

STONE

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1970

STONE

1 INT. MABRY BARN - DAY 1 *

The door slides open and MADYLYN, in her 20's, a petite, tart, taciturn woman holds a cigarette. *

Her 4 year old daughter, CANDACE, charges in. *

CANDACE
Look, look! *

JACK, mid 20's, enters laden with a cigarette between his teeth. He's wiry, strong, intense. Black hair slicked up and back. Very sure of himself. *

MADYLYN
Good lord in heaven. It's really falling apart. *

JACK
Let it rot. God damn waste of space anyway. *

They glance about the huge empty space - as Candace runs around the rusting abandoned remnants of a once thriving dairy barn, rattling off the wonders *

CANDACE
A tractor...and lots of hay... *

Madylyn and Jack stand side by side in the doorway. They both take slow drags and then turn to each other and smile. *

2 EXT. MABRY YARD - DAY 2 *

Jack and Candace jump and run in the fields of tall grass bordering the house and barns. *

Jack does a comic fall backwards in the grass - and disappears. Candace giggles and tries to copy him. Madylyn watches - smokes. *

Jack and Candace stare at the simple farmhouse and surrounding barns. *

JACK
This was my daddy's house. He was a farmer and his daddy was a farmer too. *

CANDACE
Are you a farmer?

*
*

JACK
Hell no.

*
*

3 EXT. MABRY YARD - DAY

3 *

Madylyn snubs her cigarette and bows her head. Jack lowers his head but keeps his cigarette in his teeth. Candace closes her eyes but sneaks a peek at her parents during the prayer.

*

MADYLYN
Bless, oh Lord, these gifts to our
use, and us to Thy loving
service...

Jack opens one eye and catches Candace and bumps his eyebrows and she laughs and shuts her eyes quickly. Madylyn knows what has happened and smiles, without opening her eyes.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
In Christ's name, Amen.

JACK
Amen.

CANDACE
...And Amen.

4 EXT. MABRY YARD - DAY

4 *

Jack and Madylyn sip cocktails. Candace drags a rusting saw from the barn, tries to saw a plank of wood.

*
*

JACK
No, honey...

CANDACE
I can do it.

JACK
Nope. It's old and rusty.

*

CANDACE
Please...

JACK
No, baby. No means no.

MADYLYN

Jack...why don't you help her? *

He stops her with a look "Don't contradict me." But she eyes him evenly. *

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

She wants to try.

He stares at her, more pissed than he should be. Madylyn holds the plank steady as Candace struggles to run the saw back and forth across it. The blade falls off. *

CANDACE

Oh...

JACK

Like I said...

He turns his back on Madylyn and scoops up Candace and walks off. Madylyn stares at him. *

4A EXT. MABRY HOUSE - DAY

4A

Jack walks to the end of his long driveway. Opens his mailbox. *

A muscle car pumping loud music drives passed - then slows to a stop. *

Jack watches the car slowly reverse toward him. *

VOICE

...Anything interesting in the mail today?...Mr. Jack Mabry. *

Jack leans into the passenger window - sees a teenage girl and a man in his late twenties leering back at him. *

Jack studies the man's face, then smiles, *

JACK

Walters? Jesus. How long's it...?

WALTERS

Three years next month. *

JACK

Any violations?

WALTERS

Nope. None anybody can prove
anyway.

Jack smiles. Candace and Madylyn have come over.

CANDACE

Can we get ice cream?

JACK

Not now.

GIRL

C'mon, get the little lady an ice
cream.

WALTERS

Yeah Jack. Show her what a big man
you are. You know your Daddy's one
hard ass sonofabitch, sweet-thing.
I had to clean my ass with a cue-
tip two years before he'd write me
a release.

He laughs, a little too hard.

Jack's smile fades a little. Candace clutches at his leg.

CANDACE

Daddy.

Walters holds out some change.

WALTERS

Here ya go darlin.

Jack gently pushes his hand back. Madylyn watches him.

WALTERS (CONT'D)

What? Least I can do after all you
done for me. Right?

Madylyn steps up, pulls Candace to her. Jack puts his arm
around Madylyn, kisses her head.

JACK

(looks him in the eyes)
You just keep it together, make me
proud. Okay?

Walters eyes him back. Smiles.

WALTERS

Nice place.

He winks and drives off laughing. Jack and Madylyn watch.

5 INT. MABRY HOUSE - CANDACE'S ROOM - NIGHT 5 *

Candace wakes and shuffles sleepily to her parents room.

5A INT. JACK AND MADYLYN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 5A *

Candace stares at the moving shapes under the blankets.

Madylyn sits up, startled. Jack curses.

LATER:

Candace sleeps soundly next to her parents.

Jack faces away from Candace, spooned up against Madylyn from behind. He moves into her and holds her tightly around the chest. At first Madylyn whispers protests, but her breath quickens and finally she relents. Jack builds intensity, fierce.

Candace sleeps.

6 OMITTED 6 *

7 INT. MABRY HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 7 *

Jack sits at the table reading the sports page. Madylyn serves him a drink. She lingers, sipping her own drink, runs her fingers through the back of his hair. He reads, ignoring her.

Almost unnoticed, a BEE enters a window. Just a subliminal sound in background.

8 INT. MABRY HOUSE - JACK AND MADYLYN'S BEDROOM - DAY 8 *

Madylyn tucks a sleepy Candace in for a nap.

CANDACE

I like your bed better.

MADYLYN

It's ok honey.

She sits on the edge of the bed and strokes her kid's shoulder, sipping her drink. She stares out the open window... doesn't notice the BEE crawling across the shut screen. She moves to sip and stops, hand trembling the tiniest bit. Her eyes are wet, booze or emotion...hard to say.

The SOUND OF THE BEE is just a little bit louder, turning into a VIBRATION.

9 INT. MABRY HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

9 *

Jack watches golf in a chair in front of the TV. Madylyn stumbles into the room. She stands staring at him, at the back of his head.

The sound of the BEE banging against the screen is morphing, almost a TUNING FORK now... Madylyn slugs the last of her drink, trembling.

MADYLYN

Look at me.

Jack glances at her.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

I'm not standing for this.

Jack only semi breaks from the golf, half-hearing. Looks back to her in a glance, eyes still on the game.

JACK

What's that, hon...?

MADYLYN

You keep my soul in a dungeon.

He looks at her now...quizzical.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

I'll leave you...I'm leaving.

He stares at her and she stares back. He gets up and walks toward her, not fast but she retreats a step...and he just walks past her, and up the stairs.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

Jack, do you hear me...

Suddenly Madylyn races upstairs *

9A INT. JACK AND MADYLYN'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 9A *

Jack pushes up the window, trapping the BEE between the glass panes. *

He turns back and lifts a sleeping Candace as Madylyn rushes into the room. Jack kicks out the screen and HOLDS THEIR SLEEPING CHILD OUT OVER THE DROP. Madylyn freezes. *

JACK

You mean it? Huh? If you leave me...I'll do it.

MADYLYN

Jack...

JACK

You think that I won't? You think I won't!?

His voice is like a punch but there is pain and fear in his face.

THE SOUND is rising all around Madylyn, engulfing, vibrating in waves. Terrifying. She trembles.

And then she breaks. Tears pour from her eyes and she moves to him with arms outstretched to embrace him. He places Candace on the bed, and Madylyn shuts the window quickly, SHUTTING OUT THE SOUND. Jack grabs Madylyn in an embrace, almost sobbing... *

JACK (CONT'D)

Don't ever...

MADYLYN

Shhh, I won't...I'm sorry...

He kisses her with deep passion, she's wrapped around him.

Candace wakes and looks at her parents. *

C.U. - THE BEE...crushed in the window, it's last slow movements... *

10 EXT. MABRY YARD - LATER THAT DAY 10 *

Jack and Madylyn, standing with backs to camera, talk quietly on the lawn. Candace sneaks up behind them... *

40 YEARS LATER: *

11 INT. CHURCH - DAY 11

Madylyn, singing in the Episcopal Congregation. She is in her early 60's now, still beautiful despite weight of drinking and time. She sings with conviction and feeling.

CONGREGATION

'Praise God from whom all blessings
flow. Praise him all creatures here
below. Praise him above ye Heavenly
Hosts. Praise Father, Son and Holy
Ghost.' Ah-men

Jack, his hair now gray, has retained the vestiges of unforced virility, but as he sits back down in the pew he sighs deeply from a heaviness that he rides, and doesn't deal with. Because there's not time, and he has other things to do.

He reaches over and takes his wife's hand in his, as the service continues. He seems unsettled - collar too tight.

TITLES: 'STONE'

12 INT. CHURCH HALL - DAY 12

Jack and Madylyn mingle with fellow CHURCHGOERS over coffee and pastries.

Jack greets people warmly. He shares a laugh with an EX-CON, pats him on the back.

Later, Jack and Madylyn linger at their table with coffee. Madylyn laughs into her coffee at something Jack says.

13 INT. PRISON CAFETERIA - DAY 13

The first thing you notice is the NOISE. Chaotic. Jarring. Hundreds of men, the collective energy of a riot...a bomb. Held forcibly in check but sparking off everywhere.

STONE, late 30's, wiry and hard. In line for food. Jittery,

nothing moving fast enough for him. His eyes flick to the clock which never seems to move. His eyes roam the room taking in its chaos. Sounds fragmented and disorienting.

STONE

Aw, c'mon man...

His impatience is permanent. Fundamental. Purgatory.

14 INT MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - DAY

14

Jack changing into casual clothes. His demeanor neutral, maybe a little tired. Madylyn sits on the bed and dials the phone. Her face lights up.

MADYLYN

Candace? It's Mom... Well I don't know if you recognize my...

Madylyn laughs. Jack pays no attention, doesn't even turn around.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

No, we're just back. Your father's right here, do you...? Ok. Fine. I know. I know Candace, but that's my job, okay? Alright...anyway, how's my little Katie, what has she done this week? She what?

Jack leaves the room.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
(quieter)
Stop it, really.

15 INT. MABRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY 15 *

A little later. Jack watches golf, one arm draped over his head. Madylyn in the kitchen, making them drinks. She walks over and hands him his. He takes it without looking up, mumbles thanks. *

She goes back and putters in the kitchen, humming. *

16 EXT. PRISON YARD - LATE AFTERNOON 16

All the normal yard activity. Clusters of men. Conversations. Basketball. Stone leans on the fence staring at cars driving in the distance. At the sun getting low. An INMATE passes by.

STONE
What time is it?

INMATE
Fuck you time.

Stone nods and then explodes, attacking the guy as we CUT:

17 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT 17 *

Jack joins Madylyn in bed and kisses her goodnight. He rolls over and his back makes him grunt a little. She rubs his shoulders a little, sweetly. He sighs and closes his eyes.

18 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - LATER 18 *

The phone jars Jack and Madylyn awake. He answers it and listens. Madylyn watches his face. He nods to her. She puts a hand to her mouth and sits up.

JACK (ON PHONE)
Oh, Betsy...I know...I know. Yes,
it was...Do you want us to...?
Alright, we'll be over in the
morning...we love you too.

He hangs up, affected.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Bobby slipped away just after
 midnight.

MADYLYN
 Oh, I'm sorry, Jack. I'm so sorry.

She embraces him and kisses his cheek.

JACK
 Well. Finally out of his misery.

MADYLYN
 That's right. He's in a better
 place.

He lies down next to her. She holds her hands together and says a silent prayer. Then she turns on her side and looks at him. He lies staring at the ceiling. She waits, ready to talk about it...searching his face, reading his feelings.

He sits up.

JACK
 I want to...
 (sighs)
 I think I'm gonna look at my notes.

He gets out of bed, leaving her alone.

19 INT. CHURCH - DAY

19

Jack stands at the pulpit for his eulogy.

JACK
 ...and I won't say being kid
 brother to such an All-American was
 always great. "Why can't you be
 like your brother Bobby?"...if I
 had a nickel for every time...and I
 should confess for the record...
 that scar on his forehead, he told
 a lot of stories about how he got
 it. But it was me...I threw a
 hammer at Mr. Perfect when I was
 eight.

People laugh warmly.

JACK (CONT'D)

He never told though. He covered for the people he loved, that's how he was. And I loved him for it. And I wanted to be like him.

(beat - he goes off his notes)

I want to say this...where we grew up, it wasn't...it was...Not everybody was...Without Bobby, I'm not sure where I'd have...if I'd have made these choices...He showed me how to live. What was right. He lived right.

(chokes up the smallest bit)

He lived right. And in the end, what more could you want people to say about you?

Madylyn has tears in her eyes.

20

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

20

Steps of the church. Mourners lingering, comforting and chatting. JACK stands apart, alone, shaking hands looking over at...Madylyn consoling Bobby's widow BETSY.

VOICE

...Poor Betsy...

Jack turns. FRANK, a financial advisor/insurance guy, early 40's. Not afraid to do a little business at a funeral.

FRANK

She deserves better. You don't need that kind of uncertainty at a time like this...You given any thought to...?

JACK

No. I mean...yeah, yeah I'm thinking about it but...let's see...

FRANK

Don't think too long. You retire in what...three months?

(talking quickly now)

All I'm saying...that policy it's peace of mind, sure, but when you're pension fund is down 40?

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

You can cash it now for 70 cents on the dollar and we put it to work for you now in a bargain value market while everyone else is standing around like a zombie...paralyzed. Like Buffett says, "When there's blood in the streets..."

JACK

Okay...okay...this really isn't the best...

FRANK

Sorry. I'm just saying... retirement...what do you want that to be? Planning for death? Shit, there's a moment here...grab it and enjoy life. You've earned it.

They look at Betsy crying, frightened.

FRANK (CONT'D)

My condolences.

