?

MOLLY

Your sincerity... misguided, yes... but it blows me away. It really does.

Molly heads back inside, her platform heels clanking on the icy concrete.

JAKE

I'll be waiting.

MOLLY

He's serious. He's really serious. Amazing. By the way... it's Molly. In case you were wondering.

Molly returns inside.

Jake looks around.

JAKE

What the fuck am I doing out here?

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM -- MORNING

Jake tosses and turns amid his sleep, waking with a yelp.

He grabs his head, groaning.

JAKE

Molly...

He sweeps his hand through the sheets.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fuck.

He releases a strained chuckle, standing, circling his room, finding a lone cigarette taped to his night stand, fixed on an index card. The cigarette is accompanied by crudely drawn, arrow pierced hearts.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Sincerity... nice.

His alarm begins blaring.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Jake sits uncomfortably in a stiff leather chair, across from JOE WALSH, a Captain in the New York Police Department, his superior.

Walsh, a portly man of 55, seems agitated, unable to fix his eyes on Jake for more than a moment without averting sight.

He glowers over a wide oak desk, bare of any personal memorabilia, covered with paper work, the plate bearing his name almost completely camouflaged.

WALSH

How were they last night?

JAKE

Who?

WALSH

The cabaret.

JAKE

Wouldn't know. I stayed home.  
Caught a movie.

WALSH

Caught a movie... right. I can  
smell the whore's perfume. Why  
bother lying?

JAKE

Fucking ball breaker.

Walsh laughs bitterly. He points to himself, cranes head over shoulder.

WALSH  
Who, this guy?

JAKE  
Fucking thief...

WALSH  
What's that?

JAKE  
Pay no mind.

Walsh rises from his seat, adjusting his slacks. He ambles toward a small window in the far corner of his office, peeking outward.

WALSH  
Haven't made a case lately, Jake.

JAKE  
Bit of a blunt assessment.

WALSH  
How so?

JAKE  
Not factoring in extenuating  
circumstances.

WALSH  
Your condition?

JAKE  
I'm not an alcoholic, Joe.

WALSH  
Evidence is in disagreement.

JAKE  
Circumstantial. I can handle it...  
Irish tolerance. Got a pink slip in  
that drawer?

WALSH  
No. Course not. I haven't forgotten  
your skill.

Walsh returns to his seat. He removes a bottle of Jack from his desk, along with a shot glass. He fills it up.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
I can't forget anything.

Walsh gulps the shot, head rocking backwards.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
We have the same problem.

JAKE  
I was some kind of prodigy round here. Couple years back. A few, maybe.

WALSH  
We see ghosts, Jake. The best of us. Can't sleep at night.

JAKE  
What's this about?

WALSH  
It's the stoicism... you know, Lou Gehrig. A dying man calling himself lucky. We have to convince ourselves this life isn't a lost cause.

JAKE  
When am I going to start working real cases again?

WALSH  
Most men, wearing your shoes, they'd give up this work. I'd never expect such resiliency, not from my brother, best friend... but you're different. A public servant. Aren't allowed to hurt. Your pain doesn't show in the stats. And we ride on that bottom line.

JAKE  
I'm not the only one in a slump. For what it's worth.

WALSH  
You're leaving a mess at every turn.

JAKE  
Is the implication that I'm a wash out?

WALSH  
You should consider the  
possibility.

Jake leans forward.

JAKE  
You know what I've given this  
department.

WALSH  
Your work's declined.  
Precipitously.

JAKE  
What do you want me to do?

Walsh sighs. He takes another shot.

WALSH  
Everyone carries a cross.

JAKE  
She was everything, Joe.

WALSH  
And you cared.

JAKE  
I did. I do.

WALSH  
Job's been contaminated. Grief  
turned you cowboy. We nearly had a  
fucking scandal over...

Walsh stops himself.

JAKE  
No. Say it. Go ahead.

WALSH  
We aren't vigilantes.

Walsh grimaces.

JAKE  
Should let it out. Less stress on  
the heart... sitting there, judging  
me while pounding straight shots of  
jack? You're so full of shit...

Jake's face reddens.

Quiet. The grievances have been aired.

WALSH

Winter of 2004. A street beggar named Gus Wheeler finds one Garrett Morris dead on the L.I.R.R. Train tracks. Near the Broadway station. He'd been shot four times, close range. Clean bullets. No trace. He was a junkie. People stopped caring quick. The case was never solved. It's cold. A corpse.

JAKE

So this is what I'm reduced to?

WALSH

His mother still calls, once a week, four or five times a month. She's a someone in the community, Jake. Real estate. People know her. We need to make an effort. You need to make an effort.

Jake bows head into hands, doesn't respond.

WALSH (CONT'D)

I won't beg.

Jake looks up. His eyes are red.

JAKE

No choice, is there?

WALSH

I'm not asking you to solve this. But show me something.

JAKE

What if there's nothing?

WALSH

Prove it. Take this one gently into the night. From there, you can return to good graces.

JAKE

Am I working at my leisure?

WALSH

Two weeks.

JAKE

Two weeks for a career?

Walsh puts away the bottle, the shot glass.

WALSH

They took enough, that day. Don't let them have your life, too.

INT. DEUCES BAR AND LOUNGE -- NIGHT

Jake shares a drink with his best friend, and fellow detective, TIM DALY.

Tim is 35, athletically built, sporting a thick black beard.

Deuces is a small, well lit establishment. Jake and Tim are practically alone, save for the bartender.

JAKE

That fat son of a bitch... used to say I was like a son.

TIM

He took you under his wing. It probably pains him pulling ultimatums.

JAKE

Think that's the only way I can operate?

TIM

You could use some motivation.

JAKE

And you could use some fucking tact, but do I complain?

Awkward silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'm just begging you Tim... I'm fucking begging you... No big brother speeches tonight. I'm not in the fucking mood.

TIM

I'll save my breath.

JAKE

People don't understand.

TIM

That much I'm sure of. Take your pick.

(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)

Empathy, sympathy, camaraderie...  
people don't understand lots of  
things.

JAKE

Violence. That's universal.

TIM

Raise your glass. Only reason we  
have jobs.

JAKE

Goes for one of us.

TIM

Such a pessimist... predicting  
demise for-fucking-ever.

JAKE

Since Masterson.

Tim's manner suddenly becomes strained.

TIM

Right. Masterson.

JAKE

I took the fall. By myself. Didn't  
ask to be protected, even though I  
was owed a few favors. I stood up.

TIM

Did right by the blue.

JAKE

And for what? Been a dead man  
walking since the suspension.  
They're just waiting for another  
fuck up. Now they have me chase  
some junkie's ghost... out of  
sight, out of mind... Tim... it's  
insulting. Degrading.

TIM

But you're taking it?

Jake slams his drink down.

JAKE

Absolutely.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM, POLICE DEPARTMENT -- DAY

Jake is chatting with detective MARCUS REID, the two standing in front of a acrylic glass partition.

MARCUS is black, in his mid-thirties, sporting a bald head and a sharp suit.

A short, Hispanic cop named WILLIE, Reid's partner, interviews a person of interest from inside the sealed room, gesticulating wildly, emitting a soundless barrage of verbal abuse.

JAKE

Sure you got the time? Willie's taking it pretty personal.

MARCUS

Willie smells a confession. I'm sure your familiar with his technique.

JAKE

I've taken notes.

Willie turns over the table in the interrogation room.

JAKE (CONT'D)

That's new.

MARCUS

For this junkie, I have a quick minute.

JAKE

I read the case file. Pretty standard stuff. Lucky break that vagabond had a heart attack the day after discovery, huh?

MARCUS

Chances are he didn't hold any valuable insights. They never seem to.

JAKE

How confident are you in your ultimate assertion?

MARCUS

I'd say 85 percent. Can never be sure when there's no witnesses. Fact is, with all due respect Jake--

JAKE

You could save it, though it's appreciated--

MARCUS

Or with all undue respect, whatever you prefer, if this kid were black, if his mother didn't have friends in high places, if this murder took place in Queensbridge instead of Whitestone, if any of those stars weren't aligned, the powers that be would have had to send your sorry ass on some other wild goose chase.

JAKE

Comforting.

MARCUS

It was a drug deal gone bad. For what reason, who the fuck knows, who the fuck cares? May the dead rest, and may I be spared any additional paperwork.

JAKE

That from Numbers?

Willie fixes the table, gives the perp a pen and a piece of paper to sign.

MARCUS

Could have sworn it was Leviticus.

JAKE

What's our friend here in for?

MARCUS

Punk killed his pregnant girlfriend. We found her in a shallow ditch, partially buried... along with the murder weapon.

JAKE

And we share the air... Always thought Darwin was full of shit.

MARCUS

Time and chance, isn't it?

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE -- DAY

Jake pulls into the driveway of a two story ranch smack in the middle of Suburbia, flanked by buildings nearly identical in design.

He drives a beat-up 1992 Red Corvette. The vehicle's shine has long since expired, though it retains a degree of refinement.

Exiting the car, Jake carefully analyzes his park job. Apparently satisfied with the inspection, he heads for the front door.

A plane flies overhead. Jake stops cold, grabbing his chest, looking skyward.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

ANGELICA MORRIS, a weathered woman of 39 years, painstakingly plays the opening notes to Beethoven's "Moonlight Sonata" on a large, dusty piano, retracing her steps multiple times until the melody strikes just right...

She's tall, hunched over the piano, dirty blonde hair dipping beneath slender shoulders.

There is a knock at her door. Angelica walks across the living room to answer. The house is empty, neat.

Angelica opens the door, finding Jake Moore waiting on the other side.

JAKE  
Sorry I'm late.

ANGELICA  
It's fine.

Angelica steps aside.

Jake lingers in the doorway.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)  
Come in.

JAKE  
The Van Wyck was brutal.

ANGELICA  
Par for the course.

Jake enters, closes the door behind him.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, DINING ROOM -- DAY

Jake is seated at a circular dinner table across from Angelica.

He has a miniature note pad in his right hand, absently spinning a pen with his left.

ANGELICA  
Noticed the ride. Good taste.

JAKE  
The last remnant of my youth.  
Should of sold it years ago. It  
stalls all the time...

ANGELICA  
Sentimental value?

JAKE  
You play often?

ANGELICA  
Excuse me?

JAKE  
The piano. Noticed it in the living  
room.

ANGELICA  
Not regularly, no. Lately, it's  
just been collecting dust.

JAKE  
Too bad. Beautiful instrument. And  
you've got talent. Heard from  
outside.

ANGELICA  
Yeah, well... beauty's often wasted  
in this world, detective.

JAKE  
Call me Jake.

ANGELICA  
Have they officially reopened the  
case?

JAKE  
We never close unsolved homicides.  
I admire your persistence. Haven't  
let us forget. The department, I  
mean.

ANGELICA  
How could I?

JAKE  
Caring can wear a person down.

ANGELICA  
I need to know.

JAKE  
You want a reason.

ANGELICA  
Yes.

JAKE  
Well, that's my job.

Jake opens the note pad. He scribbles something down.

ANGELICA  
Did you step on someone's toes?

JAKE  
What?

ANGELICA  
Is this a punishment?

JAKE  
How do you mean?

ANGELICA  
Two years go by, and nothing. Than  
one day, you're at my doorstep.  
Why?

Jake shifts in his seat.

JAKE  
Something about the case caught my  
interest, lodged in my mind. I'd  
slip it into conversations, time to  
time. When they finally decided to  
revisit, thanks in large part to  
your due diligence, I was picked.  
And I'm anxious to work it. That  
simple.

ANGELICA  
What caught your eye?

JAKE

You needn't worry about my motivation, Miss Morris, though I certainly appreciate your concern. Let's direct this conversation toward your son.

ANGELICA

I don't mean to be rude.

JAKE

Understood.

ANGELICA

Have you ever lost someone you loved?

JAKE

Pardon?

ANGELICA

You have a child... you love him... He's special, the most special person in the universe. Like a secret the rest of the world could never understand. One morning you wake up, and he's gone. No different than a deer caught in the cross hairs... shot.. ripped apart... and all I have left is an unanswered question.

Angelica begins to cry. Jake almost gets up from his chair, but she advises him to remain seated, gesturing with her hands, halting her tears.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. This is inexcusable. This is pretty fucking inexcusable.

JAKE

You loved your son. Apologizing for that would be inexcusable. This won't take long, you have my assurances.

Angelica wipes her eyes dry, takes a deep breath.

ANGELICA

The burn never gets better.

Jake nods.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

You know what I mean?

They gaze into each other's eyes for a moment.

JAKE

Has your opinion regarding  
Garrett's behavior in the days  
leading to his death remained the  
same?

Angelica is thrown by the question.

ANGELICA

You can tell me... if you  
understand. I see it in your eyes.

JAKE

It isn't my job. My personal  
experiences aren't relevant to the  
task at hand.

ANGELICA

What are you saying?

JAKE

You have your burdens. I have mine.  
It wouldn't be productive for them  
to intertwine.

ANGELICA

You have a wife? Lovely ring.

Jake conceals his wedding ring.

JAKE

Again, this isn't productive. In  
the slightest.

ANGELICA

Me and Rick were divorced before  
Garrett's first birthday. Haven't  
seen him since.

JAKE

For the funeral?

ANGELICA

Nope. All my love was buried with  
Garrett.

JAKE

Again, Garrett's mood, his temperament, was he worried, scared, anything you told Detective Reid that needs amending, anything worth adding?

ANGELICA

You don't want to talk about your wife.

JAKE

No.

ANGELICA

Not with me.

JAKE

My questions are important.

ANGELICA

The answers haven't changed. Time doesn't soothe. It numbs like novocaine. Did I learn anything new? Not a chance.

JAKE

I'm truly sorry for what happened to your son, Miss Morris. It wasn't necessary. Nature doesn't feed on our pain. A man did this. A man who will be caught. You deserve closure.

