DECEPTIVE CLARITY

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - HARPER WOODS, MICHIGAN {1997}

On this beautiful sunny afternoon, the bleachers on the football field are filled with family and friends attending the graduating class of Harper Woods high school. Random talk is heard, but it's nothing but positive vibes with everyone congratulating the person next to them for their child or relative graduating.

There's more people standing down by the gate next to the track surrounding the field, but it doesn't matter, as long as they're able to see and take pictures of the graduating class standing in the middle of the field on some bleachers wearing their baby blue and black cap and gowns.

An inspirational speaker is standing behind the podium in front of the bleachers the students are standing on, speaking a positive message about the future that lies ahead for the students.

Looking over the faces of the students, you can tell they're proud hard work and dedication lead to this point, ready to take the next step in their life.

All of the students graduating are in a zone that can't be disturbed, filled with happiness and accomplishments. Through all the happiness, the one brown skin student standing in the back on the end with his head down rubbing a diamond engagement ring on his right pinky finger feels different.

The way he's rubbing the ring, you would think he's trying to polish the diamond so it'll shine brighter than what it already is. But from looking at the pitiful expression on his face and watery brown eyes, you can tell something other than the quality of how the ring is shinning lurks in his mind. This is TEENAGE BERNARD DRIVE.

The heartthrob with beautiful blue eyes and long brown hair standing next to him is his best friend TEENAGE PHIL. Knowing why Teenage Bernard is in the slumps, Teenage Phil tries convincing him things will be okay.

    TEENAGE PHIL
    (WHISPERING)
    You okay, B?

The speaker is still heard.

Keeping his head down focused on the ring, he ignores his best friend words.

    TEENAGE PHIL (CONT'D)
    Let that shit go. Nobody will believe it.
A soft sigh comes from Teenage Bernard lifting his head turning to look at Teenage Phil with his glossy eyes.

**TEENAGE BERNARD**

(Sorrow)

It was wrong.

**TEENAGE PHIL**

People get what they deserve.

Focusing back on the ring, Teenage Bernard can’t seem to let go of what happened.

**TEENAGE BERNARD**

...And then?

The sound of the people applauding and whistling follows right behind the end of the speaker's speech.

**CLOSE UP – TEENAGE BERNARD'S FACE**

He closes his eyes and the water works begin flowing.

SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK:

**TITLE:**

BLACK SCREEN:

**SUPERIMPOSE: SIXTEEN YEARS LATER**

**EXT. COURTHOUSE – AFTERNOON**

Reporters are gathered on the steps of the courthouse looking like ants waiting for Bernard to come out of the courthouse after winning the biggest case the county of Harper Woods has ever had.

**BERNARD** comes out in his nice black suit smiling bright as the sun on this clear blue day, watching the reporters swarm around him asking questions.

With all the questions asked at the same time, and microphones in his face, Bernard remains calm fixing the tie on his suit.

**REPORTER**

How does it feel not only winning another case, but the biggest case in the county?

**BERNARD**

How can you lose with the best?
The reporters are silent. Bernard looks at them smiling. They begin asking questions again.

He walks off making his way to the sidewalk. Walking down the street approaching his jet-black Mercedes parked further down, he notices TIM, thirty-eight-years-old, standing against the driver door wearing dumpster clothes needing some lotion for his ashy black skin, jingling a Styrofoam cup full of coins. Bernard comes up to him, and then he takes a step back ready to hurl from the smell.

BERNARD
Can I help you?

Tim stops jingling the coins, looking at Bernard with a straight face.

TIM
You don't remember me, do you?

BERNARD
I don't wanna know you now.

TIM
That's cool. Don't worry about if you can help me. Worry about if you can help yourself.

BERNARD
Get yo dusty ass away from my car.

Bernard tries moving Tim to the side, but Tim drops his cup trying to pin Bernard against the car, and ends up getting pinned himself. Tim laughs, showing his rotted teeth.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
What's so funny?

TIM
You are. She's not here to help you.

Tim's words strike a nerve deep inside Bernard. He gets ready to swing, but he looks back seeing the reporters heading their way. Pissed off, he slings Tim to the side opening the door getting in. Tim throws a balled up paper bag into the car, and then grabs the door.

TIM (CONT'D)
This is a case you won't win.

Bernard yanks the door, and Tim moves his hand before getting it smashed. He pulls off, just as the reporters reach the car.
Bernard Mersier

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BERNARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Driving a few blocks down in the quiet neighborhood, he pulls into an alley. He grabs the balled up paper bag, opening it, and written sloppy in black marker it says...

INSERT LETTERS ON THE BAG

"Vengeance is only sweet, when you make the person you love realize how sweet it is."

Scoffing tossing the bag out, he opens the glove compartment grabbing some hand sanitizer squirting some in his hand, rubbing his hands together real good. When he's finished, he laughs turning the radio on. Some classical music plays as he pulls out the alley.

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is magnificent. A stereo system and television are up against the light brown wall that the dressers and nightstand match, and there's a mini bar off in the corner by the window.

Bernard is sitting on the edge of the king size bed in his black silk pajama pants holding an empty Cognac glass. He looks over cracking a smile at a picture of him and his mother when he was a child resting on his nightstand.

BERNARD

(Laughs)

It's only sweet if you make the person you love realize how sweet it is.

He stands up walking over to the mini bar, and we see a long scar on his right side from when he was stabbed years ago. Placing the glass down, he picks up the bottle of "Jameson", and then he blanks out.

CUT TO:

INT. BERNARD'S MOTHER BEDROOM - 1988 - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

BERNARD'S MOTHER is sitting on the bed wearing a nightgown crying, holding a picture of Bernard's father wearing his police uniform. She places the picture on the nightstand continuing to stare. The heavy bags under her brown eyes speak of not only lack of sleep, but a heavy burden of depression.
BERNARD'S MOTHER
Why did you leave? Why did you take the call?

She picks up the bottle of whiskey from the floor ready to take a sip, and out the corner of her eye she sees Young Bernard eight-years-old in the doorway wearing his pajamas rubbing his eyes.

He makes his way to her taking a seat on the bed beside her. She places the bottle down.

YOUNG BERNARD
He's in a better place.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
I know he is.

YOUNG BERNARD
So, why are you crying?

BERNARD'S MOTHER
When you get older, you'll meet someone you love.

YOUNG BERNARD
I already love you.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
You'll meet a woman you'll love, just as much as mommy.

YOUNG BERNARD
The only woman I'll ever love is you.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
That's now. When you meet the other woman...if she leaves you, it'll hurt.

YOUNG BERNARD
Why are you drinking?

BERNARD'S MOTHER
(Dry laugh)
You'd think it'll ease the pain.

YOUNG BERNARD
Why are you in pain?

BERNARD'S MOTHER
It's nothing. Just know mommy loves you.
YOUNG BERNARD
I love you, too.

She gives him a kiss on the forehead.

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - {PRESENT DAY}

Bernard has a blank stare for a few seconds, and then he wakes up slamming his fist hard on the counter.

BERNARD
It does ease the pain.

He pours a double-shot in his glass throwing it back like it's nothing, slamming the glass on the counter cracking it.

A sinister smile spreads across his face, turning his back heading to the bedroom door walking out.

INT. ABANDON BUILDING - NIGHT

The fire burning in the oil drum glows in the filthy area. WOMAN #1, twenty-three-years-old is tied up to a pole. Her face is covered with sweat, looking around the room with her green eyes filled with fear. Footsteps are heard drawing near, and her eyes widen when a person wearing an all-black hood steps in front of her.

The right hand of the killer covered by a black leather glove reaches out grabbing her face, holding up a pair of rusty garden shears in the left hand. Releasing her face, she knows she's seconds from death prepared to scream, and the killer plunges the shears under her chin up into her mouth opening them.

Snatching the shears out, the killer then turns her head to the right using a scalpel removing a large portion of flesh from her cheek. The killer places the flesh inside the right pants pocket, and then plays around in the hole in her face before walking off.

INT. MASSAGE PARLOR - MORNING

A client walks out the room. Standing against the wall by the door is JOEY, thirty-four-years-old. Irritation is radiating from his blue eyes, pulling his phone out dialing a number, placing the phone to his ear.

SPLIT SCREEN:

CLAIRE, thirty-four-years-old is a tad bit on the muscular side standing against the gym wall wearing a sports bra and spandex shorts with sweat covering her brown skin, and her
hair pulled in a ponytail.

CLAIRE
Hello?

JOEY
What are you doing?

CLAIRE
I'm at the gym, hitting the weights.

JOEY
I swear, I think you're a man.

CLAIRE
Get off my phone.

JOEY
(Laughs)
Where's your sense of humor? You heard from Tom?

CLAIRE
You know I barely call him

JOEY
I know the feeling. I was making sure everybody was coming to lunch.

CLAIRE
I'll be there. I wouldn't miss a lunch date with Mr. Perfect. You know how he can get.

JOEY
Find out what's up with Tom, and get back to me.

CLAIRE
Okay.

JOEY
Cool. Go finish gettin' your grown man on.

CLAIRE
Bye.

The screen goes back to Joey. As he places his phone in his pocket, a heavy set male walks into the room. Joey sighs, shaking his head.

JOEY
It's about to be a long day.
INT. TOM'S OFFICE - MORNING

There are pictures of top-selling book covers from published authors framed on the walls. TOM, thirty-four-years-old, is sitting behind his desk staring at the wall in a trance with his hand on the desk. His phone rests on the desk. The phone begins ringing.

He looks down with his grey eyes seeing Claire calling, waiting a few more seconds before answering.

TOM
Hello?

CLAIRE (V.O.)
What are you doing?

TOM
(Pacing his breathing)
...Waiting for the moment.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
Are you at work?

TOM
I'm working on the moment.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
What the hell is the moment?

TOM
(Orgasmic tone)
The moment is...

He leans forward, releasing a moan of pleasure.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
What the hell? Hello? Hello?

He regains his composure, placing the phone back to his ear.

TOM
(Shallow breathing)
Okay. What were you saying?

CLAIRE (V.O.)
What the hell was that about?

TOM
That was the moment.

CLAIRE (V.O.)
Are you joining us for lunch?
TOM
I'll be there.

CLaire (V.O.)
You enjoy that moment.

TOM
I did. I'll see you there.

He hangs up taking a deep breath wiping his face, moving his chair back. WOMAN #2, twenty-three-years-old with burgundy hair comes from under the desk wearing a fitted dress, licking her lips.

He pulls some money out extending it to her, which she takes with a smile for her services. She leans down trying to give him a kiss, and he places a finger to her lips.

TOM
It's not Christmas. Keep the snowballing for someone else.

She sneers making her way to the door.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'll call you, and we can do it again.

She gives him the finger walking out. He laughs stretching, turning to look out the window.