21 EXT. MABRY FRONT PORCH - EVENING

21 *

Jack and Madylyn sit, sipping their drinks and looking out on the gloaming light falling, mid conversation.

MADYLYN

(sips, shaking her head)
So many people, followed all the rules only to find that what you invested in, what you worked for, hasn't gotten you what you thought... too late to start again...Oh, Lord.

She looks at him.

JACK

Don't. We're not going to...we're going to be fine.

22 INT. PRISON CELLBLOCK - NIGHT

22 *

The place is NEVER quiet. Stone is in his cell, lying on his back. Even here, he's impatient. For what? *

STONE
 (under his breath)
 C'mon, c'mon...

A GUARD is HEARD YELLING.

GUARD
 Lights out!

The lights go out and a roar goes up from the room of men. Stone closes his eyes and sighs. Got through another day. But his eyes pop open, staring in the dark.

23 INT. PRISON - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES - DAY 23

Jack at work - an out-of-date facility. He moves down halls and consults with co-workers on cases. Jack has authority here. He is in charge. *

23A LATER - Jack is on the phone about a case. 23A

JACK (ON PHONE)
 You have him report back to me as soon as he...no...no...listen to me. It comes to me first, got it? Okay.

23B LATER - Down the hall from his office the secretary, MISS DICKERSON, is black, 60 and no nonsense. Jack strolls out to lunch with A COUPLE OF MIDDLE-AGED CO-WORKERS. 23B

JACK (CONT'D)
 You're in charge, Dickerson.

Dickerson snorts.

24 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER 24

Jack listens to a very tough looking BLACK INMATE in a prison jumpsuit. Trying to be persuasive...

SINCERE INMATE
 ...With Jesus and my family, and all the advice from you Mr. Mabry, that social worker Ms. Honeycutt, all of them, I've taken it all to heart, you know what I'm sayin'? And this is the God's truth as God is my witness. I've changed. He's speaking through me now. Praise Jesus. Definitely. *

Jack listens, motionless.

24A LATER - Jack types at his computer, squinting and hunting and pecking and talking on phone. 24A

JACK (ON PHONE)
Another year and nothing to show for it, same crap, same line. I do agree. That's what I'm writing.

24B LATER - ANOTHER INMATE IN THE CHAIR. 24B
Hispanic Guy, young, 29. Looks shell-shocked and tired.

INMATE
I'm ashamed of it but I was desperate and it was a plastic gun, man, it was a toy. I was never going to hurt nobody...but, listen, I know what I did was wrong...My mother, she feels...she tells me she feels proud of what I have done to educate myself. I don't want to disappoint her...so you know...

He trails off. Jack is lost in thought, hardly listening.

24C LATER - Jack at his desk writing notes. Dickerson pokes her head in. 24C *

DICKERSON
Warden wants to see you.

25 INT. PRISON - WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY 25

Jack walks in. The WARDEN behind his desk, early 50's, easygoing for a guy in his job, has a sense of humor but knows the job ground up. He's talking to a FEMALE FACILITY SUPERVISOR, early 40's. They turn, dropping something they were discussing.

JACK
Janice. What's up Stu?

WARDEN
Hey, shut the door, Jack.
(seems to have something to say, holds up a file)
DeShawn Mackey? Yours right? Your report?

JACK

Yeah, why?

Warden and Janice exchange a grave look.

WARDEN

It's an incompetent mess, Jack. *
 Look, I know your head's already on *
 your golf game, but this is a
 travesty of proper case work. *

He drops the file in the trash. Jack is dumbfounded.

The Warden and Janice burst out laughing.

JACK

Oh...Jesus...

WARDEN

Gotcha.

Jack's laughing now, the Warden really laughing hard. He fishes the file out of the wastebasket and hands it to Janice.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Here, learn from the master of *
 understatement. Keep 'em brief. *

Jack stops laughing, confused.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

I need you to get Janice up to
 speed before you're out the back
 door. So let's pass her all your
 indeterminates eligible this year.

Jack has to take this in...his retirement suddenly real.

JACK

Okay...I mean...yeah, yeah of
 course.

(beat)

I'd like to stay on my currents
 though. See 'em to review.

WARDEN

Hey, if you're willing...appreciate
 it.

Janice snatches up the files - Jack's lifework - and gets up to go. She pauses at the door.

JANICE
Hey. I'm really sorry.

Jack swivels to Janice - is she being a smartass?

JACK
Excuse me?

JANICE
Your brother. I heard. I'm sorry.

Jack, embarrassed, nods his thanks.

26 INT. CORRECTION CENTER BATHROOM - DAY 26

Jack finishes washing his hands. Stares at himself in the mirror, studying his own face.

27 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 27 *

STONE sits before Jack, leaning forward, jittery. *

Jack reads the file. Stone is new to him. *

STONE *

Stone... *

JACK *

What? *

STONE *

I know it say George, yo, but...I *

prefer Stone. *

Jack sees no note of it...just his name. *

JACK *

George Creeson. What's "Stone" *

...like a nickname? That come from *

in here? *

STONE *

No man...fuck these yo's. That's *

what people call me... people who *

know me. I ain't down with no *

"George", you feel me? *

Jack nods goes back to the file. Stone is visibly nervous, *

impatient. Jack senses his jittering, looks up at him. *

JACK *

You got someplace to be? *

STONE

Aww man...

JACK

Relax, son. Take a breath...do whatever you got to do to settle down, cause I'm going to get to know you and we're gonna spend a little time, okay?

STONE

I know what we're doing. ...Can I smoke?

JACK

(not looking up)

No you cannot.

STONE

Man, I quit anyway.

JACK

(still reading)

Good for you. Me too.

STONE

Not that there's anything wrong with smoking. That's all bullshit.

JACK

Well, they kill you.

STONE

But I still kinda want em anyway, you feel me?

JACK

Yes I do.

He smiles and Stone smiles back and Jack appreciates the effort. He notices that despite the smile, Stone's hands are in fists, tight.

STONE

Can we...? I mean look...help me outta here, man. I don't belong in here no more...I can't do three more -

Jack holds up his hand.

JACK

Okay, slow down. Let's talk about what got you here. Tell me about it.

STONE

Oh man, Why I got to say it again? You got the fuckin' file.

JACK

Cause now you're mine. You moved up. And just cause I like to chat.

STONE

It's just - We did it. Ok? Everyone in here is innocent. Least I admit it. I've done my time. I got a job lined up, you know. Why I gotta talk about it -

JACK

Cause I want to hear your side of it. Nobody likes to talk about it, but, listen, it doesn't matter if you don't say it well, just say it.

STONE

AW, FUCK THIS SHIT, MAN!!

And Stone is up and out of his chair knocking it back. A GUARD appears in the door immediately but Jack has seen it all before and he's totally unfazed.

JACK

Whoa! Look calm it down, son... Creeson...

STONE

You just setting me up to send me back, so send me back! Can't do this bullshit, man!

JACK

Stone...STONE!

(all friendliness gone)

IN ABOUT TWO FUCKING SECONDS YOU GO IN THE HOLE AND YOUR FILE GOES TO THE BOTTOM OF MY PILE.

Stone stops cold, evaluating...still standing.

JACK (CONT'D)

Yeah...right. You see that door behind you? You know where it goes...back. You want to go forward? Walk out of here? You want to find that door?

(points at himself)

Me. I am the door, and you go through me. You will respect me and this office and whatever questions I deem necessary to judge your condition and suitability to enter the world you will answer to my satisfaction or you will take hard time served. Got it?

(Stone nods)

Good. Now sit your ass down.

Stone sits. Sits on his fists and breathes, getting under control. Jack waves the guard off with a small nod.

JACK (CONT'D)

Good. Look, this is a Process. We talk. We get to know each other, okay? Just talk to me. Pretend we're friends. Relax. Pretend. Then maybe we can both get what we want.

Stone glances quickly at him. He looks beyond Jack at the window behind him. The sky, and a cloud. Outside. He makes a huge inner adjustment. He smiles slightly and looks right at Jack measuring him.

STONE

Ok, man...

JACK

Ok.

(beat)

Let's talk about something else. Yeah?

STONE

(laughs a little)

Yeah, that'd be good.

JACK

Yeah. Okay...

(looks at file)

You're married. That's good. How long have you been married?

STONE

Six years. Five of 'em
behind bars. It's right there in
front of you, shit... I'm - sorry -
I - This is just nerve wracking,
fuck...

JACK

Tell me about your wife.

STONE

Sheee-yut. Have you seen Lucetta?

JACK

No.

STONE

She's H-O-T, boy. She's banging.
But 'tween us, yo, she's...an
alien.

JACK

How's that? What...she's illegal?

STONE

No, man, she's like from another
world, yo. The shit we sweat...she
don't give a FUUUCK, man. She just
play it day to fucking day.

JACK

She come to see you regularly? You
have picnics most Saturdays?

STONE

I don't want no picnic, man, I miss
my dick in her ass. I miss her
sucking me till I'm raw. Hey, man,
watch out cause I'm giving you
something to dream about so you can
get it up later, ok? Lucetta does
anything, yo. Fucking her tits,
man, coming in her face. Her
blinking. She just laughing, man.
It's all like a game to her. Dirty
just natural to her. I miss that
shit. Let me out. Ok? Buddy? Are we
buddies? My number's due. My time's
up. I done my bit, got clean got
straight... now I gotta...shit,
while I'm young, yo.

Jack is staring at him, hard to read what he thinks of all

this. Stone feels he's overstepped and failed again. He pulls himself in again, desperately. *

STONE (CONT'D) *

Aww shit...I apologize...I can't *

even... *

Stone pulls it together. *

STONE (CONT'D) *

You married? *

JACK *

43 years. *

STONE *

Sheeyut... *

Pause. *

STONE (CONT'D) *

You and your wife still get it on *

though? *

JACK *

Excuse me? *

STONE *

That still work for you? I mean I *

always wonder...like how you...how *

you deal with the crepe, man, you *

know? Is she dry when you fuck her? *

You hip to Astroglide? You miss *

tight pussy? How's that shit work? *

JACK *

I don't talk with anybody about my *

wife like that. *

STONE *

Oh no, shit...sorry...I ain't...I *

just wanna know. Cause I walk *

around...I'm like a fucking *

VOLCANO, man. I don't think I could *

survive...or...now maybe you got *

that prostrate thing... I don't *

know. *

JACK *

I don't considerate it polite *

conversation. *

STONE

I'm just asking how it works for
you. How you keep the lid on it?

Jack looks at him a beat.

JACK

We're not talking about me okay.

They stare at each other in silence.

28 INT. JACK'S CAR - DAY 28 *

Jack drives home, news on the radio about the economy and layoffs and corporate malfeasance flushing people's pension funds and all of it...

29 INT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY 29 *

Jack walks in and the guy behind the counter knows him so well that while talking on the phone he just pulls Jack's two bottles and rings it up without even pausing his call.

30 EXT. MABRY HOME - SUNSET 30 *

Jack parks and gets out. A young couple is walking by on the sidewalk, arms on each other. Not that Jack stops and notices or anything, they are just there passing through. Youth.

31 INT. MABRY HOME - EVENING 31 *

Madylyn is vacuuming. She doesn't hear Jack enter. She's bending over slightly, her back to him. He stares at her a beat and then steps toward her quietly, reaches as though to grab her hips then she turns and startles hard, startling him. She laughs right away and he chuckles too maybe.

32 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 32 *

Stone in the chair again. Second meeting.

STONE

Ok - here, um - ok. Here it is.
Really straight. See, my cousin
Teach, he and I wanted some money
to score meth. So we went to
our grandparents house to steal a

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

few little things while they were sleeping. But Poppy, he heard us and got up, and we had words and he got his gun and threatened us, and then I was like, "Fuck this" and went outside. And then Teach, he came out later. ...And then the house got burned.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

Jack listens closely.

*

STONE (CONT'D)

It was a tragic mistake I made but I've learned my lesson, Mr. Mabry. And I've paid with hard time and I'm ready to be out. Can you make that happen?

*
*
*
*
*

JACK

We'll see. We're just starting out here...

*
*
*

STONE

Look, I got a temper cause I get impatient with these yo's and bein' in here but it's just words and soon as I get outta here that shit's under control. Cause I'm rehabilitated and no harm to anyone and off the shit and clean for years, and I've done all my programs and been no trouble. It's all in the record. See, I got my wife and I've got a job with Chrysler at the Mount Elliot plant lined up...

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

JACK

Who's idea was it?

*
*

STONE

Lucetta set it up for me.

*
*

JACK

Not your job. Going to your grandparents. Teach was your cousin. You run together a long time? You follow his lead?

*
*
*
*
*

STONE

Huh?

*
*

JACK
Who's idea was it? How do you
think this happened?

*
*
*

STONE
It was Teach. I told you I
didn't...I left the fuckin' house
man.

*
*
*
*

JACK
But you didn't stop him,
did you?

*
*
*

STONE
Stop him what?

*
*

JACK
From killing. Your grandparents.

*
*

Stone stares at Jack a long time, going cold.

*

STONE
...You're not going to do it, are
you?

*
*
*

Depleted in some deep way Stone collapses, sitting. Jack
waits for him to respond.

*
*

STONE (CONT'D)
I was outside. I didn't know till
he come out and told me what he'd
done. Teach testified to that. I
wasn't prosecuted for manslaughter
at all. Just accessory. And arson.
And I've done over half my time.
What more you want?

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

JACK
Your cousin died in prison?

*
*

STONE
Can you not fucking read?

*
*

JACK
Beaten to death. On death row.

*
*

STONE
That's right.

*
*

JACK
Did you see them? Before the fire?

*
*

STONE
That's in there, too. I saw
'em. I went inside and saw them.

JACK
Did you feel anything?

STONE
Feel?

