

GOING UNDER

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ISA Emerging Screenwriters
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FADE IN:

I/E. A TYPICAL HOUSE IN SUBURBIA - AFTERNOON

We begin TRACKING slowly BACKWARDS from a house across the street.

We see LITTLE CHILDREN running around from the rear of the house to the front, engaged in an EPIC WATER FIGHT; guns, hoses, water balloons, etc.

We continue moving backwards into the street, and through the inside of a PARKED and marked CARGO VAN. Various packaged-for-delivery CLOTHES hang on the inside. The engine is RUNNING. The logo on the side of the van says, "XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANERS."

We move through the double doors on the side of the van, over the yard, up the front steps of a house we cannot see, and through the front door frame with the door swung WIDE OPEN, the lock, KICKED IN.

We continue moving inside the foyer hallway until we see RUSSEL CORBIN, white, mid twenties, dressed in a door-to-door dry cleaning uniform, sitting on the floor and looking at the water gun fight unfolding from a distance.

Lying across his body is SEAN, white, also mid twenties, dressed the same, breathing erratically, dying.

Russel's hand is on Sean's chest applying pressure futilely to a wound we cannot see.

On the edges of Russel's hand, Sean's white shirt is beginning to become soaked in blood.

Russel stares outside, silent tears welling up in his eyes.

Suddenly, we see a FIGURE dressed in a black suit standing in the door frame, a silhouette to the sunlight outside. He stands there for a second, and then begins walking towards us down the hallway.

We cannot see his face.

He steps over Russel and Sean as we continue to track with him. He gets to the end of the foyer hallway and stops.

The Figure kneels down, and picks up a LATIN GIRL's lifeless body. He throws her over his shoulder, turns, and goes back the way he came.

We follow him until once again we stop with Russel and Sean.

The Figure pauses in the doorway, turns his head slightly towards Russel, back forward, and leaves.

Sean's shirt is very red now.

SEAN

Promise me.

Russel turns down towards Sean.

RUSSEL

I promise.

Russel looks away, back across the street.

SEAN

Hey-

Russel looks back down into Sean's eyes.

SEAN

No worries, man.

Sean stops breathing.

Russel gently moves to close Sean's eyes and sits silently.

We can still faintly hear the sounds of the CHILDREN PLAYING.

Russel closes his own eyes-

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT - LATER

A RANDOM MAN's blood curdling SCREAM-CUT-SHORT startles Russel back from his DAYDREAM.

He sits in a very dimly lit hallway in an old chair. The overall setting is professional and simple, but in a makeshift, found sort of way. It resembles the unfinished product of a large, renovated house.

Directly across the hall from him, a door is slightly cracked. We can hear MOVEMENT from the occupants inside; the Random Man and the Figure from before.

The once screaming, Random Man, sits bound to a chair, with his chin buried in his chest. He is dead.

The Figure enters the hallway and closes the door gently behind him. He towers over Russel and looks towards a door at the end of the hallway.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

SIMON SHAH, Indian, late thirties, sits on an old couch in the back of the office with his arm propping up his head, his eyes closed in a state of total relaxation. He's a very nicely dressed man in contrast to the room itself; a work in progress.

As Russel enters, the Figure from before follows. We still cannot see his face, only make out that his clothes are the same, and his hands are freshly bloodied.

Russel eyes him, and removes his gun from his shoulder holster. He pulls out the clip, de-chambers the bullet, and puts the pieces on Simon's desk.

The Figure goes into a small private bathroom in the corner, leaving the door wide open, his face still hidden by the door frame. He washes his hands and straightens himself out.

Russel sits down in a chair with a SUIT JACKET hung around the back of it, facing the desk, and with his back turned to the still motionless Simon. Russel's attention is still with the hidden Figure.

Finally, the Figure emerges from the bathroom revealing his face clearly for the very first time. It is VINCE, early thirties, a man whose physique radiates a former military, active mercenary type.

He and Russel make stern eye contact as Vince moves towards Simon and sits on the opposite end of the couch.

Simon lets out a long sigh and then begins, slowly, without having so much as moved this entire time.

SIMON

What is it that you want, Rusty?

Simon opens his eyes.

RUSSEL

I want out, Simon. No strings, no connections, no grudges. I walk away from here, and everyone forgets that I ever existed.

Simon stands and begins to approach Russel. When he gets to him, he puts his hands on the Suit Jacket and tugs slightly. Russel leans forward setting it free, and Simon tosses the Jacket into his own chair.

SIMON

Don't be so naive.

Simon goes for the liquor cabinet just beyond reach of his desk, and begins to pour himself a drink.

SIMON

No one wants to be here, but we do, what we have to do.

RUSSEL

Simon-

SIMON

Your good friend, your partner in crime, your best good buddy died today at the hands of a job that should've been a walk in the park for people of your-

Simon swivels his drink, smells it, takes a satisfying sip.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Caliber.

Simon sits.

Russel shifts in his seat.

Vince stares.

SIMON

For that, I do shed the proverbial tear. And for that, you are going to receive a get-out-of-jail-free card for all the loyalty you have shown me, thus far.

Russel sighs.

RUSSEL

I just thought I should let you know.

Russel stands-

SIMON

I am giving you time off, Rusty. Things are slowing down in suburbia and for that I can both sacrifice and recruit new and eager blood. You'll have plenty of time to get your head back in the game, sample life, do whatever it is that you want or feel the need to do.

(MORE)

SIMON (cont'd)

But when that time is over, when a job comes to my attention that requires your experience, your special area of expertise, I am going to send somebody to bring you back.

Russel turns towards Vince who has seemingly never taken his eyes off of him.

SIMON

They will have simple orders.

(beat)

Dead...or alive.

Russel picks up the pieces of his gun, loads the lone bullet into the clip, the clip into the gun, and holsters. He turns his back and begins walking for the door.

SIMON

Michael Schaffer will be expecting you.

Russel stops.

SIMON

You haven't heard or thought of that name in years now have you?

Simon leans back in his chair, closes his eyes, fully relaxing.

SIMON

And yet, he is the reason you and I began, where our prologue meets act one, the very reason-

RUSSEL

We met.

SIMON

You two used to be such good friends.

(beat)

Try to keep this one alive.

Russel turns towards Simon who has become preoccupied with various clutter on his desk. Russel turns to Vince, and leaves.

EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - FLASHBACK - EARLY MORNING

Russel's car pulls into a parking space in front of XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANERS located on the edge of the strip mall.

Russel and Sean get out.

Russel reaches into his backseat and pulls out a LARGE LAUNDRY BAG.

He throws it over his shoulder as they walk.

SEAN

Hey have you talked to Jerrid lately?

RUSSEL

Not since operations picked up this far from downtown.

As they approach the entrance of the cleaners, they encounter a couple of GIRLS walking into a JUICE BAR next door.

Russel's focus is on the inside of the cleaners, Sean sneaks a look at the Girls as he nearly walks into the closed door.

INT. XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANERS - CONTINUOUS

As Russel and Sean enter, a CUSTOMER leaves, bumping Sean's shoulder. Sean looks back shaking his head.

A FEMALE EMPLOYEE stands helping customers at a drive through window. She eyes Russel and Sean as they approach the counter.

She makes eye contact with the CASHIER, before giving the Cashier an approving nod.

SEAN

Anyway, he's just been actin really weird lately, jittery.

RUSSEL

Was he hungry? He does that when he's hungry.

SEAN

Nah, as a matter of fact we had just sat down for a bite when it started. And as we both know, he usually gets quite giddy when he knows food's a comin.

Russel drops the bag on the counter.

The Cashier takes the bag, reads the label, and puts it on the ground behind the counter. She opens it up and takes a few clothes out revealing a BUNDLE OF CASH in the middle of all the clothes.

The Cashier reaches under the counter and pulls out an ENVELOPE.

CASHIER

Lost and found.

Russel puts the envelope in his pocket with a nod.

RUSSEL

(to Sean)

What'd you guys talk about?

SEAN

Well he says he knows this guy.

RUSSEL

We all know "this" guy.

SEAN

But this particular guy was different. This particular guy says he's found a way out.

Russel looks at Sean skeptically.

RUSSEL

Sean, we've been over and over this-

SEAN

I know I know, but this isn't like that last guy with his Houdini pyramid scheme. This guy claims to have all the ins and outs taken care of.

(quieter, careful)

Money, protection, arrangements-I mean it sounded more legit than usual. I mean it might be Shah's way of flushing out "ye of little faith," but what if, you know?

Russel eyes the Cashier in the back talking to the OWNER, a middle-aged KOREAN MAN staring back at Russel and Sean.

SEAN

I mean don't you ever wonder what's on the other side of the fence, man?

Sean sees the girls walking back to their car, carefree.

SEAN

What it'd be like to, you know, not always be doing what we do? Always on the clock? Always on call?

RUSSEL

Presuming we somehow found a way for the people we work for not to chase us into the sunset on principle alone?

SEAN

Presuming.

The Owner nods to Russel as Russel turns his full attention to Sean as they both walk for the door.

RUSSEL

Sean, we've been apart of this since we knew what the value of money meant. Since life dealt us a bad hand and we sold our souls to the Devil for a small fix in the big picture. We've seen too much, we know too much, we've done too much. This is who we are and all we'll ever be.

SEAN

All I'm sayin Captain Pessimism is what if... Ask yourself, what if.

RUSSEL

What if.

Russel pauses for a minute at the door and then looks at Sean.

Sean exits and begins walking towards the car of girls.

RUSSEL

What if...

He sighs.

SEAN

Ladies, hold up-

INT. SMALL CEMETERY - PRESENT - MORNING

Russel kneels in front of a HEADSTONE marked for Sean.

A truck door CLOSES off to the side.

Russel looks in its direction and sees another MAN leaning against the truck.

Russel takes one final look at the grave, stands, and leaves.

EXT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Russel approaches the truck and the MAN from before. When Russel gets to him, we see that it is MICHAEL SHAFFER, late twenties, a bit bigger than Russel in build, leaning against it.

Russel leans next to him.

They both stare straight ahead at the cemetery.

MICHAEL

I'd hesitate to offer the cliché of, "it shouldn't take somebody's death to bring us back together," but-

Michael shrugs.

Russel nods.

RUSSEL

It's been a long time, Michael.

MICHAEL

That it has, Rusty. That it has.

RUSSEL

Look, about the way I left things-

MICHAEL

It's in the past, where it belongs.

Russel nods.

They continue to stare straight ahead at the cemetery.

An ELDERLY WOMAN kneels down next to a random grave and begins sorting flowers on it.

MICHAEL

We've buried a lot of people here over the years. Maybe even someday we'll be buried here. And you know who will bring flowers to our graves?

The Elderly Woman begins saying a prayer.

MICHAEL

What they'll say about guys like us?

Russel turns slightly towards Michael.

MICHAEL

No one, and nothing.

They continue to watch the Elderly Woman go through her routine.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - LATER

Michael and Russel get out of the truck and walk towards the front door.

RUSSEL

You still living alone?

MICHAEL

My sister moved in a few years back after mom died. We never did the extended family thing so, here I was.

RUSSEL

I'm sorry. I never knew.

MICHAEL

People drift. Shit happens.

Michael unlocks the door.

RUSSEL

Ashley, right?

MICHAEL

Yeah. Make yourself at home. It's what we'll be calling this for a while. Upstairs, first door on the right is you. I'm down the hall, she and the bathroom are across.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

They enter into the house. Russel takes a brief look around and turns back towards Michael.

RUSSEL

Thanks.

MICHAEL

I got something out of town I got to take care of. I'll be back later tonight, tomorrow morning. We'll catch up. Do that remember the time shit.

RUSSEL

Be careful.

MICHAEL

Rusty, guys like us aren't careful. We're the best until we meet somebody better.

RUSSEL

Until that day then.

MICHAEL

Until that day.

Michael leaves.

Russel wanders deeper into the house.

INT. MICHAEL'S KITCHEN - EVENING

Russel opens the refrigerator and doesn't see a lot of options. It's clear the owners of this refrigerator tend to order in.

ASHLEY (O.S.)

Your favorite foods still fit in the toaster or the microwave?

Russel closes the fridge revealing ASHLEY, white, early 20s, the fully grown, cute girl next door, carrying several bags of GROCERIES.

She puts the groceries down and they hug.

RUSSEL

Wow, the last time I saw you, you were about yay high.

ASHLEY

Yeah and I'm about yay high now.
I'm not that much younger than you,
you know. You hungry?

RUSSEL

Starving.

ASHLEY

Come on, I'll give you the grand
tour while we wait.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

ASHLEY

And last, but certainly not least-

Hanging FLUORESCENT LIGHTS flicker on to a slight BUZZ.

The basement contains a POOL TABLE, a wall loaded with various tools, a work out area with several weight lifting machines, punching bags and mats, and a final door at the end.

They make their way back to the door.

The door has no discernible features other than, it looks like a door. There is no handle. There are no obvious or readily apparent ways of unlocking it.

Ashley pushes her hand into what might as well be a random section of nearby wall, a half foot or so to the left of the frame. It pushes in and a keypad slides out.

She punches in some numbers.

The door can be heard UNLOCKING and MORE FLUORESCENT LIGHT flickers on to a buzz.

INT. MICHAEL'S GUN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The room is filled with WALL TO WALL GUNS, ACCESSORIES, VESTS, ETC. It's enough to form a small militia.

Russel's eyes are wowed, but he notices Ashley's lack of enthusiasm.

RUSSEL

Are you okay with all of this?

ASHLEY

I think the novelty of saying to myself, "to the gun room" wore off some time ago.

Russel smirks as he takes one final look around, nods approvingly, and closes the door. We hear it LOCK itself.

RUSSEL

Lets eat.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Russel lies on the couch, drifting in and out of sleep. Ashley sits huddled up in a nearby recliner under a blanket, doing the same.

The coffee table is littered with their empty dishes.

The TV can faintly be heard.

RUSSEL

So what do you do now? You were in school before you moved out here right?

ASHLEY

Yeah, I was studying medicine. I wanted to be a doctor.

