

A DEBT PAID

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Bottles and cigarettes adorn the wall behind the CLERK, 66, an old bearded man who operates the till. The smell of bleach and grime fills the air.

PENN, 37, a large work bag hangs to his side. The hood from his sweatshirt is pulled up over his head as he waits in line behind a man buying lottery tickets.

When Penn gets to the clerk he places a pack of gum on the counter. The clerk eyes him suspiciously.

CLERK
One ninety-nine.

Penn places two dollars on the counter.

The clerk reaches for the money.

Penn pulls a nail gun from the work bag and drives two nails into the clerks left hand pinning it to the counter.

The clerk wails in agony and reaches his other hand to pull out the nails.

Penn drives two more nails into the clerks other hand.

As the clerk shrieks in pain, Penn walks to the other side of the counter and raids the till.

He stuffs the money into the work bag and runs for the door.

A POLICE OFFICER, 29, enters the store laughing as he talks to the other officer behind him. He stops as he hears the clerk crying.

Penn halts.

He sees Penn with the nail gun in his hand.

The officer pulls his pistol from his holster.

POLICE OFFICER
Freeze!

Penn drops the nail gun and puts his hands in the air.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

White walls glow from the flickering fluorescent lights. Flashes of blue and red light occasionally creep in through the window on the wall.

Penn sits on one side of a brown table. DETECTIVE LOGAN, 42, his buttoned up shirt barely hiding the extra weigh he's found, sits across from Penn.

DETECTIVE LOGAN

You're lookin' at five to ten for assault, robbery, and resisting arrest, and all you got to say is your name is 'Penn'?

Penn sits silently defiant.

DETECTIVE LOGAN

You know the guy you nailed might die, right?

Penn looks concerned.

DETECTIVE LOGAN

Yeah, guess he had a heart attack and he's critical. He dies and you're looking at a whole new set of problems...*Penn.*

Penn freezes up.

The door to the room opens. In walks VINCENT, 35, suit and tie, all business. He adjust the glasses on his face as he looks down at a clipboard in his hands.

VINCENT

Good evening Mister...uh...

He looks for a last name but can't find it.

VINCENT

I guess just Penn then. Good evening Penn, I'm Vincent Bartto from the district attorney's office.

Vincent and Penn lock eyes. They hold the gaze for a moment longer than normal.

Vincent takes a seat next to Detective Logan.

VINCENT

Well, Penn, you don't seem to exist in any of our records. There's no fingerprints, no license, social.

Penn glares at Vincent.

VINCENT

According to our records, you don't exist. Would you care to explain?

Penn leans forward toward Vincent.

PENN

My name...is Penn.

DETECTIVE LOGAN

This is a waste of time. You okay with *Penn* for a minute while I use the ladies room?

Vincent waves his hand and nods.

Detective Logan exits and huffs as he slams the door.

VINCENT

Penn you're looking at a very serious set of charges, so you...

PENN

Vinny. It's me.

Vincent is taken aback by Penn being so familiar.

VINCENT

Do I know...

PENN

Com'on, man!

Vincent squints his eyes at Penn as he concentrates. His head tilts. Then a look of recognition washes over Vincent's face.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A YOUNG VINCENT, 8, sits on a couch. Across from him is his MOTHER, 28, kneels on the ground.

MOTHER

I'm sorry, but the court order says that one of you has to go with your dad.

In a recliner next to the couch, YOUNG PENN, 10, looks into the air as he weighs the words of his mother.

YOUNG PENN

But Mom! He lives in the woods with weird people! No clothes! They do drugs!

His mother lowers her head. Tears leak from her eyes.

MOTHER

I know, Honey. I tried. I tried to get them to give me both of you. But the judge wouldn't change his mind.

Penn looks at Vincent.

Vincent sits there with doe eyes not knowing what's going on.

YOUNG VINCENT

It's okay, Mom. Don't cry. Everything's gonna be okay.

Penn sees his brother's innocence. He takes a deep breath.

YOUNG PENN

I'll go with dad.

Their mother unleashes a torrent of tears as she cries. She reaches out and grabs both of the boys and pulls them in for a hug.

The two brothers hug their mother. Penn looks at Vincent.

YOUNG PENN

You owe me, Vinny.

Vincent doesn't understand.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

PENN

You owe me, Vinny.

Vincent recognizes his brother in front of him.

VINCENT

Penn! I can't. There's nothing I can do.

Penn motions toward the window.

PENN

Let me go.

VINCENT

I can't. My career. Everything I've worked for. It'll all be gone.

Penn takes a deep breath.

PENN

You got no idea what he did. You got no idea what I been through.

Vincent looks down.

PENN

I lived through all that shit, Vinny, so you didn't have to.

Vincent looks up at Penn's eyes. The pain and suffering on his face is too much to bear.

Vincent nods.

Penn stands and opens the window.

VINCENT

Wait!

Penn stops.

Vincent stands and walks to Penn.

VINCENT

Thank you.

Vincent hugs his brother. Penn hugs him back.

FADE OUT:

THE END