INT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

From the layout of the restaurant, you can tell the place is high class. People are sitting at their tables eating, while waiters move around the room. Paint conversations are heard.

ANGLE ON--

Bernard, Claire, Tom and Joey are sitting at the back of the restaurant. Full wine glasses and a bottle of wine are on their table.

CLaire
Do you want to explain what that moment was?

TOM
Well---

BERNARD
Nine times out of ten, he was doing some freaky shit he paid for.
TOM
You're absolutely right. I'll pay for it, before I sit around with my dick in my hand.

Claire and Joey break out laughing. Bernard takes a sip from his glass.

BERNARD
Ha, ha, very funny.

CLAIRE
It's been some years now, hasn't it?

Bernard turns looking at Claire raising his eyebrow.

BERNARD
Is this crack jokes on Bernard day? Claire, you're still a virgin.

CLAIRE
(Laughs)
So?

JOEY
Mary keeps throwing it at you, but you won't catch it.

Tom takes a sip from his wine, and then pats Bernard on the shoulder.

TOM
It's okay. You're more of a sausage man instead of peaches. It's cool.

BERNARD
Uh huh. Keep it up.

CLAIRE
Okay, okay. Let's calm down before he gets in his mood.

BERNARD
I'm good.

JOEY
That's what you always say before flipping the bipolar switch.

TOM
Okay, enough with the jokes. Congratulations on winning the case.
BERNARD
Should I really take that as a compliment?

JOEY
Oh, shit.

CLAIRE
(To Joey)
Will you stop it?
(To Bernard)
Congratulations.

Bernard doesn't respond, taking a sip.

JOEY
I knew it. We better get moving.

BERNARD
I'm good.

TOM
Lunch is on you?

Bernard turns looking at Tom, doing his best holding back from laughing.

BERNARD
You're the cheapest, tricking person I ever met?

TOM
You love me, right?

Tom tries giving him a hug, and Bernard laughs pushing him back.

CLAIRE
Why haven't you talked to Mary?

BERNARD
No particular reason.

JOEY
Maybe it's because---

BERNARD
Why are you talking? We all question your manhood.

JOEY
What?

BERNARD
We never hear you talk about women.
CLAIRE
That's true.

JOEY
Hold on. I happen to have---

TOM
Your hand and some lotion.

JOEY
I have a stable of women I can't bring around you heathens.

BERNARD
(Laughs)
Let's order this food. I think you had too much to drink.

The four sit laughing and talking.

INT. LAW OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Sitting behind her desk staring at a picture she apparently took of Bernard without him knowing is thirty-five-year-old MARY. A rouge of blush is on her Puerto Rican skin.

Bernard comes walking down the hall, and she quickly puts the picture back in her drawer pretending she's doing work. Walking up to the desk smiling, she looks up at him with her hazel eyes.

MARY
How was lunch?

BERNARD
It was cool.

MARY
I'm still waiting on my lunch date.

BERNARD
You don't wanna have lunch with me.

MARY
If that was the case, I wouldn't have mentioned it.

He gives her a slight smirk, loving her cocky attitude.

BERNARD
Do I have any messages?

MARY
A reporter wants an interview.
BERNARD
That's it?

MARY
Yes, sir.

BERNARD
Thanks. I'll be in my office.

He turns prepared to walk off.

MARY
Wait, before you go.

He turns back around looking at her.

BERNARD
What's up?

MARY
When are you taking me to lunch?

He rocks his head side to side.

BERNARD
One day...we can have a drink or two.

MARY
One, I don't drink. And two, that doesn't answer my question.

BERNARD
You're so feisty. I'll keep that in mind.

He winks at her before walking off. She sits back smiling, pulling the picture out staring at it.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lying on the bed is thirty-two-year-old WOMAN #3, brown hair wearing a black negligee with her throat slit down to the bone, and a large piece of flesh removed from the right side of her cheek. A tale of terror is on her face.

Random chatter is heard, and then the flash from a camera is seen.

WIDER ANGLE--

We see officers examining the room for clues, collecting evidence. Standing against the wall sucking his teeth with his arms folded across his chest pissed off is forty-six-year-old Detective CHARLIE SLING. Annoyance laces
his baby blue eyes. OFFICER #1 shakes her head looking over the body.

OFFICER #1  
(Talking to Charlie)  
Come take a look at this.

He sighs deep making his way over to the bed kneeling down looking at the body rubbing his chin.

CHARLIE  
This is our guy. Characteristics are the same.

OFFICER #2 turns looking at him.

OFFICER #2  
No signs of rape.

CHARLIE  
(Sighs)  
I figured that much.

He points at the missing flesh.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
I wonder why he takes the flesh from their face.

OFFICER #2  
Maybe he collects it as a souvenir.

Charlie stands up sighing deep walking over to the wall punching it, causing everyone to focus on him walking out the room.

Charlie comes into the living room where other officers are looking for clues. Pausing looking at them, he shakes his head frustrated making his way to the front door walking out.

INT. /EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

People are standing around trying to see what's going on, while officers yellow tape the scene. Reporters are standing around anxiously waiting for interviews. Charlie pulls out a pack of cigarettes pulling one out placing it in his mouth lighting it, looking up at the moon.

CHARLIE  
Where are you, you son of a bitch?

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

His plaques hang on the wall. A picture of him and his
mother when he was a child rests on his desk next to his nameplate. Bernard is sitting behind his desk reading over a file. Mary comes into the room carrying some files, walking to the desk placing them down.

MARY
How are you?

He continues reading the file.

BERNARD
Fine.

She slides her fingers across the desk, walking over to the wall with his plaques.

MARY
Did you hear about the murder?

BERNARD
How did this one die?

MARY
Throat slit to the bone.

She rubs her fingers on the plaques in an orgasmic way, turning around walking to the chair taking a seat.

MARY (CONT'D)
There was no sign of rape, as usual.

BERNARD
Isn't he something? Kills women, but has the common courtesy to not rape 'em.

MARY
Right. Usually when a woman is killed, she's either sexually assaulted before or after. I guess that's what makes this guy so eerie.

He scoffs putting the file down.

BERNARD
It's some sick people in the world.

He stands up stretching, before walking over to Mary. She stands up trying not to smile.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Thanks for everything you do around here.
MARY
That's why I'm here.

There's a long silence as they stare at each other, both of them shy. With a smirk, he moves in for a hug, and she embraces him. Feeling the situation turning mushy, he releases her stepping back clearing his throat.

BERNARD
I'll see you tomorrow.

MARY
You sure will.

He walks over to the door grabbing his leather coat off the hook walking out the room. She stands fanning herself blushing.

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bernard is holding a glass of cognac wearing his silk blue pajama pants, listening to opera music.

BERNARD
It's my fault. If I knew then, what I know now.

He downs the glass placing it on the nightstand, pulling out a cigarette placing it in his mouth lighting it, while looking down at the newspaper on the floor.

BERNARD'S POV

INSERT HEADLINE ON THE NEWSPAPER

Serial killer claims his ninth victim. Police still have no leads.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
The mind of a killer is the beginning of a masterpiece in motion without the colors. Soon...we'll see the full painting filled with colors of beauty.

He takes one more pull before putting it out.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The lights are off, and the moon is shining through the slits of the blinds. Tom opens the door clapping his hands turning the lights and radio on. Jazz music is heard.

This is a true bachelor's room. He staggers over to his waterbed taking a seat putting his cellphone on the
nightstand next to the cordless phone, before covering his face sighing.

WOMAN #4 twenty-five-years-old staggers over to the bed placing her purse on the floor. She gets on the bed behind him on her knees, massaging his shoulders. Her face is red from partying hard, and now you can tell she's ready for some intimacy to commence.

WOMAN #4
I'm having a blast.

Tom doesn't respond, sighing deeply.

WOMAN #4 (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

TOM
I don't even know why I'm thinking about it.

WOMAN #4
You wanna talk about it?

He slowly pulls his hands down feeling less of a man.

TOM
(Sighs)
Bernard Drive.

She jumps back grinning ear to ear.

WOMAN #4
The hot shot lawyer, Bernard Drive?

He turns around upset, grabbing her by the wrist.

TOM
Goddamn it! Why do people lose their fucking mind whenever he's mentioned?!

She looks at him confused snatching her arms away, rubbing her wrist.

WOMAN #4
What the hell is wrong with you? Who doesn't get excited when they hear about him?

He turns around lowering his head.

TOM
It doesn't matter.
She grabs her purse opening it, pulling out a sandwich bag filled with heroin, and a black case she extends over Tom's shoulder.

**WOMAN #4**

(Seductively)

I got what you need right here, baby.

Tom takes the case opening it, rubbing his fingers across the syringe. The doorbell rings. He looks confused placing the case down.

**TOM**

You get everything together. I'll go see who this is, and be right back.

He walks out the room, closing the door behind him. Tom is leaning up against the wall walking to the door. Reaching the door he takes a deep breath, swinging the door open.

**TOM**

Okay buddy...

He gets hit upside the head with a hammer, causing him to fall to the floor unconscious. The killer walks in turning the lights off, dragging Tom further into the house closing the door.

Leaving Tom in the hallway, the killer heads towards a room with a dim light. Stepping into the room we see the light is coming from the light over the stove.

The killer walks over to the sink grabbing a glass from the rack. Pulling out a sandwich bag filled with antifreeze, the killer pours it into the glass, and then walks back into the hallway.

Getting ready to approach Tom, the killer pauses when the music goes from Jazz to Blues. The killer turns heading towards the bedroom door listening, before slowly opening the door.

The room is dark, but the light from the moon coming through the blinds gives a little light. Woman #4 sits up in the bed naked.

**WOMAN #4**

There you are? What took you so long?

The killer walks into the room closing the door, before walking over to the bed taking a seat, back turned extending the glass.
She's so high she doesn't realize the person in the room is the killer, getting on her hands and knees crawling over taking the glass.

WOMAN #4 (CONT'D)
Still drinking, huh?

She downs the glass.

WOMAN #4
Let's get to...

She grabs at her throat, falling back on the bed having complications breathing, vomiting. The killer stands up walking to the nightstand where the syringe filled with heroin, and Tom's cellphone rests.

As Woman #4 continues slowly dying, the killer dials 911 placing it on speaker, putting it back down on the nightstand.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
911, what is your emergency?

She's having complications trying to speak. The Killer pulls a butcher knife out holding her down, placing the blade on her stomach.

OPERATOR (V.O.)
Hello? Hello, is anyone there?

The killer presses the knife down causing not just blood to come forth, but a blood curdling scream as the knife is pulled all the way across her stomach.

Leaving the knife in her stomach, the killer walks out the room heading back down the hallway grabbing Tom by the ankles, dragging him back into the room.

Propping Tom up against the nightstand, the killer grabs him by the throat. Tom wakes up struggling to get free, but he can't overpower the killer.

