

SILENT CRY

Written by

Kevin Enners

Address
Phone Number

FADE IN...

INT. HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT

WILL, types at a COMPUTER. Walls adorned by framed book covers: Secret of the Six-Inch Prince; Seven Nights in the Bronx; Kill Her! She's Not Your Type; Risqué Prey; Anatomy of a Stripper; I Want You Dead.

WILL

(typing rapidly)

As he held the smoking gun in his hand, he couldn't decide whether his actions had been justified. But, at the very least, he knew he could do it. And, with that sentiment, he could put his mind at ease, knowing that whatever bullshit his personal life threw at him, he still could spare his career and knew that her memory would fade away like her swollen corpse sinking to the bottom of the river.

Will finishing typing, lights a CIGARETTE, sits back, grins. AMY, 30s, blond and naturally beautiful, enters quietly. She reaches for Will's shoulders. Will

WILL (CONT'D)

(shrieking)

Jesus!

AMY

Sorry. I just came down to check on you.

WILL

What time is it?

(checking his watch)

Shit. Was I really down here for eight hours?

AMY

I made dinner. You can keep writing.

WILL

No, I'm at a good breaking point. I'll be right there.

Will saves his work. Amy leaves quietly. Will sighs, looking at BART, malinois/shepherd mix.

WILL (CONT'D)
Think I pissed Momma off?

Bart sighs. Will snubs out the cigarette in the ash tray and saunters upstairs.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Will puts on his watch. Seeing the date, he remembers it's their anniversary.

WILL
I'm sorry, Amy.

AMY
I can't believe you. You forgot.
You always forget! you're too busy
with your doomed pick-ups!

WILL
That was only one - well there is
that other time - Amy. Amy! I

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will follows Amy into their

Amy doesn't look up. She keeps scrolling.

WILL
Amy?

He steps closer, noticing the untouched table. His face shifts to confusion.

WILL (CONT'D)
What's all this?

Amy finally looks up, her eyes burning with disappointment.

AMY
What's all this? Wow, Will. That's
a fantastic question.

WILL
(Scratches his head)
Did I miss something?

Amy stands abruptly, tossing her phone onto the couch.

AMY

Did you miss something? Oh, I don't know. Maybe OUR ANNIVERSARY?

Will freezes. His face falls as realization dawns.

WILL

Amy, I'm so sorry. It's this book tour –

AMY

(Interrupts, voice rising)
Your book tour! You can write a bestseller, but you couldn't write our anniversary in your calendar? To set a reminder?

Will moves toward her, guilt etched on his face.

WILL

You're right. I messed up. I'll make it up to you –

AMY

You can't just "make it up," Will! This isn't about flowers or a fancy dinner tomorrow. It's about you not caring enough to remember something that matters to me.

Will runs a hand through his hair, searching for the right words.

WILL

Amy, I do care. I just –

AMY

Actions speak louder than words.

A heavy silence settles. A faint creak comes from somewhere. Amy flinches almost imperceptibly but recovers.

Will looks at her, then at the dinner table – still set, candles burning low – then back again.

WILL

How can I make it up to you?

Amy's expression softens, but her voice remains firm.

AMY

I don't know. I'm not sure how many more times I can deal with this.

She turns and walks toward the bedroom. Will watches her go, guilt etched across his face. He stands alone in the dimly lit room. The clock ticks louder in the silence.

Will walks to the table and starts blowing out the candles one by one. The final one flickers strangely before extinguishing.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Bart is lying still.

WILL
Bart, come.

Will hurries to Bart.

WILL (CONT'D)
Bart?

Will steps toward the dog. Peripherally, Will sees a DARK FIGURE. CRACK! Will falls next to the dog.

CUT TO:

INT. NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

JOHN, 30s, wakes up to screeching tires. He climbs out of bed half asleep and peers through the blinds. He catches the taillights illuminating the bedroom as a NONDESCRIPT SEDAN drives away.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Will stirs, woozy. Blood trickles from the gash on his head. He finds himself in the hall, far from the bedroom.

WILL
Amy?

No answer.

WILL (CONT'D)
Amy?!

Nothing but the sound of the night.

JOHN (O.S.)
Hello?! Will?! Amy?!

As Will passes the bathroom, there's scratching and whining from behind the closed door. Bart. Will opens the door and stumbles back as Bart charges out, ears perked up, hackles raised, a growl caught in his chest. Something is wrong.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Will? What's going on? I saw a car
tear out of the neighborhood.

Will lurches into the bedroom. John follows.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will grows cold at the sight of Amy facedown in a pillow, her arm limply hanging off the side of the bed.

WILL
Amy? Amy? Amy!

Will grabs Amy's shoulder - cold to the touch.

WILL (CONT'D)
(crying)
Oh God! No!

John squeezes Will's shoulder in solace.

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

Will has an ice pack against his head. The sheriff, LEE THOMPSON, in a Criminal Investigation Unit windbreaker, approaches Will and John.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You okay there, Will?

WILL
What do you think?

SHERIFF THOMPSON
What happened?

WILL
I saw my dog lying on the living
room rug. He wasn't moving. I
turned around and that's all I
remember.

JOHN
I heard gunshots and ran out. Will
was unconscious.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

Bart was acting strange. It was then I knew something was up. I went into the bedroom

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Mm-kay. Why don't you get that head wound checked out. We can talk more tomorrow.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

One more thing. Any ideas who might have done this?

WILL

No.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING TWO DAYS EARLIER

Will awakens, turns over in BED and caresses his wife's face. Amy blinks and smiles.

WILL

Hi.

AMY

Hi.

WILL

How'd you sleep?

AMY

Fine. You?

WILL

Less than fine.

AMY

Yeah, you were tossing and turning.

WILL

Nightmare.

AMY

Wanna talk about it?

Will shakes his head.

WILL

Gonna go for a run. Clear my head. Taking Bart with me.

AMY

Okay.

EXT. - NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Will is JOGGING through the middle-class neighborhood buzzing with activity. Lawn maintenance crews MOWING manicured lawns. Kids LAUGHING at the bus stop. People LEAVING for work.

Will spots a NEIGHBOR who is also RUNNING.

JOHN DALTON waves.

JOHN

Hey.

WILL

Morning, John. How ya been?

JOHN

Good. How 'bout yourself?

WILL

Good.

JOHN

How's Amy?

WILL

She's great. Busy as ever. That clinic is non-stop.

JOHN

Is she still planning on going to med school?

WILL

Yep, just waiting to hear back from her top choices. Fingers crossed.

JOHN

That's great, man. She'll make a great doc with all her experience at the free clinic. Any school would be fortunate to have her.

WILL

Yeah, that's what I told her. She's still nervous, on pins and needles waiting. By the way, did your daughter get into the college she wanted?

JOHN

She got accepted to NYU.

WILL
Awesome!

JOHN
Thanks. Couldn't decide on a major.
She chose interdisciplinary
studies.

WILL
Well, that's kinda good, right?
She's keeping her options open.

Bart tugs on the leash.

WILL (CONT'D)
Bart, heel.

JOHN
Looks like someone's gotta get
goin'. I'll let you get to it.
Great seeing ya.

WILL
You too.

EXT. BACK OF HOUSE - DAY

Will and Bart enter through the KITCHEN where Amy sips her
COFFEE in front of her LAPTOP. She stops.

AMY
Oh my God!

WILL
What's wrong?

Amy cups her hand over her mouth.

WILL (CONT'D)
Amy?

AMY
Dear Mrs. Henan, we are pleased to
announce that you have been
accepted into Columbia Medical
School.

Will proudly scoops Amy up in a hug and kisses her.

WILL
I knew you'd get in! I'm so proud
of you!

AMY

I love you.

WILL

I love you too. I love that we don't have to move either! Now, you better get straight A's.

AMY

Oh, shut up!

Will checks the time, pulling out his PHONE.

WILL

Oh shit! I gotta get going. I'm supposed to be at the bookstore until... Who the hell came up with this bullshitted schedule?

AMY

Don't you make your own plans?

WILL

Oh, yeah. Well, fuck it. I'm canceling.

AMY

Don't do that! You're my ticket to medical school. And meals!

WILL

Babe, don't worry about it. There are others. In fact, I've got a couple next week at a Barnes and Noble. This one is at a hole in the wall. That's literally the name!

AMY

You're going. My thing is nothing.

WILL

Amy, it's not nothing. Compared to your thing, my thing is very, very small. C'mon, let's do it tonight, the book signing shouldn't take that long.

AMY

You sure?

WILL

Hell yeah. How about Los Buenos?

AMY
That'll work. Eight o'clock?

WILL
I'll make reservations.

Will steps toward the door and opens it. He spins, poking his head back in.

WILL (CONT'D)
Hey, I'm really proud of you.

Amy blows a kiss.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Will walks into a local bookstore, packed with books - not so much with people. He glances around, trying to figure out where to set up and pivots to a headphone-wearing CASHIER, occupied by a screen.

WILL
Hey.

The cashier doesn't notice.

WILL (CONT'D)
Yo, Radiohead!

The cashier is glued to his phone. Will storms over and pounds the countertop. Finally, the cashier looks up.

CASHIER
Hi. Are you finding everything okay?

WILL
(looking around)
Uh... Actually, I was wondering where I should set up.

CASHIER
Set up?

Will points to the sign labeled "Booksigning With Will Henan!"

CASHIER (CONT'D)
Oh gosh! I'm so sorry. You're Will Henan.the Struggling writer.

WILL
Well, I wouldn't say struggling -

CASHIER
C'mon. You'll be over here.

WILL
Okay. Thanks.

The cashier leads him to the back of the bookstore where a TABLE is set up next to BOXES of his book.

CASHIER
I'll go make the announcement. Good luck!

WILL
Don't need it.

Moments later, over the intercom.

CASHIER
Hey readers, we have a special guest! Author, William Henan, is here to talk about his hit book, Shotgun Sal - a tale of crime and passion. Get your signed copy today!

INT. BOOKSTORE - BACK ROOM - DAY

A crowd gathers around Will.

WILL
First, I'd like to thank Barnes and Noble for hosting my book signing. I didn't really prepare anything. I'd rather just get to discussing my book and taking your money - I mean questions.

The crowd chuckles.

Will gives a brief synopsis and talks about his writing process.

WILL (CONT'D)
Are there any questions, comments, criticisms, thoughts?

An audience member raises their hand.

WILL (CONT'D)
Yeah?

MEMBER

Your protagonist's emotions seem so authentic. The frustration and anger towards his wife. The resentment. How did you bring your character to life like that?

WILL

(Chuckling)

Well, when I was an investigative reporter, I interviewed a lot of guys in gangs. I studied them. And, what I learned was that mobsters are human beings. They get sad, frustrated, angry -

MEMBER

Yes, but so real, so raw, so convincing.

WILL

Have you ever heard the saying, 'Art imitates life'?
My goal for this book was to present a character, typically perceived as a heartless thug, as an everyday Joe with conflicting emotions.
He's fearless yet fearful. He's tough yet vulnerable. He's quick to anger, quick to regret.
Don't we all have two sides?
Any other questions?

Everyone in the crowd raises their hand.

WILL (CONT'D)

(pointing to an audience member)

Oh, goody! How about you start.

INT. STATE-RUN FREE CLINIC - AFTERNOON

Amy's CELL PHONE vibrates. She ignores it, finishing up patient notes. It vibrates again. Glancing at the display.

AMY

(talking to herself)

Shit. I don't have time for him.

Amy continues with her work.

INT. LUXURY CAR - AFTERNOON

A tall, thin, well-dressed man in a dark suit, FRANK MOORE, looks at his IN-DASH COMMAND SCREEN, shakes his head and taps redial. He leaves a brief voice message.

