

I REMEMBER TOMORROW

Written by:

Christian Maxwell

cmaxwell1347@gmail.com
(347) 819-3591

OVER BLACK:

"The suburbs dream of violence. Asleep in their drowsy villas, sheltered by benevolent shopping malls, they wait patiently for the nightmares that will wake them into a more passionate world."

J.G. Ballard

OVER BLACK:

Tuesday. October 25th. 1994.

FADE IN:

CLOSE - BLADE OF GRASS: A caterpillar, bright yellow with green stripes, painstakingly crawls towards the edge; slowly it stretches its segmented body into space, leaving one blade for another:

MALE VOICE (V.O.)

"As a caterpillar, having come to the end of one blade of grass, draws itself together and reaches out for the next, so the Self, having come to the end of one life and dispelled all ignorance, gathers in its faculties and reaches out from the old body to a new."

(beat)

Like the Self, all of Mankind will experience death, then a glorious rebirth. I can see what lies ahead for Mankind, because...

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

Ornate. Art Deco. A beautiful remnant of the early 20th century.

The MALE VOICE belongs to CYRUS TOOMEY: 40s, rail thin, fragile, sits in a large, richly upholstered chair - not unlike a throne; both TOOMEY and the chair are framed by a massive red velvet curtain.

TOOMEY

... during my long 'sleep', the imaginary walls that separate past, present and future disappeared.

(beat)

(MORE)

TOOMEY (CONT'D)

And, in what you perceive as the future, I saw... the 'Death's Head', a man who sets in motion a chain of events, that lead to...

EXT. CITY STREET - HALIFAX - DAY

A downtown street, in a mid-sized Midwestern city, but we immediately recognize that something is wrong:

The street is deserted, weeds grow through cracks in the sidewalks. No one has lived here in many years.

The roads are cracked, full of potholes. A lone FIGURE walks down the street, face hidden, but we can tell they're surveying the desolation around them.

TOOMEY (V.O.)

...Mankind's 'great change'... and to bring about this transformation, the 'Death's Head' will have to do horrible, unspeakable things, but...

INT. AUDITORIUM - CONTINUOUS

Three hundred MEN and WOMEN, of various ages and backgrounds, hang on TOOMEY'S every word like they might be tested on it later.

TOOMEY

...Life. Death. Rebirth. This is the way of things.

SMASH CUT:

TITLE CARD: **I REMEMBER TOMORROW**

SMASH CUT:

OVER BLACK:

Tuesday, October 25th, Present Day.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - HALIFAX - NIGHT

A reasonably busy downtown street: OFFICE WORKERS stumbling out of Happy Hours and into Ubers, COUPLES on dates, WORKAHOLICS just leaving the office.

A solitary FIGURE moves down a section of the sidewalk where the street lights aren't working. He moves through pools of shadows, his face hidden from view.

EXT. LOBBY - WDDC-TV - CONTINUOUS

Expansive marble lobby. No one's at the GUARD station.

INT. T.V. STUDIO - WDDC-TV - CONTINUOUS

Empty. A trio of cameras focused on an empty desk. An INTERN, early 20s, irritable, put upon, script in hand, makes his way across the studio, his steps ECHOING on the floor.

INT. CORRIDOR - WDDC-TV - CONTINUOUS

Dark. Most of the employees have left for the day.

Slivers of light, creeping out from beneath office doors, provide the only illumination; large parts of the corridor fall into shadow.

The INTERN passes the DARK FIGURE -- walking calmly in the opposite direction.

The INTERN arrives at his destination, an office door bearing the name: DENNIS SOWA. He knocks. No answer. He looks down: No lights visible from under the door.

He opens the door. As his eyes adjust to the darkness, he can see SOWA at his desk.

INTERN
Sorry. I knocked...

When there's no answer from SOWA, he reaches out toward the wall, frantically flipping on a light switch.

CLOSE - INTERN: Wearing an expression best described as a combination of complete disbelief and lizard-brain fear.

INT. CORRIDOR - WDDC-TV - CONTINUOUS

The INTERN backs out of the office, attempting to put as much distance as humanly possible, between him and what he's just seen.

CLOSE - FEET: Where he's left bloody footprints on the marble floor.

INTERN (O.S.)
Oh fuck... oh fuck... oh fuck.

EXT. EAST LAWN STREET - EAST SIDE - NIGHT

A quiet street in a decaying working-class neighborhood. Single-family brick homes, some are clearly abandoned.

One of the houses has a FOR SALE sign in the front yard. The 'For Sale' has been covered by a red sticker marked "Sold".

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The walls are lined with boxes labelled 'Allied', topped with packing material and spools of packing tape.

In the middle of the floor -- sitting on a large pillow, eyes closed, in the half-lotus position is: ROBERT 'PROFESSOR' PRENTISS: early 40s, fit, thoughtful, calm.

The rhythmic sound of BREATHING through his nose is audible; a long INHALE and on the EXHALE:

PRENTISS
Om.
(another deep breath)
Om.

IN HIS MIND'S EYE:

Various images form, then dissipate, like puffs of smoke:

PRENTISS, late teens, wearing a backpack -- standing at the edge of a cedar forest. He's gazing up, in awe, at the:

Majestic Himalayas, appearing to reach out and touch the clouds.

A Buddhist temple. Positioned at the temple's railing, a trio of TIBETAN MONKS, in gold and crimson robes, blow LONGHORNS.

The deep, sonorous BLAST of their horns sounds like elephants singing.

The sound REVERBERATES through the valley below.

PRENTISS, now early 30s, having a picnic with a young woman, THERESA. The pair are clearly very much in love.

THERESA, packing her bags. She and PRENTISS having a heated argument. She storms out of the room, SLAMMING the door behind her.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - NIGHT

A quiet middle-class suburban street: 2-3 bedroom homes, neatly manicured lawns, minivans and SUVs in the driveways.

INT. GRETCHEN'S BEDROOM - HUBBARD HOME - NIGHT

FORREST HUBBARD, late 30s, Caucasian, doughy, one chin too many (partially covered by a reddish beard), well-dressed - is tucking his improbably adorable 6-year old daughter GRETCHEN and her teddy bear into bed.

GRETCHEN

Can you check? Please, Daddy, please?

HUBBARD is going to protest, but sees the scared look on GRETCHEN'S face, the way she clutches her teddy bear, and immediately relents.

HUBBARD

Okay.

With a little difficulty, he gets down on his hands and knees and lifts up the comforter to peer under the bed: Nothing but a few toys.

Knees CRACKING, he rises to his feet.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

No monsters. Now go to sleep, sweetheart.

She pleads gently:

GRETCHEN

Daaaad.

HUBBARD

I'm sorry, I forgot.

He goes to the closet, opens it and repeats the search.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

All clear. We are monster free.

GRETCHEN is satisfied:

GRETCHEN

Thank you, Daddy. Daddy?

HUBBARD

Yes, sweetheart?

GRETCHEN
Will you tuck me in every night?

HUBBARD
I will. If I'm working, I'll call
and say goodnight.

GRETCHEN
You promise?

HUBBARD
I promise.

He kisses her on the forehead.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)
Good night, sweetie.

He stands, heads toward the door, and just before he closes
it:

HUBBARD (CONT'D)
I'm going to leave this open just a
little bit.

GRETCHEN nods appreciatively.

INT. LIVING ROOM - HUBBARD HOME - NIGHT

He settles down onto the sofa with his wife KAYLEIGH - former
homecoming queen, blonde, early 30s - TV remote in hand.

KAYLEIGH
What's your secret? When I put her
to bed, it's always a struggle.

She presses the TV remote.

The large television displays the opening of 'The Dennis Sowa
Show'.

No sooner has she finished the sentence than his cellphone
rings. KAYLEIGH reaches for the remote but HUBBARD signals
for her to keep watching, while he takes the call:

HUBBARD
This is Hubbard... Okay, wait...
(beat)
... with who? You gotta be kidding
me.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

PRENTISS. Still deep in meditation.

PRENTISS

Om...

IN HIS MIND'S EYE:

The Himalayas.

Halifax.

His neighborhood. CHILDREN playing in the street.

THERESA.

The Himalayas, his street, and THERESA are suddenly stretched and pulled into:

A massive black hole. A pool of absolute darkness, ringed by clouds of pulsating red plasma.

His iPhone RINGS. PRENTISS opens his eyes slowly, it takes him a moment to re-orient himself to his surroundings.

He locates the phone, grabs it - taps 'Accept' and brings the phone to his ear:

HUBBARD (V.O.)

(over phone)

There's a body. Downtown. You and me.

PRENTISS wearily rubs his tired eyes.

PRENTISS

Give me ten.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

An unmarked Crown Victoria drives down a street lined with rows of strip malls full of shuttered store fronts.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

HUBBARD is behind the wheel. In contrast to his well-dressed partner, PRENTISS is in a t-shirt, army surplus jacket and jeans. He sits beside HUBBARD quietly, absentmindedly sipping a cup of coffee.

PRENTISS
Where's your usual partner?
Where's, uh...

Searches his memory for the name.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
Graham?

HUBBARD
Transferred.

He doesn't elaborate. An awkward silence follows.

RADIO
...Governor Schneider's chief
economic adviser Philip Ryan is
proposing a plan to cut taxes and
offset the loss of revenue by
making substantial cuts to
Medicaid, Education and Arts
programs...

PRENTISS taps the radio's touchscreen display, changing the station.

The news show is replaced with the sounds of Black Sabbath's 'Planet Caravan'.

The song lends their ride a psychedelic, but ominous quality.

PRENTISS watches the road unfurl in front of them, until HUBBARD breaks the uncomfortable silence.

HUBBARD
Heard you're taking early
retirement.

PRENTISS
They offered a package. I took it.

HUBBARD
Surprised they offered. You got a
serious close rate. Higher than
mine. You're good at this, why
leave?

PRENTISS
Devil's Night. Last year. The Lang
case.

HUBBARD
You were on that?

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Macabre and gory. Two blood stains on the living room wall; blood trails that end in the lifeless bodies of an African-American HUSBAND and WIFE.

PRENTISS (V.O.)

Yeah.

END FLASHBACK.

Another uncomfortable silence, which PRENTISS breaks:

PRENTISS

The things I've seen people around me, do.

(beat)

The secrets I've had to keep.

HUBBARD

That's the job.

PRENTISS

And that's why I'm leaving.

(beat)

Before I die, I want to see something beautiful again. I can't do that here.

(re: the blight around them)

I mean, look at this place.

PRENTISS drifts off, goes quiet for a moment before continuing:

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

Do you know what happens when a star dies?

HUBBARD

You sound like that Neil something... that 'know it all' Black guy.

PRENTISS doesn't take the bait, but continues.

PRENTISS

The star runs out of fuel and eventually collapses in on itself and it creates a gravity well so powerful, not even light can escape.

HUBBARD

Man, seriously, what the hell are you talking about?

PRENTISS

This city's like a black hole; it has this terrible gravity to it.

HUBBARD looks at him incredulously.

HUBBARD

Spare me your galaxy brain bullshit. Me and Kayleigh got it pretty good, and if I get this promotion, when the Captain retires, start making some real money, we move to 'Hunter's Green' and...

(looking at the urban decay just outside the window)

...and all this shit won't be my problem.

PRENTISS scrutinizes him, before replying.

PRENTISS

No man, what I'm talking about, it'll find you out there too. Sooner or later, it'll find you.

(a beat - quieter, almost to himself)

Nothing escapes a black hole, not even light.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - WDDC - NIGHT

Police cars and ambulances, cherry red lights swirling, are parked around the entrance. UNIFORMED OFFICERS keep a crowd of curious onlookers at bay. The only signs of life on an otherwise deserted street.

PRENTISS and HUBBARD make their way through the crowd, until they reach the cordon.

The two OFFICERS on duty, GRIFFIN and NEELY, recognize them, and are about to wave them through when, PRENTISS is amiably accosted by BETH GLAZER: early 30s, smart, urbane, in all-black. She holds an iPhone, set to record, up to PRENTISS' face.

BETH

Hey, Professor, what's going on in there?

PRENTISS

I just got here. You probably know more than I do.

PRENTISS reaches over, gently takes her iPhone out of her hand, stops the recording and hands it back to her with a sly smirk:

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

I'll get in touch when I know something.

BETH

Thank you.

They exchange a slight smile, that contains a flirtatious undercurrent - which HUBBARD picks up on. After they're out of earshot:

HUBBARD

She's not bad looking, if you like that type.

They enter the building, where:

INT. CORRIDOR - WDDC-TV - NIGHT

CAPTAIN TOM DOUGLAS -- late 50s, still formidable -- paces the width of the corridor. He's anxious, visibly shaken.

DOUGLAS

You two take the scenic route? I know you don't usually work cases together, but the Mayor insisted I put my best on this, and God help me, that's you two.

DOUGLAS turns and heads down the corridor, while PRENTISS and HUBBARD follow.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

Our vic was Dennis Sowa.

PRENTISS

Screamed nonsense at an audience for an hour every night.

Which hits a nerve with HUBBARD.

HUBBARD

You may have a couple fancy degrees, but you don't know everything... Sowa was a free-thinker, a straight-shooter, wasn't afraid to tell it like it is.

They stop short of SOWA'S office. They can already see the intermittent FLASH from a speed light inside the office.

Each of them slips on a pair of latex gloves. They're about to head inside when DOUGLAS places an arm in front of them:

DOUGLAS

I know you guys are pros, but you may want to take a minute before you go in...

(beat)

...we don't find bodies like this, not around here at least...

After a beat, DOUGLAS motions for them to enter. PRENTISS enters the room first...

INT. SOWA'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Then immediately wishes he hadn't. The scene before him is a gruesome tableaux:

The victim DENNIS SOWA, Caucasian, mid-50s, bearded, stocky, is zip-tied to a chair, behind the desk. His head is craned back, lifeless eyes are fixed on the ceiling.

There is a bloody incision across his throat - and his tongue has been removed from his mouth and instead hangs grotesquely along the length of his neck and upper chest like a fleshy, pink tie.

Most of his chest, and the desk are covered with liberal splashes of crimson like a grisly Jackson Pollock.

For a moment PRENTISS is too stunned to speak - his heart BEATING in his ears. He controls his BREATHING, his HEARTBEAT quiets and as it returns to normal he's able to take in the rest of the scene:

A team of FORENSIC TECHS are already at work: ALLISON 'ALLIE' SHAW, late 20s - more academic than cop, and OMAR NASSER, mid-30s, glasses, shy, scan the office for fibers and dust for prints.

Slowly making his way across the room, a crime scene PHOTOGRAPHER takes pictures. The light from his flash, creates a slow strobe in the dimmed light.

Standing behind the desk is DOCTOR MANDZUKIC, the medical examiner, 50s, full head of gray hair, could easily be mistaken for a retired (or burnt out) rock musician - examining SOWA'S corpse - still posed in his chair.

He looks up to find PRENTISS and HUBBARD:

MANDZUKIC

Professor. Hubbard. Welcome aboard the Nightmare Fuel Express...
 (re: his injuries)
 ...killer used a knife to slice the throat, severing the carotid artery... they cut deep enough to slice through all the connective tissue, then reached in and removed the tongue.

After the initial shock wears off, HUBBARD produces a note pad - surveys the scene and starts making notations.

HUBBARD stands, looms over SHAW. She's collecting a blood sample, and placing them in her kit. Her manner is calm and professional - unfazed by the gruesome corpse. She notices HUBBARD looming over her.

SHAW

We talked about this.

HUBBARD notices he's standing over her. He moves back.

SHAW (CONT'D)

(to HUBBARD - sarcastic)

Thank you.

(to MANDZUKIC)

... that's consistent with the blood splatter pattern on the desk and next to the chair.

PRENTISS

Time of death?

MANDZUKIC

I don't have an exact time yet. I'm going to guess between eight and midnight. I'll know a bit more after the autopsy.

PRENTISS
(to NASSER)
Prints?

NASSER
Four distinct sets of prints.

PRENTISS
Those prints probably belong to the
station's employees, but take some
samples just to be sure.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - WDDC-TV - CONTINUOUS

An obese uniformed SECURITY GUARD is seated at the
surveillance console, in front of a half dozen closed circuit
monitors.

HUBBARD
Go back to about seven p.m.

The SECURITY GUARD punches a series of buttons on the
console.

The images on the monitor rewind, then freeze.

The SECURITY GUARD presses play.

On the monitor: A FIGURE enters the building, his head
lowered, his face isn't visible.

We follow the FIGURE'S progress across the monitors - as it
exits the elevator and moves down the corridor.

