

Things Fall Apart

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

SUPER: 1982

The lake is small and surrounded by trees. It's situated in the hills not far from the Pacific coast, California (just north of Los Angeles).

YOUNG TAYLOR BANKS and his brother, YOUNG BRIAN, 12 and 13 years old respectively, throw sticks out toward the center of the lake. Young Taylor is baby-faced and is the shorter of the two boys.

The gravelly voice of a grown up TAYLOR.

TAYLOR (V.O.)

We would come here every weekend when we were kids, more often during the summer vacation. Even then it was a retreat, at that time from our parents, or at least for Brian and myself it was an escape from our stepfather. Though he wasn't a bad man.

EXT. BANKS FAMILY HOME/ STREET - EVENING

A simple bungalow on a street lined with similar bungalows. All fronted with a neatly manicured front lawn and a single garage.

HERBERT JACOBS (42), Taylor and Brian's stepfather, walks up to the front door with some papers under his arm. He's a tall, lanky man. He stumbles on the step. The papers spill all over the ground. He crouches to pick them up with a simple grin on his face.

TAYLOR (V.O.)

He never beat us. To be honest don't think he had the strength to do so even if he wanted to. He was just, well, just not our father.

BACK TO:

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Another boy, YOUNG SAMUEL BENDIS (13), approaches from behind the other two boys with a huge log and heaves it into the water. It doesn't go very far and neither Young Taylor nor Young Brian get a chance to move back from the water's edge.

TAYLOR (V.O.)

Our father died in a motorcycle accident. No one else was involved. He was a good man so never liked to think we came from a broken home. Didn't know too many people back then who did, except Sam, who was the other boy that made up our gang so to speak.

The water splashes the boys. Young Taylor stumbles and falls on his backside. Young Brian runs at Young Samuel, who grins but fails to make any kind of escape. Both fall into the water. Amidst smiles and laughter they spray water at each other. Young Taylor takes a running jump and joins them.

TAYLOR (V.O.)(CONT'D)

Others came and went but the backbone was the three of us. And it remained that way until school ended. The point that most children look forward to, believing that it marks freedom to roam. The point when the safety line is gone and you're set to free-fall through the days of your life. Most of which are lined with tragedy, and the hopeless search for the definitions of love, happiness and why.

EXT. STREET - DAY

SUPER: Autumn, 2000

A bullet riddled Ford Mustang (late 70s model) is parked haphazardly on the curb. The DRIVER (male/ 20s) is dead and still behind the wheel. The PASSENGER (male/ 20s) lies in the road, dead.

Police cruisers have blocked off the area.

A brand new black Chevrolet Blazer is parked further down the street.

TAYLOR, wearing a detective badge around his neck, walks away from the carnage and towards the Blazer. Despite his tired eyes and two days of stubble, his hangdog good looks make his 30 years a little hard to believe.

EXT. STREET/ BLAZER - CONTINUOUS

JAY (30s), a weasel faced man, watches Taylor approach. He sits in the passenger seat and has the window rolled down.

Taylor reaches the window.

JAY  
(grinning)  
Nothing to do with me, Detective  
Banks.

Taylor peers into the vehicle. Jay's driver, ELLIOT (a monster of a man), stares back at him. Taylor spots SAMUEL (31) in the back. He's eternally young thanks to an elf-like face. He smiles at Taylor before Taylor looks away and back down the street.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Eats away at you don't it, not  
having anything on me.

TAYLOR  
I will.

JAY  
Right.

Smiles.

JAY (CONT'D)  
If ever you do, just remember  
you'll have to take your buddy  
out first.

Taylor turns to Jay.

TAYLOR  
Just stay away from my brother.

Jay smirks.

JAY  
It's your brother who can't stay  
away from me.

Taylor walks back to the crime scene.

JAY (CONT'D)  
(to Samuel)  
He always so uptight?

Samuel catches Jay's gaze in the rear view mirror.

SAMUEL  
Kind of.

JAY

(fixing on Samuel)  
 If it comes to it I don't want  
 you becoming a pussy. You pull  
 the trigger and blow his fucking  
 brains out.

SAMUEL

Don't worry.

EXT. STREET - DAWN

The same street. Cleaned up and quiet.

The air is crisp. Sunlight bleeds into the sky. Leaves  
 swirl in the gutters and on the sidewalk.

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

BRIAN (31) has a build that suggests he was once very  
 fit. Despite a hero's jaw his face is thin and tired.  
 He watches the foaming water spill up the sand and then  
 drag itself back.

A couple of SURFERS straddle their boards out beyond the  
 rocks, waiting.

MEGAN, 30 years old and curiously pretty, walks up  
 behind Brian and puts her arms around his waist.

Brian breaks from her embrace. Megan takes out a  
 cigarette and smokes.

MEGAN

You want one?

Brian doesn't answer.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Do you love her?

BRIAN

I'm married to her aren't I?

MEGAN

That wasn't the question.

Brian stares at the surfers.

BRIAN

They wait, and they know what  
 they're waiting for.

(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

We wait for someone but we never know who or when.

MEGAN

Have you ever surfed?

BRIAN

I did love her.

MEGAN

Do you love me?

BRIAN

No.

MEGAN

Then it's easy.

She drops her cigarette in the sand and steps beside Brian.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

I don't love you either.

He looks at her, smiles half-heatedly, and then looks away.

EXT. WATER/ SURFER

A SURFER turns and paddles frantically towards the shore. The water bulges behind him. He paddles. The bulge gets bigger, its crest beginning to fray. The surfer paddles harder, grips the sides of his board, about to pop up.

EXT. STREET - MORNING

SUPER: Nine months later

Brian hurries down the street with a take-out coffee in one hand and a half-eaten muffin in the other. He sips the coffee as he walks. He spills some down his T-shirt.

BRIAN

Fuck.

He takes one more bite of the muffin and hurls the rest into the street.

EXT. STREET/ WHEEL

The remainder of the muffin is crushed into the tread of a slow moving tire.

BACK TO:

EXT. STREET - MORNING

Brian lamely tries to wipe the coffee off his shirt with a napkin as the black Chevrolet Blazer pulls up alongside and rolls along in time with his step. The passenger window slides down. Jay watches Brian.

JAY

Having difficulty Officer Banks?

BRIAN

(not even snatching  
a glance at Jay)

I can't do anything for you right now.

JAY

Did you hear me ask?

A brief moment elapses. Brian doesn't offer a response and doesn't break his stride.

JAY (CONT'D)

She's having it right now?

BRIAN

And I'm late.

JAY

(smirking)

Should be more careful at intersections in future.

Brian ignores him.

JAY (CONT'D)

I got a job for you.

Brian presses the ridge of his nose and closes his eyes.

JAY (CONT'D)

How else you gonna afford a new vehicle, and you got a kid...

(a provoking smile)

...sorry kids, on their way too.

BRIAN

Fuck you.

JAY  
Fucking hasn't helped your  
situation so far.

BRIAN  
I got a job.

JAY  
(scrutinizing)  
Really. A no action desk jockey  
cop who sells a bit of weed on  
the side? You're a fucking  
loser, Brian.

Brian stops and snaps back at the criticism. The Blazer  
stops.

BRIAN  
I could have taken you down a  
long time ago.

JAY  
(chuckling)  
You couldn't pin the tail on the  
donkey with your eyes wide and  
his ass flashing.

Brian rubs his jaw.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Just kidding. You want a lift?

BRIAN  
If Heather sees me with you...

JAY  
She's about to give birth. She's  
hardly going to be peering out of  
the fucking window. And if  
you're that worried I'll drop you  
a block away.

Brian moves to get in the back.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Toss the coffee.

Brian halfheartedly searches for a trash-can. He  
doesn't find one, gives up, and throws the cup on the  
ground. He gets in the back and the Blazer pulls away.

A pool of coffee grows on the sidewalk and trickles into  
the drain.

INT. HEATHER'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING

Brian's wife, HEATHER (30), is in bed with her newborn BABY in her arms. A couple of NURSES tend to her. Brian pokes his head through the doorway.

Heather smiles.

HEATHER

He was early, not like his father.

Brian walks in.

BRIAN

I was held up.

HEATHER

Literally?

Brian stands beside her and looks at the tiny baby.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

He has your eyes.

BRIAN

That's all I hope.

HEATHER

(ominously)  
What's wrong?

Brian delicately touches the baby's brow.

BRIAN

Nothing.

HEATHER

Brian...  
(looking at Brian  
and pausing for a  
response)  
...I thought we agreed?

BRIAN

Nothing, really.

He stands back and looks around the room.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

So...clinical.

HEATHER

Brian, I've just had a baby but I'm not stupid. We promised everything in the open so we can deal with it, together.

BRIAN

There's a time and a place though  
Heather.

HEATHER

There's now, Brian.

BRIAN

Heath...

HEATHER

(simultaneously)

Brian, please.

Brian takes a breath and returns to her side.

BRIAN

(stroking the  
baby's brow)

I'm a thirty-one year old burnt  
out cop who lost his driving  
license, got demoted, works at a  
desk, and has a family he can't  
support.

Heather regards him almost pitifully, yet lovingly.  
She recognizes his demons, from the knowledge of their  
battles, and their triumphs.

HEATHER

I thought we could call him  
Stephen?

Brian smiles.

BRIAN

After your dad?

HEATHER

My dad, the Six Million Dollar  
Man, Steve McQueen.

Brian strokes the baby's forehead.

BRIAN

Stephen James Banks. Welcome to  
the world.

He kisses Heather on the forehead.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I'm going to grab a coffee. I'll  
be back before he realizes I'm  
gone.

HEATHER

How many this morning?

BRIAN  
(in the doorway)  
One, and I spilt that.

He leaves the room.

Heather appears a little disappointed.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOM/ CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Brian steps out of Heather's room. He wanders over to a coffee machine and drops in some coins. He waits, takes his coffee and walks down the corridor. He stops at a different room, pauses for thought, and walks in.

INT. MEGAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Brian enters.

Megan sits upright in the bed, just like Heather, with a newborn baby, BABY 2, in her arms.

BRIAN  
(sipping his  
coffee)  
How are you?

MEGAN  
It's a boy.

Brian smiles.

MEGAN (CONT'D)  
Heather's a boy too?

Brian nods.

MEGAN (CONT'D)  
Two sons, lucky you.

BRIAN  
You absolutely sure?

MEGAN  
Brian, I hadn't fucked anyone for two years before you, so unless I'm the Virgin Mary you're having a very weird day right now.

BRIAN  
No shit.

MEGAN

I don't want anything from you.

BRIAN

I got nothing to give.

MEGAN

Go to Heather.

BRIAN

She deserves more.

MEGAN

What do I deserve?

An awkward pause.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

At least give one boy a normal  
life.

INT. SEDAN / STREET - DAY

Brian sits in the passenger seat. Taylor drives.

TAYLOR

Stephen's a nice name.

Brian muses over the people, the shops, the businesses,  
and the sidewalk as they pass by.

BRIAN

Wish I kept my Star Wars toys  
now.

He fiddles with the glove compartment.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Some woman sold all she had for  
\$10,000 the other day. That's a  
shit load of cash for nothing.  
Can you believe that?

He looks across at Taylor, who keeps his eyes fixed on  
the road.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(returning his gaze  
to the sidewalk)

Thing I don't get though, is how  
she managed to keep them all in  
the boxes.

He throws a second glance at Taylor.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I mean, Christmas comes you feel around for the shape of those figure boxes. Remember? The card...hoping it isn't some pen in a flashy case...

TAYLOR

Yeah.

BRIAN

You find one, you rip the fucker open, trash the box after you've scanned the back for the next additions to your collections, and then you play movie with whatever household sets you can find. Blasters sound; figures fly; all round galactic mayhem. It's some kind of foresight keeping boxes, or better still not even opening the fucker. What kind of child doesn't take a toy out of the box because of the possibility that it might be worth something later on? Or what kind of parent makes a child do such a thing?

(shaking his head  
at the absurdity  
of his idea)

Too many people miss the fucking point.

TAYLOR

(keeping his eyes  
fixed on the road)

You want something to eat?

BRIAN

(looking at Taylor)

You listening to me? You might be every bit the same in looks as Pa was but you have the irritating knack of not listening to me like Ma did.

TAYLOR

You sold what you had to pay for a pair of Z Rims, a 'Let There Be Rock' album and a Led Zeppelin patch, which irritated Ma because she thought she was doing the right thing buying you Bobba Fett's Slave 1.

Brian ponders Taylor's riposte for a second.

BRIAN

You ever want to go back?

TAYLOR

Every time I talk to you.

Brian smiles.

EXT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A full moon.

Despite the darkness it is clear that this house is not too dissimilar from Brian's. Xerox homes.

The Sedan is in the drive. The porch light is on.

INT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - NIGHT

Clearly lacking a woman's touch. Not messy, but basic. A framed poster of Buck Rogers dominates the wall behind the TV.

Taylor slouches in single-male armchair comfort, about to delight in Battlestar Gallactica re-runs. The opening credits begin. Before the credits end the muffled ring tone of a phone is heard. Taylor squeezes his hand down the side of the armchair, between the cushion and the main body of the chair. The ring tone gets louder as he lifts out a cordless phone and answers it. He listens for no more than thirty seconds.

TAYLOR

(sighing)

I'll be there in 10 minutes.

He puts the phone down, snaps on a pair of sneakers and leaves the house.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A typical suburban dwelling. Apart from the pale amber glow that illuminates the porch, no lights are on.

A police car pulls up to the curb at the same time as a reasonably large TV comes hurtling out of the window and crashes on the front lawn.

TWO COPS step out of the car. One, the younger cop, RANDY, goes to draw his gun.

The other, CHARLIE, shakes his head and gestures with his hand for him not to do so.

Charlie makes use of his seniority.

