

"B R O T H E R S K E E P E R"

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FADE IN:

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Books. Diplomas. A ticking wall clock.

DR. CARPENTER (50s), sharp eyes behind wire frames, sits with a notepad.

Across from him: JAKE JASPERS (26). Restless knee. Charming eyes that never settle.

A long silence.

DR. CARPENTER

We were talking about your brother.

Jake swallows, tries to grin.

JAKE

Jeremiah. Yeah.

His phone buzzes in his hoodie pocket. He ignores it.

DR. CARPENTER

You say you "look out for him."
I'm asking if that means you keep
him safe—
or keep him fed.

Jake's gaze flicks up, then away.

INT./EXT. VAN / SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A stripped-out panel van under a flickering streetlight.

Inside: dashboard glow.

Jake racks a Glock. Thumb checks the slide. Brass gleams. He exhales, holsters it.

From the cargo bay:

CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP-DRAG.

A sound like cowboy spurs echoing across a saloon.

Behind a tarp, a giant silhouette shifts.

Jake straightens, stage-mother proud.

The tarp parts: JEREMIAH (late 20s).
 Burn-scored cheeks. Greasy hair. A full-leg orthopedic brace
 of leather and steel runs from thigh to ankle. Every step:
 squeak, drag, thump.

He fits a cracked porcelain doll mask over his face. Blacked-
 out eyes. Broken smile.

Jake smooths Jeremiah's coat collar.

JAKE
 Keep it quiet.
 No neighbors.
 No sirens.
 No "Sarah situation."

Jeremiah nods. Obedient.
 The hunting knife slides home with a metallic kiss.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

TINA (19), blonde and tired, fumbles keys at her door. Phone
 tucked to her shoulder.

From the darkness, Jeremiah crosses the yard. The brace's
 rhythm syncs with her footsteps—until it doesn't.

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Jake picks at a faint scar on his palm.

DR. CARPENTER
 Tell me where it started.

Jake stares at the floor.

JAKE
 House rules?

DR. CARPENTER
 Mine: honesty.

INT. TINA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Steam blooms. Tina wipes mascara.

In the mirror: a distortion.

- LEFT EYE POV (clear): her face sharp.
- RIGHT EYE POV (burned): smeared blur, fractured light.

Jeremiah's dual vision stalks her. CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP.

She whips around- empty doorway. Exhales. Turns back-

Jeremiah's mask inches from her face. One clear eye. One ruined.

She SCREAMS. He hooks her ankle. She goes down.

The knife rises. Falls. A storm seen through fractured sight.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Jake drums along to oldies on the radio. Doesn't hear the first scream.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

Tina staggers into the night. Bloody. She slams into the van, smearing red across the window.

Jake jolts, catches her as she collapses.

TINA
(whisper)
Please... call...

Her eyes search his face. Something calms her.

JAKE
(soft)
You're safe. It's okay.

A hand flowers from behind. Jeremiah. A silver slice across her throat. Blood spills down Jake's chest.

Jake flinches, annoyed more than horrified.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Jesus- you got it on me.

He rips the knife from Jeremiah's hand, furious- Jeremiah recoils, cowering like a dog.

Jake freezes. Rage drains. He shoves the knife back into his brother's fist.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 (softer)
 Get home. I'll clean.

Jeremiah nods. Vanishes into the night.
 CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP-DRAG.

Jake stares at the crimson blooming across his hoodie. Sighs.
 Pulls the Glock. Stares at it. Holsters it again.

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. CARPENTER
 You want to protect him.
 You also want to punish him.

Jake smirks through glassy eyes.

JAKE
 You got kids, Doc?

DR. CARPENTER
 One. A girl.

JAKE
 Then you get it. Love's messy.

The phone in Jake's pocket buzzes. He kills the vibration.

DR. CARPENTER
 What happens if Jeremiah gets
 caught?

Jake finally meets his eyes.

JAKE
 He won't.

The clock ticks louder.

DR. CARPENTER
 Honesty, Jake.

Jake smiles — a knife without a blade.

JAKE
 You first.

INT. BURNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Charred ruins. Beams like ribs.

Jeremiah sleeps near a broken hearth. Mask on the floor, staring upward.