PRENTISS
Who are you?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - WDDC-TV - NIGHT

The PRODUCER, SECURITY GUARD and INTERN, obviously shaken,
are sitting across from PRENTISS and HUBBARD -- DOUGLAS
stands over their shoulder. The INTERN is in the middle of
his statement:

INTERN
I was taking Mister Sowa the script
for tomorrow's show...

The INTERN takes a long sip of tea to steady himself.

PRODUCER

Like he even read them. Dennis tended to 'improvise'... a lot.

PRENTISS momentarily ignores the PRODUCER and turns his attention to the INTERN.

PRENTISS

So you drop the script off. Did you see anything unusual while you were heading to his office?

INTERN

You know, now that I think about it, there was someone strange...

(as he remembers)

I know most of the folks here. I'd never seen this guy before. I passed him as I was headed to Mister Sowa's office.

HUBBARD

Could you describe him for us?

HUBBARD takes out his notepad again and starts taking notes.

INTERN

He was uh, average height, average build, and he looked away from me as I walked by, I thought he was just being a dick.

PRODUCER

Dennis had been really agitated, talking about this thing, something coming to get him, all of us, for awhile now. But tonight he was, I dunno, calm, like he was expecting it.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Wednesday. October 26th. 1994.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

The street is relatively crowded with OFFICE WORKERS, but there are more than a handful of empty retail spaces, uncollected garbage piling up curbside; signs the area's decline has already begun.

A storefront, the large display windows have been papered over. A sign above the entrance reads: The Church of The Great Change.

INT. STORE FRONT - CHURCH OF THE GREAT CHANGE - DAY

The skeletal remains of a high end grocery store. Some of the display counters and shelves remain in place, but the space has been converted into an ad-hoc adult learning classroom:

CYRUS TOOMEY, using a cane for support, stands at the front of the room. He addresses a dozen FOLLOWERS of various ages, seated at their desks.

On each desk is a copy of "I Remember Tomorrow".

TOOMEY

I want all of you to see this beautiful new world, but to do that, you'll need to master the ability to move through time, as I do.

(more invitation than command)

Please begin.

On cue, the FOLLOWERS open the books. They begin reading. With a little difficulty, TOOMEY uses the cane to walk down the row. He ignores the pain walking causes him, instead watching the FOLLOWERS read -- grinning broadly: a teacher who genuinely enjoys imparting knowledge.

INT. STORE FRONT - LATER

As his FOLLOWERS quietly read to themselves, the small storefront is gradually filled with a low-end Dolby HUM.

They don't look up from their books, continuing to read as the HUM is accompanied by a warm purplish-indigo glow.

TOOMEY

We're consumed by bigotry, greed, cruelty, and on our current trajectory, 'The Great Change' is inevitable...

The FOLLOWERS look up from the book to find the source of the LIGHT and NOISE behind TOOMEY.

An astronomical phenomenon: A small purple sun. Amethyst colored solar flares arc across its surface.

It shouldn't exist in this place, but it does.

TOOMEY (V.O.)
 ...we won't be able to stop it, any
 more than we could stop the sun
 from rising.

The FOLLOWERS stare in rapt wonderment. TOOMEY smiles beatifically.

He walks toward the strange sun. The heat should incinerate him, but he passes harmlessly through the outer layer.

As he walks closer, we...

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Wednesday. October 26th. Present Day.

INT. PRECINCT - MORNING

A decrepit building in need of renovation. The grayish light of the rising sun barely penetrates the grime-covered windows of the precinct floor.

It's a shift change, a skeletal crew of OFFICERS and DETECTIVES packing up and heading home - while an equally small crew settles in, ready to start their day. Too few people for such a large space.

PRENTISS and HUBBARD, drinking large gulps of coffee in a desperate bid to stay awake, sit on opposite sides of a desk, watching a recording of SOWA'S last show.

Seated at his 'anchor' desk, SOWA speaks slowly, calmly - but appears deeply disturbed, mentally unstable:

SOWA
 (on the monitor)
 ...tonight, the 'Death's Head' will
 reveal himself.

PRENTISS stops the video.

PRENTISS
 (partial disbelief)
 I had to sit through that cause
 it's my job...
 (to HUBBARD)
 ...but you used to watch this?
 Voluntarily?

HUBBARD doesn't have an answer and changes tack:

HUBBARD

So what do we know? This guy walked into this place, and no one looked at him twice, so he looked like he fit in.

PRENTISS

So we're looking for a Caucasian male, in his thirties or forties. College educated, professional...

(beat)

He walked into an office building full of people, committed this murder, staged it, and walked out.

(thinking out loud)

Maybe he works in a field that requires a high degree of precision, planning: medicine, engineering, architecture...

Before he can finish, HUBBARD'S cell phone rings. He picks up on the second ring.

HUBBARD

Hubbard.

He listens intently, then ends the call. He turns to PRENTISS:

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

Mandzukic. He's got something.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - MEDICAL EXAMINER'S - DAY

Dark brick walls contrast the aluminum tables and drawers. The fluorescent lights overhead cast a harsh white light on the exam table in the center of the room.

DR. MANDZUKIC, NASSER and SHAW wearing lab coats and latex gloves, are gathered around SOWA'S cold gray corpse on an exam table. They are deep in conversation when PRENTISS and HUBBARD enter:

HUBBARD

What'd you find, Doc?

SOWA'S pale corpse lies on the table, a sealed Y-incision clearly visible on the chest.

There's a deep gash across SOWA'S neck.

MANDZUKIC

He sliced the artery... waited for him to bleed out... severed the connective tissue then removed the tongue post-mortem. The cut is precise, no hesitation wounds.

(beat)

They've done this before.

The DETECTIVES and FORENSICS SPECIALISTS exchange concerned looks at this unwelcome news.

HUBBARD

(to NASSER)

The prints?

NASSER

(to PRENTISS)

Like you predicted, nothing. Four separate prints. They belong to Sowa, the show's producer, the intern you interviewed, and a member of the custodial staff.

HUBBARD

So our killer wore gloves.

SHAW

It didn't stop there. He was careful not to leave hair samples, I scraped under Sowa's nails, no skin samples, no signs of a struggle...

MANDZUKIC jumps in, cutting her off.

MANDZUKIC

... Tox-screen found eighty milligrams of Xanax in his system, heavy dosage like that, wouldn't be too hard to subdue someone and slit their throat... Xanax was prescribed by...

INT. THE SPOTTED OWL RESTAURANT - DAY

An opulent, upscale restaurant. As soon as they step through the front door, it's obvious PRENTISS and HUBBARD aren't regulars. The MAITRE D' attempts to stop their entry.

PRENTISS flashes his badge:

PRENTISS

We need to speak to Doctor Hibou.

The MAITRE D', somewhat reluctantly, leads them to a table in back:

DR. CAROLINE HIBOU, mid-40s, intelligent, warm, glasses sliding down her nose - looks as if she dressed in a hurry, like an absent-minded academic.

She eats heartily and quickly - digging into her lunch, as PRENTISS and HUBBARD sit down across from her. HIBOU adjusts her glasses:

HIBOU

Hi. Can I offer you something?
It's really good...

PRENTISS

No, thank you. We had some questions about one of your patients.

HIBOU

Do you mind if I keep eating while we talk? I have another patient in twenty minutes.

PRENTISS

Dennis Sowa.

HIBOU

He was a patient, started seeing him about a year ago.

PRENTISS

An autopsy...

HUBBARD

(interrupting)
...I'm sorry, this isn't really appropriate to discuss over a meal but...

She smiles.

HIBOU

I'm not squeamish.
(beat)
Can I ask a question, professional curiosity. Is your evidence pointing to a ritualistic killer?

A strange question, causing PRENTISS and HUBBARD to exchange a glance.

HIBOU (CONT'D)

These types of murders, are a hobby of mine. I've read all the literature, 'Sexual Homicide', 'Mindhunter' of course... I'm a student of the human mind, and I study every aspect of it.

(beat)

Did you discover anything interesting or unusual in the autopsy?

PRENTISS

Only that Mister Sowa was taking Xanax, that you prescribed.

HIBOU

Since Dennis has passed, I'm not violating Doctor-Patient privilege by telling you...

(a beat)

... he was experiencing heightened anxiety. I prescribed Xanax, to calm him, so he could continue to work and function.

(sets down her cutlery)

By any chance are either of you familiar with Cyrus Toomey?

PRENTISS

He wrote the book that Sowa quoted on his show.

HIBOU

In a session a few months ago, Dennis said he'd read Toomey's book: "I Remember Tomorrow", and after he did, he started having 'episodes', where he moved through time, to different times in the distant past, near future, and then in his final 'episode', he traveled to the night of his own death.

HUBBARD and PRENTISS exchange disbelieving glances, which HIBOU picks up on. She fixes her gaze on them:

HIBOU (CONT'D)

Ostensibly that's the comment of a schizophrenic, someone who's suffered a complete mental break, however... many great artists throughout history have suffered from mental illness, Michelangelo, Beethoven... but still produced works of genius.

(beat)

I prescribed Xanax so Dennis could continue to create, and share his gifts with the world.

EXT. HALIFAX FREE PRESS - DAY

A five story building in the heart of downtown. A midday rush of pedestrians and traffic.

A MAILMAN, cell phone to one ear - in the midst of a conversation, pushes a mail cart past the entrance.

MAILMAN

...then my bitch supervisor tells me...

INT. LOBBY - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

Through a lobby that's seen better times, but still retains traces of its' Beaux-Arts splendor.

The MAILMAN, still on the phone, wheels the cart across the entrance, past a SECURITY GUARD and into the elevators.

MAILMAN

...if there was another incident I was going on probation.

INT. METRO SECTION - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

The editorial floor. A busy workplace, phones are RINGING, REPORTERS in cubicles writing stories.

INT. BETH GLAZER'S OFFICE - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

A SLOW PAN OF BETH'S DESK: Her desk is cluttered with books and piles of paper. There is barely enough room for a computer, or her for that matter.

A row of professional awards from The Michigan Journalism Society, finally settling on a Pulitzer Prize. The inscription reads: "Things Fall Apart: Greed, Corruption and Decline in Halifax" by Elizabeth Glazer.

BETH is hunched over a keyboard, while her editor, HAROLD STERN, avuncular 60s, stands in the door. Although masked by sarcasm, there is a great deal of affection between them.

STERN

This is where I tell you that I
need that emailed to me by four,
and then you actually send it to me
around seven.

BETH

(smiling)
Hey, at least I'm consistent.

STERN

A consistent pain in my ass.

INT. MAILROOM - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

With his free hand the MAILMAN hands a large pile of mail to LEONARD, the mailroom worker.

LEONARD

A little late, isn't it?

The MAILMAN doesn't even bother to respond to him, he continues his phone conversation, and leaves as LEONARD turns and heads out into the:

INT. METRO SECTION - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

LEONARD and the MAIL CART exit the Mail Room, and LEONARD begins to hand out the latest mail to some agitated EMPLOYEES.

EMPLOYEE

For fuck's sake. What time is it?

LEONARD

Sorry, just got here.

INT. BETH GLAZER'S OFFICE - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

BETH'S attention is focused on the computer screen in front of her. The sound of SQUEAKY WHEELS momentarily break her concentration. She looks up to find LEONARD with the mail.

LEONARD
Here you go, Ms. Glazer.

BETH
Thanks.

LEONARD
The New York Times, huh? We're
gonna miss you.

BETH
Thank you, Leonard. I'm going to
miss you guys too.

LEONARD
Almost forgot.

LEONARD hands her an envelope. Just a label with her name. She opens the envelope, and a single flash drive slides onto her desk.

She's apprehensive. A beat as she debates.

Her curiosity finally wins out and, she slips it into the USB port.

We don't see the screen, just see her eyes widen.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - DAY

The tension in the air is palpable. PRENTISS, HUBBARD and DR. HIBOU, holding a large folder, enter just as STERN, LEONARD and BETH make final adjustments to a large monitor behind them.

HUBBARD
Thought it might be a good idea to
bring in a consultant...

Introducing herself to the group:

DR. HIBOU
Doctor Caroline Hibou. I'm hoping I
can help you create a profile of
this killer.

They exchange polite nods. STERN is trying unsuccessfully to connect a laptop to the screen. He looks up at the screen: Still black.

He sighs, then turns to BETH.

STERN

Can you help me with this?

BETH

Sure.

BETH moves to the laptop. She taps a few keys, then hesitates for just a moment, uncertain she wants to do this. Her hesitation doesn't go unnoticed. PRENTISS and HUBBARD exchange a nervous look.

BETH presses a few buttons on the laptop.

The laptop desktop is visible on the bigger screen.

We see the expectant expressions on PRENTISS and HUBBARD'S faces, the looks of dread from STERN, LEONARD and BETH, contrasted with an inscrutable expression on DR. HIBOU'S.

CLOSE - SCREEN: DENNIS SOWA, balding, pudgy, 50s, salt and pepper goatee. He's perspiring, and from the strange, dreamy look in his eyes -- it's clear he's been drugged.

SOWA stops and looks o.s. He nods to the person o.s., whose voice we can't hear - before returning his gaze to the camera. His speech is slow and slurred:

SOWA

He will do horrible, unspeakable things to bring about the change, but...

SOWA'S expression is resigned, he understands the gravity of his situation. There is a muffled NOISE in the b.g.

SOWA (CONT'D)

...life. Death. Rebirth. This is the way of things.

He smiles contentedly.

A silver blade appears in the FRAME. It rests on SOWA'S neck, just below the ear. It digs into the flesh, drawing a single rivulet of blood, before SLICING across his throat.

They watch SOWA get his throat cut, collectively horrified. They turn away as he bleeds out.

BETH stabs at the laptop keyboard to stop the video.

PRENTISS

(to BETH)

And he sent this to you?

She nods; while HUBBARD shifts focus to LEONARD:

HUBBARD
You work in the mailroom?

LEONARD
Yes. I was working this morning
when it came in.

PRENTISS
Did you see who brought it?

LEONARD
Our regular mail guy, kind of an
asshole.

HUBBARD
(to BETH)
Do you still have the envelope?

BETH
At my desk.

HUBBARD
We're going to need that and the
flash drive itself.

BETH
(to PRENTISS)
On one condition: I want to be in
the loop on this. You get
information, you share it with me.

HUBBARD
That's not how we operate.

HIBOU
I've done extensive study of sexual
homicide.

(beat)
You're dealing with a highly
ritualistic killer. These videos
are part of the ritual. He's going
to strike again, afterward there'll
be another video like this, and the
killer...

(looking at BETH)
...is going to send it to her.

BETH
Which means I'm involved in this,
whether you like it or not.

PRENTISS looks at HUBBARD, they both acknowledge this.

BETH (CONT'D)

Good. I give you these videos, I get access.

She turns to HIBOU:

BETH (CONT'D)

And doctor, I'd like to get your input for my story.

HIBOU takes out her phone, opens the calendar.

HIBOU

I've got some time tomorrow night.

PRENTISS interrupts, as forcefully as he can without being too rude.

PRENTISS

(to HIBOU)

Right now, we need your input, on the video. What else did you get from that?

HIBOU pushes her glasses up her nose. She smiles to soften her directness:

HIBOU

He's a highly intelligent psychopath. He's patient, methodical, and doesn't want to be discovered. He'll be very difficult to catch, if you catch him at all.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The overcast skies have given way to a storm, the city's inundated by rain.

The Crown Victoria drives through a desolate area that bears more resemblance to a Demilitarized Zone than a former industrial park.

On the right side of the road is a long line of HOMELESS MEN, waiting outside a shelter, getting soaked to the bone.

INT. HUBBARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The steady BEAT of rain, tires on wet pavement, the SQUEAK of the windshield wipers are the only sounds. HUBBARD behind the wheel, focused on the traffic, but oblivious to the environment around them.

HUBBARD

Why Glazer?

PRENTISS

Her series about the riots, 'white flight', the car companies moving to Mexico, drugs coming in, Sowa's immigrant bashing, skyrocketing hate crimes. She won a Pulitzer.

HUBBARD

Sounds like libber B.S.

PRENTISS

Man, you really need to open your eyes, see what's going on out here.

INT. CAPTAIN DOUGLAS' OFFICE - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

PRENTISS and HUBBARD stand near the door, while DOUGLAS, tie loosed, sleeves rolled up - wears a hole in the floor behind his desk.

PRENTISS

This isn't her specialty, but Hibou's speculation confirmed what we were thinking. Sowa was his first victim and he's going to keep killing until we find him, and she wasn't entirely certain we would.