RUSSEL

And?

ASHLEY

I just sort of am I guess. I mean, not officially. I didn't finish and I don't really practice anywhere or anything, but I have a few hospital connections so I fill-in there from time to time. They schedule me for some weird hours, but it's what I love, and it's good money. I've got a lot saved.

RUSSEL

What for?

ASHLEY

I don't know...a "rainy day" I guess.

Beat.

RUSSEL

You know, you used to be such a "dork" when you were a kid.

ASHLEY

That may be, but I was and will forever be cooler than you are.

Russel throws a pillow at her.

Ashley deflects it and laughs.

RUSSEL

You used to be like-
(imitating Ashley)
Hey Russel, hey Michael, can I play?

ASHLEY

Yeah and then Michael would always be like-
(imitating Michael)
Ashley's not badass enough to hang out with us. We're too cool to be seen with her. Go back in the house, Ashley.

They laugh.

RUSSEL

Michael is a badass though.

ASHLEY

Yeah, but sometimes he acts like he invented it.

Russel smiles through a yawn.

RUSSEL

How late do you usually wait up?

ASHLEY

I just like to lay here until I hear him come in. In case he comes in and he can't, you know.

Russel nods soaking the thought in.

RUSSEL

Night.

ASHLEY

Night.

Russel crosses his arms, and turns into the couch.

Ashley looks from him, to the TV, and back to him with a slight smile.

ASHLEY
Welcome back.

INT. MICHAEL'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

Michael enters through the front door quietly. He's bleeding a little bit from the lip and eyebrow, somewhat of a bruised cheek bone, his knuckles cut.

Ashley is huddled up in the recliner under a blanket asleep.

Russel is watching TV, fully alert as though it were the middle of the afternoon.

TV REPORTER (O.S.)
-Recorded earlier tonight on the scene of the latest in a string of gangland murders between the warring Ramirez and Shah families.

Russel and Michael make eye contact and look at Ashley.

Michael goes upstairs.

WITNESS (O.S.)
It's just that you don't expect this kind of violence in this part of town so-so far away from the city I mean, this is supposed to be a nice neighborhood. It *is* a nice neighborhood. We just obviously have no idea who we're living next to or-or when the police are finally going to step up and do something about it-

Russel cuts off the TV, scoops Ashley up, and goes upstairs, as well.

I/E. ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Russel tucks her in, pauses to take a look at her, and closes the door.

Michael is leaning in the hallway. He moves into-

I/E. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael stands over the sink assessing his wounds, agitated.

MICHAEL

Lets be clear on one thing.

He runs the water and spits a bit of blood into it.

MICHAEL

Nothing happens between you and her. She's better than the both of us, than this, than all of it.

Michael begins cleaning himself up. He applies antiseptics without so much as giving away any obvious indication of discomfort or pain. He hides it well.

MICHAEL

She never becomes involved.

RUSSEL

How was the job?

Michael pauses briefly, his point made.

MICHAEL

Ramirez's father is dead.

RUSSEL

What does that mean?

MICHAEL

There will be consequences.

Russel sighs.

Michael looks at his trigger finger. We see a TATTOO of "THREE." He rubs his thumb over it.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

As the lights turn off sequentially in the house, TWO TWIN RACING MOTORCYCLE'S coast to a stop out front. Each Biker looks at each other, back to the house, and engage their kickstands SIMULTANEOUSLY. They are identical in dress.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Two Men enter the door looking briefly around and stop. They look at each other and to the stairs. They ascend the staircase.

INT. MICHAEL'S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Two Men walk single file down the hallway as if they are a mirror image of one another.

The one trailing puts some sort of device, a LOCK on the doorknobs of Russel and Ashley's bedrooms. He separates the device in two, and attaches the second part to the opposite wall with a metal wire. The result, preventing the doors from being opened from the inside.

Finally, they both reach Michael's bedroom and stand outside.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

They STALK in quietly, and stand looking at the bed. There is no one inside of it. Not yet. Not tonight.

Michael stands in front of the window.

MAN 1
Hello, Michael.

MICHAEL
Hi.

MAN 2
You've done something very bad,
Michael.

MICHAEL
Yeah, I suppose I have.

MAN 1
Now, once upon a time.

The Two Men begin to advance.

MAN 2
We were three.

MAN 1
You know this story don't you,
Michael?

MICHAEL
I wrote it.

MAN 2
And that story ends with us owing
you a favor.

MICHAEL
However?

MAN 1
However, the terms of that favor
must still uphold our obligation to
remain a third party in this war.

MAN 2
So you see, our favor to you is
your life. Our obligation, the
ticking clock that we will put upon
it.

Everyone in the room seems to be loosening up a bit as necks
and knuckles can be heard POPPING from no particular
direction.

MICHAEL
Shall we get this over with then?

INT. RUSSEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly, a loud THUD slams up against Russel's wall as he
sits up in his bed.

We can hear the struggle clearly through the wall. Punches
are landing hard, VERY HARD.

Russel jumps up quickly and tries to open the door but the
contraption from before prevents him.

INT. ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Ashley is moving slowly towards her door, listening intently
to the struggle, growing more frightened.

I/E. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael is struggling with all his might to fight the two
assailants, but he is one man, and they are two.

Finally, it spills out into the hallway and Michael although,
clearly the more disadvantaged, still fights strong.

I/E. RUSSEL'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Russel begins feverishly kicking the door, specifically the doorknob. The doorknob gets pulled through the door and the door swings wide open.

Russel springs out into the hallway, rips the LOCK off of Ashley's door, and moves to tackle one of the assailants, still fighting Michael. One of them spins and kicks.

Michael ducks the attack and it instead connects with Russel sending him into the bathroom, breaking some of the tile.

Ashley stands there stunned, watching her brother fight for his life.

Russel gets to his feet and runs straight for Michael who after the last hit, is falling against the wall. Russell picks him up out of the fight and grabs Ashley's hand as they begin running downstairs.

The Twins look at each other and then back at the stairs.

They sigh.

I/E. MICHAEL'S GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

The Garage is OPENING as Russel helps Michael into the backseat while Ashley runs around and hops in.

When Michael is in, Russel closes the door, and hops in the front.

Russel is in the driver's seat, Ashley in the passenger, and Michael in the back, barely conscious.

Russel starts the car, shifts into gear, and they peel out of there.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Russel is weaving in and out of traffic like a shark through water.

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

RUSSEL

Hospital?

ASHLEY

That way, that way!

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel turns and drifts around the next corner.

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel checks his REAR VIEW MIRROR and we see the Two Men riding after them.

RUSSEL

Hang on!

Russel shifts and pushes the car harder.

Ashley begins messing with the KEYS hanging off the key ring in the ignition. She starts taking one of them off while trying to hold on with the jerky movements of the car.

She gets the key she wants and opens the GLOVE COMPARTMENT.

Inside is a GUN and a couple of CLIPS.

ASHLEY

Russel.

Russel glances down. This isn't the first time she's had to do this. He takes the gun, slams a clip into it, and chambers the bullet.

RUSSEL

Take the wheel and shift when and exactly when I say.

ASHLEY

What?

RUSSEL

Down shift.

She does.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The car slows way down as various traffic speeds past them and the Two Men begin to rapidly catch up.

Russel leans out of the window and begins to empty the clip at them.

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Ashley drives with her left hand trying desperately to avoid traffic while Russel fires at the assailants.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Two Men criss-cross one another weaving in and out of traffic, dodging the bullets.

When Russel is empty. The Two Men, although completely unaware of each other, take their cue to draw their own guns, SIMULTANEOUSLY.

RUSSEL

Up, up, UP!

Ashley shifts up.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Russel-

Russel reloads.

RUSSEL

What?

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL

They can shoot like I can.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Two Men take aim.

RUSSEL

DOWN! MOVE!

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel gets back in the car. He pushes Ashley's head down, slams on the gas, and gets down himself as a hail of gun fire tears into the car destroying the headrests of the front and rear seats and shattering both the front and rear windshields.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel spins the car around another corner and is driving as fast as possible.

The Two Men accelerate so that they are coming up right behind them.

Russel sees this in the rear view mirror, spins the car 90 degrees to the left, and slams on the brakes, causing the car to slide perpendicular to, but with the traffic.

The Man on the right dodges this ordeal entirely, but the Man on the left slams into the driver side of the car.

His body slides over the roof of the car while-

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel empties every bullet he can into the roof while Ashley covers her eyes and ears as various shards of shrapnel rain down from the ceiling.

EXT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel spins the car back forwards.

The Second Man pulls the first off the roof and onto the back of his motorcycle as they screech to a sudden stop.

The Man on the back spins off and steps forward a few steps staring.

INT. ASHLEY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Russel looks over towards Ashley and back at Michael in the rear seat, still alive.

Suddenly, they are BLIND SIDED BY A PICK UP TRUCK from the left.

BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ER - MOMENTS LATER

VARIOUS HOSPITAL JARGON AMBIENTS IN BETWEEN HEARTBEATS.

Michael, Russel, and Ashley are being wheeled in on stretchers frantically.

BLACK.

Michael's lifeless body is being hooked up chaotically to various machines.

BLACK.

Russel is having his breathing, hand-pumped for him.

BLACK.

Ashley is staring blankly around as if all light is too bright; she is unable to clearly focus on anything.

BLACK.

Michael is badly bruised, and he's flat-lining.

BLACK.

Russel is having his shoulder relocated.

BLACK.

Ashley is crying as they are holding her down to remove glass from her arm.

BLACK.

Hospital personnel are doing everything they can to revive Michael.

BLACK.

Russel lies sleeping, hooked up to an artificial respirator.

BLACK.

Ashley stares at Michael through an observation window, her arm bandaged.

BLACK.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Various hospital personnel flood the area.

Russel emerges from around the corner down the hallway, obviously a bit rattled, massaging his shoulder, but otherwise okay. He's taped up in several temporary bandages here and there, a sling supporting his injured shoulder.

Ashley is sitting on a bench just outside the door speaking with a young, female hospital NURSE.

It's clear that they knew each other from before tonight.

Russel walks up.

RUSSEL

Hey.

Ashley looks up and stands hugging him tightly. He grimaces slightly.

ASHLEY

Are you okay?

RUSSEL

Yeah, yeah, I'll be fine. You?

She nods before turning towards Michael's room.

Russel sees her bandaged arm.

ASHLEY

Just a headache.

The Nurse touches Ashley's shoulder and waves goodbye.

Ashley nods.

Russel looks at Ashley's other minor wounds, slightly towards Michael's room, and then back towards Ashley.

RUSSEL

And Michael?

She begins moving closer to the observation window.

ASHLEY

The list is long.

Russel moves closer to the window as well.

Through the window, Michael is a mess.

EXT. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATER

Ashley and Russel sit on the bench.

The hallway has nearly emptied.

A DOCTOR emerges from the room.

DOCTOR
Friends? Family?

Russel and Ashley stand.

RUSSEL
A bit of both.

DOCTOR
He's going to be fine. We'll need
to keep him here for a while just
to make sure everything on the
inside is up and running and then
we can send him home.
(to Ashley)
What about you, how's your head?

ASHLEY
It still hurts a little.

DOCTOR
Stick to the protocol. It'll fade.

The Doctor gestures to Russel.

Russel holds up his hand, a casted broken finger.

DOCTOR
You guys were lucky. Not a lot of
people make it out of that much
chaos anywhere close to the way
they went in. You two should go
home and get some rest. You've done
all that you can. I'll call you if
anything changes with him. You call
me if anything changes with you
two.

ASHLEY
Thank you.

The Doctor starts to leave—

RUSSEL
The people in the truck—

The Doctor turns around.

RUSSEL
Did they...?

The Doctor shakes his head "no," and walks away.

Russel seems to take this especially hard.

He takes one last look at Michael before walking down the hallway with Ashley.

FADE OUT.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Life wasn't always this simple.

FADE IN:

INT. SMALL CEMETERY - FLASHBACK - RAINY AFTERNOON

A dozen or so mourning couples stand around a COFFIN as it is lowered into the ground, umbrellas over their heads.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
So black and white.

MRS. SHAFFER, early 40s, stands together with an 8-YEAR-OLD Ashley under an umbrella.

Mascara runs from Mrs. Shaffer's eyes, but her tears could just be a product of the rain.

We see an EARLY TEENS Michael standing idle without an umbrella. If he is crying, the rain is hiding it well.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
So good and evil.

Simon stands just to the side of him with the same demeanor.

The coffin continues to slowly be lowered into the ground as Mrs. Shaffer begins to stare at the men who have gathered to pay their respects.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
So absolutely dead-

None of them can look her in the eye.

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Or alive-

Several SURGEON's stand around Michael doing what they do best. We hear the steady beat of an EKG and respirator between the sounds of surgery jargon.

INT. SMALL CEMETERY - FLASHBACK - LATER

The Coffin has been lowered and the mourners begin to disband.

One of the men nods in Michael's direction.

Michael nods back.

Mrs. Shaffer sees this and stares at the man who nodded to her son. He nods to her. Mrs. Shaffer turns away with no response and she and Ashley begin walking back towards their car.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Life wasn't always about reasons
for actions.

Michael and Simon follow, with Simon's hand on Michael's shoulder.

EXT. LIMO - CONTINUOUS

Vince opens the door for Mrs. Shaffer and Ashley. They get in, Michael begins to, but Simon offers his hand.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Reason's for reactions.

Michael shakes it and Simon closes his other hand around Michael's. Something is being passed from Simon to Michael.

SIMON
(quiet)
Revenge.

Michael nods, pockets Simon's gift out of sight of Mrs. Shaffer, and climbs inside. Simon closes the door.

I/E. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel begins removing various skin deep bandages and looking at what lies beneath in the mirror; bandaged new wounds next to the uncovered scars of old ones.

Ashley sits in the hallway on the floor.

EXT. OUTDOOR FAST FOOD CHAIN - FLASHBACK - DAYS LATER

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Reason's for consequences.

We walk behind an Early Teens Michael as he approaches TWO IDENTICALLY DRESSED MEN. Simon appears alongside Michael with his hand on his shoulder.