JACK
Your grandparents. How did you
feel, seeing them?

Stone's eyes start to water some. Jack sees this.

JACK (CONT'D)
He used a kitchen knife and a
hacksaw? You saw them all in
pieces?

STONE
Uh-huh. All over everywhere.

JACK
What did you think?

Stone blinks, and glances away.

STONE
What a mess.

Jack waits - watching Stone carefully.

JACK
...And then you burned down the
house.

STONE
I did. That was my idea. Yes, sir.
I set it. That was my crime. The
fire.

JACK
What was idea? To cover it up?

STONE
I don't know...I was scared, man. I
was high.

JACK
You saying you didn't know what you
were doing at the time?

Stone stares away. *

JACK (CONT'D) *
Answer me. *

Stone looks back right at Jack. *

STONE *
You get scared, a situation gets *
away from you real easy. You know? *

For just a beat Jack's thoughts take him away to something. A *
memory of something. Hard to tell if Stone noticed it. *

JACK *
If you're not careful, that's true. *

33 EXT. MABRY FRONT PORCH - EVENING

33 *

From inside MUSIC can be heard. Madylyn and Jack sit sipping *
drinks. Jack is listening distractedly. *

MADYLYN *
...it said Katie is extremely smart *
and a good group leader but has *
"control issues"...talk about *
skipping a generation, ha. These *
schools now, my God, a report card *
is like therapy...she's four, can *
you imagine? *
(stops)
Where have you gone?

Jack looks up, then away.

JACK
Just a story I heard today.

He shakes his head. She looks at him, expecting the story.
He's silent. She turns away and takes a hard drag.

MADYLYN
...Been a while since you brought
one home.

She smiles, looks at him. After a moment or two she stands
again, finishing her drink.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
You want a topper?

He hands her his glass. She goes in.

Jack looks at his hands. Sighs.

JACK
(to himself)
Ah. Jesus

The MUSIC finishes. Silence.

JACK (CONT'D)
(Calling)
You coming back...?

34 INT. PRE-SCHOOL - DAY

34

A CLASS OF PRESCHOOLERS play with the LEAD TEACHER, and her AIDE, LUCETTA: 27, sexy as hell, free, fun, and womanly. The children adore Lucetta because she thinks like they do.

LUCETTA
Let's make today a special day!
Let's do one nice thing for someone
else, and not tell anyone we did
it.

35 INT. MABRY HOME - DAY

35 *

Madylyn plays poker with SEVEN MATRONS. Lots of smoke, laughter, food, and skill. The phone rings, Madylyn gets up to answer.

MADYLYN
Hello...Excuse me? Excuse me I
couldn't understand...This is Mrs.
Mabry...Well, you need my husband.
I can give him a mes-

*

Madylyn makes a face, hangs up, goes back to poker.

36 INT. PRISON - DAY

36

Stone waits for another INMATE to get off the phone, then deposits his quarters and dials.

37 EXT. PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY

37

Lucetta supervises kickball while talking on her cell phone.

LUCETTA
Go on, I can hear you now.

38 INT. PRISON - DAY 38

STONE
What time did you call, after work
like I said?

39 EXT. PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY 39

Lucetta talks and corrals kids. *

LUCETTA
She was sort of short with me. Like
she didn't want to talk. So I just -
Tommy! Don't bite! We don't bite.

STONE'S VOICE
You gotta stay on it.

LUCETTA
Huh?

STONE'S VOICE
Can you hear me?

LUCETTA
I can now. Is he nice? Can he - *

40 INT. PRISON - DAY 40

Stone cuts her off before she can say anything incriminating. *

STONE
Don't - Just listen. Y'understand? *

LUCETTA'S VOICE
Sorry baby. I forgot - *

STONE
Find a way. Keep on till you get a
meeting, you hear me? See if we can
meet him together, too. Call him
tonight or tomorrow or tomorrow
night or the day after tomorrow
or... *

LUCETTA'S VOICE
(Giggles)
Ok.

Stone watches a GUARD down the hall. Turns his back to him.

THE "time's up" recording starts in the phone...

STONE
Offer to give him a blowjob.

41 EXT. PRE-SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY 41

LUCETTA
What? Stone? Can you hear me? Uh.
Well, I'm bringing chicken
tomorrow. See you -

She's been cut off. *

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
Shit. Amber, don't hit Tommy! No.
We don't hit. Everybody love
everybody.

42 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 42

Stone back in Jack's office.

JACK
Listen. All I'm getting at...Do you
believe it was wrong, what you did?

STONE
Did I know what I was
doing when I set the fire? Am I
evil? Or was I out of my mind when
I did it? You want me to tell you
about my bad childhood?

JACK
Did you have one?

STONE
We all got one, right?

Jack cracks a smile which makes Stone smile.

JACK
But you think you've changed.

STONE
You mean - am I going to set any
more grandparents on fire?

JACK
Are you?

STONE

Nope.

JACK

You got anymore?

Stone knows Jack's trying to make a joke. He smiles.

STONE

One.

JACK

Well...try to...you know...make a better effort with that one.

Stone smiles. Jack appreciates it. But then Stone's eyes begin to water and he turns away.

JACK (CONT'D)

I'm not trying to be flip.

STONE

Me either. I'm rehabilitated, man.

JACK

Why because you did the time? And that's it? That makes you ready? You're a clean slate?

STONE

Clean as anybody. Clean as you.

JACK

Well. (chuckles) Maybe. Maybe not.

STONE

So lemme ask you something...I'm serious now...why do you get to walk around free and easy and I don't, then?

JACK

I wasn't convicted of a crime.

STONE

You never did anything bad? Never did anybody wrong?

Barest hint of a pause from Jack.

JACK

I never broke the law.

STONE
Speeding? Bar fights? Fucked some
17 year old?

JACK
Come on, enough...

STONE
How long you judge a person for one
bad thing they did? Huh? No matter
how much I changed I gotta keep
eating shit for it? Help me out
here, buddy, I'm begging you. I've
changed, man. You look at my
record. I've been fucking born
again.

Jack leans in.

JACK
Have you? Stone? Been reborn? Do
you know what that means?
(no response)
I want to know what that means to
you. What does it mean to you? *

Stone doesn't have an answer and he feels like he's losing.
Boxed.

43 I/E. TEN YEAR OLD COMPACT CAR - DAY 43

Lucetta sings along to the radio and zips in and out of
traffic winking at those she pulls in front of, and getting
away with it.

44 INT. PRISON - ADMITTING - DAY 44

Lucetta goes through metal detection and bag inspection and
jokes and kids with the GUARDS. She seems truly sweet, as
well as tasty.

45 EXT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 45

INMATES AND THEIR SPOUSES sit at the 8 or so tables eating
lunches, watched by GUARDS. The men and women can not touch.
Stone opposite Lucetta. Kentucky Fried Chicken and fixings in
front of them. She is light and sunny. He is not.

LUCETTA
So I left another message...

STONE

Good, but you gotta get with him
person to person...promise me.

LUCETTA

I will baby...I'm on it.

Stone reaches across the table but doesn't touch her. The
GUARD in the room looks their way and starts to call out.
Stone pulls back.

STONE

I need you. I gotta have you...you
gotta help me.

She basks in this last statement, beams at him.

LUCETTA

Anything. I'd do anything for you,
baby. You know that.

They watch the guard and play a game handing over a
drumstick. He manages to get it off to her and touch her
finger for one second...she giggles and takes the drumstick
and caresses it with her mouth slowly for him...

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

Ooo, I love it greasy...

STONE

Ohh...shit. You killing me. You're
so fucking hot. Did you dress for
me? What you got under there?

She mouths "Nothing." He dies. She squirms and giggles.

STONE (CONT'D)

I swear, if he doesn't...I don't
know what...I have to...

LUCETTA

It's gonna happen baby.

STONE

If it don't I'm gonna kill myself.

He looks away.

LUCETTA

(frowns)

Don't even say that in joke. You're
so close.

(MORE)

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
 (smiles bright)
 You want to play Crazy Eights now?

Stone's gaze is fixed on something. A family around a table with Bibles. The INMATE reading Bible passages with his girl and family. Stone looks at the Guard watching them.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
 Baby?

Stone keeps staring, getting tense.

46 INT. PRISON - LIBRARY - DAY 46

Stone goes to "Religion" section and pulls down every book he can find, pamphlets too. Sits at a table and starts to read voraciously.

TIMECUTS: Some stuff is boring him and he can't even get through. Something in a PAMPHLET seems to catch his attention and hold it. He reads.

47 INT. PRISON - CELLBLOCK - NIGHT 47

INMATES settle down for the night. Stone is reading that pamphlet and a book at the same time, cross referencing between them. We might see part of the word ZUKANGOR on it, and maybe the phrase "The Light and Sound of God" *

STONE
 (reading softly aloud)
 Light and Sound are the twin
 aspects through which we know God's
 Truth. The Light is consuming Fire,
 the Sound is terrifying but for one
 who experiences these twin pillars,
 life becomes fresh and new again.
 Through Zuk he is purified of
 karma, sin. He gains wisdom,
 charity and Freedom... *

He considers this...

STONE (CONT'D)
 Fuck.

The lights turn off violently. A Roar of protest rises from the block.

STONE (CONT'D)
 Shit! I'm trying to improve myself
 here, motherfuckers!!

48 INT. MABRY HOME - HALLYWAY - EVENING 48 *

Madylyn walks down the darkened hallway and is grabbed. Jack holds her to him closely. *

Surprised, she pulls back a bit, thinking they're done, but he holds on. *

JACK
No...just... *

His head is turned away from her, she can't tell but thinks he might be crying.

MADYLYN
You ok?

He breaks the hug, looks at her - then takes her hand and leads her to the bedroom. *

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
Your back's ok?

He closes their door.

49 INT. MABRY HOME - LATER 49 *

The house is dark. The phone rings and an answering machine 'Beep' is heard. Lucetta's voice is heard.

LUCETTA'S VOICE
Hi. Hey. This is Lucetta Creeson - I called before. Uh - I'm married to Stoney Creeson, he's - I think you know him. I hope it's not too late to call...what is it? Like 9:00?

50 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT 50 *

Jack and Madylyn make love. Lucetta's voice can be heard from the answering machine down the hall.

LUCETTA'S VOICE
I was - I spoke to Mrs. Mabry before but - uh, Mr. Mabry this is for you. I would like to come talk to you about my husband? It's kind of important to us. *

51 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 51

Lucetta walks around her one-bedroom with cotton between her toes nonchalantly naked, the phone under her chin. She checks the clock: it's 9:12 PM.

LUCETTA

Stone told me you like to know people, that you're real nice and like to talk, or something. So I'd like to. Talk to you. I work mornings, but - no - anytime that'd be good for you I could arrange things. I'll call back but I gave your wife the number so please call - maybe you're already in bed -

She's cut off.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

Shit. I hate that. I wasn't done.

She flings the phone and sits to finish painting her toenails. Sings lightly to herself.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

"How can I live without you...I want to know..." ...Who goes to sleep at 9:00?

She laughs and is pleased with her toes. She cups her breasts admiringly. She picks up the phone with a sly, sexy idea and calls another number.

52 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT 52 *

Madylyn sleeps soundly. Jack is awake, on his back. He rubs one hand over his face, then stares into nothing, thinking.

53 INT. LUCETTA'S PLACE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 53

Lucetta is fucking a MAN. Hard, thrilling.

54 INT. MABRY HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING 54 *

Jack and Madylyn sitting down to breakfast. Jack has his chin on his hands, listening as Madylyn reads her "Daily Devotions".

MADYLYN

"...Where would I be today if after failing I wasn't given another chance to serve? ...How has failure brought me new strength and a stronger commitment to service?"
...Very good.

She puts it down and puts sugar on her grapefruit. They bow their heads in prayer.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

Bless, oh Lord, Thy gifts to our use, and us to Thy loving service, and make us ever mindful of the needs of others, in Christ's name.
Amen.

JACK

Amen.

MADYLYN

Lib said it rained like the devil out at her place last week but we didn't get anything. Did you out at the prison? Friday?

Jack still has his head bowed over his hands, eyebrows knit. The kettle starts to whistle.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

No rain, huh?

He doesn't respond so she stands to get the kettle. He stops her, holding her wrist. Looks up.

JACK

Did you enjoy yourself?

Arm held, not looking at him, she pauses. She begins to turn to answer him.

55 INT. PRE-SCHOOL - DAY

55

Lucetta surrounded by her class makes an art project with empty strawberry containers and twigs. She finishes hers, checks her watch and calls to the Lead Teacher.

LUCETTA

Amanda? I got that doctor's thing.

LEAD TEACHER
 Ok honey. Everyone tell Miss
 Lucetta bye bye.

The children yell out 'Bye' and keep working on their projects. Lucetta scoots out with her container.

56

INT. JACK'S CAR/EXT. PRISON - PARKING LOT - DAY

56

Jack pulls up and parks. His PISTOL is in a CLIP HOLSTER on the passenger seat. As he gets up out of the car and begins to walk to the building, he clips it to his belt under his jacket. Because his head is down, he doesn't right away see

LUCETTA: standing leaning against her car up ahead. Short dress, low cut neck.

LUCETTA
 Mr. Mabry? Officer Mabry?

*

Jack's head pops up and he stops as he sees her.

ON JACK'S FACE: as he sees Lucetta. She has an impact.

JACK
 I'm sorry...Miss...?

LUCETTA
 Mrs. Creeson. I'm Stoney's wife.

JACK
 (can't hide surprise)
 Creeson?

LUCETTA
 Call me Lucetta though. Please!

She smiles and wiggles involuntarily.

JACK
 You here to see...your husband?

LUCETTA
 No, silly I came to see you. Didn't you get my message?

