Burnside

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INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Barren. Only an old card table in the middle of the room.

OSCAR BURNSIDE, 70's, stands at the table and packs a pair of dress pants into a trash bag.

He walks to a nearby closet, reaches down, and pulls out a hammer and crow bar. He shoves them into a duffel bag and zips it up.

He picks the duffel and trash bag up, looks once more around the house for anything he forgot, and walks out the door.

EXT. PORCH - DAY

Raindrops slap slowly off the house's tin awnings. Oscar looks up at the wet sky, shakes his head, and smiles.

A defeated smile.

He closes the door and stares at a yellow laminated paper with fine print on it stuck to the window.

He makes sure the door is locked, turns, and walks up to the corner of the street.

EXT. CORNER - CONTINUOUS

Oscar turns and looks back at his neighborhood.

Most of the houses are abandoned and in ruins. The windows broke and doors kicked in.

Oscar's house is one of the few with a manicured lawn, and the only one with landscaping care.

Behind him, a bus slows and opens its doors. He turns around, waves it on, and the bus pulls off.

Oscar gathers his strength, slings the bags over his shoulder, and follows the direction the bus had went.

EXT. MARKET STREET - DAY

The town is decrepid. The only buildings that aren't abandoned are convenient stores proudly displaying beer and cigarettes; and porn shops.

Every sidestreet Oscar looks down is much like his own neighborhood, only a few houses taken care of and the rest vandalized, abandoned, and a blight.

Oscar struggles to carry the trash bag and duffel bag comfortably.
EXT. BEER AND LIQUOR STORE – DAY

Oscar walks past the Fish-Samaritan House; a charity thrift shop, and into a liquor store.

INT. BEER AND LIQUOR STORE – CONTINUOUS

Oscar sets his bags down and chooses a bottle of vodka.

A regular drunkard, ERNIE McNICHOL, 60's, recognizes Oscar and approaches him, excited.

ERNIE
Oz?  Ozzie Burnside? Holy high hell, what's it been?

Oscar sees him and smiles.

OSCAR
A long time, Ernie.

ERNIE
It couldn't've been long after...

OSCAR
Black Monday.

Ernie nods, remembering.

ERNIE
Black Monday.  Man.  Word is you've been doing okay since.

OSCAR
On and off.  I'm one of the luckier ones, I guess.

ERNIE
I didn't do too bad for awhile. Stayed afloat for a bit, had a repair shop and all. An old man's muscle runs out sooner or later, though.

OSCAR
Don't I know it.

Ernie looks at the trash bag Oscar had carried in.

ERNIE
How are things?

Oscar shrugs and looks him in the eye.

OSCAR
Things are shit.

Then he gives a genuine smile.
OSCAR
But I'm doing good.

ERNIE
Well that's good, that's good.

Ernie sees the bottle of vodka in his hand.

ERNIE
Word was you weren't drinking anymore.

OSCAR
I'm not.

Ernie can only laugh and treat it like a joke.

ERNIE
Well, if you get the chance, stop by the old stomping ground. A lot of people'd get a kick out of seeing you again.

Oscar nods and starts walking to the register.

OSCAR
Have a good one, Ernest.

Ernie watches him walk away and shakes his head.

EXT. MARKET STREET BRIDGE VIADUCT - DAY

Oscar approaches the bridge and downtown Youngstown opens up. A typical rust belt city.

Buildings once built to be banks, now only rented out floor by floor months at a time.

A huge abandoned mill with broken windows sits off to the left of the bridge on the Mahoning River.

Oscar looks at it in nostalgia.

DISSOLVE TO:

1977

EXT. MILL PARKING LOT - MORNING

Empty, except for a few cars.

Oscar, in his 30's, steps out his pick-up and looks at how empty it is.

He sees EDWARD CAMPBELL, 30's, sulking back to his car. Oscar approaches him until a door of the mill opens up.
JOHN WEBSTER, 40's, steps out and calls.

WEBSTER

Oscar!

Oscar looks. Webster motions him to come along.

Oscar watches Campbell get in his car and start it up.

INT. WEBSTER'S OFFICE - DAY

Webster motions for Oscar to sit down as he closes the door behind him.

OSCAR

They did it?

Webster sits down at his desk and grimaces. He nods.

WEBSTER

Yeah. They're shutting us down.

Oscar puts his head down.

WEBSTER

We knew it was coming.

OSCAR

Not this fast.

WEBSTER

No, not this fast. Today'll be the last day of operations, and it's just supervisors shutting it down and getting ready to load anything mobile. You will be paid in full for today.

OSCAR

Just today?

WEBSTER

As supervisor, they're giving you a one-year severance and a glowing recommendation wherever you go.

OSCAR

Why? So we'll have to go through this again in a year? And then in two years?

WEBSTER

No one's happy about this, Oscar.

Oscar takes a moment to let it all sink in.

OSCAR

Pensions?
WEBSTER
(shakes his head)
They're in jeopardy.  No one knows yet.

OSCAR
This town's going to turn into a wasteland.

Webster nods.

WEBSTER
I know.

Oscar stands up.

EXT. MILL PARKING LOT - DAY
Oscar's one of the last to leave.
He locks up the door behind him and pockets the key.  He checks to make sure it's secure.

INT. BAR - DAY
Oscar drinks heavy.  Shots of vodka in between sips of beer.
He hangs his head, not talking to anybody.