Vince hangs back in the background, leaning against the car.

SIMON

Gentlemen.

The Two Men continue to eat their food, their faces hidden from view. We only discern MAN 1, a WHITE MAN'S HAND with a TATTOO of "ONE" on his trigger finger, belonging to the man on the left, and MAN 2, a BLACK MAN'S HAND with a TATTOO of "TWO" on his trigger finger, belonging to the man the right.

SIMON

This is Michael.

(beat)

He would like to square blood.

The Two Men continue to eat. The Black Man pulls up a chair, the White Man slides over some french fries.

I/E. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Ashley sits on the floor outside the bathroom.

She stares at the broken tile beneath Russel's feet, the aftermath in the hallway from the fight.

ASHLEY

It was about choices.

EXT. OUTDOOR FAST FOOD CHAIN - FLASHBACK - LATER

ASHLEY (V.O.)

It was about choosing what you had to do today, to stay the same person on the inside tomorrow.

Michael slams into a dumpster. The Two Men are roughing him up. Michael is balling himself up, protecting himself. We see fear turning into anger until it clicks, he stops being afraid and starts fighting back.

INT. MICHAEL'S HOSPITAL ROOM - PRESENT - LATER

We see Michael's trigger finger with a device to take his pulse on the end, and once again, his tattoo of "THREE."

INT. SIMON'S FATHER'S OFFICE - FLASHBACK - LATER

The decor is pristine. Old school. Befitting of one of the most feared men in the underworld.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
But somewhere along the way.

MR. SHAH, ELDERLY, sits behind a large desk with men all around him, looking as though they are about to go to war.

SIMON, YOUNGER, stands timid away from him.

Everyone exits revealing Michael sitting on the couch watching these nicely dressed men with bulletproof vests and guns file out of the room.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
The only thing that was clear, was that gray is not good enough.

Simon approaches Michael.

SIMON
How was school?

MICHAEL
Fine.

SIMON
And after?

MICHAEL
Good.

SIMON
Good.

I/E. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel leans in the doorway, also taking in the aftermath.

ASHLEY
Saints become sinners.

She looks up at him, and then back to nothing in particular.

ASHLEY
And life becomes a simple cycle.

INT. SHAFFER RESIDENCE - FLASHBACK - LATER

Michael, A FEW YEARS OLDER than at the funeral, now enters the house dressed somewhere between his old self and the other men in Simon's presence.

ASHLEY (V.O.)

A cycle of reasons.

Ashley, AGE APPROPRIATE, sits in the living room doing homework, watching TV.

MICHAEL

Is mom here?

ASHLEY

No, she said she'd be late. The hospital was keeping her for another shift. Sarah called in sick.

MICHAEL

Put this in her purse with the rest of her money after she's gone to bed. Keep this for yourself.

Michael pulls out a small wad of cash and divides it.

Ashley on closer inspection notices a bruise forming on Michael's eye.

Beat.

ASHLEY

I know what daddy did, Michael, what you're doing. Mommy doesn't think I do, but I do. And I know-

Beat.

MICHAEL

You know why dad's gone?

Ashley nods.

MICHAEL

Then you know what I have to do.

She slowly turns back to her homework.

Michael kisses Ashley on the forehead and then heads back out.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
Reasons for dad's death.

INT. MICHAEL'S HALLWAY - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Ashley quickly wipes away any tears that start to fall.
Russel still stands in the doorway.

ASHLEY
A reason for mom's.

INT. SHAFFER RESIDENCE - FLASHBACK - LATER

Ashley, YEARS LATER, age appropriate, sits huddled up on the couch watching TV in the same fashion as earlier, it's late.

ASHLEY (V.O.)
A reason for Michael's.

Michael stumbles in the doorway, Ashley, runs up to him.

Michael is grimacing through INCREDIBLE pain. His entire shirt sleeve is soaked with blood.

As she tries to assess the wound, she pulls over a PRE-MED COLLEGE TEXT BOOK and a SMALL KIT.

A PIECE OF PAPER FALLS.

Michael keeps looking at the wound and trying to keep quiet.

MICHAEL
It's still inside...

Michael can hardly contain the noise. He's been shot in his shoulder.

ASHLEY
I have to put some of this on.

Antiseptic.

ASHLEY
It's going to hurt...more.

Michael has tears in his eyes. He nods. He takes a coaster of cork off the table and puts it in his mouth. He pulls a pillow over his face and goes still.

She eyes the Piece of Paper. "Congratulations on your acceptance into--"

Blood obscures the rest.

She pours.

We see Michael's lungs fill with air-

INT. MICHAEL'S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

ASHLEY

A reason for mine.

For the first time, we see revealing SCARS down Ashley's veins on her wrists.

Russel slowly eases down next to her and hesitates to put his arm around her as she begins silently crying into him.

He finally does, but this is not something he is used to.

ASHLEY

Just promise me.

Russel looks at her.

INT. A TYPICAL HOME IN SUBURBIA - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

SEAN

Promise me you'll look-that you'll
find it...promise me that you'll
find it and run.

Russel stares across the street.

INT. MICHAEL'S UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel stares into space as silent tears fall from her eyes.

ASHLEY

I just want a normal life, a future
away from all of this. Promise me
we'll figure that out. Promise me
we'll find a way out.

Beat.

RUSSEL

I promise.

INT. RUSSEL'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Russel sits on the edge of his bed staring at nothing.

Ashley enters with her own blanket and lays down in a bundle on the far side of the bed.

Russel lays back and turns his gaze to stare out of the window.

She balls up in her blanket, falling still quickly.

We hear what sounds like a VAN pulling up in front of the house outside-

I/E. THE XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANING VAN - FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON

The van pulls up to the spot from before between the houses.

Russel and Sean sit in the front. They are staring in opposite directions. Sean is staring at the CHILDREN filling up their water guns and balloons, Russel at the house across the street from it.

Russel throws the van into park and grabs a duffle bag from behind him and puts it on his lap. He puts on a shoulder holster and begins loading bullets into a clip.

Russel notices the preoccupied Sean.

Sean sighs looking at the Children Playing.

RUSSEL

It's just a snatch and grab, Sean,
don't over-think it.

Beat.

SEAN

Nah, I was just-do you remember
that guy Dean?

RUSSEL

Yeah the guy who buys a new pair of
shoes for every job?

Sean lets out a small laugh.

SEAN

Yeah that guy's kinda weird, I'm
not gonna lie.

Sean seems to drift into deep thought.

An impromptu water gun fight starts with the children. They begin shooting each other and pretending to die until there is only one still standing; The king of the hill.

RUSSEL

So what about him?

SEAN

Well we had this bonus gig out here a few months back. We were supposed to rough up this guy's kid, you know. Witness protection plan ID's sold to the highest bidder. Pretty standard stuff. Anyway, we were supposed to put him in the hospital. Draw his dad out. Put his dad in the ground. Everyone else walks away the same way they walked in.

The kids all get up, reload their water guns and get ready to go again.

SEAN

I mean you know me. I'm not a, I don't like sending people to the All Mighty for no reason, but I gotta-I draw the line at defending myself like everyone else still standing. When it's us or them, it's us 100%, you know? I just create the opportunities for people to do what they do best. I'm really just a kind of...professional facilitator at heart.

Russel keeps loading, mouthing "professional" with a sense of humor.

Russel looks in his side mirror. In it we see a GROUP OF people at what looks like an impromptu block party about a dozen houses back.

Sean keeps watching the kids.

SEAN

So we followed this kid to some graduation party, watched him get into a car drunk with his buddies, and wrap it around a telephone pole. The kid put *himself* in the hospital.

RUSSEL

Then that's fate.

SEAN

I don't know, maybe it was, is, but you know how Shah Senior is man. He wants verification of everything. Pictures, jewelry, thumbs, he's such a cliché. Simon's a little more, relaxed, contemporary, but his father is very, very old school. So-so I walk up to the car, and the kid's...mangled. How he's still alive and in what state, I can't even describe.

A slightly older group of kids runs up and ambushes the younger kids with more powerful water guns. It's a slaughter.

SEAN

And I see this guy that shouldn't be alive at all in the backseat. And he looks up at me with these, with these eyes and he says right to me, "I'm not supposed to be here."

Russel slows his loading for a second before continuing at a slower pace.

SEAN

It was like he was waiting for me to hear that before he could just let go, and ever since then I can't help but feel like that moment was supposed to happen for the both of us. A message from beyond or something. And as I'm walking back to the car, all I can think about is that guy was me, Rusty. He didn't sign up for that. I didn't sign up for this. We're just products of circumstance. And then I start thinkin, well, when does it all stop? Does it all stop? I mean, I'm not looking to retire on some beach somewhere, some cinematic cliché, but I mean is this it? We climb the "corporate ladder" until we're behind a desk like a Shah or Ramirez?

Sean turns back towards Russel, gestures to the bag, them, the van, everything.

SEAN

Is this our life until that day?

RUSSEL

I think you know the answer to that, Sean.

SEAN

Yeah I do, I do.

(beat)

That's why I'm saying, just hear this guy out. I'll set up a meeting, no pressure. What's the worst that could happen?

Brief pause.

RUSSEL

If you have to ask yourself that, then the worst is far worse than you can imagine.

Russel slams the clip into the gun and hands it to Sean.

INT. RUSSEL'S BEDROOM - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel sighs before closing his eyes.

INT. ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - MONTHS LATER - VERY, EARLY MORNING

The sound of RAIN outside fills the room.

We can only see Ashley and the door to her bedroom on the back wall.

Russel softly sits up into view behind her, and climbs out of bed, tucking her back in. We notice his broken finger has healed.

He quietly exits.

When the door closes, Ashley's eyes open.

She rolls over and rubs her hand gently over the empty side of the bed.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel enters slowly and quietly preoccupied.

He catches a glimpse of all the various PHOTOGRAPHS in the room of Michael, himself, and Ashley, and their families growing up.

WE SEE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THEIR ENTIRE FAMILY HISTORY:

We see Michael and Russel as kids with their full nuclear families.

We eventually see only Russel in pictures with Michael and Ashley's family.

We see a series of pictures where Michael's dad is gone and it is just the three of them and Michael's mother.

We see just Michael, Ashley, and their mother.

We see only Ashley and Mrs. Shaffer.

We see individual pictures of Ashley and Michael.

We see pictures of Russel, Ashley, and various candid shots of Michael unaware of the camera's presence.

Finally, we see very recent pictures of Russel and Ashley with individuals of Michael.

Russel and Michael both reveal the healing process of that night.

Ashley looks as though she's gotten a glimpse of a normal life.

Russel looks down at his hand looking at various scars.

Quietly, a door in the corner shuts. Russel looks to see who it is.

Ashley.

Beat.

ASHLEY
You couldn't sleep?

Russel shakes his head, closes his eyes.

RUSSEL
I just keep seeing his face, his eyes.

FLASH - Sean smiling ear to ear, talking to the Girls from the Juice Bar.

RUSSEL

I keep seeing myself trying to keep
the life from pouring out of his
body, but-

FLASH - Russel's hand on Sean's chest with red surrounding
it.

ASHLEY

Shh.

She hugs him from behind.

They have a moment before Russel opens his eyes.

Russel then moves gently out of her embrace and wonders to
the pool table. He sighs dejectedly.

RUSSEL

And any day now, Simon is going to
give me and Michael a call. And
we're just going hop right back
into it like puppets.

ASHLEY

It's OK, Russel. I'm with you
either way.

RUSSEL

That's my point, Ashley. I-Sean
meant everything to me. We looked
after each other, we were like
brothers. We kept each other going.
Sean was my best friend, that one
person per life you're allowed to
trust unconditionally, and I let
him down.

Ashley slowly turns Russel towards her and she leans in
close.

Russel brushes the hair from her face.

RUSSEL

I could never let that happen to
you, I just-

Ashley puts a finger over his lips as they lean in to kiss.

The door Ashley came in opens nonchalantly and Michael walks
in.

Ashley and Russel quickly separate and Russel begins pretending as though he's been teaching Ashley how to play pool.

RUSSEL
And so when you're playing, uh-

ASHLEY
Pool-

RUSSEL
Pool it's uh, it's all about basic geometry.

ASHLEY
Geometry huh?

RUSSEL
Geometry and then just being able to sort of uh, visualize your next best move-

Beat.

MICHAEL
What the hell are you two doing up so early?

RUSSEL
I couldn't sleep so I-

ASHLEY
He promised me he'd, so I-

Michael pauses reading the situation.

MICHAEL
We got the call.

Ashley looks at Russel who stares at Michael.

Awkward silence.

Michael looks at the two of them for a moment and leaves.

ASHLEY
(playful)
You haven't told him yet?

RUSSEL
I'll tell him.

ASHLEY

When? When he has nieces and nephews?

RUSSEL

I'll tell him.

ASHLEY

Russel its been months! Almost a year! That's what you *always* say.

RUSSEL

And every time I go to tell him he has a gun in his hand.

ASHLEY

You think he'd actually shoot you?

RUSSEL

I'm not worried about him shooting me, it's-it's how many times and where.

ASHLEY

And what about just now?

RUSSEL

Have you ever been hit by a cue ball? They hurt like hell.

ASHLEY

Russel.

RUSSEL

I will.

ASHLEY

Russel.

RUSSEL

I said *I will.*

ASHLEY

You better.

Ashley turns to leave and looks at him one more time before she leaves.

ASHLEY

(mouths)

You better.

RUSSEL
(mouths back)
I will.

She leaves.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Michael and Russel hop inside.

Michael leans in to start it, but pauses for a brief second, leans back, and looks at Russel.

MICHAEL
You're not messing around with my
sister are you?

RUSSEL
What? No, what makes you-no, NO,
she's like my sister, man.

MICHAEL
Don't lie to me, Rusty.

RUSSEL
Hey, scouts honor.

MICHAEL
(under breath)
Ain't no boy scout.

