

BONE APPETIT 3RD DRAFT

Written by

Darnay Cockrell

1 EXT. STOREFRONT CLINIC-DAY

HARPER (10), Harper boasts a crown of fiery red, curly locks framing a handsome face. His small, beady brown eyes gleam with curiosity and mischief, perched atop broad shoulders.

The three bullies slightly bigger and Harper(10) with white-collar shirts and blue pants, are seen rushing through the short hall of the clinic.

Harper struggles against the much bigger preteens/teenagers kicking and swinging his legs for dear life.

Suddenly they stop in front of a dimly lit room.

The door slams shut with a resounding thud, echoing off the sterile walls, at the same time he splashes face-first onto the white marble floor.

HARPER:

(Nervous, voice echoing slightly)
Ayo, this isn't funny. Open the
freaking door, (boom boom boom)you
guys!

The silence that follows Harper's plea is deafening.

Harper's eyes quickly dart around, taking in his surroundings.

The room is stark, illuminated by the harsh, flickering fluorescent light overhead, casting long, eerie shadows that seem to dance on the faded, peeling walls.

As he continues to peer to the left, An old, metallic examination table stands ominously in the center,

A short brown table with its surface partially covered by a thin, crinkled piece of paper, reminiscent of countless forgotten visits.

Alongside it, a small, silver tray holds various medical instruments.

Harper's shock is palpable as his beady eyes lock onto the skeleton.

HARPER: (CONT'D)

Ahhh!

Behind the door muffled sounds of his tormentors' laughter.

Harper is seen standing there face-to-face with the skeleton/Cadaver.

Harper's navy blue school pants have become darkened due to him wetting himself out of fear.

FADE OUT:

As we slowly zoom into the skeleton's mouth the title card pops up: "**Bone Appetit**" as the credits roll.

2 EXT. AVONDALE CENTRAL SQUARE-DAY

2

Superimpose: GILMANTON, NH - 1990

The scene unfolds in the warm glow of a sunlit afternoon.

Gilmanton appears charming, with cobblestone streets, vintage lampposts, and colorful storefronts.

Children's laughter and the hum of lawnmowers fill the air.

Zooming in, we see a park bench in Avondale's central square.

A young Harper, with tousled brown-redish hair and bright eyes, sits engrossed in a book.

Innocence permeates the surroundings, with children playing and families picnicking.

Harper's youthful features exude a quiet charm, hinting at the promise of adolescence.

His ever-curious gaze reflects an eagerness to explore the world around him.

HARPER (V.O.):

When I was forced to face that skeleton... I suddenly became fascinated by the methods of H.H. Holmes.

Before the scene climaxes, it zooms in on Harper's(12) right when he raises his head from the book, *The Art of War* by Sun Tzu.

DISSOLVE TO:

3 INT. HARPERS BEDROOM-NIGHT

3

The scene opens in Harper's bedroom.

Harper sits at his desk, the glow from a small lamp casting an intense light on his focused face.

His eyes, sharp and penetrating, move rapidly as he reads, whispering words that echo.

Harper, lifting his head from the book, now slightly taking half spins inside his office chair.

HARPER:

(Whispering to himself) The psychology of this guy, Holmes was amazing.

The camera subtly zooms in on a stack of books in Harper's partially open backpack. The titles, "Criminal Minds: Unraveling the Twisted," "The Anatomy of Evil," and "Profiles of Darkness," are just visible in the dim light, hinting at the complexity of Harper's interests.

HARPER: (CONT'D)

(To himself) We even have the same name initials., H.W.M. And he too was bullied.

We pan over to see the small digital clock read 9:46 PM.

4 **INT. HARPER'S BEDROOM-CONTINUOUS**

4

The trash of snacks signifies the time that has passed as we see the clock reads 12:34

As Harper muses after completing his book by slamming it shut with a smile of accomplishment.

Suddenly his attention snaps to the neighbor's cat prowling their backyard outside his window.

It strikes him that the cat embodies the perfect metaphor for his curiosity.

Grabbing his notebook, he begins to sketch the cat.

HARPER:

(Pondering) Could I really kill someone?

His sketches become more detailed and notes that dissect the physical form and the psychological underpinnings of predatory behavior in the animal kingdom.

Harper grabs his ink pin and walks out of his room quietly heading downstairs

Then out of the sliding door from the kitchen to get to the back yard heading toward the neighbor's cat Snuggles.

Harper peers at his pen for a short while as he slobbs a bit.
He's not as wrapped as we thought.

HARPER'S MOM: (V/O)
Harper, don't forget to take your
meds hunny!

He snaps out of it and glances at the medicine bottle before he opens it pours them all into the trash and takes the bag and pen with him out the door.

5 EXT. WOOD-FENCED BACKYARD-NIGHT

5

Harper closes the trash can and slowly strides toward the cat in their yard as he fumbles with a steel pen.

HARPER:
(Smooching his lips) Here, Snuggles.
Come here, boy.

Harper strokes Snuggles.

6 INT. DAYS LATER. HARPER'S HOME- DAY

6

The urgent rapping at the front door shatters the tranquility of the evening.

The neighbor, a silhouette framed by the porch light, stands impatient and concerned, her face etched with worry as always.

Harper, silently observant, sneaky peers through the balusters at the door downstairs.

His eyes, gleaming with an unreadable expression, fixate on the neighbor's anxious figure and his face baring a knowing smile.

Mrs. Mathis(41) a thick, quiet, and beautiful woman trots to the door and opens it.

The neighbor's voice breaks the stillness as soon as the door is opened.

THE NEIGHBOR:
I just can't find him anywhere...
he's never stayed away from me this
long before!

Upstairs we see Harper's expression remains blank.

Silently listening to everything without being seen.

Back Downstairs

MRS. MATHIS:
 (CONCERNED)Kev, have you seen
 Snuggles lately?

Mr. Mathis(43) is a vigilant and stern man sitting on the couch his eyes never leaving his newspaper.

MR. MATHIS:
 Yeah, the other day, when I was taking out the trash.

She looks behind her and yells.

MRS. MATHIS:
 Harper, have you seen Wanda's cat, Snuggles? It seems to fancy our backyard when you're around!

HARPER:
 (Calling down, voice tinged with feigned innocence) No, Ma'am, maybe Snuggles took a stab at another family's garden this time!

Close up on Harper's face, His expression, unseen by his mother, carries a mischievous gleam.

7 EXT. HARPERS BACKYARD - NIGHT

7

Harper is digging a pit alone in his backyard at night.

The moonlight illuminates Harper's laser-focused expression. An army of Sweat beads on his face.

The Camera shows Harper's white tank top and joggers slightly dirty.

The camera captures the young boy pausing, his silhouette framed against the dim light, suggesting a moment of reflection.

HARPER:
 (Whispering)I guess I will count this as my first kill... now you can spend your life in our yard, Snuggles!

Harper chuckles at his dark jest.

Harper brushed away the beads of sweat glistening on his forehead with the end of his tank top.

IRIS:

8 INT. THE GOODMAN'S HOUSE-NIGHT

8

Superimpose: Chicago, Illinois

Chicago appears beautiful but repulsive, with crowded streets, churches, gangbangers on the same block.

Next, the scene shifts inside a small, raggedy house in Chicago.

The carpet is a dingy red from dirt, and the cream walls show signs of wear.

Despite its cramped layout, with the kitchen and dining room combined, the house is clean.

Leila, (10) a little black girl, who possesses rich brown skin, full lips, and determined brown eyes that reflect her inner strength, sits on the couch in deep thought.

Her hair is styled in pigtails adorned with red ribbons at the tips, and her fingernails are painted red, with a red jacket.

Leila, with a keen eye for detail, contrasts sharply with her siblings, **Lil Eric**(8) and **Lola**(13).

LEILA:

(Determined) It has to be somebody we know! Papa said they got in through the backdoor and the neighbors didn't hear Day-Day's crazy pitbull barking that day!

LOLA:

(Teasing) Girl, let Papa handle it, you can barely read and now you're Sherlock Holmes.

LIL ERIC:

Papa always says to trust your gut and Le-Le my gut tells me that... you are Inspector Gagdet!

LIL ERIC & LOLA:

(In unison) Inspector Gadget! Inspector Gadget! Inspector Gadget!

As the morning sun filters through the curtains, casting long shadows across the room, Leila remains determined.

Leila ignores her teasing brother and sister, who are seen playfully spinning with each other hands locked.

The camera pans to Leila, who is looking out of the window at the nearby houses and daily commuters.

9 INT. GOODMAN'S HOUSE-DAY

9

Mrs. Goodman(38) A soft-spoken black woman dressed in her restaurant uniform.

Mrs. Goodman hands Leila her meds while she brushes Lil Eric's hair and simultaneously lends a hand brushing Lola's sweater.

MRS. GOODMAN:

Leila, if you start feeling better,
the grocery list for tonight's
dinner is on the fridge. Can you
swing by Jay's and pick everything
up before my shift ends?

LEILA:

Yes ma'am!

MRS. GOODMAN:

Thank you, baby you're a lifesaver.
I'll leave the money on the kitchen
counter... Now the rest of the crew
get your shit and let's bounce, I
don't wanna be late again!

Next, we see **Mr. Goodman**(41) come down the stairs, he's strong, handsome, and, confident.

We focus on his casual attire: a black shirt, blue jeans, and a black leather jacket.

Then we see he wears a Chicago White Sox hat turned backward.

Then the camera lands on His Glock is holstered at his belt, and his Detective Shield hangs from a gold chain- he's a detective.

MR. GOODMAN:

Roger that Captain Cutie-Wife! Le-
Le, get better, baby! I should be
back before Shaft comes on TNT
tonight!

He winks at Leila, kisses Lola on the forehead, gives Lil Eric a fist bump, and kisses Mrs. Goodman on the lips.

Before she can say a word, he abruptly leaves the house.

JUMPCUT

Leila rambles along to the corner store, her red nose and layered clothing hint at a cold, with a shine on her upper lip from smeared Vicks, revealing her illness.

Leila notices a woman walking away with a familiar collared fur coat wrapped in plastic.

Leila's eyes are still locked onto the woman as she opens the store door.

10 **INT. CORNER STORE-CONTINUOUS**

10

The fluorescent lights hum. A radio mumbles an old-school R&B track.

LEILA browses the snack aisle, fingers grazing a bag of chips, eyes locked on the **STORE CLERK** behind the counter.

The clerk, mid-40s, **chews gum fast**, his jaw working overtime. His fingers drum against the register-tap, tap, tap. Beads of **sweat** glisten under the overhead light.

STORE CLERK:

(too casual) Heard about that break-in at your crib. Any leads?

Leila doesn't answer right away. She grabs an item. Her eyes flick to the **clerk's jittery hands**, then to the security camera in the corner—conveniently unplugged.

She swallows. Smirks.

The clerk's chewing **stalls for a beat**, then resumes, faster than before.

Leila responds with a subtle shake of her head, her gaze fixed on the clerk's wrist.

There, glinting in the dim light is her father's stolen bracelet that she and her siblings got for him last Christmas, Leila is seen trying not to look suspect.

Leila manipulates the groceries on the counter with precision, creating a strategic opening for the clerk to reach. She needs to get a better look at the bracelet.

Her face does not show inner turmoil but races with anticipation as he extends his arm for her clarification.

When she sees the distinctive bracelets up close, her young mind spirals out of control. Her eyes widen.

LEILA:
That bracelet fire, yo!

Leila quickly bags the items and heads for the door.

11 EXT. CITY STREETS-CONTINUOUS

11

When she steps outside, she dashes out of the store with the bags giggling uncontrollably.

Leila zero's in on a nearby phone booth.

She races to the nearby phone booth, her fingers trembling to put the quarters in before she can dial 911.

Her voice is steady as she recounts the evidence she's uncovered soon she hears dispatch.

LEILA:
Hey, my dad's Detective Goodman,
badge number 1121. I found the guys
who've been breaking into the
projects!

JUMPCUT

As Leila's father, Detective Eric Goodman, and a team of officers arrived, the store's innocence seemed normal.

The officers come in with their guns drawn.

The same two store clerks are inside from when Leila was there a half hour ago, the one behind the counter tries to hop over the counter and make a run for it.

Detective Goodman, a strong and determined man chases and quickly tackles down the perpetrator.

DETECTIVE GOODMAN:
Antonio, I cut your grandma's grass
every week and this is how you
repay a friend?

ANTONIO:
Cut it out, Antonio! You're just
doing that 'cause you locked up my
baby brother. He's the one who used
to mow my Nana's lawn!

When Goodman snatches Antonio up from the ground to put the handcuffs on, he notices the missing bracelet that his kids bought him.

He takes a long gaze at the bracelet he considers priceless as he unsnaps sit from the mans wrist and then looks over to Leila and rushes to her to praise her.

After her father lifts her up in celebration, he tells her he'll bring home ice cream later and let her ride with him in the police cruiser to school tomorrow morning.

Detective Rizzoli(51) old Itailian man kneels down to Leila and unpins one of his service pins for bravery and pins it on her shirt.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI:
Attention!

Leila quickly stands to her feet at attention.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI:
Young Detective Goodman! You will
own your division one day.

The old man rose and saluted Leila and walked away.

Detective Goodman seeing one of his closest peers exchange with his daughter shoots Leila a wink and thumbs up.

Detective Goodman goes into the back of the store and later comes out with some of the neighborhood's stolen goods.

Leila's success in catching a criminal earns her praise from her parents and neighbors when she comes out of the store.

The neighbors clap and give her gifts and presents.

Her siblings, Lola and Lil Eric are seen with ugly & envious looks on their face.

They look at each other with envy in their heart as they are seen getting off the school bus.

Leila is content with the looks on both of their faces before she points at the pin she received from Detective Rizzoli as she takes a bite of candy.

DISSOLVE TO:

12 EXT. SOUTHSIDE STREET - NIGHT

12

Streetlamps buzz. A light drizzle mists the air.

DETECTIVE ERIC GOODMAN exits his unmarked car, coat collar turned up against the chill, badge catching the lamplight like a whisper of who he is.

He checks his watch. Long day.

Down the block — **THREE BOYS**, faces buried under dark hoodies, linger near a corner store. Shadows within shadows. One keeps glancing over his shoulder.

Eric's eyes narrow. Instinct kicks in.

He gets in the car and pulls his car to the curb beside them, window down just enough.

ERIC:

Hey—what y'all doin' out this late?

They freeze. One of the boys trembles. Another takes a step back.

BOY #1:

Nothin', sir. Just chillin'.

Eric sighs, tired but alert.

ERIC:

Chillin'? In all black, on a school night?

BOY #3 bolts. The others follow.

Eric opens the door, starts after them—

GUNSHOT.

It echoes like thunder through the rain.

Eric stumbles, eyes wide, gripping his cheek bone area. Blood blooms under his coat.

He falls to his knees.

Then—face down.

The boys vanish into the night.

13 INT. GOODMAN HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

13

A KNOCK. The door creaks open.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI steps in, with Eric's White Sox hat in his hand.

Silence chokes the air.

LEILA sits on the couch, legs pulled to her chest. Her **mother** clutches a tissue, eyes red, staring blankly.

The moment says it all.

Mrs. Goodman suddenly wails loudly and faints right after, while Rizzoli, Lil Eric, and Lola rushes to her aid.

Leila stands.

She walks past her mother, past Rizzoli, into the hallway where Eric's coat still hangs. She presses her face to it.

LEILA:
(quietly, but burning) I'll find
who did this, Dad. I swear it. I'll
be the best officer in town, Papa.

She stares at his badge on the table in Rizzoli's hands.

FADE TO BLACK.

14 INT. HARPER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

14

The scene fades in: We follow the downstairs doors up the stairs and down the hallway, entering Harper's dimly lit bedroom where soft music plays in the background.

Posters of iconic crime movies decorate the walls; *Silence of the Lambs*, *It*, *Pet Sematary*, *Friday the 13th*, and *Halloween*.

While Harper sits surrounded by books at his little desk. He has his hands locked behind his head while daydreaming in deep thought.

HARPER: (V/O)
Ending Snuggles' life ignited my curiosity, so I delved deeply into the psyche of killers portrayed in movies... in books... but I... I meticulously studied the mistakes that led to their downfalls.

Harper's fingers delicately trace over crime scene photographs pinned to a small corkboard, his touch reverent yet purposeful.

His gaze intensifies as he fixates on a newspaper headline about H.H. Holmes.

Showing the small dark figure picture in the newspaper.

HARPER:

(To himself, voice barely above a whisper) I'm going to be better.

Harper stares at the photo before he flicks it with his finger.

INTERCUT

A flash of lightning illuminates the room, casting fleeting shadows that dance across the walls like specters.

15 INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM- DAY

15

Superimpose: 4 years later

The scene transitions to a high school classroom, where students are seated in neatly arranged desks. The overhead lights were dim as the teacher cues a documentary on the projector screen.

The class is watching a documentary on serial killers for Halloween.

Harper sits in the middle row, his gaze fixed on the screen with an intense fascination.

His classmates are visibly disturbed, but Harper seems enthralled.

HARPER (V/O)

I needed to know more... Being different didn't bother me.

The documentary narrates chilling details about infamous serial killers, their crimes, and their twisted minds.

Intercut

Images of crime scenes flash across the screen but Harper's eyes remain unwavering.

L-cut

CLASSMATE 1:
 (Whispering) Is he... enjoying
 this?

Harper takes out a notebook and starts jotting down notes, his pen scratching against the paper.

Harper looks up and everyone is staring at him.

16 EXT. PARK BENCH - DAY

16

The scene shifts to a serene park on a sunny day from the beginning.

Children play on the swings, and couples stroll hand in hand. Harper sits alone on a park bench, appearing inconspicuous.

Harper watches the people around him with intense curiosity, his eyes darting from person to person.

In his lap, a notebook rests, and he scribbles notes discreetly.

HARPER (V/O):
 Suddenly, I determined I needed to master the art of persuading people to do what I pleased, all while concealing my true intentions.

A mother passes by with her child, and Harper observes their interaction closely.

HARPER:
 (Whispering to himself) Empathy, trust... it's all about understanding all human emotions.

As a young couple walks by, holding hands and laughing, Harper focuses on their body language.

HARPER:
 (Whispering to himself) Attraction, connections...

His pen moves quickly, capturing his observations as he delves deeper into his study of human behavior.

DISSOLVE TO:

17 INT. HIGH SCHOOL DANCE - NIGHT

17

The scene shifts to a high school dance in full swing.

Dimmed lights cast a romantic ambiance over the gymnasium. Couples twirl on the dance floor.

Harper dressed in his best, with a black suit, shoes, and shirt, stands near the back of the gym, watching the proceedings and the students' and teachers' every movement.

*Harper's attention is drawn to a girl, **EMMA**(17), a fellow student.*

She stands alone, looking a bit shy and out of place, as she dryly talks to her friend.

HARPER (V/O):
I later learned to wield my
charisma like a weapon...

Harper confidently approaches Emma, flashing his charming smile.

HARPER:
(Charming) Hey there, uh, Emma
right. Care to dance?

Emma blushes, surprised by the attention. She smiles and nods, taking his hand as they strut their way to the dancing floor.

They begin to dance, and Harper effortlessly leads, his charisma shining through.