EXT. MARKET STREET BRIDGE VIADUCT - DUSK
Half a dozen workers stand on the bridge. They drink and take turns throwing their empty bottles at the lonely mill.
Edward Campbell and Ernie McNichol, now in his 30's, are among them.  JOHN WICK and LEONARD BUTLER are also there.
Oscar drives by and parks his car just off the bridge. He joins them.

OSCAR
Let me guess?  Trying to hit the top corner window?

WICK
Hell yeah.

Wick hands him a beer.

WICK
Drink up and give it a try.

Ernie throws his bottle, but only hits one of the lower-tier windows.
Oscar laughs and takes the beer. He starts chugging, but not all of it.
You guys gotta start using physics. Leave some in it for velocity.

Oscar chucks his off the bridge at the huge building.

It smashes the third window from the top corner. The closest yet.

If I wasn't already drunk, my aim would've been better.

They laugh and continue to drink and chuck their bottles off the bridge at the side of the mill.

Campbell gets quiet and stares at the dark iron building.

It's not right seeing the lights off.

Everybody looks at the other mills lit up and running and smoking in the distance.

This is only the first dark beast this town'll see. It's all downhill from here.

A police car stops and two OFFICERS approach them.

Hey!

They all stop and face the officers. The police look at everybody, and then behind them at the mill.

They look at each other and frown.

Make sure none of these bottles end up in traffic.

The millworkers agree.

Anybody going to be needing a ride home?

They all look at each other and shake their heads no. Except Oscar.

Yeah, I might.

The officer nods.
OFFICER #2
We got a run to make and we'll be
back in a bit to bring you home.

OSCAR
I'll be here. Thank you.

The officers leave and the ex-workers get back to their
drinking and throwing.

Butler takes out a tiny pneumatic chipping hammer and kneels
down to the concrete base railing of the bridge.

BUTLER
All right. Who hit what?

WICK
I got the second row, fifth window.

Butler begins chipping John Wick's name into the concrete
and which window he hit.

Campbell looks at the far side of the building and sees the
large 'Youngstown Sheet & Tube' sign hung high on the mill.

CAMPBELL
Hey, John. You still got that
extension ladder?

WICK
Yeah, it's behind my garage.

Campbell smiles and nods.

CAMPBELL
Let's take a drive real quick.

Oscar watches the two leave as Butler continues putting
everybody's names into the concrete.

DISSOLVE:

BACK TO PRESENT:

EXT. MARKET STREET BRIDGE VIADUCT - DAY

Elderly Oscar stares at the old and faded banner on the far
side of the mill.

It's graffitied with black paint, but can still be read.

'Youngstown Shit Tube'

Oscar bends down and looks to all their names on the
concrete barrier of the bridge. He looks at his.

'Oscar Burnside. 1st row, 3rd window. 1977.'
He smiles at it. He looks at the other names. Some have come back through the years and tried again.

Butler and Wick tried again at different times in the 80's, and McNichol tried again in the 90's.

Dozens of other windows are broken out. The top corner window is still untouched.

Oscar sets his bagged vodka down and digs through his duffel bag for the chisel and hammer.

He bends down to the concrete barrier and begins chiseling.

'Oscar Burnside. 1st row, 1st window. 2012.'

Finished, Oscar throws the hammer and chisel into the river, picks his duffel and trash bag and vodka back up, and walks down the bridge.

EXT. MILL ENTRANCE FROM THE RIVER - DAY

Woods have grown close to the mill.

Oscar sets his bags down and approaches the door with only the vodka in his hand.

He takes out an old rusted key, but sees he doesn't need it. The door's been kicked in already.

He pushes it open the rest of the way and walks in.

INT. MILL - CONTINUOUS

It's long been pilfered. Oscar studies the rotting iron innards of the building.

Ancient machines rest, rusted and moldy. They're stripped of their copper.

In a corner of the large skeleton building, Oscar walks to a staircase leading up to a foreman's platform.

He tests it and, once secure, walks to the top.

He takes the bottle of vodka out of the bag, spins off the cap, and looks three stories down to the dirty mill floor.

He pours the vodka out and it splashes to the moldy floor below. But he keeps a little alcohol in for velocity.

He spins the cap back on and stares at the top corner window, only mere feet away from him.

Oscar readies himself, then chucks the bottle hard through the top corner window.

The glass shatters and lands to the concrete ground outside.
Oscar smiles and soaks the moment in.

He takes a deep breath and prepares to climb down the rickety iron steps.

EXT. DOWNTOWN YOUNGSTOWN - EVENING

Oscar walks the streets with his bags and approaches a police cruiser where two COPS stand by and chat.

OSCAR

Excuse me.

The cops turn their attention towards him.

OSCAR

I haven't been down here in a while and I heard they moved... Which way's the rescue mission?

The cops look at Oscar and his trash bag full of clothes. One of them points up a couple of streets.

COP #1

It's up on Martin Luther King now, down about a mile and a half.

COP #2

There's a bus that goes by every hour. It should be here in a bit.

OSCAR

I don't have any money for the bus.

COP #2

(shrugs)

Well, like I said, it's only about a mile and a half.

Oscar nods.

OSCAR

Thank you.

The cops return to their conversation.

Oscar slings the garbage and duffel bag over his shoulder and starts walking up to Martin Luther King.

Behind him, the dead iron giant by the bridge looms in the distance, dying with the city.