

FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD - WINTER DAY

A police car, nothing more than a speck on the landscape, is intermittently visible through the blowing snow.

INT. POLICE CAR - SAME

A CORPORAL (20s), behind the wheel, with a bored DETECTIVE BOYLE (60s) at his side.

CORPORAL

So his hand is like, off, right. So he puts on a tourniquet, puts the hand in his pocket, walks five miles through the bush til he gets to the highway, where he passes out, on the road, right. Then this logging truck comes along...

DETECTIVE BOYLE

(looking ahead)

Hey.

The Corporal looks forward.

CAR'S POV: Through the windshield of a WOMAN (40s), dressed in her pajamas and a parka, skipping down the middle of the road.

EXT. ROAD

The police car pulls to a stop, just as the woman does a pirouette and falls over backwards.

Detective Boyle and the other Cop get out and walk over.

CORPORAL

(into his radio)

Dispatch, this is unit 611, we need a first responder --

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Cancel that.

The Woman kicks up a leg, wiggles her foot.

DETECTIVE BOYLE (cont'd)

I know where she belongs.

As they lift her up...

1 INT. INSIDE A TRASH DUMPSTER - LATE AFTERNOON 1 *

The dumpster lid opens on a bitterly cold, gray winter's day in an Alaskan city. A chunky, shivering HAIR STYLIST with jet black bangs shakes out a box of conditioning samples.

HAIR STYLIST

(to someone O.S.)

She says "I haven't eaten all day," then, right there on the bus she pulls out this, like, salmon steak and I'm...

2 INT. INSIDE A TRASH DUMPSTER - LATE AFTERNOON 2

The dumpster lid BANGS shut, reopens a beat later. A moment of calm until two garbage bags SLAM against the inside of the lid. It falls shut with a CLANG.

3 EXT. TRASH DUMPSTER - NIGHT 3

The lid reopens. Night time now, as a street lamp BUZZES to life. A middle-aged MAN in work clothes checks to make sure he's alone. He gently lowers the lid, opens it again a moment later, this time balancing a mini-bar fridge on his shoulder. He dumps the appliance into the bin and runs off.

4 INT. INSIDE A TRASH DUMPSTER - NIGHT 4

The lid reopens. SIRENS off in the distance...

MEN'S VOICES (O.S.)

One, two, three... up.

The lifeless body of a fair-sized man comes CRASHING into the garbage. SIRENS closer. A man seen only in silhouette leans in to pull some garbage over the corpse. A second man looks in, then pulls the first man away.

MAN'S VOICE

We'll get him later. C'mon.

The lid drops.

5 EXT. TRASH DUMPSTER - MORNING 5

Black. The dumpster reopens. Morning now. A Korean-American TEENAGER wearing an apron and headphones sings along to an old KISS tune as he deposits two large orange garbage bags.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

TEENAGER

"...Get up, everybody's gonna move their feet, get down, everybody's gonna leave their seat...gonna lose your mind in..."

He shuts the lid with care. Black.

6

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

6

A cookie-cutter subdivision. Old pine trees poke through the snow cover that blankets the neighborhood. HOWARD (30s), a burly outdoors type, is trying to unload a new snowmobile from the back of his pickup. TED WATTERS (late 20s) half hidden under a heavy dress coat, walks down the street. He stops by Howard's driveway.

TED

Need a hand?

HOWARD

(turning)

Yeah. Could ya grab me those two by eights?

Ted walks up the driveway, grabs the wood slats, makes a ramp by leaning them against the rear bumper.

HOWARD (cont'd)

Thanks.

Howard maneuvers the snowmobile down the ramp, his back turned toward Ted -- who has taken out a small cam-corder and is taping Howard.

HOWARD (cont'd)

I tell ya, it may look fast but it sure ain't light. You the guy who just moved in to the Stevens old house?

TED

No. Name's Ted.

HOWARD

Hey Ted, I'm Howard.

TED

Hey Howard. What is that, an Arctic Cat? What do those go for?

7

P.O.V. CAMCORDER VIEW FINDER

7

Howard finally has the snowmobile on the ground. He's breathing heavy as he pulls off his mitt to shake hands.

(CONTINUED)

7

CONTINUED:

HOWARD

More than I could normally afford, I'll tell ya.
 (seeing the camera)
 Hey! What do you think you're you doing?

As Ted and Howard continue to talk, we PULL BACK to reveal we are watching Ted's video playing on a VCR that is --

8

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE / COMMON AREA - DAY

8

A group of office WORKERS look on, very much impressed, as a stunned Howard stares at the camera.

TED (O.S.)

Howard, you seem like a reasonable kind of guy.
 Lets you and me talk.

TIGHT ON: WATTERS at his nearby cubicle, typing frenetically on his computer. At first, he appears to be working, until we realize that on his computer screen pixilated Zombies die in silent anguish beneath an unholy hail of bullets. A Miami Dolphins sticker is the sole cubicle decoration.

As the tape finishes, a smattering of APPLAUSE from his colleagues. Ted gives a small wave over the cubicle wall.

TED (cont'd)

Thank you. Just happy to give something back to
 Liberty Capital...
 (to himself - bitter)
 After all they've done for me.

9

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE / COMMON AREA - DAY

9

CAM (30s), Native-American Alaskan walks over. Ted immediately hits a key that turns the screen to a spread-sheet.

CAM

That was really cool. It was like... watching "Cops".

TED

He was pretty spry for a man with a herniated disc.

CAM

You know, I don't want to bitch or anything, but you were supposed to take me along on that one.

(CONTINUED)

TED
Couldn't find you.

CAM
I know you know this, but the sooner they think I can handle calls on my own, the sooner they'll kick you back down south.

TED
I've been hearing that for 13 months and six days, Cam. After a while, it gets a little old.
(off Cam's look)
Next time, okay.

Good enough. Cam moves off. Back to the zombie blood bath. The phone RINGS. Ted picks up, his eyes never wavering from the gore intensive computer game.

TED (cont'd)
Claims, Ted Watters. Sure.

A final key stroke separates one last zombie from its entrails.

10 INT. INSURANCE OFFICE / BRANCH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

10

TIGHT ON: A MOUNTED SALMON

We PULL BACK to see the walls lined with souvenirs of a life spent on the edge of the wilderness; citations from the Rotarians, pictures of sponsored hockey teams... We are --

FRANK BRANCH (50s), a mid-level management type sits across from PAUL BARNELL (40s), a mild-mannered everyman wrapped in a cheap suit. Paul takes in the display. The two men sit in silence, smiling politely at one another.

PAUL
That's... quite the fish.

Branch is about to answer when Ted enters with a slim file.

BRANCH
Paul Barnell, Ted Watters.

Handshakes. Paul makes steady eye contact. Ted notices.

BRANCH (cont'd)
Mr. Barnell wants to talk to us about his brother's life insurance policy.

Ted sits and flips open the file.

TED
Raymond, isn't it?

PAUL
Yes, Raymond. You see, as I've already explained to Mr. Branch, he's been gone for five years now, and I thought it might be time to... move on.

TED
By move on you mean...?

BRANCH
...cash in Raymond's policy.

Ted smiles to himself.

PAUL
I just thought, well, it's pretty unlikely he's still alive. My Dad always wanted us to be able to look after each other if anything should ever happen. And to be frank, money's a little --

TED
I understand Mr. Barnell, but here's the thing. With no actual body, under Alaskan statutes a person must be missing for seven years before he or she can be legally declared dead and that's notwithstanding an investigation period where concerned parties can take up to another year to file interventions concerning the motion. So, even though your brother's status is undetermined at this point, there's really very little we can do for you.

Ted flips the file shut. Case closed. Branch, not entirely happy with Ted's demeanor, forces a smile.

BRANCH
Of course we are extremely sorry for your loss.

Branch looks at Ted. Ted turns to Paul.

TED
Oh, absolutely.

11 EXT. STRIP MALL - NIGHT 11

The city skyline rises in the distance as heat vents belch steam against the rapidly setting sun. But that's miles away. Here on the outskirts is a rapidly failing five store strip mall; a "Porn-a-copia" XXX Video store, hair stylist, small engine repair shop, fish and chips joint and the "Barnell Great Escapes" travel agency. We might notice a big trash dumpster in the corner. Paul's car, a Ford Taurus, pulls onto the parking pad.

12 INT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 12

Paul driving, talking on his cell phone and balancing a big non-spill metallic travel coffee mug at the same time.

PAUL

Hang on, hang on. First off, how did you get my cell number? (Beat) Because it's for mechanical and medical emergencies only.

Paul, wound up, taps his brakes too hard. His mug falls, the lid pops and the coffee proceeds to soak a stack of papers.

PAUL (cont'd)

Great.

(back into phone)

No, I'm not... I just... give me a second here.

Paul parks his car, gathers the soggy papers and gets out.

13 EXT. STRIP MALL 13

Paul, still on the phone, carries the papers to the dumpster.

PAUL

Yes, and that check went out a week ago. I watched my secretary write it up.

14 EXT. INSIDE THE DUMPSTER 14

Black. Paul opens the lid. The phone is cradled in his neck, he checks each soggy page to make sure he's not tossing anything important.

PAUL

Well I don't know. I, I, I have no clue. Could it possibly be a problem on your end? So the electric company never makes a... Look, I pay my bills. I'm a Rotarian for goodness --

(CONTINUED)

Paul looks over to see some MEN from Rodney's Repo Ranch walking up to the front door of his office. Distracted for a moment, the phone slips and falls into the trash.

Paul, muttering, leans in to get it. He pushes aside an orange garbage bag, guided by the faint sound of the other person STILL TALKING. And then--

PAUL'S POV: of THE BODY-- a 40-ish White (well, a little blue) male dressed in a cheap suit. Paul's phone lies across the corpse's mouth, like the dead guy is talking.

THE CELL PHONE

Mr. Barnell? Mr. Barnell?

15 EXT. PARKING AREA / STRIP MALL

15

A SHOUT as Paul jumps back from the dumpster. The lid CRASHES down as he scrambles/slides away. He takes a moment to compose himself, then realizes his phone is still in there.

He opens the dumpster lid and very quickly reaches in, grabs his cell and hurries off. The lid CRASHES shut.

PAUL

(into the phone)

Hello?

Hung up. Paul dials 911, looks back at the dumpster, thinks for a second, then hits END. He stands there, thinking.

A15 INT. "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - LATER

A15

Paul back in his office, staring out the window with a perfect view of the dumpster. He can't take his eyes off it.

Behind him, the Repo-Men are picking up a newish computer monitor and walking toward the door. He's oblivious.

At the sound of a TRUCK, his head snaps around. It's a garbage truck, but instead of heading to the dumpster, it rumbles past on the road. That's all it takes.

B15 EXT. PARKING AREA / STRIP MALL - MOMENTS LATER

B15

Paul backs his Ford Taurus up to the dumpster, pops the trunk, checks to make sure he's alone then steps up on the rear bumper, opens the lid and clammers inside.

16 INT. INSIDE AFRIDGE - LATER

16

Black. The fridge door opens, the light revealing several cans of pop and beer in the foreground. Behind the

(CONTINUED)

16

CONTINUED:

beverages, a garage where Paul struggles with the lifeless body. He props the man against the hood of his car, gives him a quick once over, pockets, obvious wounds. Nothing.

Paul moves to the fridge, starts to pull things out.

17

INT. ATTACHED SUBURBAN GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

17

Jodie, an annoyingly small dog, enters the garage from the house and starts sniffing around the body. A new chew toy!

PAUL
(at the sound)
Jodie, no! Not for dogs!

He SHOOS the dog back into the house. Paul moves back to the fridge, opens the door and, with great effort picks up the dead man and tries to stuff him inside. Only problem...

The man's legs don't want to fit. Paul leans down and grabs an uncooperative appendage. He grits his teeth, looks away as he kicks at the knee. It SNAPS sideways.

Paul fights nausea. But with the leg now out of joint, the man fits. Paul, breathing heavy, leans against the door.

PAUL (cont'd)
OK then. OK.

He packs in the remaining space with beer and pop bottles. Then, just before he shuts the door, Paul reaches in and sets the fridge temperature from 1 to 9 (the coldest setting).

A padlock and chain come from the base of a propane BBQ. It goes around the fridge, the lock SNAPS it in place. Paul spots some leftover drink cans. He kicks them to the corner and walks into the house, trying to sound casual.

PAUL (cont'd)
Hey Honey. Any mail?

18

EXT. CITY ROADWAY - EVENING

18

Ted drives home through a wooded section of town.

A18

INT. TED'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

A18

Ted checks out various radio stations, hating everything. He lands on one playing "Escape (The piña Colada Song)" when he looks up and suddenly jams on the brakes.

B18 EXT. ROADWAY

B18

Ted car slides toward a moose that has wandered into the middle of the road. The car stops about five feet away.

The moose looks at Ted. Ted looks back, wondering what he ever did to deserve the life he's stuck with. After a moment, the moose lumbers off. Ted drives on.

CUT TO:

19/20/2 INT TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

19/20/21

TIGHT ON: A COMPUTER SCREEN where swirling signs of the Zodiac act as a screen saver. PULL BACK TO REVEAL we are --

A telephone cord runs from the computer to the headset of TIFFANY (20s), pert, smart and dressed in a tight University of Alaska T-shirt. Tiffany sits with her feet up on the desk as she flips through a copy of "Cosmo".

It's a medium sized apartment, littered with guy stuff although bowing to advancing signs of feminine influence.

The phone RINGS. Tiffany hits the space bar. The caller's number flashes on screen. By the second ring, an electronic timer kicks in and a complete file on the caller appears with name, address, background, pets... She smiles, hits "enter."

TIFFANY

(into her headset)

Psychic Pals. How are you today... Mr. Williams?

(pause - she listens)

Well, we are all registered psychics here. I just had a feeling you'd be calling. What's up?

A KEY IN THE DOOR. A tired Ted walks inside.

TED

Hey Tiff.

Tiffany looks up, then holds up a file folder with the words "WORKING - SHHHHHH!" in big black letters.

TIFFANY

(to caller)

Your TV remote control? Okay.

Ted SIGHS, gives her a quick peck on the cheek as he wrestles off his winter gear and heads to the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

TIFFANY (cont'd)
I need you to clear your mind...

Ted looks into the fridge, making up new words to the song "Escape."

TED
"If you like frozen enchiladas, getting caught in the rain. If you're not into...something brownish."

Ted pulls out some Tupperware, tries to figure out what's in it. Tiffany, still wearing her headset, appears behind him, grabs a Diet Coke from the fridge and kisses him on the cheek.

TIFFANY
It's stew. I'm not sure it's still good.

TED
Aren't you with a customer?

TIFFANY
They're concentrating.

Ted grabs a fork, takes the pot and sits at the table. Tiffany goes back to her desk and flips through her magazine.

TED
(through a mouthful of food)
So? How's the tea leaf business today?

TIFFANY
I've decided from now on to ignore you when you're ignorant about my work. And it's going very well thank you.
(reconnecting to the caller)
Mr. Williams, I'm seeing sofa cushions. Do you have a sofa? Good. Glad I could help.

TED
You here from that software distributor guy?

TIFFANY
No, but I did crack that code problem. You know how sometimes when you're running Beta versions you --

TED
English, please.

TIFFANY
There was a boo-boo, but I fixed it.
(another call comes in)
Psychic Pals, how are you today, Carol? Now I
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

19/20/21 CONTINUED: (2)

19/20/21

TIFFANY (cont'd)
thought we'd agreed God is everywhere, but not
specifically in your coffee pot.

TED

Jeez, Tiff.

TIFFANY

Jeez, Ted. Do I tell you how to do your job?

(CONTINUED)

TED
(kidding... kind of)
No, but then again I'm not a computer aided pseudo-
psychic, so if you're looking for moral equivalence...

TIFFANY
Before you say anything else that may keep us from
having sex ever again, let me ask you something...

She picks up her magazine.

TED
Tiff, please. I always get these wrong.

TIFFANY
That's why we keep trying. Now, Love is Sacrifice
test.
(reading)
If you were in a life raft with me and there was only
enough water --

TED
Don't you have a customer?