The killer reaches on the nightstand grabbing the syringe. Tom continues trying to get free, and the killer plunges the syringe in Tom's jugular injecting the heroin.

Tom grabs at his throat spitting out blood, as the killer stands watching until he dies. Before leaving the room, the killer drops a note on the floor behind the door.

CUT TO:
INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Officers are examining the room for clues and evidence. Charlie is standing against the wall. OFFICER #3 walks over to the radio turning it off. Officer #1 holds up the knife from Woman #4 stomach.

    OFFICER #1
    He's starting to get sloppy.

Everyone in the room is thrilled except Charlie, getting off the wall shaking his head.

    CHARLIE
    This isn't our guy.

    OFFICER #2
    What?

    CHARLIE
    Somebody else did this.

    OFFICER #3
    Charlie...there's only one serial killer on the loose out here. Who else could it be?

Charlie laughs placing his hands behind his back walking over to Officer #3.

    CHARLIE
    Two key things you forgot about our guy. One, he takes a large portion of flesh from their face. And two...

    (Low chuckle)
    You'll really love this one. He only kills, WOMEN!

He slaps him on the back of the head, moving him to the side. As Charlie paces back and forth rubbing his chin, he notices the note sticking out from under the door. He walks over to the note picking it up.

    OFFICER# 2
    What's that?

    CHARLIE
    I don't know.

He opens the note.

INSERT LETTERS ON THE NOTE

They're cut out letters from a magazine soaked in blood.
CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(Reads aloud)
Which would you prefer, death or love? "B".

Everyone is speechless.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Does anybody have a clue what this means?

No one responds. Charlie walks over to Officer #3 handing him the note.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Take this along with the knife, and have the lab run them for prints. Also, have the blood tested, and see what matches come up.

Charlie walks out the room.

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Bernard is sitting behind his desk reading over a file. Mary walks in.

MARY
Are you okay?

He continues reading.

BERNARD
What are you talking about?

MARY
Wasn't that your friend involved in what happened last night?

He places the file down, sighing.

BERNARD
...Yeah. That was playboy Tommy.

She walks over to him placing her hand under his chin making him look at her.

MARY
Are you sure you're okay?

Turning looking forward, he sighs deep, closing his eyes for a brief second.
BERNARD
I'll manage. I just can't believe it.

MARY
You never know when you'll lose someone close to you.

Bernard lowers his head blanking out.

CUT TO:

INT. BERNARD'S MOTHER KITCHEN - MORNING {FLASHBACK}

The kitchen is setup simple, nothing major. An angel centerpiece is sitting in the middle of the kitchen table.

Bernard's mother is sitting at the table in her robe crying, taking a sip from the liquor bottle in her hand. She hears footsteps coming, and quickly hides the bottle trying to straighten her face. Young Bernard comes into the room carrying his backpack walking over to her.

YOUNG BERNARD
What's wrong, mommy?

She sniffles, trying to form a warming smile to let him know nothing's wrong.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
It's nothing. Do you have all your stuff?

YOUNG BERNARD
Yes.

Although she places her hands on his shoulders with tears still running down her face, she gives him that smile so his day can go smooth.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
You know no matter what, mommy loves you?

YOUNG BERNARD
YES.

She gives him a kiss on the forehead.

BERNARD'S MOTHER
Good. Get going before you're late.

He gives her a hug and kiss on the cheek, before turning making his way out the room. She watches him leave picking up the bottle taking a deep swig, placing it down.
Now that he's gone, she lifts her leg retrieving a barber razor. She sobs extending her left arm placing the razor on her wrist slowly pulling the blade down and across, alternating doing the other. Her body gives way falling to the floor.

Young Bernard comes back into the room smiling, until he sees his mother on the floor shaking. He drops his backpack running over to her dropping to his knees.

    YOUNG BERNARD
    Mommy!

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

Bernard has a blank stare as Mary shakes him.

    MARY
    Are you okay?

He comes from his trance looking around.

    BERNARD
    Huh? Oh, yeah. Can I ask you something?

    MARY
    Sure.

    BERNARD
    Would you join me for lunch?

    MARY
    The pleasure is mine. Let me go get my things, and I'll meet you in the lobby.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek, and then makes her way to the door. Bernard looks terrified, standing up reaching out for her.

    BERNARD
    Mary, don't...

She turns around looking at him.

    MARY
    Don't what?

He realizes what's going on gaining composure.
BERNARD
I'm sorry. I'll see you in a minute.

She continues looking at him odd, before walking out. Bernard has tears built up in his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL'S PARENTS BASEMENT - 1997 AFTERNOON {FLASHBACK}

The basement is setup as a bar with pool and air hockey tables, dart boards on the walls and a mini bar filled with different bottles of liquor.

Teenage Bernard is sitting at the bar drinking scotch from the bottle, and on the counter is the razor his mother used to kill herself.

TEENAGE BERNARD
(Drunken)
Mother, oh, mother! I see why you were drinking so much!

He takes another sip, and then places the bottle down, picking up the blade smiling, rubbing his thumb along the side of it.

Teenage Phil comes walking down the steps pausing looking at Teenage Bernard with his back turned, confused why he's in the basement.

TEENAGE PHIL
Bernard? What are you doing?

Teenage Bernard slowly turns around, and we see he's cutting his left wrist.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Phil! Come have a drink with me!

Teenage Phil sees what he's doing rushing over grabbing the blade, throwing it on the floor.

TEENAGE PHIL
What the fuck are you doing?!

TEENAGE BERNARD
I was--I was talking to mama.

TEENAGE PHIL
Do you see the shit you're doing?!

Teenage Phil tries to grab his arm, and Teenage Bernard pushes him back.
TEENAGE BERNARD
I'm trying to be with my mother!
Leave me the fuck alone!

Teenage Phil slings him to the floor. The two wrestle for a moment, until Teenage Bernard hits Teenage Phil knocking him to the side. Teenage Bernard grabs the blade sitting on Teenage Phil's stomach, placing the blade on his throat.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Do you know what it's like seeing the person you love die right in front of you, leaving you with nothing?! Do you know how that shit feels?!

He presses the blade down a little causing blood to come forth. Teenage Phil tenses up, but keeps a calm composure.

TEENAGE PHIL
I can tell you, you're my best friend and I love you.

TEENAGE BERNARD
That's the same shit she said! I love you baby, and I'll always be here for you! Bullshit!

TEENAGE PHIL
It's not your fault, B. It's not.

Teenage Bernard starts crying.

TEENAGE BERNARD
She didn't love me. No one loves me.

He lowers the blade, and Teenage Phil sees his opportunity flipping him over getting on top, taking the blade from his hand.

TEENAGE BERNARD (CONT'D)
Just kill me, Phil. End my useless ass life. I have nothing to live for.

TEENAGE PHIL
You have a lot to live for. Use the pain to make you stronger. If no one else in the world loves you, I do. How do you think I'd feel if I lost you as a friend?

Teenage Phil gets off him sitting to the side, allowing Teenage Bernard to sit up.
TEENAGE BERNARD
Why did she leave me? Why did she
do this to me?

Teenage Phil places the blade to the side, and then holds Teenage Bernard.

TEENAGE PHIL
She didn't leave. She's with us,
talking through me.

TEENAGE BERNARD
...I don't wanna live.

TEENAGE PHIL
You're destined to do great things.
Your mother and father would want
you to live.

Teenage Phil stands up, and then helps Teenage Bernard stand to his feet.

TEENAGE PHIL (CONT'D)
(Laughs)
Let's get your crazy ass cleaned up.

The two laugh, making their way upstairs.

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON (PRESENT)

Bernard is sitting at his desk smiling wiping the tears
going his self together, before standing up walking out
the room.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON

Joey and Claire are sitting at the usual table, looking at
Bernard and Mary walking in taking a seat at another table.
Joey is filled with jealousy taking a sip from his wine
staring at Bernard. Mary looks around the restaurant amazed
she's able to dine in such a fancy restaurant.

BERNARD
Thank you for coming with me.

MARY
Believe me, the pleasure is mine.
I've always wanted to come here,
but financially I can't afford it.
BERNARD
It's nothing special. If you turn out liking it, I'll keep it in mind if we get serious.

Joey gets up making his way over to their table.

MARY
Well, I think we should start working on making a solid connection.

BERNARD
(Laughs)
I'll think about it. But I wanted you to come with me, because I feel I should tell you something only one other person knows.

MARY
I'm listening.

Joey comes up behind Mary placing his hands on her shoulders, causing her to cringe. Bernard looks at him in disbelief, wondering why he has his hands on her.

JOEY
Hey, buddy. Why didn't you sit with us? We're not good enough for you and your precious Mary?

BERNARD
All jokes aside. Take your hands off her.

Joey lightly wraps his hands around her neck.

JOEY
What's wrong, Mr. Perfect? Am I getting under your skin?

Mary moves Joey's hands from her neck, scooting her chair up.

MARY
Why don't you have a seat, so you two can talk?

Joey grabs her by the shoulders slinging her to the floor causing a loud thud, making everyone look.

JOEY
Shut up, bitch!

Bernard gets up rushing to Joey shoving him. Joey takes a
swing missing, allowing Bernard to grab and take him to the floor getting on top of him, hitting him in the face with multiple punches.

Claire rushes over grabbing Bernard pulling him off. Claire stands in front of Bernard holding him back. Joey gets up from the floor with blood coming from his mouth.

**CLAUDE**
What the hell is wrong with you two?! How can you behave like this after the death of our friend?

Joey wipes the blood from his mouth slinging it to the floor, before pointing directly at Bernard.

**JOEY**
He's not my friend!

Joey makes his way out the restaurant. Everyone is in shock from the event that transpired. Claire turns looking at Bernard, and he gives her a light shove.

**CLAIRE**
What the hell has gotten into you?

**BERNARD**
The virgin came to save that sorry ass excuse of a man? Well, how about this? Both of you stay the fuck outta my life.

He turns his back walking off. Mary gets up from the floor, leaning over into Claire's ear.

**MARY**
He's mine, now. Consider yourselves dead like the other one.

Claire pushes her back, following it with a slap knocking Mary on the table.

**CLAIRE**
Bernard, don't throw away friendship for a whore!

Bernard turns around, walking back to the table helping Mary. Mary looks at Claire stunned holding her face.

**BERNARD**
I said my peace. Respect it when I say it again. Stay the fuck outta my life.

The two walk off. Low chatter from the other customers is
Bernard Mersier

29.

heard. Claire watches with tears built up in her eyes.

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bernard is standing by the bar with a drink in his hand, while Mary sits on the bed staring at him.

BERNARD
Why is this happening? Haven't I suffered enough?

MARY
Come over here and have a seat. You need to relax.

BERNARD
Maybe you're right. But when I saw you on the floor...

He shakes his head mumbling under his breath taking a sip.

MARY
Just come over here and sit down. We can talk about what you wanted to say in the restaurant.