FRANK

Will meet you at The Musket Room at
8:00 tonight. See you then.

INT. HOUSE BEDROOM CLOSET - EARLY EVENING

Amy freezes with her phone in hand indecisively.

INT. LOS BUENOS TAQUERIA - NIGHT

Will drains his third BEER and asks the WAITER for WATER. He takes out his CELL PHONE and dials Amy. It goes to voice mail. He hangs up and calls her at work.

RECEPTIONIST

Eastside Free Clinic. How may I
help you?

WILL

Hey, this is Will Henan, I'm
looking for Amy.

RECEPTIONIST

Hi Will, she left hours ago.

WILL

Right. Thanks.

Will puts his phone down slowly. The waiter returns.

WAITER

May I get you an appetizer while
you're waiting?

WILL

Just the check please.

WAITER

Very well.

CUT TO:

INT. WILL'S STUDY - NIGHT (PRESENT)

A phone pressed to his ear. Papers spread across the desk. A police report sits on top, sections highlighted, notes scribbled in the margins.

WILL

Yeah... I've gone through it a dozen times. It doesn't add up.

He flips a page, frowning at an empty field.

WILL (CONT'D)

No witnesses, no camera footage, and they still called it "non-suspicious." How does that make sense?

(pause, listening)

WILL (CONT'D)

Right. Last time I saw her? Morning. Coffee. She said she had errands. That's it.

He presses his fingers to his temple, trying to remember something, anything.

WILL (CONT'D)

But, there's nothing here about the SUV. I told them about the SUV.

His pen circles a blank section on the report. He pulls out a POLAROID of the car.

WILL (CONT'D)

Yeah, dark gray or black. It was parked across the street. I... I can't remember how long it was there, but it definitely showed up before.

(beat)

The police didn't do anything because the guy didn't get out of the car. Just stayed for a while, then took off.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Will sits in darkness. The house hums. Camera flashes still strobe behind his eyes.

Bart exhales from his bed in the corner—steady, trusting.

Will stares at his open agenda. The ink is still wet where he's written beneath the last line:

Check basement.

Above it, in neat block letters:

10:00 PM - BURN EVERYTHING

He grips the pen tighter. His knuckles blanch.

FLASH.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Dog food hitting the metal bowl. One measured scoop. Click of his tongue as Bart pads across tile.

9:30 PM - Review photos The words burn on the page, though the photos are gone now.

Shades drawn tight.

Light smothered.

FLASH.

FLASH.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

The man sprawled on asphalt, camera smashed near the curb. Reporters closing in, questions like shrapnel.

WILL

You okay?

The man sneers, breath hitching.

REPORTER #3

Trying to make it two for two?

Did you kill your wife?

FLASH.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

News vans lining the block like a barricade. Voices knifing the dark. Camera lights strafing his windshield.

REPORTER #1 (V.O.)
Mr. Henan, what happened?

REPORTER #2 (V.O.)
Tell us about the home invasion.

Will's grip on the wheel. Knuckles white steel. Gas pedal featured. Reporter folds over the hood.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Will's palm presses the doorframe, sweat trailing down. Deadbolt clicks home. Bart's growl rattles glass.

WILL
Good boy. You tell them to fuck off.

He snaps his fingers. The growl dies.

8:10 PM - Call Detective M.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

ALARM CLOCK rings. Will reaches over to turn it off. He touches the empty pillow. TEARS well up in his eyes.

Drawn to the news crews rallying outside, he peers through the blinds. Will SIGHS.

Will hesitantly grabs his cell and dials Dignity Funeral Home.

RECEPTIONIST
Dignity Funeral Home Celebration of Life services. How may I help you?

WILL
Hi, this is Will Henan. I'd like to make arrangements for my wife, Amy Henan.

RECEPTIONIST
Yes, hello, Mr. Henan. When would you like to come in?

WILL
Today, morning would be the best.

RECEPTIONIST
Unfortunately, our funeral director
is on vacation -

WILL
Look, this is painful enough. I'm
leaving town. This has gotta get
done today.

RECEPTIONIST
Hold please...
Mr. Dement, our associate director,
can meet you today.

WILL
Thank you.

Will hangs up and looks at Bart.

WILL (CONT'D)
(sarcastically sad)
Well, buddy, this'll be fun.

He shakes his head as he sees the reporter he plowed into
with his car the night before, bandaged and hobbling around.

WILL (CONT'D)
Shit! Can't this guy take a hint?

Will turns and walks over to the BED. He slowly picks up his
GUN from under his PILLOW and looks at it. He grabs his
DUFFLE BAG and places the gun in between his CLOTHES and ZIPS
the bag.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Will packs a DOGGY DUFFLE for Bart containing FOOD, TREATS, A
BALL and LEASH. He opens the door to the garage and heads to
his car, Bart following.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Settling Bart into the back seat, he throws the 2 duffles in
the trunk, then slides behind the wheel.

WILL
Here we go.

Bart WHINES.

The GARAGE DOOR opens. Will backs the CAR into the DRIVEWAY as the injured reporter advances toward the end of the driveway.

The injured reporter raises a TAPE RECORDER in the air. Will guns it, the car tearing away, veering in the opposite direction of the stubborn reporter.

REPORTER #3
Mr. Henan! Mr. Henan!

Suddenly, more journalists appear at the corner of the road and call out his name, SHOUTING questions.

WILL
(sarcastically)
Thanks, Monty Pythonian Bob!

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Will enters the quiet lobby of Dignity Funeral Home with Bart. The receptionist stares at them.

RECEPTIONIST
We don't allow pets.

WILL
Uh... He's a service animal.

RECEPTIONIST
Oh really? Where's his vest?

WILL
I was in a hurry. Left it at home.

The receptionist gives Will a sideways glance. She opens her mouth when footsteps echo from the hall and MR. DEMENT enters.

MR. DEMENT
What's going on?

WILL
Mr. Dement, thanks for seeing me.
It's been a God-awful twenty-four hours.

MR. DEMENT
Yes, I understand. I'm sorry for
your troubles -

WILL
You need to talk to your customer
support. They're forcing me to
leave my emotional support animal
behind and I -

Will pretends to choke up. Mr. Dement pets Bart.

MR. DEMENT
Ohhh! He's so sweet! What's his
name?

WILL
Bart.

MR. DEMENT
(To Bart)
Such a good boy! I've got two
sweeties at home.

WILL
They fill your heart, don't they?

MR. DEMENT
I couldn't fathom life without
them.

WILL
So, it's alright if he comes with
us?

MR. DEMENT
Of course! Why shouldn't he?

INT. FUNERAL HOME - OFFICE - DAY

Mr. DeMent offers Will a SEAT in front of his DESK.

MR. DEMENT
Our condolences, Mr. Henan.

WILL
Thank you, it's still sinking in.

MR. DEMENT
It's never easy. Sometimes it helps
to talk. What was Mrs. Henan like?

WILL
Everything that I'm not... Damn it!
I wish it had been me!

Mr. Dement offers Will a box of tissues as Will whimpers.
Will snags a couple.

MR. DEMENT
Have you thought about whether you
want a burial or cremation?

WILL
Amy wasn't one to stand on
ceremony...How Much?

MR. DEMENT
Generally, it would be an estimated
five thou -

Will chokes up again. Mr. Dement is baffled.

WILL
I'm sorry. It's just that... My
damn selfishness... I just put down
five thousand on my fucking book.
(whispers)
God! I'm an idiot! Damn publisher!

MR. DEMENT
If it's less of a burden, I can
give you a discount. Say... Ten
percent.

WILL
I - I can't.

MR. DEMENT
Twenty?

WILL
Forty.

MR. DEMENT
Forty percent off?

WILL
God! This is so embarrassing! I can
only pay a maximum of forty
percent.

MR. DEMENT
Excuse my prying, but don't you
have six bestsellers?

WILL
Seven. And, I overextended myself
on every single one! Hence my
current bind.

MR. DEMENT

Well, I guess it's been hard on everyone these days. Very well. Would you like a viewing for family and friends?

WILL

No.

Mr. DeMent nods then gestures to a wall of shelves displaying URNS. Will glances briefly at the urns.

MR. DEMENT

We have a beautiful assortment of urns for Mrs. Henan's ashes. Please take your time deciding.

WILL

That won't be necessary.

MR. DEMENT

I take it you'll be spreading her ashes.

WILL

People really do that - spreading the ashes thing?

MR. DEMENT

If they are not going in an earn.

WILL

How much is the earn?

MR. DEMENT

\$500.

WILL

We're skipping the earn.

MR. DEMENT

Very well, then. Your wife's ashes will be in put in our standard container. Will you be spreading them in one place?

Will stares off into space. Blank expression. Stroking Bart.

MR. DEMENT (CONT'D)

We can divide the ashes if you'd like.
Mr. Henan? Mr. Henan? Would you prefer that?

WILL
Um, no, that's ok. When can I pick them up?

MR. DEMENT
We need three days. So anytime after that.

WILL
Ok, thanks.

Mr. DeMent completes the PAPERWORK. Will signs it and pays.

MR. DEMENT
Again, our condolences.

Will nods and walks out.

MR. DEMENT (CONT'D)
That is one odd bird.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - PARKING LOT - DAY

Bart JUMPS into the passenger seat. Will pats Bart before starting the engine.

WILL
Ready for a getaway, buddy?

Will turns on the car RADIO.

RADIO HOST (O.S.)
Your wife is dead, you're the only one in the house, you're covered in blood, seriously? Are we to believe you lost your memory? Do you think we are gullible like your book characters? Look at the type of stories he writes, folks. His new one, for example -

Will angrily turns off the radio.

WILL
Fucking idiot.

Will pulls out his CELL PHONE and dials John.

JOHN (V.O.)
Will?

WILL

Hey John. Listen, I need to get away. Bart and I are headed to the cabin. Can you keep an eye out on my house?

JOHN

Of course, no problem.

WILL

Thanks.

JOHN

Take care of yourself.

WILL

Yeah.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Will sits on the edge of the bed. The lamp hums low, throwing a cone of light on the comforter.

Bart sprawls across the quilt, chin on paws, watching him.

The agenda lies open on the nightstand.

April 14 - Anniversary.

He's drawn a heavy line through it. Ink smudged like a wound.

The phone in his hand flickers—two bars.

He dials.

SAM (V.O.)

Will?

WILL

Hey, Sam. Sorry to call so late.

SAM

Don't worry about it. Are you okay?

Will presses his thumb to the agenda, covering the word *Anniversary.*

WILL

I can't remember the last 24 hours
(Long pause. Bart sighs.)

WILL (CONT'D)
You're the only person I can talk
to. Sam... I need your help.

FLASH.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Reception light is sterile, humming fluorescent.

Will stands at the counter, credit card pinched between two
fingers like it weighs a ton.

The RECEPTIONIST types.

WILL
Excuse me, I would like a room.

RECEPTIONIST
Nice to see you again, Mr. Henan.

WILL
You've seen me on the TV?

RECEPTIONIST
There and here. How long is it this
time?

WILL
I don't know.

Will forces a smile, but his eyes keep sliding to the AGENDA
sticking out of his jacket pocket. As he reaches for his
wallet, it falls

April 14 - Anniversary.

Crossed out. Heavy.

WILL (CONT'D)
Perfect.

SAM
See you then.

Will hangs up and starts undressing. He's brushing his teeth
when his PHONE chirps. He checks the display, unknown caller.
He answers.

WILL
Hello?

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Will, Sheriff Thompson here. I'm
glad I caught you.