HARPER:
(Charming) You look lovely tonight,
Emma.

EMMA:
(Blushing) Thank you, Harper You're
a great dancer.

A few of the girls who are more popular than Emma gaze at the two while they enjoy their dance.

After the dance.

HARPER:
You want some punch and then head
out of here? I literally live down
the block.

The scene transitions to Harper's bedroom, but he's not alone this time.

EMMA, sits nervously on the edge of Harper's bed.

HARPER (V/O):
my first test ... Emma Fields

Harper enter the room, shuts the door and crashes beside Emma causing her to bounce toward him.

Harper's charming smile never leaves his face. He leans in slightly, creating an aura of intimacy.

HARPER:
(Softly) Emma, you know you can
trust me, right?

Emma looks into his eyes, captivated by his charm.

EMMA:
(Hesitant) I-I guess so... Why do
you ask though?

Harper reached into his small refrigerator and grabbed snacks he knew she couldn't resist.

HARPER:
(Gentle) I've noticed you've been
feeling down lately in 3rd period,
Emma. Is there something on your
mind?

She looks surprised. She takes a swig of soda and munches on a few hot chips.

EMMA:
(Confiding) Well, it's just... my
parents are having a tough time,
and I don't know who to talk to
about it.

Harper nods sympathetically, feigning concern.

HARPER:
(Supportive) I'm here for you,
Emma. You can always talk to me.
We're friends now, right?

Harper takes advantage of Emma's openness without her realizing it, leaning in for a kiss while she's mid-sentence.

He scans her face for a reaction, gauging her thoughts.

Emma, surprised by her own feelings, finds herself drawn to the kiss and leans in for another, this time more passionate, embracing the moment with Harper.

The scene concludes with Harper and Emma sharing an intense kiss as the camera gradually zooms out.

19 EXT. GILMANTON CARNIVAL-NIGHT

19

Harper and Emma are seen strolling through the bustling Carnival with casual clothes on. The vibrant lights of the Gilmanton Carnival illuminate the night sky.

Casting a kaleidoscope of colors over the bustling crowds.

Harper and Emma meander through the throngs of people, the air alive with the sound of laughter and the aroma of fried foods.

As they navigate through the festivities, Harper's urgent need to relieve himself becomes apparent. When he grabs himself and says.

HARPER:
I gotta drain the monster!

He and Emma share a laugh, indicating her agreement with his joke about having a "monster" in his pants.

He scans the area, but the long lines at the portable toilets deter him.

Determined to relieve himself, he leads Emma behind the carnival seeking a moment of privacy.

JUMP CUT

Behind the shadows of the fieldhouse, Harper finally finds a spot to relieve himself.

Harper slightly prances as he reaches for his zipper.

Harper's privacy is abruptly disrupted when he spots a shadowy figure, armed with tools, aggressively trying to break into the fieldhouse's back entrance.

In an instant, the situation spirals out of control. The criminal notices Harper and swiftly hurls his hammer and then charges at Harper, tackling him to the ground.

The chaos of the carnival drowns out Harper's cries for help.

Emma, hearing the commotion, rushes to Harper's aid and dashes from the bench.

The assailant's violence evades and forcefully pushes Emma colliding with the statue, her limp form crumpling to the ground. "Doof"

Harper's instincts kick in. With primal fury, he grabs a nearby broken bottle. In one swift motion, Harper is back on his feet.

With a sudden, forceful move, he drives the jagged edge into the intruder's neck.

Blood spills onto the ground.

Harper's gaze shifts from the bleeding head of Emma and quickly back to the writhing figure of the assailant.

Harper pushes the bleeding man to the ground, swiftly scoops up Emma, and rushes to her safety, settling her on a nearby bench.

He quickly spots the payphone and runs to it.

When he reaches the phone booth he makes sure not to open the door with his bare hands, urgently dialing for an ambulance to come aid Emma.

JUMPCUT

Harper is seen standing in front of the barely breathing man holding his bleeding neck with his blood-soaked sweater.

HARPER:
So... you're number two!

Slowly, he strips off his shirt, exposing his torso. Methodically, he uses the fabric to wipe down the bottle he jammed in his neck.

INTERCUT

Harper is standing there but ass naked.

HARPER: (CONT'D)
(To the man) Don't worry, I'm not
gay, that's just my favorite
outfit.

We shift to see A classic New England colonial with white siding, green shutters, a wraparound porch, and a bold red door standing proudly on the house.

Inside, Mr. and Mrs. Mathis sit solemnly around the breakfast table in the kitchen.

21 INT. BATHROOM-CONTINUOUS

21

Harper is seen throwing up in the toilet of his bathroom.

Harper opens the bathroom door to eavesdrop the news and from upstairs.

NEWS ANCHOR: (V.O.)

Breaking news—police are investigating a gruesome murder at the Gilmanton Carnival. A man was found decapitated, and authorities believe his own saw was used to break into the carnival's fieldhouse before becoming the murder weapon. Officials urge anyone with information to come forward.

HARPER:

(whispering) I hope Emma—

CUTAWAY

flashback to the saw cutting through the man's neck. Harper rushes back to the toilet.

PRESENT DAY

Doubled over the toilet, he violently empties his stomach into the water below.

22 INT. CHICAGO MUSEUM -DAY

22

In the Chicago Museum, Leila(16) and her teachers & classmates are dressed in khaki uniforms and maroon shirts. The girls snap pictures amidst ancient artifacts with teachers.

The boys explore the museum with wide-eyed amazement, marveling at the grand scale of its larger artifacts. There are a few other school students and teachers from other schools and different colored uniforms are seen.

There are many small children with their parents. A woman's piercing scream disrupts the air, causing panic to spread through the crowd as she desperately searches for her missing daughter, who should have returned from the bathroom.

Instead, by the water fountain, there's the little girl's orange hat, left behind. Leila's senses sharpen as she recalls glimpsing a man standing next to the girl's bathroom moments before.

JUMPCUT

As the museum begins to empty, Leila spots Detective Rizzoli, a familiar face, leading a group of officers toward her. The officers try to question the woman, but she breaks down, sobbing uncontrollably.

With determination, Leila approaches Detective Howard.

LEILA:

Hey, mister you probably don't remember me, but my dad's a detective, and he always says to trust my gut! I saw this guy, wearing a white jacket and sunglasses, lurking near the girls' bathroom. He had to go the opposite way from the mother, heading out that door. So, he must have parked by the ice cream shop, right? Check their cameras.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI:

How could I forget a person who wears the first pendant I've ever received?

Rizzoli said as he pointed to the pendant he gave to her years ago. The detectives nearby are pointed at by Rizzoli signifying to check out Leila's hunch.

The lady officer looks in disbelief before Rizzoli gives her a distinctive look.

INTERCUT

The woman officer comes back with a confused and ashamed look on her face.

LADY OFFICER:

I didn't solve my first case until I was 26 years old.

The Rizzoli retrieves the paper that has the perp's license plate number scrambled on it.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI:

This here is Goodmans' kid, and to add insult to injury...

Rizzoli gives Leila a fatherly look and smile.

DETECTIVE RIZZOLI: (CONT'D)
She solved her first case about 6
years ago!

23 EXT. 71ST STREET CORNER- NIGHT

23

A lonely corner of 71st. Candles flicker under the weight of time – some barely holding on. Teddy bears sag in the cold. A **faded White Sox cap** rests atop a crooked cross.

Leila, hoodie up, kneels and gently **replaces the cap** with a fresh one. She lines up a few new bears beside the old – all worn, all waiting.

A breeze rolls through, carrying more than just the night air.

VOICE: (O.S.)
(hoarse, mumbling) Didn't know
Goodman was Five-O... I didn't
know...

She turns.

A young drunk dude stumbles from the shadows, talking to himself – or to ghosts.

DRUNK:
Man had a badge... had a kids and
shit... I ain't mean it...

Leila stiffens, standing slowly.

LEILA:
Hey—what did you say?

He stops. Looks her way. Eyes twitchy. **Recognition. Regret. Rage.**

DRUNK:
Isaw you on TV.. you look like—

SMACK!

He slaps her – hard. She crashes into a crumbling **china cabinet** leaned against the vacant building.

Glass shatters.

On the ground, **Leila winces** – blood at the lip, pain at the back – but she ain't done.

She **scoots backward** on her hands and butt, luring him in.

His shadow stretches—

CRACK!

She **kicks** the base of the **china cabinet**, toppling it **onto him** with a **BOOM** of broken wood and glass.

Before he can react—

SMASH!

She's up. A dusty bottle from the candle vigil is now **shattered across his skull**.

He drops.

A GUN tumbles from his jacket, spinning near her feet.

Leila stares.

Silence.

Then her hand grabs her phone.

24 INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

24

Officers haul the drunk guy down the hallway, blood trailing from his scalp.

CSI TECH:

(to another cop, quiet) Ballistics matched. That's the weapon that killed Detective Goodman.

25 EXT. OUTSIDE THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

25

She stands proud. No tears. Just a long breath.

She looks at the small picture of her and him on Halloween when she was younger.

LEILA:

You can rest easy now, Papa. I got the police oath in me... but just not the mercy part.

She starts down the street with a proud smile.

26 INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

26

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 years later

Harper(20) stacks canned goods on the counter, sliding them toward **MRS. ANDERSON (60s, warm smile)**.

HARPER:

Ok, Mrs. Anderson, I'm running late for his lecture—but yeah, I'll make sure he shows up for dinner tonight.

She smiles, as Harper grabs his bag and hurries out.

27 EXT. MICHIGAN.COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

27

The scene transitions to a bustling college campus. Students move hurriedly between classes, and the campus buzzes with life.

Among them is Harper, confidently striding across the grounds.

HARPER (V/O):

Though I hated humans, I was fascinated by their anatomy. But I still couldn't shake the fear of that day—being forced to face that skeleton. The fear that made me piss my pants? I wanted the world to feel it too.

fade In

Harper carries himself with an air of confidence, His reddish-brown hair, is now styled in a low-fade cut.

A close-up reveals his well-groomed mustache.

Despite his modest height, he has developed a fit and strong physique that doesn't go unnoticed as the scene focuses on his development.

As he strides through the campus, Harper effortlessly draws the attention of several female students, hinting at his reputation as a charmer.

Harper strolls into a building with a confident smile on his face.

28 INT. LECTURE HALL-DAY

28

Harper effortlessly strikes up conversations with peers and professors, his mastery of social skills evident.

HARPER:

(Charming) Professor Anderson, your lecture on psychology today was truly, truly inspiring.

PROFESSOR ANDERSON:

(Feeling confident) Thank you, Thank you, Mr. Mathis, It's always a pleasure to have you in class.

HARPER:

Say, Professor... **Clara Lovings** may need extra credit for her to pass your class. Is there anything she could do?

PROFESSOR ANDERSON:

I'm sorry Mathis, I only give out two extra credit assignments once every semester, Miss Lovings already used both.

The other students walk away leaving Harper and his Professor Anderson alone.

Harper's smile fades into a cold, icy glare.

HARPER:

(Sinisterly) I think you will do whatever I say, motherfucka'!

Mr. Anderson's expression shifted rapidly to one of bewilderment and anger.

HARPER: (CONT'D)

... or I'll tell your wife Rita about Ms. Scott. I know when two humans are in love and you two fit the bill so far from what I've seen.

Harper shows him a photo of the two kissing from his phone. Harper's quest for power and control drives him, and his confidence grows with each encounter.

Mr. Anderson staggers backward in disbelief upon seeing the picture.

Professor Anderson sits at his desk, a stack of graded papers before him. His brow furrows as he reaches Clara Lovings's name.

Mr. Anderson's hand is seen lingering over the 65% grade scrawled in red ink.

With a subtle look at his wife and kids picture on the desk(a woman from the store) Mr. Anderson, carefully alters the grade to 85%.

With a sigh, he moves on to the next paper, Harper's paper, which displays a grade of 85% in bold red.

30 INT. MEDICAL CLASSROOM-DAY

30

The camera shows a close-up of Harper's face. Then the scene shifts to showing the whole medical classroom.

It's evident Harper, in his favorite class, is dressed in a white lab coat. Rows of students are huddled around cadaver tables, each working diligently.

HARPER: (V/O)

My fascination with the human body continued to grow... But I often thought about vivisection, I wanted to dissect a living human being. But how did I get to Michigan?

Harper stands beside a dissecting table, his gloved hands delicately handling the cadaver before him. His eyes are laser-focused as he and his classmates dissect the cadaver.

The room is filled with the smell of formaldehyde and the soft murmur of his peers. He leans in, his eyes focused on the intricate details of the human body, his curiosity seemingly insatiable.

HARPER:

(Whispering to his peers) The human body is a masterpiece, a puzzle waiting to be solved.

Harper makes precise incisions, revealing the body's inner workings. His fascination with the fine line between life and death is palpable he continues to delve deeper into the subject.

31 EXT. GILMANTON CITY-NIGHT

31

SUPERIMPOSE: 3 years back

The dim glow of streetlights casts long, eerie shadows as a younger Harper emerges from the library, his steps slow and deliberate.

The air is heavy with the scent of autumn leaves, carried on a gentle breeze that whispers through the darkness.

Harper frequently scans his surroundings, his eyes darting around as if expecting someone to be following him. The wind tugs at his jacket, its cold fingers trailing down his spine, sending a shiver through his frame.

The Scene ends with a wide view of Harper walking home.

32 INT. THE MATHIS'S HOUSE-NIGHT

32

The Mathis household exudes warmth and comfort as Mrs. Mathis bustles about the kitchen. The savory aroma of dinner wafted through the air. The soft glow of lamplight casts a cozy ambiance, enveloping the room in a gentle embrace.

Meanwhile, Mr. Mathis lounges in his favorite armchair, his eyes glued to the television screen as he cheers on his favorite basketball team.

Outside, shadows dance ominously underneath their door.

33 EXT. STREET BLOCK- NIGHT

33

HARPER (V/O)

This is the day I'd cursed all humans. The day that I learned... humans are unpredictable and dangerous.

Harper's unease deepens, a sense of foreboding creeping over him as he quickens his pace toward his house as he watches his surroundings.

As Harper nears his street, he breaks into a brisk, almost galloping pace.

34 INT. THE MATHIS HOUSE-NIGHT

34

The tranquility of the evening is shattered by the sound of splintering wood as the robbers force their way into the house.

Mrs. Mathis stands paralyzed, her eyes wide with fear as she hears the chaos. Her hands grip a wooden spoon tightly, holding it close to her face as if it could shield her from the danger.

Harper's father quickly stands on his feet on impact.

MR. MATHIS:
(Alarmed) Awe, hell nah!

The intruders burst into the kitchen, their faces hidden behind dark masks weapons in hand.

Panic grips the family as they realize they're under attack, their peaceful evening shattered by violence and fear.

35 EXT. DINING AREA-NIGHT

35

Mrs. Mathis stands frozen in shock. Before she can react, the biggest thug roughly hand smashes her to the ground.

With a burst of rage, Mr. Mathis lunges forward and throws a few powerful punches, sending the big thug reeling backward into the kitchen.

Mrs. Mathis still on the ground, watches with fear and tears in her eyes.

Another intruder delivers a brutal blow with the butt of his gun, sending Mr. Mathis crashing to the ground.

36 EXT. GILMANTON CITY-NIGHT

36

A sharp pop cuts through the stillness of the night, followed by a flash emanating from the direction of Harper's home. Harper's eyes widen and realizes the source of the sound - a gunshot- his home.

Without hesitation, Harper veers off the sidewalk and dashes towards the backyard of his house. Reaching the rear of the house, Harper's breath comes in ragged gasps as he approaches the basement door.

Harper's hands tremble as he fumbles with the latch, lock, and keys(in that order). Once unlocked, With a determined push, he swings the door open and plunges into the darkness.

37 INT. BASEMENT-CONTINUOUS

37

In the basement, Harper's hands and legs tremble as he hears the commotion upstairs. We hear Mr. Mathis screaming in pain pleading to spare Mrs. Mathis.

Harper goes to a dark area and comes out with his father's shotgun.

Upstairs, the Mathises' desperate cries blend with the robbers' chilling commands, demanding Mrs. Mathis engage in a degrading act.

38 INT. UPSTAIRS-CONTINUOUS

38

Mr. Mathis lies on the ground, clutching his bleeding arm in agony, with pleading eyes.

MR. MATHIS:

Please, take... whatever you want.
Just don't... Please just don't
hurt her!

ROBBER 1:

What the fuck do you think we're
here for? Of course, we're going to
take what we want!

The sound of fabric tearing rips through the air as one of the robbers roughly snatches Mrs. Mathis's gown from her trembling form.

Mrs. Mathis is seen kicking and punching before two robbers pin her down.

Robber 3 walks through the house filling his bag when he stops and sees a picture of Harper.

ROBBER 2:

I know what I'm gonna take!

Mr. Mathis is being held at gunpoint by Robber 4 as he holds his bleeding arm from being shot.

ROBBER 3:

No shit, ... this is that kid Har-

In a heartbeat, Harper emerges from the shadows of the basement stairs.

(Slow Motion) With a deafening roar and massive flash, the shotgun erupts in his hands, unleashing a barrage of pellets that tear through the air with lethal precision.

HARPER:(V/O)

Kill numbers 3 & 4... changed me.

END FLASHBACK

39 INT. SCHOOL LAB-DAY

39

Back in the university cadaver lab, with Harper, now out of his thoughts and flashback.

He stands before a mutilated cadaver on an examination table, his eyes fixated on the lifeless body.

His classmates stand at a distance, their faces twisted with fear or uncertainty.

The sounds of students and instructors discussing what they had just seen.

A young man touches Harper's shoulder, snapping him out of his trance. Instinctively, Harper swings to strike his neck, but Clara intercepts, hooking his arm from behind and catching his strike with the inside of her elbow.

CLARA:

Harper, what the hell are you doing?

Harper's gloved hands a mess dropping the utensil to the ground before dashing out of the lab.

CUTAWAY

SCHOOL CUSTODIAN:

(looking through the window) The kids a natural.

40 EXT. OUTSIDE COLLEGE-DAY

40

Clara Lovings(21) has brown skin and black wavy hair, Tall and graceful, she captivates with her unique beauty. Adorned with delicate glasses, her intelligent eyes reveal depth of character.

CLARA:

Harper, ... wait up! What's going on with you?

HARPER:

I'm sorry, I... I had a flashback about Gilmanton.

CLARA:

(Reaching for his hands) When will you tell me what happened? we've been together since you came to Detroit 3 years ago... you still don't trust me?

HARPER:

(Disturbed) I already told you, I don't trust humans ... but I love you... look it's complicated, I can't explain it to you!

Harper dashes off into another building. Clara stands there by herself with a look of worry.

41 INT. DORM HALLWAY- DAY

41

Freddy Walsh, 65, has grey hair slicked back, a subtle bald spot, and a missing front tooth—marks of a life well-lived. His heavy build and weathered face tell stories of strength and resilience.

The custodian from the window.

The scene transitions to a secluded corner of the university campus. Harper and Freddy Walsh run into each other.

HARPER:(V/O)

My first unholy alliance was with the main custodian on campus, old man Freddy Walsh.

Freddy leans in, his voice low and conspiratorial.