TIFFANY
(to the caller)
Carol? God says he's busy with a famine right now,
but you should keep praying. Cool.

She hangs up. Turns back to Ted, about to pick up where she left off...

TED
No. I'm not doing it.

TIFFANY
It's just a stupid quiz.

TED
Exactly.

The PHONE RINGS. Tiffany bolts to her desk, sits, spins in her chair as she
answers the call.

TIFFANY
Psychic Pals. Is this the first time you've called us
Mrs...?

Tiffany at her computer, enters the name "Margaret Barnell" into her database.
Tiffany works a "mute" button as she points back to the magazine.

TIFFANY (cont'd)

But stupid quizzes can be illustrative of potential relationship problems.

(to her caller)

Margaret, I'm getting the feeling this is an anxious day for you.

Ted, cooking pot in hand, walks over to her desk.

TED

Our only relationship problem is you're running a \$1.99 a minute carny scam out of my living room.

TIFFANY

Don't call it a scam.

(to the caller - startled)

Excuse me?

TED

What?

TIFFANY

You've got to learn to channel that rage, Margaret.

(to Ted - playful)

You didn't just call this your living room, did you?

TED

I meant ours. Ours, ours, ours.

Tiffany returns to her call, but keeps looking at Ted.

TIFFANY

I feel someone you really care about, maybe even the love of your life, is being a real pain. Now I need you to concentrate...

Ted pretends to do just that, drawing a giggle from Tiffany before he walks off.

22 INT. "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - MORNING

22

Paul tries to open the front door, but finds it blocked by a small pile of snow. Three good yanks and it finally opens. He enters the shop.

Faded travel posters cover the walls. AVIS (40s), a career office gal, smiles at her boss as she assembles a life-size stand-up cardboard display for Aloha Airlines. It features a

dark Hawaiian beauty holding a softball sized sea shell. The shell juts out of the display giving it a 3-D quality.

AVIS
Morning Mr. Barnell. Coffee?

PAUL
Thanks Avis. Looks good.

Paul, shivering, hangs up his coat as Avis picks up a promotional Aloha Air surfboard (the old display) and walks it to the back.

PAUL (cont'd)
Was November this bad last year?

AVIS (O.S.)
Well if we didn't have the weather what would we talk about? Did you send the computer back?

Paul moves to his desk.

PAUL
Yeah, it was not working. Any calls?

AVIS (O.S.)
Just that fellow from Municipal Power and Electric. I told him you sent the check in weeks ago, but some people don't like to listen.

Paul turns to look at the snow covered empty parking lot, then at a photo of his wife Margaret on his desk. He mentally gathers himself.

PAUL
Something... strange happened last night Avis.

AVIS (O.S.)
What was that?

PAUL
Did... you ever meet my brother Raymond?

AVIS (O.S.)
The one who went missing?

PAUL
Uh huh. Well anyway last night there's a knock on the door and there's Raymond, just... standing there on the doorstep.

Avis arrives with the coffee and the mail.

AVIS
Didn't you have him declared...?

PAUL
Dead? No. I mean, they said he hadn't been gone long enough.

AVIS
(smiling warmly)
Good thing in hindsight.

Paul puts the mail down on the desk and start to flip through it. Lots of bills, most marked past due. He finds a "pre- approved" credit card application, sets it to one side.

AVIS (cont'd)
So where was he all these years?

PAUL
Lower 48. Said he wanted to get away from the cold.

AVIS
Where 'bouts?

PAUL
(looking up)
Sorry, what was that?

AVIS
Where was he living?

Paul, a flash of panic, looks over at the Hawaii display. He keys on the shell.

PAUL
Florida.

AVIS
I've got an aunt down there. Where 'bouts?

PAUL
(blinking)
A uh... small place. By the beach.

AVIS
Well that's great. You and Mrs. Barnell will have some company for a bit I guess. How is she?

22 CONTINUED: (3)

PAUL

Better, a little better. Some days are better than others.

23 INT. BARNELL HOME - DAY

23

MARGARET BARNELL (early 40s) stands in a plush bathrobe and slippers. Despite her casual attire she is immaculately made up as she walks to the front door, opening it on -- a young wholesome PAPERBOY smiling through the cold.

PAPERBOY

Collecting, Mrs. Barnell.

MARGARET

Daniel, you pussy little cocksucker. I'll get my purse.

The paperboy, unfazed, smiles as Margaret walks off.

PAPERBOY

It's 12 dollars. I missed you last time.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Jerk off... OK, jerk off, uhhuh...

Margaret gives the paperboy his money, the stamp card plus a dollar tip, then tweaks his nose. Twice.

MARGARET (cont'd)

You say hi to your slut Mom for me?

PAPERBOY

Sure will. Thanks.

He trots down the walk as Margaret shuts the door.

24 EXT. INSIDE A TRASH DUMPSTER - NIGHT

24

The lid opens. GARY and JIMBO (30s), check to insure they're not being watched. Gary, slightly effeminate, leans into the bin and BURROWS through the garbage. Jimbo, a bear of man, keeps watch. He's nervous, a little out of sorts.

GARY

I thought stuff didn't smell when it was frozen? I don't know why we have to--

JIMBO

Dave wants visual confirmation, he gets visual confirmation. We have a chance to move up here, so let's just--

(CONTINUED)

GARY

Like the guys not gonna end up in a land- fill,
anyway. You ever ask Dave what he did?

JIMBO

Whatever it was, he told him if he did it again, he'd
snap his neck.

GARY

(smiling)

Whoops, he did it again.

(off Jimbo not getting it)

The song? From that girl?

No response. Gary, HUMMING now, keeps digging, finding nothing.

GARY (cont'd)

So how'd it feel? I mean, not when you did it, but,
like now?

JIMBO

I don't want to talk about it.

Gary hops inside as his actions become more frantic. Still no luck. He stands.

GARY

Not here.

Jimbo glares at his partner.

GARY (cont'd)

Serious. He's gone. Maybe he wasn't...

JIMBO

Don't even joke. Maybe the trash was emptied.

GARY

Looks pretty full. Hey...

(ducking down)

There's a little fridge down here.

(standing)

If we would have shot him at least we'd know for
sure.

JIMBO

I was following orders. And if you hadn't started a
screaming match, no one would have called the
cops and we wouldn't have had to dump his --

(CONTINUED)

GARY

Fine. Sorry.

JIMBO

Fine.

GARY

I'm just saying... maybe you didn't break it all the way.

JIMBO

(walking away)

It was broken.

GARY

I'm just saying... maybe it was like hypothermia and he just looked dead.

JIMBO

It - was - BROKEN!

Gary, embarrassed, digs in the trash with his feet.

25 INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

25

Margaret, still in her bathrobe, walks to the fridge. As she puts her hand on the latch, she notices the pile of pop cans on the floor.

She tugs on the door. It opens just a crack before the chain stops it. The frozen head peeks through the slight gap.

Margaret SIGHS, tries to push the fridge door closed, but the body is in the way. She gives the door a hip check. The door latches shut while something frozen and brittle inside CRACKS. Margaret, oblivious, walks away.

26 INT. KITCHEN OVEN

26

A chicken sits in a pan, the rest of the room visible behind it through the oven door window.

MARGARET (O.S.)

Paul? Why is the fridge in the garage chained shut?

PAUL

How's my Angel tonight?

MARGARET

Blow me. Dinner's almost ready. You feel like some wine? I feel like some wine.

Paul walks to the oven, opens the door and pats the chicken. Stone cold.

PAUL

Sweetie, here's a crazy thought... I don't feel like chicken tonight, why don't we order in?

MARGARET

Fuck it, okay.

PAUL

There's actually something we need to talk about. It's about Raymond. He's back.

Paul smiles bravely as he shuts the oven door. Behind the chicken, Margaret doesn't look happy as Paul starts to explain. She rushes from the room.

27/28 TIGHT ON: TV SCREEN

27/28

Home video of RAYMOND (then early 30s), fat, physically imposing and the only person not in festive tropical gear, standing in a VFW hall decorated in a Caribbean theme. (He is definitely not the same person Paul has cooling in the fridge.) A large banner behind him proclaims "HAPPY 10TH ANNIVERSARY - BON VOYAGE."

RAYMOND

(a little drunk)

Okay, I never thought it would last this long, but seeing as how it has... There ya go. Let me just say that my brother, old "Puddles McBarnesy" did better than he should have.

A younger, somewhat tipsy Paul comes into frame, puts an arm around his brother and smiles.

PAUL

What'cha saying there Raymond? Wha'cha saying 'bout me?

Raymond shakes his brother's arm off his shoulder.

RAYMOND

Enough, OK?

PAUL

(sing-songy)

Ray's a little jealllllllous. This is the one that got away, right Ray?

(CONTINUED)

The crowd LAUGHS as Paul reaches over and musses up his brother's hair. Raymond, furious, grabs his brother by the lapels and throws him roughly to the floor. The laughter stops.

MARGARET (O.S.)
Leave him alone, ball licker!

RAYMOND
And shut that thing --

The screen turns to snow. We are...

Paul at his desk, watching the video on a small TV in the wall unit. He turns his attention to a large cardboard box filled with documents, souvenirs, old report cards...

On the TV playing behind him (the second part of the tape), Margaret is pictured on a cruise ship, sunning herself. Paul, obviously behind the camera, watches as Margaret takes a tropical drink from a WAITER'S tray, who promptly dumps it all over her. But instead of the expected burst of profanity, Margaret just LAUGHS.

MARGARET
That's okay, don't worry about it.
(as the waiter walks off)
I'd like the next one in a cup, please.

Paul puts aside a faded hotel postcard from Hawaii and digs out an insurance policy out of the box. On the last page is a list of the payouts. Loss of a limb: \$100,000. Loss of thumb: \$5,000. Accidental death: \$1,000,000.

And, as an extra bonus, Raymond's birth certificate. Perfect. Paul takes out the credit card application from work, and starts to write...

PAUL
(to himself)
Raymond... Barnell.

29 EXT. TOBOGGANING HILL - LATE AFTERNOON 29

LAUGHING children on toboggans, inner tubes and discarded cardboard boxes slide down a snow covered hill against a slate gray sky. It's an isolated area on the outskirts of the city.

30 INT. GARY AND JIMBO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 30

Gary and Jimbo sit in their car in the parking area.

JIMBO

Which one's your sister's kid?

GARY

See the one on the little bike-thing? Him.

JIMBO

(hesitant)

You been alright with this?

GARY

The thing with the guy? Ya know, I thought it might kinda mess me up...

JIMBO

First time for both of us.

GARY

...but I've been sleeping really well.

JIMBO

Yeah. 'Course, you didn't actually...

Jimbo mimics snapping someone's neck. It's clearly not a gesture he enjoys. As Gary looks at him, a Cadillac pulls up beside them. Behind the wheel is DAVE (50s) well dressed, in a thuggish kinda way. Jimbo and Gary share a nervous look.

31 EXT. TOP OF THE HILL - CONTINUOUS

31

About 50 yards away from the two cars, Gary's NEPHEW is having his Snowrider (a tricycle with skis instead of wheels) hijacked by a playground BULLY in a red parka. A tug o' war for the toy ensues as Gary and Jimbo get out of their car.

NEPHEW

Leggo... it's mine. Uncle Gary!

32 EXT. PARKING AREA

32

Gary and Jimbo are leaning close to the Cadillac's open window. Dave does not look happy.

DAVE

(to Jimbo)

Wait a minute. He's disappeared?

Gary waves to his nephew.

GARY
(shouting)
You just... hang in there, Billy!

JIMBO

Yeah. But he's dead. I mean, that part, no question.

DAVE

Yeah? Take off your coat. And your shirt, too.

Jimbo knows better than to argue. He strips down, exposing his corpulent middle-aged belly to the chilly winter winds.

JIMBO

I'm not wearing a wire, Dave, if that's what this is about.

GARY

It was our first time. No one gets it perfect their first time.

DAVE

You too, Sweetie.

Gary is about to comply when the sound of a FIGHT on the tobogganing hill causes them all to look over, just in time to see GARY'S NEPHEW shoved to ground. The Bully LAUGHS as he slides away.

GARY

Excuse me for a second.

Gary trots toward the hill. Jimbo can't believe it.

JIMBO

Gary! We're in the middle of something.

GARY

(calling back)

Hey, I'm supposed to be looking after him.

Jimbo turns back to Dave, shrugging sheepishly.

DAVE

Is he...?

JIMBO

He's fine. Look, we can take you there right now. We'll show you.

Behind them on the hill, Gary tries to retrieve his nephew's Snowrider from the Bully. He is failing.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE

Show me what? An empty trash dumpster? It was supposed to look like an accident. I was hoping to see it in the paper. So help me, if this guy pops up somewhere...

While Jimbo does his best to stay warm, behind him on the hill, Gary can only watch as the Bully slides away.

BULLY

(echoing in the cold)

Fag! Big homo!

JIMBO

He won't. He can't. He's --

DAVE

Proof, Jimbo. I like to know my money's well spent. You got a week.

Dave drives off as Gary walks over with his SNIFFLING nephew.

GARY

Slippery little sucker. You mind if we stop at a toy store on the way back?

33 OMITTED

33

A 33 INT. BARNELL HOME / BEDROOM - NIGHT

A 33

HIGH ANGLE ON: Paul and Margaret in bed. Margaret takes up more than her share of the bed, her arm tossed over her husband. Paul, on his third of the bed, looks as if he's lying in state. But Paul's not sleeping.

34 EXT. BARNELL HOME - MORNING

34

A newspaper clears the "For Sale - price reduced!" sign on the front lawn and lands with a THUD on the steps.

35 INT. GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

35

Paul has the "Morning News" on the hood of his car. He looks over at the fridge, still padlocked.

PAUL

(to himself)

Let's see if anyone's missing you.

He flips through each section. There's nothing. Paul walks to the fridge.

PAUL (cont'd)

(to the corpse)

I don't know what kind of man let's himself just freeze to death in the trash, but I was never one to preach. Way I see it, you've probably got family somewhere and they'd probably appreciate seeing you get a decent funeral, even if it's not really... yours.

Paul, somewhat befuddled, gently pats the fridge door.

36 OMITTED 36

37 INT. BARNELL HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATER 37

Margaret pushes the vacuum across the floor, humming to herself. Paul walks by slipping into his coat. He notices that the vacuum isn't plugged in. Without missing a beat, he walks over and plugs it into the outlet. The VACUUM ROARS TO LIFE. Margaret doesn't flinch. Paul heads out the door.

38 OMITTED 38

39 OMITTED 39

40 EXT. WOODED AREA - LATER 40

A ways out in the forest. Only two houses on this turn-out; a cozy looking lived-in cabin sits up the road from a seemingly deserted rundown mobile home. A car pulls up.

A40 INT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS A40

Paul adjusts a pillow he has taped to his stomach, then pulls on a blue ski mask.

41 EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - MOMENTS LATER 41

Paul undoes the bungee cord and drags his snowblower out of the trunk. He fires up the snowblower and starts to plow the drive way of both houses.

MRS. WHERRY (80s), in her bathrobe, looks out the window of the cozy cabin. A tad confused, she waves to the man in the blue parka. The blue parka waves back.

42 INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 42

Paul walks in from the garage, pulling off his blue parka. Margaret enters from the living room. (Paul still has the pillow taped to his front, which Margaret happily pokes with a finger but never mentions.)

42

CONTINUED:

MARGARET

(nervous)

He's not here, is he?

PAUL

Sweetie, don't you worry about Raymond.

MARGARET

When he's around, it just brings back... Fuck.

PAUL

I know. He, he said he's probably gonna head back down South soon.

Margaret smiles, relieved. The phone RINGS. Paul picks up.

43

INT. MRS. WHERRY'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

43

Mrs. Wherry talks on the phone in her kitchen. The head of a large antelope is mounted on the wall behind her.

MRS. WHERRY

Paul? Thank you so much for clearing the drive way. That was most considerate.

PAUL

I'm afraid I don't understand Mrs. Wherry.

MRS. WHERRY

You were out at the cabin this morning. Nice to see you getting some use out of that thing.