CHARLIE

Stay here.

Randy is either nervous or itches for action.

RANDY

The guy's a fucking nut.

CHARLIE

Just stay here.

Charlie walks across the lawn and peers into the house through the broken window. The room looks as if it's been turned over by some drugged up thieves. Nobody can be seen.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Brian? You OK Brian?

BRIAN (O.S.)

Fantastic. In fact super  
fantastic.

The barrel of a .45 automatic appears in Charlie's face as Brian, holding the gun, seems to roll into view from behind the front wall.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Hey there Charles.

Brian lowers the gun.

CHARLIE

Fuck me Brian, one of these days  
it's not going to be me and  
you're going to be blown halfway  
across your living room. Randy  
back there was about ready to  
storm the house and he's one  
trigger-happy son-of-a-bitch.

BRIAN

Why do you suppose that?

CHARLIE

What?

BRIAN

Why's he a trigger-happy son-of-a-  
bitch?

CHARLIE

For the same reasons you were  
when you first wore the badge.

BRIAN

No, no. Bullshit.

He shakes his head.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Those sons-of-bitches aren't cops  
anymore. They're psycho  
children. Look at the fucking  
games they play, the movies they  
watch. It's all fucked up. They  
live in their rooms, their dreams  
breed in front of a screen.

Brian's next door neighbor, a spinster woman, MRS.  
SIMPSON, steps onto her porch.

MRS. SIMPSON

(hollering)

You should be locked up. You  
cops are all the same.

BRIAN

(leaning out of the  
broken window)

Fuck you, Mrs. Simpson.

MRS. SIMPSON

God only knows what that wife of  
yours sees in you.

She walks back into her house, slamming the door.

BRIAN

Damned if I know. But fuck you  
anyway, and that rat-faced sister  
of yours.

He returns to face Charlie. For a moment he stares past  
him to the TV.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

That was expensive too.

CHARLIE

You don't know when to quit do  
you?

BRIAN

What was I talking about?

CHARLIE

I think you need to sit down and relax. Forget talking for a while.

His eyes blaze with the recollection of his words before the interruption.

BRIAN

Kids.

CHARLIE

What?

BRIAN

Kids today. You think somebody who spends his days blasting people to bits in some graphic console game makes a cop? The world isn't a global village; it's a fucking breeding ground for murderers and killers. You and me can't escape anymore. Space isn't the final frontier, Buck Rogers doesn't make kids smile, kids don't make tree houses...

CHARLIE

Because there ain't no trees Brian.

BRIAN

Whatever. They don't wish upon a Kuwahara. They practice killing in the confines of a claustrophobic parent exempt bedroom or some virtual destruction range calling itself an Internet...

(emphasizing with  
the French  
pronunciation)

...cafe.

Charlie realizes the source of Brian's possible anxiety driven anger.

CHARLIE

Heather had the baby?

BRIAN

Yeah.

CHARLIE

When she come home?

BRIAN

I'll get all this fixed by noon.

CHARLIE

Don't fuck it up, Brain.

BRIAN

I've already done that.

Taylor pulls up behind the police car. He gets out and nods to Randy as he walks up to the house. He heads for the front door.

TAYLOR

(turning to Charlie  
at the window)

Hey there, Charlie.

Taylor opens the door and walks in.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor switches on the light. Brian has turned to face Taylor. He stands at the broken window in just his jeans. His feet bleed, as he stands barefoot on the shards of broken glass. The .45 hangs loosely in his hand.

Taylor flips the overturned couch back to its upright position and sits down.

TAYLOR

I'm tired, Brian.

Silence. Brian looks through and beyond Taylor.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Why now? Why today?

The silence becomes uncomfortable.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

You got everything Brian.

Brian shifts forward aggressively across the glass, exaggerating his expression by waving the gun around.

BRIAN

No. You've got fucking  
everything.

TAYLOR

(gesturing to the  
gun)

Do you mind?

Brian tucks the gun down the front of his jeans.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

You know that's not true.

BRIAN

What? If you haven't got it  
you'll get it. You're a great  
cop.

Taylor stands.

TAYLOR

And that pisses you off?

BRIAN

Because you don't see it.

Taylor lunges at Brian and grabs him round the neck. He pins him to the wall.

TAYLOR

I know I'm a great cop and it pisses me off as much as it pisses you off because unlike you my wife left me. I didn't do half the shit you do but she left me. My job, that's all I've got Brian. You became a father today so take responsibility for that. My kid died before I could give him a name, so you just take care of what you have, or next time I'll let some punk cop deal with you and just having that tucked in your pants will see him put a hole in your gut.

Brian's energy has completely escaped him.

BRIAN

I fucked up.

Brian drops to his knees.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Sorry. Sorry Taylor. You know I don't mean it. Heather doesn't deserve me. I don't deserve her. I don't deserve to be a father.

Taylor squats beside him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I became a father to two boys today.

He looks at Taylor somewhat resigned.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Can you believe it? Me...a  
father.

TAYLOR  
I thought...twins?

BRIAN  
No.

TAYLOR  
Then what?

BRIAN  
(sheepishly)  
Megan. Remember Megan?

TAYLOR  
What the fuck are you talking  
about?

Taylor stands. Brian follows suit.

BRIAN  
Heather and Megan had baby boys  
today, and I...I'm the father of  
both.

He smiles with neither conviction nor sense.

Taylor pauses to take in the situation. Then, SMACK.  
He cracks Brian on the jaw, dropping him to the floor  
like a sack of potatoes.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor walks out and stands on the porch. He takes out  
a pack of cigarettes and taps the pack on the back of  
his hand, almost magically making just one cigarette pop  
up. He hangs it on his lower lip and feels around for a  
lighter. Charlie trundles over and flicks open his  
Zippo. Taylor lights the cigarette, inhales deeply and  
then breathes out, coloring the darkness with smoke.

CHARLIE  
You OK?

TAYLOR  
Ever feel like your life is a  
nightmare and you hope one day  
you can just fall asleep and wake  
up in a sweet dream?

CHARLIE

Can't say I do.

Taylor and Charlie amble across the lawn.

TAYLOR

You're lucky then Charlie.

Taylor stops.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Get out of here.

CHARLIE

Brian gonna be alright?

TAYLOR

Yeah.

Charlie pats Taylor on the shoulder and heads for the police car. He indicates to Randy to get in as he does so.

The police car pulls away.

Taylor watches it disappear into the pale luminosity of the night. He looks at the busted up TV and shakes his head.

He sits himself down on it and lets himself be hypnotized by the myriad of stars that color the black blanket of sky, as the smoke from his cigarette snakes upward, almost mapping out pathways between them.

CUT TO:

INT. CIRCUIT CITY - MORNING

A wall of TVs.

Taylor studies them. He searches for a match between the scribbled details of the busted one on a piece of paper and those that face him.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Taylor pulls up behind an unmarked Express van with a glass carrying rack on the side.

Two WINDOW REPAIR GUYS take measurements of the frame at the broken window.

Taylor shouts to them.

TAYLOR

Couldn't give me a hand could you? Just one of you.

Both men turn round and one, JACK, walks over. Taylor opens the back door of his Sedan.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Didn't think you'd be around so fast Jack.

JACK

What happened? Looks like somebody tossed a TV though the damn thing.

TAYLOR

Should've been a cop yourself.

JACK

Na, don't like drinking coffee all day long.

Taylor shunts the boxed TV to the edge of the seat. Jack grabs the front. Taylor heaves the back out and takes hold. They walk toward the house.

JACK (CONT'D)

How come you don't come to Marilyn's no more?

TAYLOR

Busy.

JACK

With being a cop, or covering up for Brian? You need to be Taylor every now and again.

They shuffle through the front door.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ HALL TO LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor and Jack pass through with the box.

TAYLOR

Being a barfly doesn't appeal anymore.

They lay the box down on the floor in the lounge. The mess is as it was the previous night but for the absence of Brian.

JACK

Having a few drinks and laughing  
with your pals doesn't have to  
turn you into an alcoholic.

Taylor looks at the picture of Brian and Heather on the  
wall.

JACK (CONT'D)

Sorry man. I didn't mean that  
shit about being alcoholic.

Taylor smiles.

TAYLOR

I know, and you're right.

He looks around the room.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Do you like fixing windows?

JACK

Nope. But it kills time and pays  
the bills. Every other year  
offers Bernie and me a holiday  
with the kids. Got to look after  
what you got.

Brian appears in the doorway, disheveled, thick lipped,  
and dressed as he was the night before.

JACK (CONT'D)

Fuck me, if it ain't the Wolfman  
himself. Did the TV hit you  
first?

Brian shrugs and looks at Taylor.

BRIAN

Something like that.

TAYLOR

How you feeling?

BRIAN

Pretty fucking bad.

He sees the new TV on the floor.

TAYLOR

(to Brian)  
Coffee?

Taylor heads out of the room.

BRIAN  
 (shouting after  
 Taylor)

Thanks.

Jack pats Brian on the shoulder as he moves to leave.

JACK  
 Nobody's ever owed someone as  
 much as you owe him.

Jack leaves. Brian stands, motionless. He stares into the destruction he delivered upon his own living room.

EXT. STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Three first generation Kuwahara BMXs (all Magician models) skid out of an alley and into the street. They almost continue on and into the passing traffic but for some nifty turns and jumps onto the sidewalk. Horns sound. Voices rasp and bellow.

The young Taylor, Brian and Samuel pedal hard.

They simultaneously hop a fence and bounce down some steps onto a leafy suburban street. They quickly break off into the front yard of a family home, dump their bikes and bound through the front door.

INT. BENDIS HOUSE/ LOUNGE - DAY

MRS. BENDIS (Samuel's mom), the spitting image of Bewitched's Samantha, sits on the couch with her five-year-old daughter, HOLLY. They watch "loony toons". Speedy Gonzalez 'arribas' across the screen.

Young Samuel enters with his rogue colleagues.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 Did you tidy my room?

MRS. BENDIS  
 That's your job Sam.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 I will. It's just...

MRS. BENDIS  
 Tomorrow, I know.

She turns to look at her son.

MRS. BENDIS (CONT'D)  
 It's for your own good. I think  
 Holly ate Greedo's blaster.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (glaring at Holly)  
 Mom.

MRS. BENDIS  
 We put things back as good as we  
 could.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 Why did you let her in there?

MRS. BENDIS  
 I know Taylor thinks I'm a witch.

She looks at Young Taylor with a rye smile. He doesn't  
 know where to look.

MRS. BENDIS (CONT'D)  
 But that doesn't mean I have eyes  
 in the back of my head and with  
 your father out more than in it  
 gets a little difficult sometimes  
 Sam.

Holly moves over and hands Young Samuel Greedo's blaster  
 from inside her toy purse. Young Samuel tries to stem  
 the smirk that twitches at the corners of his mouth.

Young Taylor shuffles nervously.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 I, I never...I don't think you're  
 a witch Mrs. Bendis.

Mrs. Bendis gifts him a rye smile.

MRS. BENDIS  
 I know Taylor.

HOLLY  
 (to her mother)  
 What's a divorce mommy?

Young Samuel looks back at his mother and sister a  
 moment.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (to his mother)  
 Are you and dad...

Mrs. Bendis nods before her son can finish his question.  
 He turns and heads toward the stairwell.

YOUNG SAMUEL (CONT'D)  
 (to his friends)  
 Come on.

Young Brian follows.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 (to Mrs. Bendis)  
 I said you look like the witch on  
 that TV series, and she's real  
 pretty.

Young Taylor turns and follows his friends. Mrs. Bendis is comforted by his flattery. She sits Holly down on her lap.

Young Samuel leads his followers up the stairs.

INT. BENDIS HOUSE/ SAM'S BEDROOM - DAY

Some mock scene from Star Wars is set up all around the room. Figures and craft galore.

The three boys enter.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 (picking up a TIE  
 Fighter)  
 Today the Empire wins.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 Evil never wins.

YOUNG BRIAN  
 Why not?

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 (sarcastically)  
 Because evil are always bad  
 shots.

YOUNG BRIAN  
 What about the A-Team?

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (responding to  
 Young Taylor)  
 Depends.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 On what?

Young Brian has his own topic.

YOUNG BRIAN  
 (pushing for a  
 response)  
 Everybody in the A-Team is a bad  
 shot.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (to Young Taylor)  
 I don't know.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 Exactly. Besides evil does win  
 in the Empire Strikes Back.

YOUNG BRIAN  
 Evil won in King Kong.

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 Nobody really wins in King Kong.

YOUNG BRIAN  
 So it was a draw?

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (to Young Taylor)  
 Do you think you're a better shot  
 than me?

YOUNG TAYLOR  
 I don't know.

Young Samuel ducks under his bed and slides out a Buck-a-roo game box. He opens it and takes out two BB guns (replicas of .45 Peacemakers).

YOUNG TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
 Does your mom know you've got  
 those?

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 What do you think?

Young Samuel hands one to Young Taylor. Young Taylor looks at him somewhat dumbstruck. Young Brian quietly admires the guns.

YOUNG SAMUEL (CONT'D)  
 Like the cowboys do.

He pretends he has a holster and simulates a draw to his own call.

YOUNG SAMUEL (CONT'D)  
 (simultaneously  
 raising his  
 pistol)  
 Draw.

Young Taylor, not prepared in anyway but reacting like the Sundance Kid to the call that he's become familiar with from afternoon matinees and park games, raises his pistol and fires in one fluid motion and with lightening speed.

Young Samuel is hit in the hand and lets out a scream, which he attempts to stifle.

YOUNG SAMUEL (CONT'D)

What did you do that for?

YOUNG BRIAN

(proudly)

What a shot.

YOUNG TAYLOR

Why was mine loaded?

YOUNG SAMUEL

I don't know.

YOUNG TAYLOR

Sorry Sam.