ANGELICA

And I extend my apologies... Jake. If I made you... uncomfortable. Christ, the last time I really looked someone in the eye... made a connection through the flesh... I try forcing the contact. So I can remember, maybe. And it isn't fair expecting everyone to reciprocate. It isn't my right.

JAKE

You know, when I interview friends, family of victims... and they pour their hearts out, recounting details of days and nights they probably wish wiped from their memories... I feel I owe them something transcending the truth.

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

A piece of me for a part of them, I suppose. So it's very rarely a complete transaction. The bad guy never has any answers. I've learned that... You understand what I'm saying?

ANGELICA

I understand.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Angelica escorts Jake to the front door, opening it. He steps out, but not before turning, pulling a card out of his pocket.

JAKE

My card.

ANGELICA

I'm familiar with the procedure.

JAKE

Right. I'm available, most hours. In case something rises from the doldrums.

ANGELICA

Be in touch?

JAKE

You'll be updated on my progress.

Jake has one foot out the door. But he can't quite leave. He clears his throat, hesitating, something on his mind.

ANGELICA

Yes?

JAKE

My wife died. I wear the ring to honor her. Who she was to me. There. Preemptively paid my debt.

Again, they stare at each other.

ANGELICA

I'll call. We can... talk.

JAKE

Right.

Jake departs.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Jake sits alone on a lawn chair, city skyline clear in the distance. His legs are perched on a concrete ledge at the roof's edge.

He drinks from a bottle of Red Wine, a very light smattering of snow falling gently from the sky. He stares deeply into the night.

EXT. ROOFTOP -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Same place, different time. Summer.

Jake is shirtless, toned and tanned, doing pushups, nowhere near the roof's edge.

A stereo next to him is blaring a Bob Dylan track.

A Hispanic female, 27 years old and vivacious, joins Jake on the roof, climbing from the fire escape.

She creeps up from behind, on her toes, wearing two piece business attire. She has pretty thick lips and slender hips, jet black hair and deep dark eyes.

Once close enough, she unleashes a vicious slap to Jake's bare back.

He cries out in agony, getting up and chasing around the perpetrator, his wife SANDRA MOORE.

He picks her up, carries Sandra on his shoulder.

JAKE

Want to get dropped? I'll cry  
suicide. I swear officer, she just  
jumped!

Sandra screams in playful protest, slamming her fists into Jake's back.

SANDRA

Let me down!

JAKE

Say you're sorry!

SANDRA

No!

Jake starts on a dead run toward the roof's ledge.

SANDRA (CONT'D)  
OK! OK! I'm sorry!

Jake slams on the brakes, setting Sandra down.

JAKE  
Where do you get off pulling that  
shit? Shouldn't you be at work?

SANDRA  
I left. Said I was sick. Wanted to  
hang with you.

JAKE  
You said you were sick? What are  
you, in the fifth grade?

SANDRA  
Jake... I hate this job.

JAKE  
Everybody hates their job. Show a  
little responsibility.

SANDRA  
You didn't marry a zombie.

JAKE  
Yeah, I married a real drain on the  
economy.

SANDRA  
Don't be mad at me.

Jake caresses her face.

JAKE  
I could never be mad at you. You  
found the right sucker.

SANDRA  
That was the plan. Rich white boy  
saves me from the ghetto...

JAKE  
Yeah, I'm really rich...

SANDRA  
Pledges to be my sugar daddy.

JAKE  
Sugar daddy? So that's the official  
Sandy plan, is it?

SANDRA  
Always was.

JAKE  
Sandy baby... please... just give  
this job a chance. I pulled some  
serious strings setting it up.

SANDRA  
You don't understand... I'm not  
from their world. I feel like  
everyone's looking at me.

JAKE  
A few more months?

SANDRA  
October?

JAKE  
October.

Sandra extends her hand. Jake takes hold of it, wheels her into his arms. They dance around the roof, to the rhythm of the music.

SANDRA  
Oh my God! You are so corny!

JAKE  
Your home girls are jealous!

Sandra laughs hysterically.

SANDRA  
They are! They are!

JAKE  
You like Bob Dylan? Oh wait, he's  
never been shot. Not up to your  
high standards, right?

SANDRA  
Shut up! So mean!

JAKE  
I'm not.

SANDRA  
Yeah you are.

They kiss.

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP -- NIGHT

Jake catches a snowflake, rubs it between his fingers.

JAKE  
Fucking winter.

He drops the wine, passing out.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT -- DAY

Two teenagers play a spirited game on a puddle pocked court.

MICKEY REYNOLDS, 19, is short and rail thin. His black hair hangs in bangs which nearly obscure his green eyes. He wears blue jeans and a grey hooded sweat shirt.

He competes with WALT DAVIS, 18. Walt is tall and stocky, a buzz cut rendering him close to bald. Stylistically, he and Mickey are near a perfect match, jeans and a hoodie.

Mickey is diminutive but quick, attempting to dribble around the hulking Walt, leaving the latter exhausted.

MICKEY  
(dribbling)  
Yeah, yeah, talking all that shit,  
but I hear you huffing and puffing,  
same shit different day you big  
clumsy fuck, you're easier to read  
than a pop up book, never, ever  
changing that strategy, might work  
on the little duns but not me,  
baby, I'm not driving to the lane,  
because I don't have too--

WALT  
Shut the fuck up you fucking troll,  
where you going, huh, where you  
going?

MICKEY  
--I'm too smart for that shit.

Mickey suddenly pulls back and releases a high arching shot, which smacks off the backboard and through the hoop.

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
Game! Guess who's lighting up  
tonight.

Mickey's victory is punctuated with applause from across the court.

The two turn to find Jake, clapping.

JAKE

Nice moves. Well worth the price of admission.

MICKEY

Fuck's this guy?

WALT

I don't know, but he better be ready to run his pockets, creeping up and shit.

JAKE

Run my pockets? My, this neighborhood has really kissed the abyss. How far can we fall?

Jake steps nose to nose with Walt, handing him his badge.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There's the contents of my pockets. Satisfied?

Walt inspects the badge.

WALT

Legit.

Walt returns it to Jake.

JAKE

Who said diplomacy is dead? Thought I might have to take it back. Would have been most unpleasant.

WALT

For one of us.

Jake laughs.

JAKE

I like this guy. I really like this guy. Bright future. America.

MICKEY

Fuck you want, cop?

JAKE

I want to talk. Share some meaningful dialogue. With you.

MICKEY

This about Garrett? Thought it was over.

JAKE

It'll be over when an arrest is made.

WALT

Amen.

MICKEY

Well, go ahead. I'm all ears.

JAKE

I'd prefer some privacy. Unless you're interested in a trip to the station.

Mickey nods toward Walt.

MICKEY

Work on your fucking jump shot.

WALT

Yeah, yeah...

Walt picks up the ball and tosses up a few bricks, as Mickey and Jake walk outside the court, toward the playground across the street.

EXT. PLAYGROUND -- DAY

The playground is a small enclosure, resting on a lawn next to a Church.

Mickey sits on a swing, smoking a cigarette. Jake stands in front of him, note pad in hand.

JAKE

(sarcastic)

Want a push?

MICKEY

Think I can manage.

JAKE

You and Garrett were close.

MICKEY

Enough to be brothers.

JAKE

Were you surprised when he died?

MICKEY

Shocked. Thought he was doing better. Things were looking up.

JAKE

Had a drug problem, am I right?

MICKEY

Shouldn't you know that already?

JAKE

What if I didn't? Would you tell me Mick?

MICKEY

Why hide it? The devil got him. Bad.

JAKE

I did know. For the record.

MICKEY

What happened to the black guy?

JAKE

Vacation.

MICKEY

Cleaning his dirty laundry?

JAKE

You could say that. But he didn't catch hell whiffing on this one.

MICKEY

Why not?

JAKE

Because there weren't any answers to the right questions.

Mickey stamps out the cigarette.

MICKEY

Shit. Just realized something.

JAKE

What?

MICKEY

That was my last one.

Jake emits an annoyed grunt, lending Mickey a spare cigarette.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

What do you know? A cop when you need one...

JAKE

Last person I lent a cigarette fucked my brains out.

Mickey laughs.

MICKEY

Really? What was his name?

JAKE

We relaxed now? Cracking jokes? Ready to talk?

MICKEY

What's the point? Spook asked me all this already. Even wrote it down. Study his notes, cheat a little. Stop wasting my time.

Jake raises his left hand. Mickey flinches.

JAKE

Watch your fucking mouth. Marcus tried. So am I. I'm retracing his steps. Seeing if any new information arises. Little racist prick.

MICKEY

Oh, oh, who said I was racist all the sudden? Spook's a practical term of endearment. Where you from, cop?

JAKE

Just answer the fucking question.

MICKEY

Fine. I'll fucking repeat myself. Garrett? Enemies? No. Fuck no. If he had any enemies, I would have gone to the steel, for real.

JAKE

Well, you tell me. Why did your friend get shot, close range?

MICKEY  
Wish I knew.

JAKE  
Where did he get his drugs?

MICKEY  
He never told me.

JAKE  
Where do you get your drugs?

Mickey smiles.

MICKEY  
Nice try. We done?

JAKE  
You were shocked.

MICKEY  
When he died? Yeah.

JAKE  
Thought he was clean. For how long?

MICKEY  
A month, maybe.

JAKE  
And than he's dead. Just like that.

MICKEY  
Just like that.

Jake scribbles in his note pad.

JAKE  
See Mick, it doesn't add up. Take drugs out of the equation, and there's no motive for whoever did this. No motive, no crime. It's a fucking paradox. And I can't solve those.

MICKEY  
That a fact?

Mickey shrugs his shoulders.

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
I've resigned myself to never finding out.

JAKE

He was your best friend.

MICKEY

It hurts too much. Hurts so bad you forget how hope even felt... this state of mind keeps me sane. You wouldn't understand.

Mickey leaps off the swing, starts back toward the court.

JAKE

I wasn't finished...

INT. SUPER-MARKET -- DAY

The aisles are jam packed with shoppers.

DAVID PEREZ, an elderly man of 72, struggles forward, approaching a long row of checkout lines dotting the front of the store.

David is the market's sole owner and proprietor, receiving friendly glances as he winds his way forward.

He scans the scene, his eyes fixing on register 5, and the young lady working it, SAMANTHA FIELDS.

Samantha is 19. She's short, her vibrant red hair juxtaposing a faded, pale complexion. She wears an orange cashier vest and ripped blue jeans.

DAVID

Sam! Sam!

Samantha is busy with a customer, frantically filling a brown bag with assorted household amenities.

David stealthily steps behind the register, tapping her on the shoulder. She spins around, ready to snap, softening at the sight of her boss.

SAMANTHA

Mr. Perez... sorry. I thought you were the retarded new guy asking for another roll of quarters.

DAVID

You need to take five, Sammy.

SAMANTHA

Why?

DAVID

A police officer is waiting in the break room. Wants a word. Said it'd be over quick. No need for an announcement. Just take care of it.

Samantha sighs. An annoyed customer drops an oversized box of cereal in front of the price scanner.

CUSTOMER

What kind of fucking service is this?

David wears a weary expression.

DAVID

Hurry.

INT. SUPER MARKET, BREAK ROOM -- DAY

Jake and Samantha sit across from each other, a small square table serving as a buffer.

They are alone.

Drops of water fall steadily from a busted pipe in the ceiling.

Jake, note pad in hand, clears his throat. Samantha taps her fingers on the table, eyes drifting.

JAKE

Some real first class facilities you're treated to here.

SAMANTHA

Mr. Perez likes to brag that the break room hasn't changed since he was a cashier. Takes pride in this distinct lack of progress.

JAKE

Odd.

SAMANTHA

People are totally irrational.

JAKE

I'm slowly arriving at that conclusion.

SAMANTHA

What took so long?

Jake points his pen toward Samantha, in deference.  
She winks at him.

JAKE  
Probably know why I'm here.

SAMANTHA  
Sure. But why see me at work?

JAKE  
The element of surprise.

SAMANTHA  
Leaving me little time to conjure a  
lie?

JAKE  
It was my thought process.

SAMANTHA  
Pretty cynical. Garrett's murder  
was never solved. That why they  
bought in a replacement?

JAKE  
Fresh eyes.

SAMANTHA  
Fresh questions?

Jake laughs, scribbling something.

JAKE  
Questions? You have me pegged as  
predictable.

Jake gets up from his chair, begins pacing. '

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Who said I had any questions? Tell  
me about Garrett.

SAMANTHA  
Tell you what?

JAKE  
Tell me about him. If he strolled  
in this room right now, took a  
seat, what kind of person would you  
describe?

Samantha stares straight ahead.

SAMANTHA

Don't say that, alright.

Jake nods.

JAKE

You're right. I'm sorry.

He sits, again.

JAKE (CONT'D)

See, I could come down here, waste your time and mine with bull shit, rehashing what the two of us already know practically verbatim. Or... I could try to know this guy. Get illuminated, start drawing conclusions. Because I've got a question mark, right now. Me and my brethren... at times, I'll be honest, we get insulted. We believe in a system. And when we encounter a case that defies common knowledge, that doesn't become a shred clearer after pouring our mind full tilt toward absolution... We tell it to fuck off. That's right. We file it away. This is what we've done to your boyfriend, Miss Fields. Help me see him. Help me see.

Samantha thinks.

SAMANTHA

Garrett was an artist. Did you know that?

JAKE

Yes.

SAMANTHA

Did you know what kind of pictures he painted?

JAKE

No.

SAMANTHA

People like Garrett see the world differently every day. They notice details. Life's alive to them. That's what I'll remember.

(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

He had a spark. Could win your heart with a glance. He never gave up on me.

JAKE

The drugs... why would such a charismatic guy bother?

