

COME TO DADDY

by

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EXT. DESOLATE BUS STOP -- DAY

NORVAL GREENWOOD (30s) steps off a battered old BUS, inappropriately dressed for the desolate wilderness he's found himself in.

The bus drives off, leaving Norval to consider the expanse of damp Cascadian tundra around him.

He stands there dumbly -- clad in Balmain, wearing a Trilby, holding a Louis Vuitton wheelee-case...

A stranger in a strange land.

He takes a crumpled LETTER from his pocket (we briefly glimpse "Love, your dad" as the sign-off), consulting a rudimentary MAP scrawled within its pages.

EXT. WOODS -- DAY

Norval nervously approaches dark WOODS -- a labyrinth of mossy vegetation, mud and rotting leaves spanning as far as the eye can see.

He cringes, steeling himself, entering the funereal forest.

His Tom Ford boots plunge into the mud with an obscene squelch.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Norval leaves the woods, consulting the map, walking along a windswept gray beach.

A particularly savage gust of wind relieves him of his Trilby. He watches helplessly as it spins into the drink.

Ahead of him, perched precariously on the edge of a cliff --

A small HOUSE -- one level, circular, like a bizarre UFO crashed into a cliff and its owners abandoned it.

Norval puts the letter and map in his back pocket, considering the strange house on the cliff.

As if on command, bruise-black CLOUDS burst above, rain pelting down without mercy.

Norval scrambles up the rocky cliff, wheezing --

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval knocks on the front door.

Silence.

He glances around at the cliff, the beach, a few jagged rocky islands offshore and the grey ocean beyond.

He knocks at the door again.

Nothing.

He peers through a window -- vague SHADOWS move inside.

Faint MURMURS drift from somewhere.

He bangs on the door again.

NORVAL
Hello? Anyone home?

Finally, the door is unlocked from inside -- a chorus of clanging bolts and chains.

The door opens to reveal --

BRIAN (60s). Beefy, red-faced, wearing a black-and-white Hawaiian shirt. He peers out at Norval, expression blank...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Dad, it's me. Norval.

Brian just stares at him.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
I... I got your letter.

Brian keeps staring...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Your letter asking me to come and see you.

Brian keeps staring...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Well. I'm here.
(pause)
It's me. Norval.

Brian studies Norval for a long time... then --

He reaches out fast -- grabbing Norval, pulling him close --

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Okay..!

Brian holds Norval tight to his breast, clasping the back of Norval's head. He looks like he might cry...

BRIAN
Jesus Christ. I never thought I'd see you again.

Norval finally pulls back, flustered, overwhelmed.

They regard each other strangely.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Do you want to come in?

NORVAL
Yes please..!

Norval drags his muddy luggage into the doorway.

Brian peers out into the rain-swept woods...

Then closes the door behind him.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Brian leads Norval inside, picking up an overturned chair.

Norval takes in the layout -- the large LIVING ROOM leads off to a KITCHEN, two BEDROOMS, a BATHROOM and a DINING ROOM. Large PANORAMIC WINDOWS reveal a 360 view of the raging dark ocean beyond.

Brian picks up a chair, setting it straight.

BRIAN
Welcome to my house.

NORVAL
I like it.

BRIAN
No you don't.

NORVAL
I do.

BRIAN
You don't.

NORVAL
I do.

BRIAN
Why?

Norval squirms, quickly thinking of a reply --

NORVAL
It's like a UFO from the 1960s.

BRIAN
A UFO from the 1960s.

NORVAL

Yeah.

BRIAN

A UFO from the 1960s.

NORVAL

Exactly.

BRIAN

That's brilliant.

NORVAL

Yeah.

They regard each other, desperate to fill the silence.

BRIAN

When did I last see you, son?

NORVAL

I don't know.

BRIAN

How long's it been?

NORVAL

I don't know.

BRIAN

Come on. How long?

NORVAL

A long time.

BRIAN

A long time. Yes.

NORVAL

Too long.

BRIAN

Much too fucking long. Come on.

Brian moves close to Norval, wrapping him in another tight hug.

A clock's ticking and a seagulls' cries fill the unbearable silence.

Brian lets go of Norval again.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Let's get you unpacked.

NORVAL

Sure.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- DAY

Cramped, gloomy, cell-like -- wooden walls, a single bed, a closet, a tiny dusty window looking out on the churning ocean outside.

Norval removes clothes from his case, putting them neatly in the closet. He puts a copy of *The Celestine Prophecy* on the nightstand.

He turns, noticing --

Brian is standing in the doorway, watching him.

They exchange a nervous smile.

BRIAN

Let's have a picture of us.
You know. A selfie photo.
You can show it to your mother when
you go back.

NORVAL

Okay. Yeah.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Brian and Norval stand at the cliff-edge behind the house.

Norval takes out his gold-plated iPhone. He then takes a telescopic SELFIE-STICK from his back pocket.

Brian stands close to Norval, arm around his shoulder.

Norval attaches his iPhone to the stick, extending it to full length, angling it for a selfie of him and Brian.

BRIAN

No, no. Get the sea in there.
Here, let me do it.

Brian grabs the selfie-stick, awkwardly angling it.

NORVAL

Hey. Be careful. That's a limited
edition gold phone designed by
Lorde.

BRIAN

Never heard of him.

NORVAL

It's real gold.

BRIAN

Smile.

Norval forces a smile into camera. Then --

Brian loses his footing -- he stumbles back, grabbing Norval's shoulder to steady himself -- he drops the iPhone and selfie-stick...

(Deliberately..?)

The iPhone flies off the cliff edge.

NORVAL

Shit..!

BRIAN

Ah fuck. Sorry, son. Shouldn't have had that second beer for breakfast.

They stare over the edge of the cliff, dumbly. The selfie-stick and iPhone plummet towards the rocks below.

NORVAL

There are only twenty of those phones in the world.

The selfie-stick and iPhone shatter against the rocks.

BRIAN

And now there are nineteen.

Norval looks miserable. The sound of BANGING echoes from somewhere as we --

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

BANG. BANG. BANG.

Brian noisily chops sinewy meat with a cleaver, cheroot clenched between his lips. He wears an apron that reads: *"I'd tell you the recipe, but then I'd have to kill you"*.

Ash from his cheroot lands on the meat. He smears it off with grubby fingers.

BRIAN

How's your mother?

NORVAL

Not great, actually.

BRIAN

Oh.

Norval heats a frying pan on the stove, swilling oil around. Brian begins pulling a long strand of sinew from the meat, struggling with slippery fingers.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Does she ever talk about me?

NORVAL
Not really.

BRIAN
You live with her?

NORVAL
Yeah. It's a temporary arrangement.

BRIAN
And you're not embarrassed about living with your mother? At your age?

NORVAL
I don't know. I've had a rough few years. She helped me get back on my feet. It's complicated...

Brian manages to get the sinew out of the meat, tossing it into the kitchen sink. He licks his fingers, looking at Norval with a whiff of mocking malice...

BRIAN
Do you share a bed?

NORVAL
What?

BRIAN
Do you share a bed with your mother?

NORVAL
No.

Brian chuckles, tossing the meat into the frying pan with a hiss. Norval flinches as hot oil splatters from the pan.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Brian and Norval are seated at a small table opposite each other, eating a stew.

Brian opens a bottle of red wine.

BRIAN
Wine?

NORVAL
No thanks.

BRIAN
Come on. Have a drink with your old man.

NORVAL
I don't drink.

BRIAN
What? Everyone drinks.

NORVAL
Not me.

BRIAN
Why?

NORVAL
I've had what's called "alcohol dependency issues".

BRIAN
What's that?

NORVAL
It's when you're dependent on alcohol.

Brian just looks at him, skeptical.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
I nearly...

Silence.

BRIAN
Nearly what?

Norval's eyes glaze over slightly, memories flooding back.

NORVAL
I wrote a note. I ran a bath.
I came close... *really* fucking close...

He looks down at jagged pink SCARS on his wrists -- incorrectly executed -- sad reminders of his failure to remove himself from the gene pool.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Anyway. Here I am. I survived.

Something about this pisses Brian off to the core. He pours himself a glass of wine, taking an ostentatious sip.

Norval watches him drink.

Brian sniffs the wine pompously, swilling it around his glass. Norval watches, edgy.

Finally Brian guzzles the wine down -- it dribbles down his chin. His nostrils flare orgasmically.

He exhales, eyes closed.

Norval just watches, lips a-quiver.

Brian's eyes open, locked on Norval...

BRIAN
Tempted?

NORVAL
No.

Brian pours himself another glass of wine, filling it to the absolute brim.

Norval watches the wine cascade into the glass. Time slows to a crawl, Norval hypnotized by the shimmering, deep crimson wine...

Old-time THAI FUNK MUSIC blares from somewhere as we --

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Flames erupt, roaring. We WIDEN OUT to reveal --

Brian is spraying lighter fluid on to a LOG FIRE.

Scratchy, distorted Thai music warbles from a record player.

The panoramic windows reveal the moonlit ocean outside. An array of small FAIRY LIGHTS cast a lurid multi-colored glow on the room.

Norval is seated in a worn-out leather armchair, drinking a glass of water.

NORVAL
So, dad. What do you do?

BRIAN
What?

NORVAL
For work.

BRIAN
I'm retired.

Brian fixes himself a glass of whiskey at a small DRINKS CABINET.

NORVAL

What did you do before you retired?
I've realized I know nothing about
you.

BRIAN

Your mother really doesn't talk
about me, does she?

Norval shakes his head. Brian sits in a leather armchair
beside him. He cracks his knuckles.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I was a limo driver. I drove a
black limousine with a fridge in
it. Real leather seats. It was an
award-winning limousine.

He drinks, thoughtful. He lights a cheroot.

NORVAL

I've been in a few limousines
myself. I'm in the music business.

BRIAN

Okay.

NORVAL

I'm fairly big in the music
business.

BRIAN

I'm sure you are.

NORVAL

I'm a DJ. A Disc Jockey, in other
words.

Brian starts picking his teeth, trying to dislodge trapped
slivers of meat.

BRIAN

Okay.

NORVAL

I'm close to some pretty big names.
Substantial names, actually. I
count Kendrick Lamar and Chance The
Rapper among my closest allies.

BRIAN

Anyone I've actually heard of?

NORVAL

Elton John is a good friend.
His real name is Reginald Kenneth
Dwight.

Brian puffs his cheroot, blows smoke rings.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Elton - Reginald - discovered me.
 He saw me DJ'ing at a nightclub. A
 gala event, where I was the DJ.
 He signed me to an exclusive deal.
 We inked a deal that same night.
 Elton. Reginald. He's a great man.
 You could say he's like a father to
 me.

(then)

No offense.

Norval smiles proudly.

Brian swills the whiskey around in his glass, ice cubes
 tinkling. He smirks, nodding, finally locking eyes on Norval.

BRIAN

Well, son. It's a small world.

Norval looks to him, puzzled...

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You see ... I happen to know old
 Reginald too.

NORVAL

You do?

BRIAN

Yes.

NORVAL

You're lying.

BRIAN

I'm not.

NORVAL

You are.

BRIAN

I'm really not.

NORVAL

Really?

Brian sips his whiskey, looking intently at Norval.

BRIAN

Me and old Reggie go way back.
 You see...

