HOW TO MAKE ME DISAPPEAR

Written by

REDACTED

EXT. PARK - DUSK

ROBERT MARCUM (40s), average build, buzzed grey hair, walks alone. His eyes are empty, desperate.

He passes a green sign: SALEM WILLOWS PARK - SALEM, MA

A bike rack lies on its side as he strides by it. He knows exactly where he's going...

A group of TEENAGE BOYS goofs around in the distance. They take turns punching each other in the stomach for fun.

RYAN KOVACKS (17) is the biggest of the group and it's his turn to punch one of the smaller ones, BOBBY MILLER (16).

Robert marches toward them. They don't take notice.

Ryan winds up to hit Bobby, stops at the last minute. They all laugh. As soon as he see Bobby is relaxed, Ryan nails him right in the gut.

Bobby falls hard. The rest of the boys laugh even harder. He is in excruciating pain.

One of the boys notices Robert walking up, signals the others to stop laughing.

ROBERT

Ryan?

Ryan turns to face him.

ROBERT (CONT'D) Are you Ryan?

Before Ryan has time to respond, Robert punches him in the mouth.

TEENAGER 1

Oh shit!

Ryan falls straight to the ground, holding his face together.

TEENAGER 2 What the fuck?

Robert straddles the boy and starts beating the shit out of him. The teens are horrified.

One of the smaller ones tries to drag Robert off of Ryan, but gets shoved back.

The other boys run away.

Robert stops hitting Ryan. Sits on the grass next to him, weeping.

With his face still flat against the ground, Bobby watches, frozen in shock.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DUSK

MITCH HOGAN (14) walks alone in downtown Salem wearing a backpack twice his size.

His legs move without much coordination, always carrying himself like he should apologize for his own existence.

He passes a group of OLDER KIDS (15-17) sitting on a stoop. He keeps his head down.

OLDER KID 1 Hey kid, is it true that is I flip you on your back, you wouldn't be able to get back up?

They all laugh.

OLDER KID 2 Kid looks like a turtle!

Mitch keeps walking with his head down.

OLDER KID 1 Hey! I'm talking to you!

He gets up and catches up to Mitch. His friends watch.

OLDER KID 1 (CONT'D)

You deaf?

MITCH

No.

Mitch never looks at the older kid as they keep walking.

OLDER KID 1 I asked you a question. Are you a turtle? Mitch doesn't answer...

OLDER KID 1 (CONT'D) Only one way to find out.

The older kid grabs him by his sweater and throws him to the ground.

At a distance, the rest of the kids laugh. The older kid walks back toward his friends.

OLDER KID 1 (CONT'D) Answer the question next time, turtle fuck.

Mitch picks himself up, embarrassed. His sweater is torn.

He pulls the backpack off his back and unzips the front pocket. He reaches in and pulls out a smashed GAMEBOY.

He rubs his red eyes, pulls the game cartridge out and pockets it.

He struggles to put his backpack on and starts walking again.

OLDER KID 2 (O.S.) Goodbye, turtle!

EXT. SALEM WITCH MUSEUM - DUSK

Walking by the front of the museum, Mitch puts down his backpack and gets down on one knee.

He takes out an envelope, opens it and counts the money inside. Mostly singles and quarters.

He closes it up and puts it back in the backpack. Walks away.

INT. HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Robert sits by himself in an empty cell.

DETECTIVE PHILLIPS (50s) walks up on the other side of the bars. He is a little heavier than your standard model cop and his trench coat could probably use a wash or two.

PHILLIPS Your lucky night. (unlocks cell door) Guess you made the right call. The detective slides the cell door open and waits as Robert stands and walks out.

INT. POLICE STATION LOBBY - NIGHT

MICHAEL HOGAN (40s) chats quietly with the DISPATCHER. He is a well dressed man, carries a leather briefcase and dons a gold watch on his wrist. The kind of man who always has somewhere to be.

Their conversation is immediately cut short by the arrival of Detective Phillips and Robert.

PHILLIPS He's all yours.

MICHAEL Thanks Detective.

PHILLIPS We'll be seeing you again, Bob.

Robert does not acknowledge the detective, who exits the room.

MICHAEL Does your wife know?

PHILLIPS I called you, didn't I?

MICHAEL

You did.

PHILLIPS One phone call.

MICHAEL I'll drive you home. (turns to dispatcher) Thank you, Doreen.

She nods as the two men exit the station.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Michael drives. Robert in the passenger seat.

ROBERT The kid alright? MICHAEL Wouldn't exactly call it "alright."

The men share an awkward silence.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) He'll be fine... It'll take some time.

Robert shuffles about in his seat, but does not respond.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) I'm going to be honest with you. In a case like this, with all those witnesses, I'm gonna be fighting to shorten your sentence. No way in hell you're going to be walking away from this.