YOUNG SAMUEL

(holding out his  
hand)

Gimme the gun.

Young Brian edges out a rye smile.

Young Taylor hands the gun to Young Samuel, who returns both pistols to the box and slides the box back under his bed.

YOUNG SAMUEL (CONT'D)

If we did it fairly, like  
cowboys...

YOUNG BRIAN

Cowboys cheat.

YOUNG SAMUEL

If we both drew at the same time,  
I'd beat you.

YOUNG BRIAN

Only if you shot him in the back  
of the head.

Young Taylor realizes his friend's irritability.

YOUNG TAYLOR

I agree. I was lucky.

YOUNG BRIAN  
And Sam was too slow.

END  
FLASHBACK

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ LAWN - DAY

SUPER: Autumn, 2004

Heather prunes the olive tree in the corner of the front lawn, whilst Stephen James Banks or JIMMY, now four years old, lies on the grass eye-balling a two year old German Shepherd/ Labrador cross, FLEA.

HEATHER  
Don't tease him Jimmy.

Jimmy pokes the dog's nose with an olive branch.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Dilapidated and apart from any signs of civilization, the place seems more like the Devil's Keep.

The sky is gray and a wind is picking up. All in all, the entire ambience is cruel.

A BEETLE creeps around in the dirt on the pathway that meanders through the crumbling headstones. A boot stamps down on it, crushing it into the dirt for no apparent reason.

The boot belongs to DAVE 'THE CAT' TYLER. Grim. Leather skinned, scars above each eye, and an empty gaze. He's dressed all in black and wears a gray Borsalino dress hat.

Samuel leans against a headstone. He smokes and handles an antique nickel-plated .38 Colt Lightning.

THE CAT  
You ever fired one of those before?

SAMUEL  
(not looking at The Cat)  
Nope.

THE CAT  
Watch. Pass it to me.

Samuel hands it to him and stands up straight.

THE CAT (CONT'D)

See the Virgin on that stone?

Samuel looks. The Virgin Mary, sculpted in stone on an elaborate headstone, about twenty feet away.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

THE CAT

Watch.

SAMUEL

You said that already.

The Cat snaps a fierce glance at Samuel before he quickly swivels his head, lifts, and fires. The Virgin explodes in a cloud of dust and stone fragments.

Samuel raises an eyebrow.

THE CAT

How's that for blasphemy?

SAMUEL

And the price?

THE CAT

You know why they call me the Cat?

SAMUEL

I can guess.

The Cat hands the pistol back to Samuel.

THE CAT

When you kill someone, do you just kill 'em?

Samuel doesn't attempt to humor his remark. The Cat presses his thumb on Samuel's forehead.

THE CAT (CONT'D)

Bang, bang. Quick, clean and gone.

SAMUEL

That's the general idea.

Samuel studies the artistry of the weapon.

THE CAT

You ever watch a cat?

Samuel looks at the remains of the Virgin Mary then down at the floor at the crushed beetle.

SAMUEL

See where you just shot.

The Cat looks.

Samuel raises the pistol and shoots The Cat in the side of the head, through his hat.

EXT. CHURCH/ BELFRY - SAME

No bell, no chime.

A CROW takes flight.

BACK TO:

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The Cat slumps to the floor, dead.

SAMUEL

I don't like cats; they're cruel  
fucking animals.

Samuel takes out his own .44 Magnum. With a gun in each hand he walks through the gravestones toward a parked Cadillac Eldorado Convertible with THE CAT'S DRIVER in it.

The Driver shakes and rolls his head to the rhythm of the music that screams through the headphones of his MP3 player. He's no more than twenty-five and has a face that advertises 'wise-ass'.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(shouting from the  
passenger side)

Turn it off.

The Driver fails to even notice Samuel.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Fuck's sake.

Samuel walks round the front of the car to the driver's side, stuffing the Colt Lightning down the front of his pants. He snaps the headphones off the Driver's head and replaces the left earpiece with the barrel of his .44. The Driver freezes.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You're not Goldfish.

DRIVER

No. I'm Joseph T. Burn...

He pistol whips the Driver.

SAMUEL

I didn't ask you who you were I  
said who you weren't. Do you  
know Goldfish?

The Driver (JOSEPH) is about to answer. Samuel pushes  
the barrel of .44 further into his ear.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Think carefully before you  
answer.

JOSEPH

(turning without  
thinking)

You...

Joseph now looks straight down the barrel of the .44.

SAMUEL

That could have been messy.

Joseph realizes the recklessness of his sudden movement.

JOSEPH

I'm...

SAMUEL

(simultaneously)  
Goldfish?

JOSEPH

He usually...

Samuel cuts him off, cracking him on his head with the  
.44.

SAMUEL

Not usually, not sometimes. Do  
you know him, yes or no?

Joseph rubs his head.

JOSEPH

OK. Sorry, yes.

SAMUEL

He usually follows the Cat  
everywhere, why didn't he come  
today?

JOSEPH

That's what I was going to say.

Cocky. Samuel holds up his finger to signify Joseph's last chance.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

(dropping any sign  
of bravado)

He shot himself in the foot.

SAMUEL

Shot himself in the foot?

JOSEPH

Watching TV.

Samuel's face contorts with disbelief.

SAMUEL

Goldfish, ex-sniper, arms dealer,  
and once minor league superstar  
pitcher, shot himself in the foot  
watching TV?

JOSEPH

That's what I thought.

FADE TO:

INT. GOLDFISH'S HOUSE/ LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: Previous night

GOLDFISH, a lanky, muscular man who looks like he styles himself on Iggy Pop, wears just his boxers and loads the antique nickel-plated .38 Colt Lightning. His feet are up on the coffee table and pornography colors the TV. A signed baseball rests on top of the TV.

Goldfish and all his vice looks somewhat out of place in the otherwise typical family living room.

EXT. GOLDFISH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

A station wagon pulls into the drive and stops. ERIN, Goldfish's wife, and their eight-year-old son, IGGY, get out. Erin moves to the passenger side to help her MOTHER out.

Iggy runs to the house. Erin leads her mother slowly up the drive.

BACK TO:



Pornography becomes the National Geographic channel and a documentary about mating habits.

He bends down awkwardly and picks up the baseball. He loses himself in the absurdity of chance. The bullet is embedded in the ball.

The front door can be heard closing.

ERIN (O.S.)

Hi Honey.

Goldfish tosses the blood stained T-shirt in the wastebasket and stands innocently beside the TV, a difficult smile on his face.

Erin pokes her head around the door.

ERIN (CONT'D)

(frowning)

Are you OK?

She steps into the room.

ERIN (CONT'D)

I thought I heard a gunshot.  
Sounded close too, did you not  
hear it?

Her mother is about to walk in when Erin sees blood on the carpet.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Is that?

GOLDFISH

I guess...

Erin's mother is in the doorway.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

(waving)

Hello Catherine.

She stares at the TV. Hippopotami fornicate.

MOTHER (CATHERINE)

Oh look, I like those monster  
truck shows.

Erin and Goldfish look at each other quizzically. Erin motions her mother out of the room.

ERIN

Those weren't trucks ma.

They leave the room.

Iggy enters. Goldfish sits back down. He has the baseball in one hand and picks up the TV control with the other. He doesn't switch channels and instead he sits, captivated by the documentary.

Iggy sits down next him.

IGGY

Why's there blood on the carpet  
papa?

Goldfish looks at him and hands him the baseball. Iggy takes it.

GOLDFISH

A souvenir.

Iggy stares at the ball and then at the TV.

IGGY

Why's there blood on the TV papa?

Goldfish squints at the TV and the sanguineness splatters.

GOLDFISH

(watching the TV)  
What's your favorite animal?

IGGY

(looking at his  
father)  
Why do they call you Goldfish?

GOLDFISH

(turns to Iggy)  
Is the goldfish your favorite  
animal?

BACK TO:

INT. CADILLAC/ HIGHWAY - DAY

Music blares from the radio.

Samuel sits in the passenger seat as the car barrels down the highway.

EXT. CADILLAC/ HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

The city comes into view like a sprawling swathe of apocalyptic grayness. The car barrels towards it.

INT. CADILLAC/ STREET - DAY

Suburbia has surrounded them.

JOSEPH

What happens to me?

Samuel turns the radio down.

SAMUEL

What do you mean?

JOSEPH

I mean, you're about to kill  
Goldfish and you already  
killed...

SAMUEL

And since I found you with them  
you're thinking I'm going to  
shoot you too?

JOSEPH

Are you?

SAMUEL

What would you do if you were me?

JOSEPH

I guess I'd shoot me.

They stop at an intersection.

SAMUEL

How far now?

JOSEPH

Couple of blocks.

They the cross the intersection.

SAMUEL

What number?

JOSEPH

2144.

SAMUEL

Pull over.

Joseph does as he's told. Samuel turns to face Joseph,  
one hand slung over the back of the seat, the other  
fingering his .44.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Cut the engine.

Joseph does so.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

About what you asked me before.

Joseph regards him with a deadpan expression. Samuel meets and holds his gaze. Joseph backs down.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

The man I work for gave me two names, yours wasn't one of them. So, be nice, your life is my hands. Stay here, wait for me to come back, and drop me where I tell you, and then be gone, far beyond the county line, at least. That way whether you live or die no longer has anything to do with me. Any variation on that, like you're not here when I get back, or I see you even helping an old lady cross the street, you're dead.

Joseph sits apparently calmly, given the orders he's just received.

JOSEPH

OK.

SAMUEL

OK, a deal, or OK you understand the options and will think about it?

Goldfish hobbles by, alone, on crutches.

Joseph and Samuel look on in disbelief. Samuel looks back at Joseph.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

So?

JOSEPH

I'll be here.

SAMUEL

I'm glad.

Samuel turns the radio up. Martha Reeves and the Vandellas 'Nowhere to run' plays. Samuel gets out.

He walks off down the sidewalk, .44 held tightly at his side. Goldfish is just a little way ahead.

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Samuel catches up with Goldfish and slows to walk beside him. Goldfish glances across not recognizing Samuel's profile.

GOLDFISH

You want something?

SAMUEL

You hear what happened to Dave  
'The Cat' Tyler?

Goldfish stops. He and Samuel turn to face each other.

GOLDFISH

Dead?

SAMUEL

Yeah.

GOLDFISH

When?

SAMUEL

A few hours ago.

GOLDFISH

Where do you want to do this?

SAMUEL

(looking around)  
Not that fussed, except right  
here is...a little open.

GOLDFISH

My place?

SAMUEL

Your family?

GOLDFISH

Out for the day.

SAMUEL

(pointing to  
Goldfish's  
bandaged foot)  
That's what you thought when that  
happened.

They start to walk, hobble. Goldfish stops.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You need a hand?

Samuel supports Goldfish for a second or two as he gets himself comfortable on the crutches.

GOLDFISH

Joseph tell you?

They proceed onward.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

GOLDFISH

Slimy fucker. Never liked him.  
Don't know why we even needed a  
fucking driver. Hope you blew  
out his brains too.

Regret flickers through Samuel's thoughts for a moment.

SAMUEL

Nope.

GOLDFISH

Nope?

He chuckles.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

These things got a way of coming  
back at you.

SAMUEL

(sure of himself)

I don't think so.

GOLDFISH

You work for Jay right?

SAMUEL

Yeah. Feel better knowing where  
the bullet comes from?

GOLDFISH

When you tread on a man like  
Jay's toes you know what's  
coming.

SAMUEL

Yeah.

GOLDFISH

We all got our time.

SAMUEL

Doesn't bother you, knowing yours  
is now?

GOLDFISH

Family has enough to live well.  
Erin...

SAMUEL

(as if remembering  
something)

Erin?

GOLDFISH

My wife. She knew. Marry me and  
I probably wouldn't make it to  
the bedpan stages.

He smiles at Samuel.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

Maybe you thought, or still  
think, I was going to put up a  
fight?

SAMUEL

It crossed my mind.

GOLDFISH

What kind of fight would that be  
with me and this foot?

He motions to his foot with a nod.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

Things could get messy, a shot  
goes off, hits someone, or worse  
still me, in the side of the  
head, disabled is the word and  
I'm pissing in bedpans anyway.  
No thanks. I'll take it clean.

SAMUEL

Why d'you do it?

GOLDFISH

Thought I was clever. Everybody  
thinks they're clever one time or  
another. Even thought because I  
was an old friend he might turn a  
blind eye. Even though you and I  
know there are no friends in our  
businesses.

They arrive at 2144.

EXT. GOLDFISH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Samuel and Goldfish walk up the drive.

SAMUEL

You should change your name.

GOLDFISH

Fuck you.

SAMUEL

Just kidding.

GOLDFISH

It was business; everything is  
fucking business. People have  
babies; babies need food,  
clothes...business. The sick  
need medicine, business. We all  
think we need everything,  
business. I give the cops a tip  
off, Jay loses a little trade,  
and I fill the gap, business.  
Why are you going to kill me?  
Because I ratted on Jay or  
because you want the money he  
pays you? It's all about green.

Goldfish opens the door and disappears into the house.  
Samuel follows.

INT. GOLDFISH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Goldfish leads Samuel through the house. They pass  
through the hall.

GOLDFISH

There's no such thing as loyalty.  
There is no trust. There is no  
respect. Money is all there is  
and people live and die according  
to that. One minute you're  
somebody's friend and the next,  
you're not.

They pass into the kitchen.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

You think the cops'll feel sorry  
when they find out I'm dead? Or  
you? We kill each other then  
great, less expense for the  
department. Business. Simple as  
flushing the John.

He stops at the glass-paneled sliding door that leads to  
the back yard.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

You mind if we do it out back?

SAMUEL

Nope.