DOUGLAS shakes his head in disbelief:

DOUGLAS

I didn't think we'd ever see something like that...here.
(as he refocuses)
But no hair, tissue, fiber or fingerprints? Just the video?

PRENTISS

So far.

DOUGLAS looks out his window at the precinct floor: A decaying building in need of repair, manned by a small contingent of OFFICERS and DETECTIVES.

DOUGLAS

I don't know how they expect me to keep this place from going to hell...

DOUGLAS catches himself. Calms down.

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)
 Coordinate everything from one of
 the conference rooms. If you need
 anything else, come see me, I'll do
 what I can.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Thursday, October 27th. 1994.

EXT. STORE FRONT - CHURCH OF THE GREAT CHANGE - DAY

The windows of 'The Church of The Great Change' remain
 papered over, hiding the interior from the gazes of curious
 passersby.

INT. STORE FRONT - CHURCH OF THE GREAT CHANGE - LATER

Illuminated by the rays of the indigo sun, accompanied by the
 heavy bass HUM.

Under TOOMEY'S watchful eye, a dozen FOLLOWERS stand in a
 straight line in front of the purple sun, drinking in its
 light.

TOOMEY

Now, it's time for you to see the
 beginning of 'The Great Change'
 with your own eyes. I warn you, you
 are about to see our fellow
 citizens at their worst, given over
 to their vilest, darkest instincts,
 but it must be seen.

On his cue, the FOLLOWERS step forward one by one, walking
 through the sun's corona, the chromosphere, moving ever
 closer to the surface...

OVER BLACK:

Thursday, October 27th. Present Day.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Turned into a temporary base of operations. A bulletin board
 has been set up near the front, but the rest of the
 conference room looks like a dorm during an all-nighter.

The table is piled with documents, plastic evidence bags, the ground littered with crushed soda cans and take-out containers.

NEELY, HUBBARD, PRENTISS, GRIFFIN and NASSER are all crowded into the small, messy space, going through the evidence.

One of the evidence bags catches PRENTISS' eye. He picks it up, it's a receipt: ANTIQUARIAN BOOKS.

Meanwhile HUBBARD sniffs the air, like a bloodhound - eventually leading him to NEELY.

He leans over surreptitiously to smell him, then recoils.

HUBBARD

Dude, we've got a shower in the locker room.

NEELY

That's my natural masculine musk.

HUBBARD

It's like a used diaper that's been sitting out in the sun...

PRENTISS laughs despite himself and the others join in. GRIFFIN leaps to his partner's defense.

GRIFFIN

Hey, give him a break, we've been at this all day...

The door flies open, SLAMMING into the opposite wall, hard enough that it seems the glass might break. SHAW steps across the threshold, out of breath.

SHAW

Acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene.

PRENTISS

What?

SHAW

We got lucky, found a hair sample on the envelope.

She sits down at the table, next to NEELY. She's about to continue - when her face screws up like she's just tasted something bitter.

SHAW (CONT'D)

(to NEELY)

You smell like a dumpster that hasn't been emptied for a month.

HUBBARD

Told you.

PRENTISS

(to SHAW)

What did you find on the hair sample?

SHAW

Trace amounts of acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene..

On their looks.

SHAW (CONT'D)

It's a plastic, use it to make cars. There were high concentrations. He worked for one of the car companies, but the traces were old, so he hadn't worked there in a while.

PRENTISS

For how long?

SHAW

Fifteen, sixteen years.

PRENTISS

So this guy worked at a car company.

GRIFFIN

There are only three companies that have plants or offices here: Erie, Findlay and Timken.

PRENTISS

What job at a car company is going to require a high level of precision, planning? He's not on the line, and he's not an executive.

PRENTISS has a 'Eureka' moment, snaps his fingers.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

An engineer. Meets all the criteria.

(MORE)

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

(a beat as he continues
speculating)

But a guy like this would have
difficulty making friends, holding
down a job, so he probably had
disciplinary issues or got fired...

(to GRIFFIN)

... so talk to their H.R.
departments, find out who they've
let go in the past ten years
because of violent, anti-social
behavior.

GRIFFIN

Could be a long list.

PRENTISS

But that's probably not all, Hibou
said he'll probably have a record
as well. He's got to be in the
system.

(a beat as he considers)

So get a list of employees,
terminated for violence, strange
behavior, then cross-reference that
against names in the system...and
VICAP as well.

DOUGLAS pops his head in, looks at PRENTISS and HUBBARD:

DOUGLAS

You two. Walk with me.

INT. PRECINCT FLOOR - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

With PRENTISS, HUBBARD and DOUGLAS - in his best suit - as
they walk. DOUGLAS stops in his tracks. Takes a long look at
his DETECTIVES.

DOUGLAS

You two look like hammered shit.

HUBBARD

Nobody sleeps for the first forty-
eight.

HUBBARD senses where this is going.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

You can't bench us.

PRENTISS

We just got our first real lead.

DOUGLAS

Both of you go home, grab a couple hours of shut eye. You're not going to be any good to anybody if you're dead on your feet.

DOUGLAS stops at an office door, checks his appearance in the reflective surface, then straightens his tie before heading out:

EXT. PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DUSK

DOUGLAS is behind a podium at the entrance. Assembled in front of him are various media from across the state. He's not comfortable speaking to the media and it shows:

DOUGLAS

I have a brief statement to read, then I will not be taking questions...

DOUGLAS refers to a printed statement:

DOUGLAS (CONT'D)

..thirty-six hours ago, Dennis Sowa was found dead in his office at WDDC. The Metro Police has set up a task force to investigate the murder, however at this time there are no suspects. We will continue to brief you on any developments in this ongoing investigation.

As soon as he stops speaking there is an eruption of noise, as all the assembled REPORTERS attempt to ask questions at the same time. One REPORTER manages to make himself heard above the din.

REPORTER

Is it true that the killer sent a video of the murder to the Free Press?

DOUGLAS

Didn't you just hear me say I'm not taking questions?

DOUGLAS gathers his notes, turns and heads back into the building. The throng of REPORTERS attempt to follow him in, but two OFFICERS guarding the doors halt their progress.

Unnoticed by the REPORTERS, PRENTISS and HUBBARD leave through a side entrance and cross the parking lot.

One FIGURE, his back to the CAMERA, turns and watches PRENTISS and HUBBARD leave. He turns as well, shadowing them to the parking lot.

INT. HUBBARD'S CAR - NIGHT

Drops of rain pelt the windshield. The steady PATTERN of raindrops, tires SPLASHING on wet concrete and the HUM of the engine are the only sounds. HUBBARD behind the wheel. PRENTISS rubbing tired eyes.

PRENTISS

Could you drop me downtown instead?
Need to run an errand.

HUBBARD

Sure. What's up?

PRENTISS

Uh, something Hibou said. Probably
a waste of time.

When PRENTISS finishes rubbing his eyes, he looks out the window as they pass a large, shuttered building.

PRENTISS looks at the building, nostalgic and a bit sad. He says for his own benefit more than HUBBARD'S:

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

That's my old high school, it's all
disappearing, into the black hole.

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

HUBBARD'S car pulls away from the curb.

In a light drizzle, PRENTISS wanders down a mostly empty side street, navigating oily puddles. He finally stops at a large black and gold sign, partially hidden behind a stairwell just above the street: ANTIQUARIAN BOOKS

He descends a wet stairwell, taking him below the street.

INT. ANTIQUARIAN BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

A BELL RINGS as PRENTISS opens the front door. A small, dark, musty space stuffed from floor to ceiling with books.

Puttering around behind the counter is the store owner known to his customers simply as MR. ABDULMAJID: late 60s, Somali immigrant, glasses, cardigan and a key chain hanging from his neck. He notices PRENTISS:

MR. ABDULMAJID

Ah... Professor, how are you? What brings you in today?

PRENTISS

I'm good thanks, working a case. Victim mentioned a book, think maybe he got it here...

PRENTISS reads a note on his phone:

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

..."I Remember Tomorrow".

There is a long beat. The air is suddenly thick with tension. PRENTISS, now self-conscious, looks back at MR. ABDULMAJID, slightly perplexed.

MR. ABDULMAJID'S caution dissipates and just as quickly it's replaced by the affability he first displayed when PRENTISS entered the store.

MR. ABDULMAJID

That's very rare. Collector's item.

MR. ABDULMAJID ignores the awkward moment that's just passed between them and moves stiffly to a glass case in the back.

MR. ABDULMAJID (CONT'D)

I keep that in the back.

Using a key around his neck, he unlocks it, and removes a dusty copy of "I Remember Tomorrow" from the shelf, before reluctantly handing it to PRENTISS, while trying to mask his concern.

MR. ABDULMAJID (CONT'D)

You're not looking into the Toomey disappearance, are you?

PRENTISS

The Sowa murder, been on the news.

(beat)

Sowa talked about Toomey just before he was killed, we think the suspect has an interest too, but didn't know there was an open case on Toomey, he was the...

The MR. ABDULMAJID moves back to the register, his gait more relaxed:

MR. ABDULMAJID
... heir to the Toomey electrical
fortune... in the mid-eighties...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Stately and elegant, turned into a makeshift hospital room. A DOCTOR and NURSE examine readouts from an EKG.

Their patient, TOOMEY, lies motionless in the bed behind them, tubes snaking out his emaciated arms and legs - electrodes attached to his head and sunken chest.

MR. ABDULMAJID (V.O.)
...he went into a coma for three
years, doctors never determined the
cause.

The DOCTOR and NURSE finish their exam, and leave the room.

As they leave, the room's suffused with a familiar warm purple glow.

A mini-sun, forms at the foot of his bed. Its gravity field gently lifts TOOMEY out of bed, and pulls him towards it.

He floats weightlessly, like an astronaut that's become untethered from his ship. He's pulled into the sun's warm embrace.

MR. ABDULMAJID (V.O.)
One day he woke up, saying time was
an illusion, and while he was in
the coma, he'd started moving
backwards and forward through time
and he'd seen mankind's future.

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

TOOMEY addresses the audience we saw at the beginning.

MR. ABDULMAJID (V.O.)
Did lectures across the country.
People started calling him 'The
Sleeping Visionary'. He had a group
of almost three thousand followers.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
Then he disappeared?

MR. ABDULMAJID (V.O.)
 One day, he told a small group of
 his closest followers that he was
 going to see the world 'at the end
 of history'.

EXT. TOOMEY ESTATE - MORNING

The grounds are lined by towering jack pines, the air thick
 with an early morning fog.

TOOMEY stands in the middle of the grounds. He looks into the
 middle distance. Leaning heavily on the cane, TOOMEY slowly
 makes his way into the forest. When the fog dissipates, he's
 gone.

MR. ABDULMAJID (V.O.)
 No one's seen or heard from him
 since.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. ANTIQUARIAN BOOK STORE - CONTINUOUS

Where PRENTISS listens to MR. ABDULMAJID; from his
 expression, he's intrigued by the story.

MR. ABDULMAJID
 No poison Kool-Aid, no black
 sneakers. He disappeared and his
 group just sort of dissolved...
 (holding something back)
 ...I assume his followers just went
 back to their lives.

PRENTISS doesn't ask him the obvious follow-up question as
 MR. ABDULMAJID rings up the books at the register.

PRENTISS
 (joking-skeptical)
 Cyrus Toomey. Time traveling
 visionary.

MR. ABDULMAJID
 That'll be three hundred.

PRENTISS reaches for his wallet, then hesitates. A beat, as
 he reconsiders.

PRENTISS
 What the hell, I'll expense it.

He hands MR. ABDULMAJID a debit card. MR. ABDULMAJID smiles, then runs the card. PRENTISS signs the printed receipt, while MR. ABDULMAJID carefully puts the book in a bag - then hands it to PRENTISS:

MR. ABDULMAJID
Professor, a word of warning,
Toomey's work is rumored to have
strange effects on the reader.

PRENTISS
(still skeptical)
The victim in my case read it, said
that it somehow allowed him to
travel through time like Toomey, to
the night of his own murder.

MR. ABDULMAJID
I realize all of this sounds far-
fetched, but I've spent my entire
life dealing in language.
(beat)
I never underestimate the power
that words can have on someone who
reads them.

PRENTISS
"We are shaped by our thoughts; we
become what we think."

MR. ABDULMAJID
Precisely. If that book can make
you stop thinking in a linear way,
who's to say it can't make you stop
existing in a linear way.

EXT. HALIFAX INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS - NIGHT

An expansive building in the heart of downtown. A couple large freight trucks are parked out front.

INT. GALLERY - H.I.A. - NIGHT

BETH and HIBOU gaze at the Bosch triptych: 'The Garden of Earthly Delights'. Behind them, teams of MOVERS cart large works of art toward the loading docks.

BETH
You've told the police things about
the killer so they can find him,
but for my piece, I'm trying to put
him in a larger context.

BETH takes out her iPhone. Hits 'Record' and holds the phone out toward HIBOU:

HIBOU

You don't need me for that. You understand this place. You're not from Halifax are you?

BETH

Philly.

HIBOU

Enabling you to look at this place objectively. How do you think this environment produced this killer?

BETH

We're told that if we sacrifice, work hard, we'll be successful, and the lives of our children will be better than ours were.

(a beat)

But that's stopped happening, people are figuring out they've been lied to... they're angry, they're lashing out, sometimes violently... and frequently at people and groups who can't defend themselves.

(a beat as she realizes)

...the killer's one of those people... he's lashing out.

BETH realizes that she's been doing most of the talking.

BETH (CONT'D)

You just pulled a therapy trick on me didn't you?

HIBOU can't help but smile. She looks at her watch, then smiles apologetically.

HIBOU

Like I said, you don't need me. You've already got this figured out, and I've got to get back to the office.

BETH stops recording, then looks around - taking in the MOVERS and flurry of activity.

BETH

What's all this?

A pair of white gloved MOVERS are placing a painting into a packing crate.

A hint of bitterness creeps into HIBOU'S normally cheerful voice:

HIBOU

They're closing the museum. Part of Ryan's budget cuts. Selling off most of the work to private collectors. Ryan's trying to do it quietly, literally like a thief in the night.

BETH

Can he do that?

HIBOU

Men like Ryan don't ask if they can, they just do.

BETH

Easier to ask for forgiveness than permission.

HIBOU

They don't ask for forgiveness either.

(a beat)

You should try and see as much of this as you can, before it all disappears.

INT. BEDROOM - PRENTISS HOME - NIGHT

The moving boxes still stacked against the wall. PRENTISS is again sitting in a half-lotus in the middle of the floor, reading a copy of 'I Remember Tomorrow'.

TOOMEY (V.O.)

...in a period of violence, death and destruction, that will reduce the human population by almost ninety percent...

INT. BEDROOM - PRENTISS HOME - LATER

Reading feverishly, PRENTISS is halfway through the book. His face, a mask of concentration. He's unaware neurological changes are taking place...

EXTREME CLOSE - BRAIN: The corpus callosum. A thick, flat bundle of nerves - connecting the right and left hemispheres.

The neural electrical activity increases, exponentially. The bundle of nerves becomes an interplay of rapidly moving lights, like a thousand speeding cars at night.

PRENTISS continues to read, failing to notice either the faint reddish glow or BASS heavy HUM that is gradually filling the room.

He looks up from the book to find the source of the LIGHT and NOISE:

The black hole, has left his thoughts and now floats in the middle of the bedroom; the ring of plasma bathing the room in a reddish glow.

PRENTISS sets the book down and stands. He looks at the black hole, feeling the vibration of the HUM.

PRENTISS

Wha'...

He approaches the black hole cautiously (as you would in this situation).

He stops within arm's length. Tentatively, he reaches out to touch it.

He does, pulls his hand back and examines it: no signs of damage. He sticks the hand inside the black hole. It vanishes behind the surface, when he withdraws it again, it's still undamaged.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

What...

His curiosity overwhelms his common sense and he steps across the event horizon, and onto...

EXT. CITY STREET - HALIFAX - NIGHT

The near future. A scene from Hieronymus Bosch. Halifax engulfed in flames. Burnt out buildings. Overturned police cars. Murder, rape, torture happening as far as the eye can see.

Led by a SUBURBAN MOM, a blood-thirsty, assault rifle-toting, torch-wielding MOB roams the streets -- attacking anyone and everyone in their vicinity.

PRENTISS stands in the middle of the street - amidst the fire, the smoke and chaos, panicked:

PRENTISS
What is happening?!

As he orients himself, the SUBURBAN MOM and her MOB spots him. Their eyes burn with bloodlust. They run toward him with homicidal intent. He reaches for his service revolver, which is back in the house. He's unarmed, defenseless.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
Oh shit.