WILL
Sheriff, I was just getting ready
for bed.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
I have something I'd like to talk
to you about. Was hoping to catch
you before you left, but...

WILL
What is it?

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Coroner came back with the autopsy.
He found bruising on Amy's arm.
Said they looked fresh, as in a
couple days old. Any idea where
they came from?

WILL
I don't... She told me she tripped
over the dog and fell into an open
cabinet door.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Neighbors told me they thought they
heard a fight.

WILL
Well, that's impossible. We didn't
see each other until -

SHERIFF THOMPSON
I know. Might wanna re-think that.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Will stands at the reception desk, eyes scanning the glowing
monitor as the clerk clicks through menus. The clerk smiles,
oblivious to the storm brewing behind Will's eyes.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST
Double, non-smoking okay?

WILL
(ignores the question)
How far back do you keep your guest
records?

The receptionist blinks.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Um... why?

WILL

Just curious. A few weeks? A month?

She nods slowly, tapping keys. Will leans forward, eyes darting over the screen.

WILL (CONT'D)

Do you... ever get a lot of people with the same name? Does The last name Amy Henan ring a bell?

The clerk hesitates.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Amy Henan?

WILL

Yeah.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST

Uh... well, actually—

(she scrolls)

—there was an Amy Henan here. Two nights ago.

The sound in Will's head goes hollow. The hum of lights. The soft chatter in the lounge. All gone. Just that name burning in pixels.

HOTEL RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Is that your wife?

Will's lips barely move.

WILL

Was.

FLASH.

AGENDA on his lap in the car. April 14 - Anniversary. Crossed out.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Blinds half-closed. Slats of sunlight stripe the room like prison bars. The MAHOGANY DESK gleams—too polished, like something to hide. Bookshelves sag with reference tomes, files stacked like accusations. On the wall: letters of merit, a PI license, yellowing clippings about old cases.

Will stands by the window, staring at his reflection in the glass. A distorted silhouette cut by sunlight. He blinks—maybe too long.

SAM

You really don't remember anything else about that night? Anything at all?

(beat)

Anyone out there with a grudge? Against you... or Amy? Obsessive fans?

WILL

No. Like I said, I was out cold.

(forces a grin)

C'mon, who'd wanna hurt either of us? Amy helped people. Me? I just get beat up in book reviews.

Sam studies him, expression flat.

SAM

Strange thing, though. Neighborhood like yours isn't exactly known for random break-ins.

Will shrugs, restless, moves to the bookshelf. His hand trails over a spine, lingers on a law book. He stops like he's remembering something—then doesn't.

SAM (CONT'D)

Sit down, will ya?

Will hesitates, then drops into the chair. The leather groans like it knows him.

SAM (CONT'D)

Let me guess. Local cops got nothing?

WILL

Zip. Except me.

SAM

They always start with the husband.
Don't take it personal.

WILL

(dry)

That's comforting.

Sam leans forward, voice even.

SAM

Before we move forward, I need
everything. No blind spots. So if
there's something you're not
telling me—
(beat)
Now's the time.

A shadow flickers across Will's face. He shifts, the chair
creaks again.

WILL

I've told you everything.

SAM

Okay then.

Sam's tone says he doesn't believe it. Will feels it.

SAM (CONT'D)

You said Amy woke you up when she
got home. You two talk?

WILL

She said some guy was freaking out
at the hospital. Almost caused a
fight.

SAM

Amy didn't like drama. Funny... she
never told me about you until you
moved in together.

(beat, colder now)

Maybe Amy wasn't the Amy we thought
she was. We retrace her steps, talk
to her friends—

(locks eyes with Will)

Because, frankly... something tells
me she wasn't working that hospital
shift.

WILL
 (quietly, almost to
 himself)
 I'm starting to think the same
 thing.

SAM
 Good. You head back. I'll grab a
 flight to Kennedy. I'll text you
 when I land.

Will watches Sam in the window reflection—his face fractured
 by the blinds.

FLASH OF MEMORY:

— A dark hallway. Amy's silhouette. A man's voice whispering.
 — Blood on tile. His own hands shaking. White light — then
 nothing.

BACK TO SCENE.

Will blinks hard, breathes shallow.

Here's how to ****continue your hybrid tone**** (Memento's
 unreliable POV + Gone Girl's sharp tension) while
 restructuring the sequence so it stays locked on Will's
 perspective, ****building suspicion and psychological unease****
 instead of cutting away to the Sheriff and CI.

****INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY****

****Bart whines**** as Will swipes the key card and steps inside.
****The room is dim****, shades drawn tight. A half-empty bottle
 of water on the nightstand, his laptop closed but still
 humming faintly.

In the ****hallway behind him****, a MAID appears, arms crossed,
 eyes sharp.

****MAID****
 You're keeping a dog in there? No
 animals allowed.

****WILL****
 Yeah, I know.

****MAID****
 I told the front desk. You need to
 get out.

****WILL****

We're leaving.

Will shuts the door. Hard.

****INT. HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS****

He drops to his knees, ruffles Bart's fur. ****The dog licks his hand. A simple, loyal gesture that feels like forgiveness.****

****WILL****

Hey, buddy. Sorry for leaving you here. You okay?

Bart wags, sniffs his jeans--****dark stain near the cuff****. Will notices. ****Pauses.**** Wipes it with his sleeve. It only smears.

****FLASH IMAGE:****

– ****Blood dripping from tile.****

– ****His hand clutching something metal.****

– ****Amy's voice in the dark:**** ****"Will..."****

****Back to present.**** Will shoves the thought away, zips his duffel with a violent tug.

****WILL****

We're getting out of here.

He clips Bart's leash, slings the bag over his shoulder. Hand grips the door knob, knuckles white.

****WILL** (CONT'D)**

C'mon, Bart.

****INT. HOTEL HALLWAY - DAY****

Will strides past the maid without looking at her. Her ****eyes follow him like a verdict.****

****INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY****

The RECEPTIONIST, too cheerful, ****greet**s him with a smile that doesn't reach her eyes.******

****RECEPTIONIST****

Sir, the dog-

Will ignores her, pushes through the doors to the car.

****EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY****

Bart leaps into the passenger seat, tongue lolling. Will scratches his ear.

****WILL****

Be back in a minute, buddy.

He closes the door, turns back toward the hotel.

****INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS****

Will approaches the desk, forces a calm he doesn't feel.

****WILL****

Checking out.

****RECEPTIONIST****

Is everything okay, sir?

****WILL****

Terrific.

She tilts her head, curious.

****RECEPTIONIST****

Did your friend find you?

Will freezes.

****WILL****

Friend?

****RECEPTIONIST****

Yes. Said he was from your neck of the woods. New York, right? Asked for you by name. Said it was... a personal matter.

(MORE)

****RECEPTIONIST**** (CONT'D)

(beat)

I offered to take a number, but he declined.

(smiles)

I'm sure you'll see him soon.

Will forces a smile thin as paper.

WILL

Sure.

He turns and leaves, her voice echoing in his head: personal matter.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT (FLASH-FORWARD)

Will sits alone. A mirrored wall opposite. His fractured reflection stares back.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (O.S.)

You ever write about a guy killing his wife, Will?

Will's jaw tightens. He says nothing.

FLASH IMAGE:

- Amy's hand slipping from his.
- Red water swirling in a sink.
- A dog barking in the dark.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Because we read your books. And the way I see it... This feels like one of your endings.

Will looks at the glass, like he can see through it, like Amy might be on the other side.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Will walks to the car, Bart waiting inside. He unlocks the door but stops—spots something sticking out of his duffel through the open zipper: a folded receipt.

He pulls it out. Reads: "THE SILVER LANTERN - BAR TAB - \$142.60 - 1:13 A.M."

FLASH IMAGE:

- Amy is laughing at a bar. Not in a cocktail dress. Hair down, red lipstick. She bumps into a man - Mr. Tall-Dark-And-Handsome. His back toward Will the entire time.

The BARTENDER sets their drinks down on the bar.

BARTENDER

Here you go sir. Cosmopolitan for the lady and a Vodka martini for you, sir.

WILL

Thank you.

Will carries the drinks over.

WILL (CONT'D)

Here we are.

(beat)

Who was that?

AMY

(taking a sip)

Who was who?

WILL

That guy you bumped into.

AMY

Oh, just an old friend.

WILL

Want to introduce us?

AMY

(sipping her drink)

No. You won't like him.

WILL

Why not?

AMY

He's not like you, Will.

WILL

(intrigued)

Yeah? How do you know?

AMY
I know. Besides, you'll never see
him again.

BACK TO:

INT. CAR - DAY

Will crumples the receipt in a clenching fist.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Bart WHINES. A shadow ascends the steps.

END FLASHBACK

INT. GAS STATION BATHROOM - NIGHT

Will splashes water on his face. Stares in the cracked mirror. His phone buzzes. Blocked number. He hesitates. Answers.

DISTORTED VOICE (V.O.)
You're not asking the right
questions about Amy.

WILL
Who is this?

CLICK. Dead line.

FLASH IMAGE:

- Amy slipping a phone into her purse. A second phone. A burner? Will finds an ECHO-INSPIRED JOURNAL.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

*Dim. Claustrophobic. TV on mute. Will slumps at the edge of the bed, eyes hollow. Bart stirs at the foot. Something's gnawing at Will. He grabs Amy's old tote bag.

He dumps it onto the bed. Notebooks. Lip balm. Stethoscope. Nothing.

Then. A faint rip.

Will freezes. One side of the bag's inner lining is coming loose. He peels it back. A small, flat envelope. Taped between the layers.

His hands tremble as he opens it. Inside: A USB flash drive. Labeled in black ink: "If something happens to me."

Will stares at it like it's alive.

WILL
JESUS, AMY...What the hell did you
get into?

SMASH CUT TO
BLACK.

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A dead room. White walls, buzzing lights. One camera, one clock, and the slow tick of tension.

Will sits across from SHERIFF THOMPSON (60s). Will looks worn thin – not guilty, not innocent. Just... hollowed out. Like a man running on fumes and faith.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You think you knew her.
(beat)
But women like Amy?
(sits back)
They're full of surprises.

Will doesn't blink. Doesn't flinch. He stares at a water stain on the table like it holds the answer.

WILL
You're talking like she fooled me.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
I'm saying she wasn't who you
wanted her to be.
(beat)
Or maybe she was, and you didn't
want her to leave.

Will finally looks up. Calm, deliberate.

WILL
Someone made her disappear.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You're saying that like you've got
proof.

(MORE)

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

We've got zero signs of forced entry. No struggle. No signs of anyone else. But your story's still changing.

WILL

You're not looking in the right direction.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

I'm looking at the guy whose alibi fell apart, whose fingerprints are on the trunk latch, and who hasn't cried once since his wife vanished.

WILL

(sharp)

You're wasting time.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Tell me who did it, Will.

WILL

I'm working on it.

The Sheriff leans forward.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

This isn't a vigilante movie. You're not the avenger. You're the guy in the chair, talking like he's about to make it worse.

WILL

You don't know what she was involved in.

(beat)

Amy was scared. She just didn't know how to say it.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Right. And you're the only one who saw it. Not her sister. Not her friends. Not her coworkers.

WILL

They didn't know her like I did.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Then maybe you saw something you didn't want to admit.

Will shakes his head – not angry, not defensive. Just certain.

WILL
They got to her. And I'm going to
find out who.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
They.
(chuckles)
You don't even know who you're
accusing.

WILL
Not yet.
(beat)
But I will.

Sheriff Thompson studies him. Something clicks. This isn't
denial. It's fixation.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You're chasing shadows, Will.

