THE LAST SAND GRANULES

by

Rick McCormick
FADE IN:

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

SUPER: NEWPORT BEACH, CALIFORNIA, 1965

A giant hourglass rests on a coffee table. A crucifix and a religious poster entitled "Footprints In The Sand" are on the family room wall.

BRIAN MCCLEAN (8), clean cut, unsure, sensitive, reserved, sits on a sofa frozen in time. A dozen wilting floral arrangements surround him.

Brian stares past the hourglass at the front door. A lone tear exits his red eye.

MARY MCCLEAN (35), diligent, old-fashioned, reassuring, well-intentioned, catches her son out of the corner of her eye. She makes the sign of the cross, wipes away a tear, and gathers herself. She sits down next to Brian.

MARY
He's never coming through that door again.

BRIAN
I know. I was just hoping.

She gives him a tight hug.

MARY
C'mon, I'll make you a big breakfast.

Mary heads to the kitchen.

Brian picks up the hourglass and gazes closely at the sand. The sand runs out. He turns the hourglass over and places it back on the table. He watches the sand fall.

KITCHEN

The blinding sunlight blasts through a window onto a wooden crucifix, a prayer entitled "AN OLD IRISH BLESSING", and a motto entitled "The Broken Chain."

Plates of steaming eggs, bacon, and sausage are before Brian and Mary as they say grace.
MARY
...ever this day be at our side to
light, to guard, to rule and
guide. Amen.

Brian looks at a family portrait which includes his father
in decorated military fatigues.

BRIAN
And please take care of Dad in
Heaven.

EXT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

The sun glistens off the ranch-style home with neatly
manicured landscape. Brian receives a long hug from his mom
on the front porch.

MARY
Have a nice day at school, son.

BRIAN
Thanks, Mom.

She watches Brian bounce down the front steps and onto the
sidewalk in his salt and pepper corduroy pants and white
dress shirt.

EXT. STREET - DAY

A homeless border collie begs for food. Brian removes his
backpack and pulls out his lunch box. He tears a piece of
lunch meat from his sandwich and feeds the dog. He pets the
dog and continues on.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS STOP - DAY

Brian tries to scurry unnoticed past the public schoolkids
waiting for the school bus.

Four of the schoolkids, MORGAN EHLERS (12), smart,
analytical, leader, JOHN ANTON (12), even-tempered,
coherent, BILL NEWCOMB (11), cool-headed, confident, and
OLIVER (OLLIE) GRUNDY (11), scrawny, nervous, cowardly,
block his path.

OLLIE
It's the Our Lady Queen of Angels
kid.
BILL
Hi, Queenie.

JOHN
Same clothes, different day.

Bill takes Brian's backpack and tosses it to Morgan who tosses it to John. The game of keep away goes on until Brian finally intercepts his backpack and runs off.

JOHN
See you tomorrow, Mean Queen!

They laugh.

INT. CATHOLIC SCHOOL - DAY

Brian and several students listen to SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE (28), stern, teach religion. The Ten Commandments are listed on the chalkboard.

SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE
The next commandment is Thou Shall Not Kill. Someone who kills another is like killing the Lord, because the Lord is inside every one of us.

Brian nods in agreement.

SISTER FRANCIS BERNADETTE
There's a camera filming each of you throughout your life. At the end of your life, you'll watch your life's film with God. He'll then decide if you make it to Heaven, or not.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Steaming plates of chicken and corn on-the-cob are on the table. Mary and Brian fold their hands and close their eyes.

MARY
Bless us 'O Lord and these our gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord, amen.

Brian reaches for an ear of corn.
Brian folds his hands again, peeks through one eye at his mother, and closes the eyelid.

MARY (O.S.)
...our guardian dear to whom his love commits us here, ever this night be at our side to light, to guard, to rule and guide, amen.

Mary watches Brian fidget with the skin on his chicken as she butters her corn on-the-cob.

BRIAN
Why are public schoolkids so mean?

MARY
Maybe they haven't learned about God, yet.

BRIAN
Can't they go to a Catholic school?

MARY
It's not that easy. Catholic schools are expensive and people have different beliefs.

BRIAN
Will they go to hell if they don't believe in God?

MARY
Only if they do something bad. Even then they could still change.

Brian looks at the family picture on the wall.

BRIAN
Did Dad kill people?

MARY
Well--

BRIAN
Sister Francis Bernadette says if people kill, they can't go to Heaven.
MARY
Well, I'm sure he prayed for forgiveness. God is forgiving, no matter how bad our sins.

BRIAN
Do you really think he's in Heaven?

MARY
I do. And we'll both be there with him someday.

Brian digs in to the chicken.

BRIAN'S BEDROOM
Mary helps Brian do his homework.

Brian lies in bed as Mary stands nearby. A wooden crucifix hangs on the wall. On the nightstand is a framed photo of his father. Brian reads from a worn memorial card.

BRIAN
You left us peaceful memories, your love is still our guide, and though we cannot see you, you are always at our side.

Our family chain is broken and nothing seems the same, But as God calls us one by one the chain will link again.

Brian tucks the card into the picture frame.

MARY
Say your prayers.

Mary kisses Brian on the forehead, turns off the light, and exits.

BRIAN
Lord, please let my Dad be in Heaven.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

A ROLLER SKATER(25), hippie, skates past Brian and Mary holding a sign which reads: JOHN 3:16.
ROLLER SKATER
Jesus Christ is your savior!

MONTAGE - MARY AND BRIAN AT THE BEACH
-- Mary and Brian build sandcastles.
-- Mary buries Brian up to his neck in sand.
-- Mary and Brian fly a kite.
-- Mary teaches Brian how to body surf.
-- Mary teaches Brian how to swing a baseball bat.

Brian and Mary play catch with a football. Mary gets distracted. The football hits Mary in the stomach. She doubles over in pain. Brian races over to her.

BRIAN
Are you okay?

MARY
I don't know.

She sits on the sand. Brian holds her.

LATER

Mary and Brian towel sand off their feet. They shake sand from their beach towels.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian and Mary sing in the cavernous church.

BRIAN
(singing)
Shepherd me oh God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.

Brian sees Ollie with his family. Brian looks up at the giant crucifix behind the altar.

Mary touches her stomach. She grimaces.
INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Mary uses a towel to dry the dishes. She grabs her abdominal area and grimaces. She lifts her shirt to show a baseball size bruise.

INT. DOCTOR SIZEMORE'S OFFICE - DAY

DOCTOR SIZEMORE (60), diligent, serious, examines Mary's bruised stomach.

    DOCTOR SIZEMORE
    When did this happen?

    MARY
    About a week ago.

    DOCTOR SIZEMORE
    We better run some tests.

ONE WEEK LATER

Mary and Doctor Sizemore look at X-rays on a lighted X-ray board.

    DOCTOR SIZEMORE
    I'm afraid it's not what we hoped for. You have a tumor in a very tricky spot.

Doctor Sizemore points at an X-ray.

    DOCTOR SIZEMORE
    I don't know if we'll be able to surgically remove it.

    MARY
    Oh, no.

    DOCTOR SIZEMORE
    If we can't remove it, we'll hit it hard with chemotherapy.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

A school bell SOUNDS. Hundreds of joyful children in school uniforms spill out from their classrooms. Brian rides his bike next door to the church.
INT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian kneels in the front pew of the empty church. He makes the sign of the cross and looks up at the giant crucifix behind the altar.

BRIAN
Lord, please make my mom better.

SUPER: SIX YEARS LATER

Brian (14), prays in the same front pew as he looks up at the giant crucifix.

BRIAN
Why aren't you making her better?

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

There are several bills on the kitchen table. Brian sees Mary (41), fight back tears as she looks at an Our Lady Queen of Angels tuition bill stamped "PAST DUE."

MARY
You'll have to go to the public school.

Brian is petrified.

BRIAN
Will I still be able to go to Heaven if I go to the public school?

MARY
Sure. You can go to CCD classes.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian marches to school in casual clothes and carrying a backpack. He spots Bill.

BRIAN
Please help me, Lord.

BILL
Where's your uniform, Queenie?

BRIAN
Don't need it.
Bill catches up to Brian.

BILL
You're going to the public school?

BRIAN
Yup.

Bill sees Morgan.

BILL
Morgan! Look who's going to our school!

Morgan strolls over.

MORGAN
Father O'Brian! Didn't know you had any other clothes.

Bill mouths something to Morgan. The two sandwich Brian with hard shoulders to his body. Brian grimaces.

MORGAN
You know anyone else who goes to Corona del Mar High School?

BRIAN
Nope.

Morgan mouths the signal to Bill. They smash hard off Brian again. Brian fights through the pain.

MORGAN
Think you're good enough to join our group?

BILL
What do we need him for?

MORGAN
Shut up, Bill. Let's see what he's got.

Brian sees Morgan mouth the signal to Bill. Brian stops abruptly. Morgan and Bill crash into each other.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Brian and Mary eat.
MARY
What time's CCD class?

BRIAN
Seven.

LATER
Brian hustles toward the door with his Bible.

BRIAN
Bye, Mom!

MARY (O.S.)
Bye!

Brian pulls a rosary from his pocket and sets it on the
coffee table. The giant hourglass is nearly full. He exits.

EXT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT
Brian hides his Bible on the front porch. He dashes down
the front steps.

INT. MORGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT
Bill, Morgan, John, and Ollie crumple newspapers into balls
and toss them at Brian. Brian stuffs the newspaper balls
into a shirt and pants laying on the bed.

MORGAN
Pack 'em tight.

Morgan secures a wig onto a Styrofoam head. He positions
the head so that it sticks out of the top of the shirt.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT
Brian, Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie ride bikes. The dummy
rides on the back of Brian's bike. Brian glances nervously
over at the church as they pass.

The five arrive at the bottom of a hill.

MORGAN
Face down in the gutter.

Brian sets the dummy face down in the gutter. John lays a
bike next to it. A car's headlights beam around a corner.
BILL
Spin it!

Brian spins a bike tire. The five run for cover in nearby bushes.

The car SCREECHES to a halt. MAN (40), and WOMAN (40), jump out.

MAN
Get back in the car!

WOMAN
I used to be a nurse!

Man quickly approaches the dummy. The five cover their mouths to keep from laughing.

MAN
Are you okay? I think we're too late.

Man nudges the dummy. The head rolls off. Man SCREAMS, jumps in the car, and BURNS rubber. The five LAUGH.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

Brian throws a rope end down a building. He climbs down from the building. He ties the rope to a doorknob. He runs to the others who lie on their stomachs in a field.

Keys JINGLE. A CUSTODIAN walks around the building and sees the rope attached to the doorknob. The custodian looks up, tugs on the rope, and yanks hard. A bucket of water cascades down on him.

The custodian slams the bucket down. The five LAUGH.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Morgan hands Brian a roll of wide masking tape. He hides in nearby bushes with John, Bill, and Ollie.

Brian tapes one end of the masking tape to the street sticky side up. He unrolls the tape across the street and tapes the end down. He sprints to the others.

The five look both ways down the street.

BILL
Uh, oh.
JOHN
Oh, no.

OLLIE
Shoot.

The five try to contain their SNICKERS.

A police car runs over the tape which sticks to the tires and makes a flat tire KA POO KA POO sound. The police car stops. The OFFICER gets out and sees the tape wound around his tires. The five take off LAUGHING.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Bill and Ollie act as lookouts at each end of the cookie aisle. Brian trembles between Morgan and John. Brian checks side to side like a windshield wiper for customers. Bill signals to hurry up.

Brian loosens his belt and carefully places a bag of Oreos down his pants. Morgan and John grab more bags and shove them down Brian's pants and into his jacket.

Brian waddles out like a bloated astronaut with the others.

SUPER: THIRTEEN YEARS LATER

Brian (27), sports a couple tattoos, earrings, and long hair. He sits at a desk across from SUPERMARKET MANAGER (40).

SUPERMARKET MANAGER
We need someone who shows up once in a while, Brian.

BRIAN
I had to take care of my mom.

SUPERMARKET MANAGER
That's not my problem.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Brian enters with the mail. The house is unkempt. The worn furniture should have been replaced years ago.

The mail is on the coffee table next to the hourglass which is about two-thirds filled. Brian scans through the envelopes which are mostly stamped "BILL ENCLOSED" and "FINAL NOTICE." He hears COUGHING.
MARY'S BEDROOM

A frail Mary lies in bed. She has lost a lot of weight.

MARY
Have you been to church?

BRIAN
No.

MARY
You wanna go to Heaven? Where have you been?

BRIAN
Running errands.

MARY
I need my prescriptions filled.

Brian leaves.

MARY
And you better go to church!

HALLOWAY

Brian rears back to punch the wall, but stops himself.

IN THE KITCHEN

Brian has bills spread out on the table and a telephone to his ear.

BRIAN
She needs it for her chemo. She could die if she doesn't get it!

He SLAMS the phone down.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

The cashier rings up several prescriptions. Brian winces when he sees the total on the register.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian passes the church without looking at it. Ollie exits the church. He spots Brian.
OLLIÉ

Brian!

BRIAN
Hey, Ollie. How's it going? You still hanging with Morgan, Bill, and John?

OLLIÉ
I live with them...and kind of work with them.

BRIAN
You do? Doing what?