PRENTISS takes a step back, across the event horizon and finds himself:

INT. BEDROOM - PRENTISS HOME - NIGHT

Back in his house.

PRENTISS
What?

Before he's finished processing what he's just experienced, there is a sound of a DOOR SLAMMING (o.s.).

Adrenalin spiking, he scans the room for his service weapon. It's on a box next to the bed. He moves across the room, and noiselessly slides his Glock from the holster. Armed - he steps into:

INT. HALLWAY - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

A long darkened hallway, illuminated only by the faint glow of moonlight. The wind blowing through leafless trees (o.s.) is the only sound.

PRENTISS, Glock raised, carefully measuring each step - moves down the hall: The darkened living room is visible in the distance.

He pauses at the entrance. Looks first to his left: The far end of the living room, then to his right: the entrance to the kitchen.

There is a DOOR SLAM, directly beneath him. It's coming from the basement (o.s.).

Without making a sound he turns right into the:

INT. KITCHEN - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

The window above the sink allows for plenty of moonlight to flood the room. Compared to the rest of the house, it's fairly well lit.

A quick survey of the room reveals only countertops and appliances, and on the left - the door to the basement.

He listens carefully - only the sound of the HOWLING wind outside.

Satisfied, he steps to his left, toward the basement door. His free hand turns the knob. It SQUEAKS as he turns it.

He silently curses the squeaky knob giving away his location.

The stairs are lit for a few steps, then descend into total darkness.

PRENTISS pulls at the cord overhead. The bulb provides some soft light, but the landing is still full of shadows.

PRENTISS

I am a Metro Police Detective and I
am armed!

No response. PRENTISS descends the stairwell, finally stepping into:

INT. BASEMENT - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

The only noises are the WIND and the steady HUM of the furnace to his right. With his free hand, he pushes the door to that room open and steps in:

INT. FURNACE ROOM - BASEMENT - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

A small space, dominated by a large old-fashioned furnace - but there are plenty of places to hide in the shadows.

He moves toward the far corner of the room, with the deepest darkest shadows. The sound of soft FOOTSTEPS emanates from the darkness.

There is definitely someone in the house with him. Gun raised, he moves closer...closer...

PRENTISS

I'd prefer not to use this, so why
don't you step out where I can see
you, arms up.

A FIGURE, hidden by the shadows, walks past the threshold of the furnace room - just behind PRENTISS.

FIGURE (O.S.)
 You've read the words of the
 Sleeping Visionary... you've been
 transformed...

PRENTISS spins, weapon raised, but no one is there.

FIGURE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ...you've seen with your own eyes
 what I'm going to do, and still,
 you don't believe.

He moves forward toward the VOICE, it's coming from the top of the stairs.

FIGURE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 You think that you're in control,
 and once you find the right clues,
 you'll arrest me and all this will
 be over...
 (a beat)
 By the end of the week, you'll
 know, with a horrible certainty,
 that a 'transformation' is coming
 and that you're powerless to stop
 it.

PRENTISS moves forward cautiously until he reaches the bottom of the stairs...

INT. BASEMENT - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

...just in time to see the basement door SLAM shut.

He gives chase, taking the stairs two at a time, until he reaches the top - pushing the door open, bursting into:

INT. KITCHEN - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

Gun raised and ready to fire.

The room is empty. There's no one there. Everything seems to be in place - when he notices it, on the table: A prescription pill bottle, the label flecked with drops of dried blood. The patient's name: DENNIS SOWA.

He continues to give chase, out the front door:

EXT. EAST LAWN - PRENTISS HOME - NIGHT

Breathing heavily, PRENTISS finally comes to a stop in front of a large piles of brown and orange leaves that line the curb.

PRENTISS stands on the sidewalk -- gun at his side, a light wind blowing desiccated leaves across his feet -- as he looks up and down an empty street.

INT. YARD - PRENTISS HOME - LATER

The sleepy neighborhood is now alive with activity. A half dozen police cruisers are parked along the street. The yard itself filled with POLICEMEN, including HUBBARD, GRIFFIN and NEELY.

HUBBARD

You get a look at the guy?

PRENTISS

No, too dark. He spoke to me, I remember the voice, but that's not much to go on.

HUBBARD

(to GRIFFIN & NEELY)

Canvas the neighborhood. Maybe someone saw this guy.

GRIFFIN

You got it.

Just when they're out of earshot:

PRENTISS

They're not going to find anything.

HUBBARD

Maybe one of your neighbors is nosy, was watching the street, you never know.

SHAW and NASSER emerge from the house. NASSER has his fingerprint kit and SHAW is carrying a small evidence bag.

NASSER

I think he was down in the basement waiting for you. No signs of forced entry. No prints.

SHAW holds up the small plastic evidence bag containing the blood flecked pill bottle.

SHAW

We'll test this. Should know something by morning.

HUBBARD nods.

PRENTISS

The blood is going to be a match for Sowa. There won't be any prints, no hair, no fiber.

HUBBARD

He broke in, waited in your basement, lured you down there and then slipped out, why?

PRENTISS

To tell me about what's coming, and that we won't be able to stop it.

INT. BETH'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Much like PRENTISS' house: stacks of moving boxes line the walls. The only piece of furniture, is a desk in the middle of the room.

The only noise are the melodious notes of Alice Coltrane's 'Blue Nile'. BETH'S on the computer. The phone rings. She looks at the screen, smiles - then answers.

BETH

(slightly flirtatious)

Professor, this is a pleasant surprise.

INT. GREAT LAKES DINER - MORNING

PRENTISS, exhaustion etched into his features, is at a booth in the back, staring into the depths of his cup of black coffee when BETH arrives. She settles into the booth, dispensing with pleasantries:

PRENTISS

Everything I'm about to say, this whole conversation, is off the record. Way off the record.

BETH nods. PRENTISS takes a big gulp of coffee, hoping the caffeine will help him arrange his thoughts.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

I don't even know where to start. I read that book Sowa was talking about on his show.

BETH leans in closer, curiosity piqued.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

I wanted to dismiss it as the rantings of a lunatic, but it has incredible scope, it's a disturbingly detailed vision that starts with a man destined to commit heinous crimes, that tap into this deep well of rage, bigotry and paranoia, sending the country, and then the world into a 'killing frenzy'. We wipe ourselves off the planet, then a new world and civilization takes its place.

BETH

Not exactly a beach read.

PRENTISS

You can say that again. And our killer sees himself as the one who initiates all this. Toomey calls him, the 'Death's Head'.

(a beat)

Do you know the word 'Dharma'?

BETH

You're not going to light some incense and start chanting are you?

He smiles at her joke, and continues:

PRENTISS

Two different definitions. Ever read the 'Bhagavad Gita'?

BETH looks at him as if he's taken leave of his senses.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

This great warrior, Arjuna, is on a battlefield, preparing to go to war, but the opposing army is made up of his family, cousins and countrymen.

BETH

How'd that happen?

PRENTISS

Long story. Anyway he looks at the battlefield, and says "I can't kill these people." The god Krishna appears and tells him it's his duty to fight this battle, to serve a greater cause. Doing your duty. Fulfilling your purpose in life. Dharma.

BETH

Is this going to be on the final?

PRENTISS

Very funny. That's what the killer is doing, or thinks he's doing. I know because he broke into my house last night and told me as much.

BETH'S expression registers her shock. Before PRENTISS can continue, the waitress, LINDA, comes over to take their order. BETH is a regular, doesn't even bother to look at the menu.

LINDA

Hey there, sweetie, the usual?

BETH

Thanks, Linda.

LINDA

(to PRENTISS)

Are you actually going to eat something or just nurse that coffee?

PRENTISS

I'm good with coffee.

LINDA

I make my living on tips you know.

(PRENTISS just shrugs - to

BETH)

Food'll be up in a few.

LINDA collects their menus and leaves.

INT. GREAT LAKES DINER - LATER

BETH leaning across the table, fully engrossed in PRENTISS' re-telling of last night's events.

BETH
Why you? And why Sowa?

Before he can answer, LINDA brings the food: scrambled eggs, toast and orange juice.

BETH (CONT'D)
Thanks, Linda.

BETH stops to take a bite of her breakfast.

BETH (CONT'D)
(to PRENTISS)
This is so good, sure you don't want some?

PRENTISS
I'm good, thanks. Same reason you wrote about him, before he started to deteriorate mentally, he was on TV every day, tapping into grievance, into fears his audience had, they were losing their power, convincing them it was Black people, Mexicans, unions or same-sex marriage were taking away their power, ruining their way of life.

He pauses and looks off into the middle distance. We can almost hear the gears in his head turning.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
...I think our killer, is trying to punish the people that actually caused all the suffering. And somehow that's going to play into them reaching their ultimate goal.

She puts down her utensils, and fixes her gaze on him while trying to hide her concern.

BETH
But Hibou's not right, is she? You'll find this guy, get some more evidence, your team can find him can't they?

PRENTISS
Some evidence would be good, some luck wouldn't hurt either.
(beat)
Like Hibou said, this guy's different.

(MORE)

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

He's careful, methodical, he's been planning this for years. He murdered Sowa, staged his body, could have killed me, and we have no evidence, no witnesses, no fucking idea who he is.

BETH is wrestling with that, when she suddenly remembers:

BETH

Dharma. You said there were two definitions. What's the other one?

INT. PARKING LOT - DAY

The second story of a nearly empty, above ground parking lot. The walls open to the street below. Dim sunlight and a few widely spaced fluorescent bulbs are the only light in the cavernous space.

An OLDER MAN in his early 60s, expensive coat and suit, is walking through the lot, passing through pools of light and into shadow. He strides towards a black Bentley.

Just as he's almost reached the car, he can hear the sound of a car moving towards him, very slowly - like a predator creeping through the tall grass.

PRENTISS (V.O.)

In Buddhism, meaning's a little different. Dharma refers to the cosmic order, life, death, rebirth...

The OLDER MAN looks up, into a pair of high beams.

He raises his hand to shield his eyes as the car grows closer...

PRENTISS (V.O.)

...maybe Toomey, and our perp, also think these killings...

The OLDER MAN moves away from his Bentley. The car ahead of him stops. A door opens and we hear FOOTSTEPS approaching.

The OLDER MAN turns to find a DARK FIGURE, silhouetted by the car lights, moving towards him.

He takes a few tentative steps back. The footsteps continue to advance. He removes his cell phone and starts to dial, but the FOOTSTEPS get closer.

Finally the OLDER MAN turns and runs, but drops his cell in the process. Because of his age, he doesn't move too fast...

The exit is just ahead.

The silhouetted FIGURE easily closes the gap between them.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...and the end of our world are all
part of the cosmic order: Life.
Death. Rebirth.

The shadow of the silhouetted FIGURE creeps across the floor like a living thing, until it covers the OLDER MAN in darkness.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
In which case, both definitions
apply and all of this is playing
out, according to some grand
design.

The OLDER MAN slows down and turns: There's no sign of his would-be attacker.

He breathes a sigh of relief. He reaches out to turn the knob on the exit door when:

A pair of hands reach out of the shadows, spinning him around, grabbing him by the lapels of his coat, pushing him toward the back wall, then throwing him through the wall opening:

The OLDER MAN, not comprehending what's happening to him, his hands clawing fruitlessly at the air, trying to gain purchase.

The OLDER MAN plummets toward the earth like a fallen angel, the folds of his dark coat flapping in the air like useless wings.

He hits the ground with a sickening CRACK. It was 'only' two floors - so he's injured, but alive. As his broken body lies motionless on the ground:

PRENTISS (V.O.)
And the killer's dharma is to end
this world, and give birth to a new
one.

INT. LOBBY - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - DAY

A group of EMPLOYEES enter the building, headed toward their offices, ready to start the workday - their collective footsteps echoing loudly on the marble floor. BETH, her face a mask of concern after her breakfast with PRENTISS, navigates the crowd, moving toward a bank of elevators.

INT. METRO SECTION - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - DAY

BETH steps off the elevator and works her way toward her cubicle. Lost in thought she almost runs into the mail cart.

BETH
Sorry, Leonard.

LEONARD, bright and cheery, barely notices she almost crashed into him.

LEONARD
No problem, Ms. Glazer. Mail actually got here on time for once. In fact, I already left something for you.

BETH makes a brief stop at the coffee machine. Pours herself a cup, then goes to her:

INT. BETH GLAZER'S OFFICE - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - CONTINUOUS

She places her purse in a drawer, sets down a small briefcase on the desktop.

As she places her briefcase on the desk, she notices there's a manila envelope waiting for her. The label is the same as the one the killer delivered two days ago.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Dark. The shades have been drawn. The bulletin board has been moved to the back of the room and replaced by a large television monitor.

PRENTISS and HUBBARD are at the head of the room, about to address the TASK FORCE - that has added some OFFICERS to its ranks.

HUBBARD
(referring to notes in
front of him)
(MORE)

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

Last night, someone, who we believe to be the suspect, entered Detective Prentiss' home and left a prescription bottle that was in Sowa's office.

SHAW

I confirmed that it's Sowa's blood.

HUBBARD

That means it could only have been left by the killer.

NASSER

Like the Sowa scene, he used gloves. I got a couple smudges but no usable prints.

NEELY

Canvassed the neighborhood, the few people willing to talk to us didn't see anything.

GRIFFIN

So no witnesses.

PRENTISS

Then at some point in the last twelve hours, while we were combing through evidence from the Sowa scene and my house, he delivered another envelope to Beth at the Free Press.

PRENTISS hits a button on the monitor.

PRENTISS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

And we all have a pretty good idea what's probably on it.

The members of the TASK FORCE watch the screen, trying to remain detached and analytical. Behind them BETH keeps looking away, but eventually back at the screen - virtually forcing herself to watch the monitor:

In the foreground: The OLDER MAN from the parking lot, securely zip-tied to a chair - in the middle of a dirt floor. A mixture of blood and sweat streams down features twisted in pain.

In the background we can hear something moving through the dirt and RAPID HEAVY BREATHING (o.s.)

BETH audibly GASPS.

BETH

Oh my god.

All eyes turn toward her.

BETH (CONT'D)

That's Alan Timken.

NASSER

Where is he?

SHAW

Looks like the inside of a barn.

PRENTISS

I know where they are.

Onscreen ALAN TIMKEN looks (o.s.), at something we can't see - and his eyes go wide with fear:

TIMKEN

No, no please, for the love of God,
not that, please, I'm begging
you...

There is a muffled THUNDEROUS noise, as TIMKEN SCREAMS, a large DARK SHAPE RUSHES into the frame and the screen goes black, followed by AGONIZED SHRIEKS and WET CHEWING SOUNDS.

PRENTISS

That used to be the Lang's farm.

PRENTISS and HUBBARD are already in motion, sliding on jackets, and barking out orders.

HUBBARD

(to SHAW & NASSER)
Get your kits.

PRENTISS

(to GRIFFIN & NEELY)
We're going to need a S.W.A.T. team
at the old Lang farm.

GRIFFIN

We're on it.

PRENTISS

(to HIBOU)
I'll be in touch later.

HIBOU is a lone oasis of calm amidst the chaos. She looks down at the case files on the table in front of her.

HIBOU
I'll look these over again.

PRENTISS nods. All of the color has drained from BETH'S face.
HUBBARD luxuriates in her discomfort.

HUBBARD
(to BETH)
You wanted to be in the loop.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Stalks of wheat sway gently in the breeze.

The Crown Vic, followed by two squad cars, sirens blaring and lights flashing speed down a country road.

INT. HUBBARD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD focused on the road, one hand on the wheel, the other barking orders into a walkie.

HUBBARD
We're going in the main house and
the barn at the same time.

BETH can see PRENTISS' growing unease.

BETH
You okay?

PRENTISS
He picked this place. The last
place on earth I want to go.
(thinking out loud)
To remind me that we're linked, to
show me that all of this is going
according to plan.

EXT. FARM - CONTINUOUS

A large open field, bisected by a solitary road. The caravan of police cars - speed down the road toward a large barn, and adjoining buildings.

The cars come to a stop just between the main house on the right and a large red barn on the left. The doors of the cars open, disgorging the DETECTIVES, OFFICERS and BETH.

HUBBARD

Alright, Griffin, Neely, check out the house. Shaw, Nasser, you're with us.

PRENTISS

(muttering to himself)

But I'm in control. I make my own decisions, I decide my fate.

They overhear PRENTISS talking to himself, regard him curiously - before splitting up into two teams. We follow GRIFFIN, NASSER and a two man tactical unit with a battering ram, as they quickly mount the steps of the front porch and knock on the door.