WILL
Then I'll chase every one of them
until I find the one that fits.

The camcorder blinks red in the corner. Still recording.

Somewhere far away, a woman is laughing.

FLASH IMAGE:

— Amy writing something in a notebook: "In case something
happens to me..."

— Will's hand flipping through pages—but they're missing.

CUT BACK TO:

Will is in the chair, jaw clenched, sweating.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Will approaches his car. Face hollow, eyes unfocused. He
opens the driver's door... and stops.

INT. WILL'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

SAM (late 30s) sits in the passenger seat like he belongs
there. Calm. Too calm.

WILL
What the fuck are you doing in my
car?!

Will dives in, grabs Sam by the collar, shoving him against
the window.

SAM
Whoa! Hey! It's me. Sam. Your
friend. Loo. Look.

Sam fumbles out his PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR LICENSE. Will
snatches it, scans it, his breath sharp and uneven.

SAM (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Your car was unlocked.
Somebody could've gotten in.
(beat)
Somebody worse than me.

Will stares him down, still not convinced.

WILL
Why are you here?

SAM
Because you're not crazy.
(beat)
Amy didn't just disappear. And you
know it.

A long silence. Will lets go – but just barely. Still
watching him like a cornered animal.

WILL
You could've called.

SAM
And you would've picked up?

Will doesn't answer.

SAM (CONT'D)
Look, I'm on your side. I've seen
cases like this. People vanish. The
cops write it off. But there's
always something deeper underneath.
(leans in, lower)
I think someone wanted her gone.

WILL'S EXPRESSION SHIFTS. IT LANDS. THAT'S WHAT HE WANTS TO
BELIEVE.

Here's one way the next scene could go – keeping the tension high, keeping that *Memento*-meets-*Gone Girl* energy, and pushing us deeper into mystery without giving away the truth.

****EXT. ABANDONED GAS STATION - NIGHT****

Headlights slice through the dark. Will's car rolls in, gravel crunching under the tires. The station is long dead – boarded windows, a single flickering light over the pump.

Will kills the engine. The world goes still.

SAM
(quiet)
This is where she was last seen.

Will scans the empty lot – there's nothing here but shadows and silence.

WILL
Cops check it out?

SAM
They *say* they did.

Sam gets out, moving with purpose, like he's been here before. Will follows, eyes darting.

Sam points to a patch of oil-stained concrete.

SAM (CONT'D)
Security cam was right there.

WILL
And?

SAM
Footage is gone. Wiped. Like it never existed.

Will's jaw tightens. Something in him *wants* to believe.

From the darkness – a SNAP. A twig breaking.

Will spins toward the sound. Just the black outline of the forest beyond the station.

SAM (CONT'D)
You hear that?

Before Will can answer – a distant FLASH. Camera shutter.

Both men freeze.

Another FLASH – closer this time.

Sam takes a step forward, squinting into the dark.

SAM (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Shit.

The forest swallows the sound of retreating footsteps.

Will's breathing quickens. His grip tightens on his keys like a weapon.

A beat. Then Sam turns to him – the calm is gone now.

SAM (CONT'D)
Someone is watching us.

Perfect – here's how I'd do it, cutting right from that "Someone's watching us" beat into a disorienting *Memento*-style fragment reel that starts bending what's real and what's imagined.

SAM
Someone's watching us.

FLASH CUT SEQUENCE – MEMORY? DREAM? LIE?

* **EXT. LAKE SHORE – DAY** – Amy, back to camera, standing ankle-deep in the water. Her hand lifts as if to wave... or reach for help.

* **BLACK FRAME** – The sound of Amy LAUGHING, but it's warped, slowed.

* **INT. KITCHEN – NIGHT** – Amy and Will mid-argument, words muted, movements jerky like old VHS. A glass shatters. Will's face half in shadow.

* **FLASH** – A hand – maybe Will's, maybe not – pushing Amy's hair back behind her ear. Intimate. Gentle. Then – BLOOD on her temple.

* **EXT. GAS STATION – DAY** – A security monitor shows a fuzzy figure approaching Amy's car. The image distorts, rewinds, freezes.

* **BLACK FRAME** – A phone ringing. Over and over. No one answers.

* **EXT. FOREST EDGE - NIGHT** - The same darkness Will just saw. But this time, a silhouette stands between the trees. Unmoving. Watching.

BACK TO PRESENT - EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT

Will blinks hard - shaking it off.

SAM

You okay?

Will forces a nod. His grip tightens around his keys. He scans the tree line again -

- and the silhouette is *gone*.

Alright - here's how the *forest chase* could play out, keeping that *Memento*-style unreliable POV so the audience keeps asking: *Is this real? Or Will's mind fracturing?*

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Will CRASHES through the undergrowth, branches whipping at his face. The flashlight beam from his phone jerks wildly.

Somewhere ahead - FOOTSTEPS. Too fast, too light to be Sam's.

WILL

Hey! Stop!

A shadow flickers between the trees. Gone again.

FLASH CUT - MEMORY

Amy turning, startled, in the forest daylight. Her hair tangled with leaves.

BACK TO PRESENT

Will stumbles over a root, catches himself, keeps running.

The forest SWALLOWS sound. His own breathing becomes deafening.

FLASH CUT

Will's hands - digging in the dirt.
Nails cracked, bloody.

(MORE)

****FLASH CUT** (CONT'D)**

He looks up – it's night, and
there's a SHOVEL beside him.

****BACK TO PRESENT****

Up ahead – a *faint light*.

Will pushes toward it – bursting into—

****CLEARING****

A single CAMPING LANTERN on the
ground. No one there.

The lantern flickers, buzzes... and dies.

****FLASH CUT – FASTER NOW****

* Amy's eyes, wide, pleading.

* A plastic garbage bag dragged over gravel.

* A wristwatch submerged in murky water.

* Will in the driver's seat of his car – but the windshield
is covered in mud, like he's buried alive.

****BACK TO PRESENT****

Will whirls – and Sam is there, suddenly, in the clearing.
Calm again.

SAM

You shouldn't be out here alone.

Will's chest heaves.

WILL

I saw someone.

Sam studies him.

SAM

Are you sure?

Beat. Will can't answer.

From deep in the forest – a distant CLICK. Camera shutter.

WILL

Wait! Did you hear that?

SAM

What?

WILL

A shuttering sound. Like a camera.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Will CRASHES through the undergrowth, branches whipping at his face. The flashlight beam from his phone jerks wildly.

Somewhere ahead - FOOTSTEPS. Too fast, too light to be Sam's.

WILL

Hey! Stop!

A shadow flickers between the trees. Gone again.

FLASH CUT - MEMORY

Amy turning, startled, in the forest daylight. Her hair tangled with leaves.

BACK TO PRESENT

Will stumbles over a root, catches himself, keeps running.

The forest SWALLOWS sound. His own breathing becomes deafening.

FLASH CUT

Will's hands - digging in the dirt. Nails cracked, bloody. He looks up - it's night, and there's a SHOVEL beside him.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Up ahead - a *faint light*. Will pushes toward it - bursting into a clearing.

A single CAMPING LANTERN on the ground. No one there.

The lantern flickers, buzzes... and dies.

FLASH CUT — FASTER NOW

Amy's eyes, wide, pleading. A plastic garbage bag is dragged over gravel. A wristwatch submerged in murky water.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. FOREST — CONTINUOUS

Waist-deep in a lake, Will whirls. On shore, Sam is there. Calm.

SAM
You shouldn't be out here alone.

Will's chest heaves.

WILL
I saw someone.

Sam studies him.

SAM
Are you sure?

Beat. Will can't answer.

From deep in the forest — a distant CLICK. Camera shutter.

Sam reluctantly follows, but he's scanning the ground like he's looking for something specific.

Will digs up a half-buried phone — old model, caked in mud. Screen cracked but still has power. The lock screen shows Amy's face.

Sam says nothing — just watches Will. Almost too closely. The picture seems recent. The phone, olders.

WILL
It's definitely Amy's phone.

SAM
So, she didn't have her phone when
you saw her last?

WILL
(frustated)
I don't know. I don't think so.

Will pockets the phone.

On the walk back to the car, Will keeps glancing at Sam.

Sam notices.

SAM
You think I planted that?

Will doesn't answer.

Sam leans in:

SAM (CONT'D)
(low)
You think I don't know you've lied
to me before?

Will freezes.

Before he can reply – the phone in his pocket VIBRATES.

He pulls it out – but the screen just shows "1 New Voicemail"
from an Unknown Number.

He plays it:

AMY (V.O.)
(terrified, whispering)
Will... don't trust—

CLICK. Call ends. Will stares at the phone. It vibrates with
a text, the sender "UNKNOWN."

ON AMY'S PHONE

"She's not in the water, genius."

WILL
I'll turn this over to the cops
tomorrow.

They continue out of the forest. Will's head is on a swivel.

Every branch snap, every rustle pulls his gaze.

Bart trots ahead, but his ears are pricked, tail rigid – on
alert.

A faint glint between the trees – maybe moonlight. Or maybe
glass. A camera lens? Will blinks and it's gone.

SAM
You alright?

WILL
Yeah. Just... making sure we're not
being followed.

EXT. TRAILHEAD - NIGHT

Their boots crunch on gravel as the forest thins. The parked car waits under a single buzzing light.

Shadow shifts across the tree line. They're there, then they're gone.

His hand slips into his jacket to feel the phone still there.

FLASH IMAGE:

Amy's laughing, wind in her hair. The sound distorts, slows, warps into static.

BACK TO:

EXT. TRAILHEAD - CONTINUOUS

Will shakes it off, glances behind one last time before sliding into the passenger seat.

SAM

Are you okay? You're acting like the boogeyman is about to jump out at you.

WILL

Maybe he will.

EXT. FOREST EDGE - NIGHT

Will and Sam emerge from the trees. Will's head is still scanning, every rustle making him twitch.

Amy's cracked phone is in his pocket, its weight like a brick.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Sam drives. The dash lights carve deep shadows across Will's face.

SAM

What the fuck, man? I mean, seriously.

WILL

I slipped up, okay?

Sam narrows his glancing gaze on Will.

SAM

No wonder Amy ducked out. Tell me,
for God's sake, your thoughts on
how things would play out.

Will stares out the window, hand in his jacket, thumb
brushing the phone.

WILL

Do you know what it's like? Not
seeing your wife for days, lying in
a cold bed?

SAM

I've been on the opposite side. And
I didn't want to come home either.
Now you're really fucked, brother.

WILL

How do you figure?

SAM

What do you think happens when your
favorite sheriff finds that girl?

WILL

That I'm sweet and innocent.

SAM

Goddammit, Will, for once in your
life—be serious.

Will forces a smirk.

WILL

I've got you.

SAM

I can only do so much. You need
more than a PI. You need a miracle
worker.

Beat.

WILL

I know a guy.

SAM

What are you, De Niro?

WILL

Guy was a source for my first book.
Name's Fell.

Sam eyes him.

SAM
How well do you know him?

WILL
Six weeks of shadowing him. Haven't
talked since.

SAM
Terrific.

EXT. HARLEM STREET - NIGHT

Passing jazz clubs and brownstones. Will keeps watching the
mirrors, sure they're being tailed.

A dark SUV turns the corner behind them. Lights off.

WILL
Pull over here.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

They climb the steps to a narrow door. Locks click. The door
cracks. A pair of eyes.

WILL
What's up, Fell?

FELL
Well, shit. You're the last face I
thought I'd see.

His gaze flicks to Sam.

FELL (CONT'D)
Why you bringing a cop to my door?

SAM
Private investigator.