Russel turns towards him, he didn't quite catch that.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
Cause if you are, Russel, I swear
to God I'll-

Russel stares at Michael, overplaying the "I-don't-know-what-you're-talking-about" look.

MICHAEL
Alright. Alright. Don't let me
catch ya, alright? Don't let me
catch ya.

Michael starts the car.

RUSSEL
(under breath)
Then you won't catch us.

Michael didn't quite catch that either.

EXT. SIMON'S DRIVEWAY - LATER

Simon's driveway is a long, winding, unpaved, but worn path through a heavily wooded area.

No one drives back here by accident.

Russel and Michael pull to the end of it, into a clearing where a dozen or so other assorted vehicles are parked, abandoned or scattered about.

They get out of the truck and begin walking through the sea of cars towards the front porch of a large, ranch house seemingly in the middle of nowhere.

EXT. SIMON'S PORCH - MOMENTS LATER

EVAN, late twenties, KOREAN, sits smoking a CIGARETTE, leaning forward on the railing of the porch. He has a MINI-CACHE OF KNIVES and a SNIPER RIFLE setup beside him.

When Russel and Michael climb the stairs, Evan suddenly reaches for his knives and begins to draw on the two of them.

Before he can take them out of their sheathes, he has one gun pointed in his eye, courtesy of Michael, and another two pointed between his legs, a gift from both of them.

EVAN

It's been a while. He just wanted to make sure.

Beat.

Everyone stands down.

Michael opens the door and walks in.

Russel shakes his head as he walks past Evan.

RUSSEL

The disrespect.

Evan smiles.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - MOMENTS LATER

As Russel and Michael enter, everyone seems to take notice. It's as if two star players of a team have come back off the injury list.

As they snake through the house, everyone throws them a nod or some other positive gesture, one word greetings, etc.

There are a lot of new, younger faces to Russel and Michael, but everyone has at least heard of them.

Russel and Michael acknowledge these people, but it's obvious that these aren't their friends. They're just the people they work with. To the rookies, it's still cool, new. Gunplay earns them more money than they ever could accomplish doing anything honest at this age.

To Russel and Michael, it's a one way trip through quicksand into hell.

Russel scans each room he walks past until suddenly he sees two young boys that look a lot like a younger him and Sean, but when he looks again, they are gone.

The deeper they go into the house, the dimmer the lights seem to become, and the quieter it seems to get.

Finally, they reach a door in the back and pause momentarily.

Upon opening the door, it leads down into the basement hallway from before.

Michael descends the staircase without hesitation, Russel pauses for a brief second, then follows.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Russel and Michael enter.

The room is a complete departure from it's makeshift decor from before.

It's very clean and polished, worthy of the beginning of a man's rise to power.

Vince is standing behind Simon at his desk. He's already watching their every move.

Simon finishes a phone call as he stares intently at a laptop screen. He notices the two men entering and double takes them.

Although as reserved, relaxed, and serene as before, he is happy to see them, in his own way. He hangs up.

SIMON

Gentlemen, welcome back. I trust your time off did you well, honed your skills and uh, freed your minds?

Russel and Michael sit before him.

Michael is all business.

Russel seems to be preoccupied with his last visit.

Michael shrugs in response to Simon.

Simon turns his attention back to his laptop.

SIMON

And you, Russel, how is Sean?

Russel nonchalantly reaches for his gun, Vince sees this, but there's no real reaction.

Michael follows Vince's eye line, notices, and nudges Russel's foot underneath the desk, out of sight of Vince and Simon.

Russel looks at Michael who gestures back to Vince. Russel removes his hand.

SIMON

Oh yes-

Simon leans back in his chair, having missed this entire exchange.

SIMON (CONT'D)

I almost forgot.

Simon closes the laptop, gives an approving gesture to Vince, and leans back in his chair.

Vince collects the laptop.

Simon stares at the two men. Time off has been too long. He ponders their loyalty if only for a brief moment, then moves on.

SIMON

Anyway, enough with the small talk. It's time for the matter of our, business.

Simon motions for Vince to give them some room. Vince goes to sit on the couch.

Simon reaches into his desk and removes a manila envelope and tosses it on the desk towards them.

Michael reaches for it.

Simon stands, takes an already poured drink into his hands, and begins circling the two of them like a vulture.

SIMON

Since you two have been gone, news of a certain, Pandora's Box has been circulating amongst us underground businessmen.

Michael opens the envelop revealing highlighted routes on MAPS and various PHOTOGRAPHS of different individuals carrying a metal BRIEFCASE, all dating back several years.

SIMON (CONT'D)

No one knows what's inside the box. Nothing, supernatural I presume, just something everyone is willing to sell, pay, or die for.

A highlighted picture shows the Latin Girl, NATALIE, early 20s, sitting on the front steps of the house in suburbia, smoking. In subsequent photos, the door is open, and we see her FATHER, RAMIREZ, receiving the briefcase from his son, CRISTOBAL.

Cristobal and Ramirez look very close in contrast to our impressions of Simon and his father from before.

Russel eyes the envelope and soaks in Simon's new office.

SIMON (CONT'D)

So naturally, I'd like to become a member of this elite. Wouldn't you?

Simon finds his drink empty and moves to refill it.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Several weeks ago, we managed to locate it, and paid a hefty sum for it's time in our possession.

Russel and Simon make eye contact. Russel with a less than friendly expression, Simon with a bit of a smirk.

Simon takes a sip of his drink.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Tonight, three men were supposed to bring it to my doorstep.

Simon leans on the top of his chair and turns to Michael.

SIMON (CONT'D)
(where are they in a word)
Why?

Russel sighs, looks at Michael, and the two of them stand and begin heading for the door.

SIMON
You have exactly 24 hours before I
presume the two of you have found
it-

Michael and Russel stop and turn.

SIMON (CONT'D)
And have made your own plans.

Michael turns to Russel and leaves. Russel looks at the ground and follows.

Simon and Vince exchange a look.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - JUST BEFORE DAWN - LATER

Michael drives with the map on his lap, dome light on, while Russel stares out of the window.

Nothing but the sound of the truck and slight static from the radio can be heard.

INT. THE XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANING VAN - FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON

Russel stares outside of the window towards Natalie's house.

We hear VOICES over slight radio static.

Russel begins adjusting it for clarity.

NATALIE (O.S.)
Can I get you anything?

SEAN (O.S.)
Uh, sure.

INT. A TYPICAL HOME IN SUBURBIA - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

Sean leans against the kitchen counter, soaking in his surroundings.

Behind him on a doorknob hang some clothes professionally wrapped in plastic. In front of him, a clipboard with sign-up materials.

It's what you'd expect from the inside of a home in the suburbs; cozy with a collection of items from one decade to the next.

Natalie retrieves a couple of sodas from the fridge, slides one to Sean, and takes the other for herself.

SEAN

It's a nice place you've got here.

NATALIE

Yeah well-

She shrugs and begins sifting through the day's mail.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

It's temporary.

Sean nods approvingly while sipping his soda.

SEAN

So um, did you say your father was home? We have him down as "interested" in signing up.

Sean gestures to the clothes behind him.

NATALIE

Why? You're not gonna try to kiss me are you?

Sean is knocked completely off guard.

SEAN

Oh, no, no. I uh-I mean, I'm working so...you know and when I'm on the job I tend to-all focus no, none of that-no. Not that I think that you're not worth my uh, it's just that I really just-

Sean notices her half paying attention, still sifting through the mail. He also notices her revealing outfit.

SEAN

No, I just wanted to run through the uh, the-

Sean motions to the clipboard, trying to focus.

She looks up.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You know, the checklist of things,
we're supposed to ask for things,
write things down.

She nods, waiting for him to finish.

SEAN (CONT'D)
See if he'd be interested in, in
signing up long-term. In, in
joining. 5-10 minutes of his time
tops.

INT. THE XTRATOUCH DRY CLEANING VAN - CONTINUOUS

Russel shakes his head and rolls his eyes.

He speaks into his radio.

RUSSEL
Smooth as Sandpaper, Sean.

INT. A TYPICAL HOME IN SUBURBIA - CONTINUOUS

RUSSEL (O.S.)
(via radio)
Smooth as sandpaper.

She drinks with a smile on her face, letting an uncomfortable
silence build. She leans forward.

NATALIE
I know why you're here.

Short pause.

SEAN
I'm sorry what was that?

NATALIE
I know what my father and brother
do for a living. They've never kept
that from me.

RUSSEL (O.S.)
Stay cool, Sean. See where this is
going.

SEAN

Sorry, I-I still don't think-I'm not sure that I follow-

NATALIE

You've come here, very poorly, to do one of two things: You've either come to kill me-

She gestures to Sean's not so hidden gun. He adjusts his uniform to conceal it.

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Or, you've come to take me as some sort of bargaining chip in this war they're involved in for my father's brand new briefcase-

RUSSEL (O.S.)

Alright, drop the cover, play the game.

SEAN

Look, girly, I'm a lover, not a fighter. If you cooperate with us-

Sean slowly starts to close the gap between them.

SEAN (CONT'D)

When this is all over with, I promise you, you'll walk away from this, the same way you walked in.

She slowly sets down her drink and walks towards the cabinets away from the counter.

From behind, she seems as though she is starting to become emotional, soft. From the front, she's about to be underestimated.

NATALIE

Every single day since you and the brotherhood of rejects took my mother in a hail of crossfire-

SEAN

Look-

NATALIE (CONT'D)

Every *single* day, I have to live with this unconditional fear, this anxiety, this-this overwhelming feeling that one day, one of my father's less than honorable enemies will kick in my door and-

SEAN

Look, you have *my* word.

Sean continues to approach her.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You won't be touched.

She sighs and nods.

As soon as Sean reaches her and gently moves to rest his hands on her shoulders, to comfort her, she turns and STRIKES him in the throat, KICKS him in the knee, dropping him down to the other, and spins, kicking him in the face, sending him down and sliding across the ground on his back.

She quickly finds his gun, and chambers the bullet.

EXT. A TYPICAL HOME IN SUBURBIA - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

Russel is full sprinting towards the front of the house as he looks up and down the street. The van's engine is running, the doors wide open. He gets up to the door, kicks it open breaking the lock and-

EXT. BACK ROAD - PRESENT - JUST BEFORE DAWN - LATER

Michael's truck skids to a stop past the turn he intended to make. He throws it into reverse and turns down the road, slowing to a stop just after the intersection.

His headlights reveal a CAR with a lot of bullet holes, broken glass, and various damage a short distance away from a set of criss-crossing tire tracks, indicating it ghosted off the road after the attack, and the owners of the tire tracks screeched to a stop to circle back.

It's been raining, but it's stopped.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Russel sits up stretching and looking straight ahead.

Michael sighs and chambers a bullet into his gun.

Russel follows suit, and the two of them hop out of the truck and head for the car.

EXT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael turns his bright lights on and turns off the engine.

Russel and Michael walk as shadows in the light.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Michael walks past the car looking for signs of something ahead of it.

Russel nudges the driver side door open and takes a look inside. It's empty, but he finds a couple of expended bullet shells on the passenger seat, and bullet-shredded maps and photographs like the package they got from Simon.

He starts going through the glove compartment.

Michael kneels down taking a closer look around outside of the car. He sees what looks like car tracks until the tire tracks criss-cross.

He has a theory.

Searching the side of the road, he finds a few expended bullet shells himself amongst shards of glass and car fragments.

He begins making his way closer to the car. He opens the passenger side door and leans in as Russel is still going through the glove compartment.

We see two concentrated holes in the glass each with a straight path into the headrests and through the back windshields.

MICHAEL

So?

Russel leans back in the seat, sifting through bullet-shredded materials, and starts to speak when-

They both hear an ERRATIC THUMPING coming from the trunk. They look at each other and walk around towards it. They both draw guns, and aim at the trunk.

MICHAEL
Who's turn is it?

Russel thinks a moment, motioning back and forth between him and Michael in an inaudible count.

RUSSEL
I think it's yours.

MICHAEL
Did you count that one time at the-

RUSSEL
You're counting that?

MICHAEL
Yes.

RUSSEL
Why?

MICHAEL
Because it was dangerous.

RUSSEL
I don't like the way you tally.

MICHAEL
Then take it up with Barbara in HR.

Russel gives Michael a look.

Michael just looks at Russel dryly with his eyes and stands back a little bit further and to the side, aiming from "safer" angle.

Russel shakes his head.

The Erratic Thumping continues.

Russel shoots the latch on the trunk and it flies open.

I/E. TRUNK - CONTINUOUS

The CARRIER, a badly bruised individual with HALF A HANDCUFF still connected to his WRIST, is trying to keep the light out of his eyes.

He nearly has a panic attack and tries to jump out of the trunk, attack Russel, and cower at the same time.

RUSSEL

Whoa, whoa, whoa, buddy, the lesser
of two evils is here.

The Carrier stops and takes a look at the both of them. He calms down a bit and lays there staring at the sky.

MICHAEL

What happened?

The Carrier swallows hard and takes a momentary sigh of relief.

Russel and Michael both help him out of the trunk, close it, and lean him against it.

The Carrier sighs.

CARRIER

Two men-

We can hear the FAINT SOUNDS of TWO TWIN RACING MOTORCYCLES increasing in the background.

CARRIER (CONT'D)

Two...very...good...men.

The SOUNDS of the TWIN MOTORCYCLES INCREASE to a deafening level and BRIGHT HEADLIGHTS consume the three.

EXT. BACK ROAD - FLASHBACK - NIGHT

The Two Motorcycles zip past the car at break neck speeds.

It's raining.

INT. THE CARRIER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The Carrier in the back seat leans forward to take a look.

He sees the Motorcycles up ahead. Fear sweeps over him.

The Bodyguard in the passenger seat begins to fold up his map.

EXT. BACK ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The Twin Motorcycles turn around and slowly stop at a distance. REVVING their engines, simultaneously.

They both reach into a compartment on their bikes, and throw out a series of TINY SPIKED METAL BALLS.

INT. THE CARRIER'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The occupants begin slowing the car down.

Bodyguard 1 looks at Bodyguard 2. They're both very scared.