OLLIÉ
I can't really...come over and I'll let them tell you.

BRIAN
Come on, Ollie.

Ollie moves in close to Brian.

OLLIÉ
You can't tell anyone.

BRIAN
I won't.

OLLIÉ
We kind of relieve banks of paper.

Ollie sees that Brian doesn't understand.

OLLIÉ
Green paper.

Brian still doesn't get it.

OLLIÉ
With dead Presidents.

BRIAN
No way! You're kidding?

OLLIÉ
I wish I were. Don't tell anyone.

BRIAN
I won't.
OLLIE
How's it with you?

BRIAN
I'm between jobs.

OLLIE
Maybe Morgan will let you in on some jobs.

BRIAN
Are you crazy? I can't do that.

OLLIE
Why not?

BRIAN
I gotta look after my mom.

OLLIE
How's she doing?

BRIAN
Not good.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Morgan sits behind the wheel as Brian rides shotgun. Bill, John, and Ollie are in the back seat. Morgan pulls to the curb near an expensive bike chained to a pole.

MORGAN
You're good to go.

Brian hesitates with his hand on the door handle. He sees his church in the distance.

BILL
What are you waiting for?

MORGAN
Shut up, Bill! You've gotta do this for your mom.

Brian takes a DEEP BREATH and exits.

BILL
How many bikes did we just slide the lock over the pole?

JOHN
What? Ten percent, Morg?
MORGAN
More like a quarter of 'em.

JOHN
Don't ever underestimate the stupidity of the American public.

Morgan and the others watch as Brian takes giant bolt cutters out of his knapsack and cuts the bike chain. Brian rides off on the bike.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brian rolls the stolen bike into a back room. FENCE (50), sleazeball, examines the bike and hands Brian a bill.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE - NIGHT

Brian uses a screwdriver to pop out the keyhole on a car. He jumps into the car and uses the screwdriver to pop out the ignition. The car starts. He drives off.

EXT. PHARMACY - DAY

Brian exits with a shopping bag. He examines the receipt and slams it into the bag.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Brian, dressed all in black and wearing gloves, quietly places silverware into a bag.

BEDROOM

A lady wakes up, hears a SOUND, and dials the phone.

KITCHEN

Brian HEARS a car door shut. He sees a police car in the street and a POLICE OFFICER creeping toward the house.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Brian runs out the back with the loot bag. The policeman gives chase. Brian jumps over a fence narrowly escaping the officer who struggles to get over the fence.
INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brian hands Fence the bag. In the background, men use a power saw to slice apart a Porsche. Fence pours the contents of the bag onto a table. Silverware falls out. Fence examines the items.

FENCE
A hundred.

BRIAN
Come on! I almost got busted!

FENCE
I need the good stuff. Take it or leave it.

Fence pulls out a thick wad of bills. He tosses a bill on the table. Brian snatches the bill and storms out.

INT. MORGAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Brian, Morgan, Bill, John, and Ollie watch TV and drink beer. There are ski masks and guns next to a pizza box on the coffee table. Morgan counts large stacks of bills.

JOHN
I still can't get over the teller. Here's a gun in her face and she asks if small bills are okay.

BILL
Like we're gonna turn down fives and tens.

JOHN
And Morgan's face! He looks around to see if he's on Candid Camera!

MORGAN
Usually, they're shaking and just shove the money into the bag.

JOHN
And then as we're leaving, she tells us to have a nice day!

BILL
Talk about a creature of habit.
BRIAN
What are you doing with all your money?

MORGAN
Investing it.

Brian examines one of the guns.

BRIAN
Ever had to use one of these?

JOHN
Never. How's your mom doing?

BRIAN
Not so hot.

MORGAN
Just a matter of time before you get busted, Brian.

BRIAN
And you won't? At least if I get busted I won't spend as much time in prison.

MORGAN
Hasn't happened yet.

OLLIE
And we only work once a month.

MORGAN
Only need a couple big jobs with us, Brian.

BILL
We already got four guys, Morg.

BRIAN
I can't. Thanks anyway.

Brian leaves.

EXT. SEARS - NIGHT

Brian pulls around the back of a Sears store in his mom's station wagon. He sees an eighteen wheeler backed in to a loading dock.
Brian sees a video surveillance camera on the building. He puts on a pair of sunglasses and a baseball cap.

Brian hops out of the station wagon and jumps onto the loading dock. He peeks into the building.

Brian grabs a TV box out of the truck and slides it to the back of his car. He lifts it into the back of the car.

He runs back and grabs another TV box from the truck. SEARS MAN (30), obese, clumsy, sees Brian.

    SEARS MAN
    Hey!

Brian slides the box across the ground. Sears Man gives chase for a short distance, then dials a phone. Brian shoves the box into the wagon. He hops in and rockets from the area.

INT. STATION WAGON - NIGHT

Brian HEARS SIRENS as he GASPS for breath. He rolls the window up to deaden the sound.

A police car with flashing lights passes in the opposite direction. Brian checks his side and rear view mirrors. The police car continues on.

INT. BANK - DAY

Brian observes the tellers, cameras, and bank layout as he fills out a deposit slip. He discards the bank slip into a trash can and exits.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

The wind blows clouds of sand. Brian eats a sandwich on a lifeguard tower as he looks out over the ocean.

LATER

Brian washes sand off his feet at an outdoor shower. The sand goes down a drain.

INT. MCCLEAN RESIDENCE - DAY

Brian enters with lots of mail marked "FINAL NOTICE." Brian hears COUGHING.
KITCHEN

Brian pulls a beer out of the refrigerator. He stares at the pile of bills while he chugs the beer.

MARY'S BEDROOM

Brian tends to pale and frail Mary who lies in bed coughing. A crucifix is on the wall above her.

BRIAN
When's your next chemo?

MARY
Tomorrow, if I'm strong enough.

He kisses her forehead. She sees that he's perspiring.

MARY
What are you up to, Brian?

BRIAN
Nothing.

MARY
Brian.

BRIAN
Get your rest, Mom.

BRIAN'S BEDROOM

Brian stares at the rosary next to the car keys on the dresser. He makes the sign of the cross. He takes the car keys and exits.

EXT. MORGAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie wait with several duffel bags. Brian pulls up in the beat up station wagon. Morgan sees a bumper sticker that reads: "JESUS CHRIST IS MY SAVIOR." He peels it off.

INT. CAR - DAY

A rosary hangs from the rear view mirror. Brian takes down the rosary and tosses it into the glove box which overflows with junk.

The four hop in. Morgan sticks the bumper sticker on the glove box door.
MORGAN
No identifying marks.

BRIAN
I really appreciate you guys wanting to help.

JOHN
It's Bank of America that's gonna help you.

Nervous LAUGHTER.

BRIAN
There can't be any shooting.

BILL
You're either banks or not banks.

BRIAN
I'm serious. No shooting.

BILL
Banks or not banks.

BRIAN
I'm banks.

MORGAN
Just do what we showed you and everything will be crisp.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The street is nearly empty. The station wagon pulls to the curb. An armed guard stands just inside the front door.

INT. CAR - DAY

Brian shakes. Ollie switches seats with Brian behind the wheel.

BRIAN
Why do you get to drive?

OLLIE
I don't want to kill anyone.

BRIAN
I don't want to kill anyone!
MORGAN
Calm down. He always drives.

Morgan, Brian, John, and Bill put on ski masks.

BRIAN
No shooting.

Morgan checks the passenger side view mirror. A black and white border collie BARKS repeatedly at Brian.

BRIAN
Damn it!

Brian takes off his mask. He springs outside.

MORGAN
Brian. Damn it!

BILL
What's he doing?

They anxiously look at the armed guard.

EXT. CAR - DAY
Brian chases the dog away.

INT. CAR - DAY
Brian gets in.

BILL
What the hell are you doing? We gotta abandon this, Morg.

MORGAN
Shut up, Bill. Don't do anything like that again.

OLLIE
This bank's got so much paper, it's a fire hazard.

JOHN
Let's be good citizens and remove that hazard.

John cocks his shotgun.
MORGAN
Ollie, keep the car running.

Brian makes the sign of the cross and closes his eyes.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The two curbside doors open and the four men bounce out.

INT. BANK - DAY

Bill opens the door for the other three who sprint past the armed guard. Bill points his shotgun at the guard before he can react.

MORGAN
Everyone lick the floor!

Customers SCREAM. The customers lie on their stomachs.

BILL
Close the drapes.

The guard closes the drapes over the front doors. Morgan points his gun at a teller.

MORGAN
Don't do anything stupid!

John and Brian hurry to the tellers' windows and toss the tellers the bags.

BRIAN
Come on! Move it!

He strikes a slow female teller's arm with his shotgun. She speeds up. The tellers throw money into the bags. John passes the filled bags over the counter to Morgan and Brian who set them on a table.

Sirens WAIL in the distance. John jumps over the counter as the other three grab the bags and make their way toward the door.

INT. CAR - DAY

An uneasy Ollie prays.

OLLIE
Please help me, Lord.
Ollie leans over and opens the two curbside doors. The sirens get louder. Ollie sees a police car turn onto his street and race toward him.

EXT. BANK - DAY

The police car skids to a stop in front of the station wagon. OFFICER GARNER (32), assertive, stern, flings his door open to act as a shield. He aims his gun at Ollie.

OFFICER GARNER
Show me your hands!

Bill holds open the door as the others race by. John FIRES at the officer who returns FIRE. Bullets ricochet off the bank building and BLAST out the front doors.

Bill shoots. Brian watches Officer Garner drop his gun and clutch his chest.

BRIAN
No!

Brian pushes Bill's gun away as Officer Garner writhes in pain on the ground. Ollie is stunned. He gets out of the car.

The four gunmen dash toward the getaway car and dive through the open doors.

INT. CAR - DAY

The four are surprised that Ollie is gone.

JOHN
Where the hell's Ollie?

They see Ollie tend to Officer Garner.

BILL
Damn it!

MORGAN
C'mon, Ollie!

Morgan slides over and puts the car in gear.

BRIAN
I said no shooting!
BILL
I had to!

BRIAN
He better live!

MORGAN
Get in now, Ollie! Damn it!

EXT. BANK - DAY
SIRENS WAIL. Officer Garner chokes up blood and bleeds profusely from the chest area. Ollie takes off his shirt and presses it into the gaping hole.

MORGAN
Leave him!

John opens his door and takes a few steps towards Ollie. He sees an approaching police car and jumps back in.

The station wagon's tires SQUEAL as the car fishtails around Officer Garner's patrol car.

Police cars skid to stops. Officers jump out with guns drawn at Ollie.

An officer tackles Ollie. Ollie tries to go back to Officer Garner. Officers wrestle with him on the ground.

INT. HIGHWAY - DAY
The station wagon races down the highway. Police cars with flashing lights chase in the distance.

INT. CAR - DAY
The police cars quickly gain ground on the station wagon. Morgan checks his rear and side view mirrors. Bill and John ready their weapons while Brian sits in a daze.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY
The station wagon moves too fast to negotiate a turn. It caroms off a guardrail, rolls over several times, and lands upside down in the middle of the road.

The SOUND of SIRENS.
INT. CAR - DAY

Brian tries to flee, but is trapped by his seatbelt. He sees the "JESUS CHRIST IS MY SAVIOR" sticker on the glove box. The glove box opens and the rosary hangs out.

Brian sees several sets of upside down shoes racing towards him. Police officers point their weapons and bark orders at Brian and the others.

EXT. CAR - DAY

The rear bumper shows glue residue from the bumper sticker.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

SUPER: TWO YEARS LATER

Mary prays with her rosary. The five defendants sit at a long table with their lawyers. The PROSECUTOR (50), addresses the attentive jury.

    PROSECUTOR
    Oliver Grundy didn't want any
    witnesses. He wasn't trying to
    stop the bleeding. He was trying
    to strangle Officer Garner with
    his bare hands.

LATER

Brian, Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie anxiously watch the jury file into the courtroom.

The JUDGE (55), eyes the JURY FOREMAN (60).

    JUDGE
    Has the jury reached a decision?

    JURY FOREMAN
    We have your honor. In count one,
    bank robbery, we find the
    defendants guilty.

    MARY
    No!

Brian shakes uncontrollably.
JURY FOREMAN
Count two, murder of a peace officer. We find the defendants guilty.

MARY
No, Lord!

Brian collapses onto the table. He sees Mary BLUBBERING as he's lead out by bailiffs.

EXT. PRISON - DAY

Armed guards stand on each side of BERNIE (40), skinhead, flaky, unsophisticated, who wears khaki pants, a white t-shirt, and holds a cardboard box.

The guards and Bernie watch as giant gates open. A bus enters. The gates close. The bus stops near a building.

Brian, Morgan, Bill, John, and Ollie get off the bus heavily shackled. Brian and Bernie make eye contact as they pass.

Brian watches Bernie get onto the bus without guards. A guard JABS a rifle butt into Brian's kidney. Brian winces.

INT. PRISON - DAY

The five new prisoners exit a room with a San Quentin logo. A sign on the door reads "PROCESSING." They walk single file in light blue jumpsuits. Each carries a stack of sheets, towels, and a bar of soap.

GUARD BAKER (35), reassuring, and two other guards escort the five down a corridor lined with cells on each side.