EXT. GOLDFISH'S HOUSE/ DECK - CONTINUOUS

Goldfish sits himself down in an old rocking chair. He lays the crutches on the ground beside him. Samuel observes the contradiction. Toys, barbecue, washing line with adult and child clothes, flowers in the neatly kept garden, and Goldfish.

GOLDFISH

Do you have the Colt Cat thought he was going to sell you?

SAMUEL

(taking it from his pants)

Right here.

Samuel now has a gun in each hand.

GOLDFISH

Do you mind using it?

SAMUEL

No difference to me.

GOLDFISH

Mind if I put a record on?

Goldfish moves to get up. He fumbles for the crutches.

SAMUEL

(friendly)

Sit down.

He sees the old turntable and a box of vinyls. He crouches down beside them. He lays the guns on the ground.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Any preferences?

GOLDFISH

Got a Duke Ellington album in there. Recollections of the big band era.

Samuel flicks through the vinyls and brings out the one requested. He unsheathes it, lays it carefully on the turntable and lets the needle down.

There's an effervescent crackle and then the music (Minnie The Moocher) begins.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

Just let me listen for a few minutes.

Samuel sits on the deck and looks back at Goldfish, who stares toward the sky.

SAMUEL

You ever want out of all this shit, alive?

GOLDFISH

And live to piss my pants and forget my own name?

Samuel smirks.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

Do you like music?

SAMUEL

Depends.

GOLDFISH

How do you get away from all the demons that rage in your head?

SAMUEL

Don't try and make me feel sorry for you.

GOLDFISH

You already do.

He locks eyes with Samuel.

GOLDFISH (CONT'D)

But if you don't do what you've got to do, it'll be you who asks for just one more song.

SAMUEL

Fishing. I go fly fishing.

Goldfish closes his eyes and lays back in the rocking chair.

Samuel watches the record turn for a minute or two. A look of emptiness comes over him and he stands, picks up the .38 and grabs a cushion. He walks over to Goldfish.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

The Cadillac Eldorado has gone.

Samuel approaches. He stops and ponders the moment.

SAMUEL

Mother-fucker.

He looks around as if disoriented.

A car approaches, Erin's station wagon, and slows to a halt in front of Samuel. The window slides down. Erin, her mother and Iggy are inside.

ERIN

You lost?

Samuel stands back and tries not to look conspicuous.

SAMUEL

No.

(clears his throat)

I was just doing some business in the area, my car's up the road. Thanks.

ERIN

Do I know you?

SAMUEL

No.

She looks away and then back again, just as Samuel is about to move off.

ERIN

Sam?

She nods to herself in gleeful recognition.

ERIN (CONT'D)

Samuel Bendis.

A look of 'this can't be happening' sweeps Samuel's face.

SAMUEL

I'm sorry, not me.

ERIN

You rode a Kuwahara Magician, same as your two friends. I'd see you at the old brickyard. Who was the other...

She's lost in reminiscence.

ERIN (CONT'D)

I loved that bike.

Samuel watches Iggy watch him.

SAMUEL

Naw, wasn't me.

Erin is away with the fairies.

ERIN

Taylor, yeah, Taylor was the other guy.

Samuel turns his head and rolls his eyes.

SAMUEL

I'm sorry lady.

ERIN

Erin.

SAMUEL

I'm sorry Erin, but that wasn't me.

ERIN

You remind me of him so much.

SAMUEL

We all look like someone.

He taps his hand on the roof and walks away. The car pulls away.

ERIN'S MOTHER (O.S.)

A friend dear?

ERIN (O.S.)

A memory mom, just a memory.

ERIN'S MOTHER (O.S.)

That's life dear.

Samuel looks back down the street after the car as Iggy stares back at him through the rear window and flicks him the bird.

INT. MARILYN'S BAR - NIGHT

A large signed poster of Marilyn Manson hangs behind the bar. Jack and his BUDDIES stand and exchange stories beside the bar top.

EXT. MARILYN'S BAR - NIGHT

A painted picture of Marilyn Monroe precedes the neon lit 'Marilyn's' sign.

Taylor stands across the street and contemplates Jack's words.

Two YOUNG MEN approach him. They stop, one either side of Taylor, and look at the bar with him. Both are twenty-five or less, and possess an aura of streetwise confidence.

DENNY, the taller of the two, breaks the silence.

DENNY  
Beautiful wasn't she?

His friend, TOBY, plays along with his banter.

TOBY  
Preferred Ali McGraw myself.

DENNY  
She in Cheers?

TOBY  
Naw, that was Kirstie Alley fool.

TAYLOR  
She was in Convoy.

TOBY  
The Getaway too, with Steve McQueen. Even think she was married to him at one point.

DENNY  
(smiles)  
They call him the encyclopedia. Man can link Bruce Willis to Charles de Gaulle. How you doing Detective Taylor? Don't think you're going to get served unless you go in.

Taylor smiles.

DENNY (CONT'D)  
Got myself a job.

Taylor looks at him and frowns.

DENNY (CONT'D)  
(smirking)  
Legal. Social security, pension...the full house.

TAYLOR

Glad to hear that.

DENNY

Down to you. You gave me a chance. Not many folks give too many others chances these days. Greed's the word. Soul is cheap.

TAYLOR

I'm glad Denny.

DENNY

If all cops were like you...

Taylor cuts him short.

TAYLOR

So now you like Marilyn Monroe?

DENNY

Naw, just knew it get your attention. Never really got into them movies you gave me. Old, too old looking, and heard the stories before. Mom liked them though.

TAYLOR

Think those stories came before the ones you've heard.

TOBY

We going to get a beer or what?

DENNY

Yeah.

Steps into the street and faces Taylor.

DENNY (CONT'D)

Come on, I owe you Taylor. Let me at least buy you a beer.

Taylor raises his hand in farewell.

TAYLOR

Some other time Denny.

Denny and Toby start across the street.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(shouting after  
them)

Stay out of trouble.

DENNY

Always.

Denny and Toby disappear into the bar. Taylor continues on down the sidewalk and slowly disappears as he blends into the shadows of the night.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

Without names they're all the same. Color is little beyond gray.

Monochrome structures stand, rise and fall, and merge with urbanized flora as far as the eye can see.

PEOPLE of all shapes and sizes, all walks of life, shift along their set time-lines in their private worlds, rational or irrational, some as pedestrians, others in their vehicles of choice or purpose. Rules and laws organize the otherwise chaos.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Taylor stands out front. He seemingly waits for someone.

Longtime deserted building sites surround the diner. Two trees have wrestled the sands of time and remain rooted and alive in front of the front windows.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Full of unmarked crates. A couple of Jay's THUGS move about.

Jay stands with Brian. He is considerably taller than Brian. Brian counts the cash in the envelope Jay has just handed him.

BRIAN

This is only half?

JAY

From now on half of what you earn goes toward paying back what you owe.

BRIAN

But, I need the money.

JAY

Don't piss me off Brian.

Jay walks away and toward the office at the back of the warehouse. Brian pockets the money and walks out of the warehouse.

INT. DINER - DAY

A washed out, dingy establishment, and empty but for two WAITRESSES, a CHEF and a couple of solitary CLIENTS.

ROBIN (24), an elegant and make-up free waitress, moves about her habitual chores, despite the serious lack of customers.

Taylor comes in and looks around. Robin watches him as he takes a seat at the counter. There's an impulsive first sight attraction there. She walks over to him.

ROBIN

Hello sir. Can I...

TAYLOR

Just a coffee thanks.

Before she can turn to get the coffee pot.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Did you see anybody outside before me, like they were waiting?

ROBIN

Just you.

TAYLOR

Nobody came in?

She grabs a coffee pot and fills his mug.

ROBIN

Just you.

TAYLOR

All day?

ROBIN

Well, we had our regulars. Most of the time it's pretty quiet.

Robin lets her thoughts get the better of her and investigates.

ROBIN (CONT'D)

I'd notice...maybe she...

Taylor sips his coffee.

TAYLOR

My brother seems to have stood me up.

Hope remains as relief makes Robin grin.

ROBIN

But you got to talk to me.

TAYLOR

This must get pretty boring.  
What do you...

Robin nervously cuts him off.

ROBIN

Count the leaves left on the trees.

TAYLOR

(smirking)

What are you going to do when the leaves have all fallen?

She blushes and moves to refill his mug, trying not to look at him.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Can you give me a take-out cup?

ROBIN

Am I boring you?

TAYLOR

No.

She fills a take-out cup with coffee, puts a lid on it, and hands it to him. He takes it and stands. Taylor and Robin's eyes meet for a split second. He gestures a farewell and leaves. Robin smiles to herself and waves to Taylor as he passes the window. He pulls a leaf off one of the trees and lets it drop to the ground.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Joseph, headphones on, walks along to the beat of the music on his MP3 player.

Two men in suits, Toby and Denny, approach from the opposite direction.

They each have a clipboard and are carrying out a conservation survey for some corporate enterprise.

Denny looks to Toby, both are considerably bigger than Joseph. They're about to tempt fate.

Denny blocks Joseph's path, forcing Joseph to look up, and mouths 'excuse me'. Joseph is stone faced. Denny mimes for him to remove his headphones. Joseph looks at Toby, who flanks him, and somewhat disgruntled he obliges and lets the headphones hang around his neck.

DENNY

We don't mean to pester you.

JOSEPH

You did that just by opening your fucking mouth.

Denny provokes him by feigning 'shock and horror' at the cuss words.

DENNY

(playing the part  
of a preacher of  
the bible)

We was just wondering if you believe...

Joseph cuts him off.

JOSEPH

Fuck you.

He barges past Denny.

DENNY

(shouting after  
him)

Believe in conserving the city's parks, mother-fucker.

Joseph puts his headphones back on and flicks Denny the bird.

DENNY (CONT'D)

People like that are the reason nothing ever gets done in this fucking country.

TOBY

Why him?

DENNY

Just wanted to confirm.

TOBY

Confirm what?

DENNY

That surveys are nothing but  
fucking middle class hopes and  
desires.

TOBY

Probably thought we were  
preaching Jesus.

DENNY

Then least you can do is  
respectfully decline whether you  
believe or not.

TOBY

Do you believe?

Jay's Chevrolet Blazer pulls up and stops.

DENNY

In what?

The window rolls down. Jay looks across at Denny.

JAY

How you doin' little nephew?

Denny stands back. All of a sudden he's nervous and  
edgy. He knows his uncle's way of life all to well.

DENNY

I'm good.

JAY

Who's your shadow?

DENNY

Toby.

Jay stretches his hand out to Toby. Toby takes it but  
stares past Jay and at the giant Elliot. Jay smirks.

JAY

Good to meet you Toby.

Toby snaps his look back to Jay.

TOBY

Good to meet you too...

He hesitates.

JAY

Jay.

Toby glances at Denny.

TOBY

Yeah, good to meet you Jay.

JAY

You two want some work?

DENNY

We got jobs.

JAY

What, preaching the gospel?

DENNY

No, we're doing a survey about protecting city parks.

JAY

Thought you were working at the boat yard?

DENNY

Got laid off.

JAY

Now you're the man with the clipboard. Nobody wants to protect shit except their bank balance. They're probably going to build some shopping mall. You two are just their public relations bitches.

DENNY

Not everybody's like you.

JAY

No, some like to call themselves law-abiding. You used to be sharp, what happened to you kid?

DENNY

I don't want mom to have to visit me inside again. Take it easy Jay.

He walks away.

Before Toby gets a chance to leave.

JAY

(to Toby)  
Come here.

Toby glances at Denny as he crosses the street.

JAY (CONT'D)

Come here.

Toby leans towards the window.

JAY (CONT'D)

How much you pick up a week?

TOBY

\$250.

JAY

\$2500 each, one night's work.

TOBY

I don't know.

JAY

Convince him.

Jay hands him a \$100 bill.

JAY (CONT'D)

I'm offering more than ten weeks work in one night, and if you do it good, more to come.

TOBY

I'll try.

JAY

No, you will. Tell him if he doesn't the installments for his mother's treatment stops.

Toby steps back. The Blazer pulls away.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

People mill about doing what they have to do.

Brian sits at his desk. He stares at the mound of files and paperwork that grows ominously as colleagues walk past and drop anything and everything on his desk. Somebody drops a copy of Penthouse Magazine. Brian shakes his head.

BRIAN

For fuck's sake.

He grabs it and drops it in the trash. When he looks up an over-weight, all tooth cop, COP 1, stands beside him and holds out a pencil.

In the background, Taylor walks through the entrance. He carries the take-out coffee from Robin's diner.

COP 1  
(to Brian)  
Sharpen this, desk boy.

Brian barely shifts in his chair.

BRIAN  
(not looking at Cop  
1)  
Sharpen it yourself. From what I hear your wife's cunt's as dry as a lizard's back. Maybe that'll do the trick.

Cop 1 moves clumsily and lunges for Brian. Brian falls backwards off his chair and lands splay legged. Cop 1 stabs the pencil into the ground between his legs, a little too close to Brian's crotch for comfort.

Brian looks up, steely faced, at Cop 1. Only now do people rush to the scene. Two more cops, COP 2 and 3, pull the big man back. Taylor arrives and helps Brian to his feet. Before any verbal retaliation ensues the CAPTAIN comes over.

CAPTAIN  
Sitting at a desk that hard  
Brian?

BRIAN  
Tell Smokey the Elephant there to keep his fat mouth shut.

COP 1  
He insulted me.

BRIAN  
I insulted your wife.

COP 1  
And your wife? I bet she fu...

Taylor purposely spills his coffee on Cop 1.

COP 1 (CONT'D)  
You fuck...

Taylor shrugs his shoulders as he looks from Cop 1 to his Captain.

TAYLOR  
(simultaneously)  
Oh, I'm sorry.

CAPTAIN

Nobody insults anyone.  
Understand?

Cop 1 nods as he halfheartedly attempts to wipe the coffee away.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(looking at Brian)  
Understand?