They both pull out guns, chamber bullets, roll down their windows, and swallow hard.

The car comes to a stop, and they REV their engine.

EXT. BACK ROAD - CONTINUOUS

The Two Twin Motorcyclists look at each other, and then back to the car revving their own engines simultaneously with one another. They turn off their headlights.

We see two quick gun muzzle flashes from the cyclists that shatter the headlights on the car.

We then hear the sound of NIGHT VISION being turned on like the sound of a vintage camera flash recharging.

EXT. BACK ROAD - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

Michael looks at Russel who is staring at the Carrier intently.

EXT. BACK ROAD - FLASHBACK - CONTINUOUS

The Car peels out driving towards the darkness. We hear the sounds of the Motorcycles growing louder, faster, louder, and faster.

Suddenly, there is a hail of gun fire exchanged from both sides.

The Motorcyclists' position is given away only because of the shots from each gun's muzzle flare, causing a line of damage through the front and rear windshields, and head rests.

The Two Motorcyclists zigzag past and the Bodyguards in the front seats go limp.

The Car ghosts to a stop off to the side of the road and we hear the Motorcycles screech to a stop themselves.

Their night vision goes off as their headlights come on.

The Carrier falls out of the back seat of the car and begins crawling away. He is nearly untouched, just in shock.

One of the Twins steps on the case, the other on his hand, handcuffed to the case.

A single shot breaks the link between the two. One of the Men begins walking with the case back to his Motorcycle. The other, lifts the Carrier by his shirt and headbutts him, knocking him out.

EXT. BACK ROAD - PRESENT - CONTINUOUS

The Carrier gently touches the knot on his head.

Russel looks at Michael. Michael motions for them to talk privately.

Russel begins walking towards Michael's truck.

Michael looks the Carrier stern in the eye before turning towards the truck.

He and Russel walk.

MICHAEL

Boom Boom Men?

RUSSEL

If they're still in the business.

MICHAEL

They're the only two men capable of knowing where that case was going, throwing up a giant middle finger, and taking it anyway.

RUSSEL

Yeah, but they're for hire-

MICHAEL

And to the highest bidder, which means we have 24 hours to find out who closed the bid. So after we drop him back off at Simon's-

RUSSEL

Whoa, whoa, whoa, Michael-

Russel eyes the Carrier.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

You know as well as I do that when Simon finds out he lost the case, he'll kill him on the spot.

MICHAEL

And you know as well as I do that it's him or us. Look, Rusty, there are no good deeds amongst demons. I know we've been out of this thing for a while, but that's not the kind of thing you want to forget.

RUSSEL

I know.

Michael makes Russel look him in the eye.

RUSSEL

I *know!*

MICHAEL

So what's it gonna be?

RUSSEL

Michael, I-I can't just keep-I can't just keep sacrificing people like they're some sort of pawns in a game-

Michael starts to walk towards the Carrier with ill intent in his step.

Russel stops him.

MICHAEL

Russel, we *can't*.

RUSSEL

No, *you can't*.

Russel begins walking back towards the Carrier.

Michael sighs, letting anger just beneath the surface reside. He walks back towards his truck, and leans against it for a brief moment.

MICHAEL

Rusty, you're about to make another promise you can't keep.

When Russel reaches the Carrier, he hesitates to say what he wants to, then begins.

CARRIER
What's going on?

RUSSEL
You know if you go back to Simon
he'll kill you.

CARRIER
That is if men haven't already been
sent out.

RUSSEL
You OK otherwise?

CARRIER
Otherwise.

RUSSEL
Then you'll drive. You'll drive to
forever. I promise you-

Russel looks over his shoulder at Michael, arms crossed,
watching from a distance, out of ear shot.

RUSSEL
(softer than before)
I promise you that if you aren't
dead in 48 hours, dying by your own
hands will be your only worry.

CARRIER
But, but the only way that's a
possibility is if Simon is...dear,
God, what are you about to do-

RUSSEL
You let me worry about that. Go,
just take my gun and go.

CARRIER
But Simon...he's the son
of...there's no way he'll just let
this-

RUSSEL
Go, just go.

The Carrier takes Russel's gun and looks into his eyes for a
moment. Russel offers him a few clips, he takes them, and
gets into his car.

Russel hits the trunk a couple of times to signal the Carrier
to drive off. He does.

Russel walks back to Michael, leans next to him, and reflects on a job well done.

MICHAEL

Simon catches him, makes him talk,
we're gonna pay for that.

The Carrier's car starts to disappear over a curving hill on the horizon.

RUSSEL

He won't catch him.

MICHAEL

Yeah, and what makes you so sure?

RUSSEL

Trust me.

The Carrier comes to a dead end, the spikes from the Twin Motorcyclists. He begins to make a tedious u-turn.

Michael shrugs it off and Russel starts making his way back to the passenger side of the truck.

Michael stares down the road at the Carrier's u-turn.

RUSSEL

You wanna get something to eat?

MICHAEL

How can you think about eating at a
time like this?

RUSSEL

Cause the sun's about to come up
and I'm a hungry man that's why.
Plus, now we have to go see the
Boom Boom men, and they *always*
wanna fight. Plus you know me, I'm
no good to you on an empty stomach.
It'll start growling and give our
position away-

MICHAEL

You're unbelievable.

The Carrier finishes his turn and begins driving back towards the two of them.

RUSSEL

Come on, "Mikey," where's your
sense of humor?

MICHAEL
It's out of the way so we can do
this.

RUSSEL
You keep telling yourself that.

MICHAEL
I will.

RUSSEL
So?

Michael turns his attention away from the road, and subtly
draws his gun.

MICHAEL
Alright, call Ashley, swing by the
house, get something to eat, find
me.

RUSSEL
Alright.

Michael starts to get in his truck when he sees Russel trying
to open the locked door.

Russel tries again, and then throws Michael a look.

MICHAEL
Something wrong?

RUSSEL
Aren't you going to drop me off?

Just as the Carrier's car pulls past, Michael without looking
or thinking shoots into the driver's side window, into the
head of the Carrier causing the car to ghost to an uneasy
stop.

Russel staggers backward to the ground in shock, his breath
is gone. He cannot believe what just happened.

MICHAEL
Russel, get it through your head.
For the next 24 hours, we're the
only two men we can trust. Don't
forget that.

Michael hops in his truck and starts it.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)
That's, what's going to keep us
alive.

Michael turns the truck around and leaves.

Russel stares for a good moment at the Carrier's car, gets up, and then starts walking towards it.

INT. ASHLEY'S BEDROOM - LATER

Russel walks in slowly and Ashley is stirring in bed as if he's disturbed her from a perfect sleep. He sits down on the edge of it.

Long pause.

RUSSEL
Where's the case?

She is absolutely still.

ASHLEY
Here, where we left it, what's wrong?

RUSSEL
Michael's going to see the Boom Boom Men.

Ashley sits up.

ASHLEY
Rusty, that's great. They'll tell him everything and when he comes back we'll all walk away the same way we walked in, just like we planned-

Russel stands up and walks to a dresser with a mirror on it and turns on a light. He stares at his own reflection.

ASHLEY
Rusty?

He continues to stare until he can no longer look himself in the eye.

RUSSEL
I tried to let somebody walk away from me tonight.

ASHLEY
(beat)
And?

RUSSEL

I gave him my word...and then
Michael killed him.

Russel begins taking his gun apart.

ASHLEY

Rusty, you've known ever since the
first day you met me and Michael
that he does everything he commits
to, impossibly well and-

RUSSEL

Yeah, but I knew it was the right
thing to do.

(beat)

I had to-I had to let him try, I
had to-

(beat)

I knew that when I told him he was
free that it was a lie.

(beat)

Once you go under, there's no
coming back.

He starts walking back towards the bed while taking off his
shoulder holster.

He sits on the bed next to her and begins fiddling with the
holster idly in his hands.

RUSSEL

If I give Simon back the case now,
there's a chance he knows nothing
and we can run tomorrow.

ASHLEY

And if he knows?

RUSSEL

Then blood is squared. You and
Michael are out and you guys can go
back to the way things were.
Simon's moving on after tomorrow
night. Shah is stepping down,
minimizing his role. Out here, this
ends one way or the other.

ASHLEY

Russel please, I can't-don't do
this-

RUSSEL

Ashley, if Simon doesn't get that case back, there's no chance of running for anybody. And if the only gun I'm supposed to trust is afraid of him, then where does that leave me?

(beat)

Us?

Ashley doesn't know how to answer.

Russel tosses the holster aside, stands, and heads for the door.

RUSSEL

We're not gonna make it.

ASHLEY

Yes we are.

RUSSEL

(quieter)

Not all of us.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Russel walks in and drops down to a roll underneath the Pool Table.

A few strokes on the keypad opens up a compartment where the case is mounted.

The basement door slowly opens and closes.

Russel pauses, sighs, dismounts the case, and begins to climb out from beneath the table.

Suddenly, Vince pulls Russel from beneath the table by his shirt, slams his face into the case, and tosses him aside.

He then picks up the case, and begins walking nonchalantly towards the door.

When Vince gets to the door, Russel isn't quite finished. He's pulling himself off the ground by the edge of the pool table, but barely.

Vince glances in Russel's general direction, nursing his newly split eyebrow. Vince returns his eyes forward, sighs, puts down the case, unbuttons his suit jacket, and turns back towards Russel.

Russel, slightly disoriented, throws a few more blind punches.

Vince brushes them aside and gives a stiff kick to Russel sending him back down to the ground and sliding into the wall, knocking down a few of the photographs, shattering the glass in the frames.

Vince turns, walks to the door, and picks up the case. As he reaches for the doorknob again-

Russel stands up shakily, using the wall for support.

Vince puts the case down, turns and stalks towards Russel. Smirking now.

Russel again throws a futile combination.

Vince catches a punch, spins Russel around, and kicks him in the face, nearly taking him off his feet, and down for the third and final time.

Vince stares at the body, making sure it's not getting back up.

Suddenly, Ashley comes in through the door and before she even has a good look at the situation, Vince grabs her by the hair, brings her face to his knee and brings her back up, out on her feet.

He picks up the case, she falls perfectly over his shoulder, and leaves.

CUT TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. A DESOLATE PARKING DECK - AFTERNOON - LATER

The Deck looks as though it is about to be destroyed to pave the way for something new.

EXT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael pulls into an empty parking spot on the second highest level.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

He checks his watch and sighs.

His cell phone RINGS. He answers.

MICHAEL

Yeah.

SIMON (O.S.)

The clock is ticking against you,
Michael. Your actions are reaching
me far faster than your reports.
Find my case.

Click.

Michael dwells for a brief moment.

In the background, one of the Twin Motorcycles from before
coasts to a stop and comes into focus. Man 1 on the bike
turns his head towards the truck.

EXT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael quickly exits the truck, draws two guns, and
crouches. He moves slowly towards the bed of the truck.

When he goes to peak around the corner, it is into the barrel
of Man 1's gun.

We hear a second chamber of a gun revealing the presence of
Man 2.

Michael spins quickly so that, although he is now on his
back, he has a gun pointing at both of the would be
assailants, pointing back at him.

They both remove their helmets simultaneously with their free
hands.

Man 1 is revealed to be OWEN, late 30s, the white hand.

Man 2 takes off his helmet revealing MARCUS, same age, the
black hand.

Marcus motions for Michael to just put his gun away instead
of giving it to either of them or tossing it aside.

Michael still points.

MICHAEL

Owen, Marcus, we really should stop
meeting under such hostile
circumstances.

MARCUS
Your sister?

MICHAEL
Alive.

OWEN
Then we're even.

MICHAEL
She has nothing to do with us, the
favor still stands.

OWEN
Same old, Michael.

MARCUS
(nostalgic)
If only.

Owen turns slightly in the direction of Marcus.

MARCUS
(to Owen)
He's alone.
(to Michael)
We weren't expecting you or your
tragically optimistic partner until
tomorrow. Why are you here?

OWEN
If we knew you were coming, we'd
have baked a cake.

MICHAEL
I hear you know something about
Pandora's Box. I want to know what
you know.

MARCUS
That comes at a price.

OWEN
How much is that information worth
to you?

Michael shrugs and holsters his guns slowly. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a badly crumpled five and two ones.

MICHAEL
I got sss-

Michael checks for more.

MICHAEL
I got seven dollars-

OWEN
(to Michael)
Seven...dollars?

Owen gestures in comical disbelief towards Marcus.

Marcus smiles.

OWEN
(to Marcus)
I always loved his wonderful sense
of humor.

MARCUS
I'd say that's a solid dollar menu
find at most chains. Perhaps even
enough Taco Bell to satisfy hunger,
but-

MICHAEL
But-

MARCUS
But we'd be willing to fight you
for the difference.

Michael expected this, but that doesn't mean he likes it.

OWEN
One good hit gets an answer to a
question, however-

MARCUS
If we don't feel the hit is worth
the question, you're more than
welcome to keep trying.

OWEN
Do we have a deal?

Michael nods.

Owen and Marcus holster their weapons, and walk with their
backs towards Michael, towards the upper level.

Michael gets up.

EXT. THE UPPER LEVEL OF THE PARKING DECK - MOMENTS LATER

Owen and Marcus have taken off their coats/jackets, guns, and rolled up their sleeves or whatever need be to fight.

Michael approaches them taking the cue and does the same.

Michael and Owen approach the center of the upper level. Marcus crouches, waiting for his turn, watching.

OWEN

FYI, most people don't remember the last thing they ask.

Owen pops his neck.

OWEN

On account of...well...

He gestures to himself.

Marcus smirks.

MICHAEL

What's inside the case?

MARCUS

What...is inside...the case.

Marcus and Owen nod, a worthy question.

MARCUS

Move.

Owen explodes into a fury of kicks and punches. Michael spends most of his time blocking and backing up. For every punch sent towards Owen, it is somehow used regretfully against Michael.

Finally, Michael manages a quick moment of offense and catches a good hit against Owen, staggering him backward.

OWEN

So that's what that feels like. I honestly had forgotten.

MARCUS

You know, I've heard rumors.