Norval shifts uncomfortably in his armchair...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I was his personal limo driver for
ten years.

Norval looks edgy, exposed...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
We spent a decade together.
Driving, talking, drinking. We
became good friends, Reginald and
I. So what are the odds of you
becoming friends with him too?

He grins at Norval tauntingly...

NORVAL
Yeah. Small world. So anyway--

BRIAN
Here's an idea.

NORVAL
What?

BRIAN
Let's call him.

NORVAL
Reginald?

BRIAN
Yeah.

NORVAL
Now?

BRIAN
It'll blow his fucking mind. Brian
and Norval, your two pals, happen
to be father and son. Imagine..!

NORVAL
I don't know, dad. It's late.
He goes to bed early.

BRIAN
Bullshit. Reginald is a card-
carrying night owl, and he never
shuts up about it.

NORVAL
He told me never to call him after
eight.

BRIAN
He told *me* I can call him at any
hour, night or day.

Brian picks up an old ROTARY TELEPHONE, holding the receiver to his ear, sloooooowly dialing a number --

NORVAL
Come on, dad. Don't. He *really*
hates being woken at night.

Brian keeps dialing, theatrically, painfully slowly...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Please. Don't call him.
Dad, don't.
Please don't, dad.

Brian fixes Norval with a mocking stare, eyebrow raised.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
What..?

BRIAN
You don't really know Elton John.

Norval looks at the floor, embarrassed.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Do you..?
(then)
Do you?

Norval shakes his head.

NORVAL
No.

BRIAN
No... what?

NORVAL
No... I don't really know Elton
John.

BRIAN
Well, guess what?

He slowly puts the phone down...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Neither do I.

Silence.

Brian flashes a fiendish grin.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
But I'm glad we've established
you're full of shit.

Norval slumps in his armchair. Brian finishes his whiskey.

Old pipes rattle and groan somewhere in the house, suddenly getting loud, intense, *deafening* as we --

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- NIGHT

A bathroom FAUCET shudders and shakes, finally spewing water onto a toothbrush.

Norval brushes his teeth at the sink.

Brian appears in the doorway, eyeing his son.

BRIAN

Just so you know... if you want to impress me, I like fight stories.

Norval spits toothpaste into the sink.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Have you ever been in a fight?

NORVAL

No.

BRIAN

I have.

Silence.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I accidentally kicked a man's ear off once. I didn't mean to. But it fucking flew off. I could see right into his skull.

Norval looks horrified.

Brian heads off to his room.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Night.

Norval just stands there, shaken.

EXT. HOUSE -- NIGHT

Crickets chirp in the woods near the house. The sea churns restlessly in the moonlight.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies in bed in the murky darkness, unable to sleep.

Pipes rattle and whine somewhere. Wind howls outside.
 Norval gets out of bed.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Norval pours himself a glass of water.

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Norval carries the glass of water back to his room.

He stops outside Brian's room. He sees the living room PHONE
 CORD snaking under the door.

He hears BRIAN'S VOICE within, barely audible...

He leans closer to the door, straining to listen...

BRIAN (O.S.)
 (barely audible)
*Jethro, Jethro, Jethro ... fully
 aware of that... fucking leverage
 ... collateral ... use this! ...
 what do I do? ... have your
 permission..? well then what do ...*
 (pause)
Shit ... wait a minute ...

Then -- Brian's voice goes silent. Bed-springs groan --

Norval scurries back to his room.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies in bed again, mind racing.

A FLOORBOARD CREAKS outside --

He sits up, glancing down, noticing --

The DOOR HANDLE TURNS.

He lies down fast, closing his eyes, feigning sleep...

The DOOR OPENS...

Brian peers into the room, staring at Norval in the darkness.
 Moments pass... Then --

Brian's head backs out of the doorway. The door closes
 silently.

Norval opens his eyes, staring at the door, spooked.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Heavy black clouds drift across the sea.

Seagulls circle the house...

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval walks out of his room.

NORVAL

Dad?

No response.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval wanders outside, taking in the surroundings --

NORVAL

Dad? You out here?

He walks to the cliff edge by the house, glancing down at the ocean -- waves crash thunderously against jagged rocks.

Norval walks back to the house, pausing at a pile of LOGS outside.

He picks up a large AXE, considering its weight in his hands.

He puts it back down, suddenly insecure.

He heads back inside. We hear his voice PRE-LAP --

NORVAL (V.O.)

Dad, can I ask you something?

EXT. HOUSE - DECK -- DAY

Brian and Norval sit on the deck outside, overlooking the sea below, eating toasted sandwiches. Brian wears his trademark black-and-white Hawaiian shirt again. He looks hungover.

NORVAL

Why did you ask me to come here?

Brian crunches toast. He takes a sip from a bottle of beer.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
 You sent me a letter asking me to
 come. But now I'm here, and you
 seem like you'd rather I wasn't.

Brian swishes beer around his mouth, swallowing.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
 It's like you regret sending that
 letter. Maybe I'm wrong.
 (pause)
 Am I wrong?

Brian thinks for a moment, crunching his toast. Finally --

BRIAN
 I'm going for a crap.
 Then let's go for a swim.

Brian drains the rest of his beer in one long gulp. He gets
 up and leaves. Norval looks unsure.

We PRELAP the sound of a ROTARY PHONE DIALLING...

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval sits in a leather armchair, old telephone receiver
 held to his ear. Finally, someone picks up the other end.

NORVAL (ON PHONE)
 Mom. Hey.
 Yeah, okay. How are you?
 Oh, that's great.
 (thinks)
 I don't know. It's harder than I
 thought. He's... he's not how I
 imagined him... not at all.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROCKY BLUFF -- DAY

Brian and Norval navigate the rocky path down to the beach.

Norval's phone call continues in VOICEOVER --

NORVAL (V.O.)
*I don't think he sees many people,
 you know. Maybe he's not used to
 having other people around. I'm
 sure it'll get easier.*

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Norval and Brian strip down to their underwear and run into the gray ocean, gasping as the cold water hits them.

NORVAL (V.O.)
*Who knows? Maybe we'll end up being
 best friends..!*

Norval swims out away from shore, doing a backstroke, gazing up at the sky above. Seagulls circle.

NORVAL (V.O.)
Stranger things have happened.

AT THE BEACH -- Brian returns to the shore, drying himself with his towel, getting dressed again. He gazes out at Norval in the water, expression blank.

NORVAL (V.O.)
Okay. Love you. Bye.

IN THE SEA -- Norval turns away from the shore, swimming further out into the deep waters.

Then --

Something SPLASHES into the water just millimeters from his head. Something big... something heavy - a rock?

Norval turns, spooked, seeing Brian standing motionless at the shore. Brian turns, heading back towards the house.

Norval treads water, looking nervous and isolated. A WAVE crashes up behind him, submerging him underwater --

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Norval surfaces in the bath, gasping for air.

He sits up, washing his armpits with a block of soap.

He stops, listening intently --

BRIAN'S VOICE lilts from another room. He sounds angry. We can just about make out a fragment of conversation --

BRIAN (O.S.)
 (barely audible)
*... kid ... no use, Jethro ... a
 fucking babysitter ... fucking
 doing it ... fucking doing it...
 couple of days... fucking doing
 it...*

Norval cuts himself. Blood dribbles into the sink. He looks at his reflection, blood trickling down his neck.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DUSK

Brian tosses wood into the fireplace, smoldering cheroot clenched between his teeth.

Norval sits on a leather armchair, cleaning his Tom Ford boots with a damp cloth.

NORVAL

Dad.

Brian places the logs in position, stuffing kindling wood beneath them.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Dad.

BRIAN

Yeah.

Brian takes a lighter from his pocket, lighting the kindling.

NORVAL

I need to know why you sent me that letter.

BRIAN

Give it a rest.

NORVAL

Dad. I came all this way.

BRIAN

I don't want to discuss it.

Brian takes a long drag from his cheroot.

NORVAL

This is hard for me too, you know.

BRIAN

Fucking drop it.

Silence. Brian pokes the fire with a stick.

Norval seethes, finally summoning some resolve, rising from his chair.

NORVAL

I don't *want* to fucking drop it.

Thunderous silence.

Brian turns, annoyed, squaring up to Norval... predatory.

BRIAN
What did you say?

NORVAL
... I said ...

BRIAN
You said..?

NORVAL
... I said I don't want to fucking drop it.

BRIAN
Watch how you talk to me, boy.

NORVAL
You asked me to come. Here I am.

BRIAN
And..?

NORVAL
And you have some explaining to do.

BRIAN
Why's that?

NORVAL
You walked out on us when I was five. Thirty years later you ask me to come and see you. Here I am.

Brian scowls, staring at the raging ocean outside the window, mind racing...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
I'm here because I assumed that at some point you were going to explain yourself.

Brian's glare returns to Norval. They stare at each other, fuming.

BRIAN
I don't have to explain myself to you.

Brian grabs a bottle of wine from the counter. He unscrews it, pouring a glass to the brim. He takes a messy gulp, wine spilling down his chin.

NORVAL
I disagree.

BRIAN
Yeah?

NORVAL

... yeah ...

BRIAN

And what the fuck are you going to do about it, you little shit?

He gets up in Norval's face, *screaming* --

BRIAN (CONT'D)

WHAT. THE. FUCK. ARE. YOU. GOING. TO. DO. ABOUT. IT!?

Norval backs away a step, calming a little...

NORVAL

I know what's happening here, dad.

BRIAN

Trust me. You have *no* idea what's happening here.

NORVAL

I think I do.

BRIAN

Fuck off.

NORVAL

You wrote that letter when you were drunk.

BRIAN

Fuck off.

NORVAL

You probably don't even remember sending it.

BRIAN

Fuck off.

Brian sneers, wiping wine from his chin.

NORVAL

You're a drunk. That's all you are. A useless drunk.

BRIAN

You can't handle your booze.

NORVAL

You can't handle being a dad.

This hits a nerve with Brian -- he snarls, red-faced, stepping up to Norval...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
 Dad, I've been trying really
 fucking hard to like you, but it's
 impossible. You're impossible.

BRIAN
 Fuck off.

NORVAL
 ... you fuck off ...

BRIAN
 You fuck off! You're a ratfucker.
 You stick rats up your vagina.

Brian pushes Norval, words slurring drunkenly now --

BRIAN (CONT'D)
 You dress like a woman. You dress
 like a cunt.

NORVAL
 Don't say that.

Brian pushes him again.

BRIAN
 Cunt! Cunt! Cunt!

He pushes Norval again, leering...

NORVAL
 Please don't push me.

BRIAN
 Or what?

NORVAL
 Or I'll leave.

BRIAN
 You're not going anywhere.

NORVAL
 I think I might just go.

BRIAN
 You'd get lost in the woods and
 die. They'd find your skeleton in
 the woods. Oh, and they'd find a
 rat's skeleton in your pelvis bone
 where your vagina was.

Brian wanders towards the kitchen. Norval mutters angrily --

NORVAL
 You'd love that, wouldn't you?
 You'd love it if I was dead.

Norval looks around, helpless.

He sits back in his armchair. He's shaking, riled-up.

He breathes deeply, calming himself.

He closes his eyes, attempting to meditate.

From the kitchen -- the sounds of metal clanking, drawers being searched...

