

PLAYING GOD

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1 EXT-DOWNTOWN CITY OFFICE BUILDING-NIGHT 1

A man steps out of a car on the sidewalk outside of a modern looking skyscraper. His name is Elliot Gray. He is impeccably dressed. Three piece suit. Hair slicked back, very clean cut. He walks into the lobby of the building

2 INT-DOWNTOWN CITY OFFICE BUILDING-NIGHT 2

Gray walks briskly past the security desk. A night guard stands watch over desk.

GRAY:
(to night
guard)
Elliot Gray, I'm here to see Dr.
Brian Shepperd.

Gray starts to walk away from the desk.

NIGHT GUARD:
Mr. Gray, sir, Dr. Shepperd isn't
in his offic--

GRAY:
Yes he is.

NIGHT GUARD:
Sir, you can't just--

Gray ignores the guard's pleas. Gray gets on an elevator right as the doors are about to shut. The night guard goes to radio for help but is shot dead through the forehead. We do not see the bullet's point of origin.

3 INT-EXECUTIVE OFFICE FLOOR-CONTINUOUS 3

Gray steps off of the elevator, digs into the interior pocket of his suit and pulls out a security card. He swipes the card in the scanner and opens the door. The floor is dark. Narrow hallways divide the cubical covered room. The only lights that can be seen are from the corner office. Gray walks into the office

4 INT-OFFICE-CONTINUOUS 4

There is a man sitting at a large desk. His name is Dr. Calvin Shepperd. He too is impeccably dressed in a vested suit, expensive watch on his wrist. All of the signs of a very successful man.

SHEPPERD:
Can I help you?

GRAY:

(shutting the
door to the
office)

Dr. Shepperd, my name is Elliot
Gray.

SHEPPERD:

(confused)

And whom do you represent, Mr.
Gray?

GRAY:

Oh, I don't think that's very
important. What I'm interested in
is your whereabouts this past
week.

SHEPPERD:

Mr. Gray, please, if you don't
answer my question, I'll have to
call my security team--

GRAY:

Your security team is dead, Dr.
Shepperd.

Shepperd freezes. He is visibly shaken by this.

GRAY: (CONT'D)

As is your lawyer. Are you now
understanding the position you're
in?

Shepperd says nothing.

GRAY: (CONT'D)

I won't waste much of your time.
At ten after nine on May 12 a bio-
medical CEO named Ricardo
Hernandez was shot in the head
while working late at his office
in Rio de Janeiro. At ten fifteen
a.m. on May 13, a truck driver in
Sydney, was held at gun point and
asked to hand over the wheel of
his rig. When he did, he was shot
dead and thrown out of the cab.
Dumped out like a piece of trash
on the side of the highway.

SHEPPERD:

I'm sorry, what does this have to
do with anyth--

GRAY:

I'm not finished. At eight twenty on May 13 a mail room employee at an office building in Beijing had his neck snapped in two and had the mail he was carrying stolen from him. And finally, at two twenty five a.m. on May 13, a lab technician for a Parisian pharmaceutical corporation was shot dead while he slept. His family was also shot, execution style, and considered collateral damage.

SHEPPERD:

What point are you driving at, Mr. Gray?

GRAY:

Confusing isn't it? Four seemingly unrelated people murdered in four separate locations, at four different times. But that's the thing that piqued my interest Dr. Shepperd, the time. If you convert all of those times to Eastern Standard Time, you'd find out that all four of those people were killed a mere five minutes apart. Wouldn't you find that interesting?

Pause.

SHEPPERD:

I suppose if I were a detective, I would. Yes.

GRAY:

Well, now you know what I do for a living.

SHEPPERD:

Yes, but that still doesn't answer the question of why you're interested in me.

GRAY:

Well, Dr. Shepperd, I did some digging, and I found out that all four of those people either had knowledge and/or written documentation of something in their possession, something that you didn't want them to have.

SHEPPERD:

Mr. Gray, I really think you're thinking a little too highly of me--

GRAY:

You're research and development team just completed the first test trails of a medication to permanently reverse the process of cancer in rats, did it not?

Shepperd is silent at this.

GRAY: (CONT'D)

And now it appears, Dr. Shepperd, that I know what you do for a living as well. You see, a man of your intellect knows exactly what would happen if that information got into the hands of another corporate medical giant. You know, that all of a sudden, it would become a race against the other companies to test the drug on humans and reap the benefits of saying that you were the first medical corporation to come out with a cure for cancer.

Shepperd leans back in his chair, loosens his tie, and unbuttons the top button of his shirt.

SHEPPERD:

You still can't prove that I had them killed.

GRAY:

Phone records would indicate otherwise.

Shepperd looks confused.

GRAY: (CONT'D)

That office phone has been giving you trouble hasn't it? So you decided to have some tech guys come fix it.

SHEPPERD:

You tapped my phone.

Gray nods affirmatively.

SHEPPERD: (CONT'D)
You son of a bitch.

Pause. Shepperd runs his hands through his hair.

SHEPPERD: (CONT'D)
When you've got a potential billion dollar revenue maker at your finger tips, you'd do anything to keep it in your possession.

GRAY:
True, and that might be the only point on which we agree. But you weren't just after the money. You wanted to feel what it would be like to play God.

SHEPPERD:
Who wouldn't?

GRAY:
I wouldn't want the pressure if the drug had failed after its release.