Captain nods at Cop 1 to go. Cop 1 walks away with his colleagues. Brian bends down and picks the Penthouse Magazine from the trash. Before anyone can say anything he's hurled it at Cop 1.

BRIAN

You need it more...

TAYLOR

(grabbing Brian's  
arm)  
Give it up Brian.

Cop 1 turns but is urged to walk away by his colleagues. The Captain looks down at the floor and shuffles his feet. His expression displays near pity for Brian.

CAPTAIN

Feel better?

Brian stands with Taylor at his side.

BRIAN

How long do I have to do this  
shit for?

CAPTAIN

Until you learn control.

BRIAN

He started it.

CAPTAIN

How old are you?

BRIAN

What?

CAPTAIN

How old are you?

Brian looks at Taylor bemused and then back at the Captain.

BRIAN

Thirty-five.

CAPTAIN

How long have you been in the force?

BRIAN

Since I was twenty-two.

CAPTAIN

Thirteen years. You know how old I am?

BRIAN

No.

CAPTAIN

Guess.

BRIAN

Forty, forty...forty-five?

The Captain raises an eyebrow. Taylor chuckles to himself.

CAPTAIN

(to Taylor)

Don't laugh. This applies to you too.

(back to Brian)

Thirty-three.

Brian rolls his eyes in embarrassment.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

You know how long I've been in the force?

Brian shakes his head.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

(to Taylor)

You know?

TAYLOR

Less than thirteen.

CAPTAIN

Exactly. And I'm your Captain. Why is that?

BRIAN

Because we're bad at our job?

CAPTAIN

(pointing to

Taylor)

He's one of the best I've ever seen.

Not what Brian needed to hear.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)  
You on the other hand...

Taylor cuts in.

TAYLOR  
Because we lack a college  
education, sir.

The Captain bows his head and smiles to himself.

CAPTAIN  
Lead by example Taylor, because  
you don't know when to keep your  
mouths shut.  
(to Brian)  
Go home. Take the rest of the  
day to think about how to improve  
yourself.

He walks away.

Taylor picks the chair up. Brian stands and watches the  
Captain walk away.

BRIAN  
Mother-fucker.

Taylor pushes the chair back to the table.

TAYLOR  
Why, because he's right?

Brian turns to Taylor.

BRIAN  
Do you think I'm a bad cop?

Taylor hesitates.

BRIAN (CONT'D)  
Do you?

TAYLOR  
No, you're not a bad cop Brian,  
but you've done some stupid  
things and if you're still doing  
them and somebody in here gets  
the call on you, they'll take  
pleasure in taking you down. If  
you weren't my brother...

BRIAN  
Don't say it Taylor. Don't  
fucking patronize me now.

TAYLOR

I can't keep bailing you out  
Brian, and I can't keep turning a  
blind eye to the shit you do.

BRIAN

I never asked you for any favors.

TAYLOR

But if you didn't get them, you'd  
be dead by now.

EXT. DENNY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The place is tidy but the roof is a little rickety and  
broken in places and the walls could do with a coat of  
paint. An old Chevelle is parked in the drive.

INT. DENNY'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Denny sits on the edge of his bed and clenches his  
teeth. He takes a deep breath, stands up and exits the  
room.

INT. DENNY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

DENNY'S MOM, gaunt, losing her hair because of cancer,  
and clearly suffering, watches TV. Denny enters and  
kisses her on the top of the head. She reaches up and  
touches his cheek.

DENNY

I'll be back to put you in bed  
mom.

He leaves. She watches him go and holds her gaze on the  
door as it closes.

DENNY'S MOM

My good boy.

The rumble of the Chevelle as it is fired up and leaves  
is heard above the TV sounds.

EXT. CHEVELLE/ STREET - NIGHT

The car cruises through the quiet streets.

INT. CHEVELLE - CONTINUOUS

Denny drives. Toby rides shotgun.

DENNY

Can't believe I'm doing this.  
Sick fuck. Her own brother, her  
own fucking brother making  
threats against her life.

TOBY

How is she?

DENNY

Just finished another round of  
chemo.

A tear squeezes out of the corner of Denny's eye. He quickly wipes it away. Toby notices but looks straight ahead.

Headlights suddenly burn through the driver's window and the discourse is terminated abruptly amidst a loud, ear piercing crash, as Denny's door implodes, jerking and throwing Denny and Toby about like a rag dolls.

EXT. CADILLAC/ STREET/ CHEVELLE - SAME

The Cadillac Eldorado, with Joseph at the wheel, headphones on and minus concentration, jumps a red light and slams into the driver's side of the Chevelle. The force of impact knocks the Chevelle onto its side.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

All is silent apart from the two-car crash sculpture.

Joseph climbs out of the convertible. He's cut, bloody and shaken. He hobbles over to the Chevelle.

EXT. CHEVELLE - NIGHT

Joseph peers in.

Denny lies crumpled. He's bloody and lifeless.

Toby is still fixed by his safety belt. He's covered in blood and battered, but alive. He catches Joseph's stare and looks straight back at him.

JOSEPH  
(in a broken voice)  
The preachers.

He chuckles to himself.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Now, he gets to see if there  
really is a God.

Toby suffers with just the effort to speak.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
You tell your man, Goldfish might  
be dead, but his revenge don't  
sleep, mother-fucker.

Joseph hobbles away.

INT. DENNY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - NIGHT

The lights and TV are still on. Denny's mom sits, as she was, her head now bowed, asleep.

Lights from a car shine through the front window and then go out.

There's a knock at the door, followed by a pause, another knock, and then the sound of the door as it opens.

TAYLOR (O.S.)  
Hello. Mrs. Johnson?

Taylor walks into the lounge. He looks at the sick, sleeping lady, MRS. JOHNSON (Denny's mom), and decides it best not to wake her.

He sits and watches the TV without any conviction, contemplating what to do and what to say when the time comes.

INT. DENNY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - LATER SAME NIGHT

Taylor sleeps bolt upright on the couch. Mrs. Johnson opens her eyes and sees the unexpected figure. She stands and ambles over to him.

She shakes Taylor's arm.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Detective.

Taylor shifts slightly.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
Detective Banks.

Taylor opens his eyes.

MRS. JOHNSON (CONT'D)  
Taylor.

Taylor wrestles from his sleep.

TAYLOR  
Sorry, Mrs. Johnson.

He stands automatically.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Something's happened?

TAYLOR  
You might want to sit down.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Don't be formal with me Taylor.  
My boy?

TAYLOR  
Was killed in a car accident.

She sits herself back down. Taylor does the same. Mrs. Johnson pauses for thought then takes a deep breath.

MRS. JOHNSON  
Was it a chase?

TAYLOR  
(shaking his head)  
No. Just an accident.

Tears begin to roll down her cheeks.

MRS. JOHNSON  
My boy. My little boy.

Taylor struggles to hold back his own tears at the sight before his eyes.

TAYLOR  
Can I get you anything? Is there  
anyone I can call?

She looks at Taylor for a long hard moment. They both know who else there is.

MRS. JOHNSON

No, no one.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL/ CAR PARK - DAWN

It's a run down establishment. A real estate sign advertises it as 'For Sale'.

Jay sits in the Blazer, arm out of the window. Samuel stands beside the window. Elliot reads a TV guide.

A neat Chevrolet Impala pulls in. It stops beside the Blazer. Jay steps out of the Blazer whilst two HEAVIES drag Joseph out of the Impala. Joseph's a little rough around the edges but otherwise he seems fine.

He spots Samuel.

JOSEPH

Hey, sorry I didn't wait.

HEAVY 1 gives him a short jab to the gut. He doubles over. They start to drag him towards one of the rooms.

Jay looks at Samuel. He motions for the heavies to stop.

Jay walks over to Joseph and takes him by the chin.

JAY

You know this fuckhead?

Jay motions for Samuel to come over. He does so.

JOSEPH

(looking at Samuel)

Told you I would have shot me when I had the chance.

Jay delivers a downward punch to Joseph's head.

JAY

Take him in.

The heavies drag Joseph into the first room and shut the door behind them.

Samuel doesn't know where to look.

SAMUEL

He was no one.

Jay slaps Samuel across the face, once, twice, three times.

JAY

And now he's someone.

SAMUEL

He was just a driver.

Jay's rage burns deep into Samuel's soul.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

You gave me the hit on Goldfish  
and the Cat.

Jay's expression is one of blankness.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Goldfish went and shot himself in  
the foot, so they needed a  
driver, and this guy...Joseph I  
think, yeah, was it.

JAY

Just a driver?

SAMUEL

He seemed harmless.

JAY

Harmless?

Jay whips out his .45 automatic. This is the first time  
Samuel has seen Jay raise a gun in anger. He looks  
indefinably evil. He holds it to Samuel's head.

JAY (CONT'D)

This is also fucking harmless,  
until I pull the fucking trigger.

Samuel is near panic.

JAY (CONT'D)

He was a loose end. Not no one,  
not anyone, he was a fucking  
loose end. And what do we do  
with loose ends?

Samuel is lost for words.

JAY (CONT'D)

We tie them. Otherwise what can  
loose ends create?

Samuel can't speak as he strains to look at Jay's  
trigger finger.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 Problems, problems like now.  
 (Waving the gun  
 towards the room)

Joseph, as we can now so aptly  
 call him, has killed my nephew,  
 ironically by doing what he did  
 when you knew him, driving. He  
 dies, easy as mud on a pig's  
 back. You though, my friend, my  
 employee, present another fucking  
 problem. In effect, and without  
 knowing, you have made yourself  
 accessory to the murder of my  
 fucking nephew.

Samuel's face shrouds with disbelief.

SAMUEL  
 I didn't...

Jay slaps him in the face.

JAY  
 Shut the fuck up.

He takes a breath.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 I really liked you, Sam. But I  
 think you know what's coming, so  
 live it up while you can. Go  
 fishing, or some shit.

He turns to go to the room and turns straight back round  
 again.

JAY  
 (holding out his  
 free hand)  
 The gun...the Colt you went to  
 get?

Samuel takes it from inside his jacket and hands it  
 over, butt first.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 Very nice.

He turns and walks toward the room, a gun in each hand.  
 He enters and the door closes behind him.

Samuel remains transfixed, staring at the door. A  
 thought crosses his mind for a moment. He puts his hand  
 beneath his jacket and fingers his .44.

Reason, in the shape of Elliot, steps out of the Blazer and eclipses Samuel's view of the entire room.

SAMUEL

What does a guy like you do in  
his spare time Elliot?

Elliot watches Samuel's every move.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Is it a gland problem?

Elliot takes a chocolate bar from his pocket and munches happily. Samuel turns and walks out of the car park. He blows out his cheeks and looks to the heavens.

A hail of gunfire sounds from the motel room.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ BACK YARD - DAY

Brian stands with a mug of coffee as he watches Jimmy and Flea chase each other in and out of the shrubs.

Heather can be seen through the patio window as she prepares dinner in the kitchen.

Flea skids onto the deck and crashes in a heap at Brian's feet. He almost spills his coffee on him. The dog scrambles back to his feet before Jimmy gets to him.

Brian puts his mug down.

BRIAN

(to Jimmy)

What did I tell you?

He walks towards Jimmy, who is now rooted to the spot and looks sheepishly at his father. Flea rounds a bush and makes another charge just as Brian lunges and grabs Jimmy round the waist playfully. He holds him like a bedroll at his side. Jimmy laughs.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

(more to himself  
than to Jimmy)

Keep those smiles coming little  
buddy, 'cause damn if this ain't  
the best time of your life.

With Jimmy under his arm he chases Flea around the garden before crumpling to the ground with Jimmy on his chest. Flea takes his opportunity and charges, hurling himself at his playmates. A phone rings in the house.

HEATHER (O.S.)  
 (calling from the  
 house)  
 Brian. Phonenumber.

Brian drags himself to his feet, pulling Jimmy up with him, and giving Flea a friendly shake.

BRIAN  
 Love you Jimmy.

Jimmy resumes his tireless game with Flea.

Brian walks to the house and picks his mug up as he enters.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Heather chops and dices vegetables. Brian brushes past her. The cordless phone is face down on the breakfast bar.

BRIAN  
 (to Heather)  
 Who is it?

He puts his mug down and picks the phone up.

HEATHER  
 Didn't say.

BRIAN  
 (into the phone)  
 Hello?

INT. JAY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - SAME

An oversized room made to look even bigger by the lack of furniture. Jay stands in front of the super-sized flat screen TV, the control in one hand and the phone held to his ear with the other.

JAY  
 How you doing Brian?

BACK TO:

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

BRIAN  
 (into the phone)  
 What do you want?

BACK TO:

INT. JAY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jay flicks through the channels as he talks on the phone.

JAY  
 Have a job for you.

BACK TO:

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Heather looks over at Brian.

BRIAN  
 (into the phone)  
 No thanks.

BACK TO:

INT. JAY'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Jay still stands but has stopped flicking channels and watches 'The Big Lebowski' (the levitation scene) with curiosity.

JAY  
 (into the phone;  
 not concentrating)  
 I don't think you have a choice,  
 Brian. The old brick yard at 8  
 tonight.

Jay hangs up.

BACK TO:

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Brian still speaks into the phone despite Jay having already hung up.

BRIAN  
 No thanks.

He hangs up.

HEATHER  
 Who was it?

BRIAN

No one.

HEATHER

(turning to look at  
him)

No one?

He sips his coffee and spits it back into the mug.

BRIAN

Shit.

Heather looks at him.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Just somebody about the ad.

HEATHER

Is he coming round?

BRIAN

No.

She looks at him lovingly, somewhat pitifully. She dries her hands and comes over to him.

HEATHER

(stroking his face)  
Don't sell it.

BRIAN

We need the money.

HEATHER

I can get more hours.

Brian turns to leave.