FREDDY:

I jollied at what you did earlier, I can help hone your skills.

Freddy and Harper lock their eyes.

Abruptly with no words Freddy opens and closes the door behind him, leaving Harper standing there by himself.

42 INT.LUNCH ROOM- DAY

42

Harper and Clara sit at a table eating lunch with a few friends. Frat members glide in loud and rambunctious.

FRAT MEMBER 1:

(Excited) Yoo, frat party in our dorm house Friday night! Don't just meet me there, beat me there people!

FRAT MEMBER 2:
(Smiling) Clara, make sure you are there and leave the weirdos at home!

Harper smirks, revealing a glimpse of his dark intentions.
Harper makes a too-small gesture with his fingers behind the guy as he walks away.

TIMECUT

Harper gets up from the seat and carries both his and Clara's lunch trays, now filled with trash, toward the garbage bin.

Suddenly, the same frat member from before trips him up, causing the entire lunchroom to erupt in laughter. Harper reaches for his hidden knife.

While Freddy watches from a distance, his eyes cold and calculating.

J.B. quickly comes to Harper's aid, helping him to his feet.

J.B.(20), A BLACK MALE WITH MEDIUM DREADLOCKS, EMANATES STRENGTH AND ATHLETICISM THROUGH HIS MUSCULAR BUILD.

J.B.:
(To the frat member) The way you act only exposes your little insecurities, **Ronnie!**

RONNIE:
Oh yeah? How do I act, big guy?

J.B.:
(Teasing with a hand gesture) It's obvious - you're compensating for something, Ronnie. You're a little... dick! Well, that's what Racheal says, at least!

The joke caused the entire lunchroom to erupt in laughter again. J.B. helps Harper to his feet.

Next, Clara and Harper are seen sitting on a bench alone.

CLARA:

(Eating sticky candy) So are you
going to come to the party with me?

HARPER:

(Sarcastically) Why? Are You trying
to leave the weirdos at home?

Punching Harper in the arm and sitting up from his lap.

CLARA:

It's **Sunny's** birthday and she
wanted me to go with her, asshole!

HARPER:

Oh yeah, J.B. did say something
about that... I won't hear the end
of her loud mouth if I don't come.

Sunny(18) is a short white girl with a vibrant, infectious energy.

SUNNY:

(Abruptly sitting in between the
couple) You know what's going on!
So dress in your best fool!

Sunny is smiling as she brushes her expensive hairdo and pops her gum.

44 INT. FRAT PARTY- NIGHT

44

The scene shows Clara and Sunny dancing and having drinks. The camera pans across various scenes throughout the frathouse.

Downstairs, people clutch their stomachs and double over, retching and vomiting in disgust. In another corner, a couple engages in a passionate kiss, their bodies pressed together in a moment of intimacy.

Upstairs, the atmosphere is tense as two figures engage in a heated argument, their voices rising in anger. In another room, a couple is locked in a passionate embrace, oblivious to the chaos around them as they engage in intimate activity.

Back downstairs, Clara approaches J.B. and his basketball teammates as they enthusiastically cheer each other on.

CLARA:

Hey J.B., have you talked to
Harper?

J.B.:

(Jumping up and down) Choke, Choke,
Choke- Whoa, whoa, whoa, He said
he'd be here, gang! Go get a drink
and shake some ass until he gets
here!

In the scene's final moments, a group of women who are not previously introduced in the story are shown dancing and twerking.

45 INT. TRUCK- NIGHT

45

Harper sits behind the wheel of his beloved Ford F-150, the sturdy vehicle rumbling beneath him as it navigates the darkened streets.

The soft glow of dashboard lights illuminates the interior, casting a warm hue over the cabin.

With one hand on the steering wheel, Harper takes a drag from his cigarette.

46 EXT/INT. FRAT PARTY-NIGHT

46

Harper walks up to the dorm house.

Harper sees Sunny and J.B. slobbering each other down with kisses as soon as he walks into the dorm hallway.

HARPER:

(Jokingly) Why don't you freaks go
to your room with all of that?

J.B.:

(drunk slurs) Yo, Harp, Clara's
been searchin' for ya all night, my
boy! She might want you to scratch
that itch, tonight!

Sunny slightly shoves the drunk J.B. in laughter.

HARPER:

Where is she?

SUNNY:

(Clears throat) Excuse me!

HARPER:

Happy birthday, Sunny!

Sunny extends her hand toward Harper with a commanding gesture. Harper reaches into his wallet and hands Sunny a fifty-dollar bill.

Clara walks up to Harper from behind and gives him a warm hug. Harper notices that Clara is intoxicated when she stumbles and slurs her words.

They all head back into the party and start dancing.

Many different girls blow kisses at Harper when Clara's back is turned. Harper smiles and exchanges devilish grins with J.B.

DISSOLVE TO:

47 EXT/INT. PARKING LOT-NIGHT

47

The scene shifts to the ending of the party. Harper and his friends are seen driving away.

Inside Harper's truck

Clara takes off her seatbelt and slouches over onto Harper's lap. Harper's face is intrigued as he steers the truck in silence.

CLARA:

Go to my parents, they won't be back from New York until Monday morning.

HARPER:

(Smiling) To the property, you told me they're going to give to after you graduate?

CLARA:

No, I want you to take me home, home. I want you in my room for the first time ... Besides, Sunny and J.B. are probably filming a whole fuck film in our dorm room by now!

HARPER:

I saw my dad earlier—he's not doing great... Said he can't cover my tuition anymore 'cause of medical bills. I need money, fast... and you'll be all I've got when the old man dies. We should get married after graduation.

Clara quickly rises from his lap and kisses him uncontrollably. Harper's truck swerved a bit. Harper smiles devilishly.

48 INT. CLARA'S BEDROOM- NIGHT

48

Harper & Clara's movements are fueled by desire and the intoxicating haze of alcohol.

With clumsy hands, they fumble towards each other, their lips colliding in a passionate, fiery kiss. Clothes are tossed aside without a second thought.

With each piece of clothing removed, their desire ignites. The bed beckons invitingly, its soft sheets a sanctuary for their fervent embrace.

As they finally collapse onto the mattress but naked, limbs entwined and hearts racing, the world outside fades away.

49 INT. MATHIS'S HOUSE. FLASHBACK-NIGHT

49

Harper creeps up the stairs, his grip on the shotgun tightening as he nears the top. Harper peers through the doorway.

He looks right and sees his father clutching a bleeding arm from being shot.

Harper pans left to the kitchen, where the giant man pinned her down, his mother's screams were muffled by his hand, as Harper saw her clothes ripped.

With a deep breath, Harper burst through the door, closed his eyes, and pulled the trigger.

The blast echoes through the house, striking the largest robber on top of his mother. One man falls lifeless, and another cries out in pain from being struck by the buck shots in the legs.

Harper's mother slumps over, blood pooling around her head. The last intruder scrambles away in a desperate escape. Mr. Mathis rushed to his wife's side and let out a loud cry.

50 INT MR. MATHIS TRUCK-DAY

50

Mr. Mathis looking distraught, grips the wheel, eyes fixed ahead as the highway signs change—**NOW ENTERING MICHIGAN.** Harper watches the trees blur past, with blank eyes.

51 INT/EXT. CLARA'S CHILDHOOD HOME-NIGHT

51

Harper is jolted awake by raised voices outside Clara's window, pulling him out of his night terror. The remnants of sleep dissipate rapidly as he listens to the commotion.

Rubbing the sleep from his eyes, he quietly peers out into the darkness, his senses alert as he tries to make sense of the commotion outside.

Down the block, a group of frat members stand clustered together, their voices raised in a heated argument. Harper watches as Ronnie, clearly intoxicated and belligerent, shouts obscenities at his companions.

RONNIE:

Fuck you, motherfuckers! Ima do what I want!

The other members exchange exasperated glances before turning to leave. The scene captures the piercing sound of screeching tires echoing through the quiet night.

Left alone, the drunken frat member Ronnie staggers towards his parent's doorway, his movements unsteady and erratic.

In an instant, Harper springs into action, quietly dons his clothes, and slips out of Clara's bedroom.

With urgent stealth, he slips down the stairs and out the backdoor, quickly making his way to Ronnie, clutching a shovel he'd grabbed as he crosses the street.

Ronnie, oblivious, Harper swings the shovel silently and swiftly, the metal slamming into the back of Ronnie's head with a jarring thud.

Ronnie crumples to the ground. Ronnie has a stunned expression frozen on his face as Harper stands over him. As blood slid down his face.

Harper grips the shovel tight, his knuckles white. With a swift, brutal swing, the metal edge splits the air—**CRACK!** It buries deep into Ronnie's skull. His body stiffens, then crumbles, the dull thud swallowed by the night.

52 EXT. WOODS-NIGHT

52

Harper pulls into the woods a few miles out. When Harper gets there he quickly jumps out of his truck.

Harper strips down to his bare ass again. Harper grabs the corpse and slams him over his shoulder.

HARPER:(V/O)
Number 5 started my business...

As Harper ventures deeper into the woods. Suddenly Harper spots Freddy Walsh, the school's custodian, sitting in the grass near his truck.

Harper shifts his eyes to the wrapped-up body beside him.

FREDDY:
(pulling out his gun) Who the hell
is... Ahh, it's the natural born.
(smiling showing his yellow teeth)
It would make sense, you'd pick
this spot too.

Freddy points toward the dead body.

HARPER:
(Carrying the dead body on his
shoulder): Mr. Walsh? ... I-I

FREDDY:
Just killed a man... right? I knew
you had it in you. But listen,
instead of you burying that body...
let's say me and you profit from
it.

HARPER:
What ... no I ... profit from it?
What do you mean?

FREDDY:
You are one of the top students in
Anatomy. I've seen you work a
scalpel better than some of the
doctors I know.

Walking closer to Freddy, Harper drops the body next to his body. Freddy quickly raises his gun to Harper's head.

FREDDY:

Don't you take a step closer... You move again I'll be happy to profit from your skeleton as well. So what's it gonna be?

We see a close-up of Freddy's old and determined smile showing his gruesome teeth.

53 INT. NIGHT. FLASHBACK - VISIONS

53

Harper(12 years old) shows Harper's vision of him walking up to the cat and stabbing the cat forcefully with a pen.

cutaway

Harper(16) is seen using the saw to decapitate the man's head.

cutaway

Harper (17 years old) shows Harper visions sneaking up the stairs and closing his eyes while shooting the shotgun. The two shots kill one of the robbers and one shoots his mother the other two burglars make a run for it.

cutaway

Harper in his present age, bashing in Ronnie's head.

cutaway

Harper(10) is forced into the room with him and the Skeleton.

54 EXT. WOODS. NIGHT.

54

Harper is seen with a devilish smile on his face.

HARPER:

You got a deal ... but why were you out here if you weren't gone to bury him?

FREDDY:

Agreed... I've secured a contact who can provide information on the whereabouts of deceased individuals across the entire East Coast. The closer the better... how bout you pull your truck up, we load the bodies, then go to my place to strip'em down to the bone.

The scene ends with Freddy and Harper shaking hands.

55 EXT/INT. FREDDY'S BUNKER - NIGHT

55

In the dimly lit bunker, surrounded by ominous tools, Harper and Freddy prepare to embark on their grim task.

FREDDY:

(With a sinister chuckle) Welcome to the cadaver business, Harper. It's an art.

HARPER:

(Amused) An art I always will be a part of.

They approach the lifeless bodies, cold and unyielding on the metal tables.

FREDDY:

Ok now, cut away the flesh, Harper, and reveal the beauty beneath. It's a trade secret, Just like you do in class.

HARPER:

(Smiling) The true beauty lies In the brain, Freddy.

Harper scalpels around the dead Ronnie's skulls. As they begin the grisly work, the sound of cutting flesh echoes in the bunker.

TIMECUT

In the dimly lit bunker, a close-up reveals the cadavers now transformed - skeletal forms mounted and cleaned to eerie perfection.

Harper gazes at the mounted cadavers, his expression a mix of fascination and unease.

HARPER:

(whispering) It's... unsettling how perfect they look. So how much for each one?

Harper and Freddy, sit at a makeshift table amidst the skeletal masterpieces. They enjoy hot coffee from mugs.

FREDDY:

(Raising his cup) To the art of creation, my friend. Beauty from the remnants of life... 5000\$ each!

HARPER:
(Spitting out coffee)... 5000 dollars each!

Freddy chuckles, unfazed by the dark reality surrounding them.

FREDDY:
Matter of perspective, Harper.
We're providing a service and medical schools pay top dollar for these dead sons of bitches.

Harper's eyes dart between his coffee and the skeletal forms.

HARPER:
(Thoughtful) A service, I can pay off my tuition with.

Freddy sips his coffee, savoring the bitter irony, looking into the cup.

FREDDY:
Each medical school needs at least five cadavers per semester. Do the math—Detroit's got over a hundred schools. That's a lot of demand. If my contact falls through, we can always get fresh supply... but no smashing skulls with a shovel. Got it?

HARPER:
Got it. But I really know how to read people and your book says, besides the money, you need my help to expand, and no doubt I can pay off my tuition with this... but why are you really doing it, old man?

FREDDY:
You've got a good eye, Carrot Top... I've never told anyone this. My daughter's sick—really sick. This is the only way I can consistently pay her hospital bills...plain and simple.

The silence hangs heavy. Then suddenly Harper's Phone rings.

56 EXT. TRAINING BASE- DAY

56

The training base sprawls across a vast landscape, a mix of outdoor obstacles and indoor facilities. The sun beats down on Leila Goodman.

Now a fierce officer a close-up slowly reveals Leila's distinctive red and black-dyed ponytail, her brown eyes, and a heart-shaped scar on her left cheekbone, a relic from her childhood.

We catch a glimpse of her **Detroit Police Department** training uniform, the fabric worn but firm against her stride. Leila's boots pound the dirt, kicking up chunks of mud as she powers through the outdoor training course.

Leila swiftly navigates inside the tactical shooting course. Leila skillfully snatches her gun from her leg holster and opens fire.

Leila's marksmanship is impeccable, with each shot hitting its intended target with precision. Leila stands tall when she hears the buzzer.

Her sweat-soaked uniform and red & black-dyed ponytail are soaked. The training base, now a backdrop to her indomitable spirit, prepares her for the challenges that lie ahead.

SEARGENT FLAKE (O/S):

(over intercom) Goodman, that time's a record-breaker! You've even outdone your old man... heck, you've even surpassed me! Good job cadet. Clean up quickly; the captain wants to see you!

The camera captures Leila standing still as it slowly zooms out, revealing the entire town of Michigan spread out in the background.

57 INT. POLICE PRECINCT- DAY

57

Captain Rodriguez(48), a stern but seasoned officer, sits behind his cluttered desk.

Leila enters the office, her red-dyed braided ponytail, flipped on her chest.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

Good to see you, Goodman. Have a seat.

Leila takes a seat, her brown eyes focused on the captain.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

(Leaning forward) I've got a situation here, Goodman. Two men reported missing on the same day, and it's raising some eyebrows.

LEILA GOODMAN:

(Attentive) Same day? Any connection between them?

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

So far, there is no evidence. However, both attend the same university and were last seen intoxicated and out of control around 4:00 A.M.

LEILA GOODMAN:

(raising an eyebrow) Around the same time, huh?

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

Ok, so, All your recommendations checked out, making you the youngest officer on the force, but this is detective work. If Rizzoli vouches for you, I trust you can handle it. Don't prove me wrong, kid. Something doesn't add up, and we need answers. I'm assigning you to this case—dig into their backgrounds, find any connections, and start with that crazy bar in 3 Mile.

LEILA GOODMAN:

Consider it done, Cap.

Leila rises from her seat, concealing a smile framing her determined expression.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

And Goodman, be careful out there. Detroit is just like Chicago, it's getting darker by the day.

Leila nods, her brown eyes revealing a blend of resolve and the gravity of the challenge ahead—this is her first major case as a detective. We see a fatherly smile on Captain Rodriguez's face.

SUPERIMPOSE: 2 years later

The hallways buzz with activity as students prepare for graduation.

CUTAWAY

Harper sits near the back of the ceremony, a sense of accomplishment mingled with relief on his face.

The faces of everyone in the room reflect a blend of excitement and anticipation.

HARPER (V/O):

*I Barely made it through college.
But Anatomy and biology, that's
where I excelled of course. But
just like H.H. Holmes, I wanted to
become more.*

Sunny strides across the stage in her cap and gown, pausing to pose and blow kisses to the crowd as though she were a star.

Clara walks across the stage with a beaming smile and a tear-streaked, flushed face, overcome with joy.

J.B. bounds across the stage, executing a flawless backflip before confidently shaking the principal's hand.

Finally, Harper walks across the stage in slow motion, his gaze locking with Freddy's. Freddy watches from the back of the auditorium, a devilish smile on his face.

DISSOLVE TO

59 INT. HARPER'S WEDDING-DAY

59

Surrounded by loved ones, Harper and Clara radiate joy and anticipation as they prepare to marry. The venue is adorned with an array of vibrant flowers, with the sounds of laughter and conversation.

Harper and Clara radiate happiness as the preacher pronounces them husband & wife. We see Friends and family members watch on with smiles and tears of joy glistening in their eyes.

Soft music plays in the background, adding to the romantic ambiance of the occasion. As Harper and Clara seal their vows with a tender kiss, applause erupts throughout the venue.

60 INT. CLARA'S PARENTS' HOUSE-DAY

60

Sunlight streams through the windows, casting a warm glow over the elegant interior of Clara's parents' home. Clara sits opposite her parents, her eyes widening in astonishment as they present her with a gift.

Clara's father, a broad smile lighting up his face, holds out a set of keys and legal documents. Clara reaches out to accept the gift, her fingers trembling with emotion.

MR. LOVINGS:

It's all yours, Clara, (her father says, his voice filled with warmth and affection.) A new chapter begins.

Outside, the gentle rustle of leaves and the distant chirping of birds create a serene backdrop to the momentous occasion. Harper sits at the coffee table smiling.

HARPER:

I'm very grateful to have met you guys, when I did.

61 INT. INSIDE HARPERS' TRUCK-NIGHT

61

Clara, still in the afterglow of her inheritance, signs over the property to Harper- trusting him with her life.

CLARA:

(Trusting) Harper, I want us to have a bright future together. I know you would do the right thing. I'm going to sign over the deed to your name next week.

HARPER:

I will love you even after death, my love, And you don't have to worry our legacy is in safe hands with me.

The camera shows Harper smiling devilishly again as he drives.

62 INT. FUNERAL HOME-DAY

62

The somber atmosphere of the funeral home envelops Clara as she receives the devastating news of her father's mysterious death.

Tears glisten in her eyes, reflecting the pain and disbelief that consume her fragile heart - The weight of her loss hangs heavy in the air.

Clara quivers with emotion as she struggles to comprehend the reality of her father's passing. In the background, Harper looms with a subtly devilish expression.

INTERCUT/FLASHBACK

63 INT. CLARA'S PARENT'S HOUSE-NIGHT

63

Harper is seen sneaking inside the Lovings home with Clara's spare key underneath the flower pot on the back porch. Harper sneaks through the house.

Mrs. Lovings is seen still refreshing up in the upstairs bathroom. Mr. Lovings is seen wrapped up inside the covers dosing off.