SAMANTHA

A part of him hated the acclaim. All so respectable... Garrett knew the world wasn't perfect. Maybe he wasn't having fun unless he was fucking everything up...

Samantha rubs out the tears forming in her eyes.

JAKE

Think he was self-destructive?

SAMANTHA

He was always above it. Right when the addiction seemed ready to take over, he could just stop.

JAKE

Cold turkey?

SAMANTHA

Always in control. Strong mind.

JAKE

In the case file... you never refuted the possibility that Garrett was killed in a botched drug deal, a set-up, something in that vein. You ever question that?

SAMANTHA

There any other explanation?

Jake rifles through his notes.

JAKE

But he was clean up to a month before the murder. One night, he just changes his mind?

SAMANTHA

He always did.

JAKE

Wasn't there an easier way for him to score? How did he usually obtain his drugs?

SAMANTHA

I can't answer that. Pleading the fifth.

Jake shoots an incredulous look toward Samantha.

JAKE

Don't you want to know who killed your boyfriend?

SAMANTHA

Our connect isn't involved.

JAKE

Who is it?

SAMANTHA

The answer's irrelevant.

JAKE

Who's doing the killing when a deal goes bad? The customer?

SAMANTHA

Whoever killed Garrett... it was someone we didn't know.

JAKE

Someone you didn't know... well, that really narrows the suspects down, doesn't it? What's the population these days? Should I put that on a wanted poster? Someone you didn't know?

SAMANTHA

The best I can do.

JAKE

You're willing to impede this case just to protect the name of a drug dealer? And you wonder why it hasn't been solved? You kidding me, sweetie?

SAMANTHA

You should be thanking me. I'm saving you some time.

JAKE  
Everything is connected.

SAMANTHA  
Not this. I swear.

Jake throws his note pad down, totally frustrated.

He slides his card toward Samantha.

She takes a glance, shoving it in her pocket.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)  
This has nothing to do with our  
dealer. I barely even talk to the  
guy anymore.

JAKE  
You're killing me.

SAMANTHA  
Any other question... I'd have an  
answer.

JAKE  
So give me a hypothesis. Who did  
this, and why?

SAMANTHA  
Your guess is as good as mine.

JAKE  
(annoyed)  
We're through.

SAMANTHA  
Thanks for the card.

JAKE  
Whatever.

Samantha thinks about saying something else, but notes Jake's  
anger, and instead leaves the room.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Real fucking productive... Colonel  
Mustard in the Conservatory  
perhaps...

Jake slings his pen.

EXT. DRIVING RANGE -- NIGHT

Jake and Tim have the two tiered range to themselves, sitting in a booth on ground level, drinking beers.

Tim puts his beer down, picking a shiny white golf ball out of a pile, placing it on the tee in front of them.

He clubs a shot about two hundred feet, before unleashing a belch.

TIM

I tell ya' something Jake... should of went pro.

JAKE

Did I ever doubt you?

TIM

When my brother in law bought this place, I guaranteed it'd be a failure. Never took him for an entrepreneur.

Tim sets another ball on the tee.

JAKE

Took him for a dumb shit.

TIM

Right.

Tim shanks the drive. Jake laughs.

TIM (CONT'D)

But the silly son of a bitch did it. Living the dream.

JAKE

Not the jealous type, Tim. Besides, he was gracious enough to give you a key.

Tim sets another ball.

TIM

And he thinks I've got it made. Life's a funny thing, Jake.

JAKE

Tragic.

Tim drives this one, even further than the first. He picks up his bottle of beer, taking a satisfied sip.

TIM  
Speaking of comedies, how's the  
cold case investigation proceeding?

JAKE  
As anticipated.

TIM  
Dry leads?

JAKE  
Saharan levels.

TIM  
A shame, really. What was the  
limit?

JAKE  
Two weeks.

TIM  
Than what?

Jake ignores the question, furrowing his brow.

JAKE  
We have a meeting tomorrow. A set  
time and everything.

TIM  
They've really tightened the leash.

JAKE  
Wait for the electronic bracelet.

Tim readies another shot.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
How 'bout your cases?

TIM  
Come now, Jake. Hate talking about  
that shit.

JAKE  
I need some inspiration.

TIM  
Inspiration? How about a pharmacist  
iced in an alleyway waiting for a  
shipment of black market drugs that  
didn't exist? Inspiring?

Tim takes another shot.

TIM (CONT'D)

Fuck!

JAKE

Looked alright.

TIM

You didn't see the slice?

JAKE

The slice was nice.

TIM

Of course.

JAKE

We got a SNU unit watching  
Whitestone?

TIM

Street narcotics? Possibly. Might  
not house a unit, but they could  
provide information. Why?

JAKE

I'm calling a Hail Mary.

TIM

There a method to your madness?

Jake takes a long chug, finishing his beer, tossing it aside.

JAKE

Whitestone's a small neighborhood,  
agree?

TIM

Relatively, yeah.

JAKE

The working theory is that Garrett  
Morris was popped by a drug dealer,  
am I right?

TIM

Fuck, it's your case Jake, whatever  
you say.

JAKE

Well, follow my fucking logic. Do  
me a favor just once.

TIM

Hey, I'm engaged.

Tim picks up another golf ball.

JAKE

There shouldn't be many pushers in the neighborhood. Not like they have corner boys. There's probably one group controlling the trade in the area. Maybe I find a name, get lucky.

TIM

Sounds thin, Jake.

JAKE

At this point, there's no time left for sound reasoning.

TIM

A damning statement. On so many levels.

JAKE

Yeah... yeah... let me take a shot. Back off, let me take a shot.

TIM

By all means.

Jake staggers to his feet. He kicks Tim's ball off the tee, setting his beer bottle down instead.

TIM (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

Jake swings on the bottle, shattering it, sending Tim sprawling.

TIM (CONT'D)

Fuck is wrong with you?

Jake has a fresh cut on his face, laughing hysterically.

JAKE

Look at tough guy Tim, acting like I just threw a hand grenade!

Tim gets up, throwing half-hearted punches at Jake, who fends him off.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Come on, see what you got southpaw!

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake watches television, a hockey game between the Rangers and the Devils.

He has a drink in hand, a Foster's. Jake stares at the television, contemplating.

EXT. BLEACHERS, HOCKEY RINK -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

A pair of Junior Roller Hockey teams play an intense game on an outdoor wooden rink, Jake and Sandra watching from otherwise empty bleacher seats, elevated slightly above the action.

Sandra is sitting on Jake's lap. He has a beer, concealed by a brown paper bag, in hand.

SANDRA

Oh Jake! Did you just see that?

JAKE

What?

SANDRA

They're mauling my man! The little guy!

Indeed, a pair of goons has trapped the tiniest player on the rink in a corner, not allowing him to escape the boards.

Sandra stands, disgusted.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Hey ref! How bout doing your fucking job?

Jake guides her back into his lap.

JAKE

Calm down, calm down, it's part of the game.

SANDRA

It's fucked up.

JAKE

Hey, I didn't make the rules. But goons need to make a living too.

Jake takes a sip from his beer.

SANDRA  
I'm really impressed you brown  
bagged it. Going that extra  
alcoholic mile.

JAKE  
Look the part, right?

SANDRA  
I'm worried.

JAKE  
Unnecessary.

SANDRA  
Is it work?

JAKE  
Maybe.

SANDRA  
Talk about it?

Jake shakes his head, takes another sip.

Sandra grabs the beer out of his hand, tosses it down the  
bleachers.

JAKE  
Did you actually just do that?

SANDRA  
It was an intervention.

JAKE  
It was my fucking beer.

SANDRA  
I can't see you like this. It isn't  
you Jake. Something's wrong.

JAKE  
Not your problem.

SANDRA  
Of course it is. That's the deal.

JAKE  
Look... Sandy... some people are  
weak. They succumb to the shit that  
makes up most of life. I'm strong.  
I would never let you down.

SANDRA  
Don't be afraid of your weakness.  
It's what makes you human.

Jake suddenly breaks out in applause.

JAKE  
Hey! Look! Your hero scored!

The little guy props his stick up in celebration, mobbed by teammates.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
A real moral right there.

SANDRA  
What?

JAKE  
I'll tell you later.

SANDRA  
Jake...

JAKE  
Look at me...

Jake takes hold of her shoulders.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Nothing is wrong.

SANDRA  
Why won't you let me in?

JAKE  
There's time.

Sandra gets up, walking away in disgust.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
What did I do?

Jake is left by his lonesome. He heads down the bleachers, in search of his beer.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Where are you Bud? Bud? Come on...  
know you're hiding somewhere...

The rink's scoreboard buzzes.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake's phone begins to ring. Annoyed, he lets it linger.

JAKE

This better be the fucking  
President.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Angelica, cordless phone pressed against ear, slumps into a plush recliner, awaiting a response.

ANGELICA

Why did I bother? They never pick  
up. They never fucking pick up...

Angelica's eyebrows suddenly curl.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Detective? Yes, it's Angelica  
Morris. They probably told you I  
always call... Was worried you  
were already ducking me.

She laughs.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

No... of course not. I was  
wondering if we could meet  
somewhere tomorrow... maybe discuss  
whether you've made any progress.  
No, I know... you could tell me on  
the phone. I prefer meeting in  
person. If you have the time, of  
course. Yeah, tomorrow night is  
fine. I know where it is. See you  
there. And Jake... thanks. I  
appreciate it.

Angelica places the phone down, on the receiver next to the recliner.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Christ, why can't I just leave them  
alone?

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

JAKE

Meet in person... why not? Miss  
Real Estate better pick up the  
check.

The Devils score a goal. Jake shuts off the television.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- DAY

Jake and Joe reassume their prior positions, Walsh's desk  
somehow more cluttered than before.

Walsh removes a plastic bottle of Sprite from his desk,  
taking a swig. He tips the bottle toward Jake.

JAKE

Want a gold star chief?

WALSH

For what?

JAKE

Please... give it a few months  
before shoving your sobriety in my  
face. Fuck, a week.

WALSH

Been two, actually.

Silence. Jake paws at his beard. Walsh clears his throat.

WALSH (CONT'D)

Pursuing new angles?

JAKE

Read my homework?

WALSH

Most of it. Thoughts?

JAKE

My opinion? Reid's good police.  
There's a reason this went nowhere  
the first time around.

WALSH

Which is...

JAKE

It's the suburban version of Hell's  
Kitchen.

WALSH

That bad?

JAKE

Couldn't be worse. Somebody probably knows something, but they won't come forward. And if I happen upon them in the street, they'll tell me to go fuck myself. Canvassing would be a most futile endeavor.

WALSH

So, what's your advice? Pull the plug? That your contribution to the case file?

JAKE

On the contrary. I have a theory.

Walsh perks up.

WALSH

Do tell.

JAKE

I want to have a peek at a few of Whitestone's most unsavory citizens. A plug from Street Narcotics would be excellent.

WALSH

Reid pursued the drug angle.

JAKE

But there was no scent.

WALSH

So, you suggest a shot in the dark?

JAKE

Something to the effect. Hey, I'm giving it a fucking run, here. Making an effort, right? Humor me before the two weeks is up.

WALSH

Skip the files. I can deliver you direct to a small time snitch run by Layden. Got popped for selling H and could hardly contain himself. From the area. Knows people.

JAKE

Name.

WALSH

Danny Brando. Goes by Squeals.

Jake writes the name in his note pad.

JAKE

Wait... wait... they call him  
Squeals... and he's an informant?  
Do these fucking idiots know he's  
feeding us? Or do they just possess  
an uncanny sense of irony?

WALSH

I'd lean toward the latter. His  
scheduled meet with Layden is noon  
tomorrow, at the Moonlight cafe  
over in Jamaica. You get there at  
one. Layden will tell him to wait.  
And the moron better.

JAKE

Sounds good. He a kid?

WALSH

Early twenties.

JAKE

Danny Squeals... must be my lucky  
fucking day.

WALSH

Plans for now, Jake?

JAKE

What plans?

WALSH

When you leave my office.

JAKE

Well, I was planning on taking a  
shit. Want me to file the toilet  
paper in evidence?

WALSH

Funny.

JAKE

Get off my back. I'm meeting with  
the kid's mother later tonight.

WALSH  
She's active.

JAKE  
Can't let go.

WALSH  
Honorable.

JAKE  
This meeting adjourned? You Citrus  
drinking mother-fucker?

WALSH  
Watch it. Ice is still very thin.

Jake gets up to leave.

JAKE  
Just waiting to wade in them good  
graces...

INT. THE CLINTON RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Jake and Angelica share a table in the quaint, nearly empty  
Queens eatery.

ANGELICA  
Used to meeting kin in the flesh?

JAKE  
Of course. I acquiesce to your  
needs. Plus, I had the hours to  
spare. No worries.

ANGELICA  
How's the food?

JAKE  
High quality. Best pizza in the  
city, for my dollar.

ANGELICA  
I haven't had an appetite in three  
years.

JAKE  
Understandable.

Jake downs his water.

ANGELICA  
Any breaks?

JAKE  
I would have called.

ANGELICA  
Really?

JAKE  
Man of my word.

ANGELICA  
Good to know.

JAKE  
That I am?

ANGELICA  
That you would have called.

JAKE  
You like Mickey?

ANGELICA  
Mickey was his best friend. Mickey  
would have walked through hell for  
him.

JAKE  
Mickey a good kid?

ANGELICA  
Far as I know. Though my knowledge  
is limited.

JAKE  
Ever hear rumors? About who he may  
have been associating with?

ANGELICA  
Mickey's smart. That much I can  
tell. Good head, strong shoulders.  
Wouldn't be the type I'd picture  
falling in with the wrong people.

JAKE  
Garrett did.

ANGELICA  
How do you know that?

JAKE  
Because someone shot him.

Angelica squeezes the table cloth.

ANGELICA

Of course.