Norval opens his eyes at the sound, suddenly nervous...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Dad?

Then --

Brian bursts back into the living room, brandishing his MEAT CLEAVER.

He rages towards Norval -- who bounds out of his chair, yelping in terror --

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Dad what the fuck are you *doing!*?

BRIAN

I believe the correct term is *Filicide.*

Brian lurches towards him, huffing and puffing, grimacing like a lunatic...

Norval runs to the front door. It's LOCKED --

NORVAL

Oh fuck, oh fuck... come on...

Brian lurches closer to him, cleaver held ready --

Norval fumbles with the locks and bolts, helplessly -- he gives up, edging away.

BRIAN

Come here, you little bastard! Come to daddy!

Brian stalks him around the room, cleaver held high.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(screams)
Come to daddy!

NORVAL

Dad, please ... please don't do this ... please please please ... I'm sorry I'm so fucking sorry ...

BRIAN

How about some fucking gratitude!?
I'm helping you! I thought you
wanted to die!

NORVAL

I didn't ... I don't ... oh please
please don't do this ...

Brian lunges at Norval, grabbing his throat, pulling him close, cleaver gripped tight in his other hand --

NORVAL (CONT'D)

(strangled, barely
audible)
... Dad ... no ...

Then ...

Brian suddenly stands still, eyes widening --

He DROPS THE CLEAVER. It clatters on the floor.

Norval just stares at him, dumbfounded.

Brian lets go of Norval's throat, stumbling backwards...

Norval just hyperventilates, eyes bulging...

Brian clutches his chest, face flushed red. He lets out an agonized groan -- staring helplessly at Norval with petrified, suddenly-vulnerable eyes.

He tries to say something. All he can manage is a hoarse strangulated squeak.

Norval stares agog as --

Brian drops to his knees, letting out a final rasped wheeze -- he falls onto his back, landing squarely on an Afghan rug in the middle of the room.

Norval stands there dumbly, face ashen...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Dad...? oh God... dad?

Brian just lies there...

Dead.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

... dad ..?

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

The front door is flung open --

A flock of SEAGULLS erupt from the house's roof, flying off, screaming.

Norval ambles outside, swaying, dazed.

We PRE-LAP Norval's phone call in VOICEOVER --

NORVAL (V.O.)

Mom... it's me.

Yeah.

No. Listen to me...

It's dad... he's...

I think he just died. He just fell down...

Norval falls to the ground, dry-heaving.

NORVAL (V.O.)

He just fell down and stopped breathing. We had an argument and he just ... died.

He remains doubled over, frozen to the spot, shell-shocked.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Brian lies dead on the floor, body stiff with rigor mortis.

Norval holds the phone to his ear with a shaking hand.

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Please, mom... just get here.

No, no, sooner. Please.

Okay...

He puts the phone down.

He glances over at Brian's lifeless body.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval enters the master bedroom.

He opens a closet, pulling out a large leopard-print sheet.

As he does so, a small CUDDLY LION TOY falls out onto the floor. Norval picks it up, examining it curiously -- vague memories flooding back to him, filling him with emotion.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval drapes the sheet over Brian's corpse.

He goes to the phone, grabbing it. He flicks through the pages of a PHONE BOOK beside it.

He stops at a page, and dials a number on the phone.

The phone rings. He waits.

He glances with dread at the sheet-covered body. Then --

NORVAL (ON PHONE)
Hello, coroner's office?
Yes. My dad's just died.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Norval places the meat cleaver back in a drawer.

He pours himself a glass of water at the sink.

He drinks it, hands trembling uncontrollably.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval eats dinner alone. He looks exhausted.

Distant waves crash against the rocky shore. From the distance, a passing ship sounds its bassy foghorn.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval enters the room.

He glances down at Brian's sheet-covered body.

He quickly heads out into his bedroom.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies awake, lost in thought. The cuddly lion toy is in bed next to him.

Wind howls outside.

His features quiver, on the verge of tears...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

A POLICE CAR is parked outside the house.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval stands with a ROOKIE COP (20s).

ROOKIE COP
And there wasn't any, like,
struggle and stuff?

NORVAL
No. Like I said, he seemed fine.
Then he said his chest hurt. He
fell down and...

The Rookie Cop looks at Norval very seriously.

ROOKIE COP
Do you promise you're telling me
the truth?

Norval nods.

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)
You can't just nod. You have to say
it out loud.

NORVAL
I promise I'm telling the truth.

The Rookie Cop studies Norval's features carefully. He nods
to himself. Then --

ROOKIE COP
You know something? I believe you.
You don't have raisin eyes.

NORVAL
What..?

ROOKIE COP
Look, I'm breaking the fourth wall
here, kinda. But I have this
theory. Bad guys usually have eyes
that look like raisins. Small and
dark, you know? You don't have
raisin eyes.

NORVAL
Yeah. I don't.

The Rookie Cop crouches down, tentatively lifting the sheet
from Brian's dead face -- Brian's eyes are OPEN. They're
staring DIRECTLY AT NORVAL with simmering hatred...

ROOKIE COP
Tell you something, though. Your
dad... he *did* have raisin eyes.

Norval just stares helplessly into Brian's dead manic eyes...

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)
That's just my hallucination on the
subject of badguys and their eyes.

He keeps talking, but Norval doesn't register a word of it. He's fixated on Brian's eyes, pale and shaking in fear.

Then --

The Rookie Cop pulls the sheet back over Brian's face, rescuing Norval. Normality resumes.

ROOKIE COP (CONT'D)
 Coroner will take it from here.
 Sorry about your dad, and stuff.
 Take it easy I guess? Drink lots of
 water. I can burp on command if
 that might cheer you up?

NORVAL
 No. It's okay. Thanks.

The Rookie Cop burps anyway.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

The Rookie Cop gets into his car and drives off.

Norval stands in the doorway, waving him off. Then --

A small BLACK VAN pulls up outside the house.

A FEMALE CORONER gets out, ambling towards Norval. This is GLADYS (50s), attractive, intriguing -- someone who spends more time among the dead than the living.

She extends a hand -- Norval shakes it.

GLADYS
 Mr. Greenwood?

NORVAL
 Yes.

GLADYS
 I'm Gladys. The coroner.

NORVAL
 Yes. Come in, Gladys.

They both step into the house.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Gladys enters the room, immediately seeing the sheet-covered body on the floor.

GLADYS
 I'm going to go out on a limb here
 and ask if that's your dead dad.

NORVAL
That's him.

GLADYS
I'm very sorry for your loss.

NORVAL
It's okay. I barely knew him.
He left when I was five.

GLADYS
Oh ... I'm sorry ...

NORVAL
I don't think I liked him.

GLADYS
Oh really?

NORVAL
He called me a ratfucker, amongst
other things.

She crouches beside Brian's body, lifting the sheet -- his
dead raisin eyes stare at Norval again -- somehow they're
wider and more hate-filled now...

GLADYS
Good thing he's dead then.
(then)
Is that a really bad thing to say?

NORVAL
(distracted)
I don't know... yeah?

GLADYS
Sorry.

Norval can only stare at Brian's eyes.

Dead Brian seems to be smiling faintly. He stares intently at
Norval.

Seagulls squawk outside.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval and Gladys carry Brian's sheet-covered body on a
stretcher, putting it into the back of the van.

She closes the van doors, hands Norval a clipboard and pen --

GLADYS
I'll need you to sign this
paperwork.

He rests the clipboard against the van, filling out the forms.

NAME: NORVAL GREENWOOD. SEX: M. PROFESSION: MUSIC.

NORVAL

What now?

GLADYS

I'm going to take him away and embalm him. Drain the blood from his body and inject him with a preservative to stop him going off. Then I'll bring him back here.

NORVAL

What?

GLADYS

There's a storage issue at the moment because of the flooding in town. Didn't you hear about that?

NORVAL

No.

GLADYS

He'll have to be here while your family makes the funeral arrangements. He'll be in a black bag. You won't have to look at him.

Norval nods, dazed. She smiles at him, maternal.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Has anyone ever told you...

NORVAL

Told me what..?

GLADYS

You have kind eyes.

He blushes, suddenly shy.

NORVAL

No, nobody's ever said that to me.

GLADYS

Never?

NORVAL

Not that I remember.

GLADYS

Well. You do. Big and kind.

Norval desperately thinks of something to say.

NORVAL
That cop who came said I didn't
have raisin eyes.

GLADYS
What are raisin eyes? That idiot.
Raisin eyes.

NORVAL
I know..!

They look at each other. Then --

GLADYS
Take care, Norval.

She gets into the van, fires up the engine, and drives off.
Norval watches her go, sadly.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Norval sits on the beach -- staring out to sea, letting
fistfuls of sand fall through his fingers.

He glances at his wrists, running a finger along the fading
jagged scars...

Seagulls circle above him.

He lies down on the sand, closing his eyes.

He hears a branch SNAPPING somewhere.

He bolts up, glancing around to see if anyone's there...

NORVAL
Hello?

Silence. A PLASTIC BAG blows along the beach towards him.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Hello??

The plastic bag blows towards him, breeze lifting it off the
ground, into Norval's face -- he rips the bag off, gasping
for air.

He looks at the bag -- it says THANK YOU on it in red text,
beneath a cartoon TIGER.

Norval shudders, scurrying back up towards the House.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval hurries back inside, locking the door behind him.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval stands at Brian's closet, placing clothing into cardboard boxes.

He looks miserable, feeling the textures of Brian's corduroy trousers, wool sweaters...

He sniffs a leather jacket, morose.

EXT. HOUSE -- NIGHT

Rain lashes down on the house.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval sits at the table, slowly eating spaghetti. We hear another PHONE CALL in VOICEOVER --

NORVAL (V.O.)
*Please come quickly, mom. I hate
being here alone. I hate this
place. I want to come home.*

He looks at a bottle of wine on the table.

NORVAL (V.O.)
Also, I think dad tried to kill me.

He's tempted.

But he looks away.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Lightning flashes outside. Thunder shakes the house.

Norval lies in bed, unable to sleep.

As lightning strikes, jagged shadows are cast across the walls and ceiling.

Norval stares at them, unnerved.

GLADYS' VOICE PRE-LAPS --

GLADYS (V.O.)
How are you holding up?

He covers his face with his hands, sobbing.

NORVAL'S VOICE PRE-LAPS --

NORVAL (V.O.)
I'm fine.

EXT. BEACH -- DAY

Norval and Gladys carry a large black BODY-BAG from her van -- Norval is struggling with Brian's dead weight.

We hear Norval in VOICEOVER --

NORVAL (V.O.)
*I never really knew him, so it's
 hard to feel sad. Sad enough to
 actually cry real emotional tears,
 I mean.*

They approach the house, huffing and puffing.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval and Gladys carry the body-bag inside. Norval continues in VOICEOVER --

NORVAL (V.O.)
*But he is my dad. So... I feel
 something. I just don't know what.*

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

The body-bag lies on the bed. Norval and Gladys stand together at the end of the bed.

Norval sadly considers the body-bag's black shiny surface.

His eyes gleam with tears. Gladys notices his sorrow.

GLADYS
 It does get easier.

NORVAL
 Yeah.

She smiles sweetly. He dries his eyes with his sleeve.