Harper crouches by the garage door, his calloused fingers working with precision as he laces each of Mr. Lovings's cigarettes with a fine, nearly invisible powder.

He straightens, rolling his shoulders, the dim light casting sharp angles across his stubbled jaw. A slow, knowing smirk tugs at the corner of his lips as he pockets the empty vial.

As Harper retreats into the shadows, Mrs. Lovings swings open the fridge, the cool light spilling into the dim room.

At the same moment, Harper quietly shuts the back door, the soft *click* barely cutting through the hum of the refrigerator.

END FLASHBACK

64 INT. NEWLY WEDS BEDROOM - MORNING

64

Sunlight seeps through the blinds, casting soft lines across the bed. CLARA stirs, phone pressed to her ear, her breath hitching as she listens. Beside her, **HARPER** lies still, his back turned, feigning sleep.

CLARA'S MOTHER: (V.O.)
(shaky, devastated) Clara... he's
 gone. Your father—he's gone.

Clara sits up, the sheets pooling around her waist.

CLARA:

(*disbelief*) What? No... that's not—
Mom, the doctor just said he was
fine.

Harper's eyelids barely flicker, his face carefully slack,
one hand resting beneath the pillow.

CLARA'S MOTHER: (V.O.)
(*sniffling*) I know, baby, but... he
just—he didn't wake up this
morning.

Clara presses a trembling hand to her forehead, eyes welling
with tears. She doesn't notice Harper's fingers subtly
tightening around the edge of the blanket.

CLARA:
(*whispers, dazed*) That doesn't make
sense...

Harper's breathing stays steady and controlled, his face
hidden in the crook of his arm. A shadow of a smirk flickers—
so quickly it could be imagined.

65 EXT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

65

SUPERIMPOSE: 2 Months later, New York City

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Skyscrapers tower against the crisp blue sky, taxis weave
through traffic, and pedestrians flood the crosswalks. Steam
curls from a street vent as the distant wail of a siren fades
into the city's endless hum.

The camera glides down, past the grand steps of **CITY HALL**,
where **HARPER** emerges, one hand casually adjusting the cuff of
his suit. Beside him, a **WOMAN** in an elegant white dress
clutches a bouquet, her smile wide, her fingers laced with
his.

A fresh wedding band gleams on Harper's hand as he presses a
lingering kiss to her temple—his eyes, however, remain
unreadable.

Rochelle(28) a beautiful Italian woman cons her out of the
deed to her restaurant- Harper goes by the name Howard
Mudgett now.

ROCHELLE:
I trust you, Howard, is why I will
sign the deed over to your name.
and... I... I'm pregnant.

HOWARD:

(smiling) New York is only the beginning of my dreams, my darling. We shouldn't rush things between us.

ROCHELLE:

What do you mean? I mean, You mentioned knowing someone who would buy the restaurant for twice what my Granny paid, didn't you? And we are already married. So let's just keep it!

Howard/Harper turns and gazes out of the window, a smile playing on his lips, anticipating what is about to unfold.

ROCHELLE: (CONT'D)

I can sign it over to you, and when you return from Michigan after sealing the other deal you told me about, then I can proceed with getting an abortion if you want.

HOWARD:

How about I perform the abortion myself? Lord knows I haven't done one in years.

CUTAWAY

The camera zooms in on the lifeless face of the dead Rochelle lying on the operating table, her expression frozen in eternal silence.

Howard's/Harper's hands move with practiced precision as he performs the grisly procedure. Howard's/Harper's face is a mask of detached concentration.

As the procedure reaches its conclusion, Howard's expression remains stoic, betraying no hint of emotion as he extracts the crying baby from the womb.

The infant's cries echo through the sterile basement.

66 INT. HARPER & CLARAS'. FRONT ROOM- NIGHT.

66

The scene unfolds with Clara, visibly frustrated, vigorously washing dishes.

Harper has just returned from New York, holding a New York brochure. Now with a full beard.

CLARA:

(Angrily) You come back from one fucking trip, and now it's Chicago? How much longer is this going to go on, Harp?

HARPER:

(Apologetic) Not a trip, a job, Clara... it's a crucial opportunity. I promise, once this is done, I'll make it up to you.

CLARA:

(Sarcastically) Make it up to me. I feel like I'm constantly waiting for you to make it up to me!

The atmosphere thickens as the couple continues to argue about Harper's frequent travels.

67 INT. HOUSE & GARAGE- NIGHT

67

In the enveloping stillness of the night, the house lies silent.

We hear footsteps echo softly as she navigates the darkened corridors of their house- the movements cautious as whoever makes their way to the garage door connected to the house.

Moonlight filters through the windows, casting ethereal shadows across the floor.

Clara's breath catches in her throat as she reaches Harper's car. With trembling hands, she reaches for the door handle, the metal cool against her skin.

Inside the car, the interior is shrouded in darkness. As Clara's fingers brush against the smooth surface of the glove compartment, her pulse quickens with anticipation.

With a hesitant pull, she opens the compartment, revealing Harper's journal nestled within. The leather cover feels worn beneath her touch, hinting at the time he's had it.

Clara gets out of Harper's truck and opens the door of her Camry. Now Seated in her car, Clara flips through the journal, her eyes scanning the words illuminated by the soft glow of the overhead light.

Each page offers a glimpse into Harper's innermost thoughts and desires, drawing her deeper into its spell. Suddenly, a noise shatters the silence, a sharp jolt of sound that pierces the stillness of the night.

Clara is startled and quickly grabs the snow-wiper, her senses heightened.

(Harper's POV)

In the darkness of the garage, Harper remains unseen to Clara. Clara's gaze darts frantically around the space, searching for any sign of Harper, but finding none.

The garage becomes quiet again, leaving Clara to her reading. Unbeknownst to her, Harper, stayed watching her for hours, discreetly observing from the shadows.

Harper quickly leaves through the front door upon seeing Clara and the sunlight approaching.

68 INT/EXT. NEXT MORNING-KITCHEN

68

Clara stands in the kitchen, engrossed in cooking breakfast. Her face is pale.

Lost in thought, she contemplates revealing the truth to the authorities- she grabs the phone dials 91- and then abruptly hangs up.

Harper unexpectedly enters through the front door, fully dressed, catching Clara off guard.

Clara drops her coffee mug to the ground- She had assumed he was still upstairs asleep.

CLARA:

(Surprised) Harper, I thought you were still upstairs. I hadn't realized you left.

HARPER:

(Nonchalant) What...you had a long night? I had an early meeting with an old friend back at the university. Didn't want to wake you. What's for breakfast?

CLARA:

(Undecided) Who, old man Walsh?

HARPER:

(Poised) Why would I be meeting up with the custodian, my love? (still smiling)

CLARA:

(Nervous) That's a good question...
oh shit I got to get to work.

The scene closes in on Harper's frowning face.

69 INT. HARPER'S HOME - UPSTAIRS - DAY

69

Clara moves frantically, yanking clothes from the dresser, and stuffing them into a suitcase with shaky hands. She's packing more than usual—this time, she's leaving for good.

CUTAWAY

Handwritten words flash across the screen—Harper's journal entries.

— ***"I love her. More than I ever thought possible."***

CUTAWAY

Clara's breath catches as another entry flickers in her mind.

— ***"The property will be mine. Once it's in my name, nothing else matters."***

CUTAWAY

Pages turn, revealing another chilling truth.

— ***"Rochelle my second wife never suspected I was already married to Clara."***

CUTAWAY

The final blow—the words she wishes she never read.

— ***"The bodies were easy. The skeletons sold well. Body count 54."***

Tears spill down her cheeks, but she doesn't stop packing. She wipes her face, forcing composure, stuffing the last of her things into the bag.

CLARA:

(whispers, shaken) How could I have been so blind? I need to get out of here.

She zips the suitcase and spins toward the door—then **FREEZES**.

Harper stands in the doorway.

A smile stretches across his face, easy, knowing.

HARPER:
Is everything ok, my love?

70 EXT. DETROIT(MIDDLE OF CITY)-DAY

70

Leila and her new partner **Jason(22)**, a tough, young, and arrogant officer, chase a wanted murderer through the city in their police cruiser.

The black murder suspect(40), flushing the engine on a silver Charger '95 -weaving skillfully in and out of Detroit traffic.

Leila narrowly avoids a collision with oncoming traffic on the left. She expertly navigates through an alleyway far left, nearly causing a crash.

With another risky dash out of the alley, she clips the back of the suspect's vehicle, causing it to spiral out of control.

The killer crashes his vehicle but staggers a bit before he continues on foot.

JASON:
They said you were crazy, but your ass is actually insane!

LEILA:
I prefer... motivated!

Leila hurriedly snaps off her seatbelt and continues her pursuit.

Leila and the suspect are seen darting through yards. Then quickly navigating half of a city block.

Lastly, hopping over gates and obstacles along the way.

Leila almost reaches the suspect and grabs at his back pockets, but he snaps a gate closed behind him, causing her to stumble and crash to the ground.

Quickly, she springs back to her feet. The fugitive then is seen up ahead hijacking a man's scat pack JEEP to escape the area.

JASON:
(Upset) I told yo' ass we should've called for backup! He gonna get away now.

Leila watches as he speeds away. Her partner, Jason, skids to a stop and jumps out. Leila hands Jason the perpetrator's ID from his wallet.

JASON:

(Upset) I told yo' ass we should've called for backup! He gonna get away now.

LEILA:

(Focused) Hell no. Let's go get this ma'fucka ourselves!

JASON:

(Picking a leaf out of her hair) I saw you bust your ass back there, you alright.

LEILA:

Fuck you!

71 EXT/INT. CITY BLOCK- NIGHT

71

Leila and Jason are seen patiently waiting in Leila's regular car. Leila elbows a sleeping Jason when she spots the perpetrator sneaking into his house through the backyard.

Once the perp enters, the two officers cautiously approach the house, with their guns drawn. As they near the backdoor, chaos erupts.

JASON:

(Assertive) We're here to bring you in, Dickbrian. Put up your hands!

PERPETRATOR:

(Panicking) How the hell find me?

Leila flicks his ID card to his head.

LEILA:

Because I can read!

Suddenly, a gunshot echoes, and Jason's eyes widen as he clutches his neck with one hand and fires his weapon with the other.

The suspect's young daughter, 15 years old, stands in the doorway holding a smoking 9mm pistol. Jason's gunfire takes down the suspect, striking him in the stomach.

Leila reacts swiftly, drawing her weapon and training it on the young girl.

LEILA:
(Shouting) Drop it, now!

The young girl, holding the gun, hesitates for a moment and fires at Leila. In his final moments, Jason manages to forcefully kick Leila out of the line of fire, saving her life before he dies with a faint smile.

Leila, faced with a difficult choice, fires a shot from the ground, disarming the girl. The tension in the air is palpable as the girl falls to the ground holding her arm(**slow-motion**).

Leila rushes to the girl and kicks away her weapon before she slides on the ground to Jason's side- it's too late.

Jason is dead.

LEILA:
(With grief) Dammit, Jason...

PERPETRATOR:
(Defiant) You crazy bitch, You shot my daughter!

LEILA:
(Resolute) She had a weapon. Now, where are the five missing women?

Leila trains her weapon on him. Despite the tragedy, Leila is determined to rescue the 5 missing women.

She cuffs the father and daughter.

Time Cut To

Leila led out four women who had been severely beaten, with one fatally injured, and taken away on an ambulance gurney. As the paramedics lift Jason's lifeless body, grief wells up within Leila- she drops a tear of anger

LEILA:
(Voice choked with emotion) Damn it...

Leila, consumed by sorrow, draws her weapon, driven by a thirst for retribution against the perpetrator. When Leila drew her weapon the paramedics dodged for cover.

Captain Rodriguez, understanding her pain but recognizing the necessity of justice, intervenes.

CAPTAIN:

(Firmly) Leila, stand down. That's an order!

LEILA:

(Angry) His little girl killed Jason! And this punk is smiling too much for me!

The captain positions himself in front of the perp.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

(Calmly) And he'll face the consequences. But not like this. You caught this bastard; don't stoop to his level. Now put the gun down.

Reluctantly, Leila holsters her weapon. However, as the captain turns away, she catches another smirk on the perpetrator's face.

PERPETRATOR:

(Teasing) Yeah go ahead and get your ass out of here!

Leila quickly turns, when she sees the perp heading into the ambulance escorted by police officers. Leila leaps into action and shoots him in the ass.

PERPETRATOR:

Argh, this bitch shot me in the ass!

LEILA:

(Spitting to the ground) Now you take your ass on out of here!

72 INT. PRECINCT. CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ'S OFFICE-DAY

72

The captain, Rodriguez sternly reprimands Leila for her impulsive actions.

He shows her repercussions have set the tabloids ablaze- when he slams the newspaper in front of her.

Tabloid reads in dark letters **"Teenaged officer Needs Babysitting!"**

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

(Disapproving) Leila, your actions jeopardized not only the case but the reputation of this precinct. We can't condone vigilantism. Effective immediately, you're suspended from duty.

LEILA:

(Defiant yet remorseful) Captain, I had to make him feel something and understand the pain he caused.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:

(Firmly) I understand your grief, but justice must be served through proper channels. Your suspension stands until further notice.

The weight of the captain's decision hangs heavy in the air as Leila, now sidelined, grapples with the consequences of her impulsive act.

73 INT. NICE GRAY SEDAN - DAY

73

Leila grips the steering wheel tightly, her knuckles white with tension, as tears cascade down her cheeks like a torrential downpour.

Each sob wracks her body, the sound reverberating off the sleek interior of the sedan. The air in the confined space feels heavy with the weight of her sorrow, suffocating in its intensity.

Tears blur her vision, and Leila's gaze remains fixed on the road ahead, though her mind is consumed by turmoil. The rhythmic hum of the engine provides a stark contrast to the tumult raging within her.

As the miles blur by, Leila's emotions threaten to overwhelm her. The pain of her heartache etched into every line of her face.

Leila navigates the streets with a sense of numb detachment, her tears mingling with the raindrops that streak across the windshield.

74 INT. HARPER IN THE FRONT ROOM-DAY

74

Harper sits in the dimly lit front room, bathed in the soft glow of the evening sun filtering through the curtains.

His gaze is fixed on a large framed photo hanging on the wall, capturing the moment of him and Clara on their wedding day.

The image captures a moment frozen in time, their smiles radiant and their love palpable.

His gaze is fixed on a large framed photo hanging on the wall, capturing the moment of him and Clara on their wedding day.

As Harper shifts in his seat, his attention drifts to the antique cupboard standing sentinel in the corner of the room.

The polished wood gleams in the ambient light, casting intricate shadows across the intricate carvings adorning its surface.

Atop the cupboard sits Harper's weathered journal, its leather cover worn with age.

The scene ends by zooming in closely on the journal with the initials H.W.M.

75 INT. CLARA'S CAR. BUSY ROAD-DAY

75

We see Clara's tear-stained face, Her trembling hands grip the steering wheel tightly. As the light changes to green, Clara hesitantly releases the brake pedal and guides her car forward, her vision blurred by tears.

The world outside seems to blur into a haze of indistinct shapes and colors, the traffic around her a mere backdrop to her inner turmoil.

Suddenly, the tranquility of the moment is shattered by the blaring horn of an approaching truck. "Hooonkkk!"

With a sickening sense of dread, Clara's eyes widen in horror as she realizes the impending danger. (bright lights approaching)

The truck blasts towards her with terrifying speed, its massive frame bearing down on her tiny sedan like a predator closing in on its prey.

In a split second, the truck collides with Clara's vehicle with brutal force, the impact sending her car spinning violently out of control.

Metal crunches and glass shatter as the two vehicles collide, the deafening roar of the collision drowning out all other sounds.

The truck is seen speeding off and making a wild turn to the left.

76 INT/EXT. NIGHT-A FEW NIGHTS LATER

76

Harper sits in the dimly lit surroundings, his fists clenched in frustration as he absorbs the harsh reality of Clara's betrayal.

BANK TELLER (O/S):

I'm sorry Mr. Mathis Clara called a few days ago saying she was forced to sign over her properties.. unfortunately, we will have to decline your offer to buy until further notice sorry for the inconvenience.

Harper hangs up after hearing the bad news from the bank. The weight of his financial distress bears down on him like a suffocating blanket, he rips the phone from the wall.

Bang, bang, bang against the counter until it smashes into pieces. With a heavy sigh, Harper steps outside into the cool night air, his breath forming puffs of mist in the darkness.

The faint glow of streetlights casts long shadows across the empty streets, adding to the sense of isolation that envelops him.

HARPER:

(Enraged) Fuck... Clara you foxy little bitch!

77 INT. HARPER'S TRUCK- NIGHT

77

HARPER (V.O.):

I met Clara the first week my dad and I settled in Michigan—sweetest girl I'd met since Emma. When she mentioned her father owned the store and she'd inherit one of his properties someday, I knew the long game was mine to play... just like Holmes. But I got careless—left the damn journal out—and couldn't even profit from her skeleton at least...

Harper stands before the house fire, clutching the journal in his hands. After hesitating, he tosses it into the flames, watching as it catches fire and is consumed by the blaze.

Harper talks on the phone, frustration in his voice.

HARPER:

(On the phone) That crash made breaking news! Missed an opportunity for a fee. (insinuating Clara's skeleton) What did Tall Pine say about the next order?

CUTAWAY

Freddy lies in bed with a young girl(30), a sense of urgency in his tone.

FREDDY

(Somberly) Tall Pine and his brother got locked up yesterday. It hit the news too. We're in trouble unless we resort to the old ways. But you know, that medical school just outside of town is paying eight grand a daber (code for cadaver).

HARPER:(V/O)

Freddy was like the fun uncle I never had. But never told him about my deed scams because I always shared the

78 INT. FREDDY'S BUNKER-DAY

78

The two stand in front of each other.

FREDDY:

(Grimly) That stupid fuck Tall Pine's been pinched. It's a damn mess, Harp. Our income's shot to hell. I don't know what we gonna do! I don't have shit saved up!

The flickering light casts eerie shadows across his face, accentuating the gravity of his thoughts. Harper's cell phone rings and answers.

Sunny panicked voice crackles over the phone as she relays distressing known news to Harper.

SUNNY (V/O):

(Crying) Oh my god, I can't believe this happened. I've been so focused on working at the salon that I haven't kept up with the news! She called me that day four times

Harper stands with his phone in hand, his eyes suddenly lighting up as he gets an idea. The scene ends with his signature devilish smile.

79 INT. NIGHT. FREDDY'S BUNKER-HOURS LATER

79

SUNNY:

(Crying) Harper, why was she heading to the expressway? She works on 6th Street. I don't understand.

HARPER:

(Drops a few tears) Fuck... I don't understand either... she was one of the two people, I could trust with my life. (glares at Freddy)

CUTAWAY MONTAGE

80 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

80

Harper watches from a distance as Clara rummages through his car, her fingers skimming over his journal. She snatches it, slipping into her own car, flipping through the pages, engrossed.

81 EXT. CLARA'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

81

Harper walks away, heading down the street. Clara, still fixated on the journal, eventually steps out of her car and heads inside.