JAKE

Miss Morris...

Jake searches for the right words.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There aren't any new leads at the moment.

ANGELICA

Feel free to cease and desist with calling me Miss. Are you admitting defeat already, Jake?

JAKE

Defeat? No. But my progress is stalled, unless somebody starts talking, and fast.

Jake waves off the waitress, approaching from behind Angelica.

ANGELICA

You have to do something.

JAKE

You have to understand.

ANGELICA

You have to do something!

Jake recoils, surprised.

Angelica attempts to collect herself, squeezing her eyes shut.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I'm diseased.

JAKE

Excuse me?

ANGELICA

I'm diseased. You know... people treat me like I'm sick. At parties, all eyes on me. At work, compliments I don't need and didn't ask for, reassurances that pass for pity.

(MORE)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

I can't have a second of  
contemplation without someone  
inquiring whether my whole world is  
falling apart. The damage is done.  
People don't help.

Jake hesitates before holding Angelica's right hand.

JAKE

People don't know how to help. It  
isn't their fault.

ANGELICA

I have no friends. I thought I did,  
before this nightmare. But they  
vanished quick. A call here, a  
visit there, but nobody stays the  
night.

JAKE

Have you sought grief counseling?

ANGELICA

Why? I feel alive when I cry. Dead  
when I smile. Fighting for my son  
drags me through the days.

JAKE

I don't know what to say right now.

ANGELICA

I took advantage of your good  
nature. Manipulated it to suit my  
needs. We could have taken care of  
this on the phone. You were the  
only excuse I had to leave my  
fucking house. How pathetic is  
that?

Jake twitches, uncomfortable.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Knew where you were headed.

JAKE

Where?

ANGELICA

On your little train of thought.  
Getting ready to suggest forgetting  
my only child, right? You talk  
about me with your cop friends? You  
wonder why I can't move on?

(MORE)

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

You get together and curse my junkie son for having the indecency to die?

JAKE

No.

ANGELICA

Maybe not. Because I saw it in your eyes.

JAKE

What did you see?

ANGELICA

What happened to your wife?

JAKE

Miss Morris... Angelica, I'm going to reiterate this for the last time...

ANGELICA

It isn't productive. Yeah, emotions aren't productive in society. I'm well aware. They damage the image. And we are forever in pursuit of preserving that.

JAKE

My work isn't a mirage.

ANGELICA

But are you?

Jake lets go of her hand. He sighs.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

Well?

JAKE

Join me for a drink?

INT. THE CLINTON RESTAURANT, BAR -- NIGHT

The bar is located at the front of the restaurant, near the entrance.

Jake and Angelica sit next to each other in stools, afforded privacy by the setting.

The bartender, EDDIE HORTON, a fat man in his forties, minds his own business near the taps, on the opposite end of the panel.

Jake drinks a Jack and Coke, Angelica a scotch on the rocks.

JAKE

This is a place from a better time  
in my life.

ANGELICA

When?

JAKE

My fourth date with Sandy.

Jake sips his drink.

JAKE (CONT'D)

We spent most of our time at the  
bar. Right here, these same seats  
maybe. Kids. Young and dumb. But we  
had each other's heart. It was over  
the second we locked eyes. Met her  
at this Nightclub in the Bronx,  
must be shut down by now...

ANGELICA

Your wife?

JAKE

Was. 'Till death.

ANGELICA

Never offered my condolences.

JAKE

Why insist on this?

ANGELICA

What?

JAKE

Commiseration. Just wish I could  
forget.

ANGELICA

Your heart would never allow it.

JAKE

I'm not used to someone listening.  
People tend to tune out a broken  
record.

ANGELICA  
 Jake... your wife...

JAKE  
 What happened?

ANGELICA  
 You don't have to--

JAKE  
 Aren't I obligated?

ANGELICA  
 Shouldn't feel that way.

JAKE  
 I've already crossed the line.  
 Making it a habit.

ANGELICA  
 We can talk about something else.

JAKE  
 We shouldn't be talking about  
 anything beside your son. I must be  
 losing my mind. Eddie, help me out  
 here!

Eddie turns from washing a glass.

EDDIE  
 You're losing it, Jake.

JAKE  
 Thanks.

They turn to their drinks. Jake puts his head down, resting it in his hands. Angelica runs her fingers through his hair. Jake picks his head up.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
 Stop.

They share another silence.

Jake finishes his drink.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
 My wife was taken from me.

ANGELICA  
 How?

JAKE

They called it a terrorist attack.  
I prefer mass homicide. And the  
suspect is still at large.

ANGELICA

Jesus...

JAKE

Beautiful day, not sure if you  
recall. There wasn't a cloud in the  
sky.

ANGELICA

What did she do?

JAKE

To deserve it?

ANGELICA

No... Her work, Jake.

JAKE

She was a secretary... Hated it,  
actually. With a passion. I  
encouraged her not to quit. Trying  
to be supportive. I didn't listen,  
you know... I just didn't listen  
enough.

Jake laughs, helpless.

JAKE (CONT'D)

There wasn't a body, afterward.  
They couldn't find...

Jake slumps forward.

JAKE (CONT'D)

They couldn't find her body...  
see... they just couldn't... Find  
her body. So, what can you bury?  
What can you bury, when there's  
nothing left? We, me, her family  
and mine, buried dust... ashes of  
New York.

Jake pounds the bar with his fist.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Have I been healed? Just say the  
word...

Angelica brushes her hand across Jake's face.

ANGELICA  
(whispering)  
I'll heal you... You heal me.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Jake and Angelica enter through the front door, kissing passionately. They bump into the piano, Jake yelling in pain. Angelica leads the way, toward the couch, lying herself down. Jake stands over her.

ANGELICA  
What are you waiting for?

JAKE  
I can't.

ANGELICA  
Nobody has to know.

JAKE  
I can't do this.

ANGELICA  
Please. Please, I need to feel something.

JAKE  
I'm going to get fired.

ANGELICA  
Just... just...

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE  
After... the case.

ANGELICA  
It never ends.

Jake kneels, in front of Angelica. He kisses her.

JAKE  
I'm going to find out.

ANGELICA  
Swear to me.

JAKE  
I swear.

ANGELICA  
Don't go.

JAKE  
I'm a cop.

ANGELICA  
You can't drive.

JAKE  
I drove here.

ANGELICA  
Don't leave me. You can't leave me.

JAKE  
I have to.

Angelica takes hold of Jake's hand.

ANGELICA  
I won't let you.

Jake falls onto the couch. Angelica nestles her head into his chest. He is asleep almost immediately.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Jake, sleeping soundly, the couch to himself, is woken by the whistle of a coffee pot.

He tries moving, before grabbing his head in agony.

Angelica, wearing a silk robe, emerges from the kitchen carrying a porcelain cup steaming around the edges.

She hands it over to Jake, delicately.

ANGELICA  
Careful.

JAKE  
I like it hot.

Jake drinks.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Black. Nice.

ANGELICA  
I figured. Move over.

Jake makes room for Angelica. She sits next to him.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)  
We couldn't make the bedroom.

JAKE  
Good thing.

ANGELICA  
Rules and regulations?

JAKE  
Basic human decency.

ANGELICA  
Not sure I follow.

JAKE  
It isn't right. On numerous levels.  
I couldn't even explain. Never been  
in this situation. Not even close.  
A few terms come to mind. Ethics  
and responsibility. Duty.

ANGELICA  
We share something deeper.

Jake smiles.

JAKE  
What do we do, now?

ANGELICA  
Talk some more, maybe.

JAKE  
About what?

ANGELICA  
You ever feel guilt?

JAKE  
Sure. For not taking advantage of  
every second. For not appreciating  
how much she cared about me. For my  
own stupidity.

ANGELICA  
Life's always getting in the way of  
how we feel about each other.

JAKE  
You speak the truth.

ANGELICA  
Never will know who killed my son.  
Tell me I'm wrong.

Jake doesn't answer.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)  
It's OK. Just be honest.

JAKE  
I need a miracle.

ANGELICA  
Not sure those exist.

JAKE  
You're beautiful. Can't be alone.

ANGELICA  
I am. Personal confinement.

JAKE  
I come to set you free.

ANGELICA  
Oh yeah?

Jake leans forward.

JAKE  
Yeah.

They grab hold of each other, and kiss.

ANGELICA  
You're too easy, Detective.

JAKE  
Tell me about it.

Jake suddenly pulls back.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Fuck. What time is it?

INT. MOONLIGHT CAFE -- DAY

The establishment is overflowing, an afternoon deluge. Jake and Danny "Squeals" Brando share a booth.

SQUEALS, 22, is tall and gangly. He is totally disheveled, unshaven, deep red sores brightening both nostrils. He wears a stained, grey hooded sweat shirt.

Jake hasn't changed since last night, appearing similarly haggard.

SQUEALS

You smell.

JAKE

My ears working right?

SQUEALS

It's offensive. You should really consider other people. All I'm saying.

JAKE

Well, look who's fucking talking. Could have sworn I seen you pushing that cart on The Wire.

SQUEALS

Fuck if I know. I don't get HBO.

Jake laughs.

JAKE

Well done. I owe you a Latte.

SQUEALS

Really?

JAKE

Maybe.

Jake flips a Polaroid on the table. It's facing down.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Have a look.

Squeals turns the photo over.

SQUEALS

Picasso.

JAKE

Street name?

SQUEALS

Something personal between us. I was a fan of his work. So much soul.

Squeals' nose begins to bleed. He covers it with table napkins, tilting his head upward.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

This will pass.

After taking a deep breath, Squeals releases the napkins, dropping the whole lot on the table.

JAKE

Oh, no, you ghastly mother-fucker!

Squeals scrambles to shove the napkins in his pocket.

SQUEALS

Sorry, sorry, wherever are my manners dear detective...

Jake is visibly disgusted.

JAKE

Tell me something.

SQUEALS

What do you want to hear?

JAKE

The sky is blue. Cigarettes kill.  
All dogs go to heaven. Anything...  
so I can file this report, get the  
fuck out of here, and never see you  
again. No offense.

SQUEALS

None taken.

Jake opens his note pad.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

It was a shame what happened to  
Picasso. He had a good heart.  
Violent temper, but a good heart.

JAKE

Temper?

SQUEALS

His mood swayed with the wind. One  
of those cats.

JAKE

What pissed him off?

SQUEALS

From what I saw... the world at  
large.

JAKE

You want to translate that into something concrete?

SQUEALS

Everyone and everything. So he'd run. Disappear. Wouldn't go home. His mom didn't understand.

JAKE

Alright Squeals... you ready for Final Jeopardy?

SQUEALS

Lay it on me.

JAKE

Who supplied Garrett Morris with drugs? And keep in mind, I know the fucking neighborhood. I know there aren't many dealers trafficking the heavy shit. If the victim had been copping dime bags from a cast of thousands, we'd never have the great fortune of crossing paths.

SQUEALS

It's a courier. With muscle. Caters to the upper class.

JAKE

Give me a fucking name.

SQUEALS

Ask nicely. I'll consider.

Jake slams Squeals head into the table, drawing looks from concerned customers.

JAKE

Drug dealing cunt! I want a name!

Squeals verges on tears.

SQUEALS

What the fuck man? I was going to give it! I was just playing!

Jake is concerned. He wipes his brow. Full of sweat.

JAKE

Sorry Squeals, let me have a look there...

Jake attempts to check Squeals' forehead.

SQUEALS

Back off, just back off! It's Sal, alright. Sal Bianchi, you fucking psycho!

JAKE

Making a scene isn't in your best interest.

Squeals calms himself.

SQUEALS

Too late. Why the fuck you do that?

JAKE

The good cop... that gaping asshole had the day off.

SQUEALS

Right. You're lucky I give you that much. Happy hunting.

Squeals, indignant, gets up to leave.

Jake won't allow it. He grabs his arm.

SQUEALS (CONT'D)

Let go.

JAKE

What's a matter, skipping on the bill?

SQUEALS

You're a section eight. Off the reservation. Let go of my fucking arm.

JAKE

What do you prefer? Dislocated shoulder? Popped elbow? Maybe two for the price of one?

Squeals sits back down, on his own accord. Jake lets go of his arm.

SQUEALS

What more do you need?

JAKE

Where's Sal hang?

SQUEALS

Shamrock... you know, that Irish dive near the Village. He's there practically every night. Proving he can slum it.

JAKE

Our village?

SQUEALS

None other.

JAKE

(standing)

Enjoy the drink. You earned it champ.

Jake leaves a few dollars behind.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

The definition of a dive. Dimmed lights cloak the diehard alcoholics and dirty, discolored floor, chewed up wooden walls.

There's a pool table in the back, peeling green felt ripped, covered with duct tape, yet readily played upon.

SAL BIANCHI circles the pool table, cue in hand, sizing up a shot. There's a small crowd around him, a loyal pocket of fellow teenaged followers, all dressed impeccably, mirroring their leader. They appear entirely out of place within this surrounding, lost.

SAL is 19, a dark skinned Italian. He carries a trim, spry build. His hair is spiked, face spared a single blemish.

He wears a red and black Nylon warm-up vest, matching pants.

A large gold cross hangs from his neck, sparkling.

Just as he lines up the seven ball with the left pocket, a minion taps him on the shoulder. He glances up, obviously annoyed, though maintaining a totally placid demeanor.

SAL

Never interrupt me in the middle of a shot.

The minion is Walt, Mickey's friend. He steps backward, respecting Sal's space.

WALT  
Sorry, Sally. There's a cop at the  
bar, asking about you.

SAL  
How can you be sure?

WALT  
Same guy questioned me and Mickey,  
few days ago. Could see it anyway,  
way he moves, talks, can smell the  
bacon.

SAL  
You had dialogue with a cop and  
didn't tell me?

WALT  
It's nothing. He's following up on  
Garrett. Neither us felt it  
warranted mentioning.