GUARD BAKER
We don't want any problems from you guys, you hear?

The five nod.

Black prisoners JOE (30), a mountain of a man, fiery, and JESSE (28), cynical, taunt the five from their cells while DON (25), extremely obese, cowardly, looks on.

JESSE
Welcome to hell! You boys scared?

Joe chews gum and blows bubbles.
JOE
Which one of you's the cop killer?

JESSE
I'm tagging the short one, Joe.

JOE
Bet you don't make it to sunset.

Prisoner SYD (30), a lanky black man with a shiner, religious, honest, stands outside his open cell. He looks up at WARDEN JOHNSON (57), who nods at him. Syd approaches the five with Bibles.

Syd extends a Bible to Morgan who walks by. Bill and Ollie accept Bibles.

Syd offers a Bible to Brian who SLAPS it out of his hand. Syd picks up the Bible and carefully dusts it off.

SYD
May God be with you.

LATER
A bell RINGS. Cell doors open, the prisoners stand at attention outside their cells. Prison guards write on clipboards as they do a headcount.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY
The prisoners are in self-segregated groups throughout the bland yard.

Brian, John, Bill, and Ollie survey all the sketchy characters. Several prisoners, including Joe, Jesse, and Don, stare down the convicted bank robbers.

MORGAN
Don't stare.

BRIAN
(To Bill)
Forty to life, because you had to kill a cop.

Brian grabs a fistful of Ollie's shirt.

BRIAN
And all you had to do was drive the damn car.
A tower guard snaps to life and keeps an eye on Brian.

    MORGAN
    Don't cause waves. I don't want forty years of problems.

    BRIAN
    I'll cause all the problems I want! I'm not hanging in this hellhole with these lowlifes.

Morgan covers Brian's mouth with his hand.

    MORGAN
    What are you gonna do? Walk on out of here?

Guard Baker approaches the five.

    GUARD BAKER
    I strongly recommend you keep to your own kind. Except Syd. He can be a big help to you.

    BRIAN
    I won't be going outside my kind.

    MORGAN
    How do we find this Syd?

    GUARD BAKER
    You already have.

Guard Baker points to the man who tried to give them Bibles preaching to a group in the center of the yard.

    BILL
    What's he in for?

    GUARD BAKER
    Don't ever ask him. Only the warden knows.

Guard Baker strolls off.

    BILL
    Let's check it out.

    BRIAN
    Why? To thank God for putting us here? I have no use for Him anymore.
Brian leaves.

MORGAN
I wouldn't go far. I'm staying right here.

JOHN
Me, too.

BILL
I don't mind the protection.

Bill keeps a look out as he wanders over to Syd's group.

MORGAN
I don't know if that's protection or makes him a target. We shouldn't be splittin' up.

Joe, Jesse, and Don lift weights. Joe spots Bill.

JOE
Cop killer.

They eye Bill.

JESSE
Gotta be worth a lot of cigarettes. How much the Orange County cops pay'n?

JOE
One year supply. Any brand you want.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian writes a letter addressed to his mom.

PRISON GUARD ONE
Lights out!

The cell lights go out. A cockroach scoots across the floor.

Brian takes a spoon and knife out of his pillow case. He uses the spoon to scrape at the cement between the bricks. It bends in half. He chisels with the knife. It snaps.

Brian slides under his blanket and fights back tears. BLUBBERING CRIES ECHO off the cell walls.
EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian scopes out the guard towers. Some black prisoners walk toward him. He moves in a different direction.

Brian surveys the strong perimeter wall topped with ample barb wire. Morgan, John, Bill, and Ollie head over.

MORGAN
Don't even think about it.

JOHN
Every guy who's stepped foot in here has thought of escaping.

BRIAN
I'm not staying.

BILL
You're wasting your time.

BRIAN
Time's all I got, thanks to you!

JOHN
Relax.

BRIAN
You relax! Who's gonna take care of my mom?

Brian storms off.

BILL
Should've thought of that ahead of time!

MORGAN
Everyone's gotta be responsible for their actions.

OLLIE
Think we're gonna make it, Morg?

They scan the sleazy inmates.

MORGAN
Forty years is a long time. I'd say no.
INT. PRISON MESS HALL - DAY

The five new prisoners slide their trays along the steel flashing. Servers slap slop into bowls. The five make disgusting faces at the sight of the food.

Joe, Jesse, and Don stand behind them. Joe SMACKS his gum.

   JOE
   Ain't no way you guys make forty years.

Jesse slaps Ollie on the rear.

   JESSE
   I'll help you enjoy the forty.


   JOHN
   Great. Now we gotta deal with Gumby and Pokey.

   JESSE
   (Sings to the Humble Pie tune)
   Forty years in the hole! Forty years in the hole!

Brian wheels around, but Morgan turns him back.

   MORGAN
   Low profile.

   BRIAN
   This isn't happening.

   BILL
   Yeah, it is. Get used to it.

   BRIAN
   You probably wanna shoot the food.

   BILL
   Or you.

   BRIAN
   Bet now you wish you had floored it instead of helping the cop.
OLLIE
I couldn't go to Heaven if he died.

BRIAN
Well, he died. So we're not going to Heaven.

MORGAN
Knock it off you guys.

Syd watches Brian take the long way around the black prisoner section to get to the white section. Brian sits down at a long table with the others. He examines his food.

Brian dips his spoon into his soup.

BILL
Say goodbye to home cooking.

Brian sips the soup and makes a disgusting face.

MORGAN
You'll acquire a taste for it.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd walks to the center with Bill at his side. Syd's group follows.

Jesse and Don lift weights. Joe pops a stick of gum into his mouth as he studies Syd's group.

JOE
The cop killer's getting too cozy with Syd.

Guards watch Joe, Jesse, and Don get up and approach Syd's group. The guards turn and walk away.

SYD
There will always be those who spit on you, but your ultimate goal is eternal life.

Some followers spot Joe, Jesse, and Don, and quickly move away. Joe pushes his way through the group. He wallops Syd on the cheekbone sending him to one knee.

JOE
He's sending you down a wrong road.
The frightened followers watch as Syd struggles to stand. Don watches with a concerned look.

    JOE
    You're supposed to turn the other cheek.

Joe punches Syd's other cheek sending him to the ground.

    JOE
    (To the followers)
    You're wasting your time. You can't change. We're criminals and we're all going to hell.

Joe, Jesse, and Don walk off. A concerned Don looks back at Syd.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian sits at a long table with several open books and a legal pad. A puffy-faced Syd walks over with a Bible.

    BRIAN
    You've got a lot of guts, or no brains.

    SYD
    Don't let evil get the best of you, but conquer evil by doing good. Romans, Twelve, twenty-one.

    BRIAN
    Take a hike. Brian, Four, twenty-three.

    SYD
    I'd like to read you a passage from Matthew.

    BRIAN
    Get lost, Syd.

    SYD
    Change is a bad word because we have to leave our comfortable world behind.

Syd sets the Bible down. Brian shoves the Bible, which zips across the table and onto the floor. Syd picks up the Bible and dusts it off with his shirt.
EXT. PRISON YARD – DAY

Armed guards watch the prisoners from their towers.

Brian and the other four stand in the white prisoner section keeping a lookout for ambushers. The Hispanic and black groups do the same. Bernie walks over.

BRIAN
Didn't you just leave this place?

BERNIE
Yeah, but I always end up doing something stupid. Name's Bernie.

BRIAN
Name's Brian. The preacher took quite a beating the other day.

BERNIE
Syd? He gets beat up all the time. Won't hit back...something about God inside each of us.

JOHN
Why beat him up?

BERNIE
He keeps the prisoners in line. That's their job.

Bernie points at Joe, Jesse, and Don.

BERNIE
Guards give 'em treats for keeping us in line...makes their job easier.

JOHN
Can't they just kill him?

BRIAN
Yeah, Bill will do it.

BERNIE
No one wants to stay here longer than they have to.

BRIAN
A lifer's got nothing to lose.
BERNIE
They don't hate Syd. That'd be cutting off their meal ticket.

Syd walks by with his followers. Bill follows. Brian heads toward the library.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian reads a letter from his mom. He looks at a photo of his mom. He gets out a pen and paper.

GUARD BAKER
Lights out!

The lights go out. Brian slides into bed with the picture. A mouse scurries across the floor. He CRIES. Other CRIES ECHO throughout the prison.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian plays poker for cigarettes with Morgan, John, and Ollie. Brian is low on cigarettes while Morgan has lots of cigarettes in front of him.

Morgan deals the cards. Brian looks at his cards, makes a disgusted face, and SLAMS his cards down on the table.

BRIAN
Fold!

MORGAN
You give up way too easily.

JOHN
At least take some cards.

BRIAN
I'm out.

Brian leaves the table. He watches Syd and Bill walk to the center of the yard with Bibles. Very few followers gather. Prisoners keep a watch on Joe, Jesse, and Don.

JESSE
Wanna growl 'em?

Joe rubs his knuckles.
JOE
Nah. Syd's head must be made of concrete.

More prisoners gather around Syd and Bill when they see the three lift weights.

SYD
We've all sinned. It's never too late to ask for forgiveness.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Syd watches Bill stride over to Brian seated at his usual table.

BILL
Wanna do some preaching with Syd and me?

BRIAN
So I can get worked over? No, thanks.

BILL
You're not gonna get worked over. Then at least join us.

BRIAN
No thanks.

Syd marches over.

SYD
I'd like to read you that passage from Matthew.

BRIAN
I'm busy.

SYD
Too busy for God?

BRIAN
He did a lot of good having me sent here.

BILL
Maybe you sent yourself. You can't stay angry at God forever.
Syd and Bill walk over to other prisoners at another table. Prison Guard Baker strides over to Brian.

GUARD BAKER
Your mom's waiting for you in the visitor's box.

Brian darts off.

INT. VISITOR'S BOX - DAY

A large, Plexiglas partition separates Brian from a gaunt Mary. Each puts a palm against the glass in the hopes of touching the other. They each pick up a telephone.

MARY
How are they treating you?

BRIAN
Lousy. I have to plug my nose to eat the food.

MARY
Why, Brian?

BRIAN
What else could I do? We were strapped.

MARY
So you'd rather rot in hell for killing a police officer.

BRIAN
Mom--

MARY
It's true!

BRIAN
If God exists, he wouldn't have let me get caught...or given you cancer...or taken Dad. If he really exists, why does he let anything bad happen?

MARY
We don't know his overall plan. You have to have faith, Brian.

Mary pulls out the worn memorial card and holds it against the glass.
MARY

I pray that somehow you'll be with me and Dad. Please, Brian. Our family chain must link again.

The guard escorts Mary away. Brian and Mary lock eyes until she leaves the room.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A hand reaches into a mailbox and pulls out letters. In his uniform, PRISON GUARD DONALDSON (50), dishonest, thumbs through the letters on the way to the front door.

Prison Guard Donaldson flips over a letter which has no return address. He rips open the letter. Inside are several large bills.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd and Bill preach to their followers in the center of the yard. Joe, Jesse, and Don lift weights.

Joe, Jesse, and Don get up from the weight benches. They conceal shanks in their hands. The three march toward Syd's group. Don stops, tosses his shank, and goes back.

Joe and Jesse close in on Syd's group. Some of the followers spot the two men and hurry off.

Joe stabs Bill in the side. He drops to the ground gasping for air. Joe and Jesse stab Bill repeatedly. Bill tries to block the rapid strikes with his hands, but is overpowered.

EAR-SPLITTING ALARMS BLARE. Don drops his head.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

A guard races past Brian. Brian looks out a window. He rushes out the door.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Tear gas canisters bounce off the ground sending out plumes of white smoke.

Prisoners lie down on their stomachs. A large CROWD CHEERS.
CROWD
Kill him!  Kill him!

Brian races to the crowd. He gets a glimpse of Bill bleeding profusely.

Brian pushes his way to Bill who looks up at Brian. Bill lies in a pool of blood with his arms straight out from his body and bloody palms facing up.

BILL
Sorry for changing your life, Brian.

BRIAN
It's alright. I forgive you.

BILL
I'm going to meet my maker.

BRIAN
Don't talk, Bill.

BILL
You can still change, Brian.

Bill's face gets white. His eyes glass over.

Guards in gas masks restore order.

Guards haul away Joe and Jesse.

INT. DON'S CELL - NIGHT

The cell door opens. Don enters. Several cartons of cigarettes are on his bed. He rips apart the cartons.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian walks over to his usual table carrying several law books. He sees a Bible on the table. He tosses the Bible onto another table.

A bruised Syd limps over to Brian.

SYD
Still too busy for God?

BRIAN
How do I get a knife?
SYD
Why do you want--

BRIAN
How do I get a knife?

Syd points at Brian's chair.

SYD
You're sitting on about twenty knives, but if you kill someone don't expect to go to Heaven.

BRIAN
I'm not going to Heaven.

SYD
You don't know that.

BRIAN
How long are they gonna be in solitary?

SYD
A long time.

BRIAN
Can't believe he's gone.

SYD
I've seen men have their throats slashed right in front of me. When you see a man lose his life, it changes your life forever.

EXT. PRISON YARD – DAY

Brian sits alone at a table. The workout area is empty. Morgan, John, and Ollie listen to Syd preach. Don listens to Syd from the back of the group. He walks over to Brian.