ROBERT I know what I did.

MICHAEL Do you? They're not going to settle. They have money. You don't.

ROBERT Why you doing this then? Pro-bono?

Michael doesn't know how to answer.

ROBERT (CONT'D) Probably the same reason I called you.

MICHAEL And what's that?

ROBERT You wanna feel good about yourself. Like the rest of this town.

MICHAEL That's why you called me?

ROBERT

You owe me.

MICHAEL Listen, Robert, what happened to Sam... I can't begin to imagine how-

ROBERT Save it. I've heard it all. The car pulls up to Robert's house. Robert gets out and trudges up the front lawn toward the door.

MICHAEL

Don't skip town on me.

Robert turns around, chuckling at Michael's audacity. He walks right back over to the car.

ROBERT What happened to my son... (leans on the car door) Everybody knows. Boys will be boys they say.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry.

ROBERT All you people do is say you're sorry. No one's willing to do a thing about it.

MICHAEL

Robert...

ROBERT Well I just did.

Robert walks away.

ROBERT (CONT'D) And I'm damn sure none of you feel sorry for me now.

Michael takes a moment before turning the engine back on and driving away.

INT. HOGAN HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

ALICE HOGAN (40s) stands in the middle of the kitchen. Her blonde hair perfectly brushed and styled. Maintaining good looks is obviously a priority.

Her eyes are fixated on a small TV screen as the local news are on.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) ...and bringing you more on the case of Samuel Marcum, who was found dead in a Salem High School bathroom, his father was arrested earlier today after a beating a young boy at Willows Park.

Alice shakes her head as she watches.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D) He was taken in by Salem police and released just two hours later on bail.

A set of headlights can be seen through the window. Alice goes to the dinner table and takes some boxes out of a large Burger King bag.

> NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D) Four children have gone missing in the last eight months. Is Salem Police doing enough to protect your kids? We'll tell you when we come back after the break.

Alice carries the boxes over to the microwave. Turns it on.

ALICE Mitch! Your father's home! Dinner time!

The sound of a DOOR OPENING and CLOSING.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

I'm home!

ALICE Hey honey, I'm just reheating dinner!

Michael walks into the kitchen, kisses Alice.

MICHAEL Where's Mitch?

ALICE

Mitch!

Mitch can be heard scrambling in his bedroom.

MITCH (O.S.) I'm coming! His door OPENS.

ALICE How did it go?

MICHAEL As well as it could have gone. The guy's messed up in the head.

ALICE It's awful. He's all over the news.

Mitch walks into the kitchen.

MICHAEL

Hey buddy.

MITCH

Hi.

Michael and Mitch sit at the table as Alice grabs the boxes from the microwave.

MICHAEL Burger King... Real gourmet stuff.

ALICE

Oh, shut up!

They smile as she sits down, opens the boxes.

They each take a sandwich and some chicken nuggets. Alice notices Mitch isn't interacting much.

ALICE (CONT'D) How was school?

MITCH I don't know...

MICHAEL You don't know?

MITCH

I don't know, okay? You guys ask me every day and every day is the same! What do you want me to say?

ALICE We're just trying to talk to you, Mitch. You don't have to snap at us! MICHAEL Jesus, Mitch! What the hell happened to your sweater?

Mitch just stares at him. Doesn't say anything.

ALICE Are you kidding?

MICHAEL You need to learn that these things have value! You can't just screw around with your friends and destroy your clothes every day.

ALICE Why do you keep doing this?

Mitch gets up. Storms toward his room.

MICHAEL You get back here right now!

ALICE I don't know what else to do. I just don't know.

Mitch SLAMS his door.

INT. CAR - DAY

Michael is in the driver's seat with Mitch riding in the passenger seat.

They are waiting in a long line of cars at the front of Salem High School.

MICHAEL Listen, Mitch. I know it sounds like we're angry at you all the time, but you gotta help us out.

Mitch stares out the window.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) We're trying to understand what's going on with you.

MITCH

Yeah.

MICHAEL I know Sam was a good friend of yours...

MITCH Can I get some money for lunch?

MICHAEL

What? Yeah.

Michael pulls out his wallet.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) Is five enough?

MITCH

Yeah.

He hands him the bill.

MICHAEL

Here you go.

Mitch takes it and exits the car.

MICHAEL (CONT'D) Where are you going?

He shakes his head as Mitch walks the rest of the way to the school.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - DAY

Mitch walks down the same street from the previous day. He sees the same group of older kids messing around the same stoop.

He crosses the street to avoid them.

OLDER KID 1 (O.S.) Hey, why did the turtle cross the road?

EXT. SALEM WITCH MUSEUM - MOMENTS LATER

Mitch crosses back over toward the Witch Museum. He's holding the ENVELOPE as he enters through the gift shop.

FADE TO BLACK.