44

INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN

44

Paul shakes off his boots.

PAUL

Oh I see. No, you see that must have been Raymond. (beat) Very much so. No, no one was more surprised than we were. (beat) No, he's... indisposed right now, but I'm sure you'll see him again. He's going to stay at the cabin for a while until he... leaves. And bless you too.

45

OMITTED

45

46

OMITTED

46

47 EXT. WILDERNESS ROAD - NIGHT 47

A "Moose Xing" sign is briefly illuminated by Paul's car's headlights as it heads up a snow packed mountain road. The distant lights of the city are swallowed by the thick forests of fir trees that line the road.

48 INT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 48

Paul, nervous, sings along to "Escape" on the radio.

PAUL

"...It was my own lovely lady, and she said, oh it's you..."

A48 EXT. WILDERNESS ROAD / TURNOUT - NIGHT A48

Paul pulls off. Kills his headlights. Pops the trunk.

49 EXT. FOREST - LATER 49

The corpse, now in Raymond's clothing and the blue parka, lies face up on the Aloha Airlines promotional surfboard being lurched forward by Paul, who wears a pair of snowshoes. On the body's chest lies a second pair of snowshoes. Somewhere, a WOLF HOWLS.

50 EXT. TOP/BOTTOM OF A RIDGE - LATER 50

Paul at the top of a 25 foot drop. He rolls the corpse, now wearing the other set of snowshoes, over the side. It BOUNCES down, landing in the snow with a soft WHUMPH!

51 OMITTED 51

52 INT. PAUL'S HOME / KITCHEN - DAWN 52

Paul sits in a seeming stupor at the kitchen table. A DING from the microwave snaps him out of his catatonic state. He walks to the appliance, takes out his now re-heated coffee, checks his watch and heads out.

53 EXT. TOP OF THE RIDGE / FOREST - MORNING 53

Paul, wearing snowshoes and carrying the surfboard, peeks over the edge.

PAUL'S POV: down at the corpse, exactly as it was last night.

PAUL

Well come on! How much easier do I have to make this?

His words echo in the cold wilderness.

54 INT. PAUL'S KITCHEN - DAY

54

Jodie the dog is in a complete frenzy, jumping up and down at the feet of Paul who stands over a SIZZLING frying pan full of bacon. He checks the bacon's consistency with a fork. Still pretty raw. He takes the bacon and lays it on a plate.

Beside the pan on the counter sit a baseball cap and a stapler. Paul carefully takes each strip of bacon and staples it to the peak of the ball cap. He holds it up. The bacon hangs down like fringe.

Margaret appears in the doorway.

MARGARET

Paul?

PAUL

(startled)

Holy-- Margaret, you scared the wits out of me.

Margaret lifts up Jodie, who's desperately trying to get at the hat.

MARGARET

She just wants that bacon.

PAUL

Such a little puppy. How late is "Rudys" open?

55 EXT. SHOPPING CENTER / RUDYS MARKET - LATE AFTERNOON

55

A large sign outside advertises "Fresh Moose Meat". Paul runs out with a shopping bag, jumps in his car and drives off.

56 EXT. BOTTOM OF THE RIDGE - SUNSET

56

Paul, carrying the shopping bag, he painfully picks his way down the rock face toward the corpse.

PAUL

(really bad British accent)

You may want to take a gander. You may want to take a gander...

CUT TO:

57 EXT. BOTTOM OF THE RIDGE - SUNSET 57

THE BACON HAT -- as Paul pulls it snug on the corpse's head. He pulls the bloody steaks from the shopping bag and starts to smear them on the corpse's parka. Drops of blood hit the snow at the body's feet and disappear.

Paul drapes the steaks on the body, tucking one under an arm, the other hanging from a pocket. He pauses for moment, then pulls out a container of lard and, fighting his own revulsion, smears it across the dead man's face.

PAUL
Sorry about this part.

Paul pats the body on the shoulder, then looks up at the ridge and the long journey ahead.

58 EXT. BOTTOM OF RIDGE - NIGHT 58

A WOLF appears in the moonlight. Followed by another, and another. They approach the corpse...

59 EXT. HIGHWAY TURNOUT / CLEARING - DAY 59

Snowmobiles SCREAM to the site as people tramp through the thick snow, covering all of Paul's hard work. An ambulance and State Conservation vehicles pack the area where Paul first pulled off. Yellow police tape is strung between fir trees marking a path toward the ridge.

60 EXT. BOTTOM OF RIDGE - DAY 60

The corpse is covered with a tarp. The area is littered with blood, animal tracks and bits of blue parka. POLICE OFFICERS and tough looking LOCAL SNOWMOBILERS mill about the corpse, taking turns lifting the tarp that covers the body. A few yards away, DETECTIVE BOYLE (60s) talks to a seemingly distraught Paul.

DETECTIVE BOYLE
(looking at the ridge)
If it's any comfort to you, he likely wasn't eaten while conscious. Did he say where he'd been living, before he came home?

PAUL
Florida. He didn't really talk about it much. He brought us this shell.

Paul holds up a sea shell, obviously from the display at his office. Tears well up in his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL (cont'd)

It's really all we have left. He'd been gone for five years. We'd given him up--

DETECTIVE BOYLE

--for dead, yes sir.

PAUL

How did you...?

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Anonymous phone tip from some Jamaican guy.
(Paul shows no reaction)
Said he saw what looked like a body. We tracked you through his ID.

PAUL

Just like on TV.

Boyle nods sympathetically

PAUL (cont'd)

I've got to see him. Please.

Paul starts to make his way to the body. Boyle stops him.

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Mr. Barnell, I should warn you, an animal attack isn't pretty. There's not much left.

Paul nods. They make their way over to the tarp. Boyle pulls it back.

DETECTIVE BOYLE (cont'd)

Is that your brother, sir?

Paul leans in-- the man's face is hamburger. Paul nods.

PAUL

They chewed his ears off. What kind of animal does something like that?

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Normally I'd say bear, but these tracks and the feeding pattern indicate wolf. It's rare, but it can happen.

Boyle pulls the cover back over the body. Boyle hands Barnell a clear baggie with the dead man's wallet inside.

(CONTINUED)

DETECTIVE BOYLE (cont'd)

Your brother's personal effects. We've got some people with the victim's assistance program who can help you through this. Marcie?

Marcie, a female police officer, walks a distraught Paul away. As they go, another FEMALE COP approaches.

FEMALE COP

Coroner found some smaller bite marks on the ankle.

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Pups. Must have been the whole freakin' pack.

FEMALE COP

You want an autopsy?

DETECTIVE BOYLE

On what?

FEMALE COP

Derek found this.

She holds up a clear evidence bag with the remnants of a strip of bacon on the inside.

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Not the smartest snack for a hiker.

FEMALE COP

Messy animals aren't they?

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Messy. Messymessymessymessy.

61 INT. INFLATABLE GOLF DOME - LATE AFTERNOON

61

The second level of a large indoor driving range/mini golf course. The sound of clubs SMACKING golf balls echo as an intense Ted "waggles" before his shot. On his back-swing, Tiffany throws her arms around him from behind.

TED

I take it you're done?

TIFFANY

Yup.

TED

Wanna hit some of mine?

(CONTINUED)

TIFFANY
(hugging him harder)
Nope.

He turns, LAUGHING. They kiss as she playfully starts to grope him.

TED
Now this is definitely a violation of Golf Dome policy.

TIFFANY
Must be all this talk about using your wood.

TED
Woods. So maybe later I can... check your grip?

TIFFANY
Secret?

TED
My dirty talk sucks?

TIFFANY
I like it when you try, though.

Tiffany gives him a peck and flits back to a nearby chair. He hits one, skying it into a low hanging light.

TED
You know in some states they actually do this outside?

Tiffany looks over at one of the tacky tropically-theme'd mini-golf holes.

TIFFANY
So how many insurance companies are there in the United States? Like, a billion.

TED
That's not the point, Tiff. I've busted my ass for Liberty Capital. I don't want to quit. I deserve to be promoted out of this ice bound backwater.

TIFFANY
And when it happens, I guess I'll just be another notch on your briefcase.

TED

I can't believe you said that. You know you are...

He looks around. Embarrassed, he lowers his voice.

TED (cont'd)

...the most important thing in my life.

TIFFANY

(smiling/shouting)

Sorry, what was that! You want to take me right here?

As other GOLFERS look over, Tiffany and Ted share a warm smile, the moment only broken by the ringing of a CELL PHONE. She SIGHS, unzips Ted's gym bag and answers his phone.

TIFFANY (cont'd)

Psychic... Uhm, sorry, hello? Yeah. Look, is this a matter of life and death, because right now he's...

Suddenly concerned, she hands the phone to Ted.

TED

Hello? (beat) You're kidding me.

(almost stunned)

Yeah, I'll hold.

TIFFANY

Your Mom?

TED

Million dollar life policy just checked.

TIFFANY

On a Saturday? What about the first annual golf, sex and pizza triathlon?

TED

Look, if this is... who I think it is, I may have found us a ticket out of here.

TIFFANY

We don't need a ticket.

Tiffany stands, knowing it's no use arguing, she pulls on her coat. Ted tries to give her a hug. She falls into his embrace, but doesn't hug him back.

TIFFANY (cont'd)

Don't be late, OK?

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: (3)

TED
You won't even know I'm gone.

CORPSE'S POV: Black. The drawer is pulled open. We are...

62 INT. CITY MORGUE (BODY TRAY)

62

Ted, Cam and Detective Boyle stand at the end near the feet. A white sheet covers most of the deceased.

DETECTIVE BOYLE
That's him. Raymond Barnell.

TED
Could you?

Boyle moves toward the head and pulls back the covering. Ted recoils. Cam leans in for a closer look.

CAM
Ouch. That's gotta hurt.

TED
So what's your line on this?

DETECTIVE BOYLE
Just what it looks like. Wolves got him. Maybe a grizzly with insomnia, but we didn't find any tracks.

TED
Would it surprise you to learn his brother tried to cash in his policy two weeks ago?

DETECTIVE BOYLE
You trying to tell me Mr. Barnell chewed off his brother's leg?

TED
Doesn't that make you the least bit suspicious?

DETECTIVE BOYLE
Mr. Watters, this is a nice simple ending. We like nice simple endings.

TED
But shouldn't you--

DETECTIVE BOYLE
Ya know, I don't know thing one about insurance, but I'm guessing it's your job

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

62

CONTINUED:

DETECTIVE BOYLE (cont'd)
to find a way not to pay these poor people.

CAM

Hey now, we're just like you guys, gotta run down
whatever leads we can find.

Ted walks down to the head of the victim, pulls out a camcorder and starts to
tape the body.

TED

Detective, we're an insurance company, not the
Salvation Army.

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Mind telling me what you're doing?

CAM

They gave every claims team a video camera last
quarter... you'd be amazed at how it cuts down on
litigation. We had this case two months ago where
this mother of six was claiming...

DETECTIVE BOYLE

I've got my own war stories, thanks. You mind
stopping that?

TED

Just doing --

DETECTIVE BOYLE

Your job? Yes, I caught that.

As Ted gets his last shot, Boyle covers the body back up and slides the drawer
shut with a loud CLANG. Black.

63

EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - SUNSET

63

TV NEWS CAMERA POV: Of Paul, standing on his stoop, as he's interviewed by
a well made-up female TV REPORTER (20s) dressed for the cold.

(CONTINUED)

TV REPORTER
You ready Mr. Barnell?

PAUL
Yes.

The camera man flicks on his light as Paul squints.

TV REPORTER
The police told us what happened, how are you folks holding up?

MARGARET (O.S.)
Paul? Who's out there?

Paul reaches back, and, as discretely as possible, grabs the door handle to keep Margaret from opening it.

PAUL
Obviously, my wife's very upset...

MARGARET (O.S.)
Paul, the door's stuck!

Margaret starts to HAMMER rhythmically on the door.

PAUL
(ignoring her)
It's been a tough, you know, when something like this happens you just have to ask yourself...

MARGARET (O.S.)
Who fucked with the fucking door!

PAUL
You can see how stressful it's been, I should really go now. We have to plan a service.

And with that, Paul opens his front door and ducks inside, quickly shutting it behind him.

64 INT. BRANCH'S OFFICE - DAY

64

Branch, very unhappy, flips through some papers then looks up at Ted and Cam.

TED
This isn't a standard case. You were there when this guy came in looking to cash in. C'mon, it stinks.

(CONTINUED)

BRANCH

Secondly, if the police say this guy was...

CAM

Eaten by wolves. Sir.

BRANCH

(incredulous)

Eaten by wolves, then we've got no case. Did you see Mr. Barnell on the news last

(MORE)

64

CONTINUED: (2)

BRANCH (cont'd)

night? Last thing we need is bad P.R. I don't want this thing Valdeez-ing on us.

TED

Mr. Branch, I'm sure head office would take a rather dim view of our --

BRANCH

Corporate's view will be whatever I tell them.

Cam, seeing his partner is about to get himself into a heap of trouble, hustles him toward the door.

CAM

Yes Sir. Color us called off, as of now.

65

INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

65

Ted and Cam walk through the cubicles.

TED

Stop looking at me right now.

CAM

You've got a strange way of bucking for a promotion, my friend.

(off Ted's look)

Look, I'm gonna start on the Johnasen file. You want to do up the paper work on Barnell?

Ted grabs his coat.

CAM (cont'd)

Where ya going?

TED

Lunch.

CAM

At 9:30?

Ted is out the door.

66

INT. "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - DAY

66

Ted sits across the desk from Paul. As per usual, the place is a tomb.

TED

The police say they found Raymond's wallet, that's how they tracked you down?

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

That's right, yes.

TED

Any idea what he was doing out there?

PAUL

He'd go for walks. Hikes, I mean. Hiking.

TED

How sporty. Was he a big hiker?

PAUL

Not sure I follow.

TED

Did he hike more than once a week? Or was this a...
one time thing?

PAUL

Can I ask why you need to know all this?

TED

Just trying to tie up a few loose ends.

PAUL

You know the police... they say Raymond died in the
attack. You do cover that sort of thing don't you?

TED

(forced smile)

Yes sir. It shouldn't take more than a few days.
Now, tell me a little more about your brother. The
hiker.

67 EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

67

Gary and Jimbo's car parked in the lot. Gary is just returning to the vehicle with a brown paper bag. Jimbo has the look of man who hasn't slept in days.

Gary and Jimbo are eating fish and chips. The name on the bag is "Ye' Olde Fish Shoppe."

JIMBO

Cod or Halibut?

GARY

Didn't ask.

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO

(digging in)

So we got six different stores here. We got your "Great Escapes" travel agency, your Ye Old Fish and Chips place, Porn-a-Copia videos, a hair place, one for lease and one... what is that?

GARY

Small engine repair. See all the snow blowers out front.

There is indeed a row of snowblowers lined up outside. Jimbo takes another bite of his fish.

GARY (cont'd)

Should move the blowers over to the triple X store.

Gary LAUGHS. Jimbo is in no mood.

JIMBO

So, which one you figure would want to take our friend?

GARY

I guess maybe the porn palace. Ya know for some weird sex film.

JIMBO

Yeah, this place is just a hotbed of adult cinema production. Fish shop look clean?

GARY

Very nice Korean family. You figure maybe they battered him up?

Gary LAUGHS again, then shoves Jimbo's shoulder.

GARY (cont'd)

Maybe we're eatin' him right now. Huh?

JIMBO

Gary, this isn't a joke. You ever known Dave to joke?

Gary, embarrassed, takes another bite of his fish. Jimbo turns up the radio. A local call-in show comes on.

WOMAN CALLER (O.S.)

...it could never happen. There's never been a documented case--

(CONTINUED)

GARY

Sorry.

JIMBO

Yeah, "Sorry." I get strip searched and you go off playing snow angels...

RADIO HOST (O.S.)

Well, we've got one now, don't we!?

WOMAN CALLER (O.S.)

That was different. From what I read in the paper he was unconscious. And now people are going to use this as an excuse to--

RADIO HOST (O.S.)

Hey lady, why don't you tell Raymond Barnell how wolves have gotten a bad rap.