OWEN

Better the protege than anyone else.

MICHAEL
The case, what's inside?

OWEN
Don't know, didn't look.
(to Marcus)
Your turn.

Marcus smirks and takes Owen's place. Michael is somewhat out of breath, but gets it together and gets ready.

MICHAEL
Are you two ever gonna leave me
alone?

OWEN
Now he really thinks he is a funny
man.

MARCUS
Yes, he does.

OWEN
Move.

Marcus and Michael begin to fight. Marcus's style is different, but no less fast and intense. But eventually, somehow, Michael finds a way.

MICHAEL
So?

OWEN
Why would you ask a question for
which you already knew the answer?

MICHAEL
I needed the practice.

MARCUS
Anything else?

MICHAEL
The case, where is it?

OWEN
Oh, he's going to love the answer
to this one.

MARCUS
Yes, he is, but that one will cost
him.

Owen and Marcus go to either side of Michael.

OWEN

The key, Michael, is to isolate one of your assailants.

MARCUS

To focus your attention on the one you can beat, so you can then focus on the one who won't stay down.

OWEN

Do you understand?

MICHAEL

Enough with these games.

MARCUS

(offended)

Games?

The two of them attack Michael at once. They are toying with him more than they are attacking him. Nothing is landing. It is more of a dance than anything.

OWEN

Perhaps we should make things a bit more interesting.

MARCUS

By all means.

Owen ducks out of the fight and throws Michael a couple COMBAT KNIVES. They look slightly out of place on Michael, but only because he's out of practice.

He instantly starts swinging away at Marcus.

Marcus dodges every potential strike without physical contact, but barely.

Owen watches from a distance, slowly walking in a semi circle around the two.

Finally, Marcus seems to get slightly worried, or tired of this endless charade, and pulls Michael's guns out of their holsters, and begins blocking the strikes of the knives with the guns.

After a few more moments, he begins trying to shoot at Michael, now striking the guns to change the course of their aim.

Bullets come close to hitting Owen, but he's unflinching.

Finally, Marcus runs out of bullets and Michael throws the knives at him.

Marcus drops to the ground, dodging them, and as he kicks back up to his feet, Michael nails him with a stern spin kick to the chest sending him sliding across the ground on his back.

OWEN

Ouch.

MARCUS

Yes.

MICHAEL

Where?

MARCUS

Your house.

MICHAEL

Bullshit.

OWEN

Isn't it though. He didn't trust us.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael opens the door and hops in. He dials Russel on his cell phone while starting the car.

No answer.

He slams the door. It's unusually LOUD and transitions into-

INT. A TYPICAL HOME IN SUBURBIA - FLASHBACK - AFTERNOON

Russel kicks through the door of the home, gun pointed at Natalie who's gun still points at Sean on the ground, writhing in pain from a fresh gun shot wound to the leg.

Russel walks slowly towards them, down the foyer hallway.

RUSSEL

We were told to bring you in dead or a alive, sweetheart. I have no problem with either. Now, he gave you his word-

Sean looks from Natalie, to Russel, and back to Natalie.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
You won't be touched.

Russel chambers a bullet.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)
But I'll kill you if I have to. Put
the gun down!

NATALIE
You first or he dies.

RUSSEL
What guarantee do I have, that if I
do, he doesn't?

NATALIE
None.

RUSSEL
Then you're gonna to have to
understand why I'm gonna say no.

NATALIE
Fair enough.

Natalie reaches for Sean's hair, pulls him slightly off the
ground by it, and points the gun at the back of his head.

RUSSEL
Alright, alright.

Russel drops the clip out of his gun and puts the gun down on
the ground. He kicks them both into the kitchen by her feet.

NATALIE
Keys.

RUSSEL
You put the gun down, and we'll
make a trade.

NATALIE
I don't think you seem to realize
that I'm the only one holding a gun
here. We don't negotiate, you do as
I say.

Sean and Russel make eye contact. Sean acknowledges.

RUSSEL
Watch the brakes. They're a little
catchy.

NATALIE

Thanks.

Russel throws the keys just out of comfortable reach of Natalie who instinctively moves to catch them.

Sean grabs onto her foot, tripping her off balance.

Russel darts in quickly to make his move.

Natalie just as quickly regains her balance and moves to point the gun at Russel and fire. He barely moves it away from his face while she fires off a few rounds.

He grabs and spins under her gun arm and tries to wrestle it away from her.

With her free hand, she slams a toaster into Russel's head. He staggers back a bit, but still redirects the firing shots from Sean's gun.

Russel manages to drop the clip out of the gun.

Natalie then moves to try and pistol whip Russel. He grabs her arm and uses her momentum to slam her into a nearby wall knocking her out and to the ground.

Russel stands ready for her to get back up, when she doesn't, he bends over letting out a sigh of relief.

RUSSEL

Are you alright?

SEAN

I don't know you should ask the gaping bullet hole in my leg!

RUSSEL

Looks like a gaping graze to me.

SEAN

It still hurts!

RUSSEL

Can you walk?

SEAN

Are you kidding me?

Russel smirks while he collects his gun and clip, holsters, and helps Sean up.

They begin walking towards the front door, resembling the participants of a three-legged race.

RUSSEL
Is this the second or the third
time you've been shot by your own
gun?

SEAN
Don't start-

RUSSEL
Third...fourth-

SEAN
Alright-

RUSSEL
I'm runnin out of fingers on one
hand, Sean. If I move to the other,
you'll fall down-

SEAN
Yeah did you count this one?

Russel looks to the arm over his shoulder flipping him off.

Russel smiles.

RUSSEL
I was just trying to get the bonus.
No need for bloodshed.

SEAN
Ah yes the bonus.

RUSSEL
I could've killed her any time I
wanted to.

SEAN
Oh of course, the bonus.

Russel gives Sean a look.

Natalie's eyes open.

SEAN
Just remember who's going in first
next time. I don't wanna hear any
disputes about it. No rock paper
scissors, no-no whatever. I hate
this tally system. It's your turn.

RUSSEL
Alright.

SEAN
I'm serious.

RUSSEL
I said alright.

Russel trips slightly and makes Sean put weight on his leg.
Sean cries out in comical pain.

RUSSEL
I'm sorry, she must have been
mopping here before we came in-

SEAN
Are you done?

Natalie stands to her feet, and grabs Sean's gun, and slides
in the clip, chambering the last bullet quietly.

Sean and Russel begin to open the front door.

SEAN
Hey do you think I'll get hazard
pay or sick leave out of this?

RUSSEL
Hazard pay for being shot? Who do
you think we work for?

Natalie stands slowly and shakily, but subtly and quietly.

SEAN
Is this the part where you tell me
if you had a nickel for every time
you got shot you'd be a
millionaire?

She begins walking towards them, gun pointed.

RUSSEL
No this is the part where I tell
you if I had a million dollars for
every time I've been shot I'd be a
millionaire.

SEAN
You greedy bastard.

RUSSEL
Being shot hurts, a lot.

SEAN

Oh really, does it?

(beat)

Hold up, I forgot my gun. Hang on,
hang on.

Sean turns around and instantly sees Natalie has them dead to rights.

Silence.

SEAN

Rusty!

Sean pushes Russel behind him, taking Russel's gun-

BANG!

Sean takes the bullet to the chest, and begins falling towards the ground clutching the wound. He hails marries the gun up in the air towards Russel who catches it, and empties every bullet across the room.

When the smoking gun is empty, Russel kneels down next to Sean.

SEAN

Rus, Rusty-

Russel drops the gun, and puts all of his weight on Sean's chest, no effect. Tears quickly well up in Russel's eyes.

SEAN

Listen, listen to me.

Russel is frantically trying to stop the bleeding.

SEAN

Jerrid-Jerrid...it's legit. It's legit.

Russel tries to keep pressure on the wound knowing its not doing a thing. He drags Sean's body into the sitting position from before, and keeps putting as much pressure on it as he can, but he knows its futile.

SEAN

A briefcase, it's been circulating for years now. Simon-Simon is trying to get his hands on it. You have to get it, and run. Whatever's inside-

RUSSEL

Sean-

SEAN

You do what you have to do, you do whatever you have to and you run. Do you hear me, Rus? Do you hear me!

RUSSEL

I hear you, Sean...I hear you. Just-

SEAN

Promise me you'll look-that you'll find it...promise me that you'll find it and run.

Russel looks over at Natalie lying in a pool of blood.

Suddenly, we see Vince dressed in a black suit standing in the door frame, a silhouette to the sunlight outside. He stands there for a second, and then begins walking down the hallway.

He steps over Russel and Sean on his way in.

After a moment, Vince returns carrying the body of Natalie.

He pauses in the doorway, turns his head slightly towards Russel, then leaves.

Sean's shirt is very red now.

SEAN

Promise me.

Russel turns down towards Sean.

RUSSEL

I promise.

Russel looks away, back across the street.

SEAN

Hey...

Russel looks back down into Sean's eyes.

SEAN

No worries, man.

Sean stops breathing.

Russel gently moves to close Sean's eyes, and sits silently.

We faintly hear the sounds of CHILDREN PLAYING.

Russel closes his eyes. We hang with him a little bit longer than before.

Russel cries to the sounds of the children playing.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - PRESENT - LATER

Michael walks in and sees Russel coming to on the floor.

He sees no obvious signs of struggle around the room, only the couple of picture frames that were once on the wall, now lay shattered on the floor.

He eyes the Gun Room door, still locked.

He starts to help Russel up-

RUSSEL

You should have seen the other guy.
Not a scratch on him-

Michael slaps Russel across the face, pushes him to the ground, and then violently grabs Russel's shirt bringing him to within inches of Michael's face.

Michael begins to speak in an eerie, angry calm.

MICHAEL

Why did you do it? Huh?

Russel tries to get out of Michael's grip, but more out of reflex than anything.

RUSSEL

Do what?

MICHAEL

You *know* what, steal the case.

Michael lets him fall back to the floor. He begins pacing on the opposite side of the pool table, trying not to overreact.

Russel gets up shakily and matches Michael's pendulum pace on the other side of the table.

MICHAEL

So what, are you just gonna play dumb now like you don't know? You coming down with a case of amnesia all of a sudden?-

RUSSEL
Look, you weren't there-

MICHAEL
I wasn't where?-

RUSSEL
You weren't there in that house a
year ago!

MICHAEL
You think I like killing people and
watching them die? Huh? You think I
do that for fun, to pass the time?
You think I'm like Vince?

RUSSEL
No, but I think your Simon's little
lapdog and you'll never know
differently.

MICHAEL
Fuck you.

RUSSEL
No, fuck you! I'm the one trying to
pull you and your sister away from
all the shit your in. And I'm the
one she's confided in every night
you go out and she doesn't know
whether you'll come back alive or
not.

MICHAEL
She knew what she was getting into
when she moved back out here.

RUSSEL
Real good excuse, Michael. Real
good excuse.

MICHAEL
You know what, where is she?

RUSSEL
Hmm, well let me see, oh yeah,
Vince took her to your boss.

MICHAEL
What?

RUSSEL

Yeah, in case you didn't notice, I was just regaining consciousness hours after I was supposed to meet you.

Michael grits his teeth, still trying to piece together how many lies and half truths he missed.

MICHAEL

Simon knew it all along. He knew it wasn't the Boom Boom Men, he knew it was you two-

RUSSEL

The Boom Boom Men are for hire. I give them the case, they cover our backs as we run. *That* was the deal.

MICHAEL

Yeah, and something tells me its not quite that easy, Russel, where's the *case*?

RUSSEL

You know exactly where it is, Michael!

Michael begins to pace, unable to find a reasonable solution to this problem Russel has put them in.

Russel calms down pacing a bit himself.

MICHAEL

You have no idea what you've done to all of us do you? Simon was about to assume all of his father's responsibilities miles and miles away from here. This was ending, playing itself out, and then here comes you and your Russel Corbin promises.

RUSSEL

Oh don't even kid yourself, Michael. Don't even bother. You know as well as I do that Simon wasn't gonna just leave us behind, give us a pat on the back for a job well done, start handing out severance packages. There's only one place guys like us retire. There's only one place guys like us vacation and that's six feet under.

(MORE)

RUSSEL (cont'd)

For once in your life stop trying
to avenge your father-

Michael points at Russel indicating for him to watch what he
says next.

RUSSEL

Just see what's right in front of
you.

Michael stares at the pictures on the wall.

RUSSEL

If for just two seconds you could
see how far you've brought Ashley
to the edge, you'd have made the
same promise to bring her back that
I did, but not just her. To bring
you back, to bring us back when the
time was right. I'm not turning my
back on that and neither should
you.

MICHAEL

You need to stop making promises
you can't keep. Stop giving people
hope. Stop giving them a reason to
pull glorified suicide missions
just so that you can ease your
goddamn conscience!

RUSSEL

Hope is all we have, Michael. Hope
is what makes us as good as we are
because when it's all said and
done, we have to hope we can
forgive ourselves for the things we
had to do to make it this far.

MICHAEL

You're so fucking naive it's
unreal.

RUSSEL

Regardless, this is it. No more
games, no more turns, no more
bullshit. There is no way out of
this except our own. There is time
and there is luck, and we are out
of both.

Michael doesn't look convinced.

RUSSEL

So what's it gonna be? You gonna follow orders or are you gonna do what you know you have to?

Michael begins walking around to Russel's side of the table.

MICHAEL

Don't get all noble on me and don't think for a second that what I have to do is anything different than trading your life for hers. Our lives were fine here until you lost your cool and Simon *put* you here, and right now, she is the only thing anchoring me back to this delusion you live in. You want to be a hero so bad, Russel, you *wait* for the opportunity.

RUSSEL

No. You want to be a hero, you *make* the opportunity.

Michael chambers a bullet violently and puts the barrel in Russel's throat, his hand on the back of Russel's head.

He pushes Russel's body so that it begins to lean over backwards, across the pool table.

MICHAEL

You don't make the opportunity when my family's involved! She's *my* sister!-

RUSSEL

And I love her!