GRIFFIN

This is the Metro Police, please open the door!

No answer.

NEELY

(louder)

Metro Police open up!

Again, their knocking is greeted with silence. NEELY nods to the TACTICAL OFFICER with the battering ram. The OFFICER swings the ram back, it collides with the door knob, reducing it to splinters - as the front door FLIES OPEN:

INT. LIVING ROOM - FARM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

GRIFFIN and NEELY are the first in, guns drawn. They find an empty living room. One of the chairs has been knocked over. Off to the left is a kitchen.

There is a soft but steady BUZZING sound in the b.g.

NEELY

Do you hear that?

GRIFFIN'S face screws up, as if he's just tasted something bitter or rotten.

GRIFFIN

What's that smell?

NEELY assumes that GRIFFIN is joking and given the situation is understandably not amused.

NEELY

That shit is not funny.

GRIFFIN

 No man... don't you smell that?

NEELY sniffs the air, and has the same reaction.

 NEELY

 You're right. I know what that is.

NEELY leads them through the living room and into the:

INT. KITCHEN - FARM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Where we discover the source of the BUZZING and the foul odor:

Four corpses. Rigor has set in -- their dead bodies posed at the kitchen table, in a macabre parody of a family dinner.

A cloud of BUZZING flies circle their heads and pools of dried blood at their feet.

The faces of the corpses have blackened and swollen. Flies buzz around their heads. The eye sockets, mouths and ears are filled with crawling maggots.

 NEELY

 Dear God.

GRIFFIN and NEELY take a step back toward the living room, as they do, GRIFFIN has the presence of mind to reach for his walkie-talkie.

INT. BARN - CONTINUOUS

It's very dark. There is a RUSTLING sound up ahead. They move toward the source of the noise cautiously, PRENTISS forcing himself to move forward.

As their eyes become accustomed to the light: A short slatted wall. On the other side is what sounds like GRUNTING.

The silence is broken by the SQAWKING from HUBBARD'S walkie-talkie. BETH jumps a bit at the sudden loud noise. PRENTISS sets a calming hand on her arm.

 GRIFFIN (O.S.)

 Detectives, we've got four bodies
 in the main house.

HUBBARD
(into walkie-talkie)
Get Mandzukic and a truck down
here.

GRIFFIN (O.S.)
Right away.

They reach the wall. It's actually a pen. On the other side of the pen wall, are a dozen wild boars SPLASHING around in mud and feces.

BETH
Was it the family?

PRENTISS
Yeah. Timken was out here.

BETH
How can you be sure?

PRENTISS
Look.

He points inside the pen. She looks and finds: Pieces of broken chair and TIMKEN'S shredded blood-stained clothing sticking out of the mud and hay.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

A blighted landscape. The abandoned buildings of the Timken Motors plant line both sides of a poorly maintained road.

Hubbard's car passes the empty factories as it makes its way downtown:

INT. HUBBARD'S CAR - DAY

HUBBARD, PRENTISS and BETH ride in silence - each dealing with what they've just witnessed in their own way. BETH decides to break the silence:

BETH
I don't think I'll ever get used to the smell out here, whatever they were putting into the air is still there.

PRENTISS

(a beat as he considers)
I think that's where all this
started... closing of the plant. He
blamed Timken personally.

HUBBARD tries to change the subject:

HUBBARD

It may not be 'politically
correct', but we all know who's
responsible for this...

HUBBARD studies the desolate cityscape around them:

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

...the riots, the crime, that's ONE
GROUP of people and we all know who
they are... same people that
fucking torch this city every
'Devil's Night'...

BETH

Seig Heil.

HUBBARD

That's it.

HUBBARD pulls the car over to the side of the road and SLAMS
on the brakes.

PRENTISS

What the fuck are you doing?

HUBBARD turns to BETH in the back seat:

HUBBARD

Bitch, you can get the fuck out and
walk.

PRENTISS

Start the car.

HUBBARD hears the subtle threat in PRENTISS' tone. He starts
the car and pulls back into traffic.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

(to HUBBARD)

Now I know why Graham asked for a
transfer. Did you just see what I
saw back there...

HUBBARD doesn't answer.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

...he subdued a family of four, killed them, staged their bodies, kidnapped Timken, and fed him to wild pigs. That takes an incredible amount of organization, planning and will. Right now, ALL of your focus needs to be on trying to find this guy.

(on HUBBARD'S angry look)

NOT airing your 'racial grievances'. And... not only was everything you just said complete bullshit, it's not even 'your' bullshit. You're just regurgitating the crap Sowa and the like have been feeding you. That's the kind of thinking that got the Lang's killed...

(beat)

...fuck... and that's why... Toomey might end up being right.

HUBBARD sulks and keeps his eyes on the road.

They continue in an uncomfortable silence. In the backseat, BETH remembers:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. GALLERY - H.I.A. - NIGHT

Her own words in her conversation with HIBOU:

BETH

...people are figuring out they've been lied to, they're angry, they're lashing out, sometimes violently. The killer's one of those people...

END FLASHBACK.

She leans forward toward PRENTISS, an urgency in her voice:

BETH (CONT'D)

I think I might have something.
Drop me at the paper.

EXT. STREET - HALIFAX FREE PRESS - DAY

The Crown Victoria pulls up next to the curb. The rear door on the driver's side opens. BETH gets out, slams the door shut. The CAR peels out.

BETH

Asshole.

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - MEDICAL EXAMINER'S - LATER

There are FOUR BODIES laid on a separate stainless steel exam tables. Despite the morbid scene, MANDZUKIC is largely unperturbed.

Standing several feet apart, HUBBARD and PRENTISS look like they'd rather be anywhere else than in each other's presence.

MANDZUKIC

You guys are keeping me busy this week.

PRENTISS

We know, we know, you have a very active social life.

HUBBARD

What've you got for us?

MANDZUKIC

Okay, these four were killed about forty eight hours ago. Throats were slashed same way as Sowa. Probably the same weapon.

PRENTISS

How did he kill all four with a blade?

MANDZUKIC

Toxicology found GHB in all four victims. He drugged them, and severed their carotids, just like Sowa.

HUBBARD

What about the barn?

MANDZUKIC turns and crosses the room to a workbench, with three glass sample jars.

MANDZUKIC

After a delightful afternoon
sifting through mud and pig shit, I
found these.

PRENTISS

That's it?

MANDZUKIC

Did you know that a dozen pigs can
strip a man bare...digest muscle
and most of the bones in under ten
minutes. The only things they can't
digest are teeth and some of the
larger bones.

He points to the workbench.

CLOSE - JARS: The remains of a lower jaw bone and two femurs.

MANDZUKIC (V.O.)

These, detectives, are all that
remain of the dearly departed
Mister Alan Timken.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

PRENTISS, HUBBARD, NASSER and SHAW are arranged around the
desk - dispirited. PRENTISS rubs tired eyes. NEELY paces at
the front of the room, simply because he's been sitting for
too long.

NASSER

We are oh for three on prints.
There was a smudge at the Lang
farm, but nothing inside the house
or on the bodies.

SHAW

The blood at the scene was from the
victims. I managed to find some
traces in the barn that matched
Timken, but that's it.

PRENTISS

(to SHAW & NASSER)

We've had two elaborately staged
murders in three days. Two crime
scenes, well, three if you count
the house and barn separately, and
two videos and he hasn't left us
with any evidence... is that what
you're telling me?

SHAW

Other than the hair sample on that first drive, no. Even then, he accidentally left that sample, learned his lesson and gave us nothing on the second.

NEELY

How long does it take to get hemorrhoids?

GRIFFIN

I think more than a couple days.

Frustrated by their lack of progress, PRENTISS - uncharacteristically - lashes out.

PRENTISS

Would you two focus?

Chastened, GRIFFIN pages through his notebook:

GRIFFIN

Sorry. I talked to Human Resources at Timken Motors. They sent over a list of employees, when they closed that plant on Black Friday, the employees were pissed.

HUBBARD

The shrink said he'd be in the system. Anyone with criminal records?

GRIFFIN

A bunch. Most of it was narcotics, possession. About two dozen had a violent crime on their record, mostly simple assault.

HUBBARD

And?

NEELY

We've started talking to them, we've eliminated about six so far, they had alibis.

HUBBARD

That's it?

They're interrupted by BETH, carrying a laptop.

BETH

Sorry to interrupt.

PRENTISS

Please. Tell me you've got good news.

BETH

Maybe. I was thinking about how you said maybe this guy got laid off and started planning these murders... so I went back over my old research.. and I remembered an interview I did, she still lives over on the East Side. I think she's worth talking to.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LODGE HOME - DAY

Warm and homey. Pictures of children and grandchildren on the mantel above the fireplace. PRENTISS and BETH sit across from TRACY LODGE, a heavy set African-American woman in her 60s.

TRACY

My grandmother moved up here from Arkansas, wanted a better life for her kids, she cleaned houses on the North side, took me with her to work a couple times, North side used to be so pretty...

She gets a far away look in her eyes, before returning to the conversation.

PRENTISS

Uh, I was really hoping you could elaborate on what you told Ms. Glazer for her piece.

TRACY is slightly annoyed by his directness:

TRACY

I was getting to that, she wanted us kids to do better, so I finished high school, got a job on the line at Timken, getting a job at Timken, I thought I had it made, benefits, pension, it helped me put my babies through school. My baby girl, Briana, was the first one in our family to go to college.

BETH momentarily forgets they're in the middle of an investigation, wanting to catch-up with an old acquaintance:

BETH
How are they?

TRACY
Briana's doin' good, she moved to Atlanta, and Jay got a job in D.C. Damn shame they're so far away, but there's nothing for them here.

PRENTISS is growing impatient, smiles politely and tries to steer the TRACY back to her supervisor.

PRENTISS
Back to your co-worker...

TRACY ignores PRENTISS interruption, turns to BETH:

TRACY
...so one day they called us into the warehouse, did one of them Power Point presentations, laid everybody off and 'Best of luck in your future endeavors...' some bullshit like that. A lot of folks didn't get any severance. You can't do people like that.

BETH
But they did.

TRACY
Yes, they did. I wasn't worried, shit, I took early retirement, my kids were grown, so I was gonna be fine, but there was an engineer, used to see him in the break room.

She leans in close.

TRACY (CONT'D)
Something not right about him, when he looked at you, like he was studyin' somethin' under a microscope, so I just kept my distance, ya know? Then when they announced the closing...

PRENTISS
What happened?

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. BREAK ROOM - TIMKEN MOTORS - DAY

A group of PROFESSIONAL MEN arguing, individual faces are difficult to discern.

TRACY (V.O.)

I saw him in the break room,
talking about Timken... the
executives, the consultants... he
kept saying he was 'one of them',
they couldn't do this. He said they
were going to get what was coming
to them... and he had this look in
his eyes, I'll never forget it...
get goosebumps just thinking about
it.

END FLASHBACK.

PRENTISS

Do you remember his name?

PRENTISS is almost on the edge of his seat. An excruciatingly long beat as she searches her memory before saying:

TRACY

Engineer. Worked Second Shift...
(finally)
Fletcher. Francis Fletcher.

INT. BETH'S CAR - DAY

BETH drives, while PRENTISS is on the phone.

PRENTISS

Have Griffin look through the
Timken personnel files for a
Francis Fletcher. Get Neely to see
if he's in the system.

(a beat)

And if Hibou's free, get her down
there, I'd like her input. We'll be
back in a few.

HUBBARD

(over phone)

Alright. We'll have something by
the time you get back.

He hangs up and turns to BETH in the driver's seat.

PRENTISS

We wouldn't have gotten any of this without your help.

BETH

You owe me one. You can buy me breakfast.

PRENTISS

I've seen you eat. I don't know if I can afford it.

She hits him playfully on the bicep.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The entire task force, including DR. HIBOU, is gathered around a table, piled high with files.

DR. HIBOU is reading a file, absent-mindedly humming the tune to The Steve Miller Band's 'Fly Like An Eagle'. She spots something in the file and stops humming:

HIBOU

...in his performance reviews Fletcher is described as efficient, good at his job... however...

(beat)

...there were a few incidents where employees said they felt 'threatened' by him.

(beat)

Couldn't specify how or why.

GRIFFIN reviews the file:

GRIFFIN

Apparently he was just very motherfuckin' creepy.

PRENTISS

We can't arrest him for being creepy.

HUBBARD'S eyes involuntarily dart over to HIBOU. She catches his glance and smiles. NEELY opens a file on the table:

NEELY

He was in the system too, just like she said.

(beat)

He had a juvie file, but it was sealed, but...

(MORE)

NEELY (CONT'D)

(beat)

...so happens I've got a lady friend in the D.A.'s office. She said there was an 'incident', Fletcher, received psychological counseling, diagnosed with an associative disorder, but his parents managed to get the file sealed.

HUBBARD

You have a 'lady friend'?

HUBBARD'S joke momentarily breaks the tension.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

I'm not sure which one I'm having a harder time believing, that you can actually get laid, or you got a look at a sealed juvie file.

NEELY

Hey, I got some skills.

HUBBARD

(to NEELY)

My apologies.

HIBOU studies the face in the picture (which we don't see).

HIBOU

He fits the profile. Male, Caucasian, 40s, laid off from the Timken plant, deemed a potential threat by security, sealed juvenile file that hints at abnormal psychology from childhood.

HUBBARD decides to play devil's advocate.

HUBBARD

No forensics. No hard evidence or witnesses tying him to the scene.

PRENTISS

It's thin, but I think we should talk to him.

He grabs his jacket from the back of the chair, throws it over his shoulder. GRIFFIN and NEELY start to stand.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
 (to GRIFFIN & NEELY)
 While we're talking to Fletcher,
 see what else you can dig up on
 this guy, get in touch with Beth,
 maybe she's got something else on
 Timken in her notes.

They're disappointed they're not going, but nod in acknowledgment. PRENTISS turns to HIBOU:

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
 Thanks again, Doc.

HIBOU
 Good luck. "Professor", do you mind
 if I call you that?

He shrugs as if to say "Sure, why not."

HIBOU (CONT'D)
 Be very careful.

INT. PRECINCT FLOOR - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

PRENTISS and HUBBARD move briskly toward the exit. DOUGLAS notices the flurry of activity and opens his office door.

DOUGLAS
 What's happening?

PRENTISS
 We've got a 'person of interest'.
 We're going to talk to him.

DOUGLAS
 About damn time. Take Griffin and
 Neely to back you up.

EXT. WAUSEON STREET - NORTH SIDE - DUSK

There are only four free-standing homes. Each house is sandwiched between empty lots where a home has been demolished - but the demolition crews failed to clear the sites. The sites are littered with piles of brick, wood and glass.

INT. HUBBARD'S CAR - DUSK

They ride in silence. Things are still tense between them.

As they drive down Wauseon, PRENTISS looks out the window: A semi-collapsed house, with the words "Things Fall Apart" spray-painted across the side.

He cranes his head, as if the motion will bring forth a piece of information that seems to be on the edge of his thoughts, into his conscious mind.

HUBBARD

How do you want to play this?

PRENTISS

Why don't you talk to this guy, let me have a look around while you do.

EXT. WAUSEON STREET - NORTH SIDE - DUSK

HUBBARD'S Crown Victoria and an unmarked police cruiser are parked on the street, in front of the house.

INT. ENTRYWAY - FLETCHER HOME - DUSK

A windowed door allows some hazy sunlight into the darkened entryway.

On one side of the door is an umbrella. On the other side is a key table, where a pair of keys and wallet, are precisely laid out.

The CHIME from the doorbell. We hear footsteps ECHOING on the hardwood floors.

A hand grabs the door knob and twists to reveal:

PRENTISS, HUBBARD, GRIFFIN and NEELY standing in the doorway.

HUBBARD

Mister Fletcher?

FRANCIS FLETCHER: mid-40's, average built, black hair parted to the side. Nothing remarkable about his appearance.

His only distinguishing features are his eyes: unusually large, dark and never seem to blink - framed by 'Clark Kent' glasses. He stands with an almost preternatural stillness, but his tone is Midwestern 'friendly':

FLETCHER

Yes. Can I help you?

HUBBARD raises his badge.

HUBBARD

I'm Detective Hubbard...

(points to PRENTISS)

...this is Detective Prentiss. If you don't mind, we'd like to ask you a few questions.

FLETCHER

Of course. Please come in.

He steps back, making way for them to enter, before abruptly holding out an arm to block their entrance.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Please wipe your feet first. I just redid these floors.