SAL  
He speaks my name.

Walt points toward Jake, sitting at the bar, absently  
consoling a sobbing drunk.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake, now sitting alone, drinks a beer.

His cell phone rings.

He ignores.

Sal approaches. Jake calmly wheels his seat around.

JAKE  
And you are...

SAL  
The guy you been asking about.

JAKE  
Sal.

SAL  
And you?

JAKE  
Call me Jake.

SAL  
What's your business?

JAKE  
You're the alpha dog.

SAL  
What's that?

JAKE  
Was intrigued by your play. Do you wait for me to find you, or try taking control of the situation? I got my answer. You lead that pack of wolves.

Jake nods toward the pool table, where the group is still congregated, making plenty of noise.

SAL  
I could never lead. Nowhere to go.

JAKE  
They lower the drinking age?

SAL  
We're the only reason this place makes payments.

JAKE  
How noble.

Sal extends his arms.

SAL  
So take me in. Condemn the Shamrock. Not a bad night's work.

JAKE  
Maybe you get a pardon.

SAL  
Sparing me?

JAKE  
What do you know about Garrett Morris?

SAL  
I know somebody blew him up.

JAKE  
So do I. But why?

SAL

This is a crazy world we're living in. I always thought why was incidental.

JAKE

I know a thing or two.

SAL

Bout what?

JAKE

You gave him drugs. He was your customer, and you didn't have to be much of a salesman, am I right?

SAL

Somebody's been slandering me. Lot of jealousy in this neighborhood. I'm a young Italian kid with money, so I must be a drug dealer, right? Defamation.

JAKE

You find a pot of gold? Want to lend me a map?

SAL

I'm a mechanic.

JAKE

You look it.

SAL

Want to take me in? Otherwise, this conversation is over.

JAKE

I could give two shits about your wheeling, dealing, scheming or dreaming, all I want is what you know about Garrett Morris. You're immune from my touch.

SAL

Well, it's like I said. I never met the guy. Not once. A ghost then and now. No difference.

JAKE

You should reconsider this course of action. Very mistaken.

SAL

No more than you. Been misinformed.  
Garrett Morris was no friend of  
mine.

Sal walks back toward the pool table.

Jake notices Walt, having a cue fight with another drunken  
teen.

JAKE

Strays.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- DAY

Samantha is sitting on a radiator puffing a joint, blowing  
the smoke outside her window, legs stretched onto the fire  
escape.

Her modest pad is a real mess, clothes and other assorted  
junk littered about, several bongos forming a circle on her  
kitchen's counter, a sink filled with dirty dishes.

Immediately right of the kitchen is her front door, beckoning  
with a knock.

Samantha reluctantly ashes the joint on the window pane.

She strolls across the room, to the door, opening it.

Sal strides in, kissing Samantha on the cheek. He closes the  
door, softly.

SAL

How are we, darling?

SAMANTHA

Never call me that. Otherwise, I'm  
spectacular.

SAL

Happy to hear it.

SAMANTHA

What do you want?

SAL

Your dad at work?

SAMANTHA

What's it to you?

SAL  
Nothing. You just leave the place  
in shambles. Feel sorry for the  
guy.

Sal wanders toward the window, closing it, drawing the  
blinds.

He walks back toward Samantha wearing a broad grin.

SAMANTHA  
You looking for a quick bump? All I  
got is herb.

SAL  
Quit the candy?

SAMANTHA  
Trying.

SAL  
Never know. Maybe the eighth time  
will be a charm.

SAMANTHA  
You're slime.

Sal chuckles.

SAL  
Slime... that's good...I Had  
something funny happen to me, last  
night.

SAMANTHA  
What do you mean?

SAL  
Met somebody. A face so  
unfamiliar... guy's name was Jake.

Samantha's eyes widen.

SAMANTHA  
Why would I care?

SAL  
Am I boring you? Well, that's to be  
expected. I haven't gotten to the  
best part. Want to take a guess?  
What is... the twist?

Sal slaps Samantha in the face, knocking her to the floor.

He crouches down, wrapping his hands around her neck.  
Samantha struggles to stand, but Sal forces her prone.  
He climbs on top of her, keeping the grip tight.  
He lets go her neck, opting to pin her arms back.  
Samantha gasps for air.

SAL (CONT'D)  
Tell me what you told them.

Samantha can barely talk.

SAL (CONT'D)  
Tell me what you told them, you  
stupid bitch.

SAMANTHA  
Nothing.

SAL  
Wrong answer.

Sal gives Samantha another vicious slap. Samantha tries  
clawing at his eyes with her free right arm.

Sal pins it down again.

SAL (CONT'D)  
Look at you, look at you, look at  
you... this is why I loved you.  
This is why I fucked you. So much  
fight, it's amusing.

SAMANTHA  
I fucking hate you! I fucking hate  
you!

SAL  
Where did we go wrong? Tell me.

SAMANTHA  
You're fucking crazy!

SAL  
Think it happened by accident? That  
the police pulled my name out of a  
hat? They press for a reason. You  
have to be squealing. I should kill  
you right now. Tell me!

SAMANTHA

A different cop talked to me this time! But I didn't say anything. I never do!

SAL

Cause why?

Samantha spits in his face.

Sal collects the phlegm with his finger tips, rubbing it all over her.

SAL (CONT'D)

Cause me and my friends would kill your family. Your father, your relatives, anyone close enough. You telling me the truth? Let me see it. Let me see it.

Sal pulls open Samantha's eyelids. She shrieks in pain, pulling his hair.

He examines, focused.

SAL (CONT'D)

Honest eyes never lie.

Sal pulls Samantha to her feet, shoving her into the front door.

SAL (CONT'D)

Who did this to you?

SAMANTHA

Someone... someone...

SAL

Someone you didn't know, that's right! Smart girl! They jumped you, huh? How many were there?

SAMANTHA

I don't know! I don't fucking know just let me go, please!

SAL

Three. There were three. Yeah, three works. You're a fighter.

Sal leans in close.

SAL (CONT'D)  
Wasn't this how you used to like  
it? Face to face, right?

Sal plants a forced, ugly kiss on her. He backs away, as  
Samantha slumps downward, petrified.

Sal admires his work.

SAL (CONT'D)  
I'll see myself out. Take care.

Sal leaves.

Samantha can't move.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT, SHOOTING RANGE -- DAY

Jake fires off a few rounds in the indoor shooting range,  
aiming at a target fastened about 100 feet away.

His hand is steady, the bullets flying in a controlled burst  
of three.

He is wearing earplugs.

The clip is empty.

Walsh enters the range.

He points toward the demolished target.

WALSH  
Sorry bastard never had a chance.

JAKE  
He made a move, I swear... You've  
been a busy man, Boss.

WALSH  
What can I say? Your case is a mere  
speck on the landscape.

JAKE  
As am I.

WALSH  
What was your request?

JAKE  
Surveillance.

WALSH

No shit?

JAKE

I want a watch on Sal Bianchi.  
Young scum, drug dealer. Lied to  
me.

WALSH

You want him spooked because he  
lied to you?

JAKE

I want him spooked because he's a  
drug dealer.

WALSH

A drug dealer who lied to you.

JAKE

Exactly.

WALSH

And what the fuck, may I so humbly  
ask, does it have to do with  
Garrett Morris?

JAKE

Sal got him high.

WALSH

A suspect?

JAKE

Maybe.

Walsh wrings his hands.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Want it solved, or not?

WALSH

You blowing smoke up my ass? Buying  
yourself time? Clock ticking, maybe  
you're reaching.

JAKE

Not for me to decide.

Walsh frowns.

WALSH

One car. Two days, the most.

JAKE  
Could do it myself, if necessary...

WALSH  
Yeah, cause subtlety is your  
strongest suit. You and that broken  
down fucking Corvette.

Jake fires a no look shot toward the target.

Walsh recoils, covering his ears.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
Jesus Holy Christ, you crazy son of  
a bitch!

JAKE  
(laughing)  
Always one in the chamber, Cap.

EXT. EMPTY PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

A black BMW sits in the abandoned lot of a sprawling shopping center.

Behind the driver's seat is Sal Bianchi, waiting.

A golden silhouette splashes across his face, headlights belonging to another car pulling in. This is a red Saturn.

The Saturn parks close, three spots away. Mickey steps out, carrying a can of beer.

He joins Sal in the BMW, sitting passenger side.

INT. SAL'S BMW -- NIGHT

SAL  
You drive with that?

MICKEY  
The beer? Fuck man, I'm drunk.

Sal shoves Mickey's head into the passenger side window.

MICKEY (CONT'D)  
Fuck! What are you doing?

SAL  
Stupid son of a bitch. You can't  
afford getting pinched right now.

MICKEY  
What the fuck you talking about?

SAL  
See Walt today?

MICKEY  
Family dinner.

SAL  
A cop visited Shamrock's.

MICKEY  
He wanted you? How the fuck that  
happen?

Sal pulls out a gun from under his seat. He presses it to Mickey's temple.

SAL  
Been wondering the same thing.

MICKEY  
Fuck Sal! After all I've done, this  
is how you treat me?

SAL  
Why not?

MICKEY  
I feed them shit. Piles. I act  
cool, calm, and stupid, just the  
way you said. And there hasn't been  
any heat.

SAL  
Until now.

MICKEY  
Maybe you should visit Sam or  
something man. At least she has a  
reason. Fuck Sal... you're my best  
friend. I would never sell you out.

Sal laughs, his eyes registering a foreign thought.

SAL  
Best friend?

MICKEY  
Please, put the gun down. You're  
scaring me, bro. You're fucking  
scaring me.

SAL  
Giving me orders?

MICKEY  
No. I'd never do that.

SAL  
How could they come so close, after  
all this time?

MICKEY  
Maybe Sam--

SAL  
Sam can't lie. Not to me. That  
narrows the field.

MICKEY  
Some rat--

SAL  
Word hits the street now, years  
after the fact? I should blow your  
head off for even suggesting that.

MICKEY  
Don't kill me Sal. You're like a  
brother. I'd never do nothing to--

SAL  
Get the fuck out of my car.

Sal places the gun back under the seat.

Mickey lingers.

SAL (CONT'D)  
Before I change my mind.

Mickey opens the door. He has one foot out when--

SAL (CONT'D)  
Hey Mick.

MICKEY  
(hopeful)  
Yeah?

SAL  
Lose the fucking drink.

Mickey drops the beer.

EXT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, FRONT DOOR -- NIGHT

Jake hesitates, before ringing the doorbell.

Angelica opens.

ANGELICA

Why aren't you answering my calls?

Jake walks into her house.

INT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake is sitting on the couch, Angelica standing in front of him, arms crossed. '

ANGELICA

Stop changing the subject.

JAKE

This is why it can't be personal.

ANGELICA

What does that mean?

JAKE

Time had it, I used to take a case and force myself to drum up some empathy. Yeah, the sympathy was there, but it's not enough. Something fleeting as sympathy can get lost in the procedure... nullifies the will.

ANGELICA

The will?

JAKE

To set something wrong right. I'd look at pictures of the departed. They always wore these doomed smiles. Man's far too flawed for judgment. See, we live with this. Everything, and I mean everything in this world is fucked up, upside down, we're walking in a hall of mirrors. And we accept it, in order to scrounge a life out of all this... madness. Even the empathy doesn't last. It becomes a game. Solve this, handle that, kiss some ass, shine your badge, and the beat goes on.

(MORE)

## JAKE (CONT'D)

A crime scene becomes routine. Adaptation. This was my perch, before Sandra was murdered. Before they took her from me. After that, well, everything was personal. I became a crusader. I wanted to stop them. Abolish self-created kings who see other human beings as nothing more than their subjects. The righteousness made me blind. Suddenly, the rules didn't seem as important. Nobody noticed. Not until Ron Masterson killed his wife, without any apparent reason or motive. He just... he just killed her. He tried spinning it as a break-in, of course. An unidentified black male. It was him. He murdered the mother of his children. And we knew. He was a rich guy, bought a dream team of lawyers. The evidence against him was so strong, so fucking strong, he shouldn't have had a chance. But I wasn't taking any. So I manipulated some DNA. Just to be sure. Because, he needed to go, Angelica... he needed to go. He needed to face justice in this life, because... I wasn't even sure a God in heaven existed anymore. I was caught. Chalked it up to sloppiness. It was a passable excuse. My mentor, Joe Walsh, knew it was a lie, he knew I'd never make that kind of mistake, but he protected me. And I did the same. When IA came down hard, I wouldn't say a word. Even though I knew a lot. Turned out, I got hit with a suspension. Lengthy one, believe it or not. During this time, I did nothing but drink. A functioning... but full blown alcoholic. They gave me this case to keep me out of everyone's way, because now... Now all I make are mistakes. Probably planning to fire me, unless I miraculously discover who murdered your son.

## ANGELICA

Jake...

JAKE

The thing of it is... I might actually be getting somewhere. Just a feeling. I left your house, that last morning we were together, because I had an interview set with this informant. Kid was supposed to hand over info, but he was stalling, so I took his head, and slammed it into a wooden table. I did this, because your pain had invaded my mind. Taking it personal. Carrying your cross. I can't work like this. I can't see you again, until it's over.

Jake gets up, heads toward the front door.

ANGELICA

You won't be back.

Jake turns to respond, but doesn't say anything.

He walks out.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT, DETECTIVE'S FLOOR -- DAY

Jake, enclosed in a cubicle, rifles through a folder. Activity springs all around, other detectives hard at work, multiple conversations blending into an indecipherable din.

Tim steps into Jake's work space, spreading photos on his desk.

JAKE

Intel?

TIM

From a couple of uniform. Who'd they piss off to do your dirty work?

JAKE

Must have been the Almighty.

Jake skims through the photos.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Ah, the life of a drug dealer. Well, this just about breaks the case.