JACK
 Yeah...okay, look. Mrs. Creeson... there's a way we meet with family. You go through the office. We assign a case officer to come and meet and gauge the home situation.

She laughs.

JACK (CONT'D)
What's funny?

LUCETTA
I'm the home situation, how does it
look? *

She shimmies and giggles. Jack looks around a little uncomfortable now. But it's hard not to look at her. Impossible. *

JACK
Ms. Creeson,
(she starts to say
"Lucetta...")
Lucetta...yeah...Call the office
and make an appointment.

LUCETTA
But I just want to talk with you
for a while. Can't we just make a
date just you and me? You know how
much this means to us, please...

She's stepping up to him as she says this and he backs up.

JACK
Please, ma'am...you've got to go
now. Or visit George...
(she laughs)
Stone... But we can't do it this
way...I'm late...really.

She digs into her bag.

LUCETTA
I just want to give you this little
something my kids made in class...

JACK
I'm sorry, that's not appropriate.

He moves to go but she blocks him and forces it in his hand.

LUCETTA
It's for the birds, see? They make
their nests. You stick it in a tree
and they take their bits of twig
and twine and cotton and they just
make up a little home.

She's holding his wrist.

JACK
Okay...enough. I'm sorry.

He goes but he's still holding the nest awkwardly. Doesn't know what to do with it exactly. He looks back.

She waves big. She laughs and stands staring after him, smiling.

57 INT. PRISON - SECURITY DESK 57

Jack clears through. Hands over his PISTOL to be checked in lock box for the day.

58 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 58

GUARD by the door. Stone already in the chair waiting. Jack enters, flustered and pissed. Bird nest/home in his hand.

JACK
What the hell's all this?

STONE
Huh?

Jack chucks the nest on his desk.

JACK
This. Your wife. What do you got in mind, you two?

Stone looks at him blankly.

STONE
Lucetta send you that?

JACK
She gave it to me! Just now in the parking lot.

STONE
Lucetta? She come find you?

JACK
Yeah, I hope you didn't put her up to this...you do not want to play games with me, son.

STONE
 Shit, I told you Lucetta does
 whatever the fuck she wants, man.

Jack looks at him

STONE (CONT'D)
 ...You check out her rack, man?

Jack remains standing behind the desk, studying Stone. *

JACK
 C'mon. *

STONE
 What? *

JACK
 Have some propriety son. *

He chucks the nest in the garbage and sits down, exasperated.

JACK (CONT'D)
 Jesus what a week... *

Jack is a little thrown off his normal focus a bit. He just sits, thoughts jumbled a bit. He notices Stone has a pamphlet and a book with him.

STONE
 You ever heard of Zukangor? I been
 reading. *

JACK
 No.

Stone passes the pamphlet over. Jack reads...

JACK (CONT'D)
 "The Light and the Sound of God."

STONE
 They say the Sound comes first.

JACK
 How's that?

STONE
 That when Truth comes it comes as a
 sound that puts you back in
 Harmony. Like God's tuning fork.
 (MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

If you let it go through you, you see the Light - a flash of blue or something.

JACK

Oh yeah...? I wouldn't know about that. I'm Episcopalian. *

He tosses it back.

STONE

It starts like as a vibration. Like an electric light buzzing, or rushing water. Or a bee.

JACK

Yeah?

STONE

Then it grows. That's what they say.

JACK

Is that right.

STONE

They say everything that happens to you is what's supposed to happen for you, in order for you to advance 'cause life continues after death, lots of times.

JACK

Well...that sounds good.

STONE

But there ain't no fucking priest or nothing...there's some dude Arnold who's like the Zuk-Master. *

JACK

Arnold. *

STONE

You supposed to find freedom on your own. They say when you do the practice and listen you can hear the Voice of God speaking to all creation in Sound.

JACK

Uh huh. And what's the practice?

STONE
They chant "Hue".

JACK
Hue?

STONE
Yeah like "Huuueee". And then they listen.

JACK
(smiles)
For what...a bee?

STONE
Maybe.
(pause)
They say when you dream your soul goes outside the prison of your body and goes where it wants. Back to the Creator and all kinds a shit. You think people believe their spirit goes out their body at night are in their right minds?

Jack tunes into this a little more. It connects to some private thought...

JACK
People believe all sorts of things...you know, in the Bible Saul sees God on the road to Damascus...and it knocks him right on his ass.

Stone watches Jack, sensing something

STONE
They say you gotta come back till you pay for your shit. Over and over, till you fix it and get it right.

JACK
What about this life? Answering for the things you do in this life?

STONE
Shit, I think I have. Have you?

Stone is looking right into him.

59 INT. CHURCH - MORNING 59

Jack and Madylyn in line with the congregation, kneel at the railing near the altar to receive communion.

60 EXT. CHURCH - MORNING 60

Jack and Madylyn greeting friends. Jack sees the pastor and moves over, confers with him, seems to be asking for something. They shake hands and part.

Jack and Madylyn head for the car.

JACK

You gone on. I'll walk home.

She looks at him. This is a first. She tries to read what's going on.

61 EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY 61

The usual activity. Stone sits at a table reading. He keeps looking up, making a tentative shape with his mouth, looking around self-consciously and then listening.

But it's all fragmented and chaotic noise. The same as always.

62 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - DAY 62

Lucetta, naked, squeals out of her bedroom running to the bathroom holding her crotch, laughing.

LUCETTA

Let me just get a towel. God.

63 INT. MABRY KITCHEN - DAY 63 *

Madylyn smokes, sips a highball, eats alone, and studies her bible.

64 INT. PRISON CELLBLOCK - LATER AFTERNOON 64

The population flowing by, NOISE everywhere. Stone on a bunk sitting, now we can hear that he's trying to chant.

STONE
Heeeeeeyuuuuuu....

He listens.

65 INT. MABRY HOME - AFTERNOON 65 *

Madylyn sings along with music and smokes and reads. She looks at the time. 4:00pm. She takes a drag, staring into the middle distance. Her brain is veering toward a thought, a concern. But she takes a breath and shakes it off.

MADYLYN
The Lord works in mysterious ways.

She goes back to her bible.

66 INT. LUCETTA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON 66

Lucetta wipes up between her legs, on her back on the bed. A naked man walks out of the room.

LUCETTA
Goddamn! Like a quart and a half.
Goddamn!

She squeals with laughter.

67 INT. CELLBLOCK - AFTERNOON 67

Stone is chanting louder, fighting the CHAOTIC NOISE. Humming fiercely, if that's possible. Someone catcalls at him and he breaks, losing his struggle for calm.

STONE
Shut the fuck up! Y'all BE FUCKING
QUIET!!

*

68 INT. PASTOR'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON 68

Jack with the PASTOR. Jack looks drained, and uncomfortable to be there. *

*

JACK
Look, I've never really done this
okay? If I could just...I don't
know...it's hard...I come here
every week and I've really tried to
...I don't know...

*

*

He looks up, his face strained and anxious.

JACK (CONT'D)

I mean, look, people in my life...
my brother, my wife...it seems to
come to them...easily. But lately
I...I mean, there are thoughts
going through my head...

(pauses)

What do I do with myself, Pastor?

He attempts a smile

JACK (CONT'D)

Maybe you should just shoot me.

PASTOR

(smiles)

I don't think that's what He wants
for you.

JACK

What then?

The pastor sips water. Jack stares at him.

PASTOR

(shrugs)

The Lord communicates in mysterious
ways, Jack.

Jack stares vacantly at him. Then he gets up.

JACK

Shit.

69 INT. MABRY HOME - DAY

69 *

The phone rings and Madylyn picks it up.

MADYLYN

Hello?

70 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - DAY

70 *

Lucetta, on phone, eats sitting on the kitchen counter.

Lucetta and Madylyn talk BACK AND FORTH.

LUCETTA

Well hi, It's Lucetta Creeson.
I spoke to you last week.

MADYLYN

Um. I'm sorry, what was your name
again?

LUCETTA

Lucetta Creeson. I was looking for
Jack...

MADYLYN

I'm afraid he's still -

She hears the front door.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

No - wait, hold on a minute...Jack?
Telephone.

JACK

Who is it?

MADYLYN

Friend of yours?

She was being light but he takes the phone impatiently and she can see that he's in a mood. She walks away but we may feel her linger in the periphery. Old habits.

JACK

Hello?

LUCETTA

Hey! It's me, Lucetta. Listen, when
can we get together?

JACK

Ms. Creeson, I don't know why
you're calling me at home..I told
you to call...

LUCETTA

I don't like offices though. I
can't be real with a person in some
office...

*

Something in his face, trying to assess whether he's reading her right.

JACK

Ms. Creeson -

LUCETTA

Lucetta.

JACK

My business is with your husband.

LUCETTA

(giggles)

Well that's what I want to see
you about! Did you think I had
another reason? *

JACK

No, I did not. But - *

LUCETTA

We can meet for lunch. You could
bring Mrs. Mabry too. She's got a
sweet voice. What's her first name? *

JACK

I admire that you love your husband
and want what's best for him, but
this isn't going to help him.

LUCETTA

I do love my husband. I love him so
much. All I'm asking is for a
chance to help you see him in a
different light. How many men in
that place you work have somebody
loving them like that, doesn't that
mean something to a person in your
position?

JACK

It does...don't misunderstand me.

LUCETTA

I just want him home. I want his
arms around me. I want him in bed
with me. I miss him you know. *

She pauses a flicker.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

Can't I persuade you? *

JACK

You're very persuasive. *

Jack is holding his breath without realizing it.

LUCETTA
Who's it going to hurt?

*

Jack is biting his lip.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
...Jack? Lemme come see you...

She waits, breathing into the phone. He stands frozen, staring into space listening to her breath.

She can hear him breathing back. She smiles and we CUT:

71 EXT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY

71

Lucetta grinning.

LUCETTA
Got him.

Stone and Lucetta at a table. He is quiet. Not as laser-focused on her. She is giggly with excitement.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
It's gonna happen baby! Oh, and...
AND... I saw Max Jenkins the
other night and he's still holding
your job at Chrysler. Or, he says
whenever, you know, you're
released, he'll have one for you.
So that's good. But, you know, he's
a little bit funny sometimes I will
say.

*

STONE
How so?

LUCETTA
He said he was going to call me
back and he didn't.

STONE
Maybe he was busy.

LUCETTA
And you know I hate that more than
anything. Being dangled.
(looks at him)
You okay, honey?

STONE
I'm tired.

LUCETTA

Me too.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

What, can't you sleep?

STONE

Too loud. All the time...

LUCETTA

Poor honey, I'm pooped too.

STONE

How come?

LUCETTA

I'm tired? I just am. I was up late.

STONE

Doing what?

LUCETTA

(shrugs)

And work. And stuff. I think it's gonna be next Friday.

STONE

What do you mean?

LUCETTA

My date with Mr. Mabry.

*

STONE

That's good, baby. Cause I'm having these weird-ass dreams...

LUCETTA

(flirty)

Yeah? Like what?

STONE

One time - there was this dog, see, barking its fucking head off. And I yelled at the owners to shut the damn thing up but they were a bunch of rednecks -

LUCETTA

Wait, this happened or...?

STONE

So what I did was, I fed the dog
steel wool and glass in a
cheeseburger. And that took
care of it.

LUCETTA

(stares blankly)
I don't get it.

STONE

It took a long time. To die.
Howling. But then it was quiet and
I could sleep.

LUCETTA

You dreamed that?

STONE

(whispers)
I can't be in here anymore. It's
messing with my head...

LUCETTA

(stops eating)
I know baby...but we got a plan
now.

STONE

I was trying to kill myself. Hang
myself. In solitary. But I was too
scared to die. So I just hung
there, choking...

LUCETTA

In one of your dreams?

STONE

For eternity.

He starts to cry. Lucetta is amazed and doesn't know what to
do. She has never seen him do this and she looks to see if
anyone is looking. She reaches for him.

GUARD

NO TOUCHING!!

She jerks her hand back. Tries to be practical.

LUCETTA

Honey, what'd you have to eat that
night?

He just shakes his head, "Nothing"

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
Well you must have eaten something!

72	OMITTED	72	*
73	OMITTED	73	*
74	INT. CELLBLOCK - NIGHT	74	*

Stone in his bunk. CHANTING LOUDLY. Then stopping and listening. CHANTING AGAIN at high volume, taking deep breaths and really holding it a long time.

INMATE
Fucker! Every fucking night!
Fucking kill you Creeson!

GUARD
PIPE DOWN! 4-C, put a lid on it!

Stone stops. His eyes open, sweating a little.

75	INT. PRE-SCHOOL - DAY	75
----	-----------------------	----

Lucetta, surrounded by her students, is dyeing Easter Eggs and laughing with the children.

LUCETTA
It is! It's the best time of the year. Candy, and Springtime flowers...

CHILD
And bunnies.

LUCETTA
And bunnies. Ooo, that's beautiful, Nola.

76	INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING	76
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Lucetta finishes washing her face/brushing her teeth and gets into bed alone, exhausted, but happy, and turns out the light and closes her eyes.

She opens them again, reaches on her nightstand and gets a piece of Easter candy and eats it. Then scrubs her teeth with her finger to remove the chocolate, then gets back under her covers and falls asleep, fast, smiling.

77 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 77 *

Madylyn has fallen asleep with her book on her chest. Jack's side of the bed is turned down, but not slept in. His light is on. Her bedside clock reads 3:58 AM.

78 EXT. MABRY HOME - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT 78 *

Jack sips a highball and smokes an illicit cigarette. First one he's had in years. He can't control where his mind is going. He looks at the cigarette and throws it down in disgust.

JACK
Stupid son of a bitch.