82 INT. CLARA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

82

Clara, exhausted, sprawls on the couch, journal still in hand. The clock reads 4:00 AM. Her eyes flutter shut, unaware of the danger lurking in the shadows.

83 EXT. JUNKYARD - NIGHT

83

Harper and Freddy stand beside a rusted truck, exchanging a silent nod. Freddy pops the hood, inspecting the engine while Harper lights a cigarette.

FREDDY:
You sure about this? She's a good woman to have.

HARPER:
I fucked up... She knows too much.
It has to look like an accident,
ok?

They shake hands, sealing the fate of Clara.

84 EXT. DETROIT TRAFFIC - DAY

84

Freddy grips the wheel of the rumbling truck, his knuckles white. Clara's car inches forward at a green light.

FREDDY:
(muttering to himself) Right on time...

With a sudden roar, he floors the gas. The truck **slams** into Clara's vehicle, metal crumpling like paper. Glass **shatters**. Horns **blare**. Her car spins, colliding into a street pole.

Freddy doesn't stop. He swerves around the wreckage, disappearing into traffic, leaving chaos in his wake.

85 INT. HARPER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

85

Dim lighting. Harper stands in front of a mirror, holding a camera. Click. The flash illuminates his face, a twisted smirk creeping in. He adjusts the pin on his chest—a **skull insignia with "H.W.M." engraved deep into its bone-white surface**.

His reflection lingers as the camera lowers.

CUTAWAY

86 EXT. CRASH SITE - DAY

86

Clara's crushed car, smoke curling from the wreckage. Inside, her trembling fingers twitch. A final, fragile breath escapes her lips before her hand falls lifelessly to her side.

END FLASHBACK MONTAGE

87 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

87

The beeping of machines hums softly in the background. MR. MATHIS lies frail in the hospital bed, his breathing shallow.

HARPER, now a grown man, stands beside him, hands in his pockets, eyes unreadable.

MR. MATHIS:

(weakly, a small smile forming)
You've grown into a man, Harper...
I always knew you would.

HARPER:

(quietly, but firm) I just wish you
were gonna be around to see what I
become.

MR. MATHIS:

(nodding slightly, voice strained)
You don't need me for that. Make a
name for yourself, son... something
they'll never forget.

Harper looks away for a beat, his jaw tightening.

MR. MATHIS:

(coughs, his breath hitching) You
hear me, boy? Make your mark.

His breathing suddenly **falters**. His **body tenses** as he begins **choking**, struggling for air.

HARPER:

*(stepping closer, unsure, watching
him fight for breath)* Dad?

The **monitors beep erratically**. A moment later, **nurses rush in**, pushing Harper aside as they scramble to stabilize him.

Harper doesn't move—he just **stares**.

He watches as the nurses work frantically, but something in his expression hardens.

This is the last lesson his father ever taught him.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

88 INT. BANK- DAY

88

Harper shakes hands with the bank teller after completing the sale of Clara's properties and the deed from the restaurant of his second wife Rochelle.

HARPER:

Thank you for helping with the transactions. It's a relief to have this sorted out.

TELLER:

It will take some time for the paperwork to process. I'll give you a call once everything is finalized, and you can collect your payment.

HARPER:

I appreciate. Please let me know as soon as it's ready.

Harper walks towards the door with an expression of uncertainty on his face.

89 INT. SUNNY & J.B. APARTMENT-NIGHT

89

Sunny jumps out of the shower and wraps up in a dry towel. When she is applying her face cream she hears an odd sound.

But didn't think anything of it as she listened to her music. Sunny heads down to the kitchen.

she notices the TV is turned on when she knows she has shut it off.

SUNNY:

(Nervous) J.B., baby are you home?

Sunny walks into the front room and a shadow walks behind her unknowingly.

SUNNY:

(strolling throughout the house)
Justin, don't be corny, say sumn,
ma'fucka! Hello?

The unknown person suddenly grabs Sunny from behind- she screams.

90 INT. INSIDE HIS MUSTANG. RESTAURANT DRIVE THROUGH-NIGHT

90

J.B. is bobbing his head to his rap music while smoking a cigarette and waiting on his food in the drive-thru.

91 EXT. OFFICE DESK. LEILA'S HOUSE-NIGHT

91

The glow from her **laptop screen** flickers across **LEILA'S** tense face.

A **news article** about *Clara's fatal accident* is open, but her focus is elsewhere—dissecting **the inconsistencies**: the location, the timing, the lack of witness statements.

She exhales sharply, running a hand through her hair.

A **drawer creaks open**—inside, an old **case notepad** she wasn't supposed to keep.

Leila flips through the pages, scribbling down **names**—Clara's coworkers, known associates, anyone who might have been in her circle.

Her phone vibrates. A **blocked number**.

TEXT MESSAGE: *Stop digging.*

Leila's grip tightens around the phone.

She **closes the laptop**, slips on her **jacket**, and checks the **chamber of her gun**.

Suspended or not, she's getting answers.

92 EXT. SUNNY & J.B. APARTMENT BUILDING-NIGHT

92

Leila ascends the stairs and spots Sunny emerging from the door. Sunny's disheveled hair and sweat-drenched appearance, adorned in a robe, tell a tale of an intimate encounter.

Leila observes her sharing smiles with a man she doesn't recognize as Sunny's husband, Justin Bickerstaff, also known as J.B.

As the man descends the stairs, he boldly appraises Leila, adding an element of tension to the scene before entering the basement apartment.

LEILA:
Sunny Sanchez-Bickerstaff?

SUNNY:
(Closing the door) Who the hell are you, Jehovah's Witness?

LEILA:

At this hour? I'm Detective Goodman. I'd like to ask you some questions about Clara Lovings.

93 INT. CITY STREET. J.B.'S MUSTANG- NIGHT

93

J.B. sits at a stoplight, devouring his burger and fries while immersed in his rap music.

As the light turns green, J.B. almost collides with car because he's too focused on enjoying his meal to pay proper attention to the road.

As J.B. drives, an eerie sensation washes over him, causing him to narrowly avoid another collision and spill his soft drink on his face.

Quickly pressing the brakes. "Skrt!!"

J.B.:
 (Frustrated) Shit, Ayo, watch where the fuck going, dog!

94 EXT PORCH- NIGHT

94

Leila senses someone watching them, she turns to scan the area.

LEILA:
 I'd like to talk to you in private.

SUNNY:
 (Irritated) I don't know about all that; my husband is on his way home from work.

LEILA:
 (Nonchalant) Suit yourself. I'll wait until he comes home and ask him some questions.

SUNNY:
 (Embarrassed) Um, okay, I guess you can come in, but I need to take a shower before J.B. gets home.

95 EXT/INT. CITY BLOCK- NIGHT

95

J.B. comes to a sudden halt in front of their building.

As J.B. exits his car. A masked assailant swiftly approaches J.B. from behind, stabbing him in the neck with three quick and fatal strikes.

Next, we see another assailant hopping out of the van to help carry J.B. to the back of the van.

CUTAWAY

96 INT. SUNNY & J.B. 'S UPSTAIRS WINDOW- CONTINUOUS

96

Leila hears the faint commotion from the upstairs window and looks out the window-she sees nothing but a van pulling off.

Leila continues inspecting the pictures throughout the house while Sunny takes a quick shower.

SUNNY:

(Coming out of the bathroom) I know what you're thinking, but I'm not a hoe. J.B. ... is a good man, but I know he's out here doing his dirt, so I have to look out for me. You understand, right?

LEILA:

I don't... but can you tell me more about the man in the picture? Is this her Clara's husband, Harper Mathis?

SUNNY:

(Combing out her hair) He's smart and ended up working at our university years after graduation. All I know, After a while, they were living lavishly. Harper started a business with a friend, but she didn't know many details as long as the bills were paid. Care for wine or bottled water?

LEILA:

No, thank you. Do you happen to know why he hasn't come down to see her body yet?

SUNNY:

Look, I don't know. That man was always a bit cool, calm, and a little creepy.

LEILA:

What is his current occupation?

SUNNY:

Look, Miss Goodman, I don't have all the answers. I don't live in his skin, girl. Are we done here? I've got some things to take care of, respectfully.

LEILA:

(Displaying her detective skills) Alright, just make sure to hide your friend's wave brush. From the picture I've seen J.B. is it? Has long dreaded hair. Good day.

Leila is seen turning her back heading for the door before Sunny can respond.

Leila steps outside of the building, the chilly night air biting at her skin.

She closes her jacket as the cold breezes past her. As she reaches for her phone, it vibrates in her pocket before she can get to it.

With a quick swipe, she answers the call from her friend in the department.

FRIEND (O/S):

Leila, they've found something on Clara Loving's corpse. A single page is torn from a journal or something.

LEILA:

(Intrigued) A journal page? What does it say?

FRIEND (O/S):

It's currently under analysis, but there appears to be some kind of insignia. It could potentially be a significant lead. You might want to investigate this further.

LEILA:

(Determined) I'll head to the station. Call me when you can get it, then meet me in our usual spot.

FRIEND (O/S):

Will do. And, Leila, please keep my game tickets safe. I almost got caught getting the address of that agent you ended up punching and getting suspended last month!

Leila is seen getting in her car.

97 INT. WINDOW-NIGHT

97

Harper is seen peering out the window from Sunny and J.B.'s apartment.

98 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

98

Leila's car **glides** to a stop beside a black sedan. The streetlights flicker, casting shadows over her tense face. She rolls down the window.

Inside the sedan, her friend, **JAY**, smirks, holding a folded printout between his fingers.

JAY:

(grinning) Courtside, right?

Leila tosses a pair of **basketball tickets** onto his dashboard. He hands over the document.

As she unfolds it, a dark insignia stamped in ink. **H.W.M.**

LEILA:

(to herself) What the fuck does this mean?

Jay pulls off in his car.

99 EXT/INT. FREDDY'S BUNKER-NIGHT

99

Harper and Freddy desperately haul the lifeless bodies of Sunny and J.B. into their makeshift cadaver-processing area.

The dim light reveals the tension building between them.

HARPER:

(Frustrated) This has got to stop, Freddy. We can't keep arguing every time we've got work to do.

FREDDY:

(Defensive) I get it, Harper, but things have changed. You're calling all the shots now, and I'm just supposed to follow along? It was I who brought you in!

HARPER:

(Assertive) You brought me in because you knew I had the brains for this. We need to adapt and evolve.

FREDDY:

(Grumbling) But I've been in this business longer, Harper. I had my system, my way of doing things.

HARPER:

(Smirking) Your way wasn't cutting it. We needed an upgrade, and that's why you brought me in.

Freddy clenches his fists, visibly uncomfortable with Harper's growing dominance.

FREDDY:

(Stubborn) Just because you've got some fancy ideas doesn't mean you're the boss.

HARPER:

(Leaning in) It does when those ideas keep us ahead in the game. Look, Freddy, we're partners, but we need a leader. Someone who can navigate us through this mess.

Freddy shoots Harper a resentful glare.

FREDDY:

(Sarcastic) Mess? You're the one who thinks dragging corpses around is some kind of science project.

HARPER:

(Calmly) It's a business, Freddy. And in this business, the smart survive. So, are you with me, or are you going to keep living in the past?

The bunker's wide interior echoes with their voices.

DISSOLVE TO:

100 INT. BUNKER-NIGHT

100

Inside the dimly lit bunker, Harper and Freddy diligently work on their gruesome task with a body in front of them.

Harper skillfully strips the flesh off the bones, of J.B.'s arm- later methodically cleaning every inch.

His movements are precise, a testament to his expertise in the morbid craft.

Freddy works with a determined intensity, mirroring Harper's process.

The sound of scraping and slicing echoes in the confined space as they meticulously prepare the cadavers.

Despite the macabre nature of their work, there is an eerie efficiency in their actions. The bunker serves as a silent witness to the transformation of once-living beings into lifeless cadavers.

The flickering light casts shadows on the grim scene as Harper and Freddy, with their respective skills.

101 INT. BUNKER-NIGHT

101

Harper and Freddy, their hands stained with blood and grime, stand in an uneasy silence as they finish their grim task.

Suddenly when Freddy smiles, without warning, Harper's swift hand slices across Freddy's neck.

Freddy staggers backward, his hands desperately trying to stem the flow of blood spurting from his neck.

HARPER:

(Slowly walking towards Freddy) I'm sorry, old friend. Circumstances have changed, and I need to relocate. Three dabers at 24 grand will be my ticket out of Michigan.

Freddy, panic in his eyes, he drops to the ground and continues to scramble around on the ground.

Freddy's attempts to control the bleeding grow more desperate as he crumbles.

Harper, his demeanor cold and calculated, watches Freddy struggle with a detached gaze.

HARPER:

Goodbye, old friend. I'll clean you up nicely!

DISSOLVE TO:

102 EXT. HARPER'S TRUCK- NIGHT

102

Harper sits in the driver's seat, calmly observing the glow of flames consuming Freddy's bunker through the rearview mirror as he drives away.

The fiery blaze flickers in his eyes, reflecting the cold determination that led to this destructive act.

CUTAWAY

Here's a tightened and more visual version of the scene, designed to *show* Harper's emotionless professionalism while letting the atmosphere do the heavy lifting:

103 EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

103

Harper idles in his truck, headlights off. The bed carries three shrouded cadavers – skeletal remains barely contained in body bags: *Sunny, J.B., and Freddy.*

A white, unmarked medical van pulls in behind him. The sliding door creaks open – two men step out, faces hard, no words wasted.

One of them nods at Harper. Harper exits, calm and cold.

The men wordlessly begin unloading the corpses, dragging the bags into the back of the van with clinical precision.

CLOSE ON:

Harper's hand gripping a thick envelope. He peeks inside – stacks of hundreds. No count. No questions. He tucks it into the inside pocket of his coat.

One of the men returns, extends a hand. Harper looks at and frowns but he raises his hand to salute him instead. Brief. Silent.

Their eyes lock for a second – one predator acknowledging another.

The van doors slam shut. They drive off.

Harper watches them fade into the darkness. His face stays blank, unreadable – a man who's mastered the art of detachment.

He lights a cigarette. Inhales slow. No relief in the exhale.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

104 EXT. HARPER/CLARA'S HOUSE- DAY

104

Leila rides up to the remains of Harper and Clara's burnt-down house. The once vibrant home now stands as a charred skeleton, a haunting reminder of a destructive force.

As she exits her car, the acrid scent of smoldering wood and lingering ashes fills the air. Leila surveys the wreckage with suspicion.

Police cars and fire trucks are parked nearby, their presence confirming the gravity of the incident.

Approaching a nearby citizen, Leila inquires about what happened.

LEILA:

What's going on?

BYSTANDER:

They say that one dude named Harper killed himself after his wife Clara's incident!

Her expression reveals a skepticism, a feeling that something doesn't add up.

Leila stands amidst the debris, the charred memories of a home.

105 INT. BANK-DAY

105

Harper stands at the bank counter, his face tense with anticipation.

The bank representative across the counter breaks the news, revealing an issue with his accounts.

BANK REPRESENTATIVE:

Mr. Mathis, I'm afraid there's been an issue with your accounts. We received a call from Clara before her unfortunate passing... She mentioned she was forced to sign over her father's property.

Harper's frustration intensifies, his jaw clenched.

HARPER:

(Angry) Forced? What are you talking about? My wife wouldn't sign anything against her will!

The bank representative put both hands in the air- he doesn't know what to say.

Harper, consumed by disbelief and rage, abruptly leaves the bank, the heavy glass doors swinging behind him.

106 EXT. HARPER'S TRUCK. EXPRESSWAY - DAY

106

The truck growls low like it's tired of running.

Harper grips the wheel, smoke curling off the cigarette burning slow between his lips. GILMANTON signs rise up like ghosts-he's home.

Golden sunlight bleeds across cracked pavement. Shadows stretch long like the past reaching out.

Harper's eyes stay fixed, hollowed by miles and motives. A twitch of the brow-he's remembering something.

107 FLASHBACK - INT. KITCHEN - DAY (YEARS AGO)

107

His mother-soft smile, stained apron, and humming while cooking. A warmth Harper ain't felt since.

He turns onto Main Street. It's the same street, just colder now. Closed stores. Bent street signs. That old church is leaning a little more.

He exhales-smoke and something heavier. The kind of weight that doesn't sit right. The truck creeps down a winding road, swallowed by trees.

He's not just back.

He's returning to answers, to ashes, to unfinished business.

108 EXT. GILMANTON-NIGHT

108

HARPER (V.O.)

I hadn't seen Emma since the day we peeled off down Highway 3—me, my dad. She never asked about the night my mom. Or the carnival. Now she's big time, in magazines and acting now.

109 EXT. EMMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

109

Harper climbs the porch steps slow, sizing up the house like it's a memory turned solid. Porch lights hum. Same swing. Same chipped rail.

A breath.

KNOCK.

The door creaks open. EMMA stands there—barefoot, soft robe, familiar eyes. She smiles like he never left.

No words.

Just arms around him. A hold that says history.

110 INT. EMMA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

110

The place is warm. Lived-in. A candle flickers near a framed wedding photo. Harper clocks it without flinching.

Then—

MARK enters, carrying a sleepy kid—JAKE, maybe six. Eyes Harper like a puzzle piece that don't fit.

Emma glances between the two men.

MARK

(offers a hand) I heard a lot about you!

HARPER

(quiet grin) I hope you wasn't listening.

Emma's smile fades.

FADE OUT.

111 INT. CITY BAR - NIGHT

111

Harper slouches at the far end of the bar—hood up, collar high. Neon flickers off a dusty mirror behind the bottles.

He nurses a beer like it wronged him. Eyes heavy. Mind somewhere darker than this room.

The bartender slides over a shot without a word. We see he stares at old photo of Emma & him at the carnival.

BARTENDER

(voice low, casual) You lookin' to
keep floatin' or drown?

HARPER

(taps the bar) Floatin's for liars.
Keep it comin'.

He throws back the tequila. Winces just slightly. The glass hits wood with a dull thunk.

Voices at a nearby table drift over, sharp through the fog.

GUY #1 (O.S.)

Chicago's gonna be nuts. Streets
flooded. For the World Fair.

GUY #2 (O.S.)

Man, they said record turnout.
Like... *biblical*.

Harper doesn't look, but his body shifts—just enough to listen better.

His eyes flick up to the mounted TV above the bar. Footage of the World Fair rolls—crowds, lights, noise like a thousand sins packed into one city block.

He smirks.

Half-smirk. Half-plan.

Lifts the shot glass again—empty this time—and studies it like it told his future.

HARPER:

(mutters, to himself) Chicago...
yeah. Let's see what the devil got
left, fuck it why not?

112 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

112

A battered truck slices through the open stretch, engine humming like it's got something to prove.

Wind presses against the windshield. Bugs thud. Tires eat pavement like time's running out.

The **"Welcome to Illinois"** sign flashes by-worn, graffitied, leaning just enough to feel like a warning instead of a greeting.

DISSOLVE TO:

113 INT. CHICAGO PHARMACY - DAY

113

SUPERIMPOSE: A WEEK LATER

Harper, now **J.J. Combs**, steps into the cozy, sunlit pharmacy. The couple who owns the place greet him with warmth that almost matches the gentle hum of the old air conditioner.