Jake suddenly freezes, staring at a photo, a black and white shot displaying Mickey entering Sal's BMW.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Cloak and dagger.

TIM  
Something suspicious?

JAKE  
A late night rendezvous. Fucking Mick... what were you two talking about?

TIM  
Could be a simple exchange. A dime for dough.

JAKE  
No. Sal's too bigtime for dimes. I need someone picked up. Do me a favor, make the call.

TIM  
Who's feeling lucky?

JAKE  
Mickey Reynolds. He'll be in Whitestone. Have them try his home address... failing that, a park.

TIM  
And what's the reason?

JAKE  
Reason? He seems a close personal friend of my only suspect. That enough?

TIM  
For me? Fuck yeah.

JAKE  
You got an hour?

TIM  
Had my eye on the back nine.

JAKE  
Cancel that. Down for a return of the tag team champs?

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Jake is now through the looking glass, seated across a bare metal table from Mickey.

Tim stands passively behind Mickey, leaning on the wall behind him, yawning.

Mickey is visibly nervous, tugging at the strings hanging from his hood.

Jake hands him the surveillance photo.

MICKEY

(incredulous)

So the fuck what? Wow, I'm getting into a fucking car... That why you interrupt me at point game?

JAKE

Come on, try honesty. Hell of a drug. Who owns the ride?

MICKEY

I don't know.

JAKE

You don't know?

MICKEY

Yeah, I drank a ton last night. I don't remember. Could have been Santa Claus.

TIM

A 2008 BMW? Damn, that piece of shit Kringle must be rolling in the hay these days.

MICKEY

Maybe so.

JAKE

It's Sal fucking Bianchi. Wasn't aware he was such a trusted colleague. A parking lot at two in the morning? You two blowing each other or what?

MICKEY

What's it matter?

JAKE

How you know the guy?

MICKEY  
He's a friend.

JAKE  
That your social circle? The  
leeches, the poison?

MICKEY  
Why do you care?

JAKE  
What did you talk about?

MICKEY  
Why do you care?

JAKE  
Sal getting nervous? He not used to  
feeling any heat? His behavior  
getting erratic, you starting to  
question his leadership, Mick?

MICKEY  
Why the fuck do you care?

Mickey slams his fist on the table, once, twice, three times,  
the sound reverberating.

TIM  
Calm down, my main man. You want a  
drink? A coke?

MICKEY  
I could use some fucking coke right  
about now.

TIM  
Not that kind. Though I could talk  
with someone in evidence, maybe  
find a surplus. It depends.

MICKEY  
I'm not saying shit, you hear me?  
I'm not saying shit! I want a  
lawyer, now! Right fucking now!

JAKE  
Lawyer?

TIM  
You haven't been arrested. Not yet,  
anyway. Fuck, you could walk out of  
here, we'll roll a red carpet.

JAKE

Just know, this is your last chance to cooperate.

TIM

Before we know everything.

JAKE

And we will know everything.

TIM

Because we're good. This is what we get paid for.

JAKE

And we like making money. You're our paycheck, bitch.

TIM

Straight cash, homey.

MICKEY

Who the fuck you think you're fucking with? You think this is my first fucking time around the block? That what you think? You going to intimidate me? You know my life, where I've been what I've seen? You know nothing, you have nothing!

JAKE

Who said there was something to get?

TIM

We're just talking. Fuck, we can talk sports if you like. Mike and the fucking Mad Dog, us two.

MICKEY

Fuck this. I'm out of here.

Mickey stands up.

JAKE

Sal kill your best friend, Mick?

MICKEY

I don't know no one named Sal.

JAKE

Sure, Sal was trying to establish himself, and he made an example of your boy, that right?

MICKEY

Fuck you!

JAKE

Of course, of course, and you rolled with the tide, didn't you? You let him drink your boy's blood, get famous on the street off that shit, am I right? You took it.

TIM

Like a good little whore. Legs spread.

JAKE

Maybe Garrett was holding your sorry ass back anyway. What a future you've made for yourself without him!

Mickey kicks his chair aside.

MICKEY

I should kill you, fucking pig! I should kill you for saying that shit! You're reaching! You're reaching and saying straight up blasphemous shit! I loved that fucking kid! I fucking loved him!

Mickey turns the table over.

JAKE

Poor fucking table...

MICKEY

Am I under arrest?

Jake and Tim don't respond.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Am I under the fuck arrest?

Mickey flees the room.

JAKE

I'm onto something.

TIM

Not sure.

JAKE

Have faith.

TIM

Your next move?

JAKE

Press the girlfriend. Shine a light. The truth's calling. I hear it begging.

INT. BACK ROOM -- DAY

The room is poorly lit, a single fluorescent light flickering on the ceiling.

Three men sit at a table.

VINCENT ROMANO is slim and elderly, his age upwards of 60. Despite his frail appearance, he indulges in a cigar. He wears tinted glasses that hide his eyes.

Vincent is joined by associates RAY and TONY.

Ray, 67, has liver spots dotting his bald head. Tony, 68, has silver white hair.

All three are dressed in suits.

TONY

He's a good kid.

VINCENT

I'll set him straight.

RAY

He made promises.

VINCENT

The arrogance of youth.

RAY

Said he could handle it.

TONY

He did. For a time. But they never close the book on a murder.

RAY

He never had the authority in the first place--

VINCENT

He made his play. We noticed. That much you have to admit, Ray. Sal has served us well. Now he can really show something.

TONY

Way I see it, he takes care of this, we open the books.

RAY

Easy, Tony.

VINCENT

Never enough praise for the protege...

TONY

You see any other prospects out there?

RAY

Danny Brando. Son of the baker. Runs H. Real respectable. Never near this type of mess. A very trustworthy young man...

Sal enters, from behind a curtain in the corner.

He is greeted with hugs from both Ray and Tony, while Vincent remains seated.

VINCENT

Leave us.

Ray and Tony depart.

Sal sits across from Vincent.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

I've been appraised of your situation, Sal.

SAL

What should I do?

VINCENT

What's your opinion?

Sal thinks before he answers.

SAL  
I can't be sure where this came  
from.

VINCENT  
But you have a general idea.

SAL  
Yes.

VINCENT  
When a man is blinded by  
circumstance, he should minimize  
risk. Be swift, and decisive.

SAL  
(dumbfounded)  
So...

Vincent frowns.

VINCENT  
You fucking idiot. I mourn the  
future...

SAL  
I need to be sure.

VINCENT  
Those who know? They have to go.  
That clear enough, Einstein?

Sal nods.

SAL  
Your will is mine.

VINCENT  
Good.

Vincent stands, Sal does the same.

Vincent hugs Sal, kisses him on the cheek.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
This is make or break. Execute, and  
doors open. But in this business,  
there are no second chances.

SAL  
I understand.

VINCENT  
Fail, and you pay with your life.

Sal looks away. Vincent smacks the cheek he just kissed.

VINCENT (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Sal

I'm sorry.

VINCENT

Use reliable people. Don't make me front the payment for your funeral's floral arrangement. I would hate to do that, kid. Now go.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Samantha sits on her couch, face swollen and bruised.

Tim and Jake stand at opposite ends of the couch, Jake to the right, near the radiator beneath the window, Tim to the left, close to the front door.

JAKE

Why won't you tell us?

Samantha doesn't answer.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Who did that to your face?

Silence.

JAKE (CONT'D)

A man should never raise his hands to a woman. It was a man, right?

No response.

TIM

Who did it?

JAKE

Was it Sal? Did he meet with you, like he met with Mickey?

TIM

You remember Mickey, right?

JAKE

Course she does. Garret's best friend. Or were they as close as we were led to think?

TIM

You shouldn't have let us in if you were going to play mute. I have better things to do with my time. Other cases where people care enough to open their mouths.

SAMANTHA

I don't know what to do. I don't know what's right anymore.

TIM

Feel free to indulge in our point of view...

INT. MICKEY'S SATURN -- NIGHT

Mickey and Walter are baking out the car, passing a blunt, heavy smoke trapped within.

They have found seclusion, parked under a bridge.

MICKEY

Regrets, Walt?

WALT

Hell of a fucking thing for you to ask me.

MICKEY

Figured.

WALT

Power corrupts. Thought the piece of shit was a friend.

MICKEY

Taking my side?

WALT

'Till the end of time.

MICKEY

You ever think Sal might have taken Garrett out?

WALT

Why would I think that?

MICKEY

Never crossed your mind? Not for a second?

WALT

I knew the two of them had their problems, but Sal would have never touched Garrett, out of basic respect to you. You vouched for Garrett, God rest him.

MICKEY

Damn right. Must be getting paranoid. Smoking too much of this shit.

Mickey rolls down his window, disposes of the blunt.

WALT

Mick... you vouched for Garrett, right?

A car approaches in front of them, shrouded by darkness, lights turned off.

It stops about ten yards away, hooded figures emerging.

MICKEY

Fuck is this?

WALT

A robbery?

The figures reveal automatic weapons.

MICKEY

No!

Walt tries starting the car.

Mickey jumps in the back seat.

The figures open fire, bullets slicing through the window shield.

Walt gets the car in reverse before being hit with a barrage, blood spilling out of his mouth as he slumps over the steering wheel.

His foot, though, remains on the gas pedal, rocketing the car backward, out of control.

Mickey tries steering from the back seat, as the fire continues.

He is hit in the shoulder and leg.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Fuck!

Mickey climbs over Walt, dumping him out the driver's side.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Sorry man, I'm fucking sorry!

The bullets have stopped.

VOICE (O.S.)

Reload!

Mickey slams on the brakes, puts the car in drive.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Mickey's Saturn has been blown apart. Both rearview mirrors are missing. Smoke spews from the engine. The tail lights have been shot out, as has the window shield.

Despite this, it soldiers forward, popped left tire spraying sparks.

Mickey, behind the wheel, is barely maintaining consciousness.

Cars honk, speeding by.

Mickey manages to pull the vehicle into a roadside gas station.

EXT. GAS STATION -- NIGHT

Mickey staggers out of the Saturn, doesn't need to put it in park.

It has simply broken down, the hood flying off, a good five feet in the air.

He is bleeding badly, barely able to walk.

MICKEY

They're going to kill me! They're going to kill me!

He collapses.

An attendant races over to help.

INT. SAMANTHA'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Jake and Tim continue their questioning, manner becoming more aggressive.

JAKE

Listen, we're cutting the bull  
shit! No more games! We'll take it  
behind the one-way glass.

TIM

Off that comfy couch.

JAKE

The reason this case hasn't been  
solved is simple. I--

TIM

Jake!

Tim points to the window.

A gunman crouches on the fire escape, taking aim with an UZI.

He is black, wearing a ski mask. This is JACKSON.

He begins shooting.

Tim dives to the floor.

Jake leaps toward Samantha, carrying her over the couch with  
him.

They crawl on their stomachs toward the kitchen, which  
provides cover behind the counter.

Jake protects Samantha, shielding her.

Tim also crawls, toward the front door.

The shots from the window continue.

Tim returns fire. He is hit in the hand, losing his gun. It  
slides across the floor, toward the kitchen, out of reach.

He continues toward the door.

Jake and Samantha have reached the kitchen, ducking behind  
the counter.

JAKE

Stay down! Down!

SAMANTHA

We're going to fucking die!

Samantha is hysterical, but she does as told.

Jake leans over the counter and shoots back toward the window.

Jackson enters the apartment, taking cover behind the couch.

JAKE

Get out Tim, get out now!

Tim heeds the advice, standing up, racing to the front door.

Another gunman is on the other side, waiting.

This is BROWN.

He is white, also wearing a ski mask, also wielding an UZI.

He unloads on Tim, burying shots into his stomach.

Tim falls to the floor.

BROWN

Who the fuck is this? Where's the girl?

JACKSON

He's a cop! There's another one in the kitchen! She's with him! They're trapped! We got 'em, baby!

BROWN

Cap two cops on one job, and a fucking rat? What is this, Christmas?

Jake closes his eyes, crosses himself.

JAKE

Fuck it.

SAMANTHA

What are you doing?

Jake leaps over the counter.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

No! No!

Jake tumbles on the floor, toward Tim's gun.

Brown, surprised, squeezes wild shots, missing from close range.

Jake caps him, with one shot through the head, using Tim's gun.

Jackson emerges from behind the couch, ready to fire.

He has Jake dead to rights.

Jake turns to face his fate.

Jackson's gun is jammed.

JACKSON

No, not now, not fucking now!

Jackson desperately slams on the jammed gun's barrel.

Jake searches his person for blood, stunned.

He quickly regains his senses, aiming both guns and shooting Jackson in the heart, killing him instantly.

A smoke alarm is buzzing.

Sounds of hysteria echo outside, crying and screaming, panic.

Jake breathes heavily.

He drops both guns.

Samantha runs toward Jake, from the kitchen.

She throws her arms around him.

SAMANTHA

Is it over? Is it over?

Jake steps out of her grasp, in a haze.

He approaches the body of Tim, face down in a pool of blood.

He turns him over.

Tim is dead, eyes wide in terror.

Jake closes them shut.

JAKE

No... no... why? Why?

Jake holds Tim in his arms.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Your wife... Tim... your wife...

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX -- NIGHT

Ambulances, a fire truck, news vans have all converged on the building, joining hundreds of onlookers peering from behind police tape.

Jake sits on a small stone staircase, face ashen, covered with a thick blanket.

Walsh emerges from the throng, forced to identify himself to the overmatched uniform officers, struggling to contain the burgeoning crowd and media.

Walsh sits next to Jake.

WALSH  
Tim?

Jake shakes his head.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
How could this happen?

JAKE  
Don't bother asking. You'll never get an answer.

WALSH  
Who were they?

JAKE  
Didn't get a chance to ask for identification, actually.

WALSH  
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to...