BRIAN
What do you want? Fat piece of...

DON
I didn't know they were going to kill him.

BRIAN
Don't give me that! You could've stopped it!
DON
And have them do the same to me?
I'd be dead a long time ago if I wasn't hang'n with them.

BRIAN
You let a guy die for some lousy cigarettes.

DON
You let a cop die for a few bucks.

Syd's group breaks up. Morgan, John, and Ollie hustle over to Brian and Don.

OLLIE
Syd says you got a shot at Heaven!

Morgan gets in Don's face.

MORGAN
Get out of here you fat tub of goo.

Don leaves.

JOHN
He says you'll probably have to spend some time in Purgatory.

OLLIE
Maybe we all have a shot.

BRIAN
We can't get to Heaven.

OLLIE
Why not?

BRIAN
You went to church. Thou shall not kill.

JOHN
Is that what you think?

MORGAN
I always thought if you did more good than bad you went to Heaven.

OLLIE
Bein' golden.
Some have confused looks.

OLLIE
Live by The Golden Rule.

JOHN
There's gotta be more to it than that.

BRIAN
Obey the Ten Commandments.

MORGAN
No one in here has.

OLLIE
No one outside has.

JOHN
You say'n nobody's going to Heaven? I'm not buying it.

MORGAN
If that's the case, why have a Heaven?

OLLIE
I thought God wants us all with him.

BRIAN
Not murderers.

Syd strolls over.

SYD
Maybe not, but he forgives those who believe.

BRIAN
Face it. We're damaged goods.

SYD
Maybe prison's Purgatory on Earth and then we go straight to Heaven.

BRIAN
Dream on.

JOHN
Doesn't anyone know what it takes to get to Heaven?
OLLIE
Guess we'll know in the end.

JOHN
Isn't it worth the chance to be with your mom and dad, Brian?

INT. PRISON CHURCH - DAY

Several prisoners, including Brian, Morgan, John, Ollie, and Syd watch CLERGYMAN (30), well-intentioned, use an aspergillum to sprinkle holy water on Bill's coffin.

LATER

Brian meets with Clergyman at the back of the church.

CLERGYMAN
Bill's in Heaven with his maker.

BRIAN
He can't be. He killed a police officer.

CLERGYMAN
He repented his sins and preached the word of God.

BRIAN
Yeah, but--

CLERGYMAN
Who are we to say who God keeps out of His kingdom?

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian uses a large book to conceal the Bible hidden inside. The Bible is opened to Exodus 20, The Ten Commandments.

Brian runs his finger down The Ten Commandments. He pauses at number six: Thou Shalt Not Kill. He runs his finger down to number eight: Thou Shalt Not Steal.

Brian slams the Bible shut.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Brian enters. The steel door slams shut. An envelope is on his bed. He opens it and takes out the worn motto card he
kept on his nightstand as a youngster. He reads the enclosed letter.

INSERT THE LETTER

Dear Brian McClean,

You have our deepest sympathy as we regret to inform you that your mother, Mary Geraldine McClean, passed away Friday, November 26 due to a heart attack.

Sincerely,
Gerald Johnson, Warden

He falls on his bed and clenches his fist around the letter. A rat runs across the floor.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie sit at a table with their backs to each other as they watch for ambushers.

MORGAN
Sorry about your mom.

JOHN
Sorry.

Brian wheels around.

BRIAN
Why couldn't we just get jobs like everyone else?

JOHN
You can't change that now.

He looks around at all the questionable characters.

BRIAN
Now my parents are in Heaven and I'm here with this scum.

JOHN
Way to love one another, Brian.

MORGAN
We have to be rehabilitated.
BRIAN
Prison isn't for rehabilitating!
It's to punish you! People don't change.

MORGAN
People in here change.

BRIAN
Bullcrap.

JOHN
What? Ten percent, Morg?

MORGAN
More.

OLLIE
Maybe even make it to Heaven.

BRIAN
Bull.

MORGAN
You don't know.

BRIAN
This is hell on Earth before we go through hell in hell.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

A hearse leads a small caravan.

A prison bus with steel bars across the windows parks. Guard Baker and ANOTHER GUARD, both in black suits, help Brian exit the bus. Guard Baker removes Brian's ankle shackles, but keeps him in handcuffs.

LATER

Brian and the small group of people watch Mary's casket get lowered into the ground.

Guard Baker sees Brian constantly looking around.

GUARD BAKER
Don't even think about it...unless you want to join her.

People leave. The guards escort Brian away. Brian looks back at his mother's final resting spot.
INT. BRIAN'S CELL - EVENING

Brian enters. The steel door CLANGS shut. He notices a Bible on his bed. He slides the Bible between the steel bars and sets it on the ground outside his cell.

Brian stares at the Bible. He turns to the cell next door.

BRIAN
Hey, Bernie.

BERNIE (O.S.)
Yeah.

BRIAN
How well does Syd know the Bible?

BERNIE (O.S.)
Knows it better than anyone in here. Why?

BRIAN
Just wondering.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian reaches for a law book on a book shelf. He notices several Bibles mixed in with the law books.

LATER

There are several piles of legal books on Brian's table. Syd watches an agitated Brian write on a legal pad and quickly erase what he just wrote.

Brian frustratingly scratches over what he just wrote, tears the sheet off the pad, crumples it into a ball, and heaves it across the room. Syd approaches Brian.

SYD
Face the fact. You're gonna be here awhile.

BRIAN
I could just end it all.

Syd is shocked.

SYD
If you kill yourself, you can't go to Heaven.
BRIAN
If I breathe, I can't go to Heaven.

SYD
God isn't for bailing you out when times are tough and ignored when times are good.

BRIAN
Why me?

SYD
No one said life was gonna be easy. All these books, but you're missing the most important one.

He taps his Bible.

BRIAN
I was involved in a murder. I can't go to--

SYD
I know!

Prisoners look over.

BRIAN
God's not gonna like what He sees when He watches my life's film.

SYD
He already knows what you've done. He doesn't have to wait till your life's over. Who knows what he'll decide?

BRIAN
Hell. That's what.

SYD
You think because you sinned you might as well give up? We're all sinners. That's why he died on the cross for us.

BRIAN
Yeah, but--
SYD
Don't you want your film to show you in the best light from this point forward?

Brian ponders this. He rests his hand on the top of the chair next to him for what seems like an eternity.

SYD
Look, if you don't think you've got a chance, at least help others try to get to Heaven. Maybe it'll help you get to Heaven.

Brian pulls the chair out. Syd sits down and slides the law books away.

Brian reads the Bible. Prisoners SNICKER at him. He slides a large book back and hides the Bible inside the large book.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - DAY

Brian lies in bed. A prisoner pushes a book cart outside his cell. Brian points at the cart. The prisoner passes him a Bible between the steel bars.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian and Syd read their Bibles. Syd notices Brian's Bible hidden inside a larger book.

SYD
Does God embarrass you?

Brian sets the larger book down exposing the Bible. He gets antsy in his chair.

BRIAN
This is too hard.

Syd slides Brian's legal pad toward Brian. He tears off Brian's law notes and crumples them up.

SYD
Take your time. Make some notes.

Brian looks blankly past his Bible. His eyes get moist.

BRIAN
Are any of us going to Heaven?
Syd slips a tasseled bookmark into his Bible.

BRIAN
I mean, if He loves us, why can't we all go to Heaven?

SYD
I don't know. Maybe we're examples to others to not do the things we did.

BRIAN
Are we going to Heaven?

SYD
Almost all of us can if we have faith.

BRIAN
Almost all? God doesn't take murderers, does he?

Syd shifts in his chair.

SYD
Maybe not the actual killer.

BRIAN
Bill's not in Heaven, is he?

SYD
I prayed for him since he got here.

BRIAN
Is he?

SYD
He changed his ways...had faith at the end. It's up to God now.

Brian places a tasseled bookmark in his Bible and closes it.

SYD
We're only spinning through space on this blue and white marble for a short time. What we do on Earth for seventy years is nothing compared to what awaits us in Heaven for eternity.
EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

A much slimmer Don jogs alongside the perimeter wall.

Morgan, John, and Ollie watch for ambushers as Brian and Syd read their Bibles.

BRIAN
You really think there's a God?

SYD
Guy, Brian. You sure you were raised Catholic? Come here.

Syd and Brian march across the yard and up several concrete steps.

SYD
We've all had strange miracles happen to us, so there's a God.

The two reach the top. Brian tries to catch his breath. They observe an extraordinary sunset over the harbor.

SYD
Who do you think made that? It sure wasn't man.

INT. PRISON - DAY

Guards escort four prisoners out of the room marked "PROCESSING." They carry blankets, sheets, and soap as they approach Brian. Brian looks up at Warden Johnson who nods.

Brian offers a Bible to each of the four prisoners as they walk by. The first three decline the Bibles. The last prisoner accepts a Bible.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

Syd and Brian preach to several prisoners including Don.

Don's eyes fill with fear when he sees Joe and Jesse exit a building. He immediately heads for the weight benches. Other followers see Joe and Jesse and quickly leave.

Joe and Jesse glare at Syd and Brian. Brian abruptly leaves for his usual table.

Syd marches over to Brian.
BRIAN
I can't do it Syd.

SYD
Not even for God?

BRIAN
I don't want to get killed.

SYD
You promised you'd help the others get to Heaven.

BRIAN
Sorry, Syd.

LATER

Syd and Brian preach to a tiny group far away from Joe, Jesse, and Don. Brian anxiously keeps an eye on the three.

Brian and Guard Donaldson see Joe, Jesse, and Don head toward the group. Brian zips toward his table. Guard Donaldson turns and walks away.

Joe and Jesse push their way through the group while Don acts as a lookout. They knock Syd to the ground and kick him. Don spots a guard. He WHISTLES. The three leave.

Brian hustles to Syd. He pauses when he hears him mumbling.

SYD
Lord, please forgive them, for they know not what they do. Help me show them your truth and light.

INT. PRISON LIBRARY - DAY

Brian and bruised Syd read their Bibles.

BRIAN
Why'd you get into preaching?

SYD
Guys would get out, and end up right back in here. I wanted them to make a real change...to find God.

BRIAN
Any of 'em change?
SYD

Some.

BRIAN

Why are you here, Syd?

Syd swallows hard.

SYD

I looked all over for a job. Nobody would hire me. We had no food. One Sunday after mass, I stole the collection money. Father McCarthy startled me. There was a struggle. He slipped and hit his head.

Brian is stunned.

BRIAN

You killed him?

SYD

I promised God I'd try to be like Father McCarthy and change every man that walked in here.

BRIAN

You can't go to Heaven?

SYD

It's in His hands now. I pray He'll show mercy on me when it's my time.

LATER

Syd and Brian preach to a group. Joe, Jesse, and Don burst through a door. Brian tries to leave, but Joe throws him against a wall. Joe and Jesse punch and kick Brian and Syd while Don acts as a lookout.

ALARMS BLARE. Guards rush in. They haul off Joe and Jesse. Morgan, Bill, and Ollie tend to Brian and Syd.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY

SUPER: THIRTY-THREE YEARS LATER

Brian (61), has a scowl expression etched on his face that looks like it's been there for decades. He, Morgan (64), John (64), and Ollie (63), watch for ambushers.
A large, mixed group assists frail Syd (64), to the center of the yard.

Morgan, John, and Ollie head toward Syd's group. Brian stays.

Joe, Jesse, and Don (58), show the wear and tear of long prison lives. Ollie approaches.

OLLIE
Come on, Joe.

JOE
No thanks, Ollie.

JESSE
Jesse?

OLLIE
Jesse

Ollie and Don head over to Syd's group.

PRISON GUARD ONE (40), cautious, notices a large group of Hispanics studying Syd's group. He passes Syd.

PRISON GUARD ONE
Hispanics are planning something.

Syd scans the Hispanic group.

Armed tower guards, sensing something, keep a keen watch over the yard.

The large Hispanic group eyes Joe and Jesse. Several of the Hispanics walk in one direction while others walk in the opposite direction.

The remaining Hispanics speed walk straight toward Joe and Jesse who show panic for the first time. All three groups pick up speed as they converge on Joe and Jesse like killer bees. The Hispanics kick and thrust shanks into the men.

ALARMS BLARE. Tear gas canisters bounce on the asphalt sending out contrails of white smoke. Joe tries to run, but is quickly kicked, beaten, and stabbed.

Prisoners lie on their stomachs as an army of guards regains control. Joe's and Jesse's battered bodies lie unrecognizable in pools of blood.

Don watches as Joe's and Jesse's blood snake downhill towards Brian. Brian does a push-up to let the blood run
under him. He fights to hold the push-up. He collapses into the blood. The blood soaks into his clothes.

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Syd and WARDEN SEGERSTROM (55), blissful, look out a window at the active prison yard.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM
We've always appreciated your help in keeping a peaceful prison, Syd.

SYD
Morgan's group wouldn't hurt an ant.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM
I'll see what I can do.

SYD
Thank you, sir.

WARDEN SEGERSTROM
You sure you don't want a hearing for yourself? I could set up--

SYD
My work's not done here. Never will be.

EXT. PRISON HEARING BOARDROOM - DAY

Morgan, John, and Ollie pace anxiously. An ecstatic Brian bounces out and hugs the three.