Jake stands over him. Glock in hand. Trembling. Aims at Jeremiah's face.

The giant snores - a child's sound in a monster's chest.

Jake lowers the gun. Shame floods him. He kneels, tucks the blanket tighter. Picks up the mask - half hate, half reverence. Sets it gently beside Jeremiah.

Backs away into moonlight, swallowing hard.

Outside, he lights a cigarette with shaking hands. Flare catches scar lines on his palm.

From inside: Jeremiah coughs in his sleep.

Jake's eyes wet. He inhales until it hurts.

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Another session. Same clock.

DR. CARPENTER

The fire.

Jake glances at a faint smoke stain along the ceiling - one no one else notices.

JAKE

We were kids.

DR. CARPENTER

You said it was an accident.

JAKE

(firm)

It was.

DR. CARPENTER

And yet you live there.

JAKE
Home's home.

DR. CARPENTER
Or a shrine.

Jake smiles like he doesn't understand. He very much does.

EXT. SUBURBAN GRID - DUSK

The van creeps through cul-de-sacs. Jake clicks on a recorder.

JAKE (V.O.)
Tuesdays. Work schedules. Dogs next door.
Streetlights out on Woodcrest.

He snaps photos. Houses. Cars. Faces.

JAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Avoid corner lots. Fewer sightlines.

He brakes.

EXT. VOGEL HOUSE - DUSK

DEBBIE (20), cute without trying, ushers kids inside. Messy ponytail, vintage tee.

She notices the van idling. Frowns— then smiles, waves. Reflexive. Disappears inside.

Jake freezes, caught by the simple gesture.

He rolls forward, parks half a block up. Watches.

INT. VAN - DUSK

Notebook open. Jake scribbles: "Vogel. Debbie babysits? Tues/Thurs. Porch light broken. Dog? No."

Debbie steps out with recycling. Spots the van. Approaches instead of backing off.

Jake panics, rolls down the window.

DEBBIE

Hey— do you live around here?

Jake flashes a smile. Likable when he tries.

JAKE

Sometimes. On Tuesdays. I'm Jake.

She laughs despite herself.

DEBBIE

Debbie. Vogels'. You're not a serial killer, right?

JAKE

Not on Tuesdays.

She smirks. He relaxes.

DEBBIE

Waiting on someone?

JAKE

My brother. Night shifts. I give him rides. Big-brother Uber.

DEBBIE

That's sweet.

JAKE

Define "sweet." I charge surge pricing.

She grins. He lights up.

From inside: a kid screams (playful).

DEBBIE

Well, Jake-Not-On-Tuesdays—

JAKE

— get back, yeah.

(then)

What do you call a fish with no eyes?

She squints.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Fsh.

She snorts, laughing despite herself.

DEBBIE

Terrible.

JAKE

Yeah. I collect 'em.
Keeps the silence away.

The words land heavier than he meant.

DEBBIE

You around Thursday? Could use a
not-creepy escort to my car. Vogels
leave me solo.

He blinks. Too easy. Too normal.

JAKE

Yeah. Of course.

DEBBIE

See you then, Jake Uber.

She goes. He exhales a breath he didn't know he held.

His phone buzzes: UNKNOWN.

Text: Where?

Jake types back: Later.

INT. BURNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Jeremiah at a rickety table. Mask beside a tin plate. He eats
silently, mechanical.

Jake enters with grocery bags. Drops them. Checks tripwires
along windows – invisible to anyone but him.

He pries up a scorched floorboard. Beneath: a shoebox.
Folders marked Routes, Dogs, Patterns. A thicker packet:
VOGEL.

He hesitates, hides the Vogel packet deeper, under an old
photo album.

Jeremiah's eyes track his hands. Animal, suspicious.

Jake covers, pops up with jerky.

JAKE

Protein, my dude. We bulk, we cut.
Mostly we cut.

Jeremiah chews. Watches. Always watches.

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - DAY

DR. CARPENTER
You're smiling more.

JAKE
Maybe your chair's breaking me into
posture.

DR. CARPENTER
Or you met someone.

Jake looks away, coy.

JAKE
You're the therapist. You tell me.