BRIAN

I might be late. Don't wait for  
me.

Heather watches him leaves with an air of defeat.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Brian looks up at the immaculate Kuwahara Magician that hangs on the back wall. He gently lifts it down and rolls it out and into the drive, past his Silverado truck.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ DRIVE - CONTINUOUS

A couple KIDS breeze past his entrance on new edition BMXs.

Brian lifts one leg over the frame. He puts one foot on the pedal and kicks away. He pedals into the street and rides off.

Heather watches from the lounge window.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Brian pedals, like a happy kid, down the sidewalk. Memories grip him.

DISSOLVE  
TO:

EXT. SAME STREET - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The young Brian pedals down the street on the same bike, with young Taylor and Samuel by his side.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
(breaking into a  
pedaling frenzy)  
Last one pays for the candy.

Young Brian and Taylor follow Young Samuel's lead, their bikes being almost thrown from side to side.

Young Brian and Taylor quickly catch Young Samuel and overtake him. It seems more of a personal battle between the two than anything else. They charge a railway crossing as the lights flash and the signal sounds. They squeeze under the dropping gate and make the other side. Lucky. Just after they make the other side the train trundles by. Young Samuel is forced to wait.

EXT. BRICKWORKS - DAY

It's disused and a little creepy. A dirt track runs around and through the rubble. A couple of ramps have been built in places. A homemade quarter-pipe backs up against a broke-down wall. A couple of KIDS sit by their bikes near the track. Another KID fiddles with the chain on his bike just next to them.

A girl, YOUNG ERIN, sits on top of the quarter-pipe. Her legs dangle over the top of the ramp.

A truck pulls up and stops. Young Samuel and his bike are in the flatbed. He gets out and lifts his bike down.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 (to the driver,  
 TOM)  
 Thanks Tom.

The truck pulls away. Its horn sounds a couple of times.

Young Erin watches Young Samuel like a hawk as he pushes his bike over to the other three kids.

TRAVIS, the kid fiddling with his chain, looks up.

TRAVIS  
 Hey Sam.

YOUNG SAMUEL  
 Trav.

TRAVIS  
 (pointing to his  
 two friends)  
 Kyle, Ritchie.

They both smile.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)  
 My cousins. Never ridden them  
 bikes further than school.

The larger of the two, KYLE, reacts to his cousin's remark.

KYLE  
 Not true. We got a ramp, in the  
 park.

TRAVIS  
 (patronizing)  
 Really?

Before anything more is said TWO RIDERS come flying over the rise. Young Taylor just edges Young Brian. They blast towards Young Samuel and Travis without any sense of slowing.

As they get closer Young Samuel and company scramble backwards. Young Taylor and Brian skid to an abrupt halt in front of them. Their back wheels swing through the dirt and shower their friends with grit and dust. A cacophony of 'arrghs' and 'urghs' ensues.

Young Taylor arrived first, by a cat's whisker.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

(dusting down)

What you do that for?

Kyle, RITCHIE, and Young Samuel dust themselves down.

YOUNG SAMUEL

Crazy...

YOUNG TAYLOR

How...?

YOUNG BRIAN

How d'you get here so fast?

YOUNG SAMUEL

Old Tom...

YOUNG TAYLOR

We left you at the crossing?

YOUNG SAMUEL

Old Tom picked me up.

YOUNG TAYLOR

Cheat.

YOUNG BRIAN

Doesn't count then?

YOUNG TAYLOR

What?

YOUNG BRIAN

The race, if he cheated.

YOUNG SAMUEL

No way!

YOUNG TAYLOR

Who was first out of us two  
Travis?

Travis looks at Young Brian.

TRAVIS

(pointing at Young  
Taylor)

You.

YOUNG BRIAN

No way!

TRAVIS

It was close.

YOUNG BRIAN

I'm not going.

Young Brian rides off onto the track and begins a lap.

Young Samuel and Taylor look at each other. A stare-off. Young Samuel drops his gaze and picks up his bike. He gets on and rides away, defeated.

Young Brian completes his lap and rejoins the group.

YOUNG BRIAN (CONT'D)

(shouting after  
Young Samuel)

Get me a pack of stickers Sam.

Young Erin drops off the top of the quarter-pipe and slides down the ramp. The whole maneuver seems somewhat painful. She picks her bike up and takes off after Young Samuel.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Young Samuel rides along with Young Erin in tow a little further back. He stands, pedals faster and quickly pulls away from her.

EXT. BRICKWORKS - A SHORT TIME LATER

Young Samuel returns. He drops a brown paper bag full of candy in front of his friends. He takes a pack of ET collectors' stickers from his pocket and hands them to Young Brian.

Young Brian grins like a Cheshire cat.

YOUNG BRIAN

I was just kidding Sam.

Young Erin drops back to the quarter-pipe. Young Samuel looks at her.

YOUNG TAYLOR

(to Young Samuel)

She likes you.

YOUNG SAMUEL

She's weird.

YOUNG BRIAN

So are you.

YOUNG SAMUEL

You can give me those back if you like?

YOUNG BRIAN

(teasing)

She's called Erin. Go talk with her.

YOUNG TAYLOR

Make her day.

Young Samuel fiddles with another pack of stickers, trying to open them.

YOUNG SAMUEL

Get lost.

END  
FLASHBACK

EXT. BRICKWORKS - EARLY EVENING

Daylight fades.

The area has been cleared and flattened, becoming the site for a new building project. The Blazer is parked. Jay is inside with the window down. Elliot leans against the hood, munching on a chocolate bar.

Brian rides up and over the rise on his BMX. He's a little more careful compared to when he was younger and brakes as he nears the vehicle. He remains seated for a split second.

JAY

(not bothering to  
get out)

A little big for that, aren't you?

Brian wheels the bike over toward the Blazer. Elliot watches curiously.

JAY (CONT'D)

Department really cutting down or is that a desk boy special edition?

BRIAN

You want to buy it?

JAY

Never got in to that shit.

Elliot steps over to the bike.

ELLIOT  
How much you want for it?

Jay wipes his brow.

JAY  
Get back in the fucking car,  
Elliot.

Elliot drops the remainder of his chocolate bar to the ground.

BRIAN  
(to Elliot)  
Five hundred.

JAY  
(to Brian)  
One of my employees has become a  
bit of a liability and I need  
someone to clean things up.

Elliot leans into the Blazer, on the driver's side.

ELLIOT  
Mind if I have a look at the bike  
boss?

JAY  
(pauses)  
No. Go ahead.

Elliot walks over to Brian.

ELLIOT  
Mind if I have a ride?

Brian lets him take it.

BRIAN  
(to Jay)  
Why me?

Elliot rides away. His huge frame dwarfs the bike. Jay can't help but watch. Brian turns to look.

JAY  
(smiles)  
Even ET would have had problems  
getting that fucker off the  
ground.

Brian smirks.

JAY (CONT'D)

(back to Brian)

This employee forgot to tie up some loose end. The same loose end killed my nephew. Added to which, the employee has just made your prime suspect list for two murders.

BRIAN

Whose murders?

JAY

Goldfish and Dave 'The Cat' Tyler.

Beat. Brian takes a step back and holds his head.

BRIAN

You sick fuck.

Jay stares at Brian. Brian lunges toward the Blazer and then backs off.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

JAY

You knew this day might come, whether it was me asking or just you as a cop on a job.

All of a sudden Brian seems to have aged physically as the energy drains from his body.

BRIAN

Surely you have plenty of other blood thirsty bastards in your play pen?

JAY

All indisposed.

BRIAN

No, no, no.

He paces around.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You want me to kill Samuel Bendis, to kill my friend?  
(shaking his head)  
Mother-fucker.

Jay doesn't flinch.

JAY

He's a bad man Brian, just like you are now. Just like I am. As a cop you've pulled the trigger on better men than him.

Brian can't stand still.

BRIAN

I've killed people as a cop and I've killed people for you but not any more. I can't...I can't do this shit.

JAY

(pointedly)

You want me to tell Heather about Jimmy's half brother? That'd wreck her dreams of a happy family pretty fucking quick, don't you think? You know I have you by the balls.

BRIAN

He was my fucking best friend.

JAY

(remorselessly)

Life moves on. You forgetting the money you owe me now too?

Brian drops to his haunches.

Elliot skids to a halt in front of Brian. In his excitement he's kicked up a cloud of dust. Jay closes his eyes for a few seconds whilst the dust settles.

ELLIOT

\$450?

Brian looks at him, lost for words.

JAY

The man said \$500.

Jay steps out of the Blazer. He takes some cash from his own pocket and squatting down, stuffs the \$500 in Brian's shirt pocket.

Jay stands back up.

JAY (CONT'D)

(to Elliot)

Comes out of your wages.

He points to the bike.

JAY (CONT'D)

Put it in the back.

Brian watches his beloved bike, his memory, as it is taken away. The back door is slammed shut. Elliot moves to get in the Blazer.

JAY (CONT'D)

He collects them.

To Elliot as he gets in.

JAY (CONT'D)

How many's that now?

ELLIOT

Fourteen.

JAY

(to Brian)

Can you believe that?

Brian holds his head in his hands. Jay reaches down and hauls him to his feet.

JAY (CONT'D)

Get in.

BRIAN

I'd rather walk.

Jay offers Brian a cruel smile, reaches into the Blazer a moment, then steps back and holds the Colt Lightning out to Brian, barrel first.

JAY

Take it.

Brian stares at the gun.

JAY (CONT'D)

You have no choice. 'Cause if you don't do this, then you're as dead as your friend.

Brian reluctantly takes the weapon. Jay keeps hold of it for a second. His finger edges toward the trigger. His sickly gaze locks onto Brian's sad frown for a moment.

JAY (CONT'D)

Use it. Your friend deserves to die by more than just a commoner's piece, at least.

Jay releases the weapon and gets back in the Blazer. Elliot turns the ignition.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Tomorrow at dawn. My guess is  
the lake.

The Blazer pulls away as Brian is covered in grit and dust. Brian stares at the gun.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Darkness has become. A three quarter moon nestles in a nest of translucent cumulus. Cars sit in their drives. Families are together for the night.

Brian walks, watches, and drifts, lost in his own private universe.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

A Denny's establishment. Robin walks in.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Busy with people munching on their chosen delights.

Robin enters. She looks around for a table when she spots Taylor. He sits alone and reads. His coffee mug is full and his plate is clean.

Robin walks over.

Taylor reads an old, dog-eared copy of J.M. Barrie's Peter Pan, probably bought from a second-hand store.

ROBIN  
(looking at the  
book)  
Didn't think tough guys read  
children's books?

He looks up and smiles.

TAYLOR  
What are you doing here?

ROBIN  
Same as you probably.

TAYLOR  
Eying up the waitress?

ROBIN  
 Maybe. Aren't you going to ask  
 me to sit down?

TAYLOR  
 Go ahead.

She sits.

The WAITRESS comes over. Robin speaks before she gets a  
 chance to open her mouth.

ROBIN  
 (to the waitress)  
 Tuna Melt and a beer please.

The waitress jots the order down.

WAITRESS  
 We only have Bud, Michelob, and  
 Heineken today.

ROBIN  
 Only? Bud'll be fine.

WAITRESS  
 (to Taylor)  
 Anything else for you sir?

TAYLOR  
 (to the waitress)  
 No, thanks.

The waitress saunters back to the kitchen melee.

TAYLOR  
 (returning his gaze  
 to Robin)  
 You don't trust where you work  
 for your own consumption then?

ROBIN  
 Would you?

TAYLOR  
 I was passing and...

ROBIN  
 That's exactly why this country  
 has an obesity problem.

TAYLOR  
 Denny's?

ROBIN  
The temptation to eat is  
everywhere.

TAYLOR  
Peter has a point?

The waitress comes over with the beer.

ROBIN  
(to the waitress)  
Thanks.

She sips beer from the bottle and returns to the  
discourse with Taylor.

ROBIN (CONT'D)  
Eternal youth?

TAYLOR  
Did you have dreams when you were  
a kid?

ROBIN  
Yeah.

TAYLOR  
What?

ROBIN  
And you?

Taylor chuckles to himself at her evasiveness.

TAYLOR  
A cop.

ROBIN  
And now?

TAYLOR  
I am a cop.

Robin smiles.

ROBIN  
Is this a date?

TAYLOR  
Why?

ROBIN  
Neither of us is at work and  
we're on neutral ground talking  
about stuff.

TAYLOR

We've talked about stuff before?

ROBIN

Why don't you drink?

TAYLOR

Is this a date question?

ROBIN

You don't have to answer.

TAYLOR

But you want me to tell you?

ROBIN

Yeah.

TAYLOR

When I was married we had a child...

ROBIN

What was her name?

TAYLOR

Who?

ROBIN

I don't know your wife's name.

TAYLOR

Olivia.

Robin smiles.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

The baby died about two hours after being born.

The tuna melt arrives. Robin mimes a 'thanks' to the waitress as Taylor continues to talk.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

After that, Olivia wouldn't speak to me. So I started being a cop more and a husband less. I went out more...

ROBIN

Did you try and speak with her?

TAYLOR

That was the sole purpose of everyday, to begin with, but she boxed herself off.

(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
And I started to drink. She  
never said anything even when  
I...

Taylor pauses and looks into Robin's eyes.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Then one day she was gone.

He sips his coffee.

ROBIN  
Did you hit her?

TAYLOR  
No.

He looks away from Robin a moment and rubs the back of  
his neck.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
You're the first woman to hear  
that story.

ROBIN  
Is that bad?

TAYLOR  
No.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Robin and Taylor exit the establishment.

ROBIN  
I guess you don't need a ride?

TAYLOR  
No.

ROBIN  
I enjoyed tonight.

TAYLOR  
Was it a date then?

ROBIN  
If you want it to be.

Taylor smiles. They go their own ways.