INT. MESS HALL - DAY

Syd and the four are jovial.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER (25), condescending, heads over.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER
You're only being let out because we don't have space for you. You'll never contribute anything to society.

BRIAN
Better hope we don't find out where you live.
Prison Guard Snider stares Brian down before leaving.

MORGAN
You didn't need to do that.

BRIAN
I don't care.

JOHN
I'm not going to miss this place one bit.

OLLIE
I'll be the first one out. Where are we going?

MORGAN
We can pool the money they're gonna give us.

OLLIE
Where are we going to stay?

MORGAN
We can grab a cheap place. Our moving expenses shouldn't be much.

JOHN
It's called jump on a bus and go.

They laugh.

SYD
Either that or hitchhike.

BRIAN
Nobody hitchhikes anymore.

OLLIE
Too many bad guys.

JOHN
We just spent thirty-seven years behind bars. We are the bad guys.

SYD
There's going to be a lot of people racing to work, getting the kids to school. Don't let 'em forget about God. Where you headed?
MORGAN
Back to Orange County, I guess.

OLLIE
Don't know anywhere else.

INT. BRIAN'S CELL - NIGHT
Brian lies in bed reading the worn memorial card. He looks at the photo of his mother.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER
Lights out!

The lights go out.

SNIFFLES grow into BLUBBERING CRIES echoing off the walls.

EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY
The four grinning prisoners are dressed in white t-shirts and khaki pants. Each holds a cardboard box.

Morgan, John, and Ollie have a dirt, cross shape on their foreheads. Syd bends down and rubs his thumb in the dirt. He makes the sign of the cross on Brian's forehead.

SYD
Remember that you are dust and to dust you shall return.

Brian and Syd shake hands.

BRIAN
Thanks for everything, Syd. I'll never forget you.

MORGAN
Don't ever change, Syd.

Brian and the others hug Syd.

SYD
Get to confession and receive the Eucharist right away.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER
Let's go.

Prison Guard Snider escorts the four prisoners toward the giant gates.
PRISON GUARD SNIDER
(To Brian)
You'll never make it to Heaven.

Morgan steps between Brian and the guard.

MORGAN
(To Brian)
Keep moving.

The inmates have their eyes fixed on the threshold.

JOHN
This is unbelievable.

OLLIE
What's the world gonna look like after so long?

BRIAN
My dad used to take me camping every summer. Home always seemed so different after only being gone a week.

Their pace slows. The gates open and the four walk through.

PRISON GUARD SNIDER
See you shortly, ladies.

Brian waves goodbye to Syd, who makes the sign of the cross. Prison Guard Snider goes back inside the compound as the giant gates close behind him.

Morgan barely touches the massive wall.

MORGAN
The last time I saw this side was when they brought us in.


The four creep down the street into their new world.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie scan their new surroundings as they ramble along a storefront sidewalk. Passersby and store owners eyeball the four. John looks inside his box.
JOHN
We got enough old stuff to open an antique shop.

OLLIE
Let's pool the eight hundred bucks and try our luck in Vegas?

The other three give him "You idiot" looks.

A lady walking a dog approaches. The four find it difficult to make eye contact.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie climb aboard a bus with a destination sign which reads: LOS ANGELES.

INT. BUS - DAY

The four gaze at the rural landscape.

EXT. BUS STATION - DAY

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie step off the bus.

SUPER: COSTA MESA, CA

Well-dressed people with sleek cell phones and I-Pods rubberneck at the four.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The four spot a sports bar.

JOHN
We haven't had hops in four decades.

BRIAN
Let's hoist one for Bill.

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The four enter and immediately receive funny looks from the patrons. Like scared rabbits, they head straight to the men's restroom.
MEN'S RESTROOM

The four do their business.

They look around for the flush handles.

OLLIE

How do you flush this thing?

They step away and the toilets flush automatically.

BRIAN

Wow.

They squirt soap on their hands. They look for faucet handles. They watch a man swipe his hands under a faucet and see water pour out. The man puts his hands up to a paper towel dispenser and paper towels spring out.

AT THE BAR

The four sit at the long bar on bar stools. Dozens of TVs play.

OLLIE

Look at all the TVs.

JOHN

Look how clear the pictures are.

BARTENDER (40), impatient, peers at the four.

MORGAN

Four Falstaffs.

BARTENDER

Falstaff? What's that?

MORGAN

How 'bout four Lucky beers?

BARTENDER

Never heard of it.

JOHN

Pabst?

OLLIE

Brew 102?

BRIAN

Look, bud--
BARTENDER
Got Bud.

Bartender reaches into a small refrigerator, opens, and disperses four Budweiser beers. The four raise their bottles.

MORGAN
To Bill.

JOHN
Here, here.

BRIAN
I hope you're in Heaven with your family.

MORGAN
I'm glad I'm on the right side of dirt.

OLLIE
When I go, I don't want you guys spending a lot on my funeral.

JOHN
We'll just throw a sheet over ya.

They laugh. John looks over a menu and almost spits out his beer.

JOHN
Five bucks for a beer! We used to get a case for that!

Morgan grabs the menu from him.

MORGAN
We gotta watch every dime from here on out.

EXT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The four exit. Three kids, including RICARDO (12), tattoos, carry spray paint cans as they're chased by HARDWARE STORE OWNER (50).

HARDWARE STORE OWNER
Damn kids! You're gonna end up in prison!

Morgan spots a Wells Fargo bank across the street.
MORGAN
Wells Fargo!

Morgan runs across the street. A car HONKS and narrowly misses him. The others follow.

OLLIE
I hope we're not gonna rob it. Cause I don't have another thirty-seven years.

INT. BANK - DAY

The four sit at BANKER'S (30) desk. Ollie points at the monitor on his desk.

OLLIE
That's a computer!

Banker looks at Ollie funny.

BRIAN
He doesn't get out much.

A secretary delivers a check to Banker who hands the check to Morgan.

BANKER
Here you are, Mr. Ehlers. We always wondered what happened to you.

The four grin at the check with wide eyes.

INT. PRIMERICA OFFICE - DAY

The four sit across from PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE (50).

PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE
American Express bought E.F. Hutton and then we bought it from them.

A secretary hands a check to Primerica Executive who looks it over before she hands it over to Morgan.

PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE
You're an excellent example of buy and hold investing, Mr. Ehlers. A long-term investor today is someone who holds a stock for an
PRIMERICA EXECUTIVE

hour.

Morgan and the others gasp at the check.

MORGAN
I thought Chevron and Exxon would do well.

EXT. PRIMERICA OFFICE - DAY

The four exit.

JOHN
Now we can get a place!

OLLIE
And have all the women and booze we want!

BRIAN
Wait a minute. This is Morgan's money.

They stare at Morgan.

MORGAN
I've lived with you guys for so long. I'm not going to leave you now.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Brian kneels at his mother's and father's graves.

BRIAN
Sorry, I'll never be with you.

EXT. MCCLEAN HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at his old house from the sidewalk.

Brian KNOCKS on the front door. AUNT ELIZABETH (85), quarrelsome, opens the door.

BRIAN
Hi, Aunt Elizabeth. It's me, Brian.
AUNT ELIZABETH
I know who you are. What do you want?

BRIAN
I just wanted to stop by and see how you're doing.

AUNT ELIZABETH
I'm fine. Please, don't ever come back here.

She SLAMS the door. Brian walks slowly down the front steps.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at a house with an American flag out front. He slowly walks off without taking his eyes off the house.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian saunters along the sidewalk. A car waits at a red light. A young girl in the back of the car smiles at Brian who forces a smile back.

Brian watches several well-dressed people hustle past his old church with sparse, bland landscape. The dirty sign out front reads: OUR LADY QUEEN OF ANGELS CATHOLIC CHURCH. Brian continues on.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - DAY

John, Brian, and Ollie move a sofa into place against a wall.

They flop down on the sofa with LOUD EXHALES.

MORGAN
Here.

Morgan hands each of them an envelope. They open the envelopes to expose large bills.

JOHN
Holy cow, Morgan!
MORGAN
We were ordered around for so long, I want you to enjoy the time you have left.

BRIAN
A little girl in a car smiled at me today. It made me think how I missed out having a wife and kids.

MORGAN
I'm afraid we all missed out on that.

OLLIE
Maybe we're lucky. Seen how snooty people are?

BRIAN
We hurt our families.

MORGAN
How many times were they asked where we were? How come we don't see Morgan anymore?

BRIAN
What'd they tell 'em?

MORGAN
My family said I was an international banker...always out of the country.

JOHN
I was overseas in the military, or something.

OLLIE
I was a pitcher for the Baltimore Orioles.

BRIAN
You?

OLLIE
That didn't last long, cuz they couldn't find my name on the team roster.

They laugh.
EXT. STREET - DAY

An HISPANIC GARDENER (50), smiles at Brian who walks along a store-lined street. Graffiti is spray painted on buildings. Some windows are broken.

Brian spots a fruit stand owner, WENDY (40), glum, in front of her store.

BRIAN
Good morning.

Wendy glances at his clothes and looks away. Brian looks at his clothes and moves on.

A lady, JUDY (35), and her daughter SARAH (10), approach from the opposite direction.

BRIAN
Hello.

Judy and Sarah look at Brian's unkempt hair and look away.

Brian rambles sullenly along a sidewalk. He looks over at his old church. He continues on.

INT. PRODUCE STORE OFFICE - DAY

Wendy stews at a desk with several envelopes marked "FINAL NOTICE." With one swoop of her hand she flings the envelopes off the desk.

EXT. THRIFT STORE - DAY

Brian exits wearing nicer clothes.

EXT. BARBER SHOP - DAY

Brian exits sporting a new haircut.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Brian sees a schoolgirl, CAMI (10), waiting on the bench.

BRIAN
Hi.
Cami glances at Brian's tattoos and looks away. Brian looks over the bus schedule.

BRIAN
Do you know how to read this thing?

Bus Twenty-three approaches.

BRIAN
I guess I'll take this one.

The bus pulls to the curb.

INT. BUS - DAY

JESUS (8), Hispanic, needy, warmhearted, sees well-dressed kids JOSH (10), unfriendly, and CORY (11), cruel, get on and approach down the center aisle. Jesus pulls out a red, heart-shaped box from his backpack. He rubs the box.

Cory smacks Jesus on the head.

CORY
Illegal alien.

JOSH
Nice clothes.

Brian gets on. He scans the packed, quiet bus. A notice at the front of the bus reads: PASSENGERS MUST BE SEATED AT ALL TIMES.

Brian pulls a bill from his wallet and tries to give it to the driver, DAVID (30), fat, short-tempered, uptight.

DAVID
I don't take it! Put it in there!

He points at the bill acceptor. Brian tries to figure out where to put the money into the machine. In the side view mirror, David sees an old lady jogging toward his bus. David snatches the bill from Brian and feeds it into the machine.

DAVID
Sit down!

Passengers SNICKER. Brian sits in the front row next to DELORES (50), heavy makeup, guarded.

BRIAN
Hello, I'm Brian.
Delores looks out the window. The old lady catches up to the bus. David floors it leaving a plume of black smoke in her face.

EXT. BUS STOP – DAY

Brian steps off the bus. He gapes at all the trees, buildings, and people. A man approaches.

BRIAN
Good morning.

The man walks past. Brian sees CINDY (40), with her daughter KENDRA (7).

BRIAN
Nice day, isn't it?

Cindy notices Brian's arm tattoos. She pulls Kendra in close to her side as they walk by. Another lady approaches.

BRIAN
Morning.

The lady sees his tattoos and looks away.

EXT. STREET – DAY

Pedestrians give Brian plenty of room on the sidewalk. There's more graffiti and broken store windows.

Hardware Store Owner surveys the vandalism.

HARDWARE STORE OWNER
Damn kids!

Brian observes busy people hustling past the church. He sees a sign which reads: CONFESSIONS THURSDAY 6:00 P.M.

EXT. HOUSE – DAY

Brian stands on the sidewalk staring at a house.

Brian knocks on the front door. His UNCLE BILL (85), reluctant, uncooperative, answers the door.

BRIAN
Hi, Uncle Bill. It's Brian. I just wanted to say--
UNCLE BILL
Do you realize all the embarrassment you caused? Don't come around here anymore. You hear me?

BRIAN
Yes, sir.

Uncle Bill closes the door. Brian glumly turns and leaves.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY
Brian gawks at the house with the American flag.

EXT. BEACH - DAY
JOGGER (25), cases beachfront houses. He notices a home with the drapes closed and a heavy dusting of sand on the patio furniture.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT
Brian enters the dim, cavernous building. He sees short lines of people outside of confessional boxes. He walks over and fidgets in one of the lines.

The door opens and a young girl exits. The girl stares at Brian's tattoos. Brian looks at his arms.

CONFESSIONAL BOX ONE
Brian kneels down. FATHER O' MALLEY (70), old-fashioned, intolerant, slides open an opaque window revealing another opaque window with several small holes.

BRIAN
Bless me father for I have sinned. The last time I went to confession was over forty years ago.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Forty years! Don't you love the Lord?

BRIAN
Yes, Father.
FATHER O' MALLEY
Don't you ever read the Bible?