They wipe their feet on a mat. Once FLETCHER is satisfied, he allows them to enter - and he closes the door behind them.

The sounds of the Prelude from Wagner's "Parsifal" pour in from another room.

HUBBARD

We're doing some inquiries into a case.

FLETCHER

What kind of case?

PRENTISS looks intently at FLETCHER, cranes his head.

PRENTISS

Have we met before?

A beat.

FLETCHER

"By the end of the week you'll know, with a horrible certainty a 'transformation' is coming and that you're powerless to stop me."

PRENTISS recognizes the voice and the words. His heart starts POUNDING like a jackhammer against his ribs.

Time slows.

SMASH CUT:

INT. ENTRYWAY - FLETCHER HOME - CONTINUOUS

As if awakening from a dream, PRENTISS looks around, quickly assessing the chaos unfolding around him:

GRIFFIN and NEELY are lying on the wood floors, in ever widening circles of their own blood.

HUBBARD is SHOUTING into his phone.

HUBBARD

Officer down! Officer down! Seventy
two Wauseon. Suspect. On foot.
Headed East on Wauseon.
(to PRENTISS)
Keep pressure on this!

This snaps PRENTISS out of his reverie. He kneels down, puts pressure on NEELY'S neck wound. HUBBARD runs out the door..

EXT. WAUSEON STREET - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

The sun has set. It's dark and only half the street lights work. HUBBARD plunges blindly into the night, gun drawn.

HUBBARD

This is the Metro Police, Stop and
put your hands up!

He gives chase. FLETCHER'S figure is visible turning the corner onto:

EXT. FINDLAY STREET - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD'S struggling to keep pace. He rounds the corner seconds later only to find: Four different abandoned homes.

He stops for a moment, fishes out a walkie-talkie and calls dispatch.

HUBBARD

This is Detective Hubbard. Require
additional units at Findlay and
Wauseon.

DISPATCH

(over walkie-talkie)
Ten-four. Additional units are en
route to your twenty.

He hears faint bass-heavy MUSIC coming from the nearest house, he moves slowly towards it.

INT. HALLWAY - FLETCHER HOME - LATER

PRENTISS is trying unsuccessfully to staunch the bleeding on GRIFFIN and NEELY.

His hands frantically scan GRIFFIN'S neck for the wound. Arterial spray shoots between his fingers. Once he's found the source - he applies pressure.

He scans GRIFFIN for other injuries, when he notices that GRIFFIN'S holster is empty. His gun is gone...

Two EMS WORKERS arrive at the scene. They immediately kneel beside the bodies, gently moving PRENTISS aside.

PRENTISS

They were both stabbed. I think the guy hit their arteries.

EMS #1

Blood pressure's dropping!

EMS #2 moves PRENTISS further to the side, so they can load the body onto a gurney:

EMS #2

We've got it.

PRENTISS

Where are you taking them?

EMS #2

St. John's.

PRENTISS nods, then remembers that HUBBARD is out there alone. He turns and heads out onto the street...

INT. HALLWAY - ABANDONED HOUSE #1 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD, weapon drawn, steps one foot in front of the other, moving with great caution through the entrance. The air is thick with pot smoke.

The sound of GZA'S "Duel of The Iron Mic" is blasting from the room to HUBBARD'S right.

He surveys the room: A staircase and living room on his right, a long hallway ahead of him.

He moves down the hallway, which eventually ends in a:

INT. KITCHEN - ABANDONED HOUSE #1 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Where a group of four naked LATINA and AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN are gathered around the kitchen table, placing cocaine into plastic bags - under the supervision of an armed DEALER, African-American, mid-20s, track suit, reading a copy of The Wall Street Journal.

They are almost as surprised by HUBBARD'S presence, as he is to see them. He trains his gun on the DEALER. The DEALER doesn't move for his weapon, doesn't even put down his paper - just regards HUBBARD with a kind of detached bemusement.

HUBBARD is scared, adrenalin's pumping, but he's trying (and failing) not to show fear.

HUBBARD

I'm not here for you.

(beat)

You see a white guy come through here? Six foot, dark hair?

DEALER

Besides you? No.

HUBBARD

Okay, well, let's just be cool, and I'll be on my way.

DEALER

Don't I look cool to you?

The DEALER resumes reading his paper. The WOMEN put their heads down and go back to work. HUBBARD backs out into:

INT. HALLWAY - ABANDONED HOUSE #1 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD makes his way through the cloud of pot smoke, music THUMPING around him, now joined by the WHIRLING blades of...

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE #1 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

A helicopter overhead. A SEARCH LIGHT scans the area around him.

PRENTISS enters the yard, lowering his gun.

PRENTISS

You check that house?

HUBBARD

He's not in there.

PRENTISS

Next one.

Behind them, people have started to file out of the house and glare at them. They take that as their cue to leave, crossing the yard into:

EXT. EMPTY LOT - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

Piled high with lumber, glass and brick. Despite his efforts at stealth, HUBBARD steps on some broken glass that SHATTERS loudly under his feet.

HUBBARD

Damnit.

They reach the edge of the lot and cross into the yard of:

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE #2 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD

He's got to be in here.

With PRENTISS in the lead, they mount the steps into the house.

PRENTISS puts his weight on a step that CREAKS loudly.

They've given away their location, lost the element of surprise. Exposed and vulnerable they both freeze, guns drawn, eyes alert.

After a long moment, they continue their ascent until they reach the front door:

PRENTISS and HUBBARD on opposite sides of the door. PRENTISS pushes the front door open with his free hand, sticks his head around the corner: Empty. Same layout as the previous house.

They step into the:

INT. ENTRYWAY - ABANDONED HOUSE #2 - CONTINUOUS

They mount the staircase, careful to avoid the missing steps. They quickly reach:

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - ABANDONED HOUSE #2 - CONTINUOUS

HUBBARD takes in his surroundings: Nothing but an empty house.

HUBBARD and PRENTISS in hushed tones, barely above a whisper:

HUBBARD
Maybe I was wrong...

PRENTISS
Let's check, just to be sure..

HUBBARD presses his hand against a door. He is about to push it open when, they hear a loud CREAK behind them...

They spin around, guns raised, to find FLETCHER standing near the top of the stairs. He opens FIRE. The GUNFIRE is deafening in the confined space.

A bullet hits the door frame near HUBBARD, showering him with wooden splinters.

PRENTISS returns FIRE. His shots slamming into the wall near FLETCHER.

HUBBARD joins him, squeezing off two shots that blow a hole in the wall next to FLETCHER.

FLETCHER turns and runs down a hallway, disappearing in the darkness. PRENTISS and HUBBARD follow, just as they reach the top of the stairs.

PRENTISS holds up his hand. HUBBARD stops in his tracks. PRENTISS peers downstairs: Only to find FLETCHER on the ground floor, taking aim at them.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
Down!

They drop to the floor as SHOTS are FIRED from the ground floor, exploding into the ceiling and raining plaster down on them.

PRENTISS sticks his hand around the corner, firing blindly at the ground floor.

HUBBARD sticks his head around the corner again: The front door swinging on its hinges.

They jump to their feet and scramble down the stairs..

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE #2 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

..into the front yard, but they're alone. The helicopter hovers overhead, its search light scanning the area around them. HUBBARD is on the walkie-talkie immediately.

HUBBARD

(into walkie-talkie)
Dispatch, this is Hubbard. Do you have a twenty on our suspect? I repeat do you have a twenty?

DISPATCH

(over walkie-talkie)
Negative, Detective.

HUBBARD

Fuck!!

INT. WAITING AREA - ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

DOUGLAS is already there, when HUBBARD and PRENTISS - still covered in GRIFFIN'S blood - arrive.

PRENTISS notices DOUGLAS' alarm on seeing him.

PRENTISS

I'm fine. How are they?

DOUGLAS

Not good. Doc's going to let us know.

HUBBARD

I don't understand how this guy just vanished. Again.

PRENTISS

He's meticulous, he hasn't left anything to chance. He probably had an escape route planned in case we ever showed up on his door.

DOUGLAS

I put out an A.P.B., holding a press conference later. In a few hours we'll have the whole city looking for him.

They're interrupted by the arrival of a grim-faced DOCTOR in bloody surgical scrubs.

DOCTOR

I'm sorry, Detectives. They didn't make it. They'd lost too much blood.

HUBBARD lashes out, knocks over a chair. PRENTISS sits down and hangs his head.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S HOSPITAL - NIGHT

An impromptu press conference. DOUGLAS positioned at a side exit, a much larger crowd of reporters - in a small alley-like space.

The side of the alley is a long line of vans, logos from CNN, MSNBC and FOX are clearly visible on the sides.

DOUGLAS

This evening at approximately ten p.m., two officers from the Halifax Police Department, John Neely and Paul Griffin, were killed by the suspect in the Sowa and Timken investigations.

REPORTER

(shouting above the din)
Who is the suspect?!

DOUGLAS

The suspect is Francis Fletcher, a former employee at Timken Motors. We believe he is responsible for at least six other homicides in the area...he remains at large, he is armed and should be considered extremely dangerous...

MONTAGE:

A MIDDLE-AGED MAN, watches the press conference on TV, a large Confederate flag hanging on the wall behind him.

Sitting at the dinner table, a SUBURBAN MOM (who we recognize as the leader of the roving MOB) and her FAMILY watch the stories about the murders on the news. She turns to her HUSBAND, anxiety written all over her face.

Half-sunken into his couch, a heavy-set MAN in para-military gear (who also becomes part of the roving MOB) watches the press conference, while cleaning a semi-automatic rifle.

OVER BLACK:

Sunday. October 30th. 204,000 B.C.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

CLOSE - LEAF: Huge droplets of rain race down a leaf, slide off the end, and fall through space.

A primordial labyrinth of jack pines. They provide some cover from a driving, pouring rain. Quiet save the sound of rain falling on leaves.

PRENTISS stands in sodden grass and looks around in a desperate, but now familiar, panic: "Where am I? When am I?"

FLETCHER (O.S.)

Detective.

PRENTISS spins around to find FLETCHER standing a few meters away, grinning ear to ear.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

No time for sightseeing. We've got a big day ahead of us.

PRENTISS' training kicks in, and he reaches for a gun that isn't there when:

OVER BLACK:

Sunday. October 30th. Present Day.

INT. BEDROOM - PRENTISS HOME - DAY

The room is empty, the moving boxes are gone. PRENTISS stands in his bedroom, disoriented, soaking wet - dripping water on the bare wooden floor.

PRENTISS

(to himself)

"We've got a big day ahead of us."

EXT. DOWNTOWN STREET - DAY

A black armored personnel carrier, that resembles a small tank, flanked by black-clad STATE POLICE form a check-point on a main boulevard. They look more like an occupying army than a police force.

INT. METRO AIRPORT - DAY

A DOZEN POLICEMEN, also clad in black body armor, carrying large automatic weapons, patrol the main departure terminal.

INT. PRECINCT FLOOR - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A few volunteers man the phones. PRENTISS is surprised to find DR. HIBOU, placing copies in her briefcase. She greets him with her typical warmth.

HIBOU

Detective. You're not part of the 'manhunt'?

PRENTISS

S.W.A.T. and The State Police have taken over the search.

(beat)

I needed to get out of the house...

(starts to elaborate,

thinks better of it)

...thought I'd have another look at the evidence. There's something we're missing. I need to know what that is.

HIBOU

Are you alright, Professor?

PRENTISS

I've been having a seriously weird week. I don't know if it's the case getting in my head, or I'm not getting enough sleep, but I've been seeing things, losing time.

HIBOU

You've been losing time?

(studies him closely)

Professor, you read the book, didn't you?

HIBOU studies him a beat too long, before:

HIBOU (CONT'D)

Toomey's work seems to have a marked effect on those with a touch of 'genius'. It radically altered the way Dennis thought, how the killer thinks. It sounds like you might be experiencing something very similar.

PRENTISS
Like Sowa and Fletcher?

HIBOU
I couldn't really come to any
definitive conclusions without a
physical, an MRI, therapy.

PRENTISS
So either I'm schizophrenic or
Toomey's work has given us the
ability to move through time.

She hands him a card.

HIBOU
You should make an appointment, but
even if you don't... I have a
feeling, one way or another, we're
going to be seeing a lot more of
each other.

She smiles, picks up her briefcase and heads for the door,
her heels CLICKING as she crosses the marble floor.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - LATER

PRENTISS stands in front of the bulletin board, staring
meditatively at FLETCHER'S picture: Cold dead eyes stare back
from the paper.

His meditation is interrupted by the arrival of a UNIFORMED
OFFICER, carrying bags of takeout.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
Some coffee, detective?

PRENTISS
Yeah, thanks. Any word from the
captain?

The UNIFORMED OFFICER hands him a styrofoam cup of coffee.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
We've also got some road blocks set
up along I-seventy-five, police at
Metro, the bus station.
(beat)
His face is all over the news, when
he tries to get out of town someone
will see him.

PRENTISS

I don't think he's going to try and get out of town.

UNIFORMED OFFICER

Come again?

PRENTISS

He's still here.

UNIFORMED OFFICER

Half the city's looking for him.

PRENTISS

It wasn't about Griffin, Neely, or the family at the Lang place, they were collateral damage...

UNIFORMED OFFICER

No? Then why go to the trouble of posing the corpses like that?

PRENTISS

He's a psychopath. Posing their bodies was just a 'fun' bonus, and he's still out there, I can just feel it.

PRENTISS studies the bulletin board: A picture of FLETCHER in the center of the board, surrounded by photos of the Sowa and Timken crime scenes.

PRENTISS takes out his phone and dials.

EXT. HALIFAX INSTITUTE OF THE ARTS - CONTINUOUS

BETH is standing in front of the doors of the museum, they are closed and locked. There is a paper taped to the front door: Closed Until Further Notice. We Apologize For Any Inconvenience.

Her phone rings, she looks at the display and immediately answers.

PRENTISS (O.S.)

What are you doing right now?

BETH

Not going to the museum, apparently.

PRENTISS (O.S.)

Could you come down to the station?

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

BETH arrives and before she can settle in, PRENTISS is already firing off questions.

PRENTISS

Do you remember our conversation with Tracy? What did she say about Fletcher?

BETH

About something being not quite right about him. I saw his picture on the news. She wasn't kidding, it was all right there...with the 'crazy eyes' and...

PRENTISS

No, not that. What Fletcher said, before they escorted him out of the plant.

BETH

(searching her memory)
"Timken, the executives, the consultants, he just said they were going to get what was coming to them..."

PRENTISS

Yeah. That's it. Timken, the executives, the consultants...

BETH

Oh shit.

PRENTISS

We've got a task force watching the airport and I-seventy-five, but he's still here. He hasn't left town.

BETH

Because he's not done yet.

PRENTISS

Who was the consultant that made the recommendation to close the plant?

BETH searches her memory before:

BETH

The-the governor's new advisor,
Phil Ryan.

PRENTISS looks at a calendar on a desk.

PRENTISS

And today is the thirtieth. Devil's
Night and the anniversary of the
plant shut down.

(a beat)

It's perfect. We're stretched thin,
watching the airport and roads,
first responders preoccupied with
Devil's Night.

(beat)

He's going to kill Ryan, tonight.

The UNIFORMED OFFICER enters the room, just as PRENTISS and
BETH are grabbing their coats.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

(to UNIFORMED OFFICER)

Get me a home address for Philip
Ryan. Find out where he is, right
now.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Beth's Saab reaches the outer edges of the city. The urban
decay is slowly transforming into busy suburban strip malls:
GAP, Walmart, Domino's Pizza, etc.

INT. BETH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

BETH is at the wheel. PRENTISS has his phone in his hand,
expecting a call. His phone rings.

PRENTISS

You find Ryan?

(beat)

Thanks.

He hangs up, then tries to bring up Google on his phone.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

Do you know Deerwood Church?

She smiles bitterly.

BETH

Of course that's his church.

INT. CHAPEL - DEERWOOD MEGACHURCH - DAY

A circular chapel. A sizable well-dressed, suburban congregation sits in the round, their attention focused on stage, where PASTOR GEARY - 40s, boyishly handsome, \$5,000 sneakers, used-car salesman slick - in the middle of his sermon:

PASTOR GEARY

...it's in the Bible: "I wish above all things that you prosper and be in health.." that you prosper...God wants you to achieve wealth...God wants us to grow and achieve new heights of success...

PHILIP RYAN, late 40s, smug, self-satisfied, bespoke suit, platinum Rolex, sits with his wife. A CHURCH ASSISTANT walks down the row, pauses at his side and whispers something in his ear.