He downs his glass grabbing the bottle, walking over to the bed sitting next to her.

BERNARD
...My mother. When I was little, she killed herself. She didn't do it in front of me. (Sighs) But the way I found her, she should've.

She's stunned covering her mouth.

MARY
Why did she do that?

BERNARD
Depression. When I was little, my father was killed trying to apprehend a suspect. He didn't know the dude had a partner, and he came up behind him blowing his brains out. The day we buried him, we buried her. She always kept talking about being with dad.

MARY
I'm sorry to hear that. How did you deal with it?
BERNARD
I kept my mind on school. While I was living with my friend, I slowly started getting over it.

He walks back over to the bar with his head down. Mary stands up taking her clothes off, leaving nothing but her bra and panties on.

MARY
Does your friend have a name?

Bernard shakes his drink around with a smile.

BERNARD
...Phil. We were tight in high school. After that, he got into drugs and whatnot, leading to time in jail for domestic violence and a rape case.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 1997 (FLASHBACK)

Six males in their early-twenties block off the hallway. A healthier in shape Tim has Teenage Phil against the wall beating the shit out of him.

Teenage Bernard comes running up. Two of the boy's grab him, holding him back. Tim looks back tossing Teenage Phil to the side, walking up to Teenage Bernard cracking his blood coated knuckles.

TIM
What's up?

TEENAGE BERNARD
You need to get up off my friend.

TIM
Unless you're about to pay what he owes, I suggest you get the fuck on.

Teenage Phil tries standing, but he's in too much pain.

TEENAGE PHIL
B, man, just--just go. I got this.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Phil, shut the fuck up.
(To Tim)
Let him go, and we can work something out.
TIM
(Laughs)
Work something out? Nigga, is you crazy?

TEENAGE BERNARD
You real tough with ya bitch ass boys around.

TIM
What?

TEENAGE BERNARD
You heard what the fuck I said.

TEENAGE PHIL
Bernard, man---

TIM
Shut the fuck up, before I beat on yo ass some more! Let this nigga go.

The two boy's let Teenage Bernard go.

TEENAGE BERNARD
What does this mean? When I start beating yo ass, they'll jump in.

TIM
(Laughs)
I like you lil nigga. I think...

Teenage Bernard swings hitting Tim in the face, making his head turn. He swings a few more times trying to drop him, but Tim blocks one of the punches, hitting him in the stomach making him fold over in pain. Tim hits him a few more times, before slinging him into the wall.

He hits it hard sliding to the floor shaking the daze off ready to rush at Tim, but Tim pulls out a switchblade haltering the process. Tim walks over to him, grabbing him by the collar. Teenage Bernard smiles, licking the blood from his busted lip, as Tim places the blade on his throat.

TIM
You got heart, I'll give you that. It's sad I have to kill you.

Teenage Phil sits up on his hands and knees trying to gain enough strength to stand.

TEENAGE PHIL
Tim, man---
TIM
You next, so shut the fuck up!

TEENAGE BERNARD
(Laughs)
Hurry up.

TIM
What?

TEENAGE BERNARD.
Hurry up and do it.

BOY #1
Tim, come on.

Teenage Bernard spits in his face.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Yeah Tim lets go. All you have to
do is push it in, pussy.

Tim laughs taking the knife down.

TIM
Like I said, you got heart.

TEENAGE BERNARD.
Hurry the fuck up and...

Tim stabs him on his right side. Teenage Bernard releases a
moan of pain.

TIM
If you live from this...you'll
remember I did it.

TEENAGE BERNARD.
(Chuckles)
I'll remember what it feels like
being fucked, by a pussy like you.

Tim pulls the knife up, and then pushes Teenage Bernard back
into the wall. Tim and the boy's with him take off running.
Teenage Bernard lies on the floor holding his bleeding side.

Teenage Phil slowly inches toward him.

TEENAGE PHIL
What the hell were you thinking?

TEENAGE BERNARD
That's what friends are for, right?
If you love someone, you'll die for
them.
TEENAGE PHIL
Help! Somebody help us!

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - {PRESENT DAY}

Bernard downs his drink. Mary walks up to him.

MARY
Do you know where he is now?

BERNARD
The last I heard, he was in Ohio. He supposedly remarried and got his life back together.

He turns around backing into the bar when he sees her standing there.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Whoa. What's this about?

MARY
The first time I saw you. I said to myself, I have to have you.

BERNARD
But... what if I lose you, too?

She steps into him placing a finger to his lips, trailing it down to his belt.

MARY
The only way you'll lose me is through death.

She grabs his head kissing him, jumping up wrapping her legs around him. A nice intimate romantic scene plays out.

SLOWLY DISSOLVE:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Bernard and Mary are under the covers. She has her head on his chest with one leg across his waist, and he has his arm around her playing in her hair.

MARY
I have something to tell you.

BERNARD
(Jokingly)
You're pregnant already?
She lightly hits him on the chest.

MARY
It's something way more serious than that.

Bernard sits up, and she slides her head down into his lap.

BERNARD
What is it?

MARY
I wasn't always this beautiful. I had surgery done on the right side of my face, clearing up the gash that was once there.

BERNARD
What happened?

MARY
(Sighs)
You'll usually hear about the father abusing the daughter. In my case, it was the other way around.

CUT TO:

INT. MARY'S MOTHER KITCHEN - AFTERNOON (1989) {FLASHBACK}

Dirty dishes rest in the old dish water, and on the counter. A plate of cocaine is on the table. MARY'S MOTHER is sitting at the table taking a sip from a liquor bottle wearing a dirty wife beater and black leggings.

MARY'S MOTHER
(High)
You good for nothing tramp!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. MARY'S MOTHER LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The living room is just as filthy as the kitchen. Young Mary, nine-years-old is sitting on the couch crying wearing something simple.

YOUNG MARY
What did I do, mama?

Mary's mother comes staggering out the kitchen holding the liquor bottle, leaning up against the wall to keep her balance. She shatters the bottle against the wall, still holding the neck end. Young Mary stands up, slowly walking backwards keeping her eyes on her mother.
MARY'S MOTHER
Just like your father! You'll never be shit!

YOUNG MARY
Mama, please. I didn't do anything.

MARY'S MOTHER
I'll make sure you won't become a whore, Ms. Lady!

Young Mary tries running, but her mother was quick on her feet, grabbing her by the hair slamming her to the floor. Young Mary screams in fear as her mother gets on top of her plunging the broken glass deep into the right side of her face. Young Mary screams in agonizing pain as her mother twists the glass deeper.

Mary's mother gets up throwing the glass to the side, looking down at Young Mary crying grabbing at her bleeding face, cutting her fingers on the shards of glass.

MARY'S MOTHER
There! Now I know you won't be out here doing anything foolish! Who would look at a disfigured whore like you?!

Young Mary continues sitting on the floor crying, trying to stop the blood coming from her face. Mary's mother makes her way back into the kitchen. She walks over to the cabinet tossing cereal boxes out the way until she reaches the liquor bottle grabbing it, staggering back to the table taking a seat opening the bottle.

MARY MOTHER
(Sorrow)
Forgive me, God.

She tries taking a sip, but her head falls face first to the table, dropping the bottle shattering it.

Young Mary comes into the kitchen with a blank stare, and blood dripping from her face. She walks over to the sink grabbing a butcher knife from the dirty water, and then she walks over to her mother raising the knife high, bringing it down with force into her mother's back.

Mary's mother screams in pain, while Young Mary continues stabbing. She still has the blank stare as blood covers her face, and her mother's screams go mute.

COME BACK TO:
INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - {PRESENT DAY}

Bernard sits stunned.

MARY
They charged me with temporary insanity instead of murder. I was under close observation at a halfway house before they decided to repair my face and release me.

BERNARD
I don't know what to say.

MARY
It's okay. I grew a deep hatred for women that day.

BERNARD
We have each other now. I won't let anything come between that.

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Charlie is sitting behind his cluttered desk looking over a case file smoking a cigarette, when Officer #3 comes in. He places the file down looking up at him.

CHARLIE
What do you have?

OFFICER #3
Our Victims were Tom Rivers and the woman worked for an escort service. Despite the woman was disemboweled, autopsy report concluded she would've died from ingesting antifreeze.

Charlie puts his cigarette down in the ashtray.

CHARLIE
Goddamn it. I already have to deal with one nutcase running around killing women, and now---

OFFICER #3
You didn't let me get to the part about the blood on the note.

Charlie picks up his cigarette taking a pull.

CHARLIE
I'm listening.
OFFICER #3
The blood was a mixture of all the victims.

CHARLIE
What?

OFFICER #3
Blood from each victim was found on the letters.

CHARLIE
Did they find any fingerprints on the knife?

OFFICER #3
Not a one.

CHARLIE
Does Tom have anyone who can be notified about his death?

OFFICER #3
Most of his family lives out of state. From looking at his phone records, the people he communicates with the most lives in the county. Claire Nile, Joey Spigot and our local favorite. Bernard Drive.

Charlie takes one last pull from his cigarette before putting it out, thinking about the "B" initial on the note.

CHARLIE
Bring Claire and Joey down and see what they know, just in case they're targeted next. I'll go talk to Mr. Drive.

OFFICER #3
I'm on it.

Officer #3 walks out the room. Charlie sits frustrated about the case, but he thinks he's about to get a good lead when he speaks with Bernard.

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Bernard is sitting behind his desk wearing something casual doing a crossword puzzle with his headphones on. Mary is wearing something simple, placing files in the file cabinet.

She closes the file cabinet walking over to him taking a seat on his lap giving him a kiss. He takes off his headphones.
MARY
What are we doing today?

BERNARD
I was thinking we could...

Charlie bursts into the room walking up to the desk picking up the nameplate sucking his teeth. Bernard and Mary are lost wondering why he barged into the office.

BERNARD
How may I help you?

Charlie places the plate down, turning his back walking away.

CHARLIE
Get your shit. You're coming with me.

BERNARD
May I ask why?

Charlie pauses.

CHARLIE
Don't question me, kid. Just get your shit, and let's go.

Charlie walks out the room. Bernard and Mary look on confused.

MARY
What was that about?

BERNARD
I have no idea. But he better have a good goddamn reason or a healthy pension to retire on.

He gives her a kiss, and then taps her on the ass so she can stand up. Bernard gets up walking towards the door walking out.

Mary looks on shaking her head.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Bernard is sitting at the table, while Charlie stands to the side smoking a cigarette.

BERNARD
Why am I down here?
CHARLIE
Your friends are Claire Nile and Joey Spigot?

BERNARD
Not anymore.

Charlie laughs taking a pull from his cigarette taking a seat.

CHARLIE
That really doesn't matter. What does matter is you were friends with Tom Rivers.

BERNARD
And your point is?