FELL
And?

WILL
We need answers.

Fell studies them both, then his eyes land square on Will's
jacket pocket.

FELL
 (smirking)
 Find something of hers tonight?

Will freezes. Sam looks between them.

WILL
 Got somewhere we can talk?

FELL
 (nodding)
 Come on.

INT. FELL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dim. Smoke in the air. They sit - Will tense, Sam watching him.

FELL
 Word is your wife was in deep with
 someone you don't walk away from.
 Tall. Thin. Dark suit. Cold eyes.

FLASH CUT:

- Amy counting cash on a table.
- A man's thin hand passing her a key.
- Will in the forest, but it's daylight, Bart barking at something unseen.

BACK TO SCENE:

WILL
 Where is he?

FELL
 If he wants you, he'll find you.

He leans in, voice low.

FELL (CONT'D)
 Better hope he doesn't want you.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Will and Sam step outside. Will reaches into his jacket - the phone is gone.

****WILL****

It's not here.

****SAM****

What?

Will looks up. Fell is in the upstairs window, lit by the faint glow of a phone screen.

Alright – here's how the ****bar/stranger scene**** plays out immediately after the Fell moment, keeping the phone loss fresh and feeding the paranoia you've been building.

****EXT. STREET - NIGHT****

Will's eyes lock on Fell's silhouette in the upstairs window – the faint glow of a phone screen.

A blink later, the curtains draw shut.

****SAM****

You think he took it?

****WILL****

I know he did.

Sam starts toward the building, but Will grabs his arm.

****WILL** (CONT'D)**

No. That's what he wants.

****EXT. BAR - NIGHT****

A corner joint with neon buzz and condensation on the windows. Sam pushes inside first, scanning. Will lingers a moment on the sidewalk – the dark SUV from earlier is parked half a block down.

He follows Sam in.

****INT. BAR - NIGHT****

Dim, low hum of conversation. Sam orders a whiskey. Will slides into a booth with a beer and his duffel at his feet.

From the bar mirror, he spots a man slipping into the seat across from him. Mid-40s. Clean cut. Too neat to belong here.

****STRANGER****

She was in over her head, Henan.
You should've let her go.

Will's hand goes to the edge of the table.

****WILL****

What?

The stranger smiles thinly, leans in.

****STRANGER****

You're still asking the wrong questions.

Will's about to respond – but the stranger is already gone, weaving toward the door.

****EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS****

Will pushes out into the night, scanning.

The street is empty except for the black SUV. Engine running. Lights off.

Will starts toward it – the SUV's headlights flare to life, blinding him.

When his vision clears, it's pulling away.

****FLASH CUTS:****

– Amy laughing in a crowd.

– A key sliding across a table.

– Bart barking at the foot of a bed, something unseen in the corner.

****BACK TO SCENE****

Will stumbles back inside. Sam's watching him.

****SAM****

What happened?

Will doesn't answer - just stares at the door like it's going to open again.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

The dark entry gives way to a spacious and airy open space. Fell, Sam and Will walk to a sectional SOFA.

FELL
Have a seat.

Will and Sam settle on opposite ends of the sofa. Fell sits down in an ARMCHAIR across the room.

FELL (CONT'D)
Killing her was bold.

Fell cracks a smile. Will jumps up, angrily approaches Fell.

FELL (CONT'D)
Hey, chill! Kidding.

WILL
(angry)
Well, I'm not! You got info, I want it.

FELL
Alright, alright. Word is your wife was involved with some high-level drug czar. Not a smart girl.

Will and Sam look at each other in shock.

SAM
Tell us about this guy.

FELL
I dunno, man. That ain't my business. I mediate. I get a call, set it up, drop gets made, we all get paid, nobody gets hurt. You do not wanna go down this road, writer...you won't come back.

WILL
You've been in the game for a long time. You know their angle.

FELL
Look, these guys - they ain't your typical dealers.

WILL
What do you mean?

Fell tenses.

FELL
The stuff they sell you can't get
on the street. High-quality shit.
The price is like double the normal
rate. And, you gotta pay. They
don't like fucking around. You feel
me?

Will nods.

WILL
Then why mess with him?

FELL
Big score. Lots to go around for
everyone. He's untouchable, feds
keep trying. Anyone rats, they go
missing or wind up dead.

Will and Sam exchange glances.

FELL (CONT'D)
What?

WILL
What does he look like?

FELL
Like a motherfucking Grim Reaper.

WILL
Tall, thin?

FELL
Always in a dark suit. Eyes as cold
as shit.

Will turns to Sam, his hand balled into a fist.

WILL
That explains it. That's why she
was acting so strange.

SAM
Where can we find him?

FELL
Don't know.

Will grabs Fell by the collar.

WILL
You're lying!

SAM
Will, stop!

Will lets Fell go.

FELL
Jesus! He can be anywhere. If he
wants you, he finds you.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Will stomps to the car as Sam follows.

SAM
Will, what the hell?

WILL
I was tired of his bullshit! We
needed answers.

SAM
You're frustrated, I get that. But,
you can't threatened people like
that.

WILL
I know, but I'll be damned if I let
some fucked-up junkie play me.

INT. CAR - DAY

Back on city streets, Sam and Will sit in silence as the car
dodges through traffic.

WILL (CONT'D)
Head north.

SAM
I will. After I drop you off.

WILL
What?

SAM
It's best for both of us if I do
this alone.

WILL

Sam, no.

SAM

Yes. It's too dangerous for you to be playing detective. I have to keep you safe.

WILL

Goddammit, this is about my wife!

SAM

No, it's not. It's about your life.

Will turns away, sighs.

WILL

You can't ask me to sit on my hands. We're getting close. I can feel it. We're gonna get the bastards who killed Amy.

SAM

Right there. That's exactly your problem. You've got too much skin in the game for you to be objective. No one can blame you for it. But I gotta do my job. So, let me do it.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Sheriff Thompson enters the crime scene lab where technicians are running the semen sample through the database.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

Any matches yet?

TECH

No felons. We're now looking at guys with misdemeanors.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

How long...

TECH

Got it. John Hamilton.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

The neighbor? He's got priors?

Thompson returns his office to check the neighbor out with the deputy sheriff.

DEPUTY MCINTYRE
John Hamilton was arrested in 2004
for driving under the influence.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
We need to dig deeper.

DEPUTY MCINTYRE
On it... according to the 2004
report, he broke into the Kappa
Kappa Gamma sorority and was
accused of attacking one Amy
Mueller - the now deceased Amy -

SHERIFF THOMPSON
I got it. Christ.

Thompson walks out of the station and ducks into his cruiser.
He calls Will.

Here's a ****Memento-style rewrite**** of your scene -
fragmented, disorienting, moving backward in pieces so the
audience assembles truth through the structure rather than
linear exposition. I'll break it into short, sharp beats that
feel like memory shards being pieced together.

****BLACK SCREEN****
Heavy ringing.

****FLASH - RED/BLUE STROBES.****

Will on the pavement, blood trickling from his temple. He
blinks against the police cruiser lights.

****CUT TO:****
Sheriff Thompson and a deputy
wrestling John into the back of the
cruiser.

Susan screaming, voice muffled beneath the ringing.

Will's eyes roll back. Blackout.

****REVERSE JUMP****

****EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT****

John smashes Will's head against the brick wall.

JOHN
You delusional hack!

Susan clings to John, pulling him back.

SUSAN
Stop it! Stop!

Her voice breaks through the ringing.

****REVERSE JUMP****

****EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT****

Will drives a fist into John's face. Blood sprays across the golden light of the doorway.

JOHN
I didn't kill her!

Will yanks John by the arm and hurls him against the siding.

****REVERSE JUMP****

****EXT. HOUSE - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT****

Door swings open.

John in warm yellow glow, mid-smile.

JOHN
Will, you're b-

A left hook cracks his jaw before the word is finished.

****REVERSE JUMP****

EXT. HOUSE - NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

Will storms across the lawn, rage fixed on the glowing doorway.

He balls his fists.

REVERSE JUMP**

BLACK SCREEN

Will's voice, harsh, jagged.

WILL (V.O.)
You son of a bitch. You slept with
my wife... then you killed her.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Will opens his eyes. At first, he sees nothing but bright lights around him and hears ringing. A nurse is standing over him. Her lips are moving, but he doesn't understand. Gradually, the ringing fades.

NURSE
Can you hear me, Mr. Henan?

WILL
Yeah, I hear you.

NURSE
You're in the hospital.

WILL
Yeah.

NURSE
Do you know what happened to you?

Will looks at her and sighs. He tries to move, but notices he's handcuffed to the bed rail. The nurse steps away. Sam walks into the hospital room.

NURSE (CONT'D)
I'll go get the doctor.

The nurse exits the room. Will looks at Sam.

WILL
(Looking at the cuffs)
I got into a fight. John, of all
people!

SAM

You've been arrested, Will. Assault and battery.

WILL

And John?

Sam shakes his head.

SAM

You attacked him. He is now, however, the prime suspect in the case.

WILL

Great.

With his hands in his pockets, Sam shuffles toward the hospital bed.

SAM

Before I came here, I stopped by the sheriff's office and had a long talk with Thompson. Amy wasn't just a drug mule. There's more to it... The FBI is involved. According to their sources, a deal is going down tonight on the lower east side.

WILL

Grim reaper guy?

Sam nods.

SAM

According to Thompson, FBI and NYPD are gonna be there. It's a sting operation. Sheriff's department is involved because it's in their district.

Will shakes his head.

WILL

It was John. I'm positive. I could see it in his eyes.

SAM

No. He slept with her. He didn't kill her.

WILL

What makes you say that?

SAM

He loved her. Well, maybe not love.
Guy's had a couple of affairs.

Will lays his head back, closes his eyes.

SAM (CONT'D)

John's not the killer. He had an
affair with your wife. That's it.

Sam walks to the door, reaches for the knob and hesitates.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm tagging along tonight.

WILL

Sam? That's all, right?

Sam stops and looks back.

WILL (CONT'D)

Be careful.

SAM

You're one to talk.

Sam slips out. Will shakes his head, rubbing his face.

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Sam drives by two guys in hoodies loitering. He circles
around the street once, then idles in the alley. They
approach his CAR as he rolls down the WINDOW.

HOODIE 1

Whassup?

SAM

I hear you got good stuff.

HOODIE 1

Yeah? \$112 will get you ten lines.

SAM

Must be really high-quality,
Columbian?

HOODIE 2

Does it matter?

SAM

It's all good. My other guy didn't
have product like this. Piqued my
interest.

HOODIE 2
Just hurry up with the money.
C'mon!

SAM
Take it easy. Got it right here.
Don't do me like that girl last
week.

Sam reaches for his wallet. As Sam plucks out the cash,
Hoodie 2 approaches Hoodie 1, taking him off to the side.

HOODIE 2
Don't like the feeling from this
guy.

HOODIE 1
Dude, just shut up.

They glance at Sam.

HOODIE 2
Make him get out of the car.

HOODIE 1
My man, come on over here.

Sam nods and steps out of the car, cash in hand.

SAM
Everything cool?

HOODIE 1
Nah. Everything is not cool.

Hoodie 1 punches Sam. Sam tackles Hoodie 1. Sam pulls his
gun. Hoodie 2 clubs his arm with a baseball bat. Hoodie 2
cracks Sam in the head. Sam grabs the bat, striking Hoodie 2
in the face. Hoodie 1 disappears. Sam pries the bat away from
Hoodie 2, shoving him away.

Hoodie 1 returns, cracking Sam on the head. Sam falls,
slamming his face into the car. Hoodie 1 strikes Sam across
the face. Hoodie 1 continues to beat Sam until Hoodie 2 grabs
the bloody bat.