79 EXT. PRISON PARKING LOT - PICNIC AREA 79 *

Lucetta sits across a picnic table from Jack. She's got some Easter eggs she brought. *

Jack glances around at fellow employees at adjacent tables, a little uncomfortable. He turns back to Lucetta, who sits staring at him with a warm smile, inviting. *

JACK
(blurts out)
I got a grandchild. *

LUCETTA
(smiles)
Do you?

JACK
Four years old. Katie. *

LUCETTA
Cute?

JACK
Yes she is.

LUCETTA
I'll bet. (flirting) She look like you?

JACK
Oh no, hell no.

LUCETTA
I bet she loves you though. See her
much?

JACK
No. No. Candace doesn't really -
that's my daughter. She...they live
upstate. We don't see them much.

She begins to peel another egg. He watches her hands.

JACK (CONT'D)
She's getting divorced. My daughter
is. Mistake from day one, you know.
I said so, but....you know, you
can't help... When you see
someone's life going all to hell?
And she won't even - well. What are
you going to do?

Lucetta shrugs, smiles.

JACK (CONT'D)
People do what they're gonna do.
Maybe nobody can really help
anybody.

LUCETTA
I don't believe that at all.

She's looking dead at him, right at his eyes. Jack shifts for
the pain in his back.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
Are you in pain?

JACK
Just my back.

LUCETTA
From playing ball? Or like, from
some war?

JACK
Just life.
(beat)
Look, I don't want you to get your
hopes up?

LUCETTA
(smiles)
About what?

JACK
What I can do for you - for Stone.
There's a whole system...

LUCETTA
Have you tried magnet therapy?

He's lost...

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
For your back. These magnets you
wear and stuff?

JACK
Magnets?

LUCETTA
You should come over to the house
sometime cause I got these insoles
this guy sold me and I wear 'em in
my shoes and I don't get tired at
school or anything.

JACK
Huh.

LUCETTA
And then sometimes I put 'em under
my pillow when I go to sleep.

JACK
Yeah? What does that do?

LUCETTA
Oh, you know we're all toxic. It's
all the microwaves and cell phones
going through the air, all that
stuff that we can't see.

Jack nods politely.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
Things build up inside you. And it
makes you achy and upset and can
give you brain tumors. Really. It
kills people. And these magnets
detox you.

*

JACK

Wow. That's...

LUCETTA

It's real. I believe in it. You don't believe it?

JACK

I don't know, I guess.

LUCETTA

It's real. For me it's all about the body, you know? When your body feels good, your head just follows. Absolutely. Egg?

She offers the peeled egg. He hesitates.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

My kids did 'em. Now I'm stuck with 'em so I got to eat 'em all. Salt or pepper?

JACK

(smiles a little)

Salt and pepper. They're nice.

She sprinkles some of each on top and then gently blows the excess off. Hands it to him. He eats it, awkward, self conscious as she watches.

LUCETTA

Well don't be shy, just eat the whole thing.

He pops the whole thing in his mouth and pretends to swallow, holding it in his cheek. She gasps and then he brings it back out between his teeth and she laughs hard...

She holds out second egg, waving it at him.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

You want some more?

80

EXT. MABRY HOME - FRONT PORCH - EVENING

80 *

Madylyn sits on the porch, rocking and drinking a highball and listening to music floating from inside. She smokes. Smiles at the evening waiting for Jack.

A beetle in the grass BUZZES ITS WINGS.

A LOW HUM blends into...

81 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING 81

HUM OF THE REFRIGERATOR in Lucetta's place. The camera slides along to find...

Jack and Lucetta standing a few feet apart. Jack stands with his feet slightly wide, still. And she watches him intently. His eyes are closed.

LUCETTA
Feel anything?

JACK
Um.

LUCETTA
A tingling?

JACK
...No... I don't think I...

LUCETTA
A pull? I'm telling you this is going to change your life...

She moves to him, swaying to the music. Eyes closed, Jack feels her presence. She is easing closer to him and hands him a beer and sips her own.

82 INT. PRISON - CELLBLOCK - EVENING 82

LOW HUM of a FLORESCENT LIGHT, BUZZING...

STONE is on his bunk. The block is empty because it's dinner time. He's sitting with his shirt off, reading Zuk - sweating. Rocking. He looks ragged. *

TWO GUARDS APPROACH. Start to unlock door.

GUARD #1
Creeson, let's go. Two days you ain't been to chow. You look like shit.

No answer. They lean down to help ease him up.

STONE
Leave me alone...

GUARD #2
C'mon. Infirmary.

83 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

83

THE HUM IS A LITTLE LOUDER NOW, almost vibrating.

Lucetta gets closer to Jack. Jack scoots his feet around some, trying to feel the magnetic insoles' effect.

LUCETTA
It's not dramatic. Just a sense.

JACK
Maybe. Yeah. A little something.

She smiles, aware of the effect she has on him. She comes so close her body is against his side - still swaying to the music.

LUCETTA
You can borrow them.

JACK
Couldn't hurt. I guess.

LUCETTA
Nothing wrong with feeling right.
Right?

84 INT. PRISON - HALLWAYS/HOLDING ROOM/COMMON AREA - EVENING 84

GUARD #2 unlocks a door into a holding area. Stone glances
down the hallway and notices TWO WHITE INMATES on work detail
acting strangely, looking past him. *

He turns follows their look to: A BLACK INMATE approaching in
the opposite direction, pushing a LINEN CART. *

Stone is ushered into a holding cell to await infirmary. *

Stone holds the bars, leaning heavy on them, looking into the
florescent drab space as the BLACK INMATE on work detail
enters with the cart, and enters an adjacent room. OTHER
INMATES DRIFT BY outside in the hallway. *

THE LIGHTS BUZZ, growing louder, but fracturing in fizzes and
pops. STONE raises his head, as though he is listening. Sound
is chaotic and disorienting.

STONE'S POV: through the bars, beyond the BLACK INMATE, THE TWO WHITE POWER INMATES ARE APPROACHING FAST. *

STONE sharpens up and the HUM gets LOUDER.

85 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING 85

THE SOUND is rising...

Lucetta playfully brings her lips close to the nape of Jack's neck as she moves her body around him. She giggles and breathes on Jack - sort of 'acting' the part of a seduction. He laughs, at the 'performance', but is affected.

86 INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL/Common AREA - CONTINUOUS 86

THE TWO WHITE POWER INMATES ENTER AND ATTACK. In a flash they are on the BLACK INMATE, one cold-cocking him with an elbow as the other pulls the door closed, jamming it shut with a broom handle. The black inmate is thrown to the floor and is STABBED repeatedly with a shiv... *

STONE: Watching through the bars - the action inches from his face.

87 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING 87

Lucetta touches Jack, taking his wrist. He doesn't move, looks at where she is holding him and his gaze moves along the arm to her body. He moves around to face her, she lifts his other hand, places it around her

JACK
My God. Help me...

THE SOUND: is actually pulsing now, like a tuning fork..

88 INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL/Common AREA - EVENING 88

STONE DROPS TO THE FLOOR - watching through the bars: The guy being stabbed is literally a foot away from Stone, face screwed up in agony, trying to cover up with his one free arm as blows rain in on his kidneys and neck and head. PEOPLE ARE SHOUTING.

The arm with the shiv whips across in between Stone and the guy, wrapping around to strike him in the throat.

THE SOUND OF THE BLOWS AND THE CURSING BEGIN TO MUTE.

HE WATCHES. ALL THE CHAOTIC NOISE IS FADING.

- 89 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING 89
 Lucetta and Jack fuck. Hard. *
- 90 INT. PRISON - CELLBLOCK - EVENING 90
 SECURITY CAMERA POV: the scene from above, we see Stone's hand reaching out through the bars toward the victim. One of the attackers stands up and looks right in the camera and raises his arms, triumphant. In a blur of action, GUARDS ENTER and throw the ATTACKERS to the floor. *
 *
 STONE: Staring right into the victims's EYES as he goes into shock, EYES WIDE, STARING RIGHT AT STONE.
 ALL SOUND IS GONE EXCEPT FOR THE WAVES OF GOD'S TUNING FORK CRASHING OVER STONE.
- 91 EXT. MABRY FRONT PORCH - EVENING 91 *
 Madylyn raises her cigarette and stops halfway to her mouth. Holding it there for a long frozen beat. She looks over at the rocker Jack usually sits in. Regards it. Reaches out and starts it rocking. Then abruptly stands and goes inside.
- 92 INT. PRISON - HOLDING AREA/COMMON AREA - EVENING 92
 No sound except the TUNING FORK SOUND. A perfect harmonic.
 Through the bars of the door we see the CHAOS as guards pound into the room, separating bodies and checking the guy's pulse. But we can't hear anything.
 Stone sits on the floor, cross legged with a look of wonder on his face, listening. He looks up:
 STONE'S POV: BRIGHT LIGHT coming through the bars, cut by shadows of the movement on the other side. He blinks and smiles.
- 93 INT. MABRY HOME - KITCHEN - MORNING 93 *
 Jack has his hands up in prayer position as Madylyn clears her throat to read her 'Daily Devotions'.

MADYLYN

..."To what extent is my commitment to obey God based on Do's and Don'ts, or on a true love for Him?"

(she considers)

Hmm. "In what recent circumstance was I aware of God's leading? Did it differ from what I wanted or expected from God?"...Hmm.

She looks at Jack. He's waiting for her to say a blessing.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

Why don't you say the blessing.

Startled a bit, he nods...

JACK

Bless, oh Lord,

(has to clear throat)

Bless oh Lord this food to our use and us to Thy loving service.

And make us ever mindful of the needs of others -

He stops. Madylyn waits. She lifts her head.

MADYLYN

In Christ's name, Amen.

(beat)

You lose your place?

She laughs and begins to eat her grapefruit. He keeps his head bowed. She waits.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

You want an egg?

He looks up. She's smiling.

94

INT. PRISON - MESS-HALL - MORNING

94

Stone at a table. People around him, jostling him on his seat but he doesn't even react. He eats slowly.

STONE POV: all the fragmented elements of discord and chaos have resolved into harmonious sounds. The same elements just all rearranged so that he can hear it anew. *

He pauses, with his fork coming up to his mouth, and smiles.

95 INT. JACK'S CAR - MORNING 95

Jack stopped at a light. He's in the middle lane. He looks at himself in the rearview mirror. He's got energy. He feels charged. He looks at his watch...a thought forming.

Then impulsively he guns it and yanks the wheel hard, turning right out of the middle lane.

96 EXT. PUBLIC GOLF COURSE - DAY 96

Jack tees up to drive. All is quiet. Beautiful day and he takes his time. He seems able to focus totally on the ball. Sound is muted as he winds up...AND HITS A TREMENDOUS DRIVE. He watches it go...drive of his life.

JACK
God in heaven.

He looks around to see if anyone saw. Nobody did. A tiny pump of the fist, just for himself.

VOICE
Front nine on a workday...

He whips around...it's FRANK the financial guy, going by in a golf cart...thumbs up.

FRANK
That's what I'm talking about
buddy.

Jack smiles.

97 EXT. PRISON - YARD - DAY 97

Stone leans against the fence, looking up at the sky. Not longing or agitated, just studying the movement of clouds.

98 EXT. PRISON - VISITING ROOM - DAY 98

Lucetta and Stone at a table.

LUCETTA
What's wrong you not eating?

STONE
Do you ever...think about how it
goes on forever?

LUCETTA

What?

STONE

Sky. But, really, it's like a big blue bowl. You can't see anything more than you can see - like clouds, or stars, maybe, at night. Even with a telescope you can't see forever.

LUCETTA

What?

STONE

So how do they know? What's eternity?

Lucetta laughs - then stops when she notices he isn't.

LUCETTA

So Jack, he said the Board's going to review the whole thing and take into consideration your age and you were an addict back then and...hey baby, look at me. Stone.

He was checked out. He tunes back in to her.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

I was trying to tell you about your parole.

STONE

Right.

LUCETTA

And you weren't listening.

STONE

Oh yes I was...

LUCETTA

Jack said -

STONE

You call him Jack?

LUCETTA

Sure.

STONE

Great. So. What did he say?

LUCETTA

He's going to talk to you. And he's going over the whole thing, and he told me he's going to decide in a few days to write up his notes in your case file, if he feels strongly enough, to submit to the Parole Commission and put it in the computer, so when they go over it next week they'll see it. Isn't that great? This could be it, baby. Isn't that great?

STONE

Yeah.

He closes his eyes and tilts his head to the side.

LUCETTA

(giggles)

Didn't I do good? ...Look at me!

He keeps his eyes closed.

STONE

I think the best thing is to just listen.

Lucetta's face: confusion. Then she laughs.

LUCETTA

(whispered)

Stop playing.

99

INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

99

Jack and Lucetta fuck. Her on top.

LUCETTA

You're sweet. You're really sweet, Jack.

JACK

God. God.

LUCETTA

You are. Fuck me harder. Yes.

99A TIMECUT: Jack dressing. She's smoking. She hands it to 99A him...

LUCETTA (CONT'D)

You're good, Jack.

(he takes a drag)

You're a good man to help us and we appreciate it.

Jack turns, eyes her seriously

JACK

Nobody can know about this...you know that right? Nobody. Everything you want? It will go bad. For everybody. You understand?

LUCETTA

Of course, silly.

She mimes zipping her mouth and locking it.

100 INT. CELLBLOCK - DAY

100

Stone sits on his bunk, eyes closed. A Guard calls at the door.

GUARD

Creeson! You ready?

He smiles and rises.

101 INT. PRISON - HALLWAYS - DAY

101

TWO GUARDS walk along, turning to wait for...

STONE: walking slowly. In no hurry. Taking things in.

GUARD

Hey. Step it up Creeson.