DR. CARPENTER
Are you hiding her from Jeremiah?

Jake's silence = answer.

DR. CARPENTER (CONT'D)
Secrets split a person into pieces.
You don't have many left.

Jake bristles.

JAKE
You got a kid, Doc. Imagine you
blink and everyone who ever yelled
at you— gone.
What do you owe the last person
left who still looks at you like
you're there?

Carpenter studies him.

DR. CARPENTER
Owing isn't loving.

Jake smiles like a blade.

JAKE
Then write me a prescription for
"loving right."

EXT. THE VOGEL HOUSE - NIGHT (THURSDAY)

Debbie locks up. Jake leans on the van, casual as he can fake it.

DEBBIE
Punctual. I'm impressed.

JAKE
Three-minute grace period. After that, surge pricing.

They walk toward her car, easy banter.

DEBBIE
So— big-brother Uber. What's he like?

JAKE
Big. Quiet. Snores like a chainsaw in a jar.

DEBBIE
You're close?

JAKE
Only one who answers my texts.

DEBBIE
That's bleak.

JAKE
He's my guy. Too big to fight, so— practical loyalty.

At her car:

DEBBIE
There's a thing Saturday. Tara's party. You should come.

Jake freezes — a life he doesn't get offered.

JAKE
House party? Guess I'll need a software update.

DEBBIE
They'll like you. I— like you.

He can't hide the way it hits him.

JAKE
Then I'm there.

EXT. SMALL-TOWN STRIP / DINER - NIGHT

Milkshakes. Neon. Jake trades his cherry for hers.

DEBBIE

You ever think about leaving?

JAKE

Every day that ends in "y."

DEBBIE

So why stay?

He looks at her. Doesn't say Jeremiah.

JAKE

Guilt's heavy luggage. Airlines charge for that.

DEBBIE

Then ditch a bag.

JAKE

Working on it.

In the window's reflection: a tall silhouette. When he looks-gone.

INT. BURNT HOUSE - NIGHT

Jake checks the floorboard. Secure. Glock in place.

Jeremiah lies awake, unblinking. His hand lifts - smeared with Jake's ink, stolen from a notebook.

Jake forces brightness.

JAKE

Don't stay up. Big night Saturday.

Jeremiah stares at the hearth. Silent.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Debbie introduces Jake to friends: TARA (wild energy), ROSA (protective), MATTY (stoner).

Jake charms them with dad jokes.

ROSA
Where'd you two meet?

Debbie smirks.

DEBBIE
He was casing the neighborhood.

(beat)
For pizza.

Laughter. Jake fits in. Almost.

Across the street, reflected in the glass: the porcelain mask. Watching.

INT. DR. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The secretary locks files.

Front door creaks.

CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP-DRAG.

She looks up. Smiles nervously.

SECRETARY
We're closed-

Jeremiah steps in. Porcelain face. Brace whispering.

He gently takes the phone from her hand. Sets it down. Guides her back like a dance.

The knife rises. Falls. Slow. Deliberate.

Blood darkens her cardigan. She folds.

Jeremiah tilts his mask toward the inner office.

INT. CARPENTER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Carpenter hears something. Opens the door. Meets the mask.

DR. CARPENTER

Jeremiah-

The lamp cord yanks. Room strobing.

Jeremiah's POV:

- LEFT EYE: Carpenter's pleading face.

- RIGHT EYE: glare bleeding across him, turning him ghostly.

The knife rises. Falls. Measured. Clock ticking.

On the desk: JASPERS, JAKE. Jeremiah drags the blade across the name until it's gone.

A single candy from the lobby fishbowl rolls across the floor. Stops.

EXT. TOWN - NIGHT (MONTAGE)

The brace's CREAK-SQUEAL-THUMP becomes a metronome:

Behind a convenience store: a teen clerk never sees the shape closing in.

Jogging path: a woman slows, hears the drag on gravel. The mask glows white in her phone light- before the light drops.

Motel balcony: a drunk fumbles his keycard. Wrong door opens. Hand yanks him inside. Silence.

INT. DINER - LATER

Debbie stirs coffee. Jake watches her hands like they're instructions for peace.