Charlie pulls out the note tossing it at Bernard. Bernard picks up the note.

BERNARD
(Laughs)
You got me down here reading your love letters?

CHARLIE
Just read the goddamn thing.

Bernard opens the note, scans over it, and then tosses it to the side.

BERNARD
Okay. Now what?

CHARLIE
Did you pay attention to your initial?

BERNARD
(Laughs)
What? You're saying I made this?

CHARLIE
I'm saying if you don't know who the killer is, you're next on the list.

Bernard smiles leaning back in his chair.

BERNARD
It's obvious you don't know who I am.
CHARLIE
I know who you are.

BERNARD
Good. Then you know keeping me here any longer can cost you your career. Thank you, and have a nice day.

Bernard stands up patting Charlie on the shoulder ready to walk off. Charlie drops his cigarette, grabbing Bernard by the arm making him turn around.

CHARLIE
You're a real smartass, just like your friends said. Tell me something? Did you say a smartass remark like that when they found you with your dead mother?

Bernard snatches his arm away.

BERNARD
I told you, they're not friends of mine. And if I were you, I'd tread softly. You never know if you might end up on a list.

Bernard walks out the room. Bernard comes into the main lobby that's loud from the phones ringing, and people handcuffed talking trash. He walks pass them, making his way outside.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Bernard walks to his car resting in the parking lot getting in slamming the door.

CUT TO:

INT. BERNARD'S MOTHER KITCHEN - MORNING 1989 {FLASHBACK}

Young Bernard is standing in the corner with a blank stare watching the coroners carry his mother out. There's a large bloodstain on the floor, and instead of the barber razor she used to kill herself, Young Bernard replaced it with another one. MALE OFFICER walks over to Young Bernard.

MALE OFFICER
I know this isn't the right time, but I have to ask you a question. Were you here when she did this?

Young Bernard doesn't respond.
MALE OFFICER (CONT'D)
I know this is difficult. But I need to know---

YOUNG BERNARD
She's in a better place.

MALE OFFICER
Yes, she is. But---

YOUNG BERNARD
That's all that matters.

Young Bernard walks to the front door walking out.

INT. /EXT. PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Police cars, an ambulance and the coroner van are in front of the house. People are gathered around watching. Young Bernard stands on the porch with the same blank stare looking at the coroner van.

He walks off the porch making his way down the street. Coming from the other end of the street is the neighborhood bully, eleven-year-old BILLY. He's on the husky side with soul piercing blue eyes.

Billy stops in front of Young Bernard, and Young Bernard walks through him with a hard push. Confusion is on Billy's face running up in front of Young Bernard placing a hand to his chest making him stop.

BILLY
Are you dumb today? You know there's a toll if you wanna walk down this street.

YOUNG BERNARD
I would advise you to carry on about your day.

Young Bernard places his hand in his pocket on the handle of the blade. Billy laughs cracking his knuckles.

BILLY
You must be ready to collect this beating?

Just as Billy gets ready to swing, Young Bernard grabs him pulling the barber blade out, placing it to Billy's throat.

YOUNG BERNARD
Are you ready to go to a better place? My mommy was.
BILLY
Please. Please let me---

YOUNG BERNARD
Let you live?

Young Bernard looks back seeing people making their way towards them. He leans in Billy's ear.

YOUNG BERNARD (CONT'D)
I lost my mother and father. Unless you wanna join them, I suggest you leave me the fuck alone. Do you understand?

BILLY
Yes.

Young Bernard lets him go, holding the blade down to his side. The people walk pass.

YOUNG BERNARD (CONT'D)
Get yo ass home.

Billy gets ready to walk off, and Young Bernard grabs his hand making him stop.

YOUNG BERNARD (CONT'D)
Oh, yeah. This is for all the tolls I had to pay.

Young Bernard slices Billy across the right side of his face. Billy gets ready to scream, and Young Bernard places the blade to his throat.

YOUNG BERNARD (CONT'D)
Mention a toll to me again, and the price you'll pay will be far worse than this.

He lets him go, and then walks off down the street. Billy looks like he wants to cry, but they would be tears of hate taking a bandanna out placing it on his face trying to stop the bleeding.

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S CAR - {PRESENT DAY}

Bernard is smiling.

BERNARD
I tell you this much. The last person who asked me a stupid (MORE)
BERNARD (cont'd)
question knew not to ask me shit else.

He starts the car up driving off.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

The few people in the bar are mellowed out listening to the jazz music playing. Bernard is sitting at the bar with a bottle of whiskey, and a shot glass.

WILLIAM Billy's older brother is sitting down at the other end of the bar with a twig in his mouth staring down at Bernard. The BARTENDER is standing behind the bar cleaning glasses, staring at Bernard.

BERNARD
(Drunk)
The woman I love is a deranged murderer.

BARTENDER
Are you okay?

Bernard downs a shot.

BERNARD
Am I okay? Would you be okay if the woman you love is a psychopath?

William takes a shot before making his way down to Bernard standing behind him.

BARTENDER
You had enough.

Bernard pours another shot downing it, outraged the Bartender would tell him his limit.

BERNARD
What? Let me tell---

William places a hand on Bernard's shoulder. Bernard pulls a cigarette out placing it in his mouth lighting it, before turning around.

WILLIAM
Ain't you that lawyer?

Bernard grabs the bottle from the counter taking a sip, and then drops the bottle down to his side holding it by the neck.
BERNARD
That would be me. If you have any problems let me know.

WILLIAM
This is a problem that should've been solved a long time ago.

BERNARD
Huh?

WILLIAM
You don't remember Billy Moore, do you?

BERNARD
(Laughs)
I haven't heard that name in years. Wait a minute. Are you the bully from back in the day?

WILLIAM
I'm his brother! I wish he was here to beat your ass, but due to what you did to him, he killed his self!

Bernard bursts out laughing. The Bartender reaches down grabbing the handle of the shotgun he has under the counter.

BARTENDER
I'm not having any shit in here tonight.

Bernard continues laughing, gripping the bottle tighter.

WILLIAM
You think it's funny?!

BERNARD
I guess the toll I told him really went to his head.

William gets ready to swing, and Bernard hits him upside the head with the bottle shattering it. William falls to the floor holding his bleeding head.

Bernard stands up prepared to stomp him, and the Bartender pulls up the shotgun cocking it. Everyone drops to the floor, except for Bernard. The Bartender takes aim on Bernard. Bernard raises his hands smiling.

BARTENDER
Get the fuck outta here! I told you, I'm not having any shit in here!
Bernard kicks William before walking backwards towards the door with his hands still in the air. He gets to the door putting his hands down going in his pocket pulling out a wad of money, taking the rubber band off.

BERNARD
Everybody have a drink on me!

He throws the money up in the air. Everyone rushes trying to get the money causing a bar brawl. The bartender comes from behind the bar trying to break some of the people up. Bernard continues laughing making his way out the door.

INT. BERNARD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The crystal chandelier hanging above the room shines down onto the black marble floors. Bernard comes staggering in closing the door behind him, leaning up against the wall with his head down laughing. Mary comes out the bedroom upstairs wearing a sheath black nightgown, walking over to the rail looking down at him.

MARY
What took you so long to get here?

He looks up placing his hand over his eyes trying to focus.

BERNARD
Mary? How did you get here?

MARY
The same way you did. Although I find it hard to believe you made it here in your condition.

BERNARD
(Laughs)
And you're mad, because?

She comes downstairs making her way to him shoving him.

MARY
What am I mad about?! I've been cooking all day preparing a nice night for us, and you went and fucked it up! That's what I'm mad about!

BERNARD
(Laughs)
...What did you make?

MARY
You know what?
She rolls her eyes making her way back upstairs going in the bedroom, slamming the door behind her. Bernard continues laughing, shrugging up his shoulders before walking into the living room.

The furniture in the white living room is all-black and leather. Hanging above the fireplace is a portrait painted of his mother. Off in the corner is a mini bar covered with different bottles of liquor and cognac glasses.

Bernard walks over to the sofa falling face first. The doorbell starts ringing, and he hops up looking around startled.

    BERNARD
    Huh? No further questions.

The doorbell continues ringing. Bernard rolls off the sofa onto the floor, slowly crawling towards the wall.

    BERNARD (CONT'D)
    Okay, Goddamn it, I'm coming!

He stands up getting to the front door, and the ringing stops.

    BERNARD (CONT'D)
    What?! I know you didn't have me get up for no reason?!

Dead silence. Bernard gets ready to walk away, and then...

    PHIL (O.S.)
    Why stop now, when you can go all the way?

    BERNARD
    Because what you do now can predict who you'll be in the future!

Bernard swings the door open, and there stands Phil with a short haircut, but he still has sex appeal. The two hug. Bernard lets him come in closing the door behind him. They walk into the living room.

    PHIL
    I see you made it.

    BERNARD
    What are you doing out here? The last I heard you were in Ohio.

    PHIL
    I've been here for the longest. The (MORE)
PHIL (cont'd)
wife and I had a few issues, so we
went separate ways.

BERNARD
It wasn't for what I think, was it?

Phil walks over to the mini bar grabbing two glasses and a
bottle of cognac filling the glasses, walking back over to
Bernard handing him one.

PHIL
Nah. I learned my lesson from that shit.

BERNARD
That's good. You like it out here
in the county of murder and
madness?

PHIL
None of that shit bothers me. Being
able to finally see my best friend
is all I care about.

MARY (O.S.)
What's going on down here?

They turn around seeing Mary wearing a robe with her arms
folded across her chest. Phil is in awe staring at her,
almost ready to drool over her beauty.

PHIL
Who is that?

Bernard looks at him smiling.

BERNARD
Phil, this is my woman, Mary. Mary,
this is my best friend, Phil.

She rolls her eyes turning her back.

MARY
The rapist? I'm going back to bed.

She walks off. Phil is confused why she would bring up his
past, and he didn't disrespect or come across her wrong.

PHIL
What's her problem?

BERNARD
Who gives a fuck what her issue is?
Where are you staying?
PHIL
This little motel not far from where you live. Just a little something until I get on my feet.

BERNARD
I think you meant to say you're staying here.

PHIL
I can't do that, B.

BERNARD
You can and you will. Your family did it for me.

PHIL
You're the same old Bernard. You never learned what defeat means.

BERNARD
That's why I'm the best in the county.

They laugh, toasting.

INT. GUEST ROOM - MORNING

The guest room is just as nice as Bernard's bedroom. There's a king size bed with black sheets, a wall flat screen television and a stereo system in the corner. Phil is under the covers asleep moving around.

Mary is standing at the side of the bed wearing a black jogging suit staring at him. Phil slowly wakes up, and just as he gets ready to come from under the covers, he jumps back pulling the cover over his self.

PHIL
Sorry. I didn't know you were in here.

MARY
That's the least of your problems.

Phil sits up in the bed staying covered.