102 INT. PRISON - OUTSIDE JACK'S OFFICE/DICKERSON'S ROOM - DAY 02

Jack barks at Ms. Dickerson through the open door.

JACK (O.S.)

...due the 30th or the 31st?! God dammit just tell me which -

She shouts back out at him...

DICKERSON
 I've had about enough lip from you.
 You can button that up right
 now and be nice. And I mean it!

*

STONE and GUARDS show up in her doorway.

At her desk Ms. Dickerson grunts when she sees them. She buzzes Jack on the intercom.

DICKERSON (CONT'D)
 Creeson's here.

Stone waits at the door. Turns to Dickerson.

STONE
 You think we'll get any rain later?

Dickerson glares at him. He seems different and she is suspicious of change in people.

*

103 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

103

Jack sits forward studying Stone and reading the report on the incident of the murder. His demeanor toward Stone is skeptical and impatient.

STONE
 I don't know if I can really
 explain it.

JACK
 Well. Try. Please.

Stone stares at him.

STONE
 You don't believe me, do you?

JACK
 I'm not saying I don't. Look, I've
 seen the tape. It's quite a thing
 but nothing happened to you... I
 mean you weren't involved...okay...

STONE
 I told you...I can't...

JACK
 (referring to report)
 You're saying while you watched
 them do this, you...what?
 (MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
(reading)
"...had a profound spiritual
epiphany."
(looks up)
Epiphany, huh? What's that? To you.

STONE
Well, it really don't matter.

JACK
(mounting irritation)
Uh-huh.

STONE
It don't.

JACK
Don't get me wrong here...I'd like
to believe in such things.

STONE
In me?

JACK
Yeah. Sure. I'd like to believe in
you, too. That's what we're all
here for, right?

STONE
How can a person describe
something they've been through that
someone else can't have any way to
relate to?

JACK
Try it out.

STONE
It was a moment. Uh - that's all.
All the static went away and I
could hear what was true. That's
all. And, see, now I'm going to go
on as I am, whether I'm in here or
not.

JACK
Uh-huh.

STONE
Cause see I understand my life a
little better now - I see that it's
not empty or accidental like I
thought it was before.

Jack stares at him. Stone's eyes are clear, not darting. It unnerves him for a second.

Then Jack snaps out of it. Flicks his ash, and leans forward as well.

JACK

...So - you're all good now?

STONE

No. Uh-uhn. You don't get it. I'm not saying I'm all happy. I'm going to lose my temper and get pissed and frustrated say and do things I'll regret, even with my wife, but that's OK. Know what I mean?

JACK

(impatient)

I'm afraid I don't.

STONE

Well, I told you y'wouldn't understand.

Jack stares at Stone.

JACK

...Stone, son. Just...drop it.

STONE

What?

JACK

Just...look, I know what you're trying to do, but just...don't. This isn't helping...just stop.

Stone sighs a little.

STONE

Jack. It doesn't matter to me.

JACK

What doesn't matter?

STONE

What you do. Or what anybody's trying to make you do.

JACK

'Make me do'? What's that...?
(getting a little pissed)

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
 Nobody making anybody do anything
 here...

STONE
 You do what you think is right. Say
 what you think. Judge me how you
 think.

JACK
 Well. This is a new breeze.

STONE
 I'm going to go on the same if I'm
 in here or out.

JACK
 Is that right?

STONE
 I want to be out of jail, sure, but
 I'm going to wrestle with the same
 shit if I'm out. And, I'll have
 this same feeling if I stay in.

Jack wipes his brow, reflexively. Takes a drag.

Stone stares at him. He smiles slowly.

Jack tries to laugh, and can't. Finally he pulls his gaze
 away and dumps his filled ashtray into his trash can under
 his desk.

JACK
 Oh, shit, son. Shit. You're a
 wonder.

Jack stubs out the cigarette and there is anger in it.

104 EXT. MABRY HOME - LAWN/PORCH - AFTERNOON

104 *

Jack has been mowing on the ride-mower. Something's wrong
 with it and he's tinkering and he's frowning. Madylyn is
 just emerging with drinks, backing open a door maybe when
 Jack looses an explosive kick on the side of the mower. She
 turns...did she see that? He sees her at the same time and
 recovers himself.

105 INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

105 *

Jack tosses in bed. He finally gets up, carrying his pillow.
 Madylyn wakes, watches him leave the room.

MADYLYN

You okay?

JACK

My back...can't keep still. I'll
sleep in the other room.

*
*

He exits. She rolls over and closes her eyes.

106 EXT. JACK'S CAR - NIGHT

106

*

Jack drives up to Lucetta's apartment. He gets out and goes
to the door, she lets him in.

107 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

107

Lucetta sits perched on the arm of the couch. Jack is sort of
planted across the space from her, shifting his weight
awkwardly.

LUCETTA

...if you wanna know really ... I
think it's all just kind of play
acting.

JACK

It's all bullshit isn't it?

LUCETTA

No, Stone's just...you know...He's
screwed up. His ideas about things
are weird...sometimes really
weird... he's always been that way.

JACK

Cause talking to him...he almost
seemed like...

LUCETTA

Like what?

JACK

Like something really...I don't
know. Different...

LUCETTA

He's just trying to impress you and
do what he needs to do to get out.
Can you blame him?

She flicks her skirt up to flash her panties and giggles.

JACK
(awkward)
Okay...

She hops up and taking his jacket lapels begins edging him toward the couch.

LUCETTA
He admires you a lot you know. He told me he's learned a lot talking to you.

JACK
Can you be straight?

LUCETTA
Straight as you.

She pushes him backward and down onto the couch and starts to unbutton her blouse.

JACK
Is this all just...? Just tell me what's going on.

LUCETTA
I don't do nothing I don't want to do.

JACK
No?

LUCETTA
I like you Jack. I would never fuck you if I didn't want to.

JACK
(shrugs)
Well. Thanks.

She takes her shirt off. Stands there in her sexy bra, touching her stomach lightly.

He looks at her, emotionally exhausted.

JACK (CONT'D)
God. You are beautiful.

LUCETTA
(loves hearing that)
Why, thank you.

*

JACK
I'm not coming over here again.

LUCETTA
You're not?

JACK
No ma'am.

LUCETTA
Ok.

JACK
Well...

He stands up.

JACK (CONT'D)
I don't know. Maybe I should take
some anti-depressants or something.

He hesitates, can't stop looking at her. Can't move away. She
laughs.

LUCETTA
Yes you will.

JACK
What?

LUCETTA
That's ok though, I like it when
they say "oh no, no more", cause
then I just wait.

She giggles. A little too long.

LUCETTA (CONT'D)
You'll call me. I know it. Or drop
by. Like maybe late again, some
night...won't you? Won't you?

JACK
God God.

LUCETTA
I don't mind if you deny it. It's
funny to me.

JACK
Listen to me. Stop this, now.

LUCETTA

Like this morning I was reading
"Harry El Perro Sucio" to my kids
and the whole time I was just
laughing thinking about you. I like
thinking about you at work.

*
*
*
*

JACK

Don't say that.

*
*

She pulls him back to her.

*

LUCETTA

I think you're sexy. And if you let
Stone out we can still be friends
too. He wouldn't care anyway I bet.
I do what I do cause I'm on my own
and gotta make my own way and Stone
won't know.

*

(looks at him deep)

So don't you want to help us? Help
me? Not cause we're fucking or
anything but just cause it'd be
good and we'd all be happy?

JACK

Don't talk like that. I
can't...it's not that simple.

*

Disgusted, he sighs, and gets up. She can't help herself and
giggles.

LUCETTA

You can't leave, can you? It's
sweet.

JACK

What the hell am I doing? Goddamn.

He gathers up his clothes.

LUCETTA

C'mon he's a good person at heart.

*

JACK

You really believe that?

LUCETTA

Yeah I do. As good as you and me.
No different.

JACK

Do you go to church?

LUCETTA

Hell no. There's no such thing as
God.

She smiles at him, and he can't help himself, he gets hard,
he can't leave.

108 INT. JACK'S CAR - NIGHT 108

Jack drives home - deserted streets.

109 INT. MABRY HOME - HALL/BATHROOM - NIGHT 109 *

Madylyn can be heard snoring as Jack eases down the hall and
into the guest bathroom. Through the open door we can see
him start to wash himself off.

110 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 110

Jack at his computer, working on Stone's report deciding,
uncertain. He commits and hits a key.

DICKERSON (O.S.)

(yells)

They called again, they need the
Creeson report!

JACK

(a little impatient)

I just sent it.

111 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - LATER 111

Jack is prepping Stone for his Parole Board review. He's a
little unnerved by Stone's calm.

JACK

Ok. The board's mandate is to
determine if you've served your
time well; if you're a danger to
yourself or others.

STONE

Rehabilitated huh?

Stone eyes him evenly. Jack averts his stare. He gets up
suddenly, stretches his upper body stiffly. Grimaces.

STONE (CONT'D)

They say chronic neck pain comes
from being hanged in a past life.
Or beheaded.

JACK

Well, it's my back, so...It's not
my neck.

Stone shrugs.

STONE

Just making conversation.

He stares at Jack silently.

JACK

(impatient)

Look, if you're not interested in
the details of your hearing - we're
done here.

STONE

We're done?

JACK

My report's already done. Sent.
We're done.

Stone: there is something in his face. A tiny smile.
Gratitude? Or something else... Jack stares hard at him for a
second, unnerved...but he continues

JACK (CONT'D)

Mostly they just want to hear that
you um...take responsibility for
your--

STONE

For my actions?

JACK

Yeah.

STONE

Well...see...the thing about that
is...

(with deep, sincere
feeling)

...when my cousin came out of the
house...that night...and got me and
we went back in? It was trippy,
going in there and seeing it.

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

Cause like the minute before we were arguing with Poppy and there was light in his eyes and color in his face and then I see them...all over everywhere, man, and pale like wax. My head was spinning and my mouth had taste like I was chewing on a penny. But most of all there was this....this buzzing in my ears. I thought it was the shit we was on but then it started growing...

112 INT. STONE'S POPPY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 112

Stone in the hallway. THAT TUNING FORK SOUND RISING IN HIS EARS.

STONE

...and it scared the shit out of me man. And Teach was bouncing off the walls yelling at me to help him take care of it. And then his voice just started going away. I could see his lips moving but no sound except this Sound in my head. And I don't even now what made me know it, but I just knew there was going to be a fire. There had to be.

113 JUMPCUTS: Stone moving up and down the hall pouring GASOLINE. 113

So I went and got the gasoline out of the garage and I ran it through the house up and down the hallways, and I had some matches and lit it and watched it flare up and run, you know, following the lines I poured, all through the rooms, over the blood and stuff. Have you ever seen a fire take control?

114 STONE POV: Down a long hall. The bodies can be seen through the doorway, in pools of blood, just for a second as flame whooshes down the hall and starts to consume them.

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

I saw it take up Poppy and Grandma and start to change them and I thought: This is awesome.

STONE'S FACE: staring in wonder.

115 (OMIT)

115 *

116 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY

116

Jack stares at him, horror mounting.

JACK

Awesome?

STONE

Yeah. It was awesome. And I know I'm supposed to feel guilty about it but I never did and I never knew why until now. Now I understand that the whole thing was part of the miracle of my own journey in life.

JACK

Cut the crap Stone. It was your decision. You did that.

STONE

I ain't saying I didn't, I'm saying we're Co-workers with God and we don't even know it.

JACK

Your crime has nothing to do with God.

STONE

Why not? God is everything. Look at tornadoes and floods and earthquakes. You don't think we're a part of all that? What we carry with us from one life to the next? There may be a plan for all of us, you and me and my grandparents, that we don't know. How can we know?

He stares right at Jack. Totally sincere. Jack shifts in his chair.

JACK

Enough with this shit! Enough. You...Lucetta...Even she says -

STONE

You call her Lucetta?

JACK
(emphatic)
Your wife. She said--

STONE
Don't.

JACK
What?

STONE
Don't listen to her.

JACK
What do you mean?

STONE
Don't listen to what she tells you.

JACK
She believes in you.

STONE
No. I'm telling you, man, she's
just trying to work on you. She's
fucking you over.

Jack falters a second.

STONE (CONT'D)
It's her playtime.

Jack lights another cigarette, distancing...

STONE (CONT'D)
Whatever she says about me is just
cause we wanted to get in good with
you. To get me out. She doesn't
know at all what's going on with
me. She'd say anything. And she'd
do anything. She gets off on
jerking chains.

JACK
That's not a nice thing to say.

STONE
I'm telling you. It's all a game to
her. She's a freak, man.

JACK
 You're fucking nuts you know that?
 You got a beautiful wife who cares
 about you, who's -

STONE
 What do you mean beautiful?

They stare at each other. Stone smiles.

Jack feels caught, suddenly, and very hot, cramped - what does Stone know? What has Jack gotten into?

Jack raises out of his chair.

JACK
 (he's had it)
 I don't know. Hell. Ok. I've heard
 enough. All of this crap. Shit. Ok.
You're a con. I've known that from
 the fucking start. Not for once did
 you... So you've both been conning
 me. Ok. Whatever. I've been around,
 son. Jesus. And I'm fucking tired
 of it.

STONE
 Be calm Jack.

JACK
 I'm sick and TIRED OF IT!

He bangs a file cabinet closed.

117 INT. DICKERSON'S DESK - DAY 117

Dickerson is eating yoghurt with grapenuts - crunching, and turns her head at the BANG from within Jack's office - mid crunch. She then rolls her eyes at her boss's foul mood.

118 INT. JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 118

Jack's up now and leaning forward over the desk into Stone's face. His shirt is showing pit stains.

JACK
 You expect me to eat this new shit
 you're dishing out? Write a nice
 little note about your goddamn
 epiphany?