HOODIE 2
Hey! Cool it, man! Cool it!

Hoodie 2 hesitantly steps toward Sam. He pokes Sam.

HOODIE 2 (CONT'D)
Hey man.

No response.

HOODIE 2 (CONT'D)
C'mon. Get up.

The PI remains lifeless.

HOODIE 1
Leave him! We gotta get the fuck
out of here!

HOODIE 2
Shit!

The two sprint away.

A cruiser pulls up. Sheriff Thompson gets out and walks over to Sam. He checks for a pulse.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Christ!

A shadow washes over the sheriff. Thompson spins, drawing his gun. Hoodie 2 raises his hands.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)
Jesus! What the hell happened?

Hoodie 2 stares blankly at Thompson.

Hoodie 1 steps forward.

HOODIE 1
It was a set up.

HOODIE 2
He had a gun.

Sheriff Thompson wipes sweat from his forehead. He shakes his head.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You should've just turned him away.
The guy you two idiots just killed
was a PI for the writer.

Sheriff Thompson whips out Sam's wallet, showing the credentials.

HOODIE 2
How the hell were we supposed to
know?! He was asking too many
questions.

HOODIE 1

There wasn't much time to react.

Sheriff Thompson glares at Hoodie 1.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

My job is to protect you dipshits.
You've just made it harder. That
was a colossally stupid thing to
do!

The hoodies look at each other. Sheriff Thompson shakes his head.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

I'll handle this. Just get the hell
out of here before I have to arrest
you. Go tell Frank.

The two pause.

HOODIE 1

He's gonna be pissed.

Sheriff Thompson storms toward him.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

As he damn well should be!

Hoodie looks away.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (CONT'D)

Get the fuck out of here! Go!

The two scamper away as the sheriff scrolls through his
PHONE.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Will lies in bed, bandaged and pale. The TV flickers.

ON TV - LOCAL NEWS

ANCHOR, smooth and grave:

ANCHOR

Popular novelist William Henan,
known for his graphic stories about
murder and obsession, is under
investigation tonight after
violently attacking his neighbor,
John Reeves.

(MORE)

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Sources close to the Reeves family say Henan's behavior has long been erratic.

Images flash: Will's author headshot. Book covers splashed across the screen. Headlines crawl: Writer Turns Violent? Fact or Fiction?

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Neighbors describe Henan as disturbed, with some suggesting his dark writing may reflect his state of mind. John Reese, recovering tonight, insists Henan accused him of killing his wife without cause.

Will's jaw tightens. He mutes the screen.

The door creaks open. Sam enters carrying a paper cup of coffee.

SAM

You look like hell.

WILL

They're painting me as a killer.

SAM

Welcome to the court of public opinion. No appeal process.

WILL

Christ.

Will stares at the muted screen, then at Sam. Sam sets the cup down.

SAM

I've got a lead. Could be nothing. Could be everything.

Will pushes himself up.

WILL

Then let's go.

SAM

No. You're staying here.

WIL

Like hell I am.

Sam studies him calculatingly.

SAM

Didn't you hear the TV? Someone spots you snooping around, they are gonna call the cops. I won't be able to protect you.

WILL

I don't care! I don't give a fuck what anyone thinks. I am not going to just sit here idle. They killed my wife! Whoever it is, they are probably watching this, fucking laughing! They took Amy. They took my memory. I want to make the fucker beg!

Will glares, but Sam doesn't flinch. He's already decided.

CUT TO:

****INT. WILL'S HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT****

Will sits at his desk, a lamp haloing him in dim light. A box of Amy's things is spread out—her diary on top. He flips pages. Emotional snapshots. Lists. Domestic nothings.

But beneath the diary, a ****manuscript draft****—his own story, marked in Amy's handwriting. Strange notes in the margins. Names circled. Phrases underlined. Arrows pointing to fragments of dialogue.

Will runs his finger across one line of her scrawl:

"Check the shipments."

Another:

"He'll never see the money."

He leans back, shaken.

WILL (V.O.)

Was she... using me? Feeding me pieces of her life and calling it fiction?

Will flips deeper. More cryptic annotations, all tied to a subplot he barely remembers writing, a drug ring buried inside his story.

WILL

I made it up? No. No!

Will rifles through Amy's journal. Dates. Names. Drop-off points.

His breath quickens. For the first time, the manuscript doesn't feel like his.

WILL (V.O.)
Did Amy lead me to write her story...
or mine?

The sound of his own pen scratches the page as he begins circling her notes, trying to draw lines between them.

The clock ticks. He's alone, but it doesn't feel that way. Will flattens himself at the window and peers through the blinds. A black sedan is parked near his driveway.

WILL (V.O.)
License plate. Get the license
plate. Hurry! I need a pen.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

WILL
One moment!

There's a pen under the sofa. Bart barks. Will freezes.

The shadow is waiting outside.

Will goes and opens the door.

WILL (CONT'D)
Yes?

INT. MICHELIN-STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

FRANK
Well, actually, I did get called in
now that you mention it. My days
are all messed up. My apologies. I
came in a little late, but luckily,
we got it under control.
(quickly changing the
subject)
Now, your book...

WILL
But, what happened after that? I
mean, I waited for her for several
hours.

FRANK

Well, of course, we called the police. It took a while for them to come. Then they had to take our statements. It was tedious and took a while.

WILL

So you had to go through all that riggamaroll. Why didn't she tell me? I mean, I wasn't angry - just concerned. Okay, maybe a little put off, but I would've understood. And, why the hell didn't Sheriff Thompson tell me about the fight?

FRANK

I don't know. Maybe, he didn't think it was important.

WILL

You got a woman who was shot to death in her own home the night that she's not where she should be. This after a shady asshole shows up at her work days before. I mean, that's not a fucking coincidence!

FRANK

You are getting yourself worked up. You need to calm down or you'll pop your stitches.

Will stares at Frank noticing his thin build, his dark suit.

WILL

You sure we haven't met?

FRANK

I'm sure.

WILL

There's something very familiar about you.

Frank shrugs.

WILL (CONT'D)

How long did you say you've been splitting your time between doc and pharma sales?

FRANK

I didn't.

WILL

Have you spoken with Suzie at the clinic since?

FRANK

Yeah, she's, umm, missing Amy.

WILL

(as he grabs the steering wheel)

There is no Suzie, asshole!

Will quickly grabs the steering wheel, wrestling it from Frank's grip. The car swerves, knocking Frank against the door. The car slams into a steel girder, air bags deploy knocking Frank unconscious. When he comes to, the passenger door is open and Will is gone.

Frank pulls his cell, dialing Sheriff Thompson.

FRANK

(to himself)

What a cluster.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Bart is lying on his bed. His stomach is growling. Bart gets up and goes to the window. Men are outside - men he's seen and smelled before. The ones with the tattoos. Immediately, Bart snarls. Something crashes through the back door. Bart gallops toward the door, barking.

WILL

Hey, hey. Bart, it's me.

Will puts out his hand and Bart sniffs Will, wagging his tail. Bart whines softly as he licks Will's hand.

WILL (CONT'D)

Missed you too, boy.

Will pats Bart's head and walks through the kitchen. Pivoting, Bart trots back to the window as Will follows. Bart begins to GROWL again. In the dark, Will peers around a CLOSED BLIND, spotting the men. Will quickly sneaks back to the kitchen and plucks a KNIFE from the KNIFE BLOCK.

The FRONT DOOR CRASHES in and Frank's man, MIKE, wanders around. Mike turns left. Bart growls behind him. Mike brings out a GUN WITH A SILENCER.

MIKE

There you are. Good boy. Stay.

Bart GROWLS but doesn't move. Will CLICKS his tongue. Bart bounds and bites Mike's arm. The mobster punches and kicks Bart as Bart drags him down. Mike reaches for the gun as he CRIES out.

Mike aims his GUN at Bart. Will grabs a fire extinguisher, bashing Mike's head. He strikes him again. Mike kicks Will. Will stumbles back and falls. Mike grabs hold of the gun, aiming it across his body. POOM.

Will drags Mike across the floor, grabbing his throat, pinning him against the refrigerator.

WILL

He sent you, didn't he?! First Amy.
Now me!

MIKE

Yeah, that's right. Tying up loose ends.

Will throws him into the cabinets.

WILL

He should do it himself. He should
fucking face me. Go back and tell
him that.

Mike brings the gun up. Will fights holding back Mike's wrist. Will jabs Mike twice in the face. The gun, now pointing sideways, FIRES. A YELP.

WILL (CONT'D)

No!

Struggling to stand, Bart hops away, leaving a TRAIL OF BLOOD. Bart collapses again and remains in the hallway.

Mike grabs Will's neck, yanks it, smashing his head twice on the floor. Will flings Mike into the wall. Hopping to his feet, Will storms to Mike.

Mike raises his gun, FIRING. Will ducks behind and circles the KITCHEN ISLAND as bullets pierce the top. Will charges Mike with a YELL, digging his shoulder in, slamming Mike into CABINETS.

Mike wraps his arms and legs around Will, dropping the gun. Will lunges, slamming Mike into the counter repeatedly. Jimmy's arms and legs slacken.

Will wrestles Mike to the floor, kicks him in the head, knocking him out. A card slips from Mike's pocket. Will snatches it up. It reads The Musket Room. Putting it in his pocket, Will steps over the BODIES, bending over Bart.

WILL (CONT'D)

Shit!

Here's how your scenes could play out if you wanted to write them in a ****Memento-meets-Gone Girl**** style – nonlinear, fragmented, and unreliable, where the audience is piecing things together almost against their will. I'll break down the shift in treatment and then give you a sample rewrite of some key beats in that fragmented style.

How the Style Shifts

* ****Memento influence****:

* The story isn't told in order – we cut **backwards** or **out of sequence**.

* Dialogue becomes haunting echoes across time.

* Objects and flashes (a napkin, a gun, Bart's bloody paw) become "memory anchors" that pull the viewer between scenes.

* Each scene ends with a disorienting beat that's "answered" by the beginning of the **next** scene (or the previous, depending on chronology).

* ****Gone Girl influence****:

* Characters hide the truth, gaslight, and manipulate the narrative.

* Frank and the Sheriff's dialogue isn't just expositional – it drips with calculated deceit.

* Will becomes an unreliable "investigator" of his own life.

* Every explanation feels plausible but undercut by doubt.

Sample Rewrite (Fragmented, Memento/Gone Girl Tone)

****BLACK SCREEN.****

****The sound of BART'S LABORED
BREATHING.****

A low, wet gasp.

CUT TO:

INT. VET ROOM - NIGHT

Close on BLOODY GAUZE pressed against fur. Will's trembling hands.

VET TECH (V.O.)
Vitals are dropping.

Will looks down. Bart's eyes already look far away.

SMASH CUT - REVERSE:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The gun FIRES. A muffled YELP. Bart stumbles, blood spraying tile.

Will's face - shock, rage.

WILL
No!

HARD CUT:

INT. MICHELIN-STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Frank swirling red wine, calm, thin smile.

FRANK
You're getting yourself worked up.
You'll pop your stitches.

Close on Will - staring like he's trying to remember *who the hell Frank even is*.

WILL
You sure we haven't met?

FLASH of IMAGE:

- A napkin: *The Musket Room.*
- Bart's blood on Will's sleeve.
- A woman's face (AMY?) turning away.

****BACK TO SCENE.****

Frank shrugs, too casual.

FRANK
I'm sure.

****INT. GARAGE - NIGHT (LATER? EARLIER?)****

Will staring at Amy's card on the seat.