Michael slams his gun on the table, picks Russel up by the shirt and shoves him into the adjacent wall, impacting it slightly.

RUSSEL (CONT'D)

Always have.

(beat)

And if we don't go get her, she'll square blood, and everything we have done whether you like it or not, will have been for nothing.

Michael takes a moment to gather himself, letting Russel go. Something's on the tip of his tongue, but it's not quite what we think.

MICHAEL

Do you have any idea why he sent you away? Any?

RUSSEL

What are you talking about?

MICHAEL

You didn't leave because we had a fight, Russel. My father sent you away to protect you.

Michael walks back to the table and holsters his gun. He leans forward against it, resting on his arms, staring at nothing.

MICHAEL

Your Father tried to do the same thing you're doing now, and he got himself and your mom killed because of it.

Beat.

RUSSEL

No...no my parents were killed in a car accident...I left because I was doing better in school than you were and your parents thought that maybe I should-

MICHAEL

It's bullshit, Russel, all of it and you've always known that. You're naive, but not ignorant. It's time to wake up. Come clean. You wanna talk about seeing things that are right in front of you? See this.

Michael stands up, and turns towards Russel, leaning in a sit against the table.

MICHAEL

Your parents died pushing you the hell away from this life, so you could walk away. My father promised to make sure that if something happened to yours, and when it did, you came to live with us. My parents raised you as their own. You were our brother.

Michael begins walking towards the pictures, taking them in for the first time in a while.

MICHAEL

And when you were old enough, my father sent you away. Right before he died the victim of his own demons. Right before all this started with me, but the Shahs found out. Put Sean's family in your path. And just like that, another surrogate family was born with another surrogate father to guide you back to hell. Soldiers groomed from birth. And here we now are. Our father's sons.

Michael's cell phone begins to ring and ring until Michael finally checks the ID.

Simon.

Michael silences the call.

MICHAEL

If family history repeats itself, Rusty, then because of what you've started...we're already forgotten souls in graves no one will visit.

Michael stares at a picture of him, Ashley, and Russel, and leaves.

EXT. FAST FOOD CHAIN - MOMENTS LATER

Owen and Marcus sit, eating a large meal. Owen's cell phone rings.

OWEN

Yes?

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL

I'm calling in my favor.

We hear another cell phone start to RING in the background.

EXT. FAST FOOD CHAIN - CONTINUOUS

Marcus's cell phone is ringing.

MARCUS
What it is?

Owen looks at Marcus. Marcus smiles.

RUSSEL (O.S.)
Change of plans.

Marcus stands, and takes his call out of ear shot of Owen.
Owen nods.

MARCUS
I'm listening.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel paces along the pool table.

RUSSEL
I lost the case, but you still have
Ashley's money.

MARCUS (O.S.)
The money was for the delivery of
the case. The transaction was
completed. This conversation was
over before it began. You're
wasting my minutes.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael still drives.

MICHAEL
We need cover. I don't know the
details of the deal Russel and my
sister laid out, but my favor voids
their deal and so the new deal is
this: Simon no doubt has offered
you a pretty penny to finish what I
started, to wipe the canvas clean
of the Ramirez family once and for
all. Follow through, but I need all
of Simon's people wiped out too. No
one walks away from that house. No
one gets a message back to Shah
Senior until the usual suspects
catch wind at daybreak.

OWEN (O.S.)
And Simon?

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Russell still paces.

RUSSEL

Simon has Ashley. Michael's afraid-
I need your help.

MARCUS (O.S.)

Without that case, you can't afford
us Rusty, but humor me by making an
offer. Interesting trades are
always welcome.

EXT. OUTDOOR FAST FOOD CHAIN - CONTINUOUS

OWEN

If you kill him, Shah Senior will
never stop looking for you, for
him, for her. We're like brothers,
Michael, and this little piece of
advice is free: don't do this.
You're good, but you're only one
man and come morning, there's going
to be more than a hundred guns
waiting to put you in the ground if
you're not in it already. More than
that the longer you manage to stay
alive.

MICHAEL (O.S.)

Just do what I said, after this,
one way or another, you'll never
hear from me again.

OWEN

Until that day then.

MICHAEL

Until that day.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Michael hangs up.

EXT. MANSION - MOMENTS LATER

Michael pulls up to an enormous mansion on acres and acres of
property.

Snipers line the roof, training their guns on Michael already.

Michael climbs out of the truck as MEN OF LATIN DESCENT start to filter from nowhere with rifles staring him down by the dozen.

He walks with his hands up towards the house.

LATIN MAN

I think you're lost, gringo.

MICHAEL

I know where I am at, Paco. I have a message for Ramirez's son's ears only.

LATIN MAN

The only thing Cristobal is gonna listen to is the story of how we had to put you down on the front lawn. It's a miracle you're not already.

MICHAEL

You tell him Michael Shaffer is here. He knows who I work for and he knows who I am. He'll listen.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Russel wraps up his phone call.

RUSSEL

Then it's settled.

MARCUS (O.S.)

Then it's settled.

Russel hangs up.

INT. FAST FOOD CHAIN - CONTINUOUS

Marcus sits back across the table from Owen. They both dip fries into a milk shake as they talk.

OWEN

We have a situation.

MARCUS

Ditto.

OWEN

Our once number three wants us to violate the terms of neutrality.

MARCUS

His partner as well. This is a dangerous game they're playing. They're going all in.

OWEN

Everyone's going all in.

MARCUS

Then who are we to fold?

OWEN

How do you want to do this?

MARCUS

I hear the west coast is great this time of year. Business as well. I could get used to long moonlight walks by the beach.

OWEN

Likewise.

MARCUS

The grand finale?

OWEN

The grand finale.

I/E. MICHAEL'S GARAGE - LATER

Michael's garage opens. We see Russel in a black pickup truck, gripping the steering wheel, his signature duffle bag lays in the passenger seat.

Russel stares out at the street, it's POURING RAIN.

Finally, he puts it into gear and begins moving.

Suddenly Michael's truck pulls into the driveway blocking him.

The two stare at each other for a minute before they both turn off their engines and exit.

MICHAEL

If we do this, if we even can do this, no one else walks away.

(MORE)

MICHAEL (cont'd)

No one tells this story is that understood? Everyone on the game board, but us dies.

Russel nods.

MICHAEL

We're going to be looking over our shoulders for the rest of our lives, Russel. Always thinking that person who looks a little out of place staring at us for a little too long knows the deed we're about to deal, the price on our heads. You know that right?

Russel nods.

RUSSEL

I do.

Michael begins walking back into the house.

EXT. MICHAEL'S GUN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Empty.

EXT. MICHAEL'S POOL TABLE - MOMENTS LATER

The Pool Table is filled to the limit with guns, clips, ammo, holsters, vests, etc.

They are getting ready for a war.

They load clip after clip after clip with an endless amount of bullets, and then place them into a holster for the clip itself for easy access.

They put on vests, they holster knives and guns, and finally pick up assault rifles.

INT. MICHAEL'S BASEMENT STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

The two climb the stairs, heavily armed silhouettes, towards the light at the top.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - EVENING

Russel's Black Truck pulls into the clearing from Simon's driveway.

Where Evan normally stands guard, there is nothing but a burning cigarette on the balcony about to expire. His sniper rifle missing from where it was before.

MICHAEL

If we're lucky, Simon's already mobilized and we're looking at about a dozen, two dozen amateurs packing up shop.

RUSSEL

And if they haven't?

MICHAEL

Don't waste bullets.

Russel nods. He starts looking around the property.

RUSSEL

Where's Evan?

Russel looks around as does Michael. There's no sign of him.

Russel looks into the rear view mirror just in time to see muzzle flashes from the tree line.

The truck is suddenly riddled with sniper fire.

The two exit and spread out amongst the field of cars.

RUSSEL

(shouting in Evan's direction)

Now, Evan. You and I go way back. Let's be reasonable here. Let's make a deal. You can have what's left of this truck, if you just take it and go. We're not even here for you.

EVAN (O.C.)

Fuck you, traitors!

MICHAEL

(to Russel)

That wasn't very nice.

RUSSEL

(to Michael)

We used to play Halo together in his mom's basement. Frankly, I'm aghast right now.

MICHAEL
Just draw him out. I'll flank him.

RUSSEL
He has a sniper rifle, Michael.
What do you mean draw him out?

MICHAEL
He's a terrible shot. I just need
to know where he's perched. I'll
get him.

RUSSEL
That a promise?

MICHAEL
You're wearing a vest.

RUSSEL
That a yes?

MICHAEL
No.

RUSSEL
Never change, Michael. Never
change.

Russel stands up and begins quickly moving from car to car as they get riddled with bullets.

Michael peaks his head up looking towards the tree line. He sees what he needs to and begins to close in.

RUSSEL
Evan! Seriously, man. What's the
upside here? You kill me, you kill
us and then what, you get a raise?
And then what?

EVAN (O.S.)
I walk.

RUSSEL
That's not how this works, Evan.
That's the kind of thinking that
gets people killed. Believe me. I
know.

EVAN (O.S.)
Until that day then.

RUSSEL
Yeah. Yeah.

A distant gunshot is heard from Evan's direction, followed by a few more.

Beat.

Michael quickly emerges from around the car Russel is crouched at.

MICHAEL

He's down. Let's go.

Russel takes a beat, and then follows.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - MOMENTS LATER

Someone peers out of the blinds.

MESSENGER

They're here.

Simon emerges and takes a good look through the window as Michael and Russel load up from the truck.

SIMON

First the fathers, and now the sons.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - MOMENTS LATER

Russel and Michael, guns ready, lean up against either side of the door frame.

Michael sighs and then gestures for Russel to open the door.

RUSSEL

No-no-no it's your turn.

MICHAEL

What do you mean it's my turn?

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

The Messenger walks to a room where a dozen or so people are packing up the house.

MESSENGER

We've got company.

Everyone pauses in complete silence for a brief moment staring at the messenger.

MAN 1

And?

MESSENGER

It's them.

The Messenger leaves. The men look at each other.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

Russel and Michael still stand on either side of the door.

RUSSEL

It's *your* turn.

MICHAEL

What do you mean it's *my* turn?

RUSSEL

The last time I checked, it's your turn.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

The men are handing out extra clips and ammunition. They're putting on vests as well.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

Russel and Michael.

MICHAEL

How is it *my* turn?

RUSSEL

The trunk thing, today?

MICHAEL

What about when I had to go fight those two guys by myself-

RUSSEL

(imitating Michael's voice)

Just draw him out-

MICHAEL

By myself-

RUSSEL

My name is Michael I don't know
what a promise is-

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

All of the men are turning over couches and tables,
positioning and fortifying themselves to fight.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

Russel and Michael.

MICHAEL

Evan was always a terrible shot.
He's only out here cause he smokes
like it's 1950.

RUSSEL

Draw. Him. Out.

Michael pauses.

MICHAEL

Yeah that was real dangerous.
(more to himself)
Mr. Dangerous is what they must
call you.

I/E. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

The doorbell RINGS.

One of the men insde walks over to the door, training his gun
on it.

Michael is looking at the peephole, waiting for motion.
Michael signals Russel with his eyes. Russel turns the
doorknob. They wait.

Suddenly, the Man fires a hefty amount of rounds into the
door, around the frame, everywhere men could plausibly be
standing around it.

He starts to inch forward, letting his guard down.

He opens the door and laying on their backs, comfortable,
waiting, are Michael and Russel, untouched. Russel waves,
Michael throws a knife into the throat of the man causing him
to stumble back into the house.

Michael walks in, pulls out his pistols, puts them into the armpits of the man, under the vest, and pulls the trigger.

The man falls down into a sit and to his back.

Russel and Michael stand there staring at the men all with guns staring back at them.

RUSSEL

It's really not what it looks like.

Hell breaks lose.

Russel and Michael empty their rifles blindly as they run into a far hallway giving them a minute to regroup.

MICHAEL

How many did you hit?

RUSSEL

They're all wearing vests. How many did you hit?

MICHAEL

Three, wounded a fourth.

They both stand up and empty a second clip from the rifle before retaking cover.

MICHAEL

How many?

RUSSEL

They're all wearing vests!

Michael shakes his head.

MICHAEL

I killed the wounded and got two more.

Michael puts down the rifle, and pulls out two pistols.

MICHAEL

Go find Ashley, I'll handle this.

RUSSEL

You sure you're gonna be alright?

Michael slams clips into the pistols.

MICHAEL

We gotta stick to what we do best.

Russel nods and then fires a few blind rounds as he runs deeper into the house.

Michael chambers bullets and starts to breath deeply, first through his nose, and then through his teeth. It gets faster, faster, and faster until finally, it just stops.

Michael stands up pokes his head out scanning his assailants. A dozen, maybe more. He pokes out for the second time, and executes two head shots, two bullets on one side of the entrance.

The men return fire.

He pokes out again, four head shots, four bullets.

Michael repeats this until the return fire comes from a single gun.

Michael hears a clip drop out and hit the floor.

A man frantically tries to load a second clip into his gun when he sees Michael standing before him.

BANG!

Michael walks around the entrance, is that it?

No, he hears more footsteps. He glances over his shoulder, and a man with a SHOT GUN walks in.

Michael begins spinning and zig zagging while shooting. The man with the shot gun begins blasting away, destroying everything in and around his path.

By the time Michael is empty, the man with a shot gun finds him, on the floor, Michael's arm bleeding slightly. He pulls the trigger, but he's empty too.

Michael puts the guns down and stands up. Takes off his gear. The man with the shotgun does the same.

Michael walks up to him. They both look each other in the eye. This man is clearly bigger than Michael and smiles at the challenge. Michael smiles back.

Suddenly, the man rears back for a punch, Michael head butts him, pushes him to his back, picks up the shot gun, and swings it like a sledgehammer into a carnival attraction making the man lay still.

Michael picks his pistols back up, and reloads.

Just then a couple of cars pull up outside quickly while Michael is standing in the doorway. Everyone makes eye contact.

Michael sighs, and ducks deeper into the house as the men from outside open fire.