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
You're the same bastard you've
always been. You son of a bitch.

STONE
I know. I am.

Stone stares at him, but not aggressively. With a complacency
that really rattles Jack.

JACK
Asshole.

STONE
...You don't get it.

JACK
I get it. I've got it. And I'm god
damn fucking fed up with you. Shit.
The both of you can go to hell, for
all I care.

He moves some papers and files around on his desk.

JACK (CONT'D)
The hell with you both. It's all
shit. Complete and utter shit. What
have I - Jesus.

He stops, looks at his desk clutter, shakes his head mutters.

JACK (CONT'D)
Just god damn year in and year out.
Sitting across the desk from
this... And we pretend we're doing
something. And you pretend you've
heard us. And if we fall for it you
get out and a year later you're
back in here sitting across the
desk again. And somebody out there
is hurt, or dead. Well, I'm not
buying - ...Nothing gets better.
It's all bullshit. No one changes
for the better. And I've spent my
whole adult life doing this
BULLSHIT and I'm sick to death of
it. It's all a fucking WASTE!

He blasts in Stone's face.

JACK (CONT'D)
You get no more of my time, pal.
Get the hell out of here.

Stone waits a moment, then stands.

STONE
Man...You got anyone?

JACK
What the hell do you mean?

STONE
Anybody to stand behind you? Or are
you all alone?

JACK
I said get out of here.

STONE
Listen, you go ahead and blow your
motherfucking life up. Do it, man.
Blow it up. All of it. All the way.
It helps.

JACK
(punches intercom)
Dickerson call Peterson, we're
done. *

DICKERSON (O.S.)
He's coming.

JACK
(into com)
Now goddamn it!!

STONE
Embrace it, man. Burn it up. It's
awesome.

Jack goes and flings open his door. The Guard - Peterson - is
right there.

JACK
Did you not fucking hear me?

PETERSON
I was -

JACK
Get him out of here.

The guard takes Stone's arm and leads him out.

STONE
I'm pulling for you, homes.

JACK
Fucking son of a bitch!! FUCK YOU!!

Dickerson, Peterson, and OTHER WORKERS down the hall react to Jack's screaming.

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---|
| 119 | OMITTED | 119 | * |
| 120 | INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - EVENING | 120 | * |
| | Lucetta in the mirror applying makeup. A little on edge. She glances at the phone. Impatient. | | * |
| 121 | INT. PRISON - CELLBLOCK - EARLY EVENING | 121 | |
| | Stone lies on his bunk, staring upward, peaceful. A small smile creeps onto his face and he rolls onto his side. | | |
| 122 | INT./EXT. JACK'S CAR/DRIVEWAY OF MABRY HOME - EVENING | 122 | * |
| | Jack sits in his driveway in silence, trying to calm his breathing. He makes a decision, gathering himself. He gets out and goes into his home. | | |
| 123 | (OMIT) | 123 | * |
| 124 | INT. MABRY DINING ROOM - DAY | 124 | * |
| | Jack and Madylyn eating dinner at the table. | | |
| | The phone rings. | | |

MADYLYN
Let the machine get it.

Jack listens to the ringing - on edge but trying to mask it - then goes to the phone and snatches it up.

JACK
(impatient)
Hello? (listens, relieved) Oh hey.

Holds the phone out to Madylyn

JACK (CONT'D)
It's only Candace.

Madylyn frowns at the odd comment and takes the phone.

Jack goes back to eating.

125 EXT. MABRY FRONT PORCH - EARLY EVENING

125 *

They sip their drinks. Madylyn is going through the mail. But it's all hanging there between them.

ON JACK: his jaw muscle pulsing slowly, trying to find words.

A CICADA is BUZZING...a LOW HUM...

MADYLYN (O.S.)
Did you know you started out as
stone...?

He turns...did he hear that right?

JACK
What'd you say?

Madylyn is reading a pamphlet from the mail stack.

MADYLYN
Your soul. It started out as a
mineral or a pebble. And then it
was reincarnated as a plant, then
as a fish...birds, animals and so
on. You had to work your way up to
being human. You know what it's
been doing...your soul?

He's looking at that pamphlet...he knows it. We can see a
piece of the word "ZUKANGOR" on it...

*

JACK
What...

MADYLYN
It's been paying off debts. Past
sins from past lives, reducing its
burden from one life to the next...

JACK
Until...?

MADYLYN

Until "you are cleansed by Sound
and Light and see your true
Nature".

She tosses it down dismissively. Jack is paranoid...

JACK

(trying to be casual)
Where'd you get that?

MADYLYN

Junk mail. Better than those
people at the door I guess.

(sips)

You know what I think?

(looks at Jack)

I think we get this one life. I do.
And you account for what you've
done in it here and if you don't
you pay for it when you die.
Forever.

*

JACK

Ah, shit...

MADYLYN

You don't think?

He shakes his head. That's not what he means...he's
struggling to speak... She looks away.

JACK

Mad, there's something I want to
say...

MADYLYN

Mm?

She takes a slow breath and turns to him waiting for it.

JACK

I'm sorry....I know I've been...
It's been...this case. This fucking
case has been... complicated. The
woman who called...

Madylyn is listening carefully now...

JACK (CONT'D)

She's his wife. I'm sorry that
she...called here.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)
I shouldn't have even...She's been
trying to help him. Her husband.

MADYLYN
(wants to find relief in
this)
Well, sure she does...she's
worried.
(looks at him)
And it's bothered you, this one.

He nods...sighs.

JACK
Well, hell. It's a done deal now.

MADYLYN
You did what you thought was right.
That's all you can do. ...The rest
is in God's hands.

Madylyn takes a deep drag. They may have found a way past all
this...they can both feel it. Enough to invest in the same
interpretation of these events...

JACK
Shit....

He shifts his weight.

MADYLYN
Your back?

JACK
Yeah my goddamn back. *

She takes a deep drag on her cigarette.

MADYLYN
Your damn back. *

He cracks a slight smile and glances at her. She doesn't look
back.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
"Hell", "Damn", "Shit". *

He laughs a little at her ribbing.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
"Shit". "Son of a bitch".
..."Fuck".

JACK
Okay, okay, I got it...

*

MADYLYN
Your "fucking" back.
"Motherfucker". Make me another
fucking drink, you 'cocksucker'...

*

This gets him laughing

JACK
(laughs)
Shit.

They start almost really laughing...and then hear

SOUND OF A CAR SLOWING IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE.

MADYLYN is rising to go make drinks and she turns and Jack looks up to see:

LUCETTA GETTING OUT OF HER CAR AND COMING ACROSS THE YARD.

Jack is frozen for just one beat, watching her come...

Seeing Lucetta, something in Madylyn's face changes...a knowing.

MADYLYN
Who is that?

LUCETTA
(calling out)
Hello!

MADYLYN
Is that her? Should you...

JACK
No. I'll take care of it...

And he's moving...striding off the porch and down onto the grass to intercept her.

JACK (CONT'D)
(so Madylyn can hear)
Mrs. Creeson...please...really...

He reaches her and moves to get between her and Madylyn. In what follows Madylyn can see Jack's back and glimpses of Lucetta but can't see Jack's face or hear all of it...

JACK (CONT'D)
 (sotto - deadly)
 Have you lost your fucking mind-

LUCETTA
 I've been a little worried Jack -
 you haven't returned any of my
 calls and -

JACK
 (louder)
 I know you're worried, I
 understand... *

Lucetta side-steps enough to see Madylyn and be seen by her.

LUCETTA
 Hi, Mrs. Mabry! *

Jack moves to counter her and grabs her other wrist, blocked from Madylyn's view. He leads her toward the car.

MADYLYN'S POV: Lucetta winces a little and looks down, reacting to something. Madylyn steps forward against the rail, jaw tightening.

JACK
 (sotto - fast)
 I'm done - we're done. Get in the
 car and drive... *

LUCETTA
 (tearing up a little)
 I don't know why you're being like
 this - why Stone's acting so weird?
 What did you tell him about us?

JACK
 (sotto - murderous)
 There is no "us", Get out of here. *

MADYLYN'S POV: they seem to be talking - is she resisting his grip? Is he tightening it and forcibly moving her along?

ON MADYLYN'S FACE: Something dying in her eyes...

Lucetta separates from Jack and gets in the car.

LUCETTA
 I just needed to talk - I thought
 we were friends.

Jack stands staring daggers at her. Hate. Still and unmoving making sure she starts the engine and drives. Watching, locked on the car as it drives away.

And then he walks back to the porch. Madylyn is waiting for him, examining him.

He mounts the steps, feeling Madylyn's glare.

MADYLYN

She was upset...

JACK

There's no excuse...coming to my home?

He's at the door...

MADYLYN

You don't have to be cruel, do you?

He turns on her...in his face, an expression she hasn't seen in quite some time...he barely pulls it back...

He goes inside.

126

INT. WARDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

126

The Warden leans back in his chair holding the Creeson file.

WARDEN

You know we can't alter reports once they've been submitted for review. Come on.

*

Jack stand across from him.

JACK

I know but I made a mistake.

*

WARDEN

Well you're only human.

*

*

JACK

Stu, I'm asking you. Please.

*

*

WARDEN

The hearing's in an hour. You're kidding right?

*

*

*

Jack stares at him - holding ground.

*

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Buddy...I need something more to go
on...

JACK

I know. I know. But - it's
complicated. I missed something.

That's all he wants to say. The Warden nods slowly.

WARDEN

You want to plead your concerns,
fine. You want to submit additional
evidence, that's okay too. But you
know we're clearing big numbers
right now - his fate's already been
decided. It's out of our hands
Jack. It's luck and quotas.

Jack isn't breathing.

JACK

And nothing I say is going to make
any difference.

The Warden stands to usher him out.

WARDEN

You know I don't just push your
paper...but there's a bigger wheel
turning right now.

Jack is white. The warden wraps a friendly arm around him.

WARDEN (CONT'D)

Don't sweat it Jack. You're less
than a month to go. Sleep easy.

He claps him on the shoulder.

127 INT. PRISON - DICKERSON'S ROOM - SAME DAY

127

Jack has his coat in his hand and he's leaving.

JACK

I'm going out.

DICKERSON

What about the Creeson hearing?

But he's already gone. She shakes her head.

128 INT. PRISON - SECURITY ENTRANCE 128

Jack hands A METAL TAG through the window, in exchange he is given HIS GUN. He puts it in his briefcase and exits.

129 INT. PAROLE BOARD HEARING ROOM - DAY 129

Stone is brought in. A room with a table with THREE PEOPLE sitting behind it waiting for him. He looks calm. He comes around to the chairs set in front of them. He looks at the second empty chair where Jack should be. He sits down, turns to the judges and smiles.

130 OMITTED 130 *

131 OMITTED 131 *

132 EXT. PRISON YARD - DAY 132 *

A hand taps Stone's shoulder on the basketball court. Stone turns. *

133 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - DAY 133 *

Jack sits behind the desk, smoking, fidgeting a little bit. He looks at the clock. Adjusts his back. He loosens his tie or his collar a little bit. Warm. Looks across at...

Stone: sitting in the chair across from him. Calm. Watching him. He's dressed in civilian clothes.

Jack adjusts a file on his desk. Checks his watch.

STONE
You want to talk about it?

JACK
What's that?

STONE
Her coming.

JACK
Huh?

STONE

Or anything.

Jack stares at him a long beat, then laughs and shakes his head. He's hot, wipes his brow quickly and gets up to go open a window.

STONE (CONT'D)

I'm concerned about you. You're looking pretty haggard.

JACK

(over his shoulder)

Yeah, well...set your mind at ease.

He comes back, avoiding the chair but there's nowhere to go really so he sits.

STONE

I guess this is it for us, huh? You got any more questions for me?

JACK

(impatience creeping in)

You better be smart or you'll right back in here.

STONE

I got my release, Jack. I'm out. There's no reason for you to concern yourself about me from now on.

Jack leans forward, speaking low and hard. No pretense.

JACK

Yeah, you got it...make no mistake, I can have them watch your ass every god damn minute. You got me?

STONE

(smiles)

I got you.

Jack leans back. Lights up another cigarette.

STONE (CONT'D)

You don't believe in anything, do you?

JACK

I believe you're one fucked up sonofabitch.

STONE

In God or yourself or me...nothing.

JACK

Up yours.

STONE

You don't feel anything inside, do you? Nothing true.

JACK

True? I'll give you true...I'm glad you're out of my hair. George. Creeson. You're going to be somebody else's headache now.

STONE

Life's just taking you by the neck and rattling your old frame and you don't know what the hell's going on. Isn't that right? It's scary. Isn't it? To feel the wheels coming off like that? That's right when you gotta start listening though, man.

Jack stands, looks at the door.

JACK

Where the fuck is she?

He opens the door and calls down the hall...

JACK (CONT'D)

Dickerson!

STONE

She's coming. Don't you like talking? I'm going to miss talking with you.

JACK

Not me, boy. Time for you to go.

STONE

Keep listening, Jack. It's coming for you, man. Don't cut it off. You might not get too many more shots, you feel me?

Jack is still standing by the door behind Stone. He reacts to something in the hall

JACK
Here we go...

He goes back behind his desk and composes himself.

Lucetta suddenly appears in the doorway behind Jack with the guard, Dickerson.

Jack turns - really rattled by her appearance.

JACK (CONT'D)
Ms. Creeson.

Lucetta has dark circles under her eyes and stares at Jack with ill-concealed disdain.

Stone, standing, smiles at her.

Lucetta glances at Stone who is beaming, relaxed. Lucetta does not even smile at him. She bites her lip. Uncertain.

JACK (CONT'D)
Happy day.

All three are in a new, untried place, all awkward.

LUCETTA
(softly)
You ready?