EXT. STREET/ BRIAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A soft glow emanates from the front window, through the drapes.

Brian observes his own house from across the street. He crosses and approaches the door. He pauses for thought and turns. He opens the truck and puts the Colt in a toolbox behind the seat. He locks the truck and moves to the open garage.

He goes to an old refrigerator. By opening the door he casts a spotlight on himself. He takes out a beer and then closes the door. Flea begins to bark inside. Brian walks back out to lean against the back of his truck. He cracks open the beer and drains half of it in one gulp.

The front door opens as Flea bounds over to Brian, leaving Heather to stand alone on the porch. Brian crouches to stroke Flea and looks back at Heather. She walks over and stands beside him, taking the beer and having a sip.

HEATHER  
 (handing the beer  
 back)  
 It's past midnight.

BRIAN  
 I sold the bike.

HEATHER  
 Have you eaten?

BRIAN  
 Not hungry.

HEATHER  
 There's some lasagna in the oven.

She looks out at the street.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
 Are we OK Brian?

BRIAN  
 Jimmy's happy.

HEATHER  
 Us Brian?

Brian takes the \$500 from his pocket and fans it out on the truck bed.

BRIAN

Five hundred bucks. How much  
would you sell a memory for?

Heather offers him resigned look.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

I love you, Heather.

HEATHER

That's not what I asked.

Brian looks away, downing the remainder of his beer and  
then clenching his jaw.

BRIAN

(looking back at  
her, smiling)

Like Innerspace.

Puts his arm around her.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

And that was more than OK.

She smiles. Their own private barometer.

INT. SAMUEL'S APARTMENT/ LOUNGE - NIGHT

Messy. The typical abode of a single, semi-impooverished  
male. A framed Ferris Bueller Poster is the only sign  
of decoration. Bladerunner is on the TV. It nears its  
conclusion.

The sound of flushing is heard as Samuel enters from the  
bathroom. He sits down on the couch, takes a sip of his  
beer, and rummages beneath the papers and junk on the  
table, eventually taking hold of a small wooden case,  
about the size of a can of sardines. He places it in  
front of him and opens it. Inside are five neatly laid  
fly hooks. Other part made flies, hooks, feathers and  
tools, are now recognizable amidst the junk on the  
table.

Samuel looks up, drawn to the TV. DECKARD looks down at  
BATTY'S dead body. Samuel mimes the last lines of voice  
over narration and softly voices the final line.

SAMUEL

Then he was dead.

EXT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - NIGHT

Taylor sits in the glow of a small table lamp. The flickering images on the TV intermittently intensify the light of the room, depending on their own brightness. Bladerunner plays.

Taylor flicks through old photographs. He stops at one in particular and stares at it.

CU THE PHOTOGRAPH

The young Taylor, Brian and Samuel all pose proudly on their BMXs.

Taylor chuckles to himself. He quickly loses his smile.

He drops the photograph down on the table, leans back in his chair, and looking drained, joins the end of Bladerunner, at the same moment that Samuel was miming the words.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - NIGHT

Brian and Heather sit on the couch in darkness apart from the TV. Bladerunner plays. Brian watches. Again, the same moment that found Samuel miming. Heather sleeps, nestled up against Brian's shoulder.

FADE TO  
BLACK

INT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - DAWN

Taylor is asleep on the couch when the phone rings.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - SAME

Heather peers between the drape and the window that overlooks the back yard.

HEATHER  
(on the phone)  
He's sitting on the deck,  
dressed, with a gun.

BACK TO:

INT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE/ LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor sits up, the phone to his ear.

TAYLOR  
 (standing)  
 I'm on my way.

BACK TO:

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Heather now lies on the bed, still speaking into the phone.

HEATHER  
 I hope he's not involved with...

BACK TO:

INT. TAYLOR'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Taylor grabs an old take out cup, tosses the cold coffee out, and pours in what little coffee has been made from the time set percolator. He does all this with his left hand, the phone in his right.

TAYLOR  
 Don't worry. Call me on my cell  
 if anything happens between now  
 and then. Have you got a gun?

BACK TO:

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

HEATHER  
 (alarmed)  
 Why?

She hears someone coming. She quickly switches off and stuffs the phone under the pillow and rolls over in to the fetal position, eyes closed, feigning sleep.

Brian stands in the doorway. He looks at her for a few moments then gently closes the door and leaves.

EXT. WOODS - DAWN

Dewdrops dangle precariously on the leaves of the surrounding flora and glisten on the ground. Some leaves are already colored by autumn's hues. A thin early morning mist lingers and weaves, ghostlike, between the tree trunks.

Samuel treks through the dawn shadows, his tackle bag slung over his shoulder and a two-piece rod in his hand.

The lake comes into view, surrounded by trees on all sides and given the mist hanging over the mercurial water it is almost mystical.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Samuel nears the waters edge. He lays down his bag and rod and stands for a moment, looking around. He smiles to himself.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - DAWN

Brian comes out of the house with Flea close behind. Not too sure of the idea, or what is about to take place, he gets into the truck. Like a flash Flea clambers over Brian and into the passenger seat.

Brian fires the truck up and reverses out. He then takes off down the street.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Taylor's Sedan reaches Brian's street just as Brian reverses out and accelerates away.

Taylor sails past the house and follows Brian, keeping his distance. Ultimately this is cop versus cop.

INT. SEDAN/ STREET - CONTINUOUS

Brian's truck can be seen up ahead. Taylor sips coffee from his recycled take-out cup.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The railway crossing is up ahead and the warning lights start to flash. Brian guns the engine and clears the tracks before the barriers come down.

The coffee cup is hurled out of the window of Taylor's car as he attempts to maintain pursuit. Taylor's forced to break hard. He skids to a halt just as the barrier comes to rest, a mere centimeter or two from the hood of his car.

TAYLOR (O.S.)  
Shit. God-dam-it.

INT. SEDAN/ CROSSING - CONTINUOUS

Taylor waits and watches for a freight train to slowly crawl along the tracks.

TAYLOR

Shit.

Fortunately, only an engine rolls by.

EXT. CROSSING - MOMENTS LATER

Taylor guns the engine and accelerates across the crossing. He comes to an abrupt halt a little further on.

EXT. STREET - SAME

Brian's truck is stopped only a short distance up the road from Taylor's Sedan. Brian throws up in the verge.

INT. SEDAN/ STREET - CONTINUOUS

Taylor watches as Brian supports himself against the driver's door for a moment. He then gets back in and carries on down the street.

EXT. SEDAN/ STREET - CONTINUOUS

Taylor maintains his pursuit.

EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS

Brian hauls ass up a winding road that passes into the wooded hills that feed inland from the coast. The road that takes them to the lake.

Taylor has dropped back a little more now. There's only one way this leads.

EXT. LAKE - SAME

Ever increasing circles break the surface of the water in places as fish touch the surface.

Samuel prepares his line.

EXT. ROADSIDE/ WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Brian leaves the truck parked half in the road, half on the verge, and heads into the woods.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Flea is strapped to the steering wheel and sits resignedly. The passenger side window is open, a little too much should Flea get loose and attempt an escape.

EXT. TRUCK/ ROADSIDE - SAME

Taylor's Sedan pulls up. Taylor quickly gets out, peers into the truck, and then runs into the woods.

EXT. LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Samuel casts.

A fly hook lands and pierces the mercurial surface, barely causing a ripple. The attached line floats gently downwards and charts the path back to the lone artist on the shore.

Brian can be seen standing behind him, barely twenty feet away. He closes his eyes for a split second then opens them. His memories color his thoughts. He forces his blood to run cold.

Taylor comes bundling into view beside Samuel, distracting him. Samuel looks at him dumbfounded. Taylor shifts his glance from Samuel to a stunned Brian. Samuel follows Taylor's gaze.

Brian looks from one to the other, keeping his gun raised.

BRIAN

What the fuck are you doing,  
Taylor?

He wipes his face with his free hand.

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You shouldn't have come here man.  
Fuck.

SAMUEL

Jay got you to put a bullet in my head.

Brian nods.

SAMUEL (CONT'D)

Sick fuck.

Taylor looks from Samuel to Brian.

TAYLOR

Nobody's getting shot here.

(to Brian)

Put the gun down, Brian.

Brian's trembling. Samuel's remarkably calm.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(to Samuel)

You're wanted for two counts of murder, Sam.

Samuel nods. He lays his rod down and puts his hands up.

Taylor snaps back to Brian. Brian still has the gun trained on Samuel. Brian's face clenches and a tear rolls down his cheek.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Come on, Brian.

BRIAN

Get the fuck out of here, Taylor.

TAYLOR

Wake up, Brian. God-damn-it.

BRIAN

You wake up, Taylor. It's either me or him. I can't not do this. Jay'll kill me.

TAYLOR

Fuck me, Brian. You're a cop. No matter what you've done, you're still a cop.

He looks at Samuel.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

We can take Jay down, the three of us.

Samuel looks at Taylor.

SAMUEL

How can you say that? You might be brothers, but our friendship died a long time ago. There hasn't been any 'three of us' since we were kids.

Brian lowers the gun slightly.

BRIAN

Shut up, Sam.

TAYLOR

You can testify against Jay.

SAMUEL

I'm a killer Taylor. Whether I testify or not I'm still a killer.

Taylor hangs his head. Brian lowers the gun. Samuel quickly draws a .45 from inside his jacket. Taylor goes for his gun. Brian raises the Colt and instinctively fires.

EXT. TRUCK/ ROADSIDE - SAME

Flea pulls and yanks at the knotted lead until it comes undone. He dives for the window and lands safely on the ground outside. He runs, lead trailing, into the woods.

EXT. LAKE/ UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

A good-sized trout takes the fly just as the water shudders, as if feeling the vibrations from a dead weight crashing through its serenity. The trout darts away, with the line striking its trail.

The trout passes beneath the sinking face of Samuel.

EXT. LAKE/ WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Brian stares blankly toward the lake. Taylor crouches beside the semi-immersed body of Samuel.

Brian suddenly breaks off into the woods.

EXT. BRIAN/ WOODS - CONTINUOUS

Brian runs through the trees. He and Flea fail to cross paths

He sees the truck and Taylor's Sedan.

EXT. ROADSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Brian shoots out one of the Sedan's tires. He then gets in the truck, guns the engine and pulls away. As the truck disappears round a bend, tranquility returns.

Taylor comes crashing out of the woods. He kicks at the punctured tire.

EXT. ROAD/ OCEAN - CONTINUOUS

The road winds over a rise and towards the ocean. Brian's truck speeds along.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ DRIVE - A LITTLE LATER

Brian pulls into the drive. The garage door is already open but there is no room for any vehicle. Brian cuts the engine and sits staring at the cluttered garage.

Heather comes through the garage and up to the truck.

She taps on the driver's side window. Brian opens it.

HEATHER

Did we need milk?

Brian looks at her then back at the garage.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

(glancing with him  
momentarily)

You can help me tidy it if you  
like?

She strokes his cheek. Her eyes slowly lose their luster as she fights to maintain her good humor.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Hey?

Brian returns his look to her.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You want a coffee because if you do you're going to have to get out?

He opens the door. Jimmy comes trundling through the garage. He runs to Brian as he steps down from the truck. Brian crouches in order receive his embrace.

JIMMY

Hello papi.

Brian stokes his son's brow. Brian's conscience burns and he looks past Jimmy rather than at him.

Heather peers into the truck.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Can...

HEATHER

Where's Flea?

BRIAN

(closing his eyes)

Shit.

JIMMY

(restraining a giggle)

Shit.

Brian lets go of him.

HEATHER

Not funny, Jimmy. Go into the house.

Jimmy walks back into the house through the garage. He breaks into a run halfway.

Brian stays crouched, staring after his boy. Heather crouches next to him.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You want to tell me why you got up earlier than you ever have before in your life on a day off to walk our dog and then come back without him?

Brian is as still as a lizard basking in the sun.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Did you lose him? Did he piss you off? Did you sell him? Did you kill him?

Brian turns to look at her sharply.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
I didn't mean that.

They both pause. Brian returns his gaze to the garage.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
Just tell me what happened. You know you can tell me whatever it is. We promised each...

BRIAN  
I fucked up. I fucked things up for us, Heather.

HEATHER  
Come on.

She strokes his brow.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
Can't be that bad?

BRIAN  
Can't it?

HEATHER  
On a scale of one to ten?

BRIAN  
This isn't a joke.

HEATHER  
(a private  
barometer)  
Come on, it can't be worse than Pearl Harbor?

BRIAN  
(straining)  
This isn't a joke, Heather. This isn't some pop quiz, post movie analysis.

She stands.

HEATHER  
I'm...

BRIAN  
Do you really think we tell each other everything? Do you?

HEATHER

Whatever happened to Flea isn't the end of the world, Brian. He's just a dog after all. Let's just say you managed to get him run down, even that isn't the end. It's sad, very sad, but...you killed our dog. How many...

He stands.

BRIAN

I didn't kill the dog.

He pushes past her and gets back in the truck.

HEATHER

I saw you, this morning, before...

Brian looks at her, almost apologetically.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Did you kill someone, Brian?

He turns the ignition.

BRIAN

I'm sorry.

He reverses out, wheels the front of the truck round and speeds away. He does this all as if in one fluid motion.

Heather stands and watches as if the sky had just fallen in on her.

EXT. ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Taylor's Sedan is jacked up, as Taylor finishes changing the wheel.

EXT. LAKE - SAME

Flea lies at Samuel's feet.

EXT. ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Taylor is on the police radio in his car.

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE - MORNING

It's big. Not just a carbon copy of every other house in the vicinity. Not quite Beverly Hills but it does have a high perimeter fence and an electric gate is in the process of being fitted. Wires dangle from the intercom. Money personalizes. Crime pays. The front yard is well kept, probably by a gardener, and is the size of Brian's front and back yard put together. Parked in the driveway, in front of the closed double garage door, is a black 80s GMC van and a Corvette Stingray.