He's about to say something, but she beats him to it --

GLADYS
 Look. I better get back to the
 office.

NORVAL
 Yeah.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval walks Gladys to the van.

She passes him a BUSINESS CARD --

GLADYS

If you have any questions, give me
a call. And between you and me...

She stops herself.

He looks to her, waiting --

GLADYS (CONT'D)

This might sound really weird,
but... you should talk to him.

NORVAL

What?

GLADYS

It helps. When my husband died, I
remember spending an hour yapping
on to him. All the things I never
said while he was there. I'm sure
you have a lot to say to your dad,
too.

(then)

Not that it's any of my business.
Tell me to shut up if you want..!

NORVAL

It's okay, really...

GLADYS

I don't have a filter.

NORVAL

I quite like it.

GLADYS

Do you?

NORVAL

It's different, at least.

Pregnant silence descends on them. They look at each other,
unsure what to say next. Finally --

GLADYS

Will you be okay here?

NORVAL

I hope so. Yeah. Definitely.

She extends her hand. He shakes it feebly.

GLADYS

When your mom gets here, we can
make all the further arrangements.
Take care of yourself, Norval.

She gets into the van. Engine on. Off she goes.

Norval is alone again, back in melancholic purgatory.

He heads back towards the House, pausing at the PILE OF LOGS outside...

The AXE is gone.

He frowns.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DUSK

Norval peers through the doorway, seeing the BODY-BAG on the bed -- a deathly ink-black cocoon.

He shudders, closing the door.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies awake in bed, mind racing. Suddenly --

He hears a CREAK from somewhere in the house.

He bolts up in bed, spooked.

He listens.

Nothing.

Then --

Another faint CREAK. An almost subsonic GROAN.

INT. HOUSE - HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Norval creeps out of his room, wearing just underwear, towards --

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

He enters the bedroom, glancing down at the body-bag.

He edges towards it, scared...

It looks like the body-bag has moved. Has the zipper been unfastened slightly..?

Norval reaches out with a trembling hand...

He closes the zipper all the way.

He shivers, leaving the room in a hurry.

As he closes the door, a METALLIC GLINT catches his eye --

THE AXE is under Brian's bed. He looks at it, mystified.

He creeps back into the room, picking it up, feeling its weight in his hands. In the corner of his eye --

He sees the BODY BAG MOVE --

He gasps, dropping the axe -- it buries its sharp edge into the floorboard, millimeters from his bare foot.

He stares at the body bag... it's deathly still.

He picks the axe up out of the floor, rushing out --

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies in bed again, nervous. Then --

A faint METALLIC CLANG from somewhere.

A desperate hungry GROWL...

NORVAL
Shut up. Shut up. Shut up.

He wraps his pillow over his ears, closing his eyes tightly.

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Norval lies in the bathtub -- exhausted, unshaven, dark circles under his eyes.

He hears faint BANGING from somewhere...

He flinches at the sound.

NORVAL
Is someone there?

Silence.

He submerges himself under the water.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval dresses wearily.

He hears muffled metallic grinding from somewhere.

NORVAL
(shouting out)
Who's there? Is someone there?

He waits for a reply. None comes.

He heads out.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval creeps into the room, slack-jawed to see --

It looks like the body-bag has moved more. The zipper is slightly open again.

Norval rushes to the CLOSET --

He grabs a Leopard-print SHEET, throwing it over the body-bag.

He storms out.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DUSK

Norval sits in the leather armchair.

He's holding Gladys' business card, considering it.

He sniffs it, longingly.

He reaches for the phone, but --

IT RINGS, startling him.

He waits, considering what to do.

Finally, he picks it up.

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Hello..?

SILENCE on the other end. Faint BREATHING.

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Who is this?

Silence...

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Mom, is that you?

Click. Whoever it is hangs up.

Norval puts the phone down, spooked...

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Norval lies in bed.

Creaks emanate from somewhere in the house. Then --

THE PHONE RINGS in the other room.

He grits his teeth, plugging his fingers in his ears.

The phone keeps ringing.

And ringing.

And ringing.

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Norval, even more haggard and exhausted, urinates.

He glances out of the small WINDOW, alarmed to see --

In the nearby WOODS... TWO SHADOWY FIGURES - one SMALL, one HUGE - stand motionless, looking at the house from afar.

Norval ducks down, heart pounding.

Slowly, he raises himself up and peers out of the window again, trying to stay hidden...

OUTSIDE -- the figures are gone.

Norval crawls out of the room.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval steps out of the house, peering out at the woods...

The wind picks up, whooshing through the trees.

Norval scans the woods.

The shadowy figures are nowhere to be seen.

He rushes back into the house, locking the door behind him.

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DUSK

Norval locks the window, closing the curtains.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DUSK

He closes the curtains.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM -- DUSK

Norval stares at the bottle of wine, longingly.

Its curves shimmer invitingly in the half-light.

His willpower deserts him.

He opens the bottle, raising it to his lips.

He takes the first sip, a million memories flooding back.

His eyes close blissfully...

MANIC THAI MUSIC blares from somewhere as we --

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

Norval urinates off the edge of the cliff behind the house, swaying from side to side.

He finishes, zips up, and staggers around merrily.

He tries to do a cartwheel, but it goes horribly wrong.

He collapses on the ground, cackling hysterically.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval stumbles back inside.

Wurlitzer music blares from the record player.

Norval weaves over to the drinks cabinet, pulling out a bottle of red wine. He opens it, drinking thirstily.

He turns the record player off. As if on cue --

Another faint BANGING lilts through the silence. Another CREAK. A METALLIC TINKLE...

NORVAL

I'm not listening to you...

Norval collapses in the armchair, grabbing the phone.

He consults Gladys' BUSINESS CARD, dialling her number...

It rings. He takes a gulp of wine.

Finally, Gladys picks up --

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

Hello?

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Gladys...

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

Yes? Who is this?

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Guess.

Silence.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

Mr. Greenwood..?

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Bingo.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

Is there a problem with your father?

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

There's a lot of problems with my father. But that's not why I'm calling.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

What can I do for you?

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

Good question.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

Mr. Greenwood, are you--

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

I need you to come over.

Silence.

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Don't think. Just come over.

Silence.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

I can't.

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

You can...

Silence.

GLADYS (ON PHONE)

You're going through a very difficult time.

NORVAL (ON PHONE)

We had something. I know you felt it too. We owe it to ourselves to explore this. The smartest thing you could do now is get in your car and drive over here.

Silence. Tears well up in Norval's eyes.

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
 Please. Please come and see me. I
 can't be here alone. We could just
 sleep together. Just next to each
 other. Fully clothed, if you
 wanted. I just need you here.

Silence.

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
 Hello?

Silence. Then...

GLADYS (ON PHONE)
*Please don't call me again, Norval.
 I'm sorry... just... I have to go.*

NORVAL (ON PHONE)
 No. No... no... please don't go...

Click. She hangs up.

NORVAL (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
 Gladys?

Norval consults her business card, dialling her number again.

It rings.

And rings.

He hangs up and tries again.

It rings.

And rings.

Norval's face twists into a furious scowl --

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Fuck.

He slams the phone receiver into the ground three times.

Then --

From somewhere -- THREE FAINT BANGS.

Norval sits upright, startled.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
 ... oh God ...

Silence. He stares around the room with manic eyes...

He slams the phone against the ground twice. Then...

BANG. BANG.

He slams the phone against the ground five times. Then...

BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG. BANG.

He jumps up, terrified --

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Oh fuck...

Silence...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Who's fucking doing this!?

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The door bursts open --

Norval lurches into the room, wine bottle held tight, pacing like a caged animal...

Then --

He rips the sheet off the body-bag, glaring down at it.

The zipper looks like it's been loosened...

(Or has it?)

Norval UNZIPS the body-bag, revealing --

Brian's waxy dead FACE, eyes open, cruelly staring right at Norval.

NORVAL

Are you doing this? Are you?
You think it's funny? Fuck you.
Fuck you. You're a coward. That's
all you are. Just a dried-up dead
leathery *coward*. I'm glad you're
dead.

Dead Brian just stares at him.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

You disappeared when I was a kid,
then you try to stab me... and now
you're fucking with me from beyond
the grave? Are you? I wouldn't be
surprised.

He takes a gulp of wine, draining the bottle.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

You think *I'm* a cunt? That's hilarious. You're the cunt here, not me. So fuck you. Do you hear me!? Fuck you. Fuck you. Cunt.

Norval grits his teeth, holds the bottle up by its neck, ready to smash it on Brian's face...

This is it...

But he stops himself -- he finally bursts into tears, body convulsing as he sobs.

He lies down on the bed next to the body-bag, tears spilling from his eyes.

Finally he calms himself -- lying there, staring at the ceiling, emotionally spent but denied a *real* catharsis.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

I have to tell you something, but it makes me sound like a bad person...

He takes a deep breath, about to speak... but something catches his eye --

A TATTOO on Brian's neck, previously covered by hair but now exposed -- "**RYAN R.I.P SON**"

(Who's Ryan..?)

Norval lies back -- distracted, confused, wrecked.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Afternoon sun is cloaked by bruise-gray clouds.

Waves explode against the rocks.

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval wakes, bleary-eyed.

He's still in bed, lying next to his dead father.

He turns, looking at Brian's face in the body-bag.

He raises himself up, struggling with numb arms, trying to get the circulation going again. Eventually --

He zips the body-bag shut again, covering it with the sheet.

He leaves.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval opens the small drinks cabinet, grabbing the bottles within.

EXT. HOUSE -- DAY

Norval throws the bottles one by one over the cliff's edge, into the raging sea below.

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Norval sits in the bath, reading *The Celestine Prophecy* glumly.

He tosses the book aside, frustrated --

NORVAL
Fucking bullshit.

He lies back, miserable.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Norval wanders into the room, aimlessly browsing a bookshelf, scanning its contents --

Hunting guides, *Big Cats of Africa*, *Walden*, Jack London adventures. Manly, rugged, outdoorsy works of little interest to Norval.

Until...

He sees something that's fallen down the back of the bookcase.

(Or hidden there deliberately..?)

He pushes books aside, reaching down, pulling out --

A ring-bound PHOTO ALBUM.

INT. HOUSE - GUEST BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval is seated in bed, drinking tea. He opens the photo album, browsing its pages, nostalgic...

PHOTOS depict a YOUNG NORVAL (3-4) on Miami Beach. At Disneyland. Posing with his pretty MOTHER (30s) in the Everglades.

Norval smiles, emotional, tears welling up.

More PHOTOS: Little Norval laughing on a rollercoaster. Dressed as a ghoul on Halloween. Blowing out candles on a birthday cake.

He turns the page...

A PHOTO depicts Norval and a BALD BEARDED MAN, holding toy guns. Beneath the picture, a caption is scrawled: "*Norval and dad. Gangsters*".

Norval's jaw slackens. His brow furrows, confused...

He turns the page.

Another PHOTO depicts young Norval and the same BALD BEARDED MAN, holding tennis racquets, laughing on a sunny day. "*Norval and Dad - next stop Wimbledon?*"

Another PHOTO: Norval and the bald bearded man on a diving board above a glistening pool. "*Norval and dad, Cancun*".