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - AT THE SAME TIME

Russel rushes down into the basement and stops.

Ashley is tied up in the corner. She's been beaten, crying, and slightly bloodied. She starts to cry tears of relief when she sees it is Russel.

The chamber of a six shooter style gun spins in the background as Simon walks forward.

ASHLEY

Rusty-

RUSSEL

Ashley-

SIMON

Well, if it isn't Russel Corbin, come to save the day. You didn't really think you'd win did you? That you'd just walk in here and walk out the same way you walked in?

RUSSEL

Look, Simon, you have the case, just let us go.

SIMON

You know I can't do that, Rusty. I have a reputation to uphold, principles. You and your father knew that the moment you went against them, and now look where it got you.

Simon dramatically spinning the chamber of the gun, clicks it into place, and aims at Ashley. She flinches as does Russel who draws on Simon. Vince draws on Russel.

Simon fires.

Empty.

SIMON
(to Ashley)
Lucky you.
(to Russel)
Looks like it wasn't her time.
Vince, let her go, perhaps for once
maybe we all can part ways
pleasantly into the sunset-

Simon turns to look Russel dead in the eye.

SIMON
With no strings, no connections, no
grudges. We all walk away from here
and forget that any of us ever
existed. Is that right?

Vince takes Russel's gun and vest before untying her. She begins running towards Russel. When she gets to him, they embrace warmly.

ASHLEY
I'm sorry.

RUSSEL
It's ok. It's ok.

They embrace.

RUSSEL
You're safe now.

Simon spins the chamber between his thumb and forefinger, watching the family reunion.

For a moment, all is well.

Simon walks towards Russel and Ashley embracing.

SIMON
You and Michael were my best. Do
yourselves a favor. Don't ever
cross somebody better.

Russel puts himself between Simon and Ashley

Simon smiles at the gesture.

SIMON
(to Vince)
I'll be outside. Don't be long, we
have a date with Casa Cristobal.

Simon and Russel hold eye contact for a short while longer, before Simon begins walking towards the stairs with the case.

Russel eyes Vince who is preoccupied with various papers on Simon's desk before returning his attention to Ashley.

ASHLEY

We did it, baby. We did it.
Where's, Michael?

Russel lets out a small laugh.

RUSSEL

Doing what he does
best...impossibly well.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Michael is a cornered and feral animal.

Everyone seems to be out of bullets, but Michael is killing them, one neck at a time, one knife at a time, one pistol whip at a time. They are landing punches hard to Michael's body or to nothing at all, but he's not feeling them, not now, not tonight.

While Michael is fighting the last few men, he notices someone leaving with a case, but can't quite make them out.

Michael kills the last man with a kitchen knife, and moves to the window. He sees Simon casually sit down in the passenger seat of a car. Whatever he's done, he's not in a hurry.

It's raining, hard now.

Michael turns towards the basement-

INT. SIMON'S BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS

Michael walks down the stairs and begins searching for something he can feel to-

INT. SIMON'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Michael enters, bruised and battered. Michael and Ashley embrace as he focuses all his attention on Vince, never taking his eyes off him for a second.

MICHAEL

You guys okay?

Vince collects a last few things off Simon's desk, and puts them in duffle bag.

ASHLEY

Yeah.

When he turns around, Michael has a smirk on his face, almost daring Vince to give him an excuse. Vince exchanges the same sentiment before exiting into the hallway.

RUSSEL

Simon took the case.

MICHAEL

I don't care and neither should you.

Michael keeps his eyes trained on Vince's back until he hits the stairs. Vince never once looks back. He only maintains the slight smile.

MICHAEL

The case, Simon, all of it, we're through with it. We're done. We all on the same page here? It's *done*.

Michael finally lets his guard down and turns to Ashley, looking her in the eyes. For the first time since they were young, we see the brother and sister connection.

MICHAEL

(quiet)
It's done.

Michael kisses her on the forehead.

MICHAEL

Come on, let's walk away.

EXT. SIMON'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Vince tosses the bag into the backseat of the car. He then moves to sit down in the driver's seat. He moves his hand to turn on the car when Simon gestures for Vince to take his revolver.

They make eye contact for a beat.

INT. SIMON'S BASEMENT HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Michael, Ashley, and Russel walk towards the stairs.

MICHAEL

So you two are a couple now?

Ashley hugs Russel tightly, happy for no more secrets.

MICHAEL

And when was I gonna find out about all this? Officially?

ASHLEY

You knew?

MICHAEL

Since we were kids.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

Vince stands on the other side of the front door, casually spinning the chamber on Simon's gun.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

ASHLEY

I told him to tell you. Every day I did. He said you'd hurt him. A lot.

Michael smiles. Russel eyes Michael, comically staying away from him, but waiting for a response.

Michael just holds up his hands letting it go for now.

EXT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

Vince points the gun straight at the closed front door.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

MICHAEL

Very, very soon, you and I are gonna have a nice long chat about your scouts honor, and what your intentions are with my sister.

ASHLEY

Oh now you're suddenly interested in my personal life?

MICHAEL

Thin ice you two...thin ice.

Russel starts to say something, but just lets it go.

Michael opens the front door-

I/E. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - CONTINUOUS

BANG!

HOLLOW SILENCE.

Michael drops his guns. He looks down slowly, in disbelief, his hands covered in blood. He starts to fall backwards, Russel catches him as they both fall into a sit.

They are a mirror image to how we first met Russel, including his hand, over the wound, trying to keep pressure on it.

Vince dramatically spins the gun a second time, points it at Russel's head, pulls the trigger.

Russel accepts his fate.

Ashley screams.

CLICK.

EMPTY.

Vince then walks away towards Simon's car.

When the sound fully returns, Ashley is crying, an emotional wreck, but she's been here before, or at least she thinks she has.

She snaps out of it.

ASHLEY

Okay...okay...I can do this. I can
fix...I can...keep, keep both hands-

She gently moves Michael down to his back as he coughs, not saying a word, trying to hide both fear and pain.

Russel's body is going through the motions, but he's not here.

FLASH - Russel keeping pressure on Sean's wound.

ASHLEY

Both hands. Just like that. Russel?
Russel?!

He looks her in the eyes, tears falling from both. Everyone looks at each other.

Ashley tears open Michael's shirt.

The wound is obviously fatal.

Ashley gets up and runs into-

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She goes straight for the medicine cabinet. Completely empty.

ASHLEY

Fuck!

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - KITCHEN

Michael pulls Russel's head close to his lips.

MICHAEL

Russel-

We keep seeing flashes of Sean and Michael, interchanged.

MICHAEL

I know you. I *know* you. You're not gonna want to let this go, but for her goddamn it-

RUSSEL

Michael-

MICHAEL

Listen to me! For her! You have to. You have to! You wanna keep a promise? Promise me you'll let this go. Just let it all go! All of it, here, now!

Tears begin to fall from Michael's once stoic eyes.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

Ashley is frantically looking for anything she can use to help him.

INT. SIMON'S PLACE OF BUSINESS - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Michael and Russel.

RUSSEL

I should have told you. I should-I should have said something-anything-

MICHAEL

I knew it-I knew from the moment I got back from the hospital, boy scout. I knew it from the day you first met. And I knew after Sean-

Michael is struggling to keep it together.

Russel looks away.

MICHAEL

But I want you to know, I understand. Your dad had dreams to.

Russel turns back towards him.

RUSSEL

Michael-

MICHAEL

Hey, sometimes it's just somebody better.

Michael dies.

Ashley returns with some makeshift items, but upon seeing Michael's lifeless body, she drops all of it.

She runs to Michael's body and begins crying into him.

Russel stands.

SEAN (V.O.)

You do what you have to do, you do whatever you have to and you run. Do you hear me, Rus? Do you hear me!

SIMON (V.O.)

Try to keep this one alive-

ASHLEY (V.O.)

We'll all walk away the same way we walked in-

MICHAEL (V.O.)

Promise me you'll let this go. Just let it all go! All of it, here, now!

This repeats faster and faster until-

RUSSEL

I promise-

Ashley sits up and turns towards Russel.

RUSSEL

That I can't.

Ashley turns back towards Michael, and back towards Russel. Russel stares at Michael, while offering his hand to Ashley. She hesitates, and then places her hand into his.

EXT. SIMON'S DRIVEWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Russel driving his truck pulls to the end of the driveway.

It's still pouring rain.

In one direction, there are clear roads. In the other, the wake of several cars that have been forced off the road due to Simon's quick exit.

INT. MICHAEL'S TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Russel slams his hand on the steering wheel and closes his eyes.

ASHLEY

We have to. He wouldn't have let it go and neither are we.

RUSSEL

The sun sets that way.

ASHLEY

He killed our brother when he didn't have to.

Russel hesitates.

ASHLEY

When he didn't have to!

Russel looks at her and back towards the wake of Simon's getaway, nodding.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER - CONTINUOUS

There are no more words exchanged, only intent. Russel's feet on the peddles, his hands on the shift knob and wheel, their faces reflecting only one purpose, revenge.

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Russel is driving incredibly fast for the rain, passing cars on the left and on the shoulder if necessary.

RUSSEL
The wheel or the gun?

Ashley loads Russel's gun.

ASHLEY
The gun.

She pulls back the chamber and sees she only has a handful of bullets. She'll have to make them count.

They begin to come upon Simon's car on the highway.

Ashley lets down her window and puts the upper half of her body outside of it like Russel before, taking aim.

Simon's car is swerving between the sporadic cars driving appropriately for the conditions along the highway, but Russel's car is matching Simon's move for move and gaining.

Ashley is training her eye with the rain stinging her at high speeds.

She fires. Misses. A few more, misses.

Simon's car veers off the highway and begins going up an off ramp.

As soon as Russel gets on the off ramp, Ashley takes one final shot, her last.

Simon's front tire explodes.

BLACK.

It barrel rolls across the road clipping another car causing that one to spin violently out of control into theirs.

BLACK.

Russel's truck stops nearly on a dime, shattering glass, throwing Ashley from the vehicle.

BLACK.

Three vehicles lay wrecked.

BLACK.

Russel staggers out of the driver's side, an airbag saving him.

BLACK.

Russel kneels next to Ashley, she's breathing, but barely conscious. He pulls himself back to his feet.

BLACK.

Vince walks somehow unhurt towards him. A reaper.

BLACK.

The two men stand ready, dripping with water under a stop light.

BLACK.

Fighting: Vince is effortlessly ruthless; defending Simon is what he does, and he cannot wait to do it.

BLACK.

Fighting: Russel won't stay down despite the wear and tear from even a short time in this fight. He sees Ashley's body where it lay, and it's enough to put him back into it.

BLACK.

Fighting: Russel will use any means necessary as Vince gets slammed into the car and a hubcap gets brought across Vince's face before sending Vince's face through the backseat window and relentless pummeling his kidneys.

BLACK.

Fighting: In a final sequence, Russell chokes Vince with all his might, but before he passes out, one last surge sees Vince take a piece of shrapnel from the car, and stab it into the ribs of Russel who lets out a loud cry, but won't let go until Vince goes limp.

BLACK.

The piece of shrapnel is no longer in Russel, but in Vince's heart.

Russel turns and sees Simon climbing out of his car.

Russel staggers towards him.

BLACK.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Simon climbs out of the car and Russel pushes him back down and kicks Simon's gun away from him.

Simon assesses Russel's wound before he begins.

SIMON

If she wakes up-

They both look at Ashley's body.

Closer: We still see her breathing. She starts to roll over to a crawl.

SIMON

She'll always be running. Looking over her shoulder. Staying out of the light.

Russel checks his hand and sees the pool of blood surrounding him in the water flooding the scene.

SIMON

Every breath, every step, every smile, every laugh, every moment she lets herself forget, someone will be there, watching her. Someone will be there, waiting for her. And it'll be such a waste, because you were good, Rusty, you and Michael both. Two of my best, better perhaps, but just as stubborn as your fathers. But as you age you learn a simple truth: death catches up to everyone. Hatred will consume her pursuers. The bounty will grow to interest even more evil men than my father, and she'll get careless. And then they'll find her, and on that day, guys like us, will welcome her into hell.

Ashley picks up Simon's gun and staggers towards them.

Russel and Simon stare as she spins the chamber violently, clicks it in, and pulls the trigger. Nothing. Simon breathes a sigh of relief, laughs.

SIMON

I guess we have something in common-

Ashley pulls the trigger four more times.

BANG!

Simon is dead.

We hear the signature revving of two Twin motorcycles in the background.

Ashley drops the gun.

Ashley drops to her knees next to Russel, crying. She holds him until he falls still.

Russel dies.

Ashley cries a deep, deep cry. She doesn't hold back for anything now.

She finally looks up, and sees the case. The gears in her head begin to spin as she stares at it, as the motorcycles draw nearer.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. POV SNIPER SCOPE - MORNING - MONTHS LATER

We see the Small Cemetery.

EXT. SMALL CEMETERY - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Owen takes his eyes away from his position behind the sniper scope and leans back in.

INT. POV SNIPER SCOPE - CONTINUOUS

We see the Elderly Woman from before placing flowers on TWO WELL KEPT GRAVES.

We see one LONE GIRL from behind standing behind the Elderly woman holding two Roses. A few yards out, we see Marcus, a gun with a silencer at his back.

OWEN (O.C.)

All clear.

We see Marcus bring his wrist up to his mouth.

INT. SMALL CEMETERY - CONTINUOUS

MARCUS

Likewise.

The Elderly Woman finishes and smiles at the arrangement.

She takes note of the Lone Woman.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Is there something you'd like to
say, dear?

The Lone Woman shakes her head no.

The Elderly Woman nods and places her hand on the Lone
Woman's shoulder, holds for a moment, and then walks away.

As she does we see the names on the graves.

"MICHAEL D. SCHAFFER" and "RUSSEL J. CORBIN"

The Lone Woman, Ashley kneels down, and places a Rose by
each.

When she stands up, we see there is something on her trigger
finger.

We get closer. It's a tattoo reading, "FOUR."

We hold with this image for a moment before we-

FADE TO BLACK.