WOMAN CALLER (O.S.)

I can tell you from years of experience that wolves do not operate--

JIMBO

Wait a minute.

RADIO HOST (O.S.)

You can tell me all you want, lady, but it is an undeniable, indisputable fact. This Barnell guy got turned into a Scooby Snack by a pack of wild animals...

JIM'S POV: Through the windshield, looking at the sign for "Barnell Great Escapes Travel." Jimbo and Gary look at each other. Maybe...

68 INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

68

Ted at his cubicle on his phone.

TED

Yeah, hi, it's Ted Watters from Fidelity Mutual. (beat)
I need a complete credit work up on a Raymond Barnell... and Paul, a Paul Barnell too... sure, I'll hold.

Cam walks by, leans his head over the top of the cubicle.

CAM

You start the month ends yet?

(CONTINUED)

TED

Can you take care of it? I'm kinda... working on something.

CAM

Oh God, you're not still on the Barnell thing are you--

Ted pulls Cam down into his cubicle, talks in a harsh whisper.

TED

I went to see him.

CAM

And? Then? So?

TED

Trust me. Something's not right. I can smell it. Help me buy a week.

CAM

We're gonna get in such trouble.

TED

I promise from now on you can come along on everything.

CAM

No more Cam goes to the coffee room and Ted disappears for three hours?

TED

I'll try.

CAM

And you'll work on your interpersonal skills?

TED

(a long beat)
Yes.

CAM

Good. Now if you'll excuse me, I'll go start covering your ass.

Paul sits beside his desk, flipping through travel brochures. Margaret enters, teetering in the doorway. Paul looks up.

PAUL

Hey. How's my Princess?

MARGARET

OK. I took some Advan. And called my psychic.

PAUL

(picks up the phone bill)

Honey, you know how expensive that is. I thought we agreed that...

She moves to him, runs her hand through his hair.

MARGARET

Don't be mad. It's just... this week has been so... well with Raymond getting eaten by animals and someone trying to steal the fridge.

PAUL

I know. Why don't you --

MARGARET

We got another letter from the HMO today.

PAUL

Have you opened it yet?

Margaret starts to CRY, holding the letter up to her face the SOBS building to a full blown breakdown.

PAUL (cont'd)

Oh hey honey, come on now.

MARGARET

I'm sorry. It's just, fucking cocksuckers.

Paul takes the letter, unfolds it and reads...

PAUL

"As we have stated previously... usual onset before the age of 18... coupled with no genetic history..."

MARGARET

I'm sick! I'm really, really sick!

PAUL

Shush, now. (reading again) "We hasten to add, Tourette Syndrome is not..."

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET

Fuck them.

Paul is about to say something, but returns to the letter.

PAUL

"As well, please reference our previous decisions regarding your claims for ADD, ODO, OCD, ADHOPHI...

(treading lightly)

Honey. I know you don't like to talk about it, but maybe it's not... what we might think it is but... maybe it's just stress? Remember that cruise? I saw you. You were happy.

Margaret looks at him, crestfallen.

PAUL (cont'd)

I'm sorry. I'm just really tired.

MARGARET

They say you can't get it all of a sudden but I did. I really, really did.

PAUL

I know. They just don't --

MARGARET

I'll kill myself. Then they'll see.

PAUL

That is nonsense talk.

MARGARET

Then you can go off and...

(sobbing again)

...marry someone normal.

PAUL

You're the most normal girl I know.

MARGARET

I'm not crazy, Paul. Something's really wrong with me.

He takes her to a small sofa, cradles her in his arms.

PAUL

I know, Sweetie. I know. And we're gonna find you the best specialists in...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

69

CONTINUED: (3)

PAUL (cont'd)
(a second, then confident)
...what you have that we can.

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET

Promise?

PAUL

I really think things are going to turn around. Call me cr... I just have a feeling. You just leave everything to me, OK? Is that OK? Leave everything to me? I promise.

MARGARET

(gently)
Shit bag.

PAUL

That's my girl.

CUT TO:

TIGHT ON : TV SCREEN

70/71 INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

70/71

Where Edward G. Robinson (as the character Keyes in "Double Indemnity") grills a man about a fake insurance claim.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

"Every time one of these phonies comes along it ties knots in my stomach... I can't eat. That's how I knew your claim was crooked..."

At the sound of DOORBELL, the whole scene freezes. We are --

Tiffany at her desk, working on the computer. Ted has paused the DVD, puts down the Barnell file and opens the door on a snow covered PIZZA GUY, soggy pizza box in hand.

TED

Hey.

PIZZA GUY

Hi there. That'll be \$12.97.

Ted looks at his watch.

TED

What about thirty minutes or free?

(CONTINUED)

PIZZA GUY

Doesn't apply when it's snowing.

TED

(digging out his wallet)

So nine months of the year your guarantee is worthless?

PIZZA GUY

It doesn't snow every day.

TED

They should really tell people when they order.

TIFFANY

Would you just give him the money already?

PIZZA GUY

It's not my decision.

TED

I know that. I'm just saying.

PIZZA GUY

Sure.

TED

You understand though?

PIZZA GUY

Absolutely.

TED

It wouldn't take much.

PIZZA GUY

Full disclosure to the pizza consumer. I'll be sure to pass that along.

The delivery guy leaves.

Ted walks back into the living room. Tiffany comes over, grabs a slice.

TIFFANY

Why you gotta argue with the service industry?

TED

The problem with people today is they don't expect anyone to tell the truth.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TED (cont'd)

We've just come to accept lying as acceptable.

TIFFANY

If this is another passive/aggressive shot at Psychic Buddies, all our ads state "for amusement purposes only."

TED

Tiff, it has nothing to do with... look, just forget it.

TIFFANY

You remember being amused, don't ya, honey? What is with you anyway?

TED

Want to know what's "with" me? I'm on the verge of cracking the biggest case of my career, one that corporate has to notice, and nobody gives a crap. Not my boss, and not even my girlfriend.

TIFFANY

So this is my fault?

TED

No, it's not your fault. I just want to live somewhere where road hazards don't have antlers and the pizza doesn't have to be delivered by dogsled.

Tiffany storms off as Ted flops onto the couch, swipes the snow from the top of the pizza box and hits play on the DVD.

EDWARD G. ROBINSON

"What kind of outfit is this, anyway? Are we an insurance company or a bunch of dim-witted amateurs to write a policy on a mug like that?"

Tiffany turns from the bedroom door, almost in tears.

TIFFANY

You know, even though Edward G. Robinson wins, everyone like Fred MacMurray better.

She SLAMS the door. Ted doesn't move, lost in his own world.

72 INT. MRS. WHERRY'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY

72

Ted and Mrs. Wherry sit on plastic covered furniture. The mounted heads of several dozen dead animals, foxes, wolves, elk, surround them. Ted takes notes.

MRS. WHERRY

It was terrible. Just terrible. Raymond should have known better.

TED

(re: the mounted heads)

All these yours?

MRS. WHERRY

Greatest sport on earth. Moved to a compound bow two years ago.

(whisper)

Arthritis. Less draw weight.

She mimics pulling back an imaginary bow with her bony hand.

MRS. WHERRY (cont'd)

Coffee OK?

TED

I'm fine. Did you talk to Raymond at all when he came home? Was he getting along with his brother?

MRS. WHERRY

No. Only saw him the once. Never spoke. Waved to him.

TED

Waved?

MRS. WHERRY

He was clearing my driveway. Raymond was a real hellcat when he was younger. But like they say, time mellows even the hardest soul.

TED

Was he much of an outdoorsman?

MRS. WHERRY

I thought it was Paul at first. Have you met Paul's wife? Now there's a story. Not that I'm much for gossip, but I think Raymond used to have a --

(CONTINUED)

TED

Mrs. Wherry, I'm sorry, but --

MRS. WHERRY

Sorry. Did Raymond like the outdoors. Not so much, no. Liked living out here at the cabin, though. I think he had some friends on the police force. Have you talked to them? They'd pull up here day and night, always looking for --

TED

I'm sorry, did you say you thought it was Paul who did your driveway?

MRS. WHERRY

Well in a ski mask you can hardly tell who's who. Now, how 'bout some jerky? I've got it drying out back.

73 INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - DAY

73

Ted at his cubicle, thinking hard as he chews on some jerky as he works the phone. Snow whips by outside the window.

TED

(just waiting to cut in)

That's really super, Simon. Now how'd you like to run some names for me?

Ted sees Cam reflected in his dark computer screen. Annoyed, he puts his hand over the receiver.

TED (cont'd)

You mind?

CAM

Now, now. Let's not forget who's pulling double duty.

TED

(hanging up)

Simon, I'll call you back.

(to Cam: forced)

Sorry.

CAM

Much better. So?

TED

Turns out our Mr. Barnell is mortgaged to the nuts. His business is about one step

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TED (cont'd)

away from chapter 11. Plus it's like his brother Raymond never existed. He's got no credit history, no nothing for the last five years.

CAM

Ya know, not having a credit history isn't actually a crime. People around here have been known to swap a snow mobile for 500 pounds of venison. Doesn't exactly leave a paper trail.

TED

Yes, but he was in Florida, someplace. Plus, the only thing he did after his recent "reappearance" was get some new ID and a new credit card. Didn't charge anything.

CAM

Wow. Less than nothing.

TED

It's something.

CAM

No it's not... in my humble, junior investigator's opinion.

The phone RINGS. Ted picks up.

TED

Watters, claims. Yeah, hang on...
(to Cam)
It's personal. I promise.

Cam shrugs, walks off. Ted waits 'til he's gone...

TED (cont'd)

Mr. Barnell... Your ears must have been burning, I was just -- sure, what time?

Ted is scribbling down something on a pad of paper.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY (FULL ON BLIZZARD)

Tombstones, barely visible through the blowing snow, dot the top of a small hill on the outskirts of town. A small group of mourners try to keep warm. Paul and Margaret, Avis, two other FRIENDS and the MINISTER huddle against the cold.

(CONTINUED)

MINISTER

When someone is taken from us at such a young age we often ask ourselves, why? What possible purpose could this serve?

The Minister is temporarily lost from view.

MINISTER (cont'd)

(just a voice in the white)

Why is God, who is a loving God, capable of such things...

The snow clears. Paul, a pillar of strength, discreetly checks his watch then sneaks a concerned look at Margaret who busily grins at everyone in sight. Ted's car pulls into the parking area.

75 INT. JIMBO'S CAR / GRAVEYARD PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

75

Gary and Jimbo sit in their vehicle, watching as Ted gets out of his car and is swallowed in a white out. He reappears a moment later farther up the hill.

GARY

We should have checked the funeral announcements right away.

JIMBO

Shoot.

76 EXT. GRAVEYARD

76

A wind GUST rocks the casket just as it's lowered into the frozen earth. The funeral breaks up quickly as Paul and his wife shake hands with the minister.

PAUL

That was lovely, thank you so much.

MINISTER

Margaret, Paul, you two get some sleep.

Paul looks nervously at Margaret, who is about to reply. As her mouth engages, a gust of wind obliterates most of her words, except for...

MARGARET

...nun banger.

The Minister smiles, he must have misunderstood.

MINISTER

Absolutely.

Paul turns to see Ted approaching. A blast of snow obscures his view. When Ted reappears, he's just a few steps away.

TED

Mr. Barnell. There was no hurry on this, we could wait until--

PAUL

It's OK. We just wrapped up. This is my wife, Margaret.

As they shake hands, and Margaret opens her mouth to speak...

PAUL (cont'd)

Why don't you wait in the car, sweetheart?

MARGARET

Okee dokee, smokee.

Margaret smiles and totters off.

PAUL

She's under a little strain right now.

Ted looks down the hill at a small group of TV news vans, the REPORTERS just now venturing out into the cold.

TED

I see the media's here. They don't give people a moment's peace, do they?

PAUL

I called them.

TED

(surprised)
Really?

PAUL

Well, they've been asking me to talk some more about Raymond. I thought now might be an appropriate time.

TED

And you'll just happen to mention your heartless insurance company that hasn't paid off your policy yet.

PAUL

I had to borrow money for the casket, Mr. Ted.

(CONTINUED)

TED

You are breaking my heart.

PAUL

No, I doubt that. They asked me to bring some photos of Raymond. Guess it's gonna be a pretty big story.

He pulls out some shots of his brother. They whip around in the wind and blowing snow.

PAUL (cont'd)

Of course, we could walk over there together. You could tell them how deeply moved you were by this tragedy and how... the check is on its way?

Ted thinks, grudgingly impressed with Paul's ploy.

TED

Enjoy your press conference, Mr. Barnell.

Paul stuffs the photos back in his pocket and walks down the hill. Ted watches him go, is about to leave when a gust of wind forces him to avert his eyes. Looking down he sees a photo of Raymond Barnell, on the beach in swim trunks. Must have fallen. Ted pockets it and moves on.

A76 INT. GARY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A76

JIMBO

That's your plan?

GARY

How tough can it be?

JIMBO

You ever try digging through six feet of half frozen sod? We'd need a back hoe. Can you operate a back hoe? Do you know where we'd get a back hoe? We don't even know for sure...

GARY

Oh please. Don't you think it's a pretty neat coincidence?

JIMBO

Maybe we just go explain it to Dave.

GARY

He won't take it well.

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO

Then I'm all for new options, here, Gary. (beat) If we give the money back--

GARY

Hey, wait a minute, now. We did the job. We deserve the--

JIMBO

I did the job, Gary. I know, because I haven't been sleeping for the last week.

GARY

I don't know why you're letting it get to you like this. Look, let's just not rush into anything. It's my turn to step up. I know that. I'm on it.

They look on as Paul is interviewed by the reporters.

77 OMITTED 77

78 INT. PAUL'S HOME / KITCHEN - MORNING 78

Margaret washes down some pills with her morning coffee as she looks at a fawn in the backyard, nibbling on a bush.

MARGARET

Hey little, Bambi. Where's your Mommy? Gettin' it from some ten point buck. Yes she is. Yes she is.

Just then, a THUMPING sound from the garage causes the fawn to bolt. Margaret turns, suspicious. She picks up the portable phone as she moves toward the door.

79 INT. GARAGE 79

Gary sticks his head inside the now unchained fridge, grabs a can of soda from the door rack and closes the door. A moment later, he reopens the door...

There, hanging off the frosty inside, is a chunk of the dead man's hair and scalp. Gary pulls it off, not sure what it means, but sure it means something.

Unseen behind him, Margaret steps into the garage. She quickly assesses the situation.

MARGARET

Stay away from our fucking appliances.

Gary spins, shocked to see Margaret.

GARY
Lady, just calm down.

Margaret, eyes wide with fear, unleashes a hailstorm of soda cans, knickknacks, gardening implements and anything else she can lay her hands on.

GARY (cont'd)
Hey! Would you... Lady... I have a--

He tries to close in on her, but the torrent of stuff (a rake, a Whipper-Snipper, an old pair of skates...) keeps him pinned down. Finally, he manages to grab his gun from his pocket. But even as he raises it...

A Bissel Handvac catches him flush in the face.

GARY (cont'd)
Sud of a bit!

He drops to his knees, grabbing his nose, which is now gushing blood. Margaret reaches for her portable phone and starts punching numbers.

MARGARET
You are in so much trouble.

Gary stands, pissed off, gun aimed at Margaret's head.

GARY
Lady, so help me I --

Gary ducks as the phone whizzes over his head and smashes against the garage wall. He stares at her. Game over.

80 INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

80

A standard corrugated metal storage facility. Snow falls in from a large hole that's been cut in the roof. Cam and Ted, clipboard in hand, stand by the owner, MR. SPELLMAN (50s).

CAM
So you're a souvenir wholesaler?

*
*

SPELLMAN
For the cruise ship trade, mostly. Usual stuff, stuffed animals, your huskies, your moose, your baby seals, your whales, your walrus --

*
*
*

TED
They came in through there?

*

(CONTINUED)

SPELLMAN

(looking up/duh!)

Yeah. Through that... big hole in the roof. I got a list of all the things that are missing.

Ted stares up at the sky through the ceiling.