Another PHOTO: Norval sitting on the man's lap. He's wearing a Santa Claus costume. The caption: "*Dad... or Santa?*"

NORVAL

No... no... no... no... no...

Norval manically flicks through the pages, panic-stricken, mind racing...

He rips the TENNIS COURT PHOTO from the album, bolting out of bed like a man possessed --

INT. HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM -- DAY

Norval bursts into the room, ripping the sheet off the body-bag.

He unzips the body-bag enough to reveal Brian's waxy dead FACE within.

Norval compares the bald man in the photo to Brian.

They're nothing alike.

Norval gasps, incredulous -- dropping the photo, backing away, suddenly gripped by panic...

NORVAL

Oh, no, no, no, no...

Then --

Faint BANGING from somewhere. A metallic CLINK.

Norval hurries out into --

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

The BANGING is louder now -- more urgent, *desperate...*
Muffled CRIES echo from somewhere.

A moment of horrific realization hits Norval like a bullet --

A MAN IS CRYING SOMEWHERE IN THE HOUSE.

Norval moves around the room, trying to locate the source of
the cries and bangs...

Then, he looks down at --

The AFGHAN RUG in the middle of the floor.

He creeps towards it, face shining with sweat --

The CRIES are louder, *closer* --

Norval PULLS BACK THE RUG -- eyes widening as he sees --

A TRAP DOOR in the floor.

NORVAL

Oh Jesus... oh no... no...

He crouches down, listening...

Horror dawns on him...

The cries are coming FROM BELOW.

He swallows, nervous, face pale, hands shaking.

He unlatches the trap door...

Prying it OPEN.

He stares into the DARKNESS below. The abyss. Whimpers drift
up from the shadows.

Norval slowly descends the crooked STAIRWAY.

Down into Hell.

INT. HOUSE - BASEMENT -- DAY

It's PITCH BLACK.

Norval hears WHIMPERING in the darkness, the cold clang of
CHAINS on concrete, rasping BREATH like sandpaper on metal. A
strange monstrous GROWL emanates from the shadows...

Norval fumbles in the dark, finally finding a LIGHT SWITCH.

He turns it on. A FLUORESCENT STRIP-BULB blinks to life, illuminating the BASEMENT in a flickering, putrescent yellow glow --

Norval covers his mouth with his hand when he sees --

The BALD BEARDED MAN from the photos is CHAINED to a radiator. He wears only stained boxer shorts, body bruised and scarred. DUCT TAPE is wrapped around his mouth, partly chewed away.

His LEFT EAR is missing -- reduced to just a bloody stub.

Bizarrely, *WORLD'S WORST FRIEND* has been crudely carved into his chest, alongside a scabby rendering of semi-erect male genitalia, dotted line emanating from the *glans*.

He stares up at Norval with wild, pleading, bloodshot eyes.

Dear reader, meet the REAL BRIAN (60s).

Norval rips the duct tape from Brian's mouth, staring at him in disbelief --

NORVAL

Who...

BRIAN

Norval...

NORVAL

Who are you?

BRIAN

... you came ... you *came* ...

A horrific realization dawns on Norval.

NORVAL

No... no. No.

Brian nods, face clenched in sorrow.

BRIAN

Norval ... my boy... you actually came ...

Norval backs away from the man --

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Get me out ... out of here.

Then -- they hear a CAR pull up outside...

BRIAN (CONT'D)

They're here...

NORVAL
Who's here..?

BRIAN
Close the fucking door.

Norval hurries up the stairs, pulling the trap door SHUT.

He descends the stairs, returning to Brian.

NORVAL
Who are you? What is this?

BRIAN
Look at me.

Norval stares into his eyes, terrified...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I'm your dad. And the next ninety seconds are going to change your life forever.

Norval tries to speak, but all he can manage is a pathetic whimper.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
They're coming to hurt me... and you're going to kill them.

Norval shakes his head...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
You're going to hide, and when they're down here... you're going to beat them to death.

NORVAL
I can't.

BRIAN
Find a weapon...

FOOTSTEPS boom above them.

Brian motions to a DUMBBELL on the floor by the wall.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
That dumbbell... take it... you smash their fucking brains in.

NORVAL
... no ... please ...

BRIAN
If you don't, they'll kill us both.

Then -- the CLICK of the TRAP DOOR unlocking...

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hide.

Norval gets up, grabs the dumbbell, and scurries into a CLOSET -- pulling the door shut behind him, trying not to burst into tears.

He stares out at the basement through the SLATS in the closet's DOOR.

The DOOR OPENS... A MAN enters.

He wears a cheap suit and floral shirt, large bug-like spectacles. He has a mane of wild curly hair, not unlike the revered jazz virtuoso Kenny G. This is JETHRO (50s). As he approaches Brian's crumpled body, he speaks in an English accent --

VOICE

Did Gordon leave the light on down here? The bugger's gone AWOL. Probably leathered. He needs professional help, you know. He needs to be seen. On a professional level.

IN THE CLOSET -- Norval watches, petrified as --

Jethro looms over Brian, menacing. He takes a pair of SURGICAL GLOVES from his pocket, delicately donning them.

He takes a small ZIP-LOC BAG from his jacket pocket. He opens it, gingerly reaching inside, pulling out...

A PEN. It's smeared with glistening wet globs of what looks like FECES. He holds it delicately 'twixt gloved thumb and forefinger, retching at the odor it gives off.

JETHRO

Viddy this. It's a pen. Not just any pen. I smeared my own *extrement* on it. *Excrement* is the scientific word for poo.

BRIAN

It's *excrement*, not *extrement*.

Jethro admires the shitty pen, holding it up to the light.

JETHRO

I'm going to stab you with this pen. Obviously it's going to hurt. But then the science kicks in. The *extrement* on the pen will get *into* the wound, and give you an infection that'll kill you if you don't get it treated quickly. Talk about a ticking clock.

(MORE)

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Talk about *excitement*! I'm excited.
Are you excited, Brian?

Brian stares at the pen with dread...

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Tell me what I need to know, and
I'll get you to a hospital.

BRIAN
I already told Gordon everything.
It's gone. All of it.

JETHRO
Right. Shall I tell you how I *know*
you're lying?

Brian nods, glancing intensely at the CLOSET... *waiting*...

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Because when you said that, you
looked up and to the left.
That's the *number one* sign that
someone's lying to you. I've read
articles about body language.

Jethro crouches beside Brian --

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Brian, this is bloody difficult for
me too, you know.
(inhales sharply)
Fuck. Right okay. Here we go.

Jethro takes a deep breath. Brian grimaces in anticipation.

IN THE CLOSET -- Norval tries to stifle a whimper as --

Jethro jams the tip of the pen into Brian's abdomen, twisting
it deep into the flesh -- Brian lets out a strangulated
scream --

BRIAN
Now! Fucking kill him!

Jethro stops, confused. He looks around the basement...

JETHRO
What?

IN THE CLOSET -- Norval hyperventilates --

Jethro stalks around the basement, shitty pen held ready --

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Brian ... are we not alone..?

He slowly approaches the CLOSET...

Brian grits his teeth, manically fixated on the closet --

BRIAN

Come on ... come on ... do it ...

Jethro OPENS THE CLOSET, gawking in disbelief at the petrified Norval inside --

JETHRO

Why are you still alive? Where the fuck is Gordon?

He raises the shitty pen, ready to strike...

This is it...

SMACK -- Norval slams the dumbbell into Jethro's FACE three times -- shattering Jethro's spectacles, glass splinters ground into his cheek. He staggers back...

NORVAL

Oh fuck ... oh fuck ...

Norval emerges from the closet, swinging the dumbbell again -- this time it awkwardly hits Jethro's throat -- he tumbles back, choking, breathless --

Brian watches, eyes ablaze --

BRIAN

Kill him!

Norval is in shock, face ghostly white. He raises the dumbbell again, ready to finish Jethro --

But Jethro kicks at Norval's ankle -- sending him crashing back into the closet, howling in pain, dropping the dumbbell.

Jethro scurries to his feet, scampering up the stairs and out of the basement, slamming the TRAP DOOR shut behind him --

Locking them in.

From UPSTAIRS -- Jethro slams his fists down on the trap door, shouting down to his captives --

JETHRO (O.S.)

You're both officially dead!

We hear the SCUFFLE of feet on floorboards, then silence.

Norval emerges from the closet, shaking. He heads towards Brian.

BRIAN

You were supposed to kill him...

Norval just stares at him, speechless.

Then -- from UPSTAIRS, Jethro cries out in anguish --

JETHRO (O.S.)
*Gordon! Oh no, Gordon! Gordon! No,
 no no no no no Gordon!*

Brian stares at Norval.

BRIAN
 What happened to the man that was
 up there?

NORVAL
 He was going to stab me. But he had
 a heart attack. He died.

Brian flashes a bloody grin.

BRIAN
 Good.

From UPSTAIRS -- Jethro's voice bellows out --

JETHRO (O.S.)
*I'll be back with a little friend I
 want you both to meet!*

From UPSTAIRS -- the slam of a door, the rev of an ENGINE,
 the squeal of TIRES, fading into silence as a car drives
 off...

BRIAN
 He's gone. My guess is, his 'little
 friend' is Dandy.

NORVAL
 Who's Dandy?

BRIAN
 The hunchback.

NORVAL
 The what..?

BRIAN
 You need to release me.
 Have you ever picked a lock before?

NORVAL
 Once. At school.

BRIAN
 What happened?

NORVAL
 I didn't get it unlocked. But I
 found the key in my bag, so it was
 okay.

Brian frowns.

BRIAN
Smash the shitty pen.
Come on.

Norval gets up, and stamps on the shitty pen, reducing it to plastic splinters.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Now, take a long piece of plastic
and jam it into the lock.

Norval cringes, taking a plastic sliver, slipping it into the padlock...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
Work it in small circles.
Quick.

Norval continues fiddling with the padlock --

NORVAL
Who was that man?

Brian looks at the fluorescent strip-bulb above...

BRIAN
His name is Jethro. He's my best
friend.

Norval struggles to pick the lock...

NORVAL
Then why is he stabbing you with
feces pens and chaining you up in
your basement..?

BRIAN
He has his reasons.

Norval looks up at him...

NORVAL
After I left your mom, I ended up
living in Bangkok. Me, Jethro,
Gordon - who you've met - and
Dandy. We were misbehaving in a
small-time fashion. Until we
decided to do one last score, sail
off into the sunset, all that.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
What did you do?

BRIAN
Oh, we kidnapped the daughter of
Thailand's richest man.

Norval is speechless... fumbling numbly with the padlock.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

We were supposed to split the ransom between us, but I stole it.

(then)

I ripped my best friends off. Understandably, they want their share. They think I've stashed it somewhere. But the truth is, it's all gone. Every last cent.

NORVAL

Where?

Brian's pulpy face creases into something like a smile.

BRIAN

Did you ever take a moment to wonder why you grew up in a Beverly Hills mansion with an unemployed mother?

NORVAL

My entire life has been funded...

BRIAN

... By a kidnapping.

Norval looks sick.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Sorry to change the subject, but this isn't working. You're going to have to dislocate my thumb, I'm afraid.

NORVAL

... what..?

BRIAN

Take my thumb and bend it all the way back. Quickly.

Norval feebly grips Brian's thumb. Brian nods seriously. Norval winces, pulling Brian's thumb back...