RYAN, reluctantly rises from the pew - and follows the ASSISTANT out of the chapel.

PASTOR GEARY (CONT'D)

...He wants you to accept his infinite love and wisdom...

As he walks down the aisle, he passes HUBBARD seated with KAYLEIGH and GRETCHEN. He gets up and follows RYAN out.

PASTOR GEARY (CONT'D)

...and if you do He will help you grow financially...by blessing you with a better job, or a promotion at the job you're at...a new home, a new car...

INT. LOBBY - DEERWOOD MEGACHURCH - DAY

A large, airy, atrium - lots of glass and steel - more corporate headquarters than house of worship.

A double door opens where a very agitated PHILIP RYAN is lead out by an ASSISTANT. Following closely behind is HUBBARD.

BETH spots him.

BETH

Too perfect.

RYAN reaches PRENTISS and BETH.

PRENTISS
I'm Detective Prentiss.

RYAN
I hope you have a good reason for
this interruption.

Before PRENTISS can respond, HUBBARD arrives at RYAN'S side.

HUBBARD
What's going on?

PRENTISS
I thought you were with the task
force?

HUBBARD
I'm going in after the service.

PRENTISS
(to RYAN)
I have reason to believe that your
life is in danger.

PRENTISS' obvious concern now has HUBBARD'S full attention.

BETH
(to RYAN)
Fletcher's plan is to kill anyone
involved with the Timken plant
closing. He murdered Sowa who
helped sell it to the public, then
he murdered Timken, who profited
from it.

RYAN
What does this have to do with me?

BETH
It was your idea. You can stand
here and try and downplay your
involvement to us, but Fletcher
plans to punish anyone and everyone
involved in the decision.

RYAN pauses to consider this.

PRENTISS
We'd like to move you to a safe
house.

RYAN

Absolutely not. I'm not going to be chased out of my home by some lunatic. Our community's got surveillance, armed guards.

HUBBARD

Mister Ryan, I'm inclined to agree with you. I think this guy's probably left town by now, but we call Detective Prentiss 'The Professor' -- he's got degrees coming out of his ass, if he thinks you're probably in danger, you're probably in danger.

PRENTISS acknowledges HUBBARD backing him.

PRENTISS

I hope I'm wrong, but in case I'm not...

RYAN makes a show of considering before offering:

RYAN

A unit outside the house.

PRENTISS

And someone in the house.

RYAN

No. Absolutely not.

PRENTISS

Mister Ryan, trust me when I tell you, you are seriously underestimating just how dangerous Fletcher is, if he's targeting you, it's going to take all of our collective skill to keep you safe.

RYAN

We've got walls, security guards, that's the whole point of a gated community.

(beat)

And I've got guns in the house.

HUBBARD

(to RYAN - conciliatory)

I'll stay with you in the house. You won't even know I'm there.

RYAN mulls it over, before nodding reluctantly.

PRENTISS
(to HUBBARD)
We'll do a sweep, then you can
bring them home. I hope I'm wrong.

EXT. HALIFAX, MICHIGAN - NIGHT

SEEN FROM OVERHEAD

The city appears to be a darkened, burned out center,
surrounded by raging fires along its circumference.

INT. DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

MR. ABDULMAJID stands on the sidewalk outside Antiquarian
Books, the usually semi-deserted street buzzing with
activity.

An office building at the end of the block is on fire - the
flames casting a brilliant red and orange glow down the
darkened streets.

The burning building pumps great plumes of gray and black
smoke into the night sky.

The street is blocked by a pair of fire trucks and groups of
soot covered FIREFIGHTERS attempting to extinguish the blaze.

EXT. YARD - LODGE HOME - NIGHT

TRACY LODGE stands in her front yard, her expression a
mixture of disappointment and resignation as she watches: A
semi-demolished home across the street has been set ablaze.

In the distance we can hear SIRENS and KLAXONS growing
closer.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE #2 - NORTH SIDE - CONTINUOUS

The DEALER and a few members of his crew - their expressions
impossible to read, stand in the vacant lot adjacent to the
house, which is engulfed in flames.

They are silent, there are no sirens nearby - there are no
first responders on the way. Not in this neighborhood.

The only sounds in the air are rustling WIND and CRACKLING
flames.

EXT. HUBBARD HOME - NIGHT

In stark contrast to the chaos, smoke and flame elsewhere in the city, HUBBARD'S neighborhood is quiet and serene.

INT. KITCHEN - HUBBARD HOME - NIGHT

KAYLEIGH and GRETCHEN are putting leftovers into the fridge, while HUBBARD is finishing loading the dishwasher.

KAYLEIGH

Are you going to be late?

He looks at his watch, shuts the laptop and slips on a jacket.

HUBBARD

The Professor and that reporter have cooked up some crazy theory, want us to watch Ryan tonight, so I'll probably be late, don't wait up.

GRETCHEN

Be careful. Promise?

HUBBARD repeats her bedtime ritual.

HUBBARD

Cross my heart.

EXT. HUNTER'S GREEN - NIGHT

Set amidst a verdant wooded area is a 10 foot wall, extending deep into the forest.

The only break in the wall is a large metal gate. Next to the gate is a guard house and a sign that reads: Hunter's Green.

It resembles the entrance to a fortress, which in a sense, it is.

HUBBARD'S Crown Victoria pulls up to the guard house. The window slides down. HUBBARD flashes his badge to the GUARD.

HUBBARD

Detective Hubbard.

The GUARD produces a clipboard and checks it. He looks up and smiles.

GUARD

I've got you right here. Expecting trouble?

HUBBARD

It's probably nothing, but to be on the safe side, after I drive through these gates do not, I repeat, do not let anyone through these gates that isn't a resident known to you personally or a member of law enforcement.

The GUARD nods in acknowledgment, then opens the gates. HUBBARD drives through.

EXT. RYAN HOME - HUNTER'S GREEN - NIGHT

A McMansion set on two acres of a wooded area. Perfect lawn. BETH'S car is parked discreetly down the street.

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - NIGHT

A massive entrance, nose-bleed ceilings, designed to impress guests.

PRENTISS and two OFFICERS enter - drawn weapons in one hand, flashlight in the other. They move purposefully through the entrance, their footsteps ECHOING on the marble floor.

They reach a junction.

PRENTISS

I'll go upstairs. One of you check the basement.

The FIRST OFFICER looks to his partner, nods and takes a right into:

INT. DINING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Wood paneled walls, a large fireplace and dining table for 12.

The FIRST OFFICER'S light sweeps slowly across the empty room. Quiet as the grave. He whips back the curtains...but there's no one there. Satisfied the room is empty, he calls out:

FIRST OFFICER

Clear.

INT. LIVING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The SECOND OFFICER'S flashlight beam plays across dark, wood-paneled walls with mounted animal heads. The light forces the heads to cast strange shadows across the floor.

The SECOND OFFICER'S eyes scan the room - looking for hiding places. He bends down, checking under the couch: Nothing.

He rises to his feet, surveys the room again and not detecting any signs of movement he declares:

SECOND OFFICER

Clear.

INT. BEDROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

PRENTISS pauses before a walk-in closet door. A long beat. He raises his weapon, and with his free hand, FLINGS the door open - but it's just rows of clothes.

INT. BASEMENT - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The TWO OFFICERS, descend the stairs into the basement. Dark. The air is filled with a rhythmic THUD. THUD. THUD.

The SECOND OFFICER bumps into a box, sending it CRASHING to the floor; startled, the FIRST OFFICER spins around only to find:

SECOND OFFICER

Sorry.

The FIRST OFFICER shakes his head, then opens a door to his left:

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - BASEMENT - PRENTISS HOME - CONTINUOUS

A small concrete room, and the source of the THUD SOUNDS: a large washer and dryer, mid-cycle.

They move into the center of the room, shining their flashlights into the areas of the deepest shadows. Finding nothing but home renovation materials: glass walls and tools, the FIRST OFFICER turns to his partner.

FIRST OFFICER

(into walkie-talkie)

Detective, nothing down here either. Place is empty.

INT. BETH'S CAR - LATER

BETH looks around, a bit bored, sipping a coffee - while PRENTISS watches the house through binoculars.

BETH

So this is a stakeout? Kind of boring.

PRENTISS puts down his binoculars and takes a sip of coffee:

PRENTISS

And I hope it stays that way. Fletcher may not even show up, like I said, I might be way off base but if there's any sign that he's here, or if I 'disappear' for some reason...

(on her confused look)

...I want you to drive to the Hunter's Green police department and stay there until you hear from me. Understood?

BETH

Loud and clear.

HUBBARD'S car pulls up next to BETH'S. PRENTISS lowers the window.

HUBBARD

Anything?

PRENTISS

Just finished the sweep. All clear. You can bring the Ryans back.

The brief moment of detente comes to an abrupt end when:

HUBBARD

Good idea bringing her?

BETH

Hello? Sitting right here.

PRENTISS

She'll be fine.

(changing the subject)

Post the uniforms in the back.

HUBBARD

I'm going in. I'll check in on the hour.

With that PRENTISS rolls up his window and HUBBARD drives down the street.

INT. DINING ROOM - RYAN HOME - LATER

AINSLEY RYAN, early 30s, bottle blonde, trophy wife - sits across from RYAN at the other end of a long dining table.

A HOUSEKEEPER emerges from the kitchen carrying a large serving dish.

She sets it down on the table: Veal, surrounded by an assortment of vegetables, perfectly presented.

AINSLEY

This is a new recipe.

The HOUSEKEEPER picks up a carving knife. She slices through the veal, revealing the moist, pink-tinged meat within.

AINSLEY (CONT'D)

It's a slow-roasted veal.

The HOUSEKEEPER places a few large slices on RYAN'S plate, followed by a helping of vegetables; then she serves AINSLEY, but it's a minute before she can bring herself to begin eating. RYAN has no such problems and digs lustily into his dinner.

RYAN

This is delicious, dear.

He follows the bite of veal with a glass of red wine.

AINSLEY

Thank you. Are you sure we're safe here?

RYAN stops eating just long enough to answer.

RYAN

The house is surrounded by police and I've got a gun in the next room, I'd like to see him try and get in here.

This temporarily calms her, she begins eating. She screws her face up, while tasting the first bite. She's a bit disappointed in the results:

AINSLEY

I tasted this after it came out of the oven, it's a little saltier now. Oh, I almost forgot...

(to HOUSEKEEPER)

Would you take a plate to that nice Detective? Then you can head home.

The HOUSEKEEPER nods silently and heads into the kitchen.

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - NIGHT

HUBBARD is seated near the front door, next to a small table.

The HOUSEKEEPER appears holding a plate of food and glass of wine.

HOUSEKEEPER

Mrs. Ryan wanted to make sure you had something to eat.

HUBBARD

Thanks.

She sets the plate and utensils down on the key table, then returns to the kitchen.

After she's left, HUBBARD eyes the veal appreciatively, then digs in.

INT. BETH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

They've gotten comfortable in the car.

BETH

Your partner's...

She stops herself, and searches for an euphemism.

BETH (CONT'D)

...I was going to say a 'racist piece of shit', but I settled on 'a piece of work.'

PRENTISS

Thank goodness you didn't say that.

BETH

I know, right?

They exchange wry smiles, then PRENTISS turns serious - as he often does:

PRENTISS

He spends most of his day in a kind of bubble, listening to people reinforce what he already thinks, so when someone challenges him, it pisses him off.

(a beat)

There's a lot of anger, "and holding..."

BETH touches her temples, closes her eyes like she's going into a trance.

BETH

I'm seeing something...

PRENTISS looks at her, concerned.

BETH (CONT'D)

(slowly opening her eyes)

I'm sensing another Buddhist saying is coming.

Guilty. PRENTISS can't help but smile.

PRENTISS

"... and holding onto anger is like drinking poison and expecting your enemy to die."

Now, they're both smiling. PRENTISS looks at his watch.

BETH

Time to check in?

He looks out the window again, sees the HOUSEKEEPER leave the house and walk toward the corner.

PRENTISS

Just about.

He takes out his walkie-talkie.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)

(into walkie)

This is Unit One to Units Three and Four, any signs of movement? Over.

EXT. RYAN HOME - BACK ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Two heavily armed, UNIFORMED OFFICERS scan the horizon.

UNIFORMED OFFICER #1
(into walkie-talkie)
All clear. Over.

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Shards of porcelain, broken glass, and utensils lie scattered across the marble floor.

HUBBARD is slumped in his chair, arms dangling at his sides, passed out.

INT. DINING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

RYAN and AINSLEY are both passed out at the dining table, faces planted in their food.

INT. KITCHEN - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The sound of FOOTSTEPS coming from underneath the kitchen.

The footsteps are growing closer, rising up a basement stairwell.

A basement door opens and FLETCHER emerges.

He's been in the basement the whole time.

He listens carefully. Silence. He smiles.

He walks over to a kitchen counter. There's an iPhone docking station. He inserts an iPhone.

CLOSE - IPHONE DISPLAY: Scrolls to 'Wagner'.

His thumb presses 'Play'.

The kitchen is filled with the opening of Wagner's 'Parsifal':

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - LATER

The sounds of the Prelude rouse HUBBARD.

HUBBARD rouses, his vision blurry. Slowly shapes come into focus.

He's zip-tied to a chair in the entrance, he looks frantically from side to side, trying to come to grips with his situation.

From somewhere to his right, he can hear footsteps echoing on the marble floors.

Eventually he finds FLETCHER is standing in front of him, wearing an industrial apron and latex gloves.

HUBBARD can barely contain his fury.

HUBBARD

What?! How?! How did you...

Whereas FLETCHER is a picture of calm:

FLETCHER

Gamma hydroxybutyrate... GHB... in the entree. It has a slightly salty aftertaste. For a moment I thought Mrs. Ryan had noticed.

HUBBARD struggles against the zip-ties, raging at his helplessness and trying in vain to free himself. FLETCHER fixes his glittering black eyes on him and smiles:

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

I assure you, you're quite securely fastened to that chair.

FLETCHER pauses to check his watch.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

I've got a lot to do, and not much time. Do you hear that?

(a beat)

The prelude to "Parsifal".

Another pause, as he closes his eyes, savoring the prelude:

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

We only have until the end of the first act, so we should probably get started.

INT. BETH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Both PRENTISS and BETH are reclined in the small space. PRENTISS continues to keep a vigilant eye on the house - completely unaware of what's happening inside.

PRENTISS looks down at his watch. It reads 8:35pm

BETH

Time to check in yet?

PRENTISS

Not for a few, but, I don't
know...just got this strange
feeling I can't shake.

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

FLETCHER, holding a can of liquid, has taken a few steps
closer to HUBBARD, just within arm's reach.

FLETCHER

You're probably wondering why this
is happening to you. Fair question.
I'm sure you've heard that saying:
"You're either part of the solution
or part of the problem"?

HUBBARD doesn't respond, so FLETCHER continues:

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Detective, you are very much part
of the problem. How many lives have
you ruined? How many families have
you destroyed?

(beat)

You looked at my file, and I looked
at yours. I counted at least ten
excessive force complaints, the
city settled most of them, but the
victims were never the same
afterwards... and...

(beat)

... 'The Lang Case', you knew those
officers murdered that couple, but
you kept quiet. You blame the
powerless for the fires on Devil's
Night, and the city's crime in
general, while happily protecting
the Timkens and Ryans of the world.

(beat)

You help keep this whole horrible
system in place.

FLETCHER never raises his voice, but the threat is
unmistakable. He moves closer, menacingly toward HUBBARD, and
pours the liquid over his head:

HUBBARD

(angrily)

Wait!

Surprisingly, FLETCHER stops. HUBBARD'S anger is replaced by
pleading:

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

Wait. Let me do one thing, let me talk to my daughter, one last time.

FLETCHER makes a show of considering his request, before:

FLETCHER

If you make any attempt to warn her, not only will I kill you, but I'll pay your family a visit after. Do we understand one another?

HUBBARD nods. FLETCHER reaches into HUBBARD'S pocket and removes his phone. He presses a button on speed-dial, then holds the receiver to HUBBARD'S ear.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

You have thirty seconds...

INT. KITCHEN - HUBBARD HOME - CONTINUOUS

On the kitchen counter, a phone rings. His daughter GRETCHEN is closest. She picks it up.

GRETCHEN

Hello?

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Accelerant still dripping off of him, HUBBARD hears his daughter's voice, for the last time, and his eyes well up with tears. He tries to choke them back and keep his tone as loving and casual as always.

HUBBARD

Hi, baby. It's Daddy.

GRETCHEN

(over phone)

When are you coming home, Daddy?