TED

How much?

SPELLMAN

Uh, we figure about 200,000, plus fixing the roof. Now I know you guys are gonna bust my --

TED

Fax over your estimate. We'll have you a check by Friday.

CAM

(taking Ted aside)

Ted. Maybe we should take a look at their inventory list first?

TED

This is a simple case, Cam. Bad guys, through roof, stole stuff. Let's clear it and get going.

SPELLMAN

I should tell you... we also had some VCRs we were holding for another company. That could run another couple of...

TED

Cam? You wanna wrap this up?

(off his look)

Gotta go primary some time.

Cam shrugs-- "sure." Ted hands him his clipboard and walks out, the door closes behind him with a loud BANG.

CAM

Mr. Spellman? Now I noticed a nice looking computer in your office. Why do you think they left that?

81 INT. BARNELL HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATER

81

Margaret sits taped to a Lazy-Boy recliner. Gary, who's still bleeding from the nose, sits across from her.

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET

You try and rape me, I swear to Christ I'll bite it off.

Gary looks confused. The doorbell CHIMES, playing "Tiny Bubbles." (We stay in the living room as Gary answers it.)

JIMBO (O.S.)

What's going on?

GARY (O.S.)

Okay, now here's the thing, just keep an open mind.

They both enter the room. Jimbo looks at Gary, is about to smack him when...

MARGARET

So what now, you gonna get me smokin' from both ends?

Gary and Jimbo have no idea how to react. Margaret senses their discomfort, starts to relax.

GARY

I just came to look around, but she started yelling and hitting me...

MARGARET

Oh please.

JIMBO

How the hell is this solving our problem? How is this stepping up?

GARY

Just listen, okay.

MARGARET

Yeah, listen, if the fat from your neck hasn't stopped up your ears.

Jimbo looks confused. Gary ushers him into the other room.

82 INT. BARNELL HOME / KITCHEN - LATER

82

Gary and Jimbo sit at the table, talking. Jimbo's not happy.

JIMBO

This is not what we do.

GARY

It is now.

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO

Where would we stash her? Your place?

GARY

Too small, plus we'd have to get her in and out without anyone seeing. And I've seen that sty you call an apartment.

JIMBO

See, it's just a bad idea.

GARY

Yeah. Maybe.
(a possible idea)
You see the whirlpool tub?

JIMBO

You can't be serious.

GARY

It could be like a little getaway.

Off Jimbo, considering this.

83 EXT. BARNELL HOME - NIGHT

83

Paul pulls up, hits the garage door opener and drives in.

84 INT. BARNELL HOME / KITCHEN

84

Paul walks in from the garage, pulls off his jacket.

PAUL

Hey Maggie-magster. How ya --

Paul stops short as he sees Margaret, Gary and Jimbo sitting around the table. Margaret's mouth is taped shut.

Paul is about to lunge at the men when Gary slides his gun into view. He stops.

PAUL (cont'd)

What are you people doing in my house?

GARY

Mr. Barnell. You have something that belongs to us.

PAUL

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

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO

Do you remember a dead man you found in the
dumpster behind your office?

Paul, shocked, tries to hold it together.

PAUL

No, I can't say that... I mean that would probably stick
in my mind a... dead body.

GARY

Think hard Mr. Barnell.

He tosses the frozen lock of hair onto the table.

GARY (cont'd)

Think hard.

Paul realizes he's screwed, gestures to the living room.

85 INT. BARNELL HOME / LIVING ROOM - LATER

85

Gary sits on the sofa as Paul paces.

GARY

I thought it might be some weirdo sex thing, ya
know? But you look like a pretty straight arrow. So
then I'm thinking, maybe it's a scam. Maybe
somehow our friend is worth some money to you.

Paul face lets Gary know he's dead on.

GARY (cont'd)

So what'd you collect?

PAUL

We, we had a life insurance policy
on my brother. It was for... 100,000 dollars.

GARY

You know, it's always you quiet guys. Here's how it's
going to work. We stay here with your wife, you go
get our guy.

PAUL

Here?

GARY

We even see you or a cop even roll past, she's dead.
Plus you'll have to explain

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

85

CONTINUED:

GARY (cont'd)

how you scammed the insurance people out of their hard earned money. We'll call you in three days. Have the body and, let's say 50,000 dollars for our trouble. Screw with us, we start mailing your wife back to you.

Gary pauses for dramatic effect.

GARY (cont'd)

Starting with her feet.

86

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

86

Gary walks in on Jimbo and Margaret, still gagged.

JIMBO

He gone?

Gary nods, well pleased with himself.

GARY

He was scared. Really scared.

JIMBO

You used the feet thing, didn't you?

GARY

No.

87

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

87

Tiffany comes through the door carrying a sack of groceries.

TIFFANY

Hey, little help here. I got Pop Tarts.

She sees the living room wall -- it's covered with charts, diagrams and theories. Ted on the floor, remote control in hand, replaying the shots of the body over and over...

TIFFANY (cont'd)

(re: the screen)

Don't tell me, "Sound of Music"?

(no reaction)

Honey? You OK?

TED

Shhhh. This is the important part.

Ted rewinds the tape, hits play, rewinds it again as -- Tiffany watches, quietly at first, then with growing frustration. Finally, she walks over and grabs the remote control.

(CONTINUED)

TED (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I was watching that.

TIFFANY
This stops now. This case is making me and you
crazy, especially you.

No response. Tiffany plops on the sofa and starts leafing through Ted's files.

TIFFANY (cont'd)
Ya know, I am trying to be supportive. Leading
experts agree that's the number one complaint men
have about their mates.

TED
I don't have any complaints about my... you.

TIFFANY
(re: the file)
Dead guy's got a record? Cool.

TED
Yeah. He beat the hell out of some guy in bar fight.
Broke the guy's eye socket.

Tiffany scans the file, then looks up at the screen.

TIFFANY
Honey?

TED
Yeah?

TIFFANY
I think you should read this again.

He looks. She tosses him the file.

88 INT. BARNELL HOME / KITCHEN - NIGHT

88

Margaret, still taped to a chair, sits at the kitchen table. By the stove, Gary is
cooking, an apron tied like a bath towel around his waist.

MARGARET
We don't have any money, you know.

GARY
Lady. Please.

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET

If you want Raymond's fucking insurance money...
we don't have that either.

GARY

It's none of your business what we want.

Gary goes back to his cooking. Then...

GARY (cont'd)

So how come you talk like you do? I mean, cursing
all the time.

MARGARET

It's a disease. It's called Tourette Syndrome. I can't
control what I say. Turnip.

GARY

Really?

MARGARET

You've taken a handicapped person hostage. I hope
you're proud of yourself.

GARY

I saw this thing on TV where they said people with
that don't usually curse.

MARGARET

They must have got it wrong.

GARY

I don't think so. It was a movie of the week based on
real events. Don't most of Tourette's people twitch
and stuff?

Margaret just glares.

GARY (cont'd)

(knowingly)

Oh, I get it. You got a spice rack?

MARGARET

Over the sink. And what's that supposed to mean?

GARY

Nothing. Cumin?

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET

On the left. (beat) And I'm not... crazy, it's a physical disease. Sometimes I can control it, and sometimes --

GARY

You can't? Want to know what I think? I think this "syndrome" is something you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

GARY (cont'd)

read about somewhere and figured, hey, works for me.

MARGARET

Ass-rimming ball-sucker.

GARY

You can completely abdicate your societal responsibilities, say whatever you want whenever you want, and slough it off on a illness. Maybe I should catch this thing. "Gee, sorry Your Honor, I have a disease that makes me rob 7-11s." It's called really need a Slurpee disease.

MARGARET

You've never robbed a 7-11 in your life you shit eating fuck-weasel. What kind of man threatens a woman with a gun, anyway?

GARY

You are so faking it.

MARGARET

Oh, I'm faking it? Is this how you get your kicks, you over-compensating pussy little fart sack?

Gary, suddenly tense, puts down his spoon and picks up his gun.

GARY

Hey! Keep your voice down or the gag goes back.

MARGARET

You don't scare me. If something bad was going to happen, my psychic would have told me.

Gary awkwardly chambers a round, starts gesturing with the gun, trying to look tough.

MARGARET (cont'd)

You put that down now you little bitch, or so help me, I'll start yelling so loud you'll have to shoot me.

Gary, confused and embarrassed, doesn't know what to do.

EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

Paul gets out of his car carrying a K-Mart bag. He looks like he's been CRYING. Mrs. Wherry waves from her deck.

(CONTINUED)

MRS. WHERRY

Paul, sorry to hear about your brother.
(Paul gives a sad smile)
You moving in?

PAUL

Just for a bit.

MRS. WHERRY

She'll come to her senses. They always do. Oh, the
septic lines are frozen, so you'll have to use the
outdoor commode.

Paul waves as he enters the mobile home, closing the door behind him. A
light goes on. It starts to snow.

90 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - NIGHT

90

Paul walks in, survey's the interior of the mobile home. *

PAUL'S POV: A 7 year old time capsule of a party that was never cleaned up;
beer bottles, ashtrays and general garbage. *

PAUL

(to himself) *

Would it have killed you to clean up before you left, *

Raymond? *

Paul picks up a small box from the floor, looks at the label. Edible Panties. He
puts them on top of a stack of porno mags, neatens the pile, then heads out. *

INT. BEDROOM - LATER *

HIGH ANGLE ON: Paul lying in bed, wide awake, but in the same position
we've seen him in when he sleeps with Margaret. An electric heater glows
beside him.

91 EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - CONTINUOUS

91

TIGHT ON: Car tires as they pull to a stop on the main road. A pair of heavy
men's boots get out, start to make their way toward the mobile home.

92 INT. MOBILE HOME - LATE NIGHT

92

There's a KNOCK on the door. Paul heads to the door.

PAUL

Who is it?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

State Police. Is there a Mr. Barnell here?

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
(as he unlocks it)
Yes, is there something wrong--

As he opens the door a crack, a gloved hand shoves it open. The force of the blow sends Paul staggering backward, landing in a heap against the wall where a picture of his family tumbles over and shatters on his head. RAYMOND BARNELL (40s), a bear of man, enters, picks up Paul and throws him through the serving kitchen serving hatch. Raymond leans through the hole.

*
*
*

RAYMOND
Hello brother.

*

He walks around, takes a copy of "USA Today" and throws it at Paul.

*

PAUL
Raymond? Is that...

RAYMOND
Page 16, Paul. That's why I love "USA Today", news from every fuckin' state. Don't you want to read it? I was eaten by wild fuckin' animals. But ya know, despite that, I'm feeling pretty God-damned chipper.

*

Paul beats a hasty retreat, stumbling through the mobile home with Raymond right on his heels.

PAUL
Raymond, let me tell you what happened here. We all thought you were...

RAYMOND
Dead? Yeah, I got that impression.

PAUL
But you had dropped off the face of the earth.

RAYMOND
And you just decide to make it permanent?

PAUL
But there were no records of you anywhere. I checked.

With that, Raymond kicks his brother hard in the ribs. Paul doubles over, gasping for breath.

RAYMOND
In certain lines of quasi-legal employment, using your actual ID can be a hinderance. But despite the reliance on aliases, it's nice to have your actual birth certificate to fall back on. Gotta tell ya, Paul, I was pretty pissed.

Raymond is about to kick him once more, but Paul puts up a hand, begging him to stop. Raymond, relents, then bends over and helps his brother to a sitting position.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

But then I start to think, Paul's no idiot. He woulda told 'em it's not me. Unless...

Paul can only sit there and WHEEZE. Raymond sits beside him on the floor, pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

So what is it? Frame job, lawsuit...

PAUL

Life insurance.

RAYMOND

Figured. So where's my money?

PAUL

Your money?
(a beat)
They're still... investigating.

RAYMOND

What you get?

Paul considers whether or not Raymond would even remember.

PAUL

Fifty thousand.

RAYMOND

(with a shrug)
Almost worth coming back for. What's the split? I get half?

PAUL

(not quite trusting him)
Okay. Sure.
(changing the subject)
You look good. Lost some weight?

RAYMOND

Gave up carbs. So what are you doing out here?
She not go along with it?

PAUL

Who? Margaret?

RAYMOND

How she hold up, anyway?

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

She's fine. Actually, we're not doing so good right now.

RAYMOND

Any kids?

(off his look)

Still can't get one by the goalie, huh.

93 INT. BARNELL HOME / KITCHEN - LATER

93

Gary and Margaret sit in silence, Gary taking Margaret's pulse. Jimbo walks in, grocery bag in hand.

JIMBO

Hey.

GARY

(snarky)

Hey.

JIMBO

Talked to our friend. We're okay for now. How's everything here?

GARY

Oh, just great.

(to Margaret)

Seventy six, perfectly normal. What a shock.

Gary jumps up and storms into the bathroom just off the kitchen.

MARGARET

He's a little over tired.

JIMBO

It's been a rough week.

MARGARET

(for Gary's benefit)

Really? Why? You and your life partner in the shitter having trouble picking a China pattern?

JIMBO

(shocked)

Um, um... Gary?

GARY (O.S.)

Your turn to deal with it. If I come out of this bathroom I'll put a bullet in her head, swear to God.

MARGARET

I have a psychiatric disorder.
(to Gary, in the bathroom)
And so do you!

94 EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / DRIVEWAY - MORNING

94

Paul, looking like a man who recently took a beating, shovels the light snow cover that blankets the drive. He looks as Ted's car pulls up. As Ted walks toward him...

PAUL

Mr. Watters. You said on the phone something about a resolution in our claim?

TED

Mr. Barnell. Why are you staying out here?

Paul thinks about this for a long time. Then, finally...

PAUL

My wife and I, we're having some problems.

TED

Kind of understandable I guess. Seeing as how you killed that man and dumped his body out in the woods.

PAUL

You mean Raymond?

TED

No. Not Raymond. Definitely not Raymond. I thought it was at first, but that's what was throwing me...

PAUL

I'm not sure I appreciate your tone.

TED

My tone, Mr. Barnell? You are going to jail. I will personally see to that.

PAUL

I really think you should go now.

TED
You are a liar and thief.

Paul stabs his shovel into a snow bank, then walks to Ted.

PAUL
You know Mr. Watters, I've had a pretty rough night,
so if you wouldn't mind just leaving.

Paul tries to guide Ted away, but slips and falls on the snow. Ted, rolling his eyes, reaches down to help him up.

TED
(noticing the bruises)
Hey. How'd you get all cut up?

MRS. WHERRY (O.S.)
What's say you just move away from him.

Ted, with his hands still on Paul, turns to see -- Mrs. Wherry, from her porch, a compound bow aimed at his forehead.

MRS. WHERRY (cont'd)
You all right there, Paul?

PAUL
I'm fine, Mrs. Wherry. Just go back inside.

MRS. WHERRY
I can drop him if you want.

PAUL
I'm fine. Really.
(turning to Watters)
I think you'd better go.

Ted backs to his car, gets in and drives off. Paul brushes the snow from his jacket, reaches up, touches his bleeding forehead (the fall having reopened the wound).

MRS. WHERRY
I've got some fishing line if you want me to stitch that.

Paul waves her off, then stares at the blood on his fingertips. An idea slowly takes hold.

95 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - MOMENTS LATER

95

Raymond pours whiskey into a 7-11 specialty cup as Paul pulls off his coat.

(CONTINUED)

RAYMOND

He give you the check?

PAUL

No. He thinks I... It'll be fine.

RAYMOND

Maybe I'll pay him a little visit. See if we can speed up the process.

PAUL

You don't have to... I figured out a way to take care of things.

RAYMOND

Yeah, I was watching from the window.

Paul, agitated, pulls the blinds shut.

PAUL

You can't do that, Raymond. If someone sees you...

RAYMOND

Ya know, I been thinking there, Paulie.

PAUL

About what?

Raymond walks over to Paul. Paul tenses, expecting to be hit. Raymond moves right by to refill his drink.

RAYMOND

After we get her back from these guys who grabbed her, you think your wife'll be able to keep her mouth shut?

*
*

PAUL

I don't think I...