His phone BUZZES. Unknown numbers. Missed calls. A photo: Carpenter's candy bowl spilled across tile.

Jake's hand shakes. He locks the screen.

DEBBIE

You okay?

JAKE

..Fine.

DEBBIE

You do that thing— your eyes smile,
your mouth doesn't.

He tries to fix it. Fails.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

Tomorrow. Tara's. You dance. I'll
laugh. Rosa'll threaten you.

He blinks away the kindness in her voice.

She kisses his cheek before driving off.

Jake stares at the phone. Doesn't dare open it again.

EXT. TARA'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON (DAY OF PARTY)

Controlled chaos. Folding tables, string lights. Jake hauls a
keg.

Tara whistles.

TARA

Debbie keeps bringing home strays.
You're the first that smiles with
your eyes.

JAKE

Her type: poor posture, terrible
puns.

Rosa tosses him tape.

ROSA

For your mouth.

Matty arrives in a vape cloud.

MATTY

Chad!

All cheer:

ALL

Jake!

Jake dares to imagine making it through the night.

INT. BURNT HOUSE - DUSK

On the table: the VOGEL packet. Photographs. Circles. Notes.

Jeremiah lifts a Polaroid of Debbie and Tara. On the border:
SAT @ TARA'S - PARENTS IN EUROPE :)

He burns the photo. Slips the charred square into his pocket
like a relic.

Tightens the straps on his brace.

CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP.

EXT. TARA'S HOUSE - SUNSET

Debbie watches Jake string lights.

DEBBIE

You're good at hiding.

JAKE

Only the ugly parts.

DEBBIE

Maybe you don't have as many as you
think.

Her phone buzzes. She smiles.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)

Mom says tomorrow. Brace for
impact.

Jake forces a grin. Turns away before his face cracks.

EXT. SIDE STREET NEAR TARA'S - NIGHT

A line of cars. Porch lights ripple on.

Jeremiah stands at the corner, head tilted, listening to bass
build.

He unfolds the charred Polaroid. Folds it again. Ritual.

INT. VAN - SAME

Jake sits behind the wheel a block away. A gym bag on the floor.

Text sent: Don't start without me.

He unzips the bag. Glock inside. Fingers hover.
He zips it shut. Leaves it.

INT. TARA'S HOUSE - PRE-PARTY

Warm bodies. Cheap lights. Noise rising.

Debbie spots Jake.

DEBBIE

There you are. Thought you ghosted me.

JAKE

I've never successfully ghosted anyone. People just don't notice me.

Tara grabs the mic.

TARA

Chad has arrived!

PARTYGOERS

Jake!

He bows, playing along. Almost belongs.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - LATER

Footsteps mount the porch.

Under the music: CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP-DRAG.

Through decorative glass, the porcelain smile floats closer.

The deadbolt turns. From the outside.

INT. ENTRYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Door swings open. JEREMIAH fills the frame.

A laughing couple stumbles right into the blade.
Laughter ends mid-breath.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

No score. Just the room noticing.

Jeremiah moves slow. Inevitable.
One scream. Then two. Then the room erupts.

— A cheerleader slips.
— A football kid squares up, drops instantly.
— Rosa charges with a skillet, cracks his mask — porcelain fractures.

Jeremiah catches the skillet, yanks it free. The knife goes in. Rosa gasps.

TARA

Rosa!

Tara pounds Jeremiah's back. He shrugs her into the DJ table.
Music skids into static.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Jake slams the back door shut. Grabs a knife block.

Debbie bursts in, panicked.

DEBBIE

What's happening—?

JAKE

We're leaving.

DEBBIE

My friends—

A scream tears the house.

JAKE

Ten seconds. Stay behind me.

Rosa staggers into view. Pale, bleeding. Collapses.

Jake pushes Debbie toward the hall.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Lock the back. Find Tara. Don't
open for anyone.

She nods, terrified but decisive.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jeremiah at the center, predator choosing prey.

JAKE
HEY—!

Jeremiah turns. Recognition.

Steel meets steel — chef's knife vs hunting knife. Sparks.
Jeremiah's strength crushes Jake's wrist. Jake slashes his
forearm. Barely slows him.

Debbie hauls Tara toward the kitchen.