BRIAN (CONT'D)

More...

Norval closes his eyes, unable to watch. Brian grits his teeth...

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Just fucking do it.

POP! The thumb wrenches out of joint -- Brian stifles an scream. Norval looks distraught --

NORVAL

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

Brian tries to free his hand from his restraints, but he's still stuck.

BRIAN

Right, the thumb wasn't quite enough. You'll have to try the index finger.

NORVAL

What?

BRIAN

Come on.

NORVAL

I can't. Please.

BRIAN

I abandoned you as a child. Consider this your revenge. Channel all that anger. Come on.

Norval grimaces, grabbing Brian's index finger, wrenching it out of joint. Brian stifles a scream.

NORVAL

Did that work?

Brian tries to free himself, but is still restrained.

BRIAN

Sorry. Middle finger?

Norval just nods, incredulous. He wrenches Brian's middle finger out of joint with a grisly crackle.

Brian tries to free himself, but, alas, it's not worked.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Next.

NORVAL

Fuck!

Norval wrenches the next finger out of joint. Brian grunts, breaking into delirious laughter. He finally manages to slip his hand out of his restraint, free at last.

BRIAN

See? That wasn't so hard, was it?

Norval looks on the verge of tears.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You have to carry me. We need to get as far from this house as possible.

NORVAL

I can't. I'm not made for this.

BRIAN

Do you want to be tortured and killed by a hunchback?

Norval hauls Brian up, dragging him -- struggling to get him up the stairs, wheezing with exertion. He tries to open the trapdoor, but it's locked shut.

NORVAL

Fuck. We're locked down here.

BRIAN

It's a padlock from a Christmas cracker. Even you can handle that.

INT. HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY

BANG! BANG! BANG!

The trap door is forced open from within, plastic padlock flying off.

Norval emerges from below, hauling his bloody father, who cringes with each painful movement --

BRIAN

How's your mother, by the way?

NORVAL

Yeah. Okay. I don't know.

BRIAN

Do you live with her?

NORVAL

Yeah.

BRIAN

Do you share a bed?

(then)

Put me down a second. I need water. Get me some water, would you?

NORVAL

Okay.

BRIAN

Hurry.

Norval lowers Brian onto the floor, straining.

He heads out into --

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Norval stands at the sink, washing blood and faeces from his hands, watching red and brown-flecked water spiral down the drain.

He wearily fills two glasses with water.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Norval returns to Brian with the water.

BRIAN

I'm about as useful as an
inflatable dartboard here.

Norval crouches, feeding water to his father, who gulps it down ravenously.

NORVAL

You're missing an ear.
Do you know that?

BRIAN

Yeah. Gordon kicked it off.

NORVAL

Shall we go and find it? They can
sew it back on.

BRIAN

That's not going to be possible.

NORVAL

Why not?

BRIAN

It's just not, okay?

NORVAL

Why?

Brian looks ashamed.

BRIAN

I ate it.

NORVAL

You ate your own ear?

BRIAN

He made me. He gave me a choice between my own ear and a shotglass of his semen. It was like some kind of Japanese game show or something. I chose the ear.

Norval stares at him in disbelief.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

He was starving me. I was fucking hungry.

NORVAL

Semen contains more protein and nutrients than an ear. Ears are just cartilage.

BRIAN

Look. The semen was yellow. I'm not defending my choice to you. Let's fucking go.

Norval considers this, horrified, nausea rising...

NORVAL

Can I go to the toilet?

BRIAN

Number one or number two?

NORVAL

One.

BRIAN

Be *really* fucking quick.

Norval gets up, hurrying into --

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Norval pushes the door open...

His face freezes in terror as he sees --

On the toilet, straining, wearing large headphones and reading a magazine --

A massive, hulking KOREAN HUNCHBACK with peroxide blonde hair. This must be DANDY (40s).

Dandy glowers at Norval, animal rage simmering up... he removes his headphones.

Norval lets out a feeble, terrified, strangulated whimper...

NORVAL

... oh ... shit ...

Then --

Dandy EXPLODES up from the toilet, pants around his ankles, a swathe of toilet paper still clenched 'twixt his cheeks. A gigantic FIST swings through the air --

Norval yelps, stumbling back into --

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Norval careens into the room --

Dandy stalks after him -- hurriedly getting his pants up, eyes ablaze with homicidal wrath.

BOOM. Dandy SMACKS Norval in the stomach with an open palm, sending him reeling against the counter, winded --

BRIAN cries out from the LIVING ROOM --

BRIAN (O.S.)

Dandy! Don't you touch my fucking son! Don't you fucking touch him!

SMACK. SMACK. SMACK. Dandy slaps Norval's face, grabbing his hair, slamming his HEAD against the COUNTER --

PLATES and GLASSES fall, shattering on the ground.

Norval reaches out desperately, grabbing a KNIFE --

Dandy disarms him easily, hurling the knife aside --

Norval tries to wrestle free --

NORVAL

Please ... stop ...

Dandy grabs Norval's HAIR, using it to swing his body against a counter. Norval hits the ground, screaming...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Please...

Dandy still holds a clump of Norval's hair. He lets it fall, stalking towards Norval, grinning maniacally...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - CORRIDOR -- DAY

Brian tries to crawl to the kitchen, but his crushed body permits no egress --

BRIAN

Dandy, I swear I'm going to kill
you... you motherfucker...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN -- DAY

Dandy, grunting like a hog, slams Norval's head against a MICROWAVE DOOR -- shattering the glass, reducing Norval's ear to a bloody yellow flap.

He rips Norval's earlobe off, throwing it into the kitchen sink. Norval lets out a shrill scream.

Norval reaches for a FORK -- managing to slam it into Dandy's thigh -- Dandy recoils, howling, losing his grip on Norval --

Norval watches, agog, as Dandy struggles to pull the fork from his thigh -- confused, blood squirting onto the floor...

Norval thinks fast -- he grabs a thick roll of SARAN WRAP, smacking Dandy's face with it -- again and again, screaming with primitive rage --

By the tenth hit, Dandy's bloody TEETH spray across the linoleum floor. By the fifteenth, Dandy's cheekbone SHATTERS. He groans in agony --

Dandy spits blood, stunned, swaying from side to side, staggering back into --

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM -- DAY

Dandy loses his footing, falling like a sack of rocks.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Come on, Norval! Kill the fucker!

Norval enters the room -- standing over Dandy, guided by adrenaline at this point --

BRIAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

*Do what you have to, son.
It's you or him.*

Something transforms within Norval, deep inside. Tectonic plates shift somewhere in the innermost hollows of his psyche...

He wraps the SARAN WRAP around Dandy's face, cutting off his air supply.

Dandy opens his mouth wide, sucking the cellophane into his mouth. He has one jagged front tooth remaining, which he's trying to use to pierce the cellophane...

Norval wraps the cellophane around Dandy's head again -- one layer, two, three -- until Dandy's head is COCOONED in plastic, an airless vacuum...

Norval holds Dandy's cellophane-encased head. Dandy struggles futilely as he suffocates. Finally he's still. Dead.

BRIAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
*Son, are you okay? Norval...
 please... tell me you're okay.*

Norval manages to get up. Reality crashes down on him as he realizes what he's done, what he is now...

He wanders to the sink, catching his REFLECTION in the MIRROR above it -- his face is awash with blood, hair matted to his forehead. He's shaking uncontrollably, breathing hard.

He turns on the faucet, washing his face and hands, desperately scrubbing himself.

He regards his REFLECTION again -- cleaner, but a changed man nonetheless. He's a killer now.

He looks down at the decimated Dandy, fighting tears.

INT. HOUSE - CORRIDOR -- DAY

Brian sighs with relief to see his son return.

Norval returns to Brian, sitting on the floor beside him, trembling...

Norval's face quivers with sadness, self-loathing...

Brian regards him solemnly, giving him a moment. Then, he struggling to connect...

BRIAN
 What happened in there...
 (thinks)
 It's always... I mean, what I'm
 saying is... It's...

Norval stares at the floor. Brian gives up.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
 We have to go.

Norval nods, mindless now, nightmare logic all he knows...

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

Crimson sun sinks into the chaotic sea...

Norval carries Brian's shattered body in a fireman's lift, struggling under his weight, breathing hard with exertion.

NORVAL
Who was Ryan?

BRIAN
What?

NORVAL
Gordon had a tattoo on his neck.
"R.I.P Ryan".

BRIAN
Ah. Ryan. That was Gordon's son.
Slashed his wrists in the bath. Sad
story. He was a decent kid.

Norval looks miserable and exhausted as he heads towards the WOODS near the house...

EXT. WOODS -- DUSK

Sunset bathes the woods in a stunning amber glow.

Norval carries Brian, navigating the gnarled roots and rotten branches that litter the forest floor, precariously maintaining balance.

Then --

The hum of an ENGINE.

Norval stops, looking around --

A STATION WAGON approaches the HOUSE.

BRIAN
Hide.

Norval struggles, lowering Brian to the ground, seeking solace behind a large moss-coated tree-trunk.

They peer out from behind the tree --

AT THE HOUSE -- the Station Wagon stops. Jethro gets out, brandishing a CROSSBOW. He takes a LIGHTER and lights the tip of its arrow, causing it to flame angrily. He stalks towards the house --

JETHRO
My little friend can't wait to meet
you, you bloody wank-stains!

Norval looks to Brian, helpless. Brian fixes him with a steely stare.

BRIAN
We have to get the fuck away from here.

NORVAL
Wait. Dad.

BRIAN
What?

NORVAL
I just realized something.

Brian looks to him impatiently...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Me and mom's address is written on my suitcase's luggage tag thing. If he finds it...

BRIAN
Fuck. *Fuck*...

NORVAL
What do we do?

Brian thinks. Then --

BRIAN
You have to kill him.

NORVAL
I'm not a murderer.

BRIAN
You murdered someone literally five minutes ago.

Norval buries his face in his hands.

BRIAN (CONT'D)
I'd gladly kill the fucker myself, but ... look at me ...

He flaps his dislocated fingers around for emphasis. Norval heaves, nausea doubling him over...

BRIAN (CONT'D)
If you don't go in there and kill him, we'll *never* be safe. You're part of this now.
(then)
And so is your mother.

That got Norval's attention. He looks up at Brian, smoldering...

NORVAL

He has a flaming crossbow. I have nothing. I wouldn't last a second...

Brian thinks, scanning the woods, the house... Finally --

BRIAN

You hide in the trunk of his car. You follow him wherever he goes. And when he's alone, when he's vulnerable...

Then -- Jethro's VOICE wails from the house --

JETHRO (O.S.)

Dandy! No! You bastards! You shits killed Dandy!

Brian looks to Norval, deadly serious --

BRIAN

Go.

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

Norval scampers to the Station Wagon, opening the TRUNK, climbing in -- keeping the door slightly open.

INT. STATION WAGON - TRUNK -- DUSK

Norval curls up in the dark trunk, breathing hard, trying not to burst into tears.

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

Jethro storms out of the house.

He frantically searches the back of the house, flaming crossbow held up, ready to kill.

He returns to the front of the house.

He peers out into the woods, a chilling grin creeping across his face...

He holds up the LUGGAGE TAG from Norval's suitcase, reading --

JETHRO

This is an important announcement for Norval Greenwood of 9162 West Linden Drive, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, California!