BRIAN
When I get a chance.

FATHER O' MALLEY
What do you do for work?

BRIAN
I'm not working.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Then you have plenty of time to read the Bible. Do you have a family?

BRIAN
No, father.

FATHER O' MALLEY
So you have no wife, no kids, and no job? What have you been doing the last forty years? Sitting in prison?

BRIAN
No.

Brian drops his head. He leaves the confessional.

OUTSIDE CONFESSIONAL BOX ONE

Brian sees another confessional box.

CONFESSIONAL BOX TWO

Brian kneels down. FATHER KEN (40), black, thoughtful, analytical, slides open an opaque window revealing another opaque window with small holes.

BRIAN
Bless me father for I have sinned. The last time I went to confession was thirty seconds ago.

OUTSIDE CONFESSIONAL BOX TWO

Brian waits as Father Ken exits. Father Ken puts his arm around Brian. The two sit in a pew.
BRIAN
I used to go to this school. I never thought I'd have the life I've had.

FATHER KEN
I commend you for wanting to change your ways. To love others is to love God.

BRIAN
Father Ken, how can I love others if they won't even say hello?

FATHER KEN
If you wait long enough, people will show you their good side.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

An hourglass, with over half the sand in the bottom half, rests on a table. Brian lies on a doctor's lounge chair with a bright light on each arm. A doctor uses lasers to remove Brian's tattoos.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

John enters with pizza boxes. He sits next to the others on the couch watching TV. He looks at Brian's arms.

JOHN
Hurt, didn't it?

BRIAN
Like getting splattered with hot grease. You gonna do it?

JOHN
I'm thinking about it.

They dig in to the pizza. The TV NEWSCASTER reports.

TV NEWSCASTER (V.O.)
A ten year-old girl was the victim of a drive-by shooting today...

BRIAN
Let's kill the TV and eat together at the table.
They turn off the TV and bring the pizza to the kitchen table.

BRIAN
I'd like to say grace.

The three stare at Brian. They set their pizza down. They watch Brian make the sign of the cross, fold his hands and bow his head. They do the same.

BRIAN
Bless us O Lord and these our gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord, amen.

The other three raise their heads and reach for their pizza.

BRIAN
Angel of God our guardian dear...

The three fold their hands again.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian looks at the church. He continues on.

Two boys approach tattoo-less Brian from the opposite direction.

BRIAN
Hi.

The boys look away. Brian crosses the street to the produce store. Wendy arranges apples out front.

BRIAN
Everything looks so fresh.

WENDY
We get this stuff all the time.

Brian chooses an apple and hands Wendy some change. She watches Brian cross the street.

Brian walks spiritlessly through an alley. He looks up at the sky with moist eyes.

BRIAN
Why, God?
Brian KICKS a commercial trash can. He hears WHIMPERING. He looks behind the trash can. He sees a dirty, bloody border collie tied to a chain link fence with barbed wire.

Brian carefully frees the dog from the barbed wire. The dog licks Brian.

Brian carries the blood-soaked dog to a nearby house. He hoes it down. The skinny dog drinks a lot of water and shakes water off its body. Brian takes off his shirt and pat-dries the dog.

Brian shakes out his shirt and puts it back on. He walks away. The dog follows.

Brian notices the dog following him.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Cami is on the bench. Brian reads the bus schedule.

    BRIAN
    Do you have the time?

Cami looks at Brian's bloody shirt and the somewhat bloody dog. She looks away. Brian pets the dog. Bus Twenty-three pulls up.

    BRIAN
    Stay away from your owner.

The dog watches Brian get on the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

The bus is packed, yet quiet. Jesus looks at the dog and then Brian.

    BRIAN
    Good morning.

David looks out the window and honks the horn at a car blocking the road.

    DAVID
    Come on! Move!

Brian slides a bill into the bill acceptor. He sits down in the first row next to Delores.
EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

The dog watches the bus leave until it's out of sight. It lies down.

INT. BUS - DAY

Delores looks out the window.

BRIAN
Good morning.

DELORES
You wanna meet for dinner tonight?

BRIAN
Yeah.

DELORES
Where do you wanna meet?

BRIAN
I'm new around here. You tell me.

Delores turns to Brian wearing a Bluetooth earpiece.

DELORES
Did you say something?

A smile disappears from Brian's face.

The bus stops and Delores gets up.

DELORES
Have a nice day.

A hint of a smile appears on her face.

INT. BUS DEPOT - DAY

Brian hops on a bus which reads: CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST.

EXT. BUS - DAY

The bus kicks up a cloud of dust along a rural road.
INT. BUS - DAY

Brian enjoys the scenery. The bus slows down. A flock of sheep blocks the road. The bus stops.

Brian watches a border collie corner a lone, black sheep in the distance. A shepherd catches the black sheep and carries it back to the flock.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Bus Twenty-three pulls to the curb. Brian exits. The dog he rescued rushes over.

    BRIAN
    You gotta be kidding.

The dog licks him wildly. Brian pets the dog.

    BRIAN
    Have you been here all day?

INT. MORGAN'S HOME - DAY

Brian gets a bowl out of the cupboard. He opens the refrigerator and puts leftover sausage and ham in the bowl.

    BRIAN
    Here you go.

He places the bowl on the floor. The dog gulps down the meal in no time. Brian gets more food out of the refrigerator and places it in the bowl. The dog eats.

BATHROOM

Brian gives the dog a bath.

    BRIAN
    Why would anyone tie you to a fence with barbed wire?

John and Ollie poke their heads in. Brian dries the dog with a towel.

    JOHN
    Why would anyone rob a bank and pop a cop?

    OLLIE
    People do stupid things.
JOHN
Are you going to keep him?

BRIAN
If it's okay with you guys.

The dog slides out from the towel and licks John and Ollie.

BRIAN
She's trying to talk her way in to it.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Cami waits at the bus stop. Her face lights up when she sees the newly-bathed dog.

CAMI
Your dogs looks terrific...compared to before.

BRIAN
I rescued her. Isn't she beautiful?

CAMI
She sure is.

Bus Twenty-three arrives. From their windows, Jesus and Delores see the dog and smile.

BRIAN
See you later, Blacky.

The doors open. Brian gets on. The doors close.

INT. BUS - DAY

The bus is packed with the usual people and quiet.

BRIAN
Good morning.

Brian puts a bill in the machine.

DAVID
(mumbles)
Morn'n.

Brian sits down in the front row next to Delores.
BRIAN
Hi.

DELORES
Hello.

Jesus gets out of his seat and sits across the aisle from Brian.

JESUS
Hi.

BRIAN
Hi. I'm Brian.

JESUS
I'm Jesus. Do you think I can play with your dog when I get back from school?

BRIAN
Sure. Did you see Blacky yesterday?

JESUS
Yeah. I wanted to play with her, but she just waited for buses.

Brian pulls a dog biscuit out of his pocket and hands it to Jesus.

BRIAN
Give her this so she knows you're a friend of mine.

The bus stops. Brian gets off. The passengers observe Jesus wave goodbye to Brian.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Blacky waits. Bus Twenty-three approaches. Blacky perks up. The doors open and Jesus gets off.

JESUS
Hi, Blacky!

Blacky watches the doors until they close. The bus leaves. Blacky lies down and waits.
Jesus takes the dog biscuit out of his pocket. Blacky wags her tail. Jesus gives her the treat. Blacky picks up an old tennis ball and drops it in front of Jesus. Jesus throws the ball, and Blacky blazes after it.

INT. BUS - DAY

Brian looks out the window.

BRIAN
Oh my God.

A crowd gathers to watch as Blacky leaps high and catches the tennis ball.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Blacky and Jesus run over to the bus stop. Brian gets off Bus Twenty-three. Blacky leaps into Brian's arms and licks him wildly.

JESUS
Blacky can do a lot of tricks
Brian! Watch!

Jesus gets down on all fours, taps his back and simultaneously throws the tennis ball up in the air. Blacky runs at Jesus, jumps off his back like a springboard, and catches the ball. More passersby stop to watch.

BRIAN
That's terrific!

JESUS
That's nothing. Watch this.

Jesus pulls a Frisbee out of his backpack. The red, heart-shaped box falls out. Jesus carefully brushes it off and places it back into his backpack.

Jesus flings the Frisbee. Blacky takes off after it, tracks it down, and makes a leaping catch.

BRIAN
Unbelievable!

JESUS
She gets every one I throw!

Brian notices other passersby, including Josh and Cory, stop to watch. A BUTCHER (40), turns to Wendy.
BUTCHER
Aren't you the produce lady?

WENDY
Yes, I'm Wendy.

The two shake hands.

Others converse and point at Blacky. Josh and Cory walk over to Jesus.

CORY
Can we play with her?

JESUS
Sure.

Jesus hands the Frisbee to Josh. Josh throws the Frisbee. Blacky retrieves it. Brian observes all the smiling faces.

INT. MORGAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Ollie enters with the mail.

OLLIE
Hey, a letter from San Quentin.

JOHN
If they made a mistake, I'm not going back.

Ollie hands the letter to Morgan who opens it. Brian, John, and Ollie gather around Morgan who reads the letter.

MORGAN
Shoot.

BRIAN
What?

Morgan hands Brian the letter. Brian reads the letter. His eyes could burn the house down as he HYPERVENTILATES.

Morgan puts a bear hug on Brian who thrashes about trying to escape.

BRIAN
Let go of me!

John reads the letter.
BRIAN
Let me go, Morgan!

Morgan releases Brian.

JOHN
Syd's in a better place now.

BRIAN
No, he's not! He killed a priest!

Brian storms out.

OLLIE
What happened?

JOHN
The young Hispanics killed Syd.

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

The full moon and abundant stars cast light on beachfront homes.

From atop a lifeguard tower, Brian watches waves crash against a jetty.

Brian wipes tears from his eyes. He steps down from the tower. He heads for the houses.

INT. BEACHFRONT HOME - NIGHT

There are large trash bags, TVs, and stereo equipment just inside the front door. Jogger hustles to the front door with trash bags swung over his shoulder.

Jogger quietly opens the front door.

EXT. BEACHFRONT HOME - NIGHT

Jogger pokes his head out and checks to see if the coast is clear. He exits and tosses the trash bags into the back of a van. He dashes back into the house.

Jogger pokes his head out. He doesn't see Brian approach from the beach. He dashes out with the TV. He places the TV inside the van and darts back to the house.

Brian sees the van with the back doors open. He checks it out.

Jogger holds the stereo over his head. Brian rolls out of the way. The stereo SMASHES onto the pavement. Brian grabs a sharp, broken piece of the stereo.

ELDERLY MAN walks his dog. He sees Brian stab Jogger in the torso. Elderly Man quickly punches three numbers on his cell phone.

Brian GASPS for air next to motionless Jogger.

Fear fills Brian's eyes. He quickly presses his hands onto Jogger's wounds to stop the bleeding. He checks Jogger's pulse. He performs CPR on Jogger as SIRENS WAIL.

Police cars SKID to stops. Police officers draw their guns at bloody Brian.

Elderly Man points at Brian. Officers handcuff Brian at gunpoint. They place him in the back seat of a patrol car.

INT. POLICE CAR - NIGHT

An ambulance SCREECHES to a halt. Brian watches with great concern as PARAMEDIC checks Jogger's pulse. He sees Paramedic shake his head. Brian kicks the steel caging.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

A bruised Brian paces the small jail cell. He lies down on the bed. He looks at the photo of his mom and the worn memorial card with moist eyes.

MARY (V.O.)
Please, Brian. Our family chain must link again.

POLICE OFFICER (35), unlocks his cell. Brian pops up.

POLICE OFFICER
We got ahold of a neighbor's surveillance video. Your story checks out.

Brian exits the jail cell.
INT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian kneels in a pew. Father Ken walks over. They sit in the pew.

BRIAN
Someone finally said hi to me.

FATHER KEN
Good, Brian! Hey, I was wondering if you'd like to be our sexton.

BRIAN
I'm not that kind of guy.

FATHER KEN
You'd take care of the church and school.

BRIAN
Oh.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Jesus, and Blacky walk down a street. Jesus tosses the tennis ball into the air and Blacky catches it. An Hispanic WINDOW CLEANER (22), smiles at Brian.

WINDOW CLEANER
Love your dog.

BRIAN
Thanks. I'm Brian.

The two shake hands.

BRIAN
I'm going to be working at the Catholic church. You're welcome there anytime.

Brian and Blacky continue on. WILBUR (40), black, a mountain of a man, races up to them.

WILBUR
That's my dog!

Blacky jumps into Brian's arms and snarls at the gigantic figure.

WILBUR
You stole my dog!
BRIAN
I didn't steal her! I rescued her.

Wilbur lunges for Blacky who barks and snaps at his hands. Wilbur backs away.

BRIAN
Why'd you tie her up?

WILBUR
Because she stopped doing tricks.

BRIAN
So you tied her up with barbed wire?

WILBUR
That's my dog!

Blacky barks at Wilbur.

BRIAN
It doesn't look like she wants you.

Brian turns and takes a couple steps.

WILBUR
I want five hundred bucks for Killer!

Brian turns around.

BRIAN
Killer? I'll get your money. And her name's Blacky.

Brian strides off. Blacky gets in one last snarl before licking Brian's face.