PHIL
What the fuck are you talking about?

MARY
I just wanna let you know, I know what you're doing. And just because (MORE)
MARY (cont'd)
you helped my man when he was
little, don't think you can come
back around taking him from me.

PHIL
Have you lost your fucking mind? It
was his idea for me to stay here in
the first place.

MARY
It's not about what he says! It's
about what I say! If you're smart,
which I know you're not!

She points between her legs.

MARY (CONT'D)
You should know he'll put this
pussy before some bum ass, washed
up ex rapist!

He gets ready to lunge at her, and she pulls a butcher knife
out making him jump back. Phil sits back furious about the
situation, scared if he tries taking a swing, she might end
his life.

PHIL
You got the nerve to mention my
past, and pull a knife on me?!
Bitch, you crazy!

MARY
You goddamn right, I'm crazy! You
take these words in heed. It's not
hard for me to bruise myself up,
and file a report saying you beat
me. I'm sure they'll love sending
your sweet ass back to jail.

She points the tip of the knife in his face.

MARY (CONT'D)
You remember that, bitch.

She walks out the room leaving Phil sitting upset.

INT. BERNARD'S CAR - AFTERNOON

Bernard is sitting in front of his mini mansion sitting off
alone surrounded by trees, looking at the group message he
sent to Joey and Claire, waiting for Phil to come out.
If it's possible, can we meet for lunch at the sushi place? I'm sure you guys are still pissed from last time, but let's put that behind us. I hope to see you.

He sends the message.

Phil comes out the house wearing some of Bernard's casual clothes making his way to the car getting in. Bernard turns the radio on, and some rap music plays on low as he drives off.

INT. INSIDE BERNARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Phil is still stewing about the incident he had with Mary earlier.

PHIL
What's wrong with your girl?

Bernard turns the music down.

BERNARD
What about her?

PHIL
She didn't tell you about the shit she did?

BERNARD
She told me y'all had a conversation.

PHIL
She came in the room on some other shit. Talking about, she's not letting me take you away from her. And then the crazy bitch pulled a knife on me.

BERNARD
(Laughs)
You're taking me away from her? I didn't know you were into men.

PHIL
You laughing and shit, but I'm dead serious.

BERNARD
Whoa, wait a minute. You said she pulled a knife on you?
PHIL
That's what I said.

Bernard bites down on his lip.

PHIL (CONT'D)
I know that's your girl, and you love her. But, the bitch is crazy.

BERNARD
I'll talk to her when we get back.

PHIL
Fuck a talk! You need to kick that bitch out!

BERNARD
I said I'll talk to her! Did I get on yo head when I told you about that shit back in the day, and you didn't listen?!

Phil sits silent.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Thank you. I said I'll talk to her, and I will. You're my boy. No pussy or money will ever come between that. I'm glad we're back hanging.

PHIL
I'm glad, too. It's just---

BERNARD
Just drop it.

CUT TO:

INT. SUSHI BUFFET - AFTERNOON

The restaurant is packed with people either sitting at tables, being seated or walking around refilling their plates.

ANGLE ON--

Joey has his back turned to the entrance, and Claire is sitting across from him. Bernard and Phil come into the restaurant. Bernard tells Phil to wait by the door, while he makes his way to Claire and Joey.

JOEY
Who does he think he is? What does the little lunch date supposed to mean?
CLAIRES
Just let it go. Everybody was in the wrong that day.

JOEY
That might be true. It still doesn't give him the right to do what he did. When he gets here...

Bernard extends his hand out in front of Joey.

BERNARD
You'll shake my hand accepting my apology, and say we're still friends.

CLAIRES
What do we owe the honor of this lunch, Mr. Perfect?

JOEY
Yeah. I thought you wanted us to stay the fuck out of your life?

Bernard pulls his hand back clearing his throat.

BERNARD
That's all in the past. I'm a new person now, and all I want is my friends.

Claire stands up stepping over to him.

CLAIRES
I don't know. My life without Mr. Perfect might be hard to deal with.

She opens her arms for a hug, and they embrace.

BERNARD
Thanks. How about you, Joey?

Joey stands up staring in Bernard eyes.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Well?

JOEY
...As long as you give me a kiss.

The two laugh, before giving each other a hug. Claire looks at Bernard confused.
CLAIRE
Can you tell me what happened to Bernard?

BERNARD
I had an epiphany. I want you guys to meet someone.

Bernard signals for Phil to come over. Phil pauses in his tracks staring at Claire in awe.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Claire and Joey, this is my good friend Phil. Phil, Joey and Claire.

Phil takes Claire hand kissing it.

PHIL
I'm charmed to meet your acquaintance.

She pulls her hand back blushing.

CLAIRE
Where did you meet this well-mannered man?

BERNARD
He's my friend from back in the day.

CLAIRE
It's nice to meet you, Phil.

JOEY
Claire, calm down. I don't think he's into men.

Claire gets ready to speak, and Phil grabs her hand staring into her eyes.

PHIL
She's far from a man. She's the true meaning behind the word beauty.

JOEY
I think he's blind. What man in his right mind would say that about Claire?

BERNARD
(Laughs)
Let's stop with the jokes, as Tom (MORE)
BERNARD (cont'd)
would say. Let’s sit down, eat,
drink and have a good time.

The four sit having a good time, drinking and eating. Claire
and Phil keep constant eye contact with each other.

INT. BERNARD'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

This is a beautiful white kitchen with black hardtop
counters. Mary is sitting at the glass table soaking wet,
drinking vodka straight from the bottle.

A picture of Bernard is in front her, and resting beside it
is a butcher knife. She picks up the knife placing the tip
of the blade on the picture beginning to scrape away until
she realizes she's scraping the glass, placing the knife
down. Tears pour down her face picking up the bottle taking
a sip. Just as she gets ready to put her head down, she
hears the front door open, followed by laughter from Bernard
and Phil.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bernard and Phil are standing by the mini bar laughing.

PHIL

Your friends are crazy. And that
Claire is something special.

BERNARD

I just bet she is. You never took
your eyes off her, and you got her
number.

PHIL

It's something about her. I doubt
she'll be interested in me.

BERNARD

Are you crazy? You better put that
number to use.

PHIL

You think so?

BERNARD

Hell yeah. There's no doubt in my
mind---
MARY (O.S.)
(Drunken)
He's right! What woman would be interested in a rapist?!

They turn seeing Mary leaning up against the wall holding the bottle. Phil lowers his head in shame. Bernard walks to her snatching the bottle.

BERNARD
What the fuck is wrong with you?

PHIL
...I'll just come back later.

BERNARD
Fuck that! This is my goddamn house! I need to speak with you.

He grabs her by the arm, dragging her into the kitchen. He presses her up against the wall holding her by the shoulders.

BERNARD
Why are you fucking with him? And what's with the shit you pulled this morning, pulling a knife on my friend?

MARY
I'm not losing you to a rapist, and I meant what I said! This is our house! I need you to understand that!

BERNARD
Lose me? This is our house?
(Laughs)
Listen. I know you're drunk right now. I need you to go upstairs and take a nap. When you wake up, we can talk about it.

She snatches his hands down, pushing him back.

MARY
You're not my daddy!

She turns her back walking away.

BERNARD
I should be your daddy! I discipline yo ass when you get outta line!
She stops turning around.

MARY
I don't think you would wanna be my father, considering that bastard is a rapist, too! That's the reason why I'm here!

She turns back around, storming out the kitchen. Phil looks at her storming to the front door opening it, slamming the door behind her.

Bernard walks out the kitchen.

PHIL
You okay?

BERNARD
I'm pretty fucked up right now. I'll get up with you later.

Bernard makes his way out the room. Phil walks over to the bar making a drink.

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bernard lies asleep on the bed. The light from the moon coming through the window shines on the bed. The killer is standing beside the bed in the shadows placing the tip of a butcher knife on Bernard's leg slowly trailing it up.

BERNARD
(Half woke)
Mary quit bullshitting.

The killer places the tip on Bernard's arm trailing it up.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Mary, I told you...

The killer pounces on him weighing him down pulling out a flashlight turning it on in Bernard's eyes. With the light beaming in his eyes, Bernard still remains calm.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
What do you want?

The Killer places the dull part of the blade on the right side of Bernard's face trailing it down to his heart.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Charlie said this would happen. Do it. Do it, Mary!

The killer quickly moves the knife placing a deep gash on
Bernard's side causing him to moan in pain.

BERNARD (CONT'D)

...Is that the best you got?

The killer hits Bernard upside the head with the flashlight until he goes unconscious. Before leaving the room, the killer drops a note on the bed.

INT. CLAIRE'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

Some rap music is playing. Claire is on the bench cranking out covered in sweat. She finishes one more rep putting the bar down, sitting up breathing heavy, reaching down grabbing her water bottle. Her phone rings. She finishes drinking her water, before answering her phone.

CLAIRE

Hello?

JOEY (V.O.)

What are you doing?

CLAIRE

Hitting the weights.

JOEY (V.O.)

I should've known, Hercules.

CLAIRE

Is there a reason for this phone call before I hang up?

JOEY (V.O.)

Yes. I think I like the new Mr. Perfect.

CLAIRE

He's cool. I like his friend more.

JOEY (V.O.)

You're a dick chaser. Have you ever heard of the word game?

CLAIRE

Have you ever heard of the word hater? You're jealous because everybody has somebody all over them, except you.

JOEY (V.O.)

I got mines, sweetheart. Believe me.
CLAIRE
Sure you do.

Her line clicks.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Hold on.

She clicks over.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Hello?

PHIL (V.O.)
Hey, Claire.

CLAIRE
Who is this?

PHIL (V.O.)
Phil. Bernard's friend.

CLAIRE
How are you?

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

CLAIRE
What's going on?

PHIL (V.O.)
Nothing much. Do you wanna go get something to eat?

CLAIRE
Sure. Just give me a minute to get ready.

PHIL (V.O.)
Okay, cool. I need some time to get ready myself. I'll call you when I'm ready.

CLAIRE
I can't wait.

She clicks back over, and Joey is singing a song sounding horrible.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
You know singing ain't for everybody?
Bernard Mersier

59.

[165x283]Bernard Mersier

[518x746]JOEY (V.O.)
Girl, you know my singing turns you on.

CLAIRE
Yeah, okay. Anyway, I have to let you go. I need to get ready.

JOEY (V.O.)
Where you going?

CLAIRE
On a date with the person you said is running game on me.

JOEY (V.O.)
I would tell you to take some mace, but you don't need that.

CLAIRE
Fuck you. Good bye.

She hangs up smiling, getting up to go get ready.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Bernard is on the bed getting stitched up. Charlie is standing to the side looking at him.

CHARLIE
This is the man who said he wasn't on the list?

BERNARD
Fuck you very much. This ain't the time for sarcasm.

CHARLIE
You're right.