The receptionist, **Mrs. Easter**, smiles, her voice smooth and welcoming.

MRS. EASTER

We're glad to have you onboard,
J.J. H.R. has spoken highly of you.

Harper, his face unreadable, nods, letting the compliment wash over him without a word. But in his eyes, something flickers—appreciation, maybe a hint of calculation.

J.J.

Thanks for having me, Ms... (he glances at her name tag) Worthy.

His words drip with politeness, though his mind is elsewhere, calculating, always plotting the next move.

Later, in the back of the pharmacy, J.J. slips on a crisp white doctor's coat. He doesn't look like a stranger anymore. He's **part of the fabric**—one with the place, blending in like he was always meant to be here.

MONTAGE - J.J. AT THE PHARMACY

—*J.J. rings up a young mother, gently entertaining her crying baby with a silly face. The child giggles. The mother smiles with relief.*

—*He chats with an elderly man picking up heart medication, leaning in like they're old friends. The man laughs, slaps J.J. on the back.*

—A teenager in a hoodie hesitates near the counter. J.J. motions him over, discreetly slides a free sample of acne cream across the counter. No words needed. The kid nods, eyes grateful.

—An anxious woman clutches a prescription. J.J. speaks softly, reassuring her. She exhales, her tension melting with his calm tone.

—Daylight spills through the storefront windows as the line of customers grows longer—but J.J. moves with rhythm, with purpose. Every smile is real. Every laugh earned.

—The OLD COUPLE who owns the pharmacy watches from the back. The wife nudges her husband, eyes misty with pride. He wraps an arm around her, both beaming as if they'd struck gold.

END MONTAGE.

114 EXT. PHARMACY-NIGHT

114

MR. EASTER

Watching you work tonight felt like
you were the son I never had, J.J.
Drinks on me tonight, son!

J.J. smiles—a little wider this time—shaking Mr. Easter's hand firmly. Behind his smile, a storm brews, but it doesn't show.

Instead, he hands Mr. Easter a small capsule, his voice smooth and inviting.

J.J.

I want you to try something and
tell me what you feel like tomorrow
morning. This new elixir I made,
it's fantastic for brain function.
Give it a try. Maybe we can get it
approved by the State.

As Mr. Easter takes the capsule, J.J.'s eyes dart across the room. Mrs. Easter stands by the counter, eyes soft, watching the interaction with interest.

J.J. doesn't miss a beat. He shoots her a wink, and her smile flickers, just for a second.

But that's all he needs.

115 EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MICHIGAN - DAY

115

Leila's boots hit the pavement in rhythm. Purpose in her stride. The old apartment complex stands tired and gray, balconies sagging like secrets.

As she nears, a man exits the basement unit—shirt half-buttoned, jaw clenched, eyes scanning till they land on her.

Frozen beat. Recognition clicks.

He stiffens. Guilt washes across his face, fast and fleeting. Replaced by a hard squint.

LEILA

(sizing him up) Sunny's fuck boy,
righ--

He just charges. A blur of rage.

His hands clamp around her throat like he's been waiting to snap.

MAN

(gritted) What the hell did you do
to her?! Where is she?!

Leila coughs, heels scraping concrete. No time to talk.

She drives her a small pocket knife in the man's legs. We hear it but don't see it. The wails, and let's neck go.

Leila reaches up her head and smashes her forehead into his nose — a sickening *crack*.

Blood.

He stumbles, but she's already on her feet and behind him — leg hooked, shoulder jammed. She flips him flat, yanks her scarf off in one clean pull.

Wrap. Twist. Lock.

One hard *slam* — his head hits pavement. He groans, dazed.

LEILA

(low, breath sharp) I don't hurt
people. I find them. Think real
hard: where's her husband?

The man blinks through tears and blood.

MAN

(slurred, pained) You broke my
fuckin' nose... and I don't know.
Ain't seen either of 'em. His car
ain't moved in days.

Phones are out. A couple neighbors filming, some whispering
from stoops.

Leila breathes heavy, hand still clenched.

Something's wrong.

116 INT. LEILA'S FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

116

Leila sits at her cluttered table, the room dimly lit,
shadows creeping across the walls like silent spectators.
Piles of documents and old files lay scattered, a chaotic
puzzle in front of her.

She sifts through the papers with methodical precision, her
brow furrowed in concentration.

A long pause as Leila stops, her eyes locking onto a piece of
paper. Her fingers trace over the words as they **click-**
something snaps into place.

She lifts the document, her eyes scanning it.

The name "**Clara Lovings**" stands out, and beneath it, a
chilling detail. Clara's father had signed over his property
to her right before his death.

Leila's lips tighten, a subtle, grim smile forming as she
pieces the information together.

The silence in the room thickens as Leila reads on.

A sudden **shift** in her posture. She picks up another report—
Clara had called the bank on the day of her death. Her voice,
the report notes, sounded panicked, claiming she was forced
to sign everything over.

Leila leans back in her chair, her fingers twitching slightly
as her mind races.

Her gaze flickers to the open file picture on the table—**Sunny**
and J.B. are missing. Next, Clara's photo is inserted, Liela
face is confused, the death doesn't seem like an accident
anymore.

She picks up a photo from the pile. It's of **Harper**. She
circles his face with a black pen.

LEILA:
I know it your bitch ass.

Leila reaches for a torn journal page she found at the scene. The paper is stained, corners curling, but the symbols etched on it are unmistakable. A skull head insignia. Beneath it, the letters: **H.W.M.**

Ding.

The sound of Leila's phone breaking the tension. She answers without hesitation.

FRIEND (O/S)
(Excited) Hey Leila, those game tickets? They were fire! But I got news—remember the DNA from the burnt male at Harper and Clara's place? It's matched to a guy named **Howard Mudgett**. He's been missing for a year. From New York.

Leila's hand freezes mid-air, the weight of the words sinking into her.

Her eyes widen—**everything shifts**.

LEILA
(Voice low, urgent) Harper!

The word leaves her lips like a declaration. She knows. She knows who's behind it all. The darkness just became too real.

DISSOLVE TO:

117 INT. CHICAGO - DAY

117

Harper, now **J.J.**, sits across from **Dr. Easter**, sharing a quiet lunch in the back of the business.

The clink of silverware against porcelain is the only sound, the tension of casual conversation masking a deeper current beneath the surface. Dr. Easter chews thoughtfully, looking over at J.J. with a knowing grin.

DR. EASTER
You know, J.J., there are a few medical schools around here that'll pay top dollar for quality cadavers. Around ten grand a pop. I hear you talk to the gals about your college days.

J.J. raises an eyebrow, just a flicker of interest as he casually leans back in his chair. He nearly drops his wine glass—controlled, deliberate.

J.J.

I-Is that so? I do have a degree in biology. Spent many hours in a lab, though it feels like a lifetime ago.

A beat. The wine swirls in his glass, reflecting the dim lighting like liquid shadows.

TIME CUT TO

118 EXT. MORGUE-DAY

118

SUPERIMPOSE: WEEKS LATER

Harper/J.J. walks beside **Mrs. Easter**, their footsteps slow as they leave the morgue. The weight of Mr. Easter's death hangs in the air between them.

Mrs. Easter's eyes are red, her grief raw and unspoken. J.J.'s expression is a mask of empathy, his hand gently resting on her shoulder.

J.J.

(softly) I'm so sorry for your loss, Mrs. Easter. If you need anything... I'm here for you.

Her sobs fill the silence as he walks her to the car, offering a comforting presence, a steady arm.

119 INT. THE EASTER'S HOUSE- NIGHT

119

In the Easters' living room, the subtle electricity of unspoken connection crackles. Shared glances linger longer than necessary, and silence speaks louder than words.

J.J. stands by the window, hands casually tucked in his pockets. Mrs. Easter sits across from him, wiping her tears.

MRS. EASTER:

(eyes closed) J.J., you've been such a great support these past few weeks.

J.J.

(softly) It's the least I could do, considering how close we've become.

He steps closer, a calculated move. She doesn't pull away as his hand rests gently against hers.

Then, like the world itself exhales, J.J. moves in—his lips meeting hers with practiced precision, a promise sealed without hesitation.

MRS. EASTER:

I think I wanna sign over the pharmacy to you. This happened to Ray... I

TIME CUT TO

In the dimly lit basement, we zoom in on the deed with his signature on the paper.

Next, we see J.J. stands over a **skeleton**, the faint sound of polishing filling the otherwise quiet room.

He's meticulous, careful—every movement slow and deliberate as he buffs the bones.

120 INT. THE PHARMACY - DAY

120

Harper, dressed in an elegant suit, stands confidently, shaking hands with a few independent contractors.

The scene is almost too perfect—the firm grips, the smiles that seem to stretch a little wider than necessary.

J.J.

Welcome, gentlemen. I've got blueprints for each of you.

The contractors nod, eager, as J.J. hands over the plans. They flip through the blueprints, their faces focused on the details. J.J. watches them carefully, his smile just shy of a smirk.

J.J. (V.O.)

(softly, almost to himself) I gave them exactly what they wanted—blueprints for the areas they'd be working on. But not everything's on paper. Some spaces are... unlisted. Hidden doors, secret compartments... areas that don't exist on any plan.

J.J. leans back slightly, his hands clasped behind his back, eyes glinting with a secret only he knows. He observes as the contractors get absorbed in their tasks, unaware of the blind spots in their work.

121 INT/EXT. CORPSE CASTLE - DAY

121

CAMERA sweeps across a half-finished building—wood beams exposed, dust floating through sunlight like secrets in the air.

J.J. moves like a conductor through chaos—clipboard under his arm, sharp eyes slicing through sawdust. He points without hesitation, each gesture tight and commanding.

J.J.

(to an architect, flat but firm)
Steel. Black. Edges like blades. I
want this place to cut the skyline.

A group of workers nod, adjusting blueprints. A spark shoots off a welding tool behind him. He doesn't flinch.

J.J.

(to decorators) Velvet. Gold.
Darkness you sink into. It should
feel like sin... with a price tag.

He slides a cooler open—tossing water bottles, handing out homemade sandwiches like currency. Some laugh. Others stay focused. All of them follow his lead.

DISSOLVE JUMP CUTS:

BACK TO SCENE:

Harper—J.J.—steps onto the curb. The wind kicks his coat slightly. He lights a cigarette without looking down.

Behind him, the new structure stands tall—glass, steel, secrets. A convenience store, a barbershop, and a hotel stacked like layers of a perfect lie.

J.J. takes a drag, eyes the blacked-out windows above. A smirk creeps across his lips—not pride... calculation.

His reflection stares back at him in the tinted glass—darker, sharper, like it knows what's coming.

122 EXT. CHICAGO - DAY

122

The sky bleeds orange over the South Side, casting long shadows across the city like it knows something it shouldn't. And there it stands—his masterpiece.

The newly built monolith stretches tall, unapologetic, like a king born from blood and blueprint. Its silhouette carves a new skyline—sharper, colder.

HARPER/J.J.: (V.O.)

I'm only twenty-five. Took seventy-six lives over the past thirteen years. Well... seventy-five if you don't count Snuggles. But now? Now with my Lybrinth—my empire—I can finally double up. Make 'em all remember my name... even if they have to scream it in hell.

Cue slow motion—

Inside, the ground floor buzzes. Neon hums against glass coolers. Chips, condoms, blunt wraps—everything a soul on the run might need. A cashier bags items with dead eyes while a teenager swipes a juice behind him.

The camera floats upward.

Second floor—fades into clippers buzzing in rhythm with trap music. Black barber slices the air with his comb, twisting a young boy's hair with precision. Laughter. Mirror smirks. A straight razor glints.

Another dissolve.

Third floor—low lights, burgundy curtains. A modest hotel with whispers crawling the hallway walls.

The camera pans across the structure's veins. Trap doors. False walls. Floorboards that echo hollow. Pipes that hum secrets.

A young Hispanic couple tangled in pleasure inside room 106, completely exposed beneath the illusion of privacy.

We slow to a small hole in the wall. Inside the walls, Harper watches through a sliver in the plaster. One eye. Steady.

He doesn't blink.

A small valve clicks under his fingers. Gas hisses softly, sneaking through vents like a ghost on a mission.

The couple twitches. Hands freeze mid-touch. Their bodies spasm, soon as they inhale the gas and suddenly the room becomes a silent warzone of death.

Harper twists the valve again. This time in reverse. The gas retreats. Obedient. Efficient.

No panic. No hesitation. He moves deeper into the wall, fingers brushing cobwebs, reaching a hidden door. A push—and it opens like it's greeting an old friend. A gas mask hangs waiting. He puts it on without ceremony.

He's done this before.

He steps in.

He lifts the woman like a prized possession. Studies her, briefly lost in thought.

HARPER:

This one had a nice ass, I must say. Ha. Too bad now

Then—bam—flings her into a hidden chute like yesterday's trash.

Down she goes, body rolling smoothly along a padded tunnel engineered to protect the bones. No cracks. No blood trail. Just a thud. Soft. Calculated.

From the basement floor, the camera stares up into the shaft. A dim red light above.

Harper leans in from above, gas mask dangling around his neck now.

And there it is.

That smile.

All teeth. No mercy.

123 INT. J.J.'S OFFICE - DAY

123

Light pours through half-shut blinds, casting prison bar shadows across stacks of blueprints, receipts, and blood-red folders.

HARPER, aka J.J., sits behind a massive desk—eyes fixed on surveillance screens, fingers drumming against a fountain pen. His cellphone buzzes with a Michigan area code.

He freezes.

ON SCREEN - CELLPHONE: Incoming Call: MICHIGAN

He picks it up, eyes narrowing, tension in his jaw masked behind a smooth voice.

HARPER / J.J.
(into phone) Yeah?

MICHIGAN FRIEND (O.S.)
Yo, Harper—cops are snooping
around. My guy in the department
says they found a body at your old
place, man. But they know it ain't
yours.

HARPER / J.J.
(calm, calculated) Appreciate it.
They're late. I'm ten moves ahead.

MICHIGAN FRIEND (O.S.)
Nah bro—

click.

The phone crashes down into the cradle, louder than necessary. Not rage. Just punctuation.

CREEAAK—

The office door groans open.

BOBBY PIERCE (24) steps in like he owns part of the floor. Tall. Clean-cut chaos. Black hair slicked with intent, neck tattoos peeking out from his collar—inked reminders of wars fought in alleys and prisons.

He smiles, but it don't reach his eyes.

BOBBY:
(smirking) You J.J. Combs?

J.J. doesn't answer right away. He leans back slow, flicking open a pocket knife, letting the blade catch the light.

HARPER/J.J.:
Depends.

BOBBY:
I heard you were hiring. Figured
I'd shoot my shot. I got skills. My
name is--

J.J.'s eyes scan Bobby like he's weighing a new weapon—beautiful but potentially volatile.

HARPER/J.J.: (V.O.)

Bobby Pierce... My second & most
trusted unholy alliance.

HARPER/J.J.:

(flat) What skills?

BOBBY:

Two convenience stores. A
barbershop down the block. Hands
that don't freeze under pressure.

J.J. closes the knife.

HARPER/J.J.:

(smiling just enough) Welcome to
the castle.

They shake.

IRIS OUT.

124 EXT. CHICAGO SOUTHSIDE - NIGHT

124

The streets don't sleep here. Streetlamps buzz and flicker like dying stars over cracked sidewalks. A dog barks somewhere behind a rusted gate. .

HARPER, aka J.J., trails a man. Tight. Silent. Eyes locked on BOBBY PIERCE – hoodie up, pace anxious – like he's walking guilt home.

Up the block, a thickset MAN steps out from an alley. Stops Bobby in his tracks.

A beat passes. Then tension snaps.

CRACK – the man's fist rocks Bobby's jaw in Harper's POV.

BOBBY stumbles back, wipes the blood from his lip... then *lunges*.

He swings hard – fists drumming the man's ribs like a war rhythm. A growl rips from Bobby's chest.

HARPER ducks behind a delivery truck, eyes locked. Silent witness.

The man gasps, drops to a knee.

BOBBY:

(panting, eyes wild) You fire me like that?! I got four mouths to feed... and a pregnant wife, die you fat fuck!

He holds a bloodied **bloodied bowie knife** under the streetlight.

The man tries to crawl – *too slow*.

SHUNK – Bobbies blade buries into the crown of his skull. The man freezes. Then tips backward like a felled statue.

Harper steps from the shadows, slow clap echoing inside his smirk.

HARPER/J.J.:
(half-grin) Damn, Bobby. You do have skills.

Bobby looks up, chest heaving, face soaked in rage and sweat. Doesn't reply.

He snatches the man's wallet and his knife. Gone. Vanishes behind a backyard gate like he never existed.

125 EXT. CHICAGO ALLEYWAY – NIGHT

125

Next, we see J.J. hauls the dead weight – literally. The man's body thuds against the truck bed, one arm dragging in the gravel.

He finally hoists the fat man, Bobby killed in, slams the tailgate.

CUT TO:

126 INT. HARPER'S CASTLE – DAY

126

Concrete walls. Dim lighting. The *hum* of refrigeration. This ain't a basement. It's a tomb that works part-time as a lab.

BOBBY steps in upstairs, still twitching from last night a bit.

127 INT BASEMENT-CONTINUOUS

127

J.J. leans on the railing below, looking up.

HARPER/J.J.:
Yo. Down here.

Bobby descends.

At the bottom: *four gurneys*.

One holds last night's corpse — chest cut open, face pale and frozen in disbelief.

Another: a **sunken skeleton**, ribs poking out like prison bars.

Next: the dead & gassed **Hispanic man**, bruised and stitched.

Last gurney: *empty*.

Bobby stops cold.

HARPER/J.J.:

(slick) You did good. Real good.
That body's worth ten grand chopped proper.

He tosses Bobby a **lab coat**. Then a **scalpel**.

HARPER/J.J.: (CONT'D)

Suit up. We split it down the middle all the profit. Ten large per. what do you say?

Harper slowly approaches him.

BOBBY stares at the blade. At the body. At the money beneath the madness.

128 EXT. BASEMENT - SAME TIME

128

The crematorium rumbles low like a beast waking up. J.J. slides a bloody hoodie inside — slow, practiced. A watch. A wallet. A torn-up driver's license. All swallowed by the fire.

Bobby sits on an overturned bucket a few feet back — eyes wide, shirt stuck to him with sweat and someone else's blood. His hands won't stop trembling.

Behind him, the butcher table still drips.

CRACKLE-FWOOSH.

The furnace flares. Orange light kisses J.J.'s face. Calm. Almost serene.

Bobby stares into the fire like it might talk back.

J.J. doesn't look his way.

J.J.:
 (low, smooth) You'll get used to
 the smell.

The fire pops again – the only applause in the room.

Bobby swallows hard. Doesn't say a word.

J.J. watches the flames, like he sees something holy in them.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK

129 INT. PRECINCT - CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ'S OFFICE - NIGHT

129

Papers scatter as Captain Rodriguez SLAMS a folder on his desk.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:
 (fuming) Why the hell were you
 still sniffin' around Clara
 Lovings? That case was closed—
 reckless homicide! (beat) And now?
 Now you put hands on a man claimin'
 you were the last to see the
 Bickerstaff's breathin'!