RAYMOND

Crazy people talk a lot. And I think if you tell your therapist something, they can use it in court.

PAUL

She's not... she doesn't have a therapist.

RAYMOND

(taking a slug)

Still, might wanna think about it.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Think about what?

RAYMOND
You crossed over into the bigs now, Paulie. Fraud. *
Consorting with felons. Got to "cowboy up." *

PAUL *
Cowboy up? *

RAYMOND *
Get tough, ya suck-hole. I'm just saying sometimes *
a man has to make problematic decisions. Cull the *
heard, so to speak. *
(off his look)
Paul, come on, just kiddin' around, here. Don't be
such a fuckin' stick.

Raymond, an enigma, looks at Paul, then grins -- just kidding. Paul relaxes. *
Raymond tenses -- not really. Paul's not sure how to read his brother as they *
shoot looks at one another -- sibling rivalry ad absurdum. *

96 EXT. CITY SKYLINE - MORNING 96

The sky moves from dark grey to light grey, then stops. A thermometer outside
on an office tower shows a brisk minus 20. Workers bundle themselves
against the cold, hurry to work past the drifts piled alongside the road.

97 INT. INSURANCE OFFICE - MORNING 97

Ted walks in, throwing his coat over the wall of his cubicle and is about to sit
down when he notices Paul in his boss' office. Ted moves closer.

PAUL (MUFFLED)
I haven't called the police yet, but I'll tell you it was
certainly tempting.

Ted opens the door to his boss' office. Paul doesn't notice.

PAUL (cont'd)
I've had some dealings with, diseases of the mind,
and I can tell you he is not well.

Branch, obviously worried, stands.

BRANCH
Watters. Glad you're... Mr. Barnell was just telling
me about the... meeting you two had.

TED
I caught that, yes.

BRANCH

As you can see... well, Mr. Barnell has some...
concerns.

Paul turns to look at Ted. He has a large band-aid on his forehead, scratches
and bruises on his face. It takes a second for the dime to drop.

TED
You don't think I did this?

Paul gets up and moves to the other side of the office.

TED (cont'd)
Oh come on. I never laid a hand on him.

BRANCH
Ted, his neighbor says... otherwise.

TED
Now just hang on here. Let me show you something...

Ted digs into his briefcase. He takes out a video tape, the police file on Raymond and the photo of Raymond Paul dropped in the snow.

98/99 INT. OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

98/99

Paul and Branch listen intently as Ted paces, the TV/VCR plays shots of the dead body in the background.

TED
See? Where's the birthmark? Your brother's police report listed it...
(reading from the report)
"...large purple birthmark, upper left thigh..."
(leaning into the screen)
But I don't see it. Not on this body. You can see it in the picture. See?

Ted points to the photo; Raymond, in the summer, wearing shorts with a blotchy purple spot clearly visible on his leg.

TED (cont'd)
So what, Mr. Barnell? Did it just disappear? Did it just... get better.

Ted grins. His moment. Finally. Seconds feel like minutes.

PAUL
It... did get better.

TED
Did it now. Well how in the world did that happen?

PAUL
Raymond was always... bothered by it. When he came back from... Florida, he'd
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

PAUL (cont'd)
had it fixed. Laser surgery... like removing a tattoo.

Paul looks at Branch. It's an excuse Ted hadn't thought of before.

TED
He did not.

PAUL
You taped my brother's body, in the morgue?

Paul stands and grabs the photo from off the desk.

PAUL (cont'd)
And this? You stole pictures of my family? And
taped his naked body? What kind of sick company
are you running here?

TED
Oh for... he's lying. It's obvious he...

Paul, feigning fear, shrinks back into the corner.

TED (cont'd)
This is crazy. All we have to do is dig up the body...
check the leg for scars...
(bingo)
Dental records!

Paul goes white. He hadn't thought about this.

BRANCH
That will be just about enough of that. Mr. Barnell, I'm
sorry it's all come to this. We'll have a check brought
over to you tomorrow morning.

Paul nods, stressed and strung out, he hugs the wall as he walks out. After a
moment...

TED
Sir, with all due respect, he's --

BRANCH
Jesus, we're lucky he's not suing. Now tomorrow,
you deliver the check to Mr. Barnell with a complete
apology.

TED
Fine, I understand how this looks --

BRANCH

It looks like you beat the hell out of one of our policy holders. Now send Cam in here.

TED

Why?

BRANCH

Well, while you were off on your little Easter Egg hunt, your junior found us an out on that warehouse robbery. Head office is bumping him a level.

TED

(fuck me naked)
I'll go get him.

BRANCH

They're very keen on him. They want me to feel him out on a transfer --

Ted has left the office, SLAMMING the door behind him.

100 INT. INSURANCE OFFICE STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

100

The door CLANGS shut behind Paul as he dials his cell phone.

PAUL

Hello... yes, I'm wondering what city department would be in charge of... sure, I can hold.

(to himself)

Hang on Mag Pie, just hang on.

Paul puts a hand to his chest. Suddenly dizzy, he drops to his knees and starts to RETCH. Tears well up in his eyes. After a few moments, the storm passes. Still on his knees, the person on the line comes back.

PAUL (cont'd)

Yeah, hi. I was wondering if you could.... but I was... sure.

He sits there, on hold again, waiting...

101 INT. UNDERGROUND PARKING AREA - EVENING

101

Ted walks to his car. As he opens the door -- WHAM! A fist to his face drops Ted. Raymond in a ski mask, picks him up, opens the car door and lays Ted's head on the door jamb.

101 CONTINUED:

RAYMOND

Listen you little prick, we've had just about enough of this. You get me?

Raymond leans onto the door, Ted SCREAMING as his head is squashed in the vice.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

So let's just settle this right now, OK? We want what's coming to us.

Ted tries to say "yes." Raymond releases his grip on the door, leans down and grabs Ted's wallet and walks off.

102 OMITTED 102

103 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - NIGHT 103

Paul walks in on A LOUD PARTY. Raymond, drunk out of his head, has his arms around two marginal looking HOOKERS.

PAUL

Ray-

Not wanting to use his brother's real name.

PAUL (cont'd)

Richard! What in the blazes are you doing?

RAYMOND

Hey Paul. Took care of our little problem today. We should see some serious money any time, soon.

PAUL

Could... I have a word with you?

104 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 104

Paul pulls the sliding door closed behind Raymond.

PAUL

(whisper)

Are those...?

RAYMOND

(serious)

Prostitutes?

(laughing)

I sure as hell hope so, cause Jehovah's Witnesses won't lick your lolly no matter how much you pay them.

*

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

How did you get them here?

Raymond pulls out the credit card Paul got for him.

RAYMOND

Put it on my plastic. See, got my name on it and everything. It's every where I want to be. *

PAUL

You can't use that. You're supposed to be dead! They'll track us down.

RAYMOND

You think they give a shit who pays the bill? Think for a minute, will ya? *

Paul turns, trying to compose himself, when he notices a handgun sitting out on the counter.

PAUL

What... Raymond, what is... this?

Paul pokes at the gun, sending the barrel spinning around to face him. Raymond grabs it and stuffs it into his pants.

RAYMOND

That's "muh gun," Paul.

Paul's cell phone RINGS.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

Don't be long. The little spinner's yours. *

Paul picks up the phone as the party revs back up.

PAUL

Yes, hello. Sorry, what?

105/106 INTERCUT: BARNELL HOME / KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

105/106

Jimbo is on the wall mounted phone.

JIMBO

You having a party, Mr. Barnell?
(embarrassed for Margaret)
That's... that's not right.

Margaret, now gagged, sits where we last saw her. She tries to talk through the gag.

(CONTINUED)

105/106 CONTINUED:

Gary's staring at his watch, calling out seconds.

(CONTINUED)

GARY

Thirty, sorry, startinnng... Now!

Paul pulls the kitchen door closed with his free hand.

PAUL

There's no party...let me talk to my wife.

JIMBO

Hang on.

He hands the phone to Margaret. Gary leaps up and stops him.

GARY

Twenty-five!

Jimbo pushes past him, pulls down Margaret's gag and holds the phone to her.

PAUL

Why are you counting?

MARGARET

Paul? Are you entertaining?

PAUL

(a wave of relief)

Oh God, oh Jesus... Margaret, are you okay?

RAYMOND (O.S.)

Paul, we got any more chips?

GARY

Fifteen!

(grabs the phone)

The body. Have you -- (beat) No, I'm the other guy.
Have you got the body?

MARGARET

(shouting)

Paul, the carrot little weasly one wants to carrot
screw me with his sick carrot little cock. And he's
messing up my kitchen. Carrotcarrocarrot...

Jimbo, annoyed, puts the gag back in Margaret's mouth.

PAUL

You sick... Don't you hurt her!!

(CONTINUED)

GARY

I never said anything like--
 (looks at his watch in panic)
 Yes or no. Ten seconds.

PAUL

Yes! It'll... it'll happen tomorrow. Put Margaret back on!

RAYMOND (O.S.)

Paul! Chips!!

PAUL

Hello?

Gary lunges for the phone cradle like it's the finish line in the 100 meter dash, slamming the phone down. A beat.

GARY

I think I managed to avoid a trace.

JIMBO

(quietly to Gary)
 We're staying at his house.

107 (END INTERCUT) INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME KITCHEN

107

Paul goes to the cupboard and pulls out a box of potato chips. As he turns, he sees one of the HOOKERS (30s) standing in the doorway. She gives Paul a come hither look.

108 INT. BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL - MORNING

108

A bruised Ted enters, once again the only person in the shop. He keeps his parka on. Avis stands to greet him.

AVIS

Hello. Can I help you?

PAUL (O.S.)

(icily)
 Mr. Watters?

Paul comes around the corner. He extends his hand, shocked to see the bruises on Ted's face but knowing exactly where they came from.

TED

Mr. Barnell. I have your check.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL

Thank you, I appreciate that.
(an awkward pause)
Please, sit.

Ted sits at Paul desk, reaches into his brief case and pulls out an envelope and several forms.

PAUL (cont'd)

Have a little accident, there?

TED

I was mugged. The cops say it was just a random act of violence. But who knows, right?
(re: documents)
You'll have to sign.

Ted slides the papers across to Paul, then gets up and moves around over Paul's shoulder.

TED (cont'd)

Where I've marked it with an X. And... I'd also like to apologize for my --

PAUL

No, please. You don't have to...

Paul, at a loss, starts to read the paperwork. He pulls open his desk drawer to grab a pen. Ted looks down, sees the Sea Shell in the drawer.

TED

That's quite the shell.

PAUL

(picking it up)
It was a gift from Raymond. He bought it for me from Florida. It's all we have to remember him by.

Paul puts the shell down on the desk.

TED

That and a million dollars. Things really worked out for you, didn't they? lots of cash, newly single guy...

PAUL

I'm not single.

TED

...so you gonna head down to Club Med? See how much fun a big bank roll can buy?

PAUL

Mr. Watters, I love my wife. Very much.

Ted can't help but look confused by this simple, yet sincere declaration.

TED

Can we level with each other for a moment?

(Paul nods)

Did you --

Before he can finish his question, a DELIVERY DRIVER entering the office with a large box.

PAUL

Avis! Avis?

There's no answer. She's in the back.

PAUL (cont'd)

Will you excuse me?

Paul gets up to deal with the delivery. Ted, sullen, picks up the shell and turns it over in his hands. Avis enter from the back. She smiles at Ted, then sees the shell.

AVIS

Oh, that's where you went.

She takes the shell and reattaches it to the display for Aloha Air. Ted, confused, walks over as Avis snaps the shell back into place.

TED

That's quite the display.

AVIS

They do some very nice in store promotions.

Paul walks back, shocked to see the shell now back on the display. Ted just stares at him.

AVIS (cont'd)

Here it is Mr. Barnell.

(to Ted)

I thought someone might have walked out with it. It's not the best neighborhood.

(CONTINUED)

Avis walks back to her desk. Ted and Paul hold their look. Finally, Paul walks back to his desk and the paperwork.

PAUL

So, right here, by the X.

Ted nods. Paul signs. Ted takes the envelope with the check, hands it to Paul but doesn't let go. Paul tries to pull it free. He looks at Ted who looks right through him. Just then, the lights go out. They're all in the dark.

PAUL (cont'd)

We, uh... Avis? Call Municipal Light and Power and let them know I'll... stop by in a bit.

Paul looks at Ted, embarrassed. Ted finally lets go of the check.

PAUL (cont'd)

Thank you.

Ted shakes his head, gets up and walks out.

109 OMITTED

109

A109 EXT. "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - NIGHT

A109

Paul, seen through the window, sits alone in the dark. His face lit only by a small flashlight, he is completely still.

110 INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

110

Tiffany on her headset with a customer. Ted on the sofa, lost in thought and whatever's on the TV.

TIFFANY

There's nothing to be embarrassed about.

(a snide glance at Ted)

A lot of people find talking to a psychic very therapeutic. So what's on your mind, Carlos?

111 INTERCUT WITH: "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - CONT.

111

An overwrought Paul is on the phone with Tiffany, sitting in the dark. He's got his home phone bill in front of him.

PAUL

I have a situation. My wife... do you think it's okay to do something kinda bad to someone if you think they're gonna do something really bad to someone else?

TIFFANY

Sure.

PAUL

What if it's a really bad thing?

TIFFANY

Well, you probably shouldn't break the law if you can help it. Are you really sure they're going to do this other thing?

PAUL

I'm... I... I don't know. He said some things. He said he was joking, but I... I think he might.

TIFFANY

Don't think, know. How close are you to the other someone else, the one you're trying to protect?

PAUL

(crying)

I just, I just... Have you ever felt like that? Like your own life didn't even matter, as long as...

TIFFANY

(touched)

Listen to me, Carlos. Your wife is an incredibly lucky woman. I know, relationships are tough, but you do what you gotta do to keep it together, okay? Remember, love is sacrifice.

Ted can't help but SNORT at the mention of this familiar phrase as he looks at Tiffany. Tiffany glares back at him.

PAUL

(sniffing)

I guess you're right.

TIFFANY

Now you get tough. And remember, this call is for entertainment purposes only. Call me back and let me know how it goes.

Tiffany hangs up and walks out. Ted tries to catch her eye and let her know he was just kidding. He can't. She goes.

112 INT. PAUL'S CAR - LATER 112

Paul behind the wheel, a strange determined look on his face. He appears be steeling himself for something.

113 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / MAIN AREA - LATER 113

Paul enters, SLAMMING the door behind him as Raymond looks up from his porno magazine.

PAUL
(blowing by)
She's having sex with them.

And with that, Paul disappears into the back bedroom.

114 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / BACK BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 114

Paul sits, waiting. After what seems like forever, Raymond walks in.

RAYMOND
Who's doing what?

PAUL
Margaret. You know that Stockholm Syndrome thing?

RAYMOND
The movie?

PAUL
When you fall in love with your kidnappers.

RAYMOND
Get the fuck out of here.

PAUL
I went by there. She was in the bedroom with the big one.

(quietly)
Not the first time, either.
(a flash of panic)
With other men, not kidnappers.

RAYMOND
For real?

PAUL
Her therapist. And some guy she... hardly knew.

(CONTINUED)

RAYMOND

Wow. Sucks to be you.

PAUL

Shut up.

Raymond, a momentary flash of anger, sits on the bed beside his brother. Paul does his best not to flinch.

RAYMOND

I always knew she was a fucking tease.

PAUL

Yeah. Guess you were right.

RAYMOND

Well, you want my opinion...

(Paul nods)

I don't trust her, Paul. Never did.

*

*

PAUL

You think she'd... really mess things up?

RAYMOND

Only one way to make sure she doesn't.

*

PAUL

Not sure what you're saying?

*

*

RAYMOND

You remember that pooch Mom had? Crazy little Jack Russel with the bladder infection?

*

*

*

PAUL

Whole basement stank.

*

*

RAYMOND

Nothing you can do but put the thing out of it's misery. And yours.

*

*

*

PAUL

You... You sure, Ray?

*

*

RAYMOND

Trust me, Bro'. Leaky dogs, crazy women. Two things no man should have to live with.