Walsh puts his arm around Jake.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
You need to go home.

JAKE  
Can't figure why I'm still breathing. I should be dead.

WALSH  
Jake... just go home.

JAKE  
Where's the girl?

WALSH  
We'll take care of it, now.

JAKE  
You put her in a safe house. Had to. Where?

WALSH  
You're covered in blood. Go home.

JAKE  
Home? Home? I don't have a fucking home! I don't have anything anymore! I'm finishing it for Tim!

WALSH  
This doesn't end tonight.

JAKE  
I'm finishing the interview. I'm finishing the fucking interview!

Walsh sighs.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Where?

INT. PIER -- NIGHT

Sal is awaiting word, alone on a dock.

A small boy, his messenger, scampers toward him, whispering something in his ear and scurrying away, into a waiting car.

SAL  
I'm dead.

He reaches into his pocket, pulling out a cell phone.

He accidentally drops it into the frozen pond beneath his feet, hands shaking.

INT. HOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Two guards blocking the door step aside for Jake.

Splotches of dried blood line his shirt.

Samantha is near a state of shock, hardly reacting upon seeing Jake again.

JAKE  
Are you ready to tell me  
everything?

SAMANTHA  
The other officer...

JAKE  
No.

SAMANTHA  
A friend?

JAKE  
Yes.

SAMANTHA  
I'm sorry.

JAKE  
It isn't your fault.

SAMANTHA  
It is. If I'd come forward  
sooner... I was scared. After  
Garrett, I believed anything.

JAKE  
Sal?

Samantha nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
He did that to your face?

Samantha nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Who is he working for?

SAMANTHA  
Mafia connections. Not sure who,  
exactly.

JAKE  
How do you know?

SAMANTHA  
I was... cheating on Garrett. I was  
cheating on Garrett with Sal. Years  
ago. When he just started out.  
(MORE)

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

He sent messages, eventually pushed drugs. Kept us supplied.

JAKE

Did Garrett ever find out?

SAMANTHA

Why do you think he's dead?

JAKE

Who pulled the trigger?

SAMANTHA

I'm not sure.

JAKE

Samantha!

SAMANTHA

I don't know, I swear to God! Sal wanted Garrett dead.

JAKE

Did he make him dead?

Samantha doesn't answer.

SAMANTHA

I--

JAKE

Don't tell me you don't know! Don't say that!

Samantha shrugs helplessly.

She begins to cry.

SAMANTHA

I'm sorry... I'm sorry... I'm sorry...

JAKE

It's alright. Everything's...

Jake leaves the room.

INT. JAKE'S CORVETTE, HOTEL PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Jake pounds on the steering wheel, in a complete rage.

JAKE

Sal, you motherfucker, I know it's you! I know it's you! Not many places to hide, not many places to hide.

Jake's police rover buzzes with cop jargon. He screams, ripping off the handset, tossing it in the backseat, ending communication with his brethren. He slams a fresh clip into his gun.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I know where you are tonight, you piece of shit. I know it. Having a celebratory drink? Fuck that shit. Fuck your drink, fuck your piece of shit bar.

Jake starts the car. It stalls. He tries again. No luck.

Hail is beginning to pound the windshield, a major storm in the offing.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Great! Fucking great!

Jake continues to gun the ignition, which refuses to respond. The hail outside intensifies.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fuck it... fuck it... you win God! I'm fucking miserable! You happy? I'm Job you sick fuck! I'm your only misbegotten son out of his fucking mind! And I can't fucking win!

Suddenly, the car roars to life. Jake pulls out of the lot, his car nearly spinning out.

JAKE (CONT'D)

We're not even close to even, you sick bastard.

Jake flashes on his headlights, accelerating ahead, tires squealing.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Mickey is laid up, wrapped in bandages, an IV in his arm.

A nurse adjusts his pillow. This is AMANDA.

MICKEY

Nurse?

Mickey is weak, his voice barely audible.

AMANDA

Yes, Mickey?

MICKEY

I need to talk with someone.

AMANDA

I thought you refused to see family?

MICKEY

Not family... police. Tell them I need to see Jake... only Jake... tell them I'll give up everything.

EXT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake's Corvette nearly jumps the curb as he parks beside the bar.

He slams shut the driver side door three times before entering, the violent winds of the swirling storm prying it ajar.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake storms into the bar, brushing shards of ice from his hair, a thinned out crowd of downtrodden drunks staring at him.

Jake takes a moment to appraise his audience, before pulling out his gun, pointing it toward the bartender, CHRIS ROBERTS. Chris is in his twenties, totally unkempt, lint tangled within a bushy brown beard.

JAKE

Hey barkeep!

CHRIS

What is this, a fucking full moon?

JAKE  
Any other visitors tonight, acting  
strange?

CHRIS  
You call this strange? I call it  
assault, motherfucker!

JAKE  
I'm a cop.

CHRIS  
Yeah, and I'm a fucking chemist.

JAKE  
He's here. I can feel it.

CHRIS  
Who the fuck you talking about?

JAKE  
Junior kingpin.

CHRIS  
No shooting, you fucking understand  
me?

JAKE  
Where is he? Where the fuck is he?

Chris' eyes glance toward the bathroom, adjacent from Jake. The door leading in is near unhinged, rusty nails hanging perilous, red spray paint warning: 'Abandon hope, all ye who enter here'.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

The facilities are a crawl space, dried urine adorning cracked white tiles. Sal Bianchi sits on the toilet, seat down, face buried in cupped hands, snorting.

SAL  
My kingdom... my kingdom... what  
will happen to my kingdom? I'm  
fucking dead... they're going to  
find me... they're going to find  
me...

Sal tilts his head backward, sneezing a gob of blood. A credit card, traces of heroin lining the plastic, falls limply from his hand.

Sal reaches into his waistband, pulling out a handgun. He stares at the flimsy bathroom door, eyes bloodshot, vacant.

SAL (CONT'D)

I kept the view... I kept the...  
view... but where are my barefoot  
servants? Where are my barefoot  
servants?

He slaps himself in the face.

SAL (CONT'D)

You think I'm scared? I'm never  
scared! I'm never fucking scared!

The bathroom door is completely torn off by Jake. He tosses it aside, sizes up Sal.

Sal observes Jake's clothes, the blood stains.

SAL (CONT'D)

Fuck happened to you?

JAKE

Drop the weapon, step out of the  
bathroom.

SAL

And one-two, it's off with his  
head...

JAKE

Drop the weapon, step out of the  
bathroom.

Jake steadies his fury, aiming the gun directly at Sal.

Sal returns the threat.

SAL

Let me ask you something cop...  
what's the difference between me  
and you?

JAKE

The world.

A flying beer bottle slams into the side of Jake's head. He is knocked off his feet.

Sal springs up, leaping over Jake's body and scrambling out of the bar, barely able to proceed in a straight line.

INT. SHAMROCK BAR -- NIGHT

Jake collects himself quickly. A drunk at the bar, old and fat, laughs uproariously.

JAKE

What did you do? What did you  
fucking do?

CHRIS

Joker, you fucking kidding me,  
throwing bottles at fucking cops?

The drunk, JOKER, continues laughing, shrugging his shoulders, doesn't have a clue.

Jake minds the blood now gushing from his head wound, before racing off in pursuit of Sal.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

The hail storm has increased in violence and volume. Jake spots the silhouette of Sal, dissolving into the obscured night horizon.

Jake takes a quick look at his Corvette, as if considering climbing in.

JAKE

You stalling on me again? Are you?  
Fuck it!

Jake makes his decision, taking off toward Sal on foot, closing the gap quickly.

Sal is struggling with the hail, shielding his eyes, screaming into the wind. He peeks over his shoulder, falling down upon catching sight of Jake.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Freeze Bianchi! It's fucking over!

Sal squeezes off three shots at Jake, from a crouched position. Jake keeps coming, ignoring the bullets whizzing over his head.

Sal runs toward an intersection, firing careless shots behind his back. Jake is closing ground, shooting at Sal's legs, barely missing.

EXT. INTERSECTION -- NIGHT

Jake follows Sal across the intersection, suddenly blinded by the approaching headlights of a Suburu, skidding to a stop.

He leaps, rolling over the hood, back hitting the frozen pavement.

The car slides to a halt. The driver steps out, a medium sized female, features shrouded by the blinding conditions.

She helps Jake off the ground, saying something unintelligible.

Jake searches for signs of Sal. A burst emanates from the street up ahead. Jake yanks the driver down, shielding her body from the shots. She tries to fight him, punching and thrashing to no avail.

Satisfied in her safety, Jake lets the driver loose.

She kicks him in the face, bewildered, speeding off.

JAKE

I saved your life you idiot! This  
some kind of fucking joke?

Wiping the blood from a busted lip, Jake continues forward.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

Jake arrives upon a fenced in construction site, sunken below the street's surface.

He climbs the fence, dropping off the top, momentum carrying him down a steep hill and into the construction pit.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Jake, walking now, approaches a concrete structure at the site's center. It appears to be a walkway, leading into a dark passage, surrounded by three steel pillars.

JAKE

Fucking rat's hiding in the  
sewer...

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Sal hides himself behind the center pillar, Jake visible, nearing his position.

Jake, unbeknownst to this dangerous proximity, stops to take a cursory glance at his surroundings.

Sal seizes his opportunity.

He twists into plain sight.

Jake weaves just as Sal pulls the trigger.

Sal barely misses Jake, who finds refuge behind a pile of cinder blocks.

SAL

Fuck!

Sal takes a step forward, before reconsidering. Spraying buffering fire at the blocks, he makes a run for the sewer passage.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Sal, desperation evident, hurries through the winding, dank corridors of the channel, searching for an exit.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION PIT -- NIGHT

Jake tentatively emerges from behind the cinder block stack.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Sal finds a gaping gutter to climb through, elevated no more than four feet from the sewage oozing at his feet.

Using an exposed pipe as leverage, he maneuvers himself into the gutter, crawling toward freedom.

EXT. SIDE STREET -- NIGHT

Sal crawls from the gutter, crying in pain, shoulders cracking as he tenaciously squeezes through.

The roads and sidewalks are deserted, hail storm persisting.

Sal staggers forward, clutching his left shoulder.

INT. SEWER CHANNEL -- NIGHT

Jake slogs ahead, gasping. He suddenly hunches, vomiting profusely. Nearly keeling over, he leans on the slimy channel wall for support.

JAKE

He's gone.

Jake's legs are covered in liquid waste. His clothes are awash in blood. The wound from his head is dripping. His lip is swollen and cracking.

JAKE (CONT'D)

He's fucking gone!

With a twisted, sardonic laugh, Jake empties his chamber into the darkness.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- NIGHT

Jake is sprawled out on the backseat of a NYPD squad car, separated from Walsh, the passenger, behind metal mesh. A middle aged trooper named IKE THOMPSON drives carefully in deference to the weather.

Jake has changed into clean clothes. A bandage is wrapped around his head.

WALSH

Don't say a fucking thing. In case anything crossed your mind.

JAKE

I had him. If it makes a difference.

WALSH

If... if... never fucking matters. You know that! Or you used to.

JAKE

I mean some drunk, probably can't even remember his own name, manages to execute a perfect Olympic toss of his Budweiser, right into my fucking skull. What are the odds?

WALSH

No backup?

Jake shakes his head.

WALSH (CONT'D)

No fucking backup? To apprehend a potentially armed and dangerous suspect? You have ceased being a cop.

JAKE

Whatever that means.

WALSH

Well, the killer went free. On your account.

JAKE

He walks anyway. Testifies. Gives up his big brothers in the syndicate. All in the game... right Cap? Fuck justice.

WALSH

Well, no worries, you took care of that. We got an APB out on a kid who just had a fucking Wild West gunfight with a decorated homicide detective. He could know where the weapons of mass destruction are in Iraq, and it still won't mean shit. What were you planning? To shoot him? That the next step up from planting evidence?

JAKE

I don't know what I was going to do.

WALSH

You haven't in years. Your wife... she'd be ashamed.

JAKE

So you can read my dead wife's mind? How 'bout that? Want to organize a seance sometime?

WALSH

Why did it have to be Tim?

The color drains from Walsh's face.

WALSH (CONT'D)

I didn't mean that.

JAKE

Who knows Joe... maybe fate's asleep at the wheel. Where's Mr. Trooper taking us, anyway?

WALSH

Hospital. You are a fucking mess gauze can't fix.

JAKE

Fuck the hospital.

WALSH

You don't want to go to the hospital? Fine! Fuck it! We'll take you home! Because you aren't my fucking problem anymore! Any other attempt to intercede in this investigation, God help me, I will place you under arrest.

JAKE

There's nothing left to fight for.

The squad car's rover cackles. Walsh motions for Ike to ignore.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Name was joker.

WALSH

Who?

JAKE

Hell of a thing. This case took me over, it was everything. And he will never, ever realize the debt... The world will turn, Joker will drink tomorrow, maybe remember enough fragments to form a narrative. He can tell a friend, if he has any left. My life, essentially, boiled into a tale told by a drunk, all that sound and fury... signified nothing.

Walsh answers the radio, ignoring Jake.

WALSH

(into radio)

And he'll only cooperate with that officer? He refuses to compromise?

Walsh slams down the radio.

WALSH (CONT'D)

Jake, you most definitely are going to the hospital.

JAKE

This again?

WALSH

You have work. Does the name Mickey Reynolds ring a bell?

JAKE

What's the deal with that punk?

WALSH

He got shot. And he wants to talk tonight.

JAKE

Yeah, put a few holes in 'em... snitching suddenly becomes fashionable. Mickey Reynolds is a pawn. I just lost the triggerman in this fucking storm.

WALSH

Your precious insights aren't worth shit at the moment.

JAKE

So tell your man here to sound the sirens.

Ike looks to Walsh for approval.