LEILA:
 (stern but low) Cap—

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ:
 (snaps, rising) I ain't askin' for
 explanations! You're done, Goodman.
 Badge. Gun. Get the fuck out my
 office.

Silence. Leila doesn't flinch. No tear, no shake. Just steps forward, drops her badge and sidearm on his desk like dead weight.

Turns around – slow, deliberate – and walks out. The door doesn't slam. It clicks. Quiet. Final. Rodriguez stands frozen. Hands still clenched.

His jaw tight as his eyes follow the now-empty doorway.

CAMERA HOLDS –

Captain Rodriguez, alone in the room, surrounded by silence... until—

The door FLINGS back open.

Leila storms in like a bullet. Eyes locked. One hand shoots to her empty holster.

Rodriguez flinches. Not fear—startled. His breath catches.

Then—**Leila pulls out a crumpled pack of gum.**

She peels one out, tosses it in her mouth, chews. Slow. Cold.

She shoots him a look that cuts deeper than bullets—then walks out for good.

Door clicks again. Louder this time.

130 INT. MOVING TRUCK — DAY

130

Sunlight streaks through a cracked windshield.

Leila grips the wheel — jaw set, eyes locked on the road like it owes her something.

Behind her, the truck's cabin rattles with the weight of a new chapter.

Boxes stacked high, duct tape peeling at the edges. A toppled photo frame slides with every turn.

The hum of the engine drowns out yesterday.

Leila don't blink. She just drives — forward. Always forward

131 INT. MOVING TRUCK — NIGHT

131

Darkness hugs the cabin. Streetlights strobe across **Leila's stone-cold face** as the city fades behind her.

The **engine hums steady**, but her mind don't.

On the passenger seat —

Two Chicago Bulls tickets. Creased. Unused.

She glares at 'em like they betrayed her.

BUZZ. BUZZ.

The phone lights up the cab.

"Ma" glows on the screen. She answers.

LEILA'S MOTHER: (V.O.)

(soft, cracking) Leila... it's your brother. Lil Eric. He gone, baby. Ain't nobody seen him in months.

Leila freezes.

Eyes wide.

Fingers clamp tight around the wheel.

LEILA:

(quiet, shaken) What? Months?

LEILA'S MOTHER: (V.O.)
We ain't wanna pile on... not after
you got let go. Thought he'd walk
back in. But he didn't.

Beat.

Leila's voice breaks through the silence.

LEILA:

I was just...(look at tickets)I'm on
my way.

CLICK. Call ends.

Outside the windshield -

A green sign glows in the night.

"WELCOME TO ILLINOIS."

She floors the gas.

The road don't know what's coming.

132 EXT. CHICAGO WORLD FAIR - DAY

132

Sunlight bounces off the Ferris wheel. Laughter rides the wind. Music, shouts, smells of roasted peanuts and kettle corn(the ground is covered in them)-**chaos dressed as celebration.**

133 INT. SMALL CONVENIENCE KIOSK - CONTINUOUS

133

Inside a tucked-away corner of the fair, **Harper/J.J.** rings up a snack for a smiling **TOURIST.**

DING. Register closes.

Harper hands back change with a salesman's charm.

But his eyes? Cold. Calculating.

He leans toward **Bobby**, who's rearranging candy bars.

HARPER/J.J.:
(low, slick) Goin' for a walk.

Bobby nods—a signal received, mission understood. Bobby hands J.J. a knife.

134 EXT. CHICAGO WORLD FAIR - CONTINUOUS

134

Harper/J.J. slides into the river of people. His pace casual, his smile warm—just another friendly face.

But his gaze slices through the crowd like a knife in velvet.

KIDS laugh by a balloon stand.

Couples kiss on the carousel.

All while **predator's eyes** roam behind a grin.

Somewhere in this wonderland... a mark breathes easy.

Not for long.

The fair glows bright — but the shadows move with J.J./
Harper.

135 INT. MS. GOODMAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

135

The sun's light slices through the blinds, casting sharp shadows that dance over the dusty air, suspended like forgotten memories.

Ms. Goodman sits rigid, her grip tight on a tissue, crumpling it further with each shaky breath. Her eyes, swollen and raw, stare at nothing in particular. Her age is more than skin deep—etched into her face.

Across from her, Leila remains still. Tense. She watches, but she doesn't just listen. She absorbs. Every tremor in her mother's hands. Every crack in her voice.

Her jaw tightens, eyes cold as ice, yet filled with something simmering beneath the surface.

MS. GOODMAN:
 (whispers, barely audible) He said
 somethin'... about some new
 hotel... 63rd Street... last thing
 he said...

Leila stays silent. Her eyes flicker to her mother's face for just a moment, then drift back to the window. Her body is a coiled spring, poised, waiting.

Silence.

It weighs down the room, thick and oppressive, like it could swallow them whole.

Leila shifts. The movement is subtle, but in it—there's a change. A snap. The calm before a storm.

She stands. Slow. Deliberate. Her eyes catch the light, cold like a predator's.

Her voice, steady and controlled, carries across the room, slicing through the tension.

LEILA:
 We gon' shoot every shot, until we
 find 'em.

Without another word, she turns toward the door. The air shifts as she moves. Unstoppable.

WIPE TO:

136 INT. HARPER/J.J.'S BASEMENT - DAY

136

The basement air is thick with the smell of oil and metal. J.J. stands over a cluttered workbench, his focus unwavering.

A blade meets flesh, a brutal, rhythmic chopping sound echoing through the room.

His hands move fast, precise—like he's done this before. Sweat beads on his forehead, but it's not from the heat. The fire's glow flickers across his face, painting him in harsh shadows.

"**Stan**" by Eminem hums low in the background, the haunting rhythm matching the tension in the room.

A sudden shift in the air.

BOBBY enters, stepping into the dim light. He's holding a bag.

BOBBY:
 (grinning) Got us some Harold's,
 J.J.!

J.J.'s eyes don't leave his work, but the corner of his mouth twitches—almost a smirk. The tension in the room doesn't let up. As he approached Bobby wth the butcher knife still in hand.

137 EXT. CHICAGO PRECINCT - DAY

137

Clouds hang low over the city like they know something. The precinct stands cold and tired, its bricks stained with decades of bad news.

Leila leans against the hood of her car, arms folded tight, jaw locked. She watches the street like it's hiding something.

FOOTSTEPS crunch behind her.

CAPTAIN RIZZOLI, a bit older, worn down from the beginning of the screenplay but still sharp, steps into frame. A deep breath escapes him before he speaks.

CAPTAIN RIZZOLI:
 (sincere, low) Good to see you,
 Leila. Been a while.

Leila doesn't smile.

Rizzoli glances around, voice dropping with the weight of it.

RIZZOLI: (CONT'D)
 Ain't just your brother. We got
 folks comin' in from everywhere...
 same story. Someone visits Chicago—
 then gone. No calls. No goodbyes.
 No bodies.

His eyes meet hers—haunted.

LEILA:
 (scoffs) Lil Eric been on some
 young & dumb shit, yeah. But broke?
 He'd show up beginn' with a story
 and a lie. He been quiet too long.

She pushes off the car. Energy shifting.

LEILA: (CONT'D)
 Something foul out here.

She turns, ready to go. Her steps are sharp, decisive.

CAPTAIN RIZZOLI:
Leila— (beat)

CAPTAIN RIZZOLI: (CONT'D)
...Shit.

138 EXT. WORLD FAIR - DAY

138

Color bursts in every direction—flags wave, drums beat, kids laugh. Tourists snap pics, dancers spin in circles. It's loud. Alive.

Leila moves slow through the chaos, out of sync with the joy around her. A cappuccino in hand. Untouched. Her eyes scan the crowd, but her thoughts are miles away—visible only in the furrow of her brow.

A child bumps into her. She barely reacts.

CAMERA PANS — across the parade of colors — and **FINDS HIM.**

HARPER/J.J.

Draped in a festival hoodie, beard thick, eyes shaded, posture too calm for someone lost in the crowd. A skull pin glints on his chest — the faint engraving: **H.W.M.**

SLOW MOTION BEGINS.

He moves with purpose. Clean. Smooth. A phantom cutting through the crowd's current.

Leila's eyes flick toward him. A flicker. Familiar. She freezes mid-sip.

TIGHT ON HER FACE.

Brows narrow. Breath catches.

TIGHT ON HIS FACE.

Expression unreadable. Head dipped. He doesn't look back.

ANGLE - HER EYES.

Lock onto the pin.

FLASHBACK - INT. MICHIGAN APARTMENT - NIGHT

A single sheet of paper. Tattered edges. Ink-stained.

The same insignia. **H.W.M.** sketched in jagged strokes beside a growing list of names—crossed out.

BACK TO PRESENT — WORLD FAIR

Leila's POV: Her pulse kicks. She drops the cup. Foam splatters against the pavement.

LEILA:
(shouting) Harper Wayne Mathis!?

Heads turn. Conversations stop mid-word.

LEILA: (CONT'D)
You're under arrest! Turn your
bitch ass around... slowly!

J.J.'s POV: Feet plant. His spine straightens. The name rings in his ears like a church bell tolling doom.

He doesn't turn. Doesn't speak. Just bolts.

CROWD ERUPTS.

Leila explodes into motion, weaving through stunned festivalgoers. Her hand dips beneath her jacket—fingers wrapping her grip.

CHASE SEQUENCE BEGINS

J.J. darts through the maze of tents and bodies, knocking over a vendor table. Chicken skewers crash to the ground.

A man grabs his arm—

SLASH.

Arterial. Quick. The man drops, blood painting the pavement like spilled wine.

Another tries to tackle him—

BLADE FLASHES.

A throat opens.

Screams ripple like wildfire. The fair turns frenzy.

Leila closes in, feet thudding, eyes locked, rage and clarity warring in her face.

CAMERA TRACKS HER FROM BEHIND — SWAYING, DODGING.

139 EXT. CHICAGO DOWNTOWN APARTMENT - NIGHT

139

J.J. steps into the cold night air from a basement apartment.

New hoodie zipped high. Head clean.

Beard gone. Identity scrubbed.

He pushes open the exit door - vanishing into the city's underbelly..

Before the door swings shut - *a hand grabs his hoodie.*

He turns. Fast.

A BLACK WOMAN - *we can't see her face, skin tight one piece with blue braided hair, lips like danger - pulls him in close.

Their lips meet - fierce. Hot. Dangerous.

She leans in, voice low like a warning wrapped in velvet.

BLACK WOMAN:
 (smiling, but dead serious) Be
 careful, white boy... Motherfuckers
 been disappearing lately.

She gives his cheek a tap - *clicks* the door behind her shut - and locks one... two... three bolts. *CLANK. CHUNK. SNAP.*

Then she's gone. Just the wind and locked metal in her place.

J.J. exhales through his nose, slow... focused. Then moves.

140 EXT. PARKING GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

140

Dim lights hum overhead. Shadows crawl along concrete pillars.

J.J. walks with purpose -

past rusted pipes, flickering security cams - and stops near a dented *electrical box*.

He taps twice on the side. *Clink clink.*

Reaches behind it - and pulls out a dusty BLACK ZIP BAG.

No hesitation.

Unzips.

Inside: a compact pistol, a foldable knife, and a worn key fob.

J.J. pockets the weapons, eyes sharp.

BEEP-BEEP.

A gray pickup across the garage flashes its headlights.

He crosses over, shoulders tight, eyes scanning.

Slides into the driver's seat.

Door shuts. Engine rumbles alive.

He doesn't look back.

141 EXT. 63RD STREET - DAY

141

The sun does little to warm the eerie quiet hanging over the strange structure at the corner—barbershop signs buzz half-lit, a hand-written "ROOMS 4 RENT" hangs in the window next to a faded liquor poster.

142 INT. 63RD STREET ESTABLISHMENT - CONTINUOUS

142

Leila steps inside. Fluorescent lights flicker. A faint hum fills the air. The place feels alive... but barely breathing.

She takes one cautious step, then another—

CREAK.

She freezes.

Turns back toward the exit—

BOBBY: (O.S.)
(low, casual) You lost, ma'am?

BOBBY stands right behind her. No footsteps. No sound. Just there.

LEILA:
(puts her dukes) Shit!

Before she can answer the question—

WHAM!

J.J./Harper bursts from a side door, shoves her hard into another room.

FADE TO BLACK.

143 INT. DARK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

143

HARPER: (V.O.)
 The first time I saw Leila... I
 thought she was just someone coming
 out of J.B. and Sunny's apartment
 that night... but she wasn't... but
 she also reminded me of a woman I
 knew. I trust me, I know women.

Leila SLAMS into a wall—her gun skitters across the floor.
 She groans, disoriented.

The lights SNAP OFF. Pitch black.

LEILA'S POV:

A metallic GROAN. A closet door swings open somewhere in the darkness.

THUMP.

CLICK.

Trapdoor.

From the shadows—

MRS. EASTER rises like a demon from hell—one eye wide and twitching. Her mouth sewn shut with black thread. A rusted blade glints in her hand.

LEILA:
 (gasping) Bitch, what the fuck
 wrong wit' yo face!?

SLASH! The blade slices air as Leila blocks with a elbow—stumbles back.

GRUNT. GROWL. No words. Just rage.

INTENSE FIGHT ENSUES - IN THE DARK.

Steel scrapes drywall. Boots scuffle over splintered wood.

Mrs. Easter fights like something inhuman, slicing wildly. Leila dodges, counters—fueled by pain and instinct.

THWACK.

The knife sinks into Leila's side.

She screams—body wracked with pain—but her hand clamps the handle.

LEILA:
(strained whisper) You picked the wrong bitch...

With one breath—**YANK**.

She tears the blade from her body, spins—

THWUMP.

Drives it straight through Mrs. Easter's skull.

A twitch. A long, low gasp.

Mrs. Easter drops, knife still jutting out like a trophy.

Leila stares at the woman as she takes her last breath.

LEILA:
(panting) Mrs... Easter...?

SILENCE.

Then—**CREEEEAK**. Another trapdoor opening nearby.

WHOOSH. A blur of motion.

SLICE!

J.J./Harper strikes from behind—blade rakes across Leila's back.

She drops to her knees, teeth clenched against the pain.

When she looks up—**Harper is gone**. Another trapdoor yawns open. Empty.

144 INT. THE CORPSE CASTLE - CONTINUOUS

144

CAMERA SWOOPS through the multi-leveled death maze like a drone:

Level One: mirrors, levers, buzzers, blood-stained sheets.

Level Two: cages with shackled limbs still twitching.

Level Three: underground surgical tables and racks of personal items—IDs, phones, purses.

A **BLUEPRINT** flickers into frame—spread out like a madman's treasure map.

Over **30 trapdoors**, hidden compartments, twisting staircases.

One hell.

And **Harper Wayne Mathis** knows every inch of it.

145 INT. BARBERSHOP - 2ND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

145

Leila tears her shirt with clenched teeth, wrapping the fabric tight around her bleeding arm.

She pauses — nostrils flare.

The *hiss* of gas.

She eyes the doorknob. Grips the knife from Mrs. Easter's eye. Slides the blade in the lock.

CLICK.

The door bursts open—

CRACK!

Bobby's fist connects with her jaw, a he snatches her out the room, sending her reeling back. She stumbles into the elevator — he shoves her in fully.

146 INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

146

Bobby charges.

But Leila ain't done.

She braces, ducks under a swing, *slams* a sharp elbow into his ribs, then pulls him in—

CRACK! CRACK! — Headbutts, straight to his face.

The elevator *jerks* to a halt.

147 INT. BARBERSHOP - 2ND FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

147

The doors slide open.

Both bodies *spill out onto the floor*, still scrapping. Bobby grabs at Leila's leg — she kicks free.

Across the room, a young black BARBER lines himself up in the mirror, looking in shock.

BOBBY:
(shouting) You said you can shoot
when it's time... so shoot!

The young Barber turns, startled, and grabs the pistol from the drawer.

POP! POP!

Gunfire slices through the chaos.

148 INT. UNDER THE TRAIN TRACKS. LOLA CAR. FLASHBACK - DAY

148

SUPERIMPOSE: 30 MINUTES EARLIER

Leila stands under flickering streetlights. Her breath clouds the cold air. She turns to LOLA (26), strong eyes, hair tied tight.

She hands over her phone.

LEILA:
(low) Fifteen minutes. If I'm not back, call this number. Don't ask shit in exactly fifteen minutes, Lo-Lo.

Lola stares at the phone, tension tight in her brow.

LOLA:
Nervous as hell... but I got you, Lee-Lee, id Lil Eric not in there hurry and get your ass out of there!(beat) They say crazy shit happens around here.

Leila nods. Not fear – focus.

She turns and walks off toward the strange building.

Lola watches, frozen in place. Streetlights flicker above her like a warning.

END FLASHBACK

149 INT. CORPSE CASTLE. THIRD FLOOR-DAY

149

BANG! BANG!

Gunshots echo through the corridors.

HARPER/J.J. freezes, face half-lit behind the wall's hidden panel.

His police scanner crackles to life a few moments later – a dispatcher's urgent voice pierces through.

DISPATCH: (V.O.)

...all units, possible officer in distress. Location pinged near 63rd and Wallace...

J.J.'s eyes narrow.

He moves fast.

Strikes a MATCH.

Drops it into the corner of the floor – *WHOOMPH!* Flames race across the carpet and up the drapes.

He kneels – pulls back a loose tile.

Reveals a blackened iron hatch.

Without hesitation, he yanks it open and *drops* into the darkness.

150 INT. BASEMENT – CONTINUOUS

150

Harper. lands on a cushion, breath fogging in the cold gloom.

The fire above ROARS like a beast, devouring the labyrinth's secrets.

He grabs a few items before he slips into the shadows – vanishing like smoke.

151 INT. BARBERSHOP – DAY

151

Smoke thickens. Screams echo.

Broken glass crunches under rushing feet.

LIL ERIC (19), wild-eyed, as he stares.

The we here Bobby yelling.

LIL ERIC:
(hoarse) Lee-Lee, what you doing in
here?!

He drops to his knees, grabs her wrist—she's alive.

BLAM!

LIL ERIC:
Come on, sis. We gotta go.

They stumble toward the exit.

But before freedom—

CLANG!

A door hidden door kicks open behind Lil Eric's barber chair.

HARPER.

Rage blazing in his eyes. A **vase** in hand.

He **SWINGS**—the vase shatters across Leila's skull.

HARPER:
What the fuck you doing helping the
fun?!

She drops. Lifeless.

LIL ERIC:
(screaming) Aye whiteboy keep your
motherfucking hands to yourself—this
ain't no thot! That's my big
sister, ma'fucka!

BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM—

Eric **unloads** his entire clip.

One round grazes Harper—but he slips behind another wall panel. Gone.

BOOOOM!

The floor **rumbles**—an **EXPLOSION** rocks the building.

Eric shields Leila's body as debris rains down.

152 EXT. BARBERSHOP – CONTINUOUS

152

Smoke billows out broken windows.

Flames crawl up the sides of the building.

Lil Eric **drags** Leila through the chaos, coughing, sweating, limping—

They breach the door.

Fresh air.

But—

SHHHK!

BOBBY—engulfed in flames—**DRIVES A KNIFE** into Eric's back.

Eric yells in pain. Eyes wide.

He pushes Leila forward—then is yanked **back into the inferno**.