DEBBIE
Come on! Please—!

TARA
(laughing through blood)
Kick him in the Chad—

Jeremiah backhands Jake into the TV. Glass freckles his face.
He rises.

Jeremiah reaches for Debbie—

Rosa, near-dead, grabs his ankle.

ROSA
Run.

Jeremiah stomps. Rosa goes still.

Jake tackles Jeremiah low. Moves the giant an inch.

Face inches from the mask:

JAKE
Not her.

He yanks free.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Debbie— go!

He hurls the knife. Buries in Jeremiah's shoulder. Jeremiah plucks it out like a thorn.

EXT. SIDE YARD - CONTINUOUS

Jake and Debbie crash out the back. Gate splintering.

They sprint to the van. Jake yanks the gym bag, unzips— Glock, spare mag.

He hesitates. Breath catches. Tucks it at his back.

DEBBIE

What are you—

JAKE

Seatbelts.

He floors it. Tires bark.

Through the rear window: figures clawing out of Tara's house. Light strobing.

Down the block: Jeremiah, calm, watching the van go.

EXT. BURNT HOUSE - NIGHT

The van skids to a stop.

DEBBIE

What is this?

JAKE

Home.

They drag Tara inside.

INT. BURNT HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Debbie tends Tara with her shirt. Jake grabs the towel bundle under the bed - spare mag.

Debbie sees the Glock at his back.

DEBBIE
You have a gun?

Jake doesn't answer. Scans windows.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)
Jake- who was that?

He can't dodge anymore.

JAKE
My brother. Jeremiah.

The word lands like a death sentence.

DEBBIE
Jake... no.

JAKE
The fire. It was me. I wanted to scare our dad. It got away. Our parents died. He didn't. He woke up... wrong. I made him. I owe him. I've been paying.

Debbie stares.

DEBBIE
Paying with people.

He nods. Ash falls through silence.

WALL COLLAPSES - JEREMIAH BURSTS IN

Boards explode inward. Porcelain fractures further.

CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP- closer now.

DEBBIE (CONT'D)
(screams)

Jake draws the Glock.

JAKE
JEREMIAH— NO—!

He fires.
One. Two. Three. Four. Five. Six.

Bullets slam chest, shoulder. Jeremiah staggers— then steps forward. Breathing. Still coming.

Jake shoves Debbie back.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Run—!

The knife drives into Jake's chest.

Time slows.

JEREMIAH'S POV

— LEFT EYE (clear): Jake's face, human, hurting.
— RIGHT EYE (burned): Jake as a blur of heat, a memory of a brother in a bunk bed.

Jake grips Jeremiah's wrist, holding the knife where it is. Pinning himself.

He turns to Debbie.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry.

(beat, to both)
I love you.

He shoves the Glock into Debbie's hands.

JAKE (CONT'D)
End the pain.

He lets go. The blade sinks the last inch. Jake collapses.

DEBBIE VS. JEREMIAH

Debbie screams, raises the Glock with both hands. Fires.

Mag dump — chest, shoulder, throat. Jeremiah rocks but keeps coming.

CLICK. Empty.

He reaches for her.

Debbie fumbles the mag, slams it in. Racks the slide. Breath ragged.

DEBBIE

STOP—!

She plants her feet. Fires.

A headshot. Porcelain shatters. Skull cracks.

Jeremiah locks. Puppet with cut strings.
Falls forward— into Jake's arms. A grotesque embrace.

Still.

SILENCE

A dawn bird dares a note.

TARA

(weak, small)

Debbie...?

Debbie kneels beside Jake. He's gone.

She closes his eyes. Presses her forehead to his for one last beat.

EXT. BURNT HOUSE - PRE-DAWN

Debbie steps into cold blue. Blood on her hands. Ash in her hair.

Sirens rise in the distance. Late to everything.

She wipes her face with the back of her hand. Red comet across her cheek.

The faintest phantom sound on the wind:

CREAK. SQUEAL. THUMP.

And then— nothing.

EXT. GRAVEL LANE - SUNRISE

Debbie walks toward the light. Small. Unbreakable.

SOUND: The opening bars of "He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother."

FADE OUT.

CREDITS.