INT. MORGAN'S HOME - NIGHT

Brian, Morgan, John, and Ollie eat pizza at the table. Brian gives Blacky a piece of pepperoni.

BRIAN
I'm moving to the church tomorrow. They hired me to watch over it and the school in exchange for room and board.
OLLIE
Good for you, Brian.

JOHN
Will they let you take Blacky?

BRIAN
Yup.

INT. CHURCH - DAY
Brian takes several dying plants and flowers off the altar steps.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY
Brian plants the dying plants and flowers in the garden by the front steps.
Brian fertilizes and waters the garden.
Blacky spots Wilbur. She walks up to him. He pets her.

WILBUR
Please forgive me.

Blacky looks up at the church. Wilbur looks up at the church. He walks up the church steps.

Several uniformed students watch Brian clean the "OUR LADY QUEEN OF ANGELS" sign as they walk to school.

Brian polishes the giant steel cross. The blinding sunlight blasts off the cross and catches Wendy's attention. Wendy walks up the steps and enters the church.

Wilbur exits the church. He spots Brian.

WILBUR
You wouldn't let me have her back, would you?

BRIAN
She likes being with me.

WILBUR
I know.

BRIAN
There's no excuse for abuse.
WILBUR

I know.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Schoolkids play. The church is in the background. Brian washes classroom windows. He sees a MOTHER (40), walk out of the principal's office with her MISCHIEVOUS SON (8).

MOTHER
How do you ever expect to get to Heaven?

MISCHIEVOUS SON
I'll just keep running in and out and slamming the door until Saint Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, come in or stay out.'

Several schoolkids, including STUDENT (10), approach Brian.

BRIAN
Hi. How are you?

The schoolkids pass Brian. SISTER ROSEMARY (30), meddlesome, observes the schoolkids snub Brian.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Sister Rosemary sits at her desk while the students take an exam. Student approaches Sister Rosemary with her test. Student points at her test. Sister Rosemary shrugs her shoulders.

Sister Rosemary watches Student return to her desk with a perplexed look. Sister Rosemary smiles at Student who smiles back. Student gets up from her desk and races out of the classroom.

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

Student runs across campus to a shed filled with mops and cleaning supplies. Brian is startled to see Student.

STUDENT
What's your name?

BRIAN
Brian.
STUDENT
Nice to meet you, Brian.

Student takes off. Another student runs past Student in the opposite direction toward Brian's shed. Several students run toward Brian's shed.

STUDENTS
What's your name?

BRIAN
Brian.

STUDENTS
Hi, Brian! Nice to meet you!

More students run up to Brian.

STUDENTS
What's your name?

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Brian and the priests are at the dining room table with hands folded and heads bowed. Salad, fish, bread, and wine are on the table.

BRIAN
...ever this night be at our side to light, to guard, to rule, and guide, amen.

Brian and the priests make the sign of the cross.

FATHER KEN
How's it going so far?

BRIAN
Okay, I guess.

They dig into the food.

FATHER KEN
If you love one another as yourself, you'll have no problems.

FATHER O' MALLEY
The ultimate measure of a human is their love.
FATHER KEN
You were put here for a reason, Brian. We're all part of His master plan.

FATHER O' MALLEY
He gives each of us a special purpose.

FATHER KEN
If we don't seek it, it's like spitting in God's eye.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Our lives are God's gift to us and what we do with our lives is our gift back to God.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Brian dusts the altar in the dim church. A candle flickers in a red vase. He mops using a back and forth motion.

Brian kneels and looks up at the crucifix.

BRIAN
I hope I'm serving you the way you want. Please help me get to Heaven, Lord.

He hears one of the rear doors open and close. Brian hides in an area just off from the altar. He watches a small figure enter and warm himself against the radiator.

The giant crucifix attracts the attention of the small figure who moves up to the front of the church. Brian sees that it is Jesus. Jesus kneels in the front pew and folds his hands.

JESUS
Lord, please have my brother leave the gang so he doesn't get in trouble.

Jesus makes the sign of the cross and gets up. He kneels back down.

JESUS
Just so I know you've heard me, please leave me a toy car. I'll pick it up tomorrow. And could you please put a man in it? Thanks.
He makes the sign of the cross and leaves.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

Bus Twenty-three pulls to the curb. Brian pets Blacky.

BRIAN
Be a good girl.

CAMI
Have a nice day, Brian.

BRIAN
You too, Cami. Make someone smile today.

Brian gets on the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY

The people are more talkative.

BRIAN
Good morning.

DAVID
Good morning.

Brian puts his bill in the bill acceptor and sits in his usual front seat.

BRIAN
Good morning.

DELORES
Good morning.

Jesus sits across from Brian.

JESUS
Hi, Brian. How's Blacky?

BRIAN
Great. Jesus, do you have any brothers or sisters?

JESUS
I have a big brother, Ricardo.

BRIAN
How about your parents?
Jesus glumly looks away.

JESUS
My dad's never home...works three
jobs. My mom died of cancer.

BRIAN
I'm very sorry to hear that.

Jesus unzips his backpack. He takes out the red,
decorative, heart-shaped box, and a wallet. He opens the
wallet and shows a picture to Brian.

Brian studies the photo.

BRIAN
I'm sure she was special.

Jesus gazes at the red box.

JESUS
She still loves me, even from
Heaven.

BRIAN
I'd like to meet your brother.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian and Blacky walk along a tree-lined, residential
street. Brian sees a girl with a missing arm.

BRIAN (V.O.)
Lord, please watch over this girl
throughout her life.

Blacky stops and looks down the alley where Brian rescued
her. Brian follows Blacky past the large, commercial trash
can where she was tied up.

Blacky stops on a house doorstep. Brian rings the doorbell.
Wilbur opens the door.

BRIAN
I've got your money.

Brian opens his wallet and hands Wilbur the money. Wilbur
pets Blacky.

WILBUR
My wife passed away recently. I
guess I took it out on her.
BRIAN
Sorry to hear about your wife.

Brian sees several bags of dog food inside the house.

BRIAN
You still got some dog food. Why don't you rescue a dog from the pound? And this time take good care of it.

Brian walks away. He observes Blacky licking Wilbur's hand.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Brian plants flowers. Passing students wave to Brian.

A passerby admires the new landscape. Blacky guides the passerby up the church steps as others descend the steps.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The candle flickers in the red vase. Father O'Malley observes Brian from just off the altar.

Brian pulls a toy car out of a bag. He puts a small man in the car and places it on the altar steps.

He dunks a mop into a bucket and squeezes the excess water out. He mops the marble floor around the altar using a back and forth motion.

Brian looks up at the crucifix. He kneels on the altar steps and folds his hands. He EXHALES deeply.

BRIAN
Lord, please forgive me about Officer Garner.

Brian hears the back door open. He hides behind the area just off the altar.

Wendy walks down the center aisle and kneels in the front pew. She looks up at the giant crucifix and CRIES. Brian marches over.

BRIAN
What's wrong, Wendy?

WENDY
They're foreclosing on my house.
Brian comforts Wendy.

LATER

Brian mops. He hears the back door open and close. He hides behind the area just off from the altar. A small figure enters and warms himself against the radiator.

The small figure strides toward the altar. Jesus moves faster as he makes out the toy on the altar steps. He picks up the toy and grins up at the giant crucifix.

INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Brian looks in a mirror. A picture of Jesus Christ on the wall behind him reflects in the mirror.

The Eight Beatitudes are posted next to the mirror. Brian reads the Beatitudes.

DINING ROOM

Brian and the priests sit at the table with lots of food. Blacky lies on the floor near Brian. Brian tosses Blacky some food which she chomps on.

    FATHER KEN
    Turning around gang members is a great idea.

    FATHER O' MALLEY
    You've asked for forgiveness for the officer shooting, and you've received it.

    BRIAN
    How could I?

    FATHER KEN
    You may think you hurt God by the things you did in the past.

    FATHER O' MALLEY
    God's love leaves no one behind, but how strong is your love for God?

    FATHER KEN
    What's the most important commandment?
BRIAN
Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

FATHER O' MALLEY
And with all your soul and with all your mind. Do you?

BRIAN
No.

FATHER KEN
You love your parents so much you want to be with them in Heaven, but you're suppose to love God even more.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Life's short, Brian. Heaven's forever.

INT. BANK - DAY

Morgan, Brian, and Wendy sit at Banker's desk. The four stand and Banker shakes Wendy's hand.

INT. BUS - DAY

Brian places a bill in the bill acceptor. There is more talking and even some laughing on the bus.

DAVID
Good morning, Brian.

BRIAN
Good morning, David.

From the side view mirror, David sees the same old lady running to catch his bus. Brian sits in his usual front row seat next to Delores.

DELORES
Hello, Brian.

BRIAN
Hi, Delores.

David waits for the old lady to reach his bus. He gets up and helps her onto the bus.

Jesus sits across from Brian in the front row.
JESUS
Hi, Brian.

BRIAN
Hi. Are you going to play with Blacky today?

JESUS
Sure.

BRIAN
Let's take her over to your place so Ricardo can play with her.

JESUS
Well...

BRIAN
I'd like to meet him.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian, Jesus, and Blacky walk along a tree-lined street.

JESUS
How old's Blacky?

BRIAN
I'll have to ask Wilbur. Dogs don't live very long.

JESUS
That's too bad.

BRIAN
Your time is your life, don't waste it. You can't get it back.

JESUS
Ever since Mom died Ricardo isn't very nice.

BRIAN
How so?

JESUS
He's always getting in trouble.
EXT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Jesus, Brian, and Blacky walk up the dilapidated steps. Paint is missing off the building. An oxidized Chevy is parked on the front lawn behind a rusty, chain link fence.

INT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Jesus enter the dingy structure. Several Hispanic men wearing t-shirts, blue jeans, and work boots watch TV and sleep.

JESUS
They rent rooms.

They move down a hallway. Jesus KNOCKS on a door at the end of the hallway.

RICARDO
What!

RICARDO'S ROOM

Jesus and Brian enter. Ricardo lies on his bed. There's a beer on his desk next to him. There are several cans of spray paint throughout the untidy room. Brian picks up one of the cans.

BRIAN
Gonna do some painting?

RICARDO
Who's he?

JESUS
This is Brian, the one with the dog.

RICARDO
Can you pick me up some beer?

BRIAN
Nope. I just wanted to talk to you. Let me talk to him.

Jesus exits and closes the door. Ricardo takes a sip of his beer.

BRIAN
Your brother's worried about you. He doesn't want you to end up in prison.
RICARDO
I don't need this.

BRIAN
I don't want you in prison.

Ricardo tries to take a swig of his beer. Brian grabs the bottle.

BRIAN
You wanna end up in prison like me...always worried someone's gonna stab you in the back?

RICARDO
Leave.

BRIAN
I spent thirty-seven years in prison. I'm only doing what I wish someone had done for me.

RICARDO
Get out!

HALLWAY
Brian exits with the beer bottle.

JESUS
You were in prison?

EXT. JESUS'S HOUSE - DAY

Brian walks down the front steps as the screen door closes in front of Jesus.

BRIAN
It's not something I'm proud of.

JESUS
God will forgive you, right Brian?

Brian's moist eyes can't face Jesus.

BRIAN
I don't know.

He pours the beer out, tosses the bottle into a trash can, and leaves.
INT. RECTORY - NIGHT

Brian, Father Ken, and Father O'Malley enjoy fish, bread, and wine.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Even when I was wrong, God showed me so much patience. He always waited for me to return to Him.

FATHER KEN
That's the great thing about God...He forgives all our sins. He wants us all with him in Heaven.

FATHER O' MALLEY
Have you shown the same compassion for your enemies, Brian? It's easy to love those who love you. It's a lot harder to love those who have done you wrong.

FATHER KEN
When you forgive others and pray for your enemies, you remove the blackness from your heart so you can love again.

FATHER O' MALLEY
He made your life the way it is for a reason. Shed your past. It'll help you move forward.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian stares at the house with the American flag. He finally moves up the pathway towards the front door.

BRIAN
Please help me, Lord.

Brian KNOCKS on the door.

The widow of slain police Officer Garner, MARGARET GARNER (65), compassionate, forgiving, answers the door.

Brian's moist eyes and quivering lips signal Margaret that something is seriously wrong.

BRIAN
Mrs. Garner, I...I...
Margaret gives Brian a tight hug. Brian is surprised. He puts his arms around her. The two weep.

INT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Margaret sit at a table covered with photo albums. On the wall is a crucifix, a photo of Officer Garner, and a poster entitled "Footprints In The Sand."

MARGARET GARNER
I always wondered what I'd do if one of you knocked on my door.

BRIAN
Now you know.

MARGARET GARNER
And now I know. I'm so sorry about your mother, Brian.

BRIAN
Thanks, Margaret. Thanks for being so forgiving.

MARGARET GARNER
For many years I wasn't. The pain was so overbearing. I finally realized the hate I carried inside was not what God wanted. So I started praying for you. I felt the pain being lifted almost immediately.

EXT. GARNER HOUSE - DAY

Brian and Margaret hug on the front porch.

MARGARET GARNER
Please tell the others to stop by.

BRIAN
I will.

MARGARET GARNER
See you in Heaven, Brian.