Bobby's screams follow him inside.

153 EXT. 63RD STREET - CONTINUOUS

153

SIRENS.

Red and blue lights paint the street.

EMTs, FIRETRUCKS, COPS.

A roaring crowd from the World Fair stands frozen, horrified.

CRASH!

A piece of roof collapses.

But from the wreckage— **two arms reach out**—pull Leila from the fire.

A stranger. Her savior. She's unconscious, but safe.

154 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

154

Ash hangs in the air.

Yellow tape stretches across the street.

Fire hoses hiss.

Leila lies on a stretcher—oxygen mask on.

EMTs tend to her burned arm.

Reporters hover. Cameras flash.

A shattered window falls loose behind her—crashing like a gunshot.

155 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM — DAY

155

LEILA'S POV — white ceiling, fluorescent lights.

Beep... beep... beep...

She blinks.

Her MOTHER sits at her bedside—face streaked with tears.

MS. GOODMAN

(sobbing) Oh, Leila... baby, you
awake...

Leila's gaze sharpens. Her lips tremble.

MS. GOODMAN

Eric... he saved you. A man said he
pulled you out the fire but... he
got... They dragged him back in. He
—he didn't make it, baby...

Leila's breath hitches.

Her eyes brim—then flood.

She turns away from the light.

KNOCK.

Detectives FRANKS and RIZZOLI enter.

Somber. Serious.

RIZZOLI:

Leila... there's something else.

He pulls a folded paper from his coat.

RIZZOLI: (CONT'D)

Lola called me... but when we
traced your phone— it was found in
her car.

She's missing.

Leila's mind spirals. Chest tight. Breathing shallow.

Her mother clutches her, holding her like she used to when
they were kids.

And the silence between the sobs says everything.

156 INT. CDT VAN - HIGHWAY - NIGHT

156

Headlights cut through the black. Rain dots the windshield like tears.

LOLA grips the wheel, face streaked with real ones. Her eyes stay locked on the road—but her mind is racing somewhere darker.

In the backseat—

HARPER slumps against the window, blood seeping between his fingers as he clutches a pistol pointing it toward Lola. Each bump in the road makes him groan.

Silence hangs heavy—except for the tires humming and Harper's labored breaths.

No music.

No talking.

Just dread and Harper groans of pain.

157 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

157

Chaos hums. Phones ring. Officers shuffle with purpose.

HOWARD RIZZOLI stands in the middle of it—face like steel, voice slicing through the noise.

He clicks a remote. A grainy **floor plan** projects onto the wall.

click.

PHOTO of the basement: surgical tools, scorched bones, blood on concrete.

RIZZOLI: (CONT'D)

We found fragments of over twenty different DNAs down there. All linked to missing persons.

Tension spikes in the room. Officers exchange stunned looks.

Chairs scrape back. Radios chirp.

The war is on.

158 INT. LEILA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

158

A dim lamp flickers.

Leila lies in bed—bruised, stitched, haunted.

RIIING.

The phone buzzes on the nightstand.

Leila blinks. Reaches.

UNKNOWN CALLER.

She answers.

(breathless) Leila—it's me... I
don't got time. He knows. He's
bleeding but not dead. I'm at 555
North Cinway—Gilmanton, New
Hampshire. Please... please come.

CLICK.

Silence again.

Leila sits there—stone still. Then her hands start to shake.

She pulls the IV from her arm.

Slides off the bed.

Her body is battered. But her eyes?

Fire.

159 INT. AIRPORT - DAY

159

Leila stands like stone while the world rushes by—backpack slung, phone to ear, jaw clenched so tight it looks like she's chewing glass.

160 INT. CAPTAIN RIZZOLI'S OFFICE - DAY

160

Rizzoli paces like he's dodging landmines. Files open like autopsies across his desk.

RIZZOLI: (V.O.)

That address Lola dropped? It ain't random—it's Harper's childhood crib. And that house... that house got teeth. Watch yourself, Leila.

161 INT. TSA CHECKPOINT - CONTINUOUS

161

Leila slides her twin Glock 26s into the tray. No hesitation. Like it's just part of her.

LEILA: (INTO PHONE)

I brought my girls—Make-a-Man-Screamers. I ain't goin' out soft (pauses, swallows hard) But this? This one's on me. I dragged Lola into this storm. Lost Eric to it. Mama loses another one of us(shakes her head) Not on my watch.

162 EXT. RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

162

Plane wheels lift. Steel bird climbing.

Inside the window, Leila sits stiff—hands balled, eyes like loaded guns. She ain't on vacation.

163 EXT. GILMANTON CITY STREET - DAY

163

Wind chases dead leaves across cracked pavement.

HARPER, tight-built, neck twitching, stares at a squat **clinic** across the way.

Through the glass, **JAMES (29)** kicks back, phone glued to his face, laugh cocky, posture looser than ever.

164 INT. CLINIC HALL - FLASHBACK FROM TEASER

164

Young Harper is tossed in the room with the skeleton. James' smirk, sharp as razors.

END FLASHBACK

JAMES: (V.O.)
Harper? Hey man I'm sorry about
what happened to you m-?

BACK TO PRESENT

165 INT. CLINIC - SECONDS LATER

165

Veins flare in Harper's neck. Jaw locks. He charges.

BAM! The door swings wide. James turns, still grinning.

JAMES:
Harper? Damn man, long time no see,
Mommie-Kill-

CRACK!

A chair shatters on his head.

James hits the floor like dead weight. Harper stomps him.

WHAM. WHAM. WHAM.

Boots land with vengeance. Blood kisses the linoleum.

Breathing heavy, Harper straightens. One glance around.

That *skeleton display*—the one that haunted his kid-nightmares—still hanging like a curse.

He rips it down, slings it over his shoulder, and walks out like it's war spoils.

166 EXT. CAR RENTAL LOT - HOURS LATER - DAY

166

Leila takes the keys from the attendant, grip firm.

TRUNK OPENS.

She loads: bullets, vest, spare clips.

167 INT. FORD FUSION - CONTINUOUS

167

GPS speaks in a calm voice that don't match the heat in her chest.

GPS:

"555 N. Cinway Boulevard. Twenty-three minutes from ETA."

Leila shifts into drive. Eyes dead ahead. No turning back.

168 EXT. MATHIS HOUSE - LATE DAY

168

The house looks forgotten-porch sagging, ivy choking the wood. Windows watch like eyes.

Leila cuts the engine. Cocks a Glock. Steps out slow.

LEILA: (LOW)
Stay alive Lola. I'm coming big sis.

169 INT. MATHIS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

169

BOOM!

Door blasts open. Leila sweeps in, boots heavy, muzzle leading.

LEILA:
LO-LO?! Bitch where you at! It's me, Leila!

Silence, thick and sticky.

170 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

170

HARPER sits on the couch like he owns the air. Coffee in hand, legs crossed. Calm.

LEILA:
You son of a fat bitch, I should you and play in the wound, For what crazt motherfucker did to my brother!

HARPER:
(sipping) Ha, ha, so familiar...
Lil Eric made his choices. Same as me. Same as you.

CLICK.

Leila chambers one.

LEILA:

Where. Is. My. Sister?

SHADOW MOVEMENT.

Knife flashes into frame. It's **LOLA**.

Eyes wild. Face cracked with fury. Grip on the blade like she's held it forever.

LOLA:

You always thought you were better.
Leila the genius. Leila the college
queen. (steps closer) Lil Eric
still bled for your approval. Died
chasin' your damn light and
respect.

Leila's arms falter. Gun lowers—just a little.

LEILA:

Lo... what fuck you talking about?
Bitch lets go, mama waiting on us!

LOLA:

(snarling) I'm done bein' your
shadow.

SCREAM.

Lola launches. Steel meets sweat. Sisters clash.

FLESH. GRIT. BETRAYAL.

You got it, Darnay. Here's your full sequence rewritten in your "**show, don't tell**" style—visceral, visual, and emotionally charged. I kept your beat points and dialed up the cinematic tension, flow, and gritty character nuance.

171 INT/EXT. CHICKEN RESTAURANT - DAY - FLASHBACK

171

BACK CORNER

HARPER sits alone—hood low, fingers tapping on the table like they're bored, but his eyes? Watching everything. Grease pops behind the counter. Laughter bounces off walls.

His number's called. He grabs the tray, slides out.

172 EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

172

BAM.

He bumps into **LOLA**, fries spill, drink slosses. She ain't sorry.

LOLA:

Aye, white boy, you cool watch
where you walking out here, boy.

Her smirk holds a dare.

HARPER:

(reaching inside his pocket) You
always this bold with strangers?

LOLA:

Only the ones who feel familiar.

Their energy clicks. That unspoken pull.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS - WEEKS LATER

— Back alley kisses, headlights bouncing off brick walls.

— Motel blinds half-closed, tangled bodies in stolen moments.

— She was the woman with the blue braids as she kisses his cheek so we can see her face now.

Two broken souls orbiting something dangerous.

173 EXT. 63RD STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK CONTINUES

173

HARPER stumbles out of an alley, shirt ripped, face bruised, limping.

LOLA spots him from across the street. No hesitation.

She runs to him. Harper forcefully took snatches a man from a CDT van by force. Lola Helps him in like she's done it before.

LOLA:

What the fuck you got going on
white boy!?

174 INT. STOLEN VAN - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

174

Harper lies in the backseat, hand holding the gun. Lola drives, eyes bouncing from rearview to road.

RADIO ANNOUNCER: (V.O.)

—among the charred remains found inside what the CPD I now calling "the Corpse Castle" are three unidentified males, one believed to be Harper Wayne Mathis and Leila Goodman's younger brother... Eric Goodman Jr.

Lola blinks tears out of her eyes. Fingers tighten on the wheel.

HARPER:

He was there. Wrong place, wrong time.

He doesn't say what *he* did.

Her breath shortens. She nods and sobs, but something shifts behind her eyes.

175 INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT

175

Lola paces, phone in hand. Thumb hovers over Leila's contact.

Breathing like she ran a marathon—only she didn't.

She's naked from the waist up, Harper behind her, pulling her back into the sheets.

She answers the call as his hands explore.

LOLA:

(into phone, out of breath) Hey...
yeah... the Harper guy on the news
is chasing me, Here's the address

She moans into the lie. Her voice cracks from pleasure and guilt.

END FLASHBACKS

176 INT. MATHIS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

176

Lola lunges with the knife. Slashing Leila's arm, causing her to drop the knife.

Leila dodges, deflects, counters—her **Wing Chun** turns speed into dominance.

CRACK!

Leila's kick drops Lola cold.

She exhales—barely—before **HARPER** blindsides her from behind.

They crash to the floor. Struggle turns savage.

Leila claws toward the knife Lola dropped. She reaches it—slashes.

STEEL RIPS FLESH.

Harper screams. Blood soaks his back. But he doesn't stop.

He flips her—pins her—punches rain like thunderclaps.

Her vision blurs.

Then—

BOOM!!! Outside?

The house SHUDDERS.

Harper jolts. Eyes widen.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - CONTINUOUS

BOOM!

A fiery blast tears through the air. **Leila's rental car erupts**—a flaming beast swallowing itself in orange and black.

The flames crawl fast, licking up the doors, across the hood, then **detonate the windshield**, glass shooting like shrapnel across the pavement.

Smoke billows like a summoned ghost.

Inside the inferno, we catch a glimpse—

A shirt, torn and soaked, **jammed inside the gas tank**, its edges still smoldering like the fuse of a homemade bomb.

177 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

177

Leila spits blood. Legs coil. She **kicks Harper** in the groin.

They collapse, coughing, dazed.

LOLA stirs. Blood at her lip. Eyes cold.

She crawls to Leila's dropped Glock. Points it at her sister.

LOLA:

(panting) I always hated you Leila,
so... Tell Daddy... I said *hi*.

Her finger tightens.

Leila scoots backward on her but, Harper hold his nuts,
suddenly Leila's foot kicks the lamp stand into Lola's knees—
a **distraction**.

Leila grabs her **ankle holster**, yanks her hidden **Glock 26** from
her ankle holster, and **fires**.

POP!

Lola's arm jerks. She yelps. Drops the gun— it hits the
ground.

BANG!

It discharges—point-blank into Lola's own eye.

She collapses, eye wide, one missing, body twitching.

SILENCE.

The room—now a battlefield. Smoke curls from outside. Harper
groans, bleeding.

Leila, on her knees, stares at her sister's body. Her
breathing ragged. The gun still warm.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE - AFTERNOON

Red and blue lights flash across shattered windows. The
street crawls with SWAT and squad cars.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ storms in, bulletproof vest half-zipped.
CAPTAIN RIZZOLI in street clothes, flanks Harper, weapon
raised. Officers fan out, shouting commands.

In the middle of it all—

LEILA, bloodied, barely standing—collapses into Rizzoli's
arms. He catches her just before she hits the ground.

178 EXT. AMBULANCE BAY - AFTERNOON

178

Gurney wheels clatter across pavement.

LOLA lies lifeless, a sheet half-draped over her body. **LEILA**, eyes wet and wide, stares as medics cover the last of her sister's face.

Her lips tremble, but she says nothing.

Across the chaos—

HARPER, face split with cuts and bruises, leans against a squad car. But that grin? Still there. Twisted. Unapologetic.

Leila sees him.

She moves. Slow. Gun in hand. Arm steady.

HARPER raises his head—smiles like he's waiting for the bullet.

HARPER:

You will remember me.

CAPTAIN RODRIGUEZ: (O.S., SLOW-MOTION)

Leila, don't do it!

Her finger tightens—

But her eyes don't burn with vengeance. They glisten with purpose.

LEILA:

(smiling through tears) See you in court... Harper... Mudgett... Combs!

Harper flinches. First time he's heard *all* his names out loud.

The grin fades.

Silence holds as officers move him in to put him in the squad car.

179 INT. OFFICE - DAY

179

The door swings open with a soft creak.

Sunlight slices through dusty blinds, painting gold stripes across the wooden floor.

LEILA steps in, heels clicking. Her face: calm. Clear. Eyes sharp like the edge of justice.

She flicks on the **vintage desk lamp**—a soft *click*—and the room glows like it's waking up with her.

Corkboard walls bleed with red string and faces. Maps. Crime scenes. Old case files.

Books jammed into shelves. Tools of the trade—magnifying glasses, case tags, cameras—each one touched by purpose.

The camera glides across the room, resting on a bronze nameplate:

SPECIAL PRIVATE INVESTIGATOR

LEILA GOODMAN

DISSOLVE TO:

180 INT. MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON - KITCHEN - NIGHT

180

Steel trays clatter. Hot steam rises.

HARPER, now gaunt but still slick behind the eyes, washes dishes in the back.

Harper stare cuts across the room to a **CORRECTIONAL OFFICER**—mid-30s, well-groomed, openly gay, eyes linger a second too long.

The look they share? Not innocent.

Harper smirks. Game recognized.

181 INT. PRISON - SECURE EXIT - NIGHT

181

SUPERIMPOSE: FIVE YEARS LATER

Rain taps the roof like soft applause.

The same correctional officer—older, sharper, secrets buried behind his smirk—leads Harper through a series of dark corridors.

No alarms. No witnesses.

A forged ID. A laundry cart. A key swipe too smooth to be by chance.

182 EXT. PRISON PERIMETER - CONTINUOUS

182

A gate slides open.

HARPER, hooded, disappears into the darkness.

His hand runs along the cold prison wall one last time before slipping into the night like he never existed.

DISSOLVE TO:

183 INT. FOREIGN LIVING ROOM - DAY

183

A ceiling fan spins in lazy circles.

The TV stutters—static slicing through a flickering image.

ONSCREEN - A NEWSCASTER.

Pale. Lips pinched. Haunted.

NEWSCASTER: (V.O.)

(over static) Eighty-six confirmed dead-on the five-year mark since the closure of what headlines now call... *“Corpse Castle.”*

The name hangs, thick and heavy, like smog.

CAMERA PUSHES IN—

HARPER sits alone. Older now. Hair long, matted.

Eyes glued to the screen—calculating, not blinking.

ONSCREEN - NEWS FOOTAGE

A collage of horror:

— Gloves pull back fake walls.

— A **hotel**, a **barbershop**, a **corner store**—all connected by corroded tunnels and whispering gas valves.

Flashbulbs pop in pitch black.

NEWSCASTER: (V.O.)

New forensic links tie Harper Wayne Mathis—alias J.J. Combs—to dozens who vanished during the World Fair...

A hidden chamber creaks open.

Bones.

Stacked like secrets.

Stained in time.

NEWSCASTER: (V.O.)

...All buried beneath what locals once called— (waiting, distracted) —excuse me, I'm just now receiving breaking news... Harper Wayne Mathis has reportedly escaped from prison. Authorities have also confirmed the disappearance of correctional officer Isaac Riggs, who may have aided in the escape.

JUMPCUT - INT. LEILA'S OFFICE - DAY

The city hums outside. Inside, silence.

LEILA sits frozen.

A yellowed letter trembles in her grip.

Her eyes move. Line by line.

HARPER: (V.O.)

Dear Leila Goodman, I hope this letter finds you—like I soon will.

Her throat tightens. She reads on.

HARPER: (V.O.)(CONT'D)

You think I took from you. But you took, too. Your own flesh and blood even. We've danced this long. Shall we finish the song?

A tear escapes. She lets it fall.

HARPER: (V.O.)

I often wonder will you moan like Lola did?

Leila's jaw clenches. Her breath hitches.

HARPER: (V.O.)

I still hear it. I want it again. From you. Soon.

Signed,

The Last... Good... Man

—H.W.M.

JUMPCUT - INT. HIDDEN HOUSE - FOREIGN COUNTRY - DAY

SCRAPE.

A blade drags across bone.

In a crumbling adobe hideout, **HARPER** crouches—face shadowed, curls damp with sweat.

A child-sized skeleton lies half-assembled before him.

His hands move with surgeon's grace. Cold. Clinical.

On a nearby chair:

A **prison guard's uniform**, neatly folded. The name tag untouched.

TAPESTRIES hang from cracked walls—ancient patterns, faded symbols.

Shrunken skulls, rusted keys, and torn maps litter the space like relics of a madman's pilgrimage.

CANDLES burn around him.

Their flames flicker like they're afraid to stay.

Harper stands. Steps back.

Admiring.

He strikes a match.

Holds it close.

Watches the fire.

Not for warmth, but for *what it might say*.

His shadow looms across the wall—warped and monstrous.

Unrecognizable.

184 INT. DIMLY LIT ROOM - NIGHT

184

A single bulb swings overhead, casting slow, sweeping shadows. As we pan deeper in the cabin

The door creaks open... revealing a **small room** dressed like a playroom—except it's colder. Still. Off.

IN THE CENTER - A LITTLE BOY (5), red curls wild and untamed, spitting image of Harper, sits cross-legged on a faded rug.

In front of him- a **child-sized skeleton** propped upright in a plastic chair. Its skull tilts slightly, almost listening.

The boy hums softly.

He holds a bone and pretends to feed the skeleton.

HARPER JR:

(opening the skeleton's jaw gently) Eat up, buddy. It's good for you...

The camera closes in-

On the skeleton's **mouth**.

TITLE CARD: Bone Appetit

THE END