*

*

*

As Ray stands to go, Paul nods, his heart ripped apart for any number of reasons.

*

*

115 INT. BANK OFFICE - MORNING 115

Paul sits in the manager's office, signing forms. A large BANK GUARD stands nearby. The reason? One million dollars in hundred dollar bills neatly stacked on the desk.

116 INT. OUTDOOR CLOTHING STORE - DAY 116

Paul, with his sack of one million dollars at his feet, is calmly trying on new winter coats with a CLERK. He feels each one, checking the amount of padding. He finally settles on a red full-length down parka.

117 INT. "BARNELL GREAT ESCAPES TRAVEL" - LATER 117

The lights are back on as Paul, wearing his oversized red parka comes through the front door carrying his sack of cash. Avis looks up.

AVIS

Mr. Barnell? I didn't expect you back today. Nice jacket.

(CONTINUED)

PAUL
Well... I am. And Avis?

AVIS
Yes?

PAUL
You've been with me for five years? Paul? Can we make it Paul?

Paul enters the back room, closes the door. Avis walks over.

AVIS
Sure. I just thought it was more professional when people were around to call you Mr. Barnell.

PAUL (O.S.)
Avis. There haven't been any people in here for months. No one comes in here, unless they're looking for pornographic movies or deep fried fish, neither of which we carry. So you can call me pretty much anything you want and it won't impress the customers at all because we don't have any.

AVIS
Are you OK, Paul?

Paul opens the door. Avis is surprised to see billowing clouds of down floating in the air behind him.

PAUL
No Avis, to be frank I'm a little frazzled right now. Now could you get me some tape, my passport out of the safe and two open-ended tickets to Paraguay.

Paul shuts the door. Avis gets to work.

118 INT. COFFEE ROOM - DAY

118

ARNITH and BILL, two city workers, sit sipping coffee at a cafeteria table. The room is white, very clean and fairly new. The men wear large orange overalls, their white construction safety helmets sit on the table beside them.

ARNITH
Trouble is the city keeps cutting us back and cutting us back.

Raymond and Paul, wearing his big red parka, enter.

PAUL
Excuse me, are you Arnith?

ARNITH sips his coffee, points to his name patch but doesn't look up.

PAUL (cont'd)
Great. I was told to give you this.

Paul hands Arnith a folded form. Arnith puts his hand out, forcing Paul to move the form to him. As Arnith looks at it.

PAUL (cont'd)
Disinterment order. Got it from the coroner's office.
My brother didn't want to be buried.

ARNITH
How'd you know?

PAUL
Know what?

ARNITH
That he didn't want to be buried.

RAYMOND
He left it in a letter.

ARNITH
And you just got it now?

PAUL
Ya know, I don't mean to be rude here, but I'm not
sure this is any of your business.

ARNITH
That's entirely possible.

Bill stifles a LAUGH. Raymond is about to tear out Arnith's spine. Paul holds his brother back.

PAUL
I, I don't think this is anything to be flippant about.

ARNITH
I appreciate that, Sir. But I'm on a union specified
break right now, which means you are talking to me
as a private citizen. Now as a private citizen I can
pretty much say whatever I want to. If

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

118

CONTINUED: (2)

ARNITH (cont'd)

you talk to me in 15 minutes I can assure you, you will be afforded every courtesy as specified in the workers policy guide and recently ratified in our latest collective agreement dated --

PAUL

Sorry. I'm just --

ARNITH

Trying to get your brother out of the ground. We couldn't be more pleased. You've arranged for transportation of the remains?

RAYMOND

We're gonna take him to go.

BILL

See, now that's a problem. We can't release the body into your custody unless you are licensed by the state to convey deceased persons.

ARNITH

Good point Bill. Bill knows exhumation policy. You can look it up but I'm betting he's right. You come back with a bonded agent and we'll get right on this.

Paul thinks for a moment, digs into his pocket pulls out five crisp, new hundred dollar bills and SLAMS them on the table.

PAUL

I'll give you five hundred dollars to go get him now.

119 EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

119

A large back hoe TURNS OVER. The muffler BELCHES a cloud of black smoke into the air. Arnith is at the controls, expertly maneuvering the shovel end towards the unmarked grave.

120 INT. TRUNK OF PAUL'S CAR

120

Black. The trunk lid opens as Bill and Arnith dump a well-wrapped body unceremoniously into the trunk. Arnith and Bill look at each other. Bill closes the lid. Black.

ARNITH (O.S.)

There ya go Mr. Barnell. Snug as a bug in a rug. Anything else we can get you?

121 INT. NICK'S STRIP BAR - NIGHT

121

Ted sits at the bar beside Cam. Ted, close to being drunk, plays with a book of matches as a STRIPPER struts to Tennessee Ernie Ford's version of "16 Tons."

CAM

So... Miami, huh? Can you believe that? One little case and "boom", you're the flavor of the month.

TED

(without a trace of sincerity)
Congratulations. Why are you here?

CAM

Say thanks. I really owe you. If you hadn't given me a shot on that--

TED

Forget it. I'm trying to.

CAM

So we were all kinda wondering... what did happen to your face?

TED

(beat)
Car trouble.

Ted gets up, a little shaky on his feet.

CAM

Should you be driving?

TED

Absolutely not.

Ted gets up and walks to the door.

A121 EXT. NICK'S BAR - NIGHT

A121

Ted exits, a BLAST of Arctic wind and snow hits him in the face. He closes his eyes, letting the cold run over him.

122 INT. PAUL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

122

Margaret sits at the dinner table, as Gary puts down an overly large serving plate of tuna casserole. Jimbo walks in, takes a seat and a scoop full of food.

GARY

We set?

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO

Yeah. How you feel about the turnout by Summit Hill where the snowmobilers park?

GARY

Fine.

They all dig in. Gary looks expectantly. Just the sound of chewing. Finally, he can't wait.

GARY (cont'd)

(to Jimbo)

You like it?

MARGARET

Tastes like a rectal polyp.

A long, protracted silence. Then...

JIMBO

(to Gary)

How would she know.

Gary CHUCKLES as he gets up for some ketchup. Margaret stares at Jimbo, who gives her a "I'll-say-what-I-need-to-have-peace-in-this-house." Margaret smiles, then discretely slides him the salt. Jimbo quickly douses his food.

123 EXT. PAUL'S HOUSE - LATE AT NIGHT

123

Ted pulls up in front of Paul's home. He stares at something that looks like a tree on the front lawn. He looks closer -- it's a "For Sale" sign.

TED

Blowing town, are we, Mr. Barnell? I don't think so.

Ted staggers through the snow to the sign and drunkenly pushes it down into the snow.

TED (cont'd)

I'm not done yet "travel man!" You hear me?!

LAUGHING, he takes some matches from his pocket and tries to light the "For Sale" sign on fire. It's no use. He quits. He's cold now. He gets up and staggers back to his car.

124 OMITTED

124

125 OMITTED

125

126 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

126

Raymond, half in the bag, sits on the sofa.

RAYMOND

See, I could have had her. We both know that, but I figured, she was such a... I mean, I don't know why... You know why?

PAUL (O.S.)

No. You want a refill?

RAYMOND

Does a duck shit under water?

Paul walks in with two glasses. He hands Raymond the larger.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

Any trouble getting the bank to handle that much cash?

PAUL

They said it'd be in tomorrow by --

RAYMOND

Right, right, you told me. Then all we have to do is get her and the thing... Hey, remember that time in school, when I jumped out and scared you, and you fucking pee'd all over yourself?

*
*

PAUL

Was pretty funny.
(raises his mug)
Bottoms up.

RAYMOND

Okay, "Puddles." Remember how they called you that? Huh, "Puddles?"
(about to drink - then)
Christ, what time is it?

PAUL

It's early. Come on... ya...
(uncomfortably)
...pussy.

Raymond LAUGHS, takes the drink.

127 EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME - CONTINUOUS

127

A beautiful winter's night, the soft snowy silence broken only by Raymond's drunken shot of...

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

RAYMOND (O.S.)

Pussy!!!

A startled rabbit scurries across the snow.

128 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / VARIOUS - LATER

128

Raymond is passed out on the sofa. Paul sits, gun in hand, the barrel pointed at Raymond's forehead. His finger grazes the trigger... but it's suddenly all too real. Paul lowers the gun, takes a deep breath and tries again. Not wanting to be sprayed by Raymond's gray matter, he half turns his head... Another idea comes to him. Paul picks up a plastic picnic plate to use as a shield from the blow back.

He gets ready to fire again, then makes the mistake of looking at Raymond. Maybe it's the light... maybe it's the small puddle of drool on the cushion, but he looks almost angelic. Paul stares at his brother.

In the kitchen, Paul fills a glass with water, empties the pistol's bullets into the cup and hides it on the top shelf.

Paul puts the gun back. Not sure of his next move, he spots the beat up clock radio lying next to his brother.

A128 EXT. BARNELL HOME - MORNING

A128

Establishing.

129 INT. BARNELL HOME / BEDROOM - MORNING

129

Margaret, still tied up, lays on top of the bed covers.

Gary walks past, looks in, checks his watch, then heads to the bathroom.

Margaret listens as Gary turns on the jacuzzi tub jets. As he starts singing, Margaret sits up and scooches over to the phone on the end table. Her hands tied loosely to her chest, she manages to dial by placing the phone receiver flat on the bed.

JIMBO (O.S.)

Gary! You seen my shirt?

Margaret looks over to see Jimbo, wearing Paul's pajamas, walking past while shaving with a portable razor. As the line rings.

JIMBO (O.S.) (cont'd)

Aw jeez, again?

GARY (O.S.)

It relaxes me. You know it has twelve different settings?

(CONTINUED)

JIMBO (O.S.)

No Gary, I don't know that because every time I thought about using it someone was in it.

GARY (O.S.)

Hey, I do a lot around here.

As they continue to squabble, the phone line connects.

911 RECORDING

You have reached 9-11. All our operators are busy, but your call will be handled in the order in which it was received. If this is a --

Margaret, using her nose, hangs up.

132 INT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME / LIVING ROOM

132

Paul, quiet as a mouse and dressed in his money-lined parka, picks up his cell and his car keys, drops them quietly into his pocket. Just as he finishes...

RAYMOND
(half asleep)
What's going on.

PAUL
We're out of coffee. But I'll be right back. Still early.

Not to worry. Raymond has already rolled over.

133 INT. BARNELL HOME / BEDROOM

133

Margaret has just dialed another number. It RINGS on the other end... And RINGS... And connects.

MARGARET
Paul?

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)
The number you have dialed is no longer in service.
If you think you have --

Margaret disconnects the call, then dials again.

134 INT. TED'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

134

A woozy Ted is trying to keep Tiffany's phone from RINGING.

Finally, he puts on the headset and hits a computer key. It connects.

TED
Yeah? Hello? (coughs) Hello?

He hits a few keys on the computer keyboard. The screen pops to life. The line connects.

MARGARET
Oh thank fucking Christ. Is Tiffany there?

TED
No, she's...

He pulls off a yellow Post It note stuck to the computer. It reads: "Coffee made. Don't touch my computer. Back in 10."

Unseen on the computer screen beside him, the name "Margaret Barnell" pops up, along with all her pertinent information like pet's name, husband, delusions...

TED (cont'd)
She'll be back in a few minutes. You want to try later?

MARGARET
Well you should know, fuck-wit. You know there's a man with a gun in my shower, right now?

Ted, distracted, turns as he hears the doorknob turning.

TED
Hang on, she's on her way--

Finally he notices the computer screen. Holy shit.

TED (cont'd)
(tentatively)
Mrs. Barnell?

But before she can answer, Tiffany walks in carrying a laundry basket, pulls the headset off Ted's head and holds it up to her ear.

TIFFANY
I'm here, Margaret. How you feeling today?

TED
Give me the headset.

Ted grabs for the headset, Tiffany resists.

134 CONTINUED: (2)

TIFFANY
(to Ted)
What is wrong with you?

135 INT. BARNELL HOME / BEDROOM 135

Margaret sits in the same position on the bed by the phone. Gary, in the shower, belts out some SHOW TUNE.

MARGARET
Christ, where do you want to start?

136 INT. TED'S APARTMENT 136

Tiffany shoves Ted, who loses his balance and stumbles backward. She puts on the headset.

TIFFANY
Sorry about that. Mrs. Barnell? Could you speak up a bit?

Ted is at her side, trying to listen in by pressing his ear to the outside of the headset.

TED
What's she saying?

TIFFANY
Something about the gay mafia taking her to a park to kill her. Can you hand me my Help Line list?

TED
What... Wha...

Ted's throat seizes up again. He stumbles to the kitchen, gulping water from the faucet. Tiffany watches with some amusement.

TIFFANY
Margaret, are you sure these are real people in your house?

TED
Find out where she...

His voice locks up again. More water.

TIFFANY
(listening to a profane ramble)
Well then it's a good thing you called. Nope, not seeing any problems, but hang on, let me really concentrate.

(CONTINUED)

136

CONTINUED:

TED

Ask her...

Ted's not doing much better.

137 INT. BARNELL HOME / BEDROOM

137

Margaret hears the shower stop running.

MARGARET

Shit on toast.

She hangs up, places the gag back in her mouth and hustles back into place.

138 INT. TED'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

138

Ted, pulls on his boots and his jacket. In his hand, an address scribbled down on a piece of note paper. Tiffany watches, not happy.

TED

You're sure this is it?

TIFFANY

She specifically mentioned the cock-sucking turnout up the highway where the snowmobilers hang out.

TED

I'll call later.

TIFFANY

I won't be here.

TED

Excuse me?

The phone RINGS. Tiffany lets it.

TIFFANY

I know relationships aren't all sunshine and roses, but I'm really not having fun anymore, and I don't think you are either.

TED

God, now's so not the time, Tiff.

TIFFANY

Maybe you have to be like this right now, and I'm just not in a good space to deal with it. But...

TED

But what?

(CONTINUED)

TIFFANY

Maybe we shouldn't be like this together.

Tiffany gives him that look every man who's ever crossed the line for the last time is all too familiar with.

Ted stares. Words fail him. Finally, his only recourse is to hurry out the door which shuts with a BANG. Tiffany lets the phone continue to RING as she stares at the door. Sadly, she hits the computer key that picks it up.

(CONTINUED)

TIFFANY (cont'd)

Psychic Buddies. How are you Mr. Bennett? I think she'd be fine with you remarrying, but hang on, let me concentrate.

Ted opens the door, steps back inside.

TED

OK. Come on.

TIFFANY

(to Ted)

Really?

TED

I've been cutting you out of my life and as a result our normal communication channels have been blocked. I think you coming with me would... would...

He's reaching, but Tiffany looks cautiously hopeful.

TED (cont'd)

...further the development of our relationship and allow us to both... realize the potential of our... interpersonalism.

TIFFANY

If you're going to be sarcastic.

TED

I'm not being anything. Swear to God.

TIFFANY

Okay. Why do you want me to come?

TED

(total sincerity)

Cause if you don't, then I'll have to stay, and I'll be mad at you and eventually we'll break up over it, and as bad as my life is right now, that would make it a million times worse.

Tiffany smiles, genuinely touched.

TIFFANY

(into the phone)

Mr. Bennett, she's totally cool with it. but listen, you're gonna have to call back... I gotta go help my boyfriend.

139 OMITTED 139

140 INT. PAUL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 140

Paul drives, smiling for the first time in a long time. He listens to the beautifully wrenching Iz-Kamakawiwo'Ole's version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" on the radio. (The music continues over the next two scenes.)

141 EXT. TED'S APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER 141

Ted and Tiffany walk out to their car. They sneak looks at each other, not entirely sure what emotional sign-post they just passed.

142 INT. BARNELL GARAGE 142

Gary and Jimbo, with Margaret, hands bound, walk into the garage. Jodie (the dog) runs out after them. Margaret looks at Jimbo, who takes the dog and gently puts him back inside.

143 INT. TED'S CAR / CITY STREETS - LATER 143

Ted and Tiffany drive in silence. Then...

TIFFANY

Okay, it's called the listening game. You talk, I listen, and I can't interrupt. Then we switch.