Brian leaves.
INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Brian sweeps around the altar. The candle flickers in the red vase. Blacky sits next to the mop bucket.

BRIAN
Bring me the bucket, girl.

Blacky nudges the mop bucket across the floor with her snout.

Blacky looks up at the giant crucifix. Brian looks up at the crucifix, kneels, and makes the sign of the cross.

BRIAN
Lord, thanks for giving me Blacky, my life, everything. Forgive me for leaving you. Please let me get to Heaven.

The SOUND of WIND. The candle in the red vase FLICKERS rapidly.

Brian mops using an infinity sign motion, instead of his usual back and forth method.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Brian, Morgan, John, Ollie, and Blacky hide behind the hardware store. They see Ricardo and another boy with spray paint cans. They roll up their sleeves to expose tattoos. Morgan sees Ollie struggle to make his bicep bulge.

MORGAN
We wanna scare 'em, not make 'em laugh.

They sneak up on the boys and grab the paint cans. Blacky BARKS at Ricardo as the other boy runs off.

BRIAN
Get him!

Blacky chases after the other boy.

BRIAN
This is how I started down the wrong road...doing pranks.

Blacky catches up to the other boy.

Ricardo tries to walk away. John blocks his path.
JOHN
Where are you going?

Ricardo stops. Morgan gets in Ricardo's face.

MORGAN
We know about prison...wasting away with no end in sight.

Ollie gets in Ricardo's face.

OLLIE
Our friend was killed in prison.

BRIAN
Is that what you want?

Blacky corners the other boy using her ranching instincts.

BRIAN
You're not a good example for your brother. You want him to end up in prison?

RICARDO
No.

Brian points at the graffiti.

BRIAN
Think your dad wants to pay for this with his hard earned money?

RICARDO
No.

BRIAN
Would your mom be happy?

Ricardo's lips quiver as he holds his breath.

BRIAN
It's okay, let it out.

Ricardo EXHALES LOUDLY.

BRIAN
My mom died of cancer, too. We don't want you to end up like us.

RICARDO
I know.
BRIAN
Stop the vandalism, study in school, and get a part-time job. You take care of the first two, I'll work on getting you a job.

RICARDO
Okay.

Blacky brings the other boy back. Ricardo and the other boy walk away.

INT. BUS - DAY

The usual passengers are on board and in a jovial mood. Jesus and Brian sit in the same row.

BRIAN
Didn't you say you worked for the downtown association?

DELORES
That's right.

BRIAN
What are the odds of getting some kids jobs cleaning up downtown?

DELORES
I'm sure we can find them something.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian wears a florescent yellow vest and holds a red "STOP" sign as he walks kids across a street. Blacky sits on a corner next to a fold up beach chair.

BRIAN
Have a nice day at school. Make someone smile.

INT. BUS - DAY

Everyone talks, laughs, and sits up front with Brian.

DAVID
Why do you always say hi to everybody?
It gets quiet as they wait for an answer.

BRIAN
I don't like the feeling that I'm missing out on meeting a new person...since God's inside each of us.

DELORES
Don't you ever get angry at people?

BRIAN
Once in awhile, so I do what the priests do; eat extra Eucharists to get more of Christ in me.

They all laugh. Brian scans all the smiling faces.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Brian, Ricardo, and Jesus stand in the checkout line with various cleaning supplies.

BRIAN
How much money do you have?

RICARDO
Twenty bucks.

BRIAN
Pull out ten.

Ricardo reaches into his wallet and pulls out a bill.

BRIAN
There's consequences to everything we do in life.

EXT. STREET - DAY

MONTAGE - BRIAN, RICARDO, AND OTHER KIDS CLEAN THE TOWN

-- They wash windows.
-- They paint over graffiti.
-- They sweep the sidewalks and gutters.
-- They help store owners replace broken windows.
Wilbur walks up with a black Labrador. Blacky and the dog get acquainted.

    BRIAN
    Hey! You took my advice.

    WILBUR
    This is Lexie.

Brian pets Lexie.

    BRIAN
    She's beautiful. She's counting on you to take good care of her.

    WILBUR
    I'm going to, Brian.

EXT. STORE - DAY

People pet Blacky. Brian, Ricardo, and Jesus exit with shopping bags.

Brian sees the Hispanic gardener hard at work. Ricardo watches Brian take a can of soda out of a bag and place it near the gardener who waves.

Brian sees an elderly man trying to hang a sign. He nudges Ricardo toward the elderly man. Ricardo helps the man hang the sign.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

MONTAGE - RICARDO AND HIS FRIENDS FIX UP THE CHURCH

- They sand and stain the pews.
- They paint the church.
- They polish the floor with a buffer machine.

Brian watches Ricardo cross the center aisle wearing a breathing mask. Ricardo stops, genuflects at the crucifix, and makes the sign of the cross.

    RICARDO
    You're low on sandpaper.
EXT. CHURCH - DAY

The well-manicured garden is fresh and bursting with color. Brian greets parishioners. Wendy and Delores walk up the steps.

BRIAN
Hello, Wendy! Hello, Delores!

WENDY
Hello, Brian.

Cami walks up the steps in a choir outfit.

BRIAN
I want to hear you loud and clear.

CAMI
Okay, Brian. Make someone smile.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

The church is immaculate. Cami walks up the back stairs and joins the rest of the children in the choir loft. The conductor waves her hand and the children sing.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR
God of great and God of small, God of one and God of all...

Several seated parishioners including Wendy, Judy, Delores, and the window cleaner turn their heads back toward the choir and smile.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR
...God of land and sky and sea, God of life and destiny...

Brian ushers people into pews.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR (V.O.)
...God of silence, God of sound, God of whom the lost are found, God of day and darkest night, God whose love turns wrong to right...

More smiling faces including Cindy and the Hispanic gardener turn around. Brian smiles up at Cami who smiles back.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR
...God of Heaven and God of earth, God of death and God of birth, God of now and days before, God who
CHILDREN'S CHOIR
reigns for evermore...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian holds his red "STOP" sign as he walks schoolkids across a busy street. Brian waves to parents and kids who call his name from all directions.

WENDY
Hi, Brian!

SARAH
Hi, Brian!

BRIAN
Hi!

JOSH
Hi!

BRIAN
Make someone smile today, Josh.

JOSH
I will.

LATER

Brian folds up his beach chair. A wave of panic comes over him. He drops the "STOP" sign. He clutches his chest as he falls to the ground.

Brian's trembling hand reaches into his pocket and pulls out a rosary.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

A few elderly people kneel in prayer in the dimly-lit church. A female, CHURCH SINGER (35), pleasant, and a PIANIST (30), practice while Father Ken listens nearby.

YOUNG GIRL hustles over to Father Ken. Father Ken quickly genuflects, makes the sign of the cross, and exits. Church Singer and Pianist hurry over to Young Girl.

People hurry over. Sobbing people trickle into the church and talk amongst each other. Some people kneel in pews.

Pianist sits down at the piano and PLAYS. More people enter. Church Singer steps up to the microphone and SINGS.
CHURCH SINGER  
Shepherd me, o God, beyond my  
wants, beyond my fears, from death  
into life...

INT. RECTORY - DAY  

Father Ken rushes over to Father O'Malley in the hallway.  
Father O'Malley makes the sign of the cross.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY  

Father Ken gets into a car with a wooden crucifix and  
rosary.  The window cleaner and others hustle over.  They  
speak briefly with Father Ken.  Father Ken drives off.

CHURCH SINGER (V.O.)  
God is my shepherd, so nothing  
shall I want, I rest in the  
meadows of faithfulness and love,  
I walk by the quiet waters of  
peace...

INT. CHURCH - DAY  

More concerned people enter including the Hispanic gardener,  
the butcher, and the hardware store owner.  People WEEP and  
hug one another.

CHURCH SINGER  
Gently you raise me and heal my  
weary soul, you lead me by  
pathways of righteousness and  
truth, my spirit shall sing the  
music of your name.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY  

A crowd surrounds Blacky.  Bus Twenty-three pulls to the  
curb.  The doors open.  Jesus jumps off the bus and runs to  
the crowd.

CORY  
Brian's not coming back today  
Blacky.

CINDY  
He may never come back.
Confused, Blacky tilts her head from side to side.

JESUS
What happened?

JUDY
Brian had a heart attack. He's at Hoag Hospital.

Jesus takes off running.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

More visibly shaken people, including Wilbur and Delores, enter the church. Father O'Malley consoles the people.

CHURCH SINGER
Though I should wander the valley of death, I fear no evil for you are at my side...

EXT. STREET - DAY

Jesus races down the store-lined street. People gather in clusters in front of the stores and talk on cell phones.

CHURCH SINGER (V.O.)
Shepherd me, o God, beyond my wants, beyond my fears, from death into life.

MONTAGE - JESUS THINKS OF TIMES WITH BRIAN

-- Brian waves to shop owners.
-- Bus passengers laugh with Brian.
-- Brian and Jesus play catch with Blacky.
-- Crossing guard Brian walks children across the street.
Jesus runs toward the hospital.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Jesus runs down a long, polished corridor.
CHURCH SINGER (V.O.)
You have set a banquet of love in
the face of hatred, crowning me
with love beyond my power to hold.

BRIAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM

Jesus enters winded. Brian lies in bed with tubing coming out of his nostrils. Jesus watches Father Ken give Brian the Eucharist. There are two burning candles in an open wooden crucifix and an hourglass low on sand on a table.

FATHER KEN
Lord, may our brother Brian safely reach your kingdom of light and life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
(to Brian)
May the Lord Jesus protect you and lead you to eternal life.

Jesus watches Father Ken dip his thumb in holy water and make the sign of the cross on Brian's forehead. Father Ken holds Brian's trembling hands.

BRIAN
I tried to touch a lot of people.

Father Ken looks at the hourglass.

FATHER KEN
Coaches practice for the final two minutes of a game, because they're the most important. It's the same with life, because you have to make amends before you meet your Creator.

BRIAN
But no one knows when they're gonna die.

FATHER KEN
Like a burglar in the night, we have to be ready for Him.

A doctor enters and reaches for the hourglass. Father Ken grabs the doctor's wrist. The doctor and Father Ken lock eyes. The doctor puts the hourglass down without turning it over, and leaves.
FATHER KEN
To get to Heaven, you have to accept Jesus Christ, you have to repent your sins, and you have to acknowledge that Jesus Christ is your savior to someone.

BRIAN
I haven't done the last one.

FATHER KEN
Say it to me.

With moist eyes, Brian EXHALES LOUDLY.

BRIAN
Jesus Christ is my savior.

Father Ken blows out the candles and packs away the crucifix.

FATHER KEN
Put in a good word for me with the man upstairs.

A grin disappears from Brian's face.

BRIAN
You gotta tell Morgan and Ollie and John how to get to Heaven!

FATHER KEN
I will.

BRIAN
Tell everyone!

FATHER KEN
That's why I became a priest.

Father Ken leaves. Brian takes the photo of his mom and the worn memorial card out of his Bible and places them over his heart.

BRIAN
I want you to have this.

He hands Jesus his Bible.
BRIAN
We spend so much time worrying about every little thing, when this is nothing compared to the big show.

JESUS
Is this the last time I'm going to see you?

BRIAN
I'll see you in Heaven. Treat people well and don't ever hurt anyone. Do what is right and you'll never go wrong.

Jesus unzips his backpack and pulls out the red, heart-shaped box.

JESUS
I want you to have this.

BRIAN
I can't have chocolate.

Jesus forces Brian to take the box.

JESUS
My mom gave me it before she died.

Jesus smiles broadly as Brian opens the empty box.

BRIAN
What is it?

JESUS
It's love. It'll keep you warm when you're lonely and safe when you're scared.

Brian gives Jesus a long hug.

BRIAN
Did you save enough for yourself?

JESUS
Sure. Besides, that hug just gave me a lot more. Tell my mom I miss her.

BRIAN
I will.
The last sand granules fall in the hourglass.

CHURCH SINGER (V.O.)
Surely your kindness and mercy
follow me all the days of my life,
I will dwell in the house of my
God forevermore.

ALARM BLARES. The doctor and nurses rush in and work on Brian. The heart monitor flat lines. Brian's hand goes still over the photo and worn memorial card. Jesus SOBS.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Empty, cold, and dark. A despondent Blacky lies on the sidewalk. She perks up when she HEARS a distant bus.

A nearly-empty bus pulls to the curb. The doors open and a man gets off. The doors close and the bus leaves. Blacky lies down.

LATER


LATER

Bus Twenty-three approaches. Blacky sits up. The bus pulls to the curb. The doors open. Jesus gets off.

Blacky darts past Jesus and springs onto the bus.

JESUS

Blacky!

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Blacky WHIMPERS LOUDLY. Jesus hops on the bus. The bus driver turns around. Blacky runs up and down the center aisle checking the rows of empty seats.

JESUS

Blacky, come here.

Blacky finally obeys and the two step off the bus.

EXT. BUS STOP - NIGHT

Blacky lies down and waits. Jesus pets her.
It's okay.

Jesus takes Brian's Bible out of his backpack and lets Blacky sniff it.

It's gonna be alright.

The two take a few steps. Blacky stops and looks back. Blacky takes a few more steps and looks back.

It's never too late to change.

Jesus walks with Blacky down a tree-lined street.