HUBBARD

Daddy won't be home tonight, but I promised you if I couldn't tuck you in, I'd call and say goodnight. Did you do your homework?

GRETCHEN

(over phone)

I did. I had my dinner and ate my vegetables. Even the broccoli.

HUBBARD

That's Daddy's good girl. I want you to give Mommy a message for me, tell her I love her very much... will you do that for me?

GRETCHEN

(over phone)
Okay.

HUBBARD

You promise?

GRETCHEN

(over phone)
I promise.

HUBBARD

Okay, Daddy's got to go now.
(beat)
Don't ever forget how much Daddy loves you.

FLETCHER ends the call. HUBBARD looks up at him with genuine gratitude.

HUBBARD (CONT'D)

Thank you.

FLETCHER

You're welcome...
(looking at his watch - almost apologetic)
...but I am on a tight schedule.

He lights a lighter, takes a few steps back before casually tossing it towards HUBBARD.

EXT. LIVING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

RYAN is sitting at his desk. It's been moved to the center of the room. He's unconscious, zip-tied to the chair and desk.

There are four large glass walls on the ground around him - arranged for quick assembly. Assembly of what?

The air is filled with the haunting music of Act One of "Parsifal".

RYAN'S eyes open slowly. Blurry. He can only make out shapes and colors - outlines of furniture in the darkness.

Slowly images come into focus. His head on a swivel, looking from side to side, trying to get his bearings. He looks down: His arms and legs have been zip-tied to a chair.

Then he sees the large glass walls on the floor.

There is a camera set-up on a tripod directly ahead of him.

He quickly comes to the realization that he's in grave danger.

RYAN
Ainsley? Ainsley?

No response from his wife, only silence.

There is a BURST of orange, reddish light from another room. The explosion of light is followed quickly by HUBBARD'S agonized SCREAM (o.s.).

Thick clouds of smoke drift into the living room, the agonized SCREAMS continue. The SCREAMS subside to a whimper.

The bright lights dim, then disappear (o.s.).

Again, there is silence.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Hello? Hello?

There's no answer. This time the silence is broken by the sound of footsteps ECHOING on the marble floors.

The FOOTSTEPS grow closer, then FLETCHER, still in coveralls, emerges from the cloud of smoke.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Where's my wife?

FLETCHER looks back toward the dining room, then allows himself a small smile:

FLETCHER
Finishing her meal.

RYAN
The house is crawling with cops.

FLETCHER
Cop. Singular, and Detective
Hubbard won't be bothering us.

RYAN
They'll come looking for him.

FLETCHER

He's not due to check in for several minutes. Giving me just enough time to do everything I need to do. We'll start with a brief chat.

RYAN

About what?

FLETCHER

You Philip Ryan, I want to talk about you. When you're lying awake at night on those thousand thread count sheets, do you ever feel guilty about the misery you've caused?

RYAN

My job was to maximize profits for my client, not their employees.

FLETCHER

I was one of the people Timken laid off. With no work, I had a lot of free time on my hands, time to think and to plan.

(beat)

If you hadn't fired me, we might not be here right now.

(smiling at the irony)

Talk about your 'unintended consequences'...

FLETCHER checks his watch.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

I know you made your living coming up with ideas for your clients, but Mister Ryan...

For a brief moment, FLETCHER'S mask of sanity and civility slips, revealing the monster behind it - and it is terrifying. He taps RYAN forcefully between his eyes.

FLETCHER (CONT'D)

...YOU HAVE SOME VERY BAD IDEAS IN THAT HEAD OF YOURS!

RYAN flinches in his seat. FLETCHER regains his composure, like someone flipped a switch, and suddenly he's calm and (seemingly) rational again:

FLETCHER (CONT'D)
I'm going to make sure you don't
have any more.

RYAN seems to accept that he might die and changes tack.

RYAN
Killing me isn't going to change
anything.

FLETCHER isn't persuaded. He simply smiles before responding:

FLETCHER
By itself, probably not, but
killing Sowa, Timken, you, is part
of...
(closes his eyes and
smiles rapturously)
...something much 'larger'.

INT. BETH'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

PRENTISS looks at the time. It's a few minutes after the
hour.

PRENTISS
(into walkie)
I know I'm early, what's going on
in there?

No answer. STATIC. An ominous silence.

PRENTISS (CONT'D)
(to BETH)
Something's not right. If I'm not
out in five minutes, head to the
police station, tell them Fletcher
is on the scene and I'm going to
apprehend him. Got me?

A slight nod and smile, then he opens the car door and
hurriedly steps out into:

EXT. YARD - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

He goes to the front door. Knocks. There's no answer. He
knocks a second time, more insistently - still no answer.

He moves around to the side of the house, unconsciously
moving his hand towards his holster as he does. He turns a
corner into the:

EXT. BACK YARD - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Where the TWO UNIFORMED OFFICERS lie face down in the perfectly manicured yard. The neatly trimmed grass is stained dark crimson.

PRENTISS unholsters his weapon, then unclips the walkie-talkie.

PRENTISS

(softly - into walkie-talkie)

This is Detective Prentiss, Ryan home. I have two, possibly three officers down. In need of EMS and immediate backup.

DISPATCH

(over walkie)

Copy that. EMS and backup are en route.

He replaces the walkie-talkie and uses his free hand to remove a small flashlight from his belt:

INT. LIVING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Where FLETCHER continues his calmly delivered rant to a terrified RYAN.

FLETCHER

There are, at least seventy, seventy five million people out there, who've rigged the system in their favor, so they can enjoy unchecked power, and privilege... now they're afraid they might lose some of their power... and they're terrified... terrified that once they no longer have the protection of money and power, the folks who were the losers in that rigged system, the ones they've oppressed won't want reconciliation, they'll want revenge... so they're afraid.

(beat - smiles)

Why do you think they own so many guns?

EXT. CAPITAL BUILDING - LANSING, MICHIGAN - DAY

A group of PROTESTORS (who were part of the roaming mob PRENTISS encountered): heavy-set men and women, in camo and body armor, carrying assault rifles storm the steps of the capital.

FLETCHER (V.O.)
Tens of millions of paranoid,
angry, heavily-armed people...

They press their faces against the doors, YELLING and POUNDING on the glass like zombies in a horror movie.

FLETCHER (V.O.)
...and when they keep reading about
these murders, over the next few
months, they're going to start
thinking: "'The Reckoning' we've
been afraid of, is finally here...
so I'm going to go out and kill
them, before they kill me."
(beat)
That's how it'll start, and they
won't stop until they've burned
this world to the ground.

INT. LIVING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

FLETCHER moves closer, as he does - he removes a long silver spike from his coveralls. The steel glints in the light. RYAN reflexively moves back.

The music and voices of "Parsifal" soar. FLETCHER takes this as his cue:

FLETCHER moves to the camera, looks through the viewfinder and returns his attention to RYAN:

FLETCHER
Now I want you to say this into
camera...

The words are drowned out by the sound of blood pumping in FLETCHER's ears: THUMP THUMP THUMP. As his excitement builds he can barely hear RYAN.

RYAN
(mouthing the words)
...Tonight is the beginning of 'The
Great Change'...

INT. KITCHEN - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Weapon and flashlight raised, PRENTISS moves quietly into the kitchen.

The flashlight beam tries to cut through a thin cloud of smoke, as it plays across dirty dishes in the sink, finally coming to rest on the far side of the room and an open basement door.

PRENTISS steadies his weapon, grips it tightly so that's it almost an extension of his hand. Letting it lead the way, he enters a sort of 'Museum of Gruesome Deaths':

INT. DINING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

The smoke is thicker here. Through the cloud he can see two half-empty plates and half-eaten meals still on the table. AINSLEY still lies face first in hers. A pool of blood on the tablecloth around her.

Careful not to make any noise, PRENTISS leans in and touches her neck, searching in vain for a pulse. He doesn't find one and involuntarily drops his head in despair.

For the split second PRENTISS' head is dropped, FLETCHER appears in the doorway ahead of him, like an apparition; then just as quickly disappears again behind the door frame.

PRENTISS lifts his head, with a vague sense he was just being observed.

He raises his gun again and moves cautiously into the:

INT. ENTRANCE - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

And the source of the smoke: HUBBARD, still tied to the chair, is nothing more than a blackened, smoldering husk.

All the animosity PRENTISS once felt is gone, replaced by a profound sadness. He kneels down next to the chair; struggles to remember a passage, but doesn't close his eyes, aware that FLETCHER is probably nearby:

PRENTISS

"Remember the clear light, the pure
clear white light from which
everything in the universe comes..."

EXT. THE BARDO - CONTINUOUS

A state between death and rebirth. Floating in the center of this realm: A globe, HUMMING and PULSATING, composed of thousands of filaments of white light.

HUBBARD'S consciousness, visible as a dark silhouette, faces the PULSATING ball of light, buffeted by WINDS.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
 ...to which everything in the universe returns... let go into the clear light, trust it, merge with it. It is your own true nature, it is home."

INT. HALLWAY - RYAN HOME - LATER

Flashlight and gun raised, PRENTISS continues moving into the:

INT. LIVING ROOM - RYAN HOME - CONTINUOUS

Where his flashlight beam finds:

RYAN'S headless corpse, secured to a desk, frozen in place in a deranged simulation of work.

The corpse and desk are encased in a large glass box like a demented Damien Hirst sculpture.

Momentarily too stunned to speak, it takes PRENTISS a moment to regain the power of speech. When he does, he removes his walkie-talkie again.

PRENTISS
 (into walkie-talkie, more urgently)
 This is Detective Prentiss. Where is that backup?

DISPATCH
 (over walkie-talkie)
 Additional units and EMS are en route. E.T.A. two minutes...

PRENTISS replaces the walkie, then moves through the living room, as stealthily as possible back toward the entrance.

FLETCHER (O.S.)
 Ah, Professor.

PRENTISS almost at the threshold, stops short. He pauses. He looks down. He can see FLETCHER'S shadow just beyond the threshold. He's lying in wait on the other side of the door.

PRENTISS

Francis Fletcher, you are under arrest!

FLETCHER (O.S.)

My arrest, my death, they're irrelevant. The Change's already begun. You've seen what's going to happen, and deep down, you know...

(beat)

...you can't stop it.

PRENTISS

I put you behind bars, this ends.

FLETCHER

Didn't you ever wonder about all the clues that just fell into your lap: the strand of my hair, Tracy Lodge... this is all happening exactly the way it's supposed to.

PRENTISS

Get down on your knees, with your hands up. This is your final warning!

(a beat)

Don't make me do this, Fletcher.

His pleas are met by silence. He looks down at the threshold. Stepping across it is death, standing still is death.

PRENTISS does a quick calculation, guessing where FLETCHER is standing. He quickly raises his gun and FIRES into the wall, then moves as he continues FIRING, stitching a pattern of bullet holes...

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL

FLETCHER stands. His expression calm, peaceful as...

Gun shots EXPLODE through the wood and dry-wall, BOOMING in the large space.

FLETCHER'S body jerks in strange, contorted movements like a Butoh dancer -- as the rounds bore through flesh and bone, fountains of blood bursting from the wounds.

He collapses to the ground in a bloodied, bullet-ridden heap.

PRENTISS bursts across the threshold, gun still raised, only to find FLETCHER'S lifeless body; but it's not triumphant, PRENTISS feels no sense of victory in his death.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Monday. November 1st. Present Day.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

PRENTISS, unshaven, more scruffy than usual, dark circles under his eyes, wrinkled clothes, drains a cup of black coffee. He sits across from CAPTAIN DOUGLAS.

A video camera is set up on a tripod, recording PRENTISS' statement. DOUGLAS turns off the camera.

DOUGLAS

...but you got the son of a bitch.

When PRENTISS speaks again, his voice is thick with guilt and regret.

PRENTISS

I never wanted to take a life, any
life, not even his.

DOUGLAS regards PRENTISS, not entirely certain what to make of him.

INT. PRECINCT FLOOR - PRECINCT HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

BETH is waiting on a bench outside. She stands when she sees PRENTISS exit the interrogation room. PRENTISS and DOUGLAS exchange an awkward handshake, after:

DOUGLAS

Beth, could you step in?

DOUGLAS goes back into interrogation. Once he's out of sight BETH turns to PRENTISS, and touches him gently on his shoulder.

PRENTISS

Sorry I never called you back.

BETH

You needed some time. I get that. I just wanted to say I'm sorry about Hubbard. We weren't exactly the best of friends, but I'm sorry.

PRENTISS

Thanks for your help on the case. I don't know if Douglas would ever admit this, but you were crucial in helping us track this guy down.

(changes the subject)

You headed to NYC?

BETH

(a slight smile)

Said my 'goodbyes', found a place on the Lower East Side, don't even ask me what the rent is. I start next week.

(an awkward beat)

You're still taking early retirement?

PRENTISS

I can't be a part of...this system... anymore.

(beat)

I want to live as much as I can, while I can...

(a beat)

...see the beauty that's out there, before it's gone.

BETH

You find yourself in New York, give me a call.

PRENTISS

(smiles slowly)

I will. I still owe you breakfast.

PRENTISS turns to leave, but before he goes, she stops him.

BETH

I've had this nagging feeling.

She's reluctant to put her thoughts into words:

BETH (CONT'D)

This doomsday cult shit, Toomey's 'prophecy', that's just crazy talk right?

(MORE)

BETH (CONT'D)

Fletcher couldn't actually have
made that stuff happen, could he?

PRENTISS

These murders were his purpose...

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN - DAY

Aftermath of Devil's Night: Think Dresden just after WWII.

Groups of buildings that the fire department didn't have time
to extinguish are still burning; thick clouds of black smoke
and ash rise from their smoldering husks.

PRENTISS (V.O.)

...his dharma...

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK:

Monday. November 1st. 2080.

EXT. CITY STREET - HALIFAX - DAY

The deserted street we saw in the beginning. Almost totally
silent, except for the wind WHISTLING through the trees and
CHIRPING birds.

The FIGURE continues its lonely march down the street.

A herd of deer cross the FIGURE'S path, then graze on a clump
of wild grass, unconcerned by the FIGURE'S presence.

PRENTISS (V.O.)

At first, I thought Fletcher was a
psychopath. Toomey's work just gave
him an excuse to kill and if I
found him, arrested him, that'd be
the end of it...

EXT. ABANDONED TIMKEN FACTORIES - DAY

A row of empty husks - under a sky the color of ash.

Their crumbling facades are covered with graffiti, empty
windows, the concrete below covered with shattered glass.

Vegetation snakes along the walls, nature is well on its way
to reclaiming the entire area:

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...but after everything that's
happened this week...

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - ABANDONED FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

Piles of detritus cover the floor. Strange graffiti covers the walls. Dimmed sunlight filters into the space, casting large areas into shadow.

WHISPERING VOICES drift out of the shadows.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...I know, with a horrible
certainty...

INT. CORRIDOR - ABANDONED FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

Hazy sunlight manages to penetrate a dark inner corridor. From deep within the shadows, MEN and WOMEN step into the light.

They're the source of the WHISPERING: TOOMEY'S FOLLOWERS. The dozen MEN and WOMEN we recognize from the storefront church.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...that Toomey was right...

Moments later, HIBOU emerges, then with the help of his cane, CYRUS TOOMEY.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...Fletcher really is the 'Death's
Head'... he'll bring about
Mankind's end...

They turn their gaze toward the sound of FOOTSTEPS of the FIGURE, whom we've watched traverse the barren landscape.

PRENTISS (V.O.)
...followed by a kind of rebirth...

The FIGURE finally steps into the light: It's PRENTISS, scarred, years of struggle etched into his features.

They recognize him, and smile warmly.

TOOMEY
Professor. Welcome. We've been
expecting you.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Silence. Stillness. A forest of thick jack pines, that's been undisturbed by humans for decades.

TOOMEY, now using a large walking stick, and PRENTISS hike along a faded trail, through the undergrowth.

PRENTISS

Our new world, tell me it'll be better than the last one.

TOOMEY smiles cheerfully:

TOOMEY

You used to say, you wanted to see something beautiful, before it all disappeared.

PRENTISS doesn't even bother asking how he could've known that.

TOOMEY (CONT'D)

The new world will be beautiful, better; but one day, it will end too.

PRENTISS accidentally brushes against a bush, disturbing the foliage and dozens of moths.

The moths fly into the air, their wings FLUTTERING, forming an undulating dark cloud. It is a strangely hypnotic, beautiful sight:

TOOMEY (CONT'D)

Life. Death. Rebirth. This is the way of things.

FADE OUT.

THE END