Charlie pulls out the note handing it to Bernard. Bernard takes the note opening it.

BERNARD
(Reads aloud)
I'm cutting off all ties. The only thing standing between me and my goal is death. For the first time, Bernard was scared for his life.

CHARLIE
Do you know what it means?
BERNARD
She was plotting on me the whole time.

CHARLIE
Who?

BERNARD
My woman.

Charlie bursts out laughing, causing the doctor to laugh accidentally pricking Bernard with the needle.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Ouch! That shit hurt.

DOCTOR
(Snickering)
Sorry, sir.

CHARLIE
Let's say that's true. That explains why she killed your friend. Why did she kill the other women?

BERNARD
Her abusive mother placed a gash on the right side of her face and she ended up killing her, growing a deep hate for women.

CHARLIE
That explains why she takes the flesh. We need to get to her before she kills someone else.

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

The streetlamps light up the park. Claire and Phil are holding hands walking along the path.

CLAIRE
How does it feel reuniting with your childhood friend?

PHIL
It's good. We started off as nothing more than neighbors. After the incident with his mother we became closer.

CLAIRE
What incident with his mother?
PHIL
You don't know? His mother killed herself. Sad to say, he was the one who found her.

CLAIRE
Oh, my God.

PHIL
It fucked him up real bad. He was always trying to kill his self. It got to the point I couldn't leave him alone.

CLAIRE
I didn't know that.

PHIL
He's a secretive person. He doesn't open up, because he feels holding back pain makes him stronger.

CLAIRE
So, you were his guardian angel?

PHIL
You can say that. He was mine, too.

CLAIRE
Mr. Perfect was a guardian angel? Tell me about this.

PHIL
He took a knife for me. I thought he was about to die in my arms that day.

CLAIRE
Why would anyone want to hurt you? You're such a sweetheart.

PHIL
During that time, I was everything but a sweetheart. I did dumb shit I knew I had no business doing.

CLAIRE
I know what you mean.

PHIL
That day showed he's a real friend.
CLAIRE
Believe it or not...Bernard has a special place in my heart.

PHIL
Are you gonna tell me?

CLAIRE
It's not important right now. So, what's a fine, well-distinguished man doing single?

PHIL
Drugs, alcohol and trying to be something I'm not.

CLAIRE
Okay.

PHIL
That's why I don't bother approaching women. I figure when they find out about my past it's a wrap.

CLAIRE
You approached me.

PHIL
To tell you the truth, I was about to give up. Good old Bernard told me to keep pursuing.

They stop walking, and she turns looking at him.

CLAIRE
I'm glad you kept pursuing me. Maybe we're what each other need to wipe the others pain away.

PHIL
That would be...

She gives him a kiss. They embrace for a moment, and then release.

CLAIRE
I need to get home and tend to a few things. How about when I'm done, I'll come over and we can talk?

PHIL
Great. I'll head to the house and freshen up.
CLAIRE
You do that.

She gives him one more kiss, before they walk back to their cars.

INT. BERNARD'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bernard and Charlie are standing in the room that's in shambles lit by the moon and building lights coming through the window.

CHARLIE
This place is a mess just like hers.

BERNARD
There's only one other place she could be.

Charlie picks up the picture Bernard had on his desk.

CHARLIE
How did you get over the thing with your mother?

BERNARD
I'm actually not over it. That's why I take cases reminding me of the incident. Like the case I just won with the lady on trial for killing her husband.

CHARLIE
What about it?

BERNARD
She killed him because he was always cheating and beating her.

CHARLIE
She killed him because of built up anger?

BERNARD
She had a depression problem. In the state she was in, I'm surprised she didn't kill him, the kids and herself.

(Sighs)
You know when you get to the point where you have to do something? That moment of clarity to help you get through the pain. I kept having (MORE)
BERNARD (cont'd)
flashbacks of my incident, and I used that to help strengthen me win the case.

CHARLIE
So, winning the case helped you with your problem?

BERNARD
If I knew then, what I know now.

Charlie places the picture back on the desk, and pats Bernard on the back.

CHARLIE
I'm sorry about the comment I made before.

BERNARD
Sometimes I need to hear those words, so I can get through the rough times.

CHARLIE
You did real good, kid. Let's go get the justice for those innocent people murdered.

Charlie walks out the room. Bernard stands with tears in his eyes sighing deeply, before walking out the room.

Bernard comes out the room walking down the barely lit hallway with his head down and the killer clothesline him from one of the other rooms, knocking him to the floor unconscious.

Charlie is walking down the stairs, and then he stops when he notices Bernard isn't behind him. He pulls his gun out, slowly making his way back upstairs.

CHARLIE
Come on kid, we need to get going!

Charlie gets to the top of the stairs pausing, seeing the outline of the killer.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Kid?

The killer opens fire, and Charlie quickly takes cover returning fire. The two have a short and sweet shootout, because Charlie tries getting a clean shot, and gets shot in the shoulder making him fall backwards down the stairs. Charlie tumbles down the stairs losing his gun, and the
killer is right behind him.

Charlie lands hard against the wall, sitting in pain with distorted vision. The killer walks up kneeling down, placing the gun in his face.

CHARLIE
Kill me, you crazy bitch!

The killer pistol-whips Charlie until he goes unconscious, and then goes back upstairs to get Bernard.

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bernard arms and ankles are tied to the bedposts, as he lies unconscious. The killer injects him with morphine. As the killer gets ready to walk out the room, you can hear Phil coming in the house. Phil is coming up the stairs. The killer quickly hides behind the door.

PHIL (O.S.)
B! You won't believe what happened tonight.

He opens the door, and his mouth drops seeing Bernard tied to the bed. He rushes over trying to untie him. The killer comes from behind the door butcher knife in hand, walking behind Phil tapping him on the shoulder making him turn around. The Killer plunges the knife in Phil's right eye twisting it, before his body falls to the floor dead.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Charlie is slowly waking up moaning in pain. He takes his tie off wrapping it around the bullet wound tight to stop the bleeding. He stands to his feet still in pain, walking to get his gun.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bernard is tossing and turning in his sleep covered with sweat.

BERNARD
Mommy! Get up, mommy!

DISTORTED VOICE (O.S.)
Mommy can't help you.

BERNARD
What am I supposed to do mommy?
DISTORTED VOICE (O.S.)
Wake up. I have a surprise for you.

Bernard slowly opens his eyes turning to the side, and he shrieks seeing Phil's dead body.

BERNARD
What the fuck?!

Bernard struggles trying to get free from the ropes. Mary is standing at the foot of the bed in the shadows. You can only see the cold stare in her eyes. Bernard sees her, and stops trying to get free.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
I knew it was you. Why didn't you kill me?

She doesn't respond.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Say something!

JOEY (O.S.)
I will.

BERNARD
Joey? What are you, her partner?

JOEY (O.S.)
(Laughs)
How can she be my partner...and I killed her, too?

Joey releases Mary hair and shirt allowing her to fall onto the bed. The back of her skull is crushed in, with multiple stab wounds in her back.

Joey stands up from the stool he was sitting on, walking over to the wall turning the lights on. His wife beater is covered with blood. He makes his way over to Bernard. Bernard lies with tears falling from his eyes.

JOEY
Would you look at this? Mr. Perfect has a heart after all.

BERNARD
Go to hell, you son of a bitch.

JOEY
The hell part I can probably get with. The son part is way off.
BERNARD
What are you saying? ...You're a woman?

JOEY
(Sighs)
I was. Besides, when I was a girl, you didn't care for me then, like you don't now.

BERNARD
What are you talking about?

JOEY
Back in high school, I was the flat chest girl with shaggy hair, bum clothes and messed up teeth.

BERNARD
I think you got the wrong guy, freak.

JOEY
Allow me to refresh your memory. It's graduation day, and a girl asks if she can have that special place in your heart.

Bernard lies silent with his eyebrow raised.

JOEY (CONT'D)
I guess the ugly people are hard to remember. I mean, how can you remember a hideous beast named Josephine Sheppard?

Bernard eyes widen.

BERNARD
It can't be.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - AFTERNOON 1997 {FLASHBACK}

Teenage Bernard and Teenage Phil are standing by the lockers wearing their cap and gown.

TEENAGE BERNARD
This is the day we've been waiting for.

TEENAGE PHIL
Our moment to shine is now.
TEENAGE BERNARD
Check out this ring.

Teenage Bernard holds out his right hand, showing off the ring he was rubbing when the movie started.

TEENAGE PHIL
That's cold. Where did you get it?

TEENAGE BERNARD
It was mama's engagement ring.

JOSEPHINE has shaggy hair, and is skinny as twig. She comes walking down the hall wearing her gown, carrying her cap smiling. She walks up behind Teenage Bernard tapping him on the shoulder.

JOSEPHINE
Can I talk to you for a minute?

He turns around and jumps as if he seen something that scared him.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Goddamn it, Scooby. What do you want?

JOSEPHINE
It's the end of the year, and I was wondering---

TEENAGE PHIL
Just say what you have to say, so we can get the fuck on.

JOSEPHINE
Would you like to exchange numbers?

Teenage Bernard and Teenage Phil look at each other, and then break out laughing. Josephine stands embarrassed.

TEENAGE PHIL
Why the hell would he do that?

JOSEPHINE
I wasn't talking to you, now was I?

TEENAGE BERNARD
You two cut it out.

Teenage Bernard takes Josephine's hand kissing it, looking into her eyes.

TEENAGE BERNARD (CONT'D)
Josephine, I would love to.
Josephine stands blushing.

JOSEPHINE
Would you, really?

He lets her hand go.

TEENAGE BERNARD
Hell no! Get outta here, Scooby.

Teenage Bernard and Teenage Phil walk off laughing. She runs up grabbing his shoulder making him stop.

JOSEPHINE
Bernard, I can be the perfect woman for you. Give me that chance.

He backhands her with his right hand, turning around looking at her.

TEENAGE BERNARD
What would I look like dating something that looks like you?! I'd prefer death before being seen with you!

She holds her bleeding face crying. He realizes what he's done and tries comforting her, but she slaps him across the face. She stares at him with insanity in her eyes, and blood coming from the long gash.

JOSEPHINE
Get the hell away from me!

I'm---

TEENAGE BERNARD
You mark my words, Bernard Drive! It may not be today or tomorrow! But you're gonna pay for what you did to me! Physically and mentally!

She takes off running down the hall crying. Teenage Bernard gets ready to go after her, but Teenage Phil stops him.

TEENAGE PHIL
Just let her go. Who'll believe what that ugly bitch has to say?

TEENAGE BERNARD
...Maybe you're right.

He looks down seeing a piece of flesh and blood on the ring rubbing it off.
COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - (PRESENT DAY)

Joey wipes the tears from his eyes, walking over to Phil's dead body snatching the knife from his head. He spits on Phil's face, and then walks over to Bernard. Bernard looks at him confused.