WALSH

Do it.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake strolls through the crowded hallway, Walsh following closely behind.

They stop at room 28, the nurse Amanda waiting outside.

JAKE

Mickey Reynolds inside?

AMANDA

We've stabilized his condition. It's a miracle he even survived. What happened to your head?

Amanda attempts to peel away the gauze, but Jake presses her hands aside.

JAKE

I'm fine. Is he coherent?

AMANDA

Yes. Amazingly enough. His tolerance is through the roof. The patient requested someone named Jake, specifically. He was insistent on talking to him alone. I'll leave you to it. Did you have a CAT scan?

JAKE

Hey. I'm alright. Could do cartwheels.

AMANDA

You cops are crazy.

Amanda proceeds down the hall.

WALSH

Jake... just for the record... What I said before...

JAKE

Joe... go fuck yourself. He was my best friend, you piece of shit.

Jake enters the room, leaving Walsh in the corridor.

WALSH

Love you too.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Jake pulls up a seat at Mickey's bedside.

MICKEY

What do you know... a cop when you need one. Your night rough as mine?

JAKE

They got us good.

MICKEY

Not good enough.

Jake smiles.

JAKE

Tough.

MICKEY

All I have. Sad thing.

JAKE

Mickey... you don't have to protect Sal anymore.

MICKEY

Trust doesn't exist.

JAKE

He put the fear into you? That why you never told us what he did to Garrett?

MICKEY

Fear...

JAKE

Don't be afraid. Sal is over. He's either getting popped by a button man or pinched by plain clothes. Either way, he's finished.

MICKEY

I was young and dumb. Back then. Garrett was starting to fade from us. With his art. Running with a new crowd. Becoming unreliable. Doing more drugs. Like he wasn't even the same person anymore. The living dead. Samantha was a slut. Always will be. Sal fucked her. Sal and I were getting closer. Sal, you could count on. We didn't care Sal was fucking Garrett's girl. Garrett sold out. One day, he just stops using. Reverses the inevitable. Wants to settle down with Samantha, have a serious relationship. He was a new man, reborn. But he could never regain the respect he lost. Gone forever. Samantha kept fucking Sal, of course she did. It burned Garrett. He had a temper... one night, he's at the Shamrock, talking loud about Sal. He didn't realize... he wasn't among friends anymore. Sal couldn't let it pass.

(MORE)

MICKEY (CONT'D)

He couldn't let this junkie disrespect him. He wanted to know if he could trust me.

JAKE

What the fuck are you saying to me?

MICKEY

I act like I have Garrett's back. What reason did he have to doubt me? I had always been there. Through all the relapses, a rock. I told him we should meet up late, in a private place, plot revenge. Murder wasn't on his mind... he wanted his pride back. I was setting him up, and brilliant as that kid was, loyalty got him killed. Loyalty. He wanted Sam to be loyal. He wanted me to be loyal. But loyalty is a lie. We're all out for our own survival... all else is... vanity.

JAKE

What the fuck are you saying to me?

MICKEY

Sal didn't kill Garrett. He ordered the hit. I carried it out. I put a gun to my best friend's stomach, I stared into his eyes... and pulled the trigger. I killed my best friend.

Tears fall from Mickey's eyes, though he tries to fight it.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

I killed my best friend. And Sal thanked me with a 30 spot... Betrayal should be priceless...

Mickey sighs.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

So tell me, cop, why am I still alive? Why did Walt have to die?

Jake removes a tape recorder from his pocket.

JAKE

Wish I knew. Wish you knew.

MICKEY

Kill me. Kill me. One bullet. Do it. I don't deserve life.

Jake rises.

MICKEY (CONT'D)

Please... I'm begging you, kill me. Please, I'm begging you... kill me.

JAKE

I'm all out, Mick. How far can we fall?

Jake walks out of the room.

INT. PHONE BOOTH -- NIGHT

Sal enjoys momentary cover from the storm.

His clothes are soaked.

His left arm is dangling, shoulder dislocated. Agony etches his face.

He contemplates, before dialing a three digit number.

SAL

No choice.

He presses the receiver to his ear.

SAL (CONT'D)

This is Sal Bianchi... I know I'm out of options. I want to surrender. I'm willing to cooperate, get put in witness protection. I'll say whatever they want. And just for the record, that fucking cop shot at me first! If he hadn't acted so unprofessionally, this may have been resolved in a more dignified manner. I hate running. Look, I think I'm being followed... can't be sure. You need to pick me up. You need to pick me up now.

A tap on the booth's door.

Sal turns, finding a double barreled shotgun staring at him.

SAL (CONT'D)

Not me.

Sal is blasted in the face, his body bursting through the booth, out onto the sidewalk.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Jake closes the door to Mickey's room behind him, Walsh eagerly awaiting word.

WALSH

What did he say?

Jake hands Walsh a cassette tape.

JAKE

Place him under arrest.

Jake heads down the hallway.

WALSH

For what?

Jake turns.

JAKE

He confessed to killing Garrett Morris. Now take care of it.

He continues.

WALSH

Jake... wait.

JAKE

What?

Walsh pockets the tape.

WALSH

They just found a body.

INT. SQUAD CAR -- NIGHT

Jake, Joe, and trooper Ike drive upon a crime scene, police tape encircling a destroyed phone booth. There's a body, covered by a white sheet, just beside it.

A crowd surrounds the area, despite the hail. They are Whitestone, it's mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, feigning shock and outrage, a sturdy wall of cops shielding their view, some teenagers snapping pictures with their cell phones.

EXT. CRIME SCENE -- NIGHT

Walsh and Jake are allowed to pass through, crouching under the yellow tape.

Jake has a look under the sheet.

WALSH  
That your man?

JAKE  
Could have sworn. If this world  
made any fucking sense.

WALSH  
What do you feel?

Jake shakes his head.

JAKE  
Long live the king.

He conceals the body, once more.

EXT. ANGELICA'S RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

Jake stands on Angelica's lawn, engulfed by the tempest.

Angelica emerges, a rolled up newspaper over head.

She rushes toward Jake, holding her robe closed.

ANGELICA  
Jake? What's wrong?

Jake caresses her face.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)  
What's wrong? Something happened at  
Samantha's? A shooting?

JAKE  
Mickey Reynolds betrayed your son.  
Mickey Reynolds killed your son...  
I was wrong... Everything is wrong.

Jake collapses into her arms.

Angelica, stunned, manages to keep him upright.

FADE TO:

EXT. BACKYARD BARBECUE -- DAY -- FLASHBACK

Dog days. Jake, Tim, Sandra, and Tim's wife EILEEN DALY, a total knockout of a blonde in her twenties, sit at a picnic table, enjoying burgers and hot dogs.

Tim keeps stealing food from Eileen's plate. His wife is tall and slender, hair curled into a ponytail, wearing oversized Gucci sunglasses.

SANDRA

We still need to take a group picture.

JAKE

Jesus Christ, would you stop busting everyone's balls about this photo opportunity already?

Tim laughs, the juices of his burger sliding down his hairless chin.

TIM

He's got a point Sandy. Where you find that patience, Jake?

Eileen smacks Tim on the shoulder.

TIM (CONT'D)

I take that back. She probably doesn't need to be negotiated into bed, unlike some people I could mention at this table.

JAKE

What the fuck is wrong with you?

EILEEN

He's trying to make me cry.

TIM

I love making her cry.

EILEEN

He says whenever I cry, the makeup sex is phenomenal. His own words... Phenomenal. Fucking deviant.

SANDRA  
You two are type crazy.

TIM  
Well, it's true. Right? Look at her  
blush!

EILEEN  
No comment.

Eileen can't help but laugh.

TIM  
There's my dirty girl! Where you  
been all day? Welcome to the party!

EILEEN  
Manners Tim?

TIM  
(singing)  
Come on Eileen, come on and see...  
at this moment... you mean  
everything!

JAKE  
Alright, alright, I'm trying to  
fucking eat here.

SANDRA  
Animal carcass.

JAKE  
Excuse me dear, but I don't see any  
broccoli on your plate.

SANDRA  
At least I acknowledge it's wrong.  
When I think of the poor cow that  
had to be slaughtered so you could  
enjoy your burger...

JAKE  
And do I!

Jake takes a hearty bite.

TIM  
At least he died a hero.

Jake and Tim high five.

EILEEN

Stop Sandy... you're making me sad.  
Why you always bring that up?

Eileen fronts an exaggerated pout.

Joe Walsh, younger and slimmer, enters the scene, planting a camera on the table.

WALSH

There Jake. Now tell your wife to  
get off my back already.

JAKE

You too, boss?

Sandra claps, excited.

SANDRA

One last thing Papa Joe... you have  
to snap the picture.

WALSH

Joy.

Sandra, Jake, Eileen, and Tim smile for the camera. A flash,  
and the moment's frozen.

Walsh starts heading back toward the grill, steaming behind  
him.

JAKE

Wait a second, Joe. You better take  
one of my queen, all by her  
lonesome. She deserves a glamour  
shot.

TIM

Intoxicated already, partner?

EILEEN

Stuff it Tim. He's really romantic.

Tim rolls his eyes.

TIM

He's really drunk.

Sandra poses as Walsh zooms in.

WALSH

Here's one for Jake... on the next  
stakeout!

The whole table laughs.

Walsh snaps the photo.

INT. WALSH'S OFFICE -- DAY

A meeting between Joe and Jake.

Walsh sits behind his desk. Jake opts to stand.

He is clean shaven.

JAKE

You remember that barbecue at your house, back in 2000?

WALSH

Can't say I recall.

JAKE

Hot summer. Had the Subway Series that Fall. Derek Jeter.

Jake pumps his fist.

Walsh smiles.

WALSH

Good time for the city. Real good time...

Silence.

WALSH (CONT'D)

How was the sabbatical?

JAKE

Refreshing, I guess.

WALSH

Think about Tim?

JAKE

Not a day goes by. If I just would have let him play golf... he'd still be alive. It wasn't his case.

WALSH

That was Tim. Doing the job. Helping a friend. You didn't pull the trigger.

JAKE

No. I just guided him into the crossfire.

WALSH

Blaming yourself excuses the scum.

JAKE

He was a good man. He was a good man who didn't deserve that.

WALSH

Amen... how's his wife doing?

JAKE

Alright. Eileen's hanging in there. Strong lady. You were right in the car that night. It should have been me. Would have been fair.

WALSH

I've regretted many things said in this life. But the memory of that... Who the hell am I to decide who lives or dies?

Walsh takes out a nearly depleted bottle of Jack, downing it straight.

JAKE

Sprite giving you the shakes?

WALSH

I tried.

JAKE

All they can ask.

WALSH

Ready to work again?

JAKE

I'm quitting, Joe.

WALSH

What? Wait... no... you're a cop, Jake. Make no mistake, this is what you were born to do. I'm willing to forgive any past transgressions. This is the NYPD. Fuck that, this is America. Our country was founded on a clean slate.

JAKE  
This job kills me. I can't let it  
own my soul anymore.

WALSH  
Well, what will you do?

JAKE  
I was thinking of teaching.

WALSH  
Teaching what?

JAKE  
(smiles)  
Something.

WALSH  
Something... be a start, wouldn't  
it?

Walsh gets up from behind his desk.

They share a hug.

WALSH (CONT'D)  
Godspeed.

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Angelica awakes with a start, sharing the bed with Jake.

He rests beside her, already wide awake.

JAKE  
How was yours?

ANGELICA  
I don't remember.

JAKE  
Lucky.

ANGELICA  
Tell me what you see.

JAKE  
When I sleep?

ANGELICA  
Yeah.

JAKE

It's the same scenario every time.  
My only escape is drinking into  
oblivion. It was my excuse, I  
suppose. Those dark days.

ANGELICA

Get it off your chest.

Jake hesitates.

ANGELICA (CONT'D)

It'll help.

JAKE

You better be sure.

Angelica kisses his hand, takes hold.

ANGELICA

Trust me.

JAKE

Alright... I'm in a stairwell... or  
some sort of dark place... Sandy's  
there. The world's falling apart  
all around us. No way out. I run  
toward her, trying to offer some  
comfort, because she's afraid,  
she's so afraid... and I can't  
stand it. I just can't stand seeing  
her so scared. It's tearing up my  
insides. I'd walk through hell to  
spare her from feeling that fear.  
And I try to hold her, I try to  
calm her down, but she doesn't see  
me. She needs me, but I'm not  
there. She tries talking, but  
this... black smoke is pouring out  
of her lungs. And I'm begging, I'm  
pleading with God to save her,  
because she never hurt anybody. She  
never hurt anybody. But I guess God  
can't hear me either. Eventually,  
she keels over, coughing, crying.  
And I can't stop it. I can't do a  
damn thing. Finally, her eyes turn  
lifeless... And I wake up. It's all  
wrong... and I'm powerless,  
understand?

Jake gets out of bed. He walks toward his drawer, removing a  
picture. He hands it to Angelica.

It's Sandra, at the barbecue, vibrant, full of life, as they all were that day.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Before I met you, that nightmare would chase me into morning. I'd stay up, see the sun rise. Staring at that picture. Occasionally call Tim. Now, I can sleep. Most times.

ANGELICA

You'll see her again, Jake.

JAKE

Afterlife?

ANGELICA

We never die. Maybe in time you'll understand the love can save us.

Jake smiles, wipes away a tear.

JAKE

I don't know what you saw in me. I couldn't see it in myself.

ANGELICA

Your heart, Jake. You made me believe.

EXT. GRAVEYARD -- DAY

Jake and Angelica wind their way through the burial grounds.

Jake is holding flowers, and Angelica's hand.

He stops in front of a white headstone, kneeling, placing the flowers down.

He kisses his hand, touches the stone, eyes closed, reflecting.

Jake stands.

He holds Angelica.

They continue along together, arms locked.

FADE TO BLACK.