TED

Doesn't sound like much of a game, but... I can talk about anything?

TIFFANY

Yes.

Ted smiles, and launches in...

144 INT. JIMBO'S CAR / CITY STREETS - LATER 144

Gary leans into the backseat and holds a magazine in front of Margaret's face.

GARY

See the little box down there? Lists all the symptoms of that Tourette's thing, and you don't have half of them.

MARGARET

And?

GARY

And? And you're faking it.

MARGARET

Magazines don't prove anything.

JIMBO

Gary, can we just try and get there in peace?

GARY

Magazines prove everything!!

145 EXT. BARNELL MOBILE HOME

145

The residence seen from a distance.

RAYMOND (O.S.)

That little prick!!!

As the camera rushes the mobile home, from inside comes the sounds of a very angry man. Then, just as we're at the door, it SLAMS OPEN. Raymond stands in the doorway, a mountain of anger in a hastily pulled on parka.

He's holding the clock radio by the cord. He checks his wristwatch, then smashes the clock radio against the trailer.

Stalking toward his car, he checks the pistol in his side pocket, then, almost as an afterthought, opens the clip. No bullets. He smiles.

146 EXT. GLACIER - LATER

146

A not-well-frequented tourist spot, featuring an expansive, far-as-the-eye-can-see carpet of white. The road from the turnoff is about 200 yards long, leading to a plowed out parking area. The road is the only way in or out. Paul's car takes the corner and heads toward the parking area.

147 INT. JIMBO'S CAR / HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

147

Margaret in the back, Jimbo and Gary in the front.

GARY

You can't be serious.

JIMBO

I'm still not sleeping.

GARY

Jimbo. Come on.

JIMBO

It's a thought, okay. With hard work, you can live okay as a civilian.

GARY

After all this...

JIMBO

Yeah, after all this.

GARY

Don't you go soft on me, Jimbo.

Margaret LAUGHS through her gag in the backseat. Gary and Jimbo pretend not to hear her. They drive on in silence.

148 EXT. PARKING AREA - CONTINUOUS

148

Gary and Jimbo's car pulls in, sliding to a stop beside Paul.

149 OMITTED

149

150 INT. TED'S CAR / HIGHWAY

150

Tiffany and Ted drive. Ted has just finished. Tiffany has been paying rapt attention.

TIFFANY

So this is kind of like a really weird "Law and Order" episode?

TED

Sure. I guess.

TIFFANY

And if Paul Barnell already killed his brother...

TED

Maybe his wife is next.

TIFFANY

Cool. My turn?
(Ted nods)
Now a healthy relationship is...

TED

Hey, here we are.

Ted takes the turnoff to the parking area.

151 INT. GUN STORE - MOMENTS LATER

151

A young, bored female CLERK (18) is behind the counter as the door CHIMES go off. She looks up to see Raymond walking in, gun in hand. Raymond lays it on the counter.

GIRL

Calibre?

152 EXT. PARKING AREA

152

Ted's car pulls up at the far end of the lot, about 200 yards from where Paul, Gary and Jimbo are parked. Paul's car is in between Ted's car and Jimbo's.

Paul gets out of his car, as do Jimbo and Gary. Paul looks for Margaret in the back of Jimbo's car, but she remains lying down on the backseat.

JIMBO

Mr. Barnell. I'll assume you've got our friend back there?

PAUL

Yes. You can let her go now.

153 INT. TED'S CAR

153

Ted looks at Paul's car, too far away to see much. He's about to get out when Tiffany stops him.

TIFFANY

(gently)

So, do you have a plan here?

TED

I'm gonna go talk to him. You mind staying here?

TIFFANY

I guess. So when do we call the cops?

TED

Soon as I... if he actually is doing... something. I'll wave, alright?

Tiffany gives him a quick kiss.

TIFFANY

That's a very good plan.

(CONTINUED)

Ted's about to jump out of the car, but has to pull back his door as another vehicle slides in beside them, the driver locking his brakes and sliding into the snow embankment.

TIFFANY (cont'd)

Tourists.

Ted, a confused look on his face, looks over as Raymond gets out of his vehicle.

TIFFANY (cont'd)

What?

TED

That was...

TIFFANY

Who?

Ted, too excited, fumbles with his seat belt as he tries to jump out of the car.

154 CORPSE'S POV: FROM PAUL'S OPEN TRUNK

154

Black. The lid opens. Jimbo, Gary and Paul look in at the frozen body. Jimbo recoils at the mangled mess before him. Gary reaches down and touches the well-chewed body.

GARY

How do we know it's him?

PAUL

Come on! Where would I get another one?

Good point. Paul hands him the ransom money.

155 OMITTED

155

156 EXT. PARKING AREA

156

Ted rushes up beside Raymond.

TED

Excuse me. Aren't you... Raymond Barnell?

RAYMOND

I know you?

TED

(confused)

You're... You're dead?

(CONTINUED)

Raymond shoots him a look... Clearly this was taken as a threat. Ted can't help but step back.

TED (cont'd)
That came out so wrong.

Raymond sizes up Ted, then looks off to Paul's car.

RAYMOND
Go away, now.

Raymond walks on. Ted, realizing he has no choice, runs and jumps in front of Raymond, blocking his way.

TED
Okay, I don't know exactly what's going on here, but if you would come with me to my office, just for a few minutes, it would really help me out with my boss.

Raymond steps around Ted. Ted stays with him.

TED (cont'd)
Look, I'm not trying to screw with your life at all, but you can't just walk off with a million dollars and expect people to--

RAYMOND
(stops cold)
How much?

TED
See, your brother has, and I use this term carefully, stolen a million dollars from my insurance company. Now if we--

Before he can finish, Raymond hits him with an elbow to the temple. Ted drops to his knees, but even as Raymond tries to walk off, Ted manages to grab his ankle.

157 INT. TED'S CAR

157

Tiffany is busy fiddling with the radio, missing the fight just outside her window as she tunes in the Beach Boys "Wouldn't It Be Nice."

158 EXT. PARKING AREA / BY PAUL'S CAR

158

At Jimbo's car, Gary is folding the corpse into the trunk as Jimbo pulls Margaret upright from the backseat and tugs down her gag. She smiles at him as, with great care, he helps her out of the car and presents her to her husband.

PAUL

It's all over honey. It's all over. Did they hurt you?

MARGARET

(smiling/whisper)

Does food poisoning count? Have you been eating?

PAUL

You know me when I get busy.

She touches the bruise under his eye.

MARGARET

Did you fall?

PAUL

Just a little.

(to Jimbo)

Hey, we're gonna get...

That's when Paul sees what Jimbo and Gary are watching.

Raymond kicks Ted in the head, turns, spots Paul and breaks into a run.

Paul seems frozen, but just for a moment.

JIMBO

Who the hell is that?

MARGARET

Paul?

Paul discretely takes off his red parka and drapes it over Margaret's shoulders.

PAUL

(quietly)

Honey, I need you to start walking to that hill over there, alright?

MARGARET

Why?

PAUL

I'll catch up in a bit. Now, no matter what you hear, just keep going, alright. And if I'm... late or something, just look in the coat, alright?

Margaret nods, kisses her husband quickly on the cheek, then starts to walk off.

(CONTINUED)

Paul, Gary and Jimbo watch, transfixed at the down-parka'd shit-storm that is headed their way.

(CONTINUED)

GARY
(nervous)
Jimbo?

RAYMOND
(yelling)
A million dollars, Paul!? You really think you could
take me? Again!

JIMBO
What million dollars?

Gary and Jimbo look over at Paul, somewhat confused. Raymond's ten yards out, and they can now see he's taken out his gun. He's aiming it at Paul.

Paul looks over his shoulder at Margaret, who's having some trouble making it up a snow covered hill.

Gary's hand slips into his pocket, grabbing hold of his gun. Raymond, oblivious, moves right past.

159 INT. TED'S CAR

159

Tiffany finally looks over at Ted, who's just getting to his feet. She bursts out of the car...

160 EXT. PARKING AREA / BY PAUL'S CAR

160

Raymond reaches Paul, takes the gun and points it at the top of his head. Paul's eyes shut tight, expecting the worst.

PAUL
Raymond... please.

But shooting your brother is tougher than it looks. Paul opens his eyes. Raymond tries to pull the trigger again, but can't. He moves the barrel six inches to the right and shoots Margaret in the back. She drops face first into the snow.

Paul's world ends.

Ears RINGING, he rushes toward his wife.

Jimbo can't believe it as Gary holds him back.

JIMBO
Hey! What the fuck!!

Raymond, a look of relief on his face, turns to Jimbo.

JIMBO (cont'd)
She had nothing to do with this!

RAYMOND

And you do?

But even before Raymond can raise his weapon, Gary pulls his gun and gets it pointed (shakily) at Raymond.

RAYMOND (cont'd)

Oh put it down, Nancy.

GARY

You first.

JIMBO

Gary! Just --

Raymond drops his gun to his side. Gary smiles, too happy he won the face off.

RAYMOND

You win, tough guy.

Gary, trying to be cool, flips the gun to his other hand. As he does-- BANG! The bullet rips into the snow about six feet from Raymond's feet.

Raymond glares at Gary. So does Jimbo.

GARY

(meek, apologetic)

Sorry.

Jimbo lunges for cover as Raymond FIRES back. Gary, truly terrified, closes his eyes as he squeezes off shots on the run -- BANGBANGBANGBANG.

One bullet bounces off Paul's car. One hits Raymond. With a quizzical look on his face, he drops to his knees. A large crimson stain forms on his jacket. Everything goes quiet, except for the sounds coming from...

Paul, almost crazed with grief, cradles his wife's body.

PAUL

Oh God... Oh Jesus...

MARGARET

(muffled)

Oh fucking hell... I can't... breath.

Paul gently turns her over. Margaret, alive, unharmed but winded, tries to catch her breath.

(CONTINUED)

MARGARET (cont'd)

Paul... Someone kicked me.

Paul feels around the bullet hole and pulls out a stack of money, now embedded with the slug from the Raymond's gun. He starts to weep tears of relief.

PAUL

Can you stand.

MARGARET

Is... The Pope... a...

PAUL

Okay, easy...

Gary is behind the other car with Jimbo.

GARY

(starting to lose it)

He just, fell... Oh Jesus, oh God.

Jimbo gently takes Gary's gun.

JIMBO

I know.

As Jimbo puts an arm around Gary and helps him to the car, he sees Paul, arm around Margaret, coming their way. Everyone stops. A look passes, then both couples move off.

161 EXT. PARKING AREA - CONTINUOUS

161

As Jimbo and Gary drive away, Paul brings Margaret to his vehicle. Spotting Raymond, he walks over, kicks the gun away, then leans down. Raymond's not dead, but he's close.

Paul has to turn away.

RAYMOND

(laboured)

Look at me, you little...

Paul turns back, not angry, not frightened, just a little sad. Raymond, taken aback for a moment, tries for one last verbal shot, but all he can manage is...

RAYMOND (cont'd)

Puddles.

And Raymond dies.

162 EXT. PARKING AREA - CONTINUOUS

162

Paul turns back to his car when he spots a delirious, damaged Ted stumbling toward him with Tiffany desperate to drag him the other way.

TED

Where do think you're going?

TIFFANY

Ted, leave him alone.

TED

No, no, no. I have been beaten, humiliated, had my head squeezed by a guy... and I am getting some answers, right now.

Ted, barely able to stay on his feet (concussion) gets in front of Paul, and just stands there and waits. Paul can't help but feel bad for the guy.

PAUL

Okay.

TED

Well go ahead.

(re: his left ear)

I can still kind of hear out of this one.

PAUL

(a long pause)

I love my wife, Mr. Watters. And when you love someone, I mean, really love someone...

The punch hits Paul on the top of his head. He stumbles back, but Ted is on him before he can move out of range. It's a strange looking fight between the younger (physically spent) and older (emotionally drained).

TED

(between punches)

I want a fucking Hallmark card or the lyrics to a Foreigner rock ballad, I'll go to the mall, Mr. Barnell.

Margaret and Tiffany jump in, trying to pull the two men apart.

163 INT. PAUL'S CAR - LATER

163

The car is still in the parking area. Paul and a bloody, beaten Ted sit up front with Margaret and Tiffany in the back. No one speaks, until...

TIFFANY

They call this the listening game. Mr. Barnell, you get to go first.

Ted glares at Tiffany, but her look instantly softens him. Ted looks at Margaret, who looks expectantly at Paul. Ted shrugs.

TED

Knock yourself out.

Paul starts to talk, and Ted starts to listen...

164 EXT. GRAVEYARD - NOON

164

Arnith (the grave digger) walks to the side of a casket. He hits the switch and it starts to drop. Arnith watches impassively, taking brief note of two people up the hill before returning to his work.

165 EXT. GRAVEYARD HILL - CONTINUOUS

165

It's Gary and Jimbo, dressed in black. They watch silently as Raymond is laid to rest.

166 EXT. TROPICAL BEACH - DAY

166

The sun beats down on a white sand tropical paradise. The wind is calm, the water azure blue. Perfection, except for the -- SNOW. Big pure white flakes, cutting across this idyllic --

Poster that hangs in a BOOK STORE window. We are...

167 EXT. STREET / LIBERTY CAPITAL TOWERS - DAY

167

Tiffany stares at her reflection in the window, her face transported to an island paradise. Ted walks out.

TIFFANY

Hey.

TED

Hey yourself.

TIFFANY

So where you want to go?

(CONTINUED)

TED

Somewhere close. My three o'clock's been moved up.

TIFFANY

Cool. You alright about everything?

TED

Yeah. The life policy was written on his brother, and he did, you know, die. I may be rationalizing a bit, but ethically I think I'm okay.

TIFFANY

Good. I like it when you're okay.

The two walk down the street. Snow keeps falling. Tiffany shuts her eyes, looks straight up as the gossamer snowflakes land and melt on her face. She's never looked more beautiful.

TIFFANY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Don't ya just love this weather?

Ted stares at her.

TED

Learning to.

Tiffany grabs his hand and pulls him away, disappearing into the whiteness.

168 OMITTED

168

A168 INT. BARNELL HOME / LIVING ROOM - DAY

A168

Paul, sitting alone, reads a postcard from Margaret.

MARGARET (V.O.)

Pauly, know it sounds corny but I miss you so much! Wish you could have come. Saw some dolphins today. Frisky little buggers. They were even playing our song in the bar. Have been pondering about your question, and I think my answer is "yes." After all, it's no fun in the sun without...

MARGARET (O.S.) (cont'd)

Paul, you ready?

Paul looks up to see Margaret. Dressed in a coat, she is standing in the middle of the living room, now empty save for a few boxes and a very ugly floor lamp.

Paul flips Margaret's letter over, and we now see it is the faded Hawaiian Hilton postcard from the box in his den.

Paul puts the postcard in a shoe box full of keepsakes, and tucks it under his arm. Margaret picks up Jodie, whose in his carrying case, and walks over.

A CAR HORN sounds from outside. It's their cab. As they walk to the door...

PAUL
How you feeling?

MARGARET
Pretty damn good.

PAUL
I can tell.

MARGARET
Can you?

Paul takes her hand and gives it a squeeze. They head out.

169 EXT. AIRPORT TARMAC - DAY

169

Snowing now, as various PEOPLE walk toward the aircraft and the portable stairs rolled to the door.

Paul and Margaret among the crowd, exchange nervous but hopeful smiles, then they are lost along with the other pilgrims in the swirling white.

FADE TO BLACK.

170 (CODA) EXT. DAVE'S HOUSE - DAY

170

Dave and his WIFE (50s) walk out of their house toward their car. They get in, Dave behind the wheel.

171 INT. DAVE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

171

As they pull down the driveway.

DAVE
Why don't we go there after?
(off her look)
Fine. We'll do it now.

(CONTINUED)

DAVE'S WIFE

Watch the curb.

Dave keeps backing up. As he takes the corner and bumps over the curb, the momentum sends the half-eaten body (that Gary and Jimbo stuffed into the backseat) to an upright position.

They drive on, oblivious.

DAVE

Looks like weather.

FADE TO WHITE.