BERNARD
Wait a minute. You waited all these years to do this crazy shit?

JOEY
You would've taken forever too, if you had to plan, go through therapy and surgery. Didn't you get my message from Tim?

BERNARD
Tim? The only Tim I know is from high school, and I haven't seen him since.

JOEY
You've seen him. He's not the terrifying threat who stabbed you, but you've seen him. "Vengeance is only sweet, when you make the person you love realize how sweet it is."

BERNARD
(Laughs)
That was him? I thought he would be dead by now.

JOEY
(Laughs)
You might as well say he is.

BERNARD
You murdered those innocent people, just so you could get back at me? You're a fucking weirdo.

JOEY
Oh, it's okay, baby. You can finally be with a real woman.

BERNARD
What the fuck are you talking about?
JOEY
I may look like a man, but I still have my womanhood to satisfy a man. And, I'm still a virgin.

BERNARD
You're truly out of your fucking mind.

Joey takes a seat on the bed patting Bernard on the chest.

JOEY
I know this. But, you'll finally be with a real woman. Because unlike your mother. (Scoffs) What a pathetic woman. But unlike her, I'll never leave you.

Bernard spits on him.

BERNARD
Fuck you, bitch!

Joey smiles ripping Bernard's shirt open, placing the knife on his stitched up wound, slowly dragging it across. Bernard moans in pain.

JOEY
We'll grow to love each other.

BERNARD
...I'd prefer death.

JOEY
I won't let you die, baby. But since we're talking, let me tell you how I killed your precious Mary. I'm actually glad I killed her. Not just because she slept with you, but she was the key for me to set this up.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAW OFFICE - NIGHT {FLASHBACK}

Mary staggers along the side of the building not knowing Joey is waiting in the shadows behind some trees watching. She gets to the back door leaning up against the wall, fumbling around in her purse for her key card, finally pulling the card out ready to use it.

Joey runs from the darkness grabbing her covering her mouth, dragging her into the darkness behind the trees. Mary
struggles trying to get free. Joey tosses her to the ground, turning her around, taking a seat on top of her.

MARY
Oh, my...

He slaps her hard across the face.

JOEY
Yes bitch, it's me. If you'd kept your hands off my man, you wouldn't have been on the list.

Joey pulls the butcher knife out, and Mary swings with all her might hitting him in the face, knocking him over to the side. She gets up running, but Joey is quickly on his feet right behind her tripping her, causing her to fall face first to the ground. Joey places his foot on her back so she can't move. Mary screams out for help, as Joey leans down picking up a brick.

She continues screaming, as Joey cocks his arm back slinging the brick with full force to the back of her head, silencing her screams. He sits on her back picking the brick up hitting her in the head a few more times, cracking her skull. He gets up going to grab the butcher knife, walking back over to her dead body taking a seat on her back stabbing her.

JOEY
He's not here to save you this time.

He stabs her one more time, leaving the knife in her back walking off.

COME BACK TO:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - {PRESENT TIME}

Joey is sitting with the tip of the knife on his lip smiling. Bernard is devastated with tears falling from his eyes.

JOEY
I went back to sabotage your office, and as I was coming out, you and your cop friend showed up. I guess it was a blessing in disguise.

BERNARD
And you really think we'll be together?
Joey leans down in Bernard's face, placing the knife to his throat.

JOEY
I don't think it, baby. I know.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. BERNARD'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Claire comes walking up the walkway to the front door ready to ring the doorbell, and Charlie comes from behind one of the trees walking up aiming his gun at the back of her head, cocking the hammer. She puts her hands up in the air.

CHARLIE
(Whispering)
What are you doing here?

CLAIRE
(Nervous, whispering)
I came to see Bernard's friend.

Charlie lowers his gun. Claire slowly turns around lowering her hands.

CHARLIE
His woman is the killer. I'm pretty sure she has him in there.

CLAIRE
Why are we standing here talking?

CHARLIE
We're not about to do anything. I'm waiting for backup, and we'll handle this.

CLAIRE
My friend could possibly die, and you're standing here waiting for backup? I'm going in.

CHARLIE
No you're not. We're waiting for backup.

CLAIRE
You wait for back up. I'm helping my friend.

She gets ready to take off running, and he grabs her arm. Sighing deep, he pulls a nine-millimeter from his other holster extending it to her, and she pushes it away.
CLAIRE
I don't need that. I can handle myself.

CHARLIE
Okay. Here's what we're gonna...

She takes off running towards the back of the house. Charlie sighs, and within a few seconds the sound of breaking glass is heard, followed with the alarm blaring. Charlie pulls his gun out running towards the back of the house.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. BERNARD'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Joey places a gag in Bernard's mouth, and then gives him a kiss on the forehead.

JOEY
It sounds like we have guest, dear. Let me go take care of them, and I'll be right back.

Joey walks off, and Bernard starts mumbling. Joey walks back to him taking the gag from his mouth.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Yes?

BERNARD
(Laughs)
I knew you had no social life.

Joey gets frustrated, slashing Bernard across the chest, before placing the knife on his throat.

JOEY
I might as well send you to your precious, Mary.

He gets ready to slit his throat, when Claire bursts into the room.

CLAIRE
What the hell?

She covers her mouth from the gruesome scene.

JOEY
Goddamn it, Claire.

CLAIRE
You were the killer all this time?
JOEY
This has nothing to do with you. Strong women like me and you need to stick together.

CLAIRE
Strong women like me and you? What fucking drugs are you on?

Joey walks over to Claire with a sadistic smile.

BERNARD
He's a woman, Claire! She's a crazy bitch from my past finally coming back to get me!

JOEY
(Chuckle)
Pay him no mind. You and I could...

Claire hits Joey in the mouth making his head turn, taking a step back.

CLAIRE
Why would I be part of this?!

Joey looks at Claire smiling, licking the blood from his busted lip.

JOEY
Fuck it. I see there's no winning.

He tries to stab her, but she grabs his arm and they tussle out the door. Charlie is making his way upstairs, and they trip stumbling forward down the steps, knocking Charlie down with them.

Joey drops the knife on the steps, before the three hit the floor. Claire and Charlie lie motionless. Joey gets up laughing, walking back over to the stairs getting the knife.

JOEY
You see, Claire. Since I'm a strong woman, it allows me to endure anything.

He walks over to Claire grabbing the back of her head pulling it back.

JOEY (CONT'D)
Unfortunately...this is the end for you.

He gets ready to slit her throat, when a gunshot goes off. Joey drops the knife looking at the bullet hole in his
shoulder. Charlie is sitting up with his aim on Joey.

JOEY (CONT'D)
I don't recall this happening in my story.

CHARLIE
It happens when you leave someone alive in the last scene. They always come back to bite you in the ass.

Joey picks up the knife smiling.

JOEY
Not in my story.

CHARLIE
I'm tired. Just put the knife down, and we can all walk out alive.

JOEY
You're in the way of a beautiful picture.

Joey charges at Charlie, and Charlie lets off two shots dropping him. Charlie slowly stands to his feet in pain, walking over to Claire. Claire sits up shaking the daze off.

CHARLIE
You okay over here?

CLAIRE
I had better days. Bernard is upstairs tied to the bed.

CHARLIE
Okay. Let's get up there and--AH!!

Charlie drops to the floor dropping his gun screaming in pain, grabbing at his bleeding ankle Joey slashed. Joey has blood falling from his mouth and chest.

Claire picks up the gun taking aim.

JOEY
He's mine! You can't have...

Claire lets off one shot hitting Joey in the head, splattering his brains on the floor. Charlie continues holding his ankle in pain, looking up at Claire.

CHARLIE
Goddamn.
CLAIRE
It wanted something it couldn't have.

CHARLIE
Go outside and see if back up arrived. And find somebody to turn off this annoying ass alarm.

She places the gun under her shirt.

EXT. BERNARD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Coroner vans, ambulances, reporter vans and police cars are resting in front of the house. Reporters are trying to get to Bernard for interviews, but officers are holding them back.

Medics are tending to Charlie on a stretcher. Claire is standing beside Bernard's stretcher.

BERNARD
Thanks Claire.

CLaire
I'm glad I could help. Can you help me out with something?

BERNARD
You name it.

CLaire
Do you remember the pedophile they caught some years back?

BERNARD
I remember that sick bastard, because I got him life in jail. What about him?

CLaire
Along with giving him life, you took my unborn child's life due to a miscarriage.

BERNARD
Huh?

CLaire
He was my soon to be husband, and father of the child I lost.

She pulls the gun from under her shirt, placing it to his head. The medics take off running.
MEDICS
She's got a gun!

The officers on scene draw their guns taking aim. The reporters scream, dropping to the ground. Charlie sits up taking aim with his spare gun from his ankle.

CLAIRE
Anything you wanna say?

Bernard shakes his head, closing his eyes.

BERNARD
Do what you have to do.

CLAIRE
I hear by sentence you to death. No further questions.

A gunshot goes off, and blood sprays on Bernard's face. He opens his eyes just in time to see the hole in Claire's head, before her body falls to the ground. He looks over seeing Charlie.

CHARLIE
You owe me one, kid.

The medics come back over ready to place him in the ambulance.

BERNARD
All this time...I thought she was a virgin.

The medics place him in the ambulance, and then get in themselves. The ambulance pulls off.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. INSIDE THE AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

The rain is hitting hard against the ambulance. Bernard has a look of anguish on his face.

BERNARD
I'm alone again.

MEDIC
Excuse me, sir?

BERNARD
Nothing. I was thinking aloud.

MEDIC
Okay.
BERNARD
I wanna go home.

MEDIC
Sir?

BERNARD
I'm sorry, this was an eventful evening. Can you loosen my straps, please? I feel a tad bit dizzy.

The medic loosens the straps.

BERNARD (CONT'D)
Thank you. I'm going home now.

Bernard sits up shoving the medic to the side, kicking the door open jumping out onto the street. He tumbles to the ground, and when he stands to his feet, he gets hit by a car rolling up and over the top, landing on the ground dead. The look on his face says he's happy with the outcome.

EXT. CEMETERY - MORNING

It's a clear day. Charlie is standing in front of Bernard's tombstone wearing a black suit with his arm in a sling, holding a bouquet of white roses.

CHARLIE
I guess this is the way it had to end, huh kid? I'll tell you one thing. You can finally rest in peace.

He places the roses down, pulling a cigarette out placing it in his mouth lighting it. Exhaling slow nodding his head yes, he turns his back walking away.

SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK:

"Depression leads to various outcomes, all of which are bad. Don't let the burden of what happened to you or someone you know bring you down."

Bernard Mersier

In loving memory, and will never be forgotten. Mary K. Lewis, Shawn P, Richie, Sweetie Mae Peterson, Kenyon Reese, Ken, Macc 3, and Lamar.

END CREDITS