Beside it, a napkin: *The Musket Room.*

He holds them both, unsure which came first.

****INT. HOUSE - NIGHT****

Bart growling at shadows.

The FRONT DOOR EXPLODES IN.

Mike steps through.

MIKE
There you are. Good boy. Stay.

****SMASH CUT - REVERSE:****

****INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT****

Frank, lit by the blue glow of a muted TV. Sheriff Thompson pacing.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Amy wasn't enough. The PI wasn't
enough. Now Henan?

Frank doesn't flinch.

FRANK
My guys are taking care of it as we
speak.

The TV in the background: a NEWS ANCHOR's mouth moves,
silent. A chyron reads:

"BREAKING: Shootout in Suburbs."

INT. VET ROOM - NIGHT

Back to Bart on the table.

Monitors BEEP erratically.

Will whispers, almost chanting:

WILL
Stay with me. Stay with me.

FLASH CUTS:
- Will slamming Mike into cabinets.

- Frank dialing a phone, no answer.

- Bart licking Will's hand in the dark.

- Amy's smile, then the sound of a gunshot.

INT. MUSKET ROOM BAR - NIGHT

Smooth jazz. Laughter. A room of strangers.

Will in the corner, feral, sweat-drenched, clutching the bat.

Frank passes, oblivious.

Then - a hand grabs Will, shoving him into a dark side room.

Grey's face in shadow.

AGENT GREY
What the hell are you doing here?

Will's breath hitches. He almost doesn't know the answer.

WILL
Who the hell are you?

SMASH CUT TO
BLACK.

INT. ANIMAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The sound of a dog's shallow breathing.

I/E. ANIMAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Will stares at a Polaroid of a man in a suit. On it, Amy's writing: "Frank Gamble - don't believe his lies." Though the high-end suit matches the guy in the car, the face is concealed in shadows.

Outside, a car door SLAMS. A tall man in a suit briskly enters.

AGENT GREY

Whoa. Take it easy.

WILL

You assholes killed my fucking wife!

Will lands a punch. Grey stumbles back. Will raises the BAT. Simultaneously, Grey draws a GUN.

AGENT GREY

You got this all wrong, Mr. Henan.
You have no idea what's going on.

Grey flashes his BADGE.

AGENT GREY (CONT'D)

Special Agent Grey. I'm on your side. We need to talk.

Will looks confused.

AGENT GREY (CONT'D)

Come with me.

I/E. - CAR NIGHT

Will stands outside a BLACK SEDAN. Grey opens the passenger door. Will tentatively gets in.

AGENT GREY (CONT'D)

Mr. Henan, your wife has been helping the FBI build a case against Frank Corcione.

WILL

Had been. She's dead.

AGENT GREY

Look, you don't know me, you don't trust me, I get it. But, if you just come with me, I'll explain everything.

Frank notices the back door open. He steps out of the club, stares at the BLACK SEDAN. The car screeches away.

INT. WILL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A bare bulb hums overhead. The kitchen's shadows are thick.

Will paces. The duffel waits by the door like a dare.

Agent Grey leans on the frame, arms crossed.

WILL

I can't just walk away from this.

He rips open the duffel. Clothes. A pistol. The shine of it catches the light.

Grey shifts, uneasy.

AGENT GREY

Mr. Henan, don't do this.

WILL

Sam's been with Frank from the start.

(beat)

Amy's blood's on both their hands.

He checks the gun, slides it into his waistband. The tremor in him is gone.

WILL (CONT'D)

It ends tonight.

Jacket over the steel. Eyes like stone. He brushes past Grey without looking back.

The door slams. Silence swallows the room.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT

Rain. Neon buzz. Pavement slick like glass. Will strides fast, head low, jacket pulled tight. The pistol digs into his hip with every step.

FLASH - AMY'S LAUGH.

Quick. Bright. Gone.

FLASH - BLOOD on tile.

Amy's hand, limp.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jaw locked. Eyes dead ahead. Will turns a corner. Headlights streak across his face.

SAM (V.O.)

Trust me, Will. Always trust me.

The lie echoes. Will shakes his head in disbelief. A passing bus throws him in shadow.

FLASH

Amy screaming. Cut short.

FLASH

Sam shaking Frank's hand. Deal done.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Rain on his face, but he doesn't flinch. He's already somewhere else.

He stops under a neon sign that sputters OPEN. The glow paints him red.

His hand rests on the gun.

WILL (V.O.)

It ends tonight.

A figure follows.

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Will stands face-to-face with FRANK, gun in hand. Behind Frank, a briefcase of money sits on a crate.

FRANK

I didn't think you had the guts to come here alone.

WILL
 (voice trembling)
 You killed her. And for what?
 Money?

FRANK
 Amy knew the rules. She played the
 game, she lost. But you... You're
 still in it. You can walk away now,
 Will. Forget this ever happened.

Will's hand shakes as he grips the gun. His mind races. He
 could end this right now. Take revenge.

But then...he hears Amy's voice in his head.

AMY (V.O.)
 Please... don't.

Will's hand steadies. His finger tightens on the trigger, but
 then...he lowers the gun.

WILL
 I'm not like you, Frank.

Suddenly, SHERIFF THOMPSON steps out of the shadows, his gun
 aimed at Will.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
 But I am.

Nice. You want this to keep stacking – each reveal heavier
 than the last, forcing Will deeper into conflict until the
 resolution lands like a gut punch. Noir thrives on betrayal,
 shifting allegiances, and personal stakes colliding with the
 larger crime machinery. Here's a reworked draft of your
 sequence with escalating twists, a brutal climax, and a
 resolution that shows how the journey has changed Will:

EXT. SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Rain lashes down. Will walks, jaw tight, eyes hollow.

The city's neon buzz cuts through the storm.

He stops beneath a flickering sign that sputters *OPEN*. The
 glow paints his face blood-red.

His hand brushes the gun under his jacket.

****WILL (V.O.)****

It ends tonight.

A shadow detaches from the darkness. Someone's following.

****EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT****

The place looms like a coffin. Inside, a single hanging bulb sways.

Will faces ****FRANK****.

Behind him: a crate, a briefcase of cash, menacing silence.

****FRANK****

Didn't think you'd walk in alone.

(beat, smirks)

Maybe you've got more guts than I gave you credit for.

****WILL****

(voice shaking)

You killed her. Amy. And for what?

A pile of money?

****FRANK****

Amy knew the rules. She gambled.

She lost.

(leans in, cold)

But you—

(beat)

You can still walk. Forget her.

Forget all of this.

Will's hand trembles on the gun. His face is torn.

AMY'S VOICE (V.O.)

Please... don't.

Will's grip steadies. His finger hovers—then lowers.

WILL

I'm not like you.

A CLICK.

Sheriff Thompson steps from the shadows, gun drawn on Will.

SHERIFF THOMPSON

But I am.

The door creaks. Sam enters, gun raised.

SAM

Drop it, Frank.

Will spins. Betrayal flashing across his face.

WILL

Sam?

FRANK

(laughing)

Of course. My clean-up man finally shows his hand.

Will levels a glare at Sam, a mix of confusion, anger, and betrayal.

SAM

(to Will)

You think I sold you out? I was in it to bury Frank. But Thompson—

(beat)

He's the one who pulled the trigger on Amy.

Will's world tilts. His rage pins Thompson.

WILL

And you?

SHERIFF THOMPSON

(flat)

Amy got too close. She would've sunk us all.

Frank smirks, feeding the chaos.

FRANK

See, Will? Everyone's got blood on their hands. Except you.

(beat, taunting)

But not for long.

Three guns. Three men. Silence except the rain hammering the roof.

Will looks at Sam, then Thompson, then Frank. The weight of Amy's voice echoes in his head. He raises his gun, points it at Frank.

Thompson shifts, ready to fire. Sam's finger tightens. BANG. BANG. BANG.

Clenching his jaw, Will hastily fires. Frank slumps, dead.

Thompson lies bleeding.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
ARRGGGGGH!

Sam's on the floor too, gasping, mortally hit. Will stands frozen, gun smoking in his hand.

Sam coughs blood, stares at Will.

SAM
(weak)
I... tried, Will. For Amy.

WILL
You're going to have to explain
this to her.

SAM
You're gonna have to do that for
me.

WILL
Uh-uh.

Will drops the gun and gets on his phone. The gun clatters, echoing in the empty warehouse. Sam's eyes close.

WILL (CONT'D)
Sam, stay with me.
(On the phone)

FLASH - AMY'S LAUGH. Alive. Whole.

Will walks out into the rain. Alone. Changed.

WILL (V.O.)
I thought ending it would bring me
peace.
(beat)
But peace is for the dead.

He disappears into the night, swallowed by the city.

E

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

A BUZZING fluorescent light.

WILL sits slumped in a chair, shirt bloodied, hair matted with sweat.

REPORTERS (V.O.)
(overlapping, echoing)
Did you kill her? / Did you snap? /
Tell us the truth, Will!

Sheriff THOMPSON enters, slams a file down.

FLASH CUT -

A MUZZLE FLASH.

A BODY jerks backward.

BACK TO:

INT. SHERIFF'S STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Will staring at Sheriff Thompson.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
You thought you knew her.

OVER BLACK

THE SOUND OF A GUNSHOT ECHOES INTO SILENCE.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. CABIN - DAY

Amy's hand, trembling, brushes Will's cheek. Shadows cast over her face as if condemning her.

AMY
(Softly)
The semen was planted.

SHERIFF THOMPSON (V.O.)
She fooled you, didn't she?

Will blinks. For a moment, Amy is SMILING. For another, her eyes are cold, calculating.

WILL
Amy...?

FLASH CUT:

Will digging in dirt. Nails bloody.
inner voice whispering: *"Don't trust..."*

BACK TO:

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

FBI AGENT GREY slides a GUN across the table. The metallic scrape feels louder than thunder.

FLASH FORWARD -

Will's hand grips the same gun. SMOKE curling off the barrel.

Frank approaches the FRONT DOOR. He tries the DOOR KNOB. Locked. Frank SHOOTS the lock, enters and trips over the FISHING LINE. PAINT CANS hit him in the head.

After climbing out of the hole, Thompson enters the house.

Will's SHADOW flashes down the hall. Thompson follows.

INT. CABIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Thompson quickly enters the bedroom. He SCREAMS in pain, floorboard NAILS PROTRUDE through his SHOE, BLOOD GUSHES.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank hears a SHOWER CURTAIN RUFFLE. He turns towards the BATHROOM DOOR, firing TWO SHOTS. He OPENS the door. Nothing.

FRANK
Where are you Henan?

INT. CABIN KITCHEN - NIGHT

Will OPENS the BACK DOOR and exits. Frank follows.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Why must you make this difficult,
Will? There's no way out this time!

Thompson hobbles in leaving a TRAIL OF BLOOD.

E

Great – here's a ****linear but sharpened rewrite**** of the section you pasted. It keeps the same overall beats (Cabin → Grey's plan → Amy's brother reveal → Frank & Thompson → prep montage), but trims exposition, strengthens Amy, and makes the antagonists colder and scarier.

****REWRITE (Pages ~83-86)****

****INT. CABIN - NIGHT****

Will stares at the gun on the table. Doesn't touch it.

AGENT GREY
(low, steady)
Just follow her lead.

Will's jaw tightens. Amy steps in closer.

AMY
I'm sorry, Will. But Frank has to go down.

AGENT GREY
Kingpins like him don't just poison streets. They feed on families.

Amy flinches. Will notices.

WILL
Families like yours.

AMY
Like my brother.

Will freezes.