INT. STATION WAGON - TRUNK -- DUSK

Norval's eyes bulge with terror as he hears this...

JETHRO (O.S.)
*You and the rest of the Greenwood
 family are now officially fucked!
 It's official!*

EXT. HOUSE -- DUSK

Jethro blows out the flame on the crossbow. It takes a couple of tries.

He jumps into the Station Wagon, tossing the crossbow into the passenger's seat, firing up the engine.

EXT. WOODS -- DUSK

Brian watches the Station Wagon speed off into the woods. The car's red light disappears, drowning him in darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION WAGON - TRUNK -- NIGHT

Norval is curled up in a foetal position, bathed in the embryonic amber glow of the brake lights.

He hears Jethro in the DRIVER'S SEAT, making a call --

JETHRO (O.S.)
*Precious? It's Jethro again.
 I need to see you.
 Well, fucking cancel it! Please.
 I really need it.
 Thank you, Precious.
 Okay. Okay. Bye.*

The car speeds up, rocking Norval.

EXT. HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

The car's headlights illuminate our way as we speed across rain-slick blacktop.

We pick up speed, traffic lines flashing kaleidoscopically as we hurtle towards a conclusion...

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

The Station Wagon pulls into a meat-and-potatoes MOTEL. Two floors, pool, free HBO. The Ritz it ain't, folks.

Jethro gets out of the car, running his hands through his hair, exhausted. His cheek is raw and scabbed, throat yellow-black with bruises.

He locks the Station Wagon, heading towards the motel.

INT. STATION WAGON - TRUNK -- NIGHT

Norval teases the TRUNK DOOR open a sliver --

He sees Jethro running up the EXTERIOR STAIRWAY, approaching a ROOM in the middle of the second floor -- disappearing inside.

Norval opens the trunk all the way, climbing out.

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Norval hides behind a low wall separating the parking lot from the quiet SMALL-TOWN STREET beyond.

He watches Jethro's room. And thinks. And waits.

Then --

A WHITE SUV enters the parking lot, pulling to a stop.

A tall, incredibly muscular WOMAN gets out, wearing a sleeveless T-Shirt. She checks her makeup in the wing mirror. This must be PRECIOUS (30s).

She heads to the STAIRWAY leading up to the second floor.

We drift over to the WALL Norval was hiding behind -- but he's already gone.

EXT. MOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Precious approaches Jethro's room, crackling her neck to the side, limbering herself up for something.

She's about to knock at the door, when a WHISPER alarms her --

NORVAL
(whispered)
Hi.

Precious turns, bemused to see --

Norval, bloody and haggard, standing in the grimy flickering light of a neighboring DOORWAY. His manner is darker now... he's shed his old skin...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Are you a prostitute?

She stares at him, shocked...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Are you?

PRECIOUS
I provide a therapeutic service to male clients. Is it highly physical? Yes. Its it sexual in nature? That's up for debate.

NORVAL
How much is he paying you?

PRECIOUS
Excuse me?

NORVAL
Whatever it is, I'll triple it. And all you have to do is leave that door open a little bit when you leave.

She just stares at him, impatient and irate...

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Listen, Precious...

PRECIOUS
How in the fuck do you know my name?

NORVAL
Are we allies?

PRECIOUS
Allies? Get the fuck outta here before my foot liquefies your testes.

She knocks at the door.

NORVAL
Shit...

Norval scurries off downstairs.

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Norval returns to the parking lot, pacing, mind racing.

He looks up at the SECOND FLOOR -- Jethro's door opens, and Precious disappears inside.

Norval paces around, thinking.

He catches his REFLECTION in Precious' car window -- his face is bloody, hair disheveled.

He wanders over to a FAUCET in a wall. He runs water over his face, washing away the blood, smoothing out his hair.

He returns to Precious' car window.

He regards his reflection, nodding to himself, satisfied.

He heads towards the small RECEPTION OFFICE.

INT. MOTEL - RECEPTION OFFICE -- NIGHT

Norval enters the small office. A chubby GOTH RECEPTIONIST (17) behind a desk glances up from a small TV.

RECEPTIONIST

Can I help you, sir?

Norval un-pockets his leather wallet, pulling out some cash.

NORVAL

I'd like a room. Second floor.

RECEPTIONIST

Whole floor's booked out, what with the geology conference in town.

NORVAL

Geology conference?

RECEPTIONIST

It's actually a swinger's convention. I kid you not. I have a motel full of flabby sex people. Now, we *do* have one room available, but that's on the ground floor.

NORVAL

I'd prefer the second floor.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm sure you would prefer the second floor. But as I said, there are "geologists" in every room of this motel - bar one. The one being the free room on the ground floor I mentioned mere seconds ago. Would you like to book said room?

NORVAL
Maybe later.

Norval leaves.

RECEPTIONIST
Okaaaay.

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Norval paces around, thinking, frustrated.

ACROSS THE STREET -- he sees a small BILLBOARD advertising a local bar. On it, a cartoon image of a buxom BLONDE BARMAID in revealing Lederhosen.

Norval stares at the billboard, studying it.

Then, inspiration hits.

INT. MOTEL - RECEPTION OFFICE -- NIGHT

Norval walks back inside the office.

The receptionist looks up at him --

RECEPTIONIST
Let me guess. You realized this is the only motel in town, and you changed your mind about that room?

Norval looks nervous --

NORVAL
Hey.

RECEPTIONIST
Yes?

NORVAL
There's a naked woman in the street outside.

The receptionist stares at him in disbelief.

RECEPTIONIST
A naked woman.

NORVAL
Yeah.

RECEPTIONIST
In the street.

NORVAL
Yeah.

RECEPTIONIST

Must be one of the swingers.

(fake gags)

No thanks.

NORVAL

Seriously. She's pretty. She looks like someone who knows how to have fun, if you know what I'm saying.

RECEPTIONIST

Sir, I've beheld more than my share of swingers lately. They're... an acquired taste, at best.

NORVAL

Trust me. She's a knockout.

RECEPTIONIST

Hmm... okay, you're clearly a weirdo but I'm sort of intrigued, I'm not gonna lie.

NORVAL

I'm serious. Incredible body.

RECEPTIONIST

Full disclosure: I'm a tittyholic. Naturally my next question is: does she have--

NORVAL

I'm going to stop you right there and say: when this woman is shopping for bras, she can be found in the area designated Double-D.

The receptionist smirks, getting up from his desk.

RECEPTIONIST

Excuse me just a minute, sir.

He walks out, leaving Norval alone.

Norval rushes behind the desk, rummaging desperately --

A KEY HOLDER ordered by FLOOR NUMBER is his first port of call --

He grabs a handful of keys.

Then -- he sees a RECEIPT SPIKE at the side of the desk, laden with yellow receipt paper.

He examines its gleaming sharp point.

He grabs it.

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

The receptionist returns to the office, shoulders slumped in disappointment --

INT. MOTEL - RECEPTION OFFICE -- NIGHT

The receptionist enters, but Norval is gone.

RECEPTIONIST

Asshole.

He picks up his phone, dialling a number. It rings. Then --

RECEPTIONIST (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Freddie. Listen to this. Some creep comes in and tells me there's a naked chick in the street. Titties of the Double-D persuasion, he says. Naturally, your boy's curious. Hey. It's me, right? But this prick was a lying piece of dirt. A regular horseshitter. Yep, just another bullshit night at the motel, basically. Yawn!

Silence. Then --

FREDDIE (ON PHONE)

*I told you never to call me again,
Danny. We're no longer friends.*

The receptionist hangs up and looks miserable. He fights tears, psyching himself up.

RECEPTIONIST

Come on Danny, you're stronger than this. You got this. Come on Danny. Come on now. Okay. Danny's back. Danny's back in the room. Oh hi Danny!

He closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

EXT. MOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Norval creeps down the corridor, holding the RECEIPT SPIKE and a handful of KEYS, stopping outside Jethro's room.

He selects the key, gently easing it into the lock. CLICK. The door unlocks. Holding his breath, he teases the door open, but --

The CHAIN IS UP inside, stopping the door from opening. We hear grunts from Jethro and Precious inside --

PRECIOUS (O.S.)
*How'd you like that shit, you
 anaemic floppy-dicked fuckface?*

JETHRO (O.S.)
*Oh yeah, do it harder. Really get
 aggressive now.*

Norval quietly closes the door, frustrated. He thinks.

He then creeps down the corridor, stopping outside the room next to Jethro's...

He selects the appropriate key, slipping it into the lock -- fumbling, desperate not to be heard.

CLICK. The door unlocks.

He teases it open slowly, silently...

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval creeps into the room, moving in slow motion. He pauses, gawking apprehensively at --

On the DOUBLE-BED -- three MEN and one WOMAN are asleep, naked.

Liquor bottles and condoms are discarded on the floor. An old PORN MOVIE (*White Men Can't Hump*, if you must know) plays mutely on the TV, casting lurid pink light across the room.

Norval silently shuts the door -- tiptoeing into the room, towards --

AN ADJOINING DOOR, leading to Jethro's room.

Norval's FOOT brushes a VODKA BOTTLE on the floor...

... Which spins...

... Clinking against an ASHTRAY.

ON THE BED --

The woman stirs...

ON THE FLOOR --

Norval DROPS DOWN, holding his breath.

ON THE BED --

The woman sits up, glancing around the room. She sighs, lying back down, drifting back to sleep.

ON THE FLOOR --

Norval inhales, crawling over to the door, face sweat-soaked.

He stops at the ADJOINING DOOR, reaching the key towards the lock, when --

He steps on a REMOTE CONTROL -- the TV is suddenly UNMUTED, sex grunts and moans blaring into the room -- he scrambles to pick up the remote, pressing the MUTE BUTTON...

ON THE BED -- the men and woman wake, jolting up, turning on bedside LIGHTS -- also speaking POLISH --

MAN 1 (SUBTITLE)
We have a fucking intruder!

WOMAN (SUBTITLE)
Oh fuck, oh fuck, oh fuck...

MAN 2 (SUBTITLE)
He's going to kill us all!

MAN 1 (SUBTITLE)
I've done shits bigger than him!

Norval notices the woman's EARRINGS --

NORVAL
You. Give me one of those earrings
now please.

The woman complies, terrified, removing an earring with trembling hands, passing it to Norval.

Norval uses the earring to pick the lock of the adjoining door.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
Come on. Come on...

Finally, he gets the door unlocked.

NORVAL (CONT'D)
I did it!

He returns the earring to the woman, who takes it, slack-jawed in disbelief.

The four horrified Polish guests watch, shocked, as Norval bursts into --

INT. MOTEL - JETHRO'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Norval falls into the room, dismayed to see --

The bed has been pushed aside to make room.

On the floor -- Precious has Jethro in a tight headlock.
They're both fully dressed --

PRECIOUS
You like that?

They suddenly both look up at Norval, embarrassed, exposed
and enraged --

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)
(to Norval)
What did I tell you? You best get
the fuck outta here! This is
private business!

She releases Jethro, who stares up at Norval incredulously.

The Polish guests from the neighboring room stand in the
adjoining DOORWAY, watching in bewilderment as --

Precious stalks towards Norval, fuming.