EXT. STREET/ JAY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Brian sits in his truck a little way down the road from Jay's house.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Brian looks the Colt over in his hands. Tears well in his eyes.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - SAME

Taylor pulls up outside Brian's house. He steps out of his car and walks straight into the house.

TAYLOR (O.S.)

Heather?!

A police cruiser pulls up.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor looks around. He walks up the stairs.

TAYLOR

Heather?

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ LOFT - CONTINUOUS

Heather stands beside a meticulously crafted landscape decorated with hundreds of vintage Star Wars craft, figures and accessories.

Taylor's head peers through the loft-hatch in the floor.

TAYLOR

Heather?

He climbs in.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(seeing the  
collection)

Holy shit.

HEATHER

All he's ever wanted is to be a  
kid again.

She looks at Taylor.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

You too eh, Taylor?

TAYLOR

Where is he?

HEATHER

We were never OK, not from the  
day Jimmy was born. I know about  
Megan, Taylor.

TAYLOR

Heather, help me please. Do you  
know where he is?

HEATHER

He came back and he left.

TAYLOR

When?

Heather is spaced out.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

(gripping her  
shoulder)

Heather, please?

HEATHER

About twenty minutes ago.

She becomes more alert to the situation.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

He came and then he drove off  
like a lunatic.

COP 2 (O.S.)

Mrs. Banks?

Heather and Taylor look at each other.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ HALL - CONTINUOUS

Cop 2 stands in the entrance. Taylor and Heather come down the stairs.

COP 2  
Howdy, Taylor.

TAYLOR  
(to Heather)  
Just gimme a minute.

HEATHER  
If this is about Brian I want to hear.

TAYLOR  
Just gimme a minute, Heather.

He walks out with the cop.

EXT. BRIAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Taylor and Cop 2 stand in the drive.

TAYLOR  
Stay here with her. Brian comes back, keep him here.

COP 2  
How?

TAYLOR  
I've got a feeling he won't. But just stall him if he does, get on the radio to me.

BACK TO:

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Brian walks up to the door of Jay's house. The Colt is in his hand. He opens the door and walks in.

INT. JAY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

TV sounds can be heard. Brian looks in and out of each room. He nears the kitchen.

INT. JAY'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jay, wearing a bathrobe, sits at the breakfast bar eating a bowl of cereal and watching the cartoon network. His shotgun rests against the cupboard door down beside his leg. Rolls and stacks of hundred dollar bills are on the breakfast bar.

Brian appears in the doorway, gun raised and ready. Jay stops momentarily, in mid-spoonful, and then continues to eat. The breakfast bar obscures Brian's view of the shotgun.

JAY

You nearly gave me a fright there.

He eyes the Colt and smiles.

JAY (CONT'D)

You want a coffee?

Brian steps a little further into the room.

JAY (CONT'D)

Job done?

Jay lays his spoon down carefully on the bar top. He stretches his arms out and yawns.

JAY (CONT'D)

How's it feel to kill a friend?

Brian grits his teeth. He's nearer to tears than anything else.

JAY (CONT'D)

Funny, the paths we take in life, eh? Friends today, gone tomorrow.

He takes a sip of his coffee.

JAY (CONT'D)

I had good friend once...

BRIAN

Shut the fuck up.

JAY

Don't come in my house and tell me...

BRIAN

Shut up. Shut the fuck up.

JAY

Exactly. Now, if you have nothing better to say, at least listen to my story.

Brian strains, the gun starts to shake, a breakdown is imminent. His life is in tatters.

BRIAN

(a tear rolling  
down his cheek)

I shot my friend. I shot my fucking best friend. And for what? For fucking what?

Jay looks at him with intent, realizing that he hasn't got anything left, definitely no will or strength to pull the trigger.

JAY

My friend, Lee, was his name. One of those people you can count on. The one in a group of good buddies who is your best buddy. He stole \$20 from my father's wallet whilst he was in my house. I saw him do it. But I didn't say anything. Even when my father beat the shit out of me for being a thief, and I wasn't, not then, I didn't say anything. I just lost my trust in people instead, in friends, in Lee. He was the first person I shot.

Brian lowers the gun. Jay throws a roll of bills at him, which he fails to catch.

JAY (CONT'D)

For money Brian, you shot your friend for nothing more than lousy fucking money.

Jay whips the shotgun up and levels it on Brian before Brian gets a chance to react. He pulls the trigger, one, twice, fast as lightening, slamming Brian into the back wall. Brian slides down the wall, blood painting his decent to the floor, dead.

Jay sits back down, reloads the shotgun with cartridges from his bathrobe pocket, and once again places the shotgun by his leg. He adds a few more Cheerios to his bowl and munches away. He chuckles as Woody Woodpecker begins on the TV.

WIL (4), Megan and Brian's child, wanders into the kitchen.

He sees Brian's body on the floor and stops in his tracks. Jay looks at Wil. Megan comes rushing in and snatches up her son. She freezes when she sees Brian's body.

Jay casually sips his coffee.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Get the fuck out of here.

Megan holds Wil close.

JAY (CONT'D)  
(raising his voice)  
Get the fuck out of here right now, and don't ever come back.

Megan stares at Jay, tears in her eyes. Jay tosses several stacks of bills at Megan, though they crash to the floor.

JAY (CONT'D)  
The cops'll be coming. There's about ten thousand dollars there. Take the Corvette and go.

She doesn't move.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Fucking go.

She quickly crouches down, gathers the money and runs out of the kitchen, Wil in tow.

Jay carries on stuffing himself with Cheerios.

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Taylor's Sedan pulls up. He gets out and walks toward the house.

Megan straps Wil in and is about to get in the Corvette herself when she sees Taylor. Taylor stops beside her. They look at each other. Megan has tears in her eyes. She hangs her head and gets into the car.

Taylor watches her leave. His gaze fixes on a Hummingbird for a moment. He then takes out his .45 and walks toward the front door.

INT. DINER - SAME

Robin stands at the counter. She absentmindedly flips the pages of the daily newspaper.

BACK TO:

INT. JAY'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Jay stops eating and watches Taylor enter.

Taylor looks down at his brother and then back at Jay.

JAY  
(smiling at Taylor)  
Still haven't got anything on me.

Everything happens in a flash. Jay drops his shoulder to draw the shotgun. Before he gets close, a shot rings out from Taylor's .45 and Jay is sent flying backwards. He crashes to the floor, dead.

Taylor stands, gun at his side, staring, as the machine gun sound of Woody Woodpecker screams from the TV.

Taylor turns and leaves the room.

EXT. JAY'S HOUSE/ DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

The sprinklers have come on in the garden. Taylor stands in the doorway and watches them, tears in his eyes. Sirens can be heard in the distance.

INT. BRIAN'S HOUSE/ KITCHEN - LATER THAT MORNING

Heather has slumped to the floor, her back against the kitchen units. She sobs.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING - SAME

Taylor stands near the entrance, about to leave. The Captain approaches him.

CAPTAIN  
Taylor.

Taylor turns.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)  
Hey.

TAYLOR

Hey.

The Captain discretely takes a quart bottle of whisky from his pocket and offers it to Taylor.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

You know I don't drink.

CAPTAIN

It's times like these just the smell softens the nerves.

Taylor smiles and takes it.

TAYLOR

Not just a promotion junkie after all.

The Captain smiles.

CAPTAIN

I hate kissing ass, but if you want to climb the ladder that's what you got to do.

TAYLOR

Don't kiss too much or your lips'll get burned.

He's about to turn to leave.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

See...

The Captain takes a detective badge from his pocket.

CAPTAIN

Maybe now's not the time to quit, Taylor?

He drops the badge in Taylor's top pocket.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

Just call it a time-out.

TAYLOR

No time-outs, Captain.

Taylor leaves.

EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Taylor sits on the steps outside the entrance and studies the unopened quart of whiskey.

He cracks open the bottle and takes a swig. He takes the detective badge from the pocket of his shirt and holds it flat in the palm of his hand.

Cop 1 approaches with a forlorn, half-baked, and cuffed YOUTH. Cop 1 stares at Taylor. The youth does the same.

YOUTH

Spare me some Mr.

Cop 1 yanks him forward.

COP 1

Quit your small talk fuckhead.

YOUTH

Fuckhead?

Taylor stands and gestures a toast to the youth and takes a swig.

YOUTH (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

COP 1

(shouting after  
Taylor)

Fucking childish Taylor.

Taylor walks on down the steps.

INT. DINER - LATE MORNING

Taylor sits himself down at the counter. Robin sets a mug of coffee down in front of him. Taylor offers a smile in thanks.

ROBIN

It's not even mid-day and you  
already look like you've had  
enough of today.

TAYLOR

And tomorrow.

ROBIN

And the day after that?

TAYLOR

(grins)

Maybe this is the penance I have  
to serve to deserve that night.

ROBIN  
Why, am I a sin?

TAYLOR  
Just to look at.

ROBIN  
Cheesy.

TAYLOR  
Yeah.

ROBIN  
You want anything to eat?

Taylor shakes his head.

TAYLOR  
Just coffee thanks, Robin.

ROBIN  
About Friday...

TAYLOR  
(smirking)  
Our first date.

ROBIN  
You must be getting nervous?

TAYLOR  
Prepared my questions already.

Robin smiles.

ROBIN  
About, our first date...

TAYLOR  
Friday.

ROBIN  
I was hoping we could meet a  
little later. I have a seminar  
and...

TAYLOR  
On what?

ROBIN  
About heroes, history and  
origins...  
(embarrassed)  
Sorry...

TAYLOR  
Gimme a call when you're done.

ROBIN

It's not that I don't want to see you. It...

Taylor smiles compassionately.

TAYLOR

Do you have a favorite hero?

ROBIN

You mean fairy-tale hero?

TAYLOR

What other kinds are there?

ROBIN

Not really. Do you?

TAYLOR

Not really. I mean, I liked Batman, the Silver Surfer, but generally speaking, I always wanted the underdog to win.

ROBIN

Because you felt sorry?

TAYLOR

No. But I wouldn't have cried if Tom kicked Jerry's butt more often.

He smirks.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

But I guess a hero is built on winning, and the rest are just made to lose.

ROBIN

Not always.

Beat. Taylor begins to lose his tongue as the morning starts to strangle his thoughts.

TAYLOR

(absentmindedly)  
How's your mom?

ROBIN

She's good. How's Brian?

Taylor's mind drifts for a second. He pauses.

TAYLOR

I remember something you told me once, about heroes.

(MORE)

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Something about yesterday's hero  
becoming tomorrow's villain...

Sadness grips Taylor and his eyes glaze. He tries to maintain his composure with a fixed stare.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)  
Brian's dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Jimmy catches his first wave. Heather applauds from the shore. Megan approaches from behind her. She pauses before tapping Heather on the shoulder. Heather turns and contemplates Megan blankly.

MEGAN  
I'm...

Heather cuts her off.

HEATHER  
I know.

Megan tries, nervously, to maintain her composure.

MEGAN  
I'm sorry.

HEATHER  
I'm not sure who needs to be  
sorry for what. But, thank you.

Jimmy wades through the water, making his way to the shore, surfboard in tow. Megan watches him for a moment. Heather looks at Megan and touches her arm.

HEATHER (CONT'D)  
Are you OK?

Megan looks back at her.

MEGAN  
Yeah.

They both look at each other, unsure as how to act, react.

HEATHER  
I, I hope things get better.

MEGAN  
Thank you.

Megan turns and walks away as Jimmy reaches his mother. Heather watches Megan walk to the car park. Wil plays in the sand just in front of the Corvette. Megan arrives and fetches him up. Heather watches them get in the car before crouching down to towel Jimmy down.

EXT. CORVETTE STINGRAY/ HIGHWAY - DAY

The car barrels down the highway. Megan is at the wheel. Wil is beside her and luggage is wherever space allows.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Toby lays a small bunch of flowers on each of two graves. The headstones bear the names of Denny and his mother.

EXT. MARILYN'S BAR - NIGHT

Taylor stands across the street, staring at the bar. Robin appears from the shadows, smiling and pretty as a princess. She stands beside Taylor and touches his shoulder.

ROBIN

You OK?

Taylor looks at her with an air of vulnerability.

TAYLOR

(nodding)

Yeah.

Taylor looks back at the bar, at the picture of Marilyn Monroe. He smiles to himself.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Only movie stars live forever.

He turns to Robin.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

And our lives seem like nothing,  
no more than lonely memories.  
Things that fall apart.

He drops his gaze to the ground.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

You sure you...

Robin brushes his chin, making him look at her.

ROBIN

I can't promise you anything,  
Taylor, nobody can promise  
anything, other than my hopes are  
in a tomorrow, with you.

Taylor smiles.

TAYLOR

(he starts across  
the road)

Come on.

She catches up and takes his hand.

TAYLOR (CONT'D)

Starbuck or Luke Skywalker?

ROBIN

A coffee shop or a Jedi Knight?

TAYLOR

You never saw Battlestar  
Gallactica?

INT. MARILYN'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

Jack smiles broadly, greeting Taylor and Robin as they reach the bar. Robin is introduced, hands are shaken, and drinks are ordered.

EXT. MARILYN'S BAR - CONTINUOUS

It's just another bar on just another Friday night. A couple more people walk in.

EXT. NIGHT SKY

The velvety black sky seems to be filled with countless stars. They sparkle brightly, yet apart from each other. Single star dying constellations.

EXT. LAKE - DAWN

The place where Samuel last stood.

A mist floats above the surface of the water, a surface so still it begs to mirror all that surrounds it. At once this offers an aura of calm, peace and tranquility, but also a foreboding sense of loneliness.

FADE OUT.