SHEPPERD:
It wouldn't have failed.

GRAY:
Your ignorance is your downfall, Doctor. What the R&D team didn't tell you was that six weeks after the test trials on the rats, those same rats died.

Shepperd is again dumbfounded.

GRAY: (CONT'D)
The medication left behind a stimulant that caused an increased heart rate and palpitations in the rats. Once the rats took another dose of the meds, however, the palpitation was lessened. In effect, the rats became somewhat addicted to the pills and needed them to maintain a regular heart beat. When the pills were taken away, their hearts couldn't take the constant increased heart rate, and they eventually died of heart rupture.

Shepperd is now beginning to sweat. He composes himself,

however, after a moment.

SHEPPERD:

You seem to have quite a lot of resources at your disposal for being a detective.

Shepperd quickly opens his desk drawer and pulls out a gun. He is instantly more confident.

SHEPPERD: (CONT'D)

So I'm curious, who exactly are you with? Is this a police sting or something?

Gray smiles. Shepperd grows angrier.

SHEPPERD: (CONT'D)

It looks like it won't matter anyway. Your luck has run out.

Shepperd pulls the trigger, but there are no bullets in the gun.

GRAY:

Dr. Shepperd, I work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in a newly formed, top secret unit, designed to take men like you to their graves.

SHEPPERD:

Oh my God.

GRAY:

Yeah. This is the point where, as my son would say, "the shit just got real."

SHEPPERD:

So what do you want me to do?

GRAY:

Well, it's really a matter of how you want to go out. If you want to spend ten years in a jail cell getting violated by much more violent men than yourself, then get a lethal injection in your veins, I can arrest you. The company would transfer power to the C.F.O. who has publicly criticized the cancer cure, and would take the company in another direction. Or, you can die

(MORE)

GRAY: (CONT'D)
 tonight, in a bit more of a
 dramatic and, shall we say,
 "accidental" fashion.

Pause. Shepperd considers the options.

SHEPPERD:
 I'll take my good name with me to
 the grave.

GRAY:
 Suit yourself. Would you like a
 phone call beforehand?

SHEPPERD:
 Yes.

GRAY:
 To whom?

SHEPPERD:
 My wife.

Gray picks up Shepperd's office phone and dials Shepperd's home phone number. Shepperd looks stunned.

GRAY:
 Oh c'mon. Don't act so surprised.
 We know far more about you than
 you think. It's called the Patriot
 Act.

Gray hands the phone to Shepperd.

SHEPPERD:
 (into the
 phone)
 Hey honey, it's me...I know it's
 late, I was just calling to say I
 love you...no, hun, I think I'll
 be a little bit later...I'll try
 to get done as soon as I
 can...what?...no, I'm fine...yeah,
 don't wait up...I'll give you a
 kiss when I get home...okay...I
 love you...bye.

Shepperd hangs up the phone.

GRAY:
 Tomorrow, the newspapers, blogs,
 and T.V. stations will tell the
 story of how an accident at your
 laboratory a floor below your
 (MORE)

GRAY: (CONT'D)
 office caused you to die in the
 resulting explosion. An explosion
 that could have been prevented if
 only the last lab technician to
 close up for the night had
 remembered to shut off a Bunsen
 burner.

SHEPPERD:
 Someone will figure it out. Do you
 really want the U.S. Government on
 the hook for my death?

GRAY:
 Dr. Shepperd, my people are very
 good at making things look like
 accidents. Just so you know, you
 have from the time it takes me to
 get from here down to my car to
 make your peace with God.

Gray leaves Shepperd's office. Shepperd gets up from his chair and watches Gray go to the elevator. Once Gray is out of sight, Shepperd leaves his office and runs across the floor to the elevator lobby doors. He pushes them as hard as he can, but they are locked from the other side. He runs to the every stairwell on the floor, but they too are locked from the other side. He is effectively trapped. He screams for help, but no one is around to hear them. He finally gives up, retreating back into his office, shutting the door, and sitting in his chair. With all hope lost. He returns to what he was doing before Mr. Gray arrived.

5 INT - DOWNTOWN CITY OFFICE BUILDING. LOBBY 5
 There are three F.B.I. agents at the lobby front desk.

GRAY:
 (to the agents)
 It's time to go. See you in the
 morning. They'll want us in
 Washington by noon.

Gray and the agents leave.

6 EXT - DOWNTOWN CITY OFFICE BUILDING-CONTINUOUS 6
 Gray gets in the passenger side of the car waiting for him by the side of the building. The car leaves the building.

7 INT-CAR-CONTINUOUS

7

Gray speaks to the driver of the vehicle.

GRAY:
Go a few blocks and turn left.

DRIVER:
You testing the range of the
remote?

GRAY:
I could blow this thing from 3000
miles away. It's the suspicion
that we're avoiding now.

Gray takes out a cell phone and presses a speed dial.

GRAY: (CONT'D)
(into the
phone)
I'm going to blow it in about 45
seconds...yeah...no, he knew he
was cornered...yes sir...I sent
the e-mail with the all of the R&D
team's work to the director at the
C.D.C....thank you sir...see you
tomorrow...bye.

Gray hangs up the phone.

GRAY: (CONT'D)
I love my job.

Cut to black.

An explosion is heard. Followed a few moments later by
sirens.

Roll Credits

The End.