NORVAL
Please, Precious. My fight isn't
with you.

PRECIOUS
Agree to disagree.

SMACK -- she kicks Norval in the knee, sending him tumbling
down with a yelp. Without missing a beat --

She SOMERSAULTS towards him, locking him in an impenetrable
MMA CHOKE-HOLD.

He struggles futilely, gasping for air.

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)
I don't know what your business is
with my client, but I don't like
it. No, sir.

Jethro gets up, edging towards the restrained Norval.

JETHRO
Hold him tight for me, Precious.

She nods grimly.

Jethro pulls Norval's LUGGAGE TAG from his pocket, flashing
it at Norval, who can't escape Precious' iron hold.

JETHRO (CONT'D)
You're going to die here. And I'm
going to LA. Any messages for your
mum?

NORVAL
Tell her I love her.

JETHRO
I'm going to specifically tell her
you *don't* love her.

NORVAL
(seething)
You bastard...

Jethro picks up the RECEIPT SPIKE. Precious gasps --

PRECIOUS
Oh, Hell no...

Jethro takes a deep breath, psyching himself up.

JETHRO
Right. Okay...

He winces, clenching his jaw --

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Fucking *get in!*

Jethro shoves the spike into Norval's ABDOMEN with a ghastly *pop*. He pulls the spike out, slamming it into Norval's CHEEK.

JETHRO (CONT'D)
Bugger. That was supposed to go in
your neck.

AT THE ADJOINING DOOR -- the Polish guests recoil, disgusted,
barking at each other in their native tongue --

MAN 2 (SUBTITLE)
I'm calling 997.

WOMAN (SUBTITLE)
In America it's 999.

MAN 2 (SUBTITLE)
I think it's 911, actually.

MAN 3 (SUBTITLE)
If the police come, they'll find
the drugs. We'll get deported..!

ON THE FLOOR -- Norval's blood spills onto Precious' arms.

She lets go of him -- he hits the carpet, unconscious, a limp
rag-doll. The spike sticks out of his cheek.

Precious looks up at Jethro, appalled --

PRECIOUS
I think you killed him.

Jethro rummages in his pocket --

JETHRO

You killed him, you big tonk twat.
You choked the life right out of
him. I saw it.

PRECIOUS

I don't take kindly to accusations
of murder.

Jethro tosses a couple of crumpled Hundreds at Precious --

JETHRO

You know what? Sod this sad, shit
situation. I'm going to LA.

Jethro rushes to a closet, throwing his belongings into a
small suitcase.

PRECIOUS

You are a cold-blooded psychopath.

JETHRO

And you're a muscle-bound prozzie
who puts lonely men in headlocks
for cash! Oh, and there's this new
invention called deodorant. You
should try it sometime, yeah?

Jethro hurries out of the room with his suitcase.

EXT. MOTEL - SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- NIGHT

Jethro runs out, face ashen and slick with sweat.

INT. MOTEL - JETHRO'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Precious cradles Norval, who lies lifeless in her arms,
receipt spike protruding from his cheek.

The Polish guests enter the room, cautious --

WOMAN (SUBTITLE)

Is he dead?

MAN 1 (SUBTITLE)

He's not breathing.

Precious shakes her head, tears welling in her eyes.

PRECIOUS

I'm an accessory to murder.
That right there is a life
sentence.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

Jethro runs to his Station Wagon -- unlocking it, flinging the door open -- hurling his suitcase inside.

He pauses, noticing -- YELLOW RECEIPTS on the ground by the car, fluttering in the night breeze.

(The same receipts from Norval's spike..?)

He jumps into the car.

INT. STATION WAGON -- NIGHT

Jethro fires up the engine.

He consults Norval's LUGGAGE TAG, punching the address into a SAT-NAV device.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL - JETHRO'S ROOM -- NIGHT

Precious and the Polish guests loom over Norval's body.

Precious shakes him, desperate --

PRECIOUS

You come back to us, now.

Finally -- Norval INHALES sharply, gasping for breath --

His EYES open, manic, delirious --

PRECIOUS (CONT'D)

Oh! Oh! He's alive!

He stares at her, consciousness returning... He tries to say something, but the spike protruding from his cheek forbids it.

The Polish guests get up, edging to their doorway, slowly closing the door behind them --

MAN 1 (SUBTITLE)

Is it a terrible idea to ask this
muscular woman to join us?

The other Polish guests look at him in disgust.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL - PARKING LOT -- NIGHT

The Station Wagon skids out of the parking lot, onto the dark SMALL TOWN STREET.

Its tires HISS...

INT. STATION WAGON -- NIGHT

Jethro drives, intently.

EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET -- NIGHT

The Station Wagon speeds out of town, into the night.

Suddenly --

The Station Wagon's FRONT TIRES DEFLATE -- rubber, asphalt and sparks spray. Then --

The BACK TIRES DEFLATE --

The Station Wagon swerves --

INT. STATION WAGON -- NIGHT

Jethro tries to control the car as it skids off the road --

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL -- NIGHT

A loud CRASH rings out from the distance.

Norval limps past the reception office, on the verge of collapse, blood spilling from his abdominal wounds, receipt spike still stuck in his cheek.

INSIDE -- the receptionist looks up from his fitness magazine, shocked to see the injured Norval...

EXT. MAIN STREET -- NIGHT

Norval shuffles down the street.

AHEAD -- he sees Jethro's STATION WAGON, crushed against a LAMP POST. Black smoke billows from its hood.

He approaches wearily...

INT. STATION WAGON -- NIGHT

Norval walks up beside the car, body on the verge of collapse, blood oozing from his abdominal wound, receipt spike still stuck into his cheek.

He peers inside the car -- Jethro isn't there.

Norval sees his LUGGAGE TAG on the crumpled dashboard. He slowly takes it, slipping it into his pocket.

EXT. MAIN STREET -- NIGHT

Norval looks around, seeing --

AHEAD -- Jethro stumbles away, heading down the road, an eerie moonlit ghoul.

Norval approaches, catching up to Jethro, finally walking alongside him. We see Jethro clearly now --

Part of his scalp and skull have been shaved away during the crash, exposing brain matter. He walks like a zombie, staring into space, catatonic.

Norval looks at Jethro, horrified. Jethro stares at him dumbly. They walk side by side. Jethro finally speaks in a low lifeless monotone --

JETHRO

Your mother was a prostitute.
That's how your father met her.
He was a frequent flier.
You think her name is Jacqueline.
But her real name is Annie.
I fucked her. But I lost my
erection, because from certain
angles she reminded me of Michael
Heseltine.

(eyes wide)

Michael Heseltine, if you're
wondering, was a British politician
in the 1980s.

Jethro stops. Norval stops. Jethro looks to Norval with pleading eyes.

JETHRO (CONT'D)

Finish it. Please.

Norval reaches for the receipt spike in his cheek, pulling it out with a gasp of pain. He slowly grips the spike, raising it to Jethro's head... slipping the spike into the exposed brain matter.

Jethro suddenly gasps --

JETHRO (CONT'D)

Arthur..!

He lets out a long gurgle. He stops breathing. His eyes glaze over. Frothy blood spurts from his mouth and ears. He drops like a sack of bricks. It's fair to assume he's dead.

Norval's eyes are shiny with tears. He tries to speak but can't. He limps away from the crumpled Jethro, holding his bleeding abdomen, heading off into the darkness.

SIRENS wail from afar.

In the DISTANCE -- Precious, the Polish guests and the receptionist stand in the road, watching nervously.

Norval glances back at them, waving weakly.

Precious waves back.

EXT. ROAD -- NIGHT

Norval shuffles along, holding his abdominal wound. He looks ahead, bemused to see --

GLADYS, walking into town. She stops as Norval approaches, regarding him, shocked --

GLADYS

Mr. Greenwood? Norval? Christ...
are you okay? What happened to you?

He walks closer to her. She gasps, seeing the full extent of his injuries --

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Norval? What happened?

He keeps walking, passing her, calling back to her. His injuries make his voice barely comprehensible --

NORVAL

(muffled)
Sorry for drunk calling you that
time.

He walks off.

She watches him recede into the darkness, baffled.

She calls out to him --

GLADYS

Where are you going?

From the shadows, Norval awkwardly barks a reply -- but we barely hear it...

NORVAL (O.S.)
I'm going home.

EXT. HILLSIDE ROAD -- NIGHT

Norval walks up the hill.

He pulls the LETTER from his back pocket.

He consults the rudimentary MAP scrawled within its pages. It's now blotted with blood.

Norval continues on.

Miles below, the North Pacific churns, gleaming in the pale light of a gibbous moon.

EXT. FIELD -- NIGHT

Norval slowly shuffles across a desolate field, insignificant beneath a sea of cold sparkling stars.

He glances up at the stars, savoring their light.

He collapses to the ground, wheezing, glistening ropes of blood dribbling from his mouth.

EXT. WOODS -- NIGHT

Norval enters the forest, clutching his bleeding stomach, limping, life draining from his body...

He DROPS to his knees, spitting blood, groaning in agony.

Ahead -- he sees the distant glow of the house's lights through the woods...

His features constrict strangely. He passes out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WOODS -- DAWN

The sun rises through the treeline. Birds chirp.

Norval opens his eyes. He raises himself off the ground, groaning, clutching his wound.

He gets to his feet, struggling onwards...

EXT. HOUSE -- DAWN

Norval approaches the house, homeward-bound.

He looks around -- Brian is nowhere to be seen.

He calls out to Brian, but all sound is drained away.

Norval wanders to the cliff's edge, looking to the moonlit beach below --

BRIAN is lying sprawled out on the beach. He looks up at Norval, feebly waving.

EXT. BEACH -- DAWN

Norval limps over to Brian's side, flopping down on the sand next to him.

They stare at each other intensely, tears spilling from their exhausted eyes. Then --

Father and son finally embrace. They hold each other close.

NORVAL

I have to tell you something, but
it makes me sound like a bad
person...

Brian looks to him, dazed. Although it's painful, Norval finally speaks...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

I never let mom get over you. Every
man that came along, I drove them
away... She had so many chances to
be happy, and I never let her. I...

Brian looks miserable. Norval spits a glob of blood onto the sand.

NORVAL (CONT'D)

I always thought you'd come back
and we'd pick up where we left off.

Brian coughs, wheezing, in agony... fading ...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Why did you write to me?

They both stare ahead at the gleaming moonlit sea with blank expressions, glassy eyes...

NORVAL (CONT'D)

Dad. Why did you write to me?

Brian just stares out to sea. Norval nods, looking at his father. They stay there for a long time. It's hard to tell if either is alive or dead.

FADE TO BLACK:

For a moment, we see a FLASH of OLD CAMCORDER FOOTAGE --

Shaky whirling camera, as if the user doesn't know they've hit record --

We're on a BEACH at sunset. Joyous Thai funk music lilts through the air. Seagulls shriek. Waves lap the shore. A distant passing SHIP sounds its bassy foghorn.

We settle on --

YOUNG NORVAL (4) and YOUNG BRIAN (40s), sitting on the beach by a shimmering ocean at sunset, arms around each other. Little Norval holds the CUDDLY LION TOY.

One of life's fleeting perfect moments, bursting with promise.

CUT TO:

END TITLES, THE SOUND OF WAVES LAPPING THE SHORE.