WILL
You never told me how he died.

Amy looks away. Grey cuts in, voice flat.

AGENT GREY
Frank snuffed him out. Thought he was smarter. Tried to skim. He wasn't.

Grey snaps his fingers. The sound is final.

Will studies Amy. She won't meet his eyes.

WILL

What now?

AGENT GREY

We set the trap. You call Frank, make him come here. He'll bring Thompson. They confess, we lock them down.

Grey pushes an earpiece toward Will.

AGENT GREY (CONT'D)

I'll be watching. As soon as they slip, I'm in.

Amy steps forward.

AMY

No. I'll call. He trusts me.

Grey shakes his head.

AGENT GREY

You're supposed to be dead. Stay that way.

WILL

Amy, he's right. If this works, you stay out of it.

Amy's jaw trembles, but she says nothing.

Grey slides the gun across.

AGENT GREY

Twelve rounds. You know how to use it?

Will stares at the weapon. Finally, he nods.

Grey leans closer.

AGENT GREY (CONT'D)

If it goes south—don't hesitate.

Amy whispers, almost to herself.

AMY

What if it already has?

****EXT. SHERIFF'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT****

FRANK leans against his sedan, cell to his ear.

FRANK
He wants to meet. His cabin.

Sheriff Thompson smirks, lighting a cigarette.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Perfect. Quiet. Nobody to hear him beg.

FRANK
(strangely uneasy)
But his voice... he wasn't scared.

Thompson exhales smoke.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Then we'll give him a reason.

Frank pockets his phone, face unreadable.

****INT. SHED - AFTERNOON****

Will stuffs tools into a box. Amy slips inside.

WILL
Jesus!

AMY
Sorry.

Will whirls on her, eyes burning.

WILL
You didn't just fake your death,
Amy. You killed us.

Amy stiffens, then leans closer.

AMY
And you believed it. That's why it worked.

Will blinks, shaken.

Amy's expression softens—for a moment.

AMY (CONT'D)
Frank knew about you. Faking it was
the only way to keep you alive.

WILL
Alive for what? To be bait?

She swallows hard. No answer.

EXT. CABIN - MONTAGE (INTERCUT WITH FRANK & THOMPSON DRIVING)

Will digs a shallow pit, tarp stretched over it.

Frank's car headlights cut through woods.

Amy angles motion lights toward the road, camera clicking on.

Thompson checks his gun in the passenger seat.

Grey knots rope to paint cans, filled with rocks.

Will hammers nails into floorboards.

Frank adjusts his cufflinks, face calm.

Grey strings a tripwire across the entrance.

Logs creak as they're tied to branches.

END MONTAGE

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

A black sedan rolls to a stop. FRANK steps out, immaculate in his dark suit. Sheriff THOMPSON follows, gun holstered.

Frank checks his watch.

FRANK
Where the hell is the crew?

Thompson cocks his head, scanning the shadows.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Doesn't matter. We'll handle him
ourselves.

They approach the cabin. Dark. Silent.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Will kneels at the window. Grey crouches in shadow nearby. Amy watches from the back room, fists clenched.

Grey's whisper crackles in Will's ear.

AGENT GREY (V.O.)
Remember. Let him talk.

Will's hand trembles near the gun.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Thompson steps onto the porch. The wooden planks CREAK. The porch lights blaze on, blinding. He stumbles forward straight onto the tarp. The ground gives way. Thompson CRASHES into the pit, howling.

Frank jerks his gun out of the holster and creeps inside, alert.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

It is pitch black. Frank feels for a switch and the room lights up. Will and Amy fire their guns. Frank ducks, rolls, fires into the cabin. SPLINTERS explode off the walls. WINDOWS shatter. Frank ducks behind the COUCH, returning fire.

Will can feel the bullets graze his ear as he ducks. A ringing in his ears begins. Grey shoves him aside, returning fire.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Amy crouches by the window, covering her head. Through a fractured mirror, she sees Frank rise, calm, deliberate. His suit jacket hardly rustles.

Their eyes lock.

INT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Will peers through the smoke, gun in his grip.

WILL
(shouting)
Frank! It ends tonight!

FRANK (O.S.)
Amusing, coming from a writer who
doesn't remember anything.

Another round blasts through the wall, narrowly missing
Will's head.

Another round blasts through the wall, splintering wood
inches from Will's head.

The sound cracks something open in his mind.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE LOADING DOCK - NIGHT (AN UNKNOWN TIME AGO)

Rain pelts down. A pickup idles under a flickering light.

Amy's brother, JASON, barely twenty, paces nervously. Frank
and two heavies unload duffel bags stuffed with bricks of
cocaine.

FRANK
(To Jason)
Payment first. That was the deal.

Jason swallows hard, dropping an envelope of cash on the
table. Too light. Frank knows it.

WILL (V.O.)
It was supposed to be a handoff. A
quick in and out. I should have
known better when it came to
dealing with the devil.

Frank rifles through the cash.

FRANK
I'm insulted.

WILL
You ordered us to rob a nobody.
That's what was in the safe.

JASON
You promised this would be the last
shakedown. You're supposed to be a
man of your word.

FRANK
You promised me a hundred thousand
in cash.

Frank lays a gun on the table. His hand rests on it.

JASON
You're right. Okay? Just tell me
how to fix this.

FRANK
As I said before, this was your
last chance.

Will grabs Jason's arm. Gunfire erupts. Jason bolts toward the riverbank. Will tears out from hiding, sprinting after him.

EXT. RIVERBANK - CONTINUOUS

Mud, reeds, chaos. Will grabs Jason's arm, trying to pull him along. Bullets whistle past.

WILL
Move! Don't stop!

Will sees Amy and Agent Grey across the river. Jason stumbles, slips free, and plunges into the black water. Will reaches out—too late. Jason vanishes under the current.

Amy's scream carries over the gunfire.

CUT TO:

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

Amy, pale and hollow-eyed, sits across from Agent Grey. Will is beside her, shaken.

AGENT GREY
You want to make this right? Then
you work for me. Both of you.

Will nods, unable to meet Amy's gaze.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

A dingy room. Blinds half-shut. The rain from the warehouse night still feels heavy in the air.

Amy sits stiff in a chair across from Agent Grey. She hasn't cried. She's burning.

Will sits beside her, eyes on the floor, soaked in guilt.

WILL
 Amy, I'm so sorry.
 (beat)
 Amy, please talk to me. How do I
 make this right?

AGENT GREY
 You want to make this right? Then
 you work for me. Both of you.

Amy's head jerks toward Will. Her voice is sharp, cutting.

AMY
 You had him! You had Jason's hand
 and you let go!

Will finally looks up, his voice breaking.

WILL
 He slipped. Amy, I tried -

AMY
 (through gritted teeth)
 Don't you dare. You let him drown.

Grey clears his throat, impatient.

AGENT GREY
 Amy, Jason got caught up with
 Frank. That's on Frank. But if you
 want a chance to bury him, this is
 it.

Amy doesn't look at Grey. She stares through Will like she
 doesn't recognize him. After a long beat...

AMY
 (quiet, cold)
 Fine. I'll do it.

Grey nods, satisfied.

Will tries to speak, but Amy steps away from him. A
 deliberate cut.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO:

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Frank circles, cold and precise. He steps past Thompson's pit
 without looking down.

Thompson groans, clawing at the dirt.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
Frank! Goddamn it, Frank!

Frank doesn't answer.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Grey motions to Will.

AGENT GREY
Now. Get him talking.

Will's jaw clenches. He pushes to his feet, shouting through the doorway.

WILL
Amy's brother. You killed him.

Silence. Then, Frank's voice, even.

FRANK (O.S.)
That two-faced rat bastard stole
from me. He thought he was clever.
I had to make an example out of
him. And your wife... she was clever
too.

Will looks toward Amy. She won't meet his eyes.

Amy backs into the shadows. Frank's words ripple through her.

AMY
Don't trust him.

INT. CABIN - MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grey signals, about to move. Will stops him.

WILL
(quiet, to Grey)
Not yet.

Grey hesitates.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Frank steps onto the porch. His shoe nudges the fishing line.

SNAP — logs swing down, CRASHING into the siding. Frank ducks again, fluid, calm.

He raises his gun, FIRES into the cabin.

INT. CABIN — MAIN ROOM — CONTINUOUS

A round tears through Grey's shoulder. He slams against the wall, groaning. Will rushes to him.

GREY
(gritted)
Take him. Take him now!

Will looks toward Amy. She steps into the doorway, silhouetted by the chaos.

AMY
No!

Will raises his gun. Frank is just out of reach.

EXT. CABIN — CONTINUOUS

Frank lowers his weapon, amused.

FRANK
See? Even she doesn't trust you.

INT. CABIN — NIGHT

Will's breathing ragged. His grip shakes.

Amy steps closer, whispering:

AMY
If you pull that trigger, you'll
never know the truth.

Will's eyes dart between her and the dark outside.

FLASH CUT

INT. MORGUE — NIGHT

Amy's "corpse" in bed. Blood on Will's hands.

SHERIFF THOMPSON
She fooled you, didn't she?

BACK TO:

EXT. CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Frank edges closer, voice low, coaxing.

FRANK
Give me the gun, Will. This isn't
some story you're writing. You
don't give up, this won't end
happily for you.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

Grey winces on the floor, blood spreading.

GREY
Will, don't listen. End it.

Will's finger tightens on the trigger.

Amy's whisper cuts through:

AMY
Choose. But choose what's real. Not
the lie he feeds you.

Will steadies his breath. BANG.

Will's shot lands. Frank staggers out of the smoke and
collapses. Dead.

But almost at the same instant—another BANG. Frank's gun goes
off as he falls.

Will freezes, eyes wide. Blood blooms across his shirt. His
gun slips from his grip, clattering to the floor.

Amy rushes to him, dropping to her knees.

AMY (CONT'D)
Will! Stay with me. Look at me!

Will blinks, fighting to focus, the smoke thinning around
them. He looks at her without shadows in his eyes.

WILL
(weak, but clear)
Actions speak louder than words.

FADE TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Amy and Grey sit silently. Amy watches Will walking the parameter, tired but on guard. Amy puts her head in her hands. Grey stares off.

AMY
It's all my fault.

AGENT GREY
You did your job.

AMY
Fuck my job.

Amy stands.

AGENT GREY
Amy -

AMY
My job was to protect my husband!

A doctor appears. Amy looks at the man in scrubs.

DOCTOR
He made it through the surgery.
He's talking. He wanted to talk to
you. I'd make it quick. He's on
some pretty heavy meds.

The doctor walks out of the waiting room. Amy spins back to Grey.

AMY
Let me be clear. I want my life
back. I'm done being your mole. The
only time that our paths should
ever cross is if you're seeking
medical treatment.

Saying nothing, Grey studies Amy. Amy turns and quickly walks away. Grey exits the hospital.

EXT. BOSTON NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

A quiet side street. Brownstones with stoops. Kids on bikes wheel past, their laughter echoing. A corner store hums with life.

Will and Amy step out of their new apartment - modest but warm, a second-floor walk-up. Will, still healing, carries a bag of groceries in one arm. Amy locks the door behind them.

They walk down the stoop together. For the first time in a long time, there's no rush, no fear. Just the city breathing around them.

AMY
(looking around, half-smile)
Think we'll fit in here?

WILL
Only one way to find out.

They walk side by side down the street. A neighbor waves from a stoop; Amy waves back.

Will shifts the bag to his good arm and takes her hand.

WILL
This is it, Amy. No more ghosts.

She squeezes his hand. They keep walking, disappearing into the hum of the neighborhood.

FADE OUT.