STONE
You bet.

She stares at him, sick of this, and wary of what it may mean in her life.

He smiles at her benignly - a different Stone than she knows. Clear-eyed. He turns to Jack.

STONE (CONT'D)
Can I kiss her?

Jack nods. Stone moves oddly to her - it's been years. She wonders - is he shorter than when he went in?

They kiss. But not really connecting.

LUCETTA
(Cold, almost sad)
Ready to go home?

STONE
Oh yeah. I want barbeque.

*
*

JACK
 (forcing a smile)
 Well. Good luck to you, Stone.

Stone turns and extends his hand to Jack. Jack takes it reluctantly. Stone holds it longer than necessary and Jack awkwardly disengages.

STONE
 Thanks for all you've done.

JACK
 Good luck to you too, Ms. Creeson.

LUCETTA
 Lucetta, Jack...please. We're all
 friends now, right?

She and Stone stare at him. He can't read between the lines and he's sweating now.

JACK
 Lucetta. Take good care of him.

LUCETTA
 Oh, I will. And listen, you take
 good care too, old man. *

She goes out into the hall and follows Dickerson.

DICKERSON
 You make a damn good cookie, honey.

Stone starts after them and Jack starts to let out a breath, relieved. Then Stone steps back into the door and into the room.

STONE
 Oh, I meant to say...Lucetta told
 me you fucked her.

Jack stands frozen. Does not respond or betray anything.

STONE (CONT'D)
 That's got to be against some kind
 of rules around here.

JACK
 God damn.

STONE
 Your life looks like shit, don't
 it?

JACK

I knew what you two were doing.

STONE

But, did you know what you were doing when you let my wife suck your cock?

JACK

Shut up.

STONE

See you down the road.

He leaves. Jack stares after him. What did he mean by that?

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--------|
| 133A | INT. PRISON HALLWAY | 133A | * |
| | Stone and Lucetta walk down the hall. Stone reads from his pamphlet. Lucetta grabs it and chucks it on the floor. | | *
* |
| 134 | INT. MABRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - MORNING | 134 | * |
| | Madylyn is alone at home. Drinking. Already a little drunk. | | |
| 135 | INT. MABRY HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATER | 135 | * |
| | Door opens and Jack enters. He finds Madylyn out cold on the couch. Her bottle and glass on the coffee table. He lifts her hanging arm up to rest it on her chest. Puts a blanket on her. Takes the bottle and glass... | | |
| 136 | EXT. MABRY HOME - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT | 136 | * |
| | Jack alone on the porch drinking. Standing in the dark, no lights on. Stares into the night. Cicadas buzzing. | | |
| | A CAR DRIVES BY, the brake lights come on as it slows in front of the house. Jack tenses, watching it as it pulls on away. He goes inside. | | |
| 137 | INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS | 137 | * |
| | Jack puts his GUN in the bedside drawer and lies down. Stares at the ceiling. | | |

138 INT. MABRY HOME - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

138 *

Jack serves eggs and toast, banging the plates down, in a foul mood.

Madylyn sits at the table, her face flushed red. There is an empty highball glass by her and a Jack Daniel's bottle nearby.

Madylyn lightly pushes the eggs away and finishes her drink.

Jack looks at her - daring her to pick up the bottle. She picks up "Daily Devotions" booklet.

MADYLYN

Oh!...okay...um...

(Reads)

"The glory revealed to Moses is not God's bodily splendor but that of his moral being. Moses's immediate response is submission and worship."

(She clears her smoker's throat)

"A vision of the glory of God often has that effect."

This strikes her funny and she chuckles.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

- I'll bet. ...Um...

(Reads silently)

...So we're getting to the commandments next, I guess, huh?

She takes a sip from her already empty glass. She looks up at him watching her.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

Um...I heard a cute story the other day. You want to hear it?

JACK

Do you believe in all this?

*

MADYLYN

What?

JACK

Do you...?

He stops. She stares at him hard. Hands him the book.

MADYLYN
You read the meditation.

He takes it and reads...

JACK
"What request is on the top of my prayer list for today? Is it a selfish request? Or one that will bring God glory?... After I yield myself to the Lord, like Moses, will my "top request" be changed?"...

He stops with the book open.

MADYLYN
...I know what I want, how bout you?

Jack looks up at her, empty.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
Lost your place again?

He can't speak.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
You got something you want to say to me?

JACK
No.

MADYLYN
You don't.

JACK
I can't -

MADYLYN
What?

JACK
I can't even think of what you would want me to say.

Madylyn doesn't say a word. She just walks straight upstairs and closes the door. Jack follows and pauses in the end of the stairs and listens. She may be calling someone on the phone. She might be weeping. He can't tell.

*
*
*
*

139	INT. CHURCH - SAME MORNING (OMIT)	139	*
140	INT. CHURCH HALL - LATER THAT MORNING (OMIT)	140	*
141	INT. MABRY HOME - CONTINUOUS (OMIT)	141	*
142	INT. MABRY HOME - NIGHT (OMIT)	142	*
142A	EXT. MABRY HOME - NIGHT All is quiet.	142A	*
143	EXT. MABRY HOME - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT Jack on the porch with his pillow - listening, watching. A car approaches - and passes by. Jack exhales.	143	*
144	INT. MABRY HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS Madylyn lies with A PHOTO ALBUM on her chest staring up. She has tears in her eyes. She closes them, praying softly.	144	*
145	INT. CANDACE'S ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS Jack lays down on the small bed. He puts his GUN on the table beside him.	145	*
146	EXT. MABRY HOME - NIGHT Street dark and quiet. A CICADA BUZZES. A STREETLIGHT IS HUMMING. The sounds blending in a rising HUM of VIBRATION.	146	*

147 INT. MABRY HOME - NIGHT 147 *

No lights on anywhere. Quiet. *

147A (OMIT) 147A *

148 EXT. MABRY HOME - NIGHT 148 *

The HUMMING SOUND is rising...

149 INT. MABRY HOME - CANDACE'S ROOM - NIGHT 149 *

Jack, asleep. A small sound...metal dropping? It wakes him and as he processes that he heard something he perks up and listens. Nothing. All quiet.

Groggy he gets up to go piss. *

150 INT. MABRY HOME - GUEST BATHROOM - NIGHT 150 *

Jack finishes peeing. Then he hears a loud POP. *

151 INT. MABRY HOME - HALLWAY - NIGHT 151 *

Jack moves downstairs with THE GUN and now there is a distinct SMOKE HAZE, hanging at ankle level. A flickering light is coming from under the door to the kitchen. *

He pushes the door to the kitchen open to check and is met with

FLAMES. THE KITCHEN WALL IS FULLY ON FIRE. FLAME ALREADY CURLING UP ONTO THE CEILING.

He lurches back. It's too far gone already to think about an extinguisher or anything like that. He moves...

JACK
(yelling)
Mad! MAD! Get up!

151A He pulls a curtain and looks outside, half expecting to see Stone. *

JACK (CONT'D)
MADYLYN! GET UP!

No response. He runs for the bedroom and throws the door open.

151B Madylyn is lying in bed with her photo album on her chest eyes closed. She seems to have not been woken by him. We might not even notice that there is a bottle of pills with the cap off and a glass of water on her night table. 151B

JACK

MAD!

She turns to him groggy.

MADYLYN

Hmmm?

JACK

It's a fire. We've got to move.

She's slow to respond and rips the covers back and grabs her and we CUT:

152 EXT./INT. MABRY HOME TIMECUT 152

FIRE DESTROYS THE HOME. EATING IT FAST, MOVING FROM THE INSIDE TO THE WHOLE STRUCTURE. AN INFERNO.

153 EXT. MABRY HOME - STREET - NIGHT 153*

They run to the street. Jack gripping his gun, frantic - doesn't know where to run. *

JACK *

I'll get to a phone! *

MADYLYN *

Where? Where are you going to go? *

Jack stops - ideas racing through his head - doesn't have car keys, or a phone... *

JACK *

I'll run to Ellen and Steve's - *

MADYLYN *

They're away - *

JACK *

Or David's house! *

MADYLYN *

It's too far - it's too late. *

Jack succumbs to the hopelessness of the situation. *

JACK
Motherfucker! I'm going to kill - *

MADYLYN
Let it go - it's too late! *

Jack paces about - distraught, cursing to himself. *

Madylyn stands at a distance, watching the fire. Eerily calm. *

MADYLYN (CONT'D)
...That's that. *

JACK
If I hadn't had to piss. Good
God..we'd be dead. *

Fire sirens are heard in the distance. *

JACK (CONT'D)
Fucking smoke detector never even
went off...piece of... *

MADYLYN
The battery was dead. I forgot to
change it. *

He looks at her... Whole thing is just too much. *

JACK
I don't believe it...total write-
off. Everything. *

He notices the album she's holding. *

JACK (CONT'D)
You grab something? *

MADYLYN
Pictures. I had it out. *

JACK
(near tears - rage,
frustration)
Good. Something at least...my God.
Everything. Gone. Unbelievable.
Our whole lives in that house.
Unbelievable. Isn't it? *

MADYLYN *
It is hard to believe. *

JACK *
God Damn it. God damn... *

MADYLYN *
(sharp) *
Stop saying that. *

JACK *
What? *

MADYLYN *
Taking the Lord's name. Stop it. *

JACK *
Jesus, Madylyn - I - *

MADYLYN *
(starting to crack) *
STOP IT! I won't stand for *
it. *

She's sobbing now...the dam breaking... *

MADYLYN (CONT'D) *
It's something to ME, Jack, you *
hear me?! Even if it's nothing to *
you anymore, it MEANS SOMETHING TO *
ME! You could at least make an *
effort to pretend that it's... *

He snaps too...the tension built up and uncorking. *

JACK *
(overlapping her) *
We almost get killed and you're *
gonna bother me about my fucking *
language... *

MADYLYN *
(overlapping) *
Nobody did this to us... *

JACK *
(overlapping) *
I got a pretty damn good idea *
who... *

MADYLYN *
(overlapping, cutting off) *

It wasn't anybody, it was an act
of God, I'll tell them that!

He stops short.

JACK

What?

MADYLYN

(crying)

Nobody else. It was us...we let it
fall apart, an old wooden
house...I'll tell the fireman...

JACK

Tell them what?

MADYLYN

About the frayed wiring in the
kitchen wall...

JACK

What are you talking about?

(no response)

Madylyn. What wire?

MADYLYN

In the kitchen wall.

Jack looks at her. Madylyn eyes him evenly.

MADYLYN (CONT'D)

Or the basement, there were a lot
of old rags...I'll tell them to
look there.

JACK

Why would you say that?

She looks at him.

MADYLYN

Because it's as good a story as any.

He stares at her dumbstruck. The sirens and lights of
approaching fire trucks crest the hill behind him.

Madylyn stares back.

The house is engulfed in flames - the kitchen, the
furniture, the T.V., the porch - all of it burns.

155 INT. BAR/RESTAURANT - NIGHT

155

Jack's Retirement Party:

Jack's co-workers - WARDEN, Dickerson, Janice, Peterson, and as twenty others cheer and clap. Jack smiles uncomfortably under a GOOD LUCK ON THE OUTSIDE banner.

LARRY

He's free! He's free!

No sign of Madylyn.

155A TIMECUT: Jack having drinks and accepting congratulations from colleagues. There's a muted awareness that it's been a tough time for him and people are trying to be cheery. 155A

DICKERSON

(drunk, laughing it up)

You won't have me to kick around any more! Better get a dog!

SOME GUY

(laughing)

That's what wives are for!

Uncomfortable glances all around. Jack shrugs it off with a small laugh.

155B TIMECUT: Jack's at a table with Janice. They're huddled up sharing war stories and advice and he's making her laugh. She appreciates his advice and it seems cozy. He's definitely had too much but he still seems to be keeping it together. 155B

JACK

...but do not...I mean reall DO NOT make it a two-way conversation.

(MORE)

JACK (CONT'D)

They got nothing but time to think about how to work on you...get under your skin. You can't make yourself a person with them.

JANICE

Oh believe me...I learned that lesson.

JACK

They'll test you for sure...
(looks at her)
Good looking woman like you...

He smiles. He puts his hand on her knee out of sight of anybody else. Janice takes it in and looks at him nicely.

JANICE

(soft)
Jack...

JACK

(grins)
I'm retired, not dead you know.

JANICE

C'mon, we're friends, you're the best... *

JACK

A little fun...send me off into the sunset...

He leans in a little. She's uncomfortable but she's trying to be cool.

JANICE

Uh uh...let's keep it pro, okay?

He stares at her a long time. She can't tell if he's depressed or just going to nod and drop it. But he keeps staring at her and it gets dark. He starts talking very low, so only she can hear. From a distance nobody could tell they weren't just chatting.

JACK

Want to be a pro? Fuck you, pro. They're going to chew you alive in there.

JANICE

Jack - *

*

JACK
 (low and hard)
 No no...jerk my chain like that.
 Fucking cunt. Have some respect...

Janice is shocked almost to tears. Warden arrives with darts, *
 plays it cool.

WARDEN
 C'mon buddy, let's take these kids
 on...

Janice stands and so does Jack. He's still staring like a
 cobra at Janice but she's trying to make it easy...

JANICE
 Okay, I'm in... *

Jack leans toward her aggressive...we see how drunk he
 actually is.

JACK
 Up yours...

Warden grabs him back

WARDEN
 Whoa, whoa buddy...all good fun...

Jack actually resists for a second then shrugs it off.
 Immediately embarrassed.

JACK
 (slurring)
 Sorry...not your fault.

He holds out his hand to Janice

JACK (CONT'D)
 Hey...Not your fault. I'm all
 fucked...- I should go.

Everybody's feeling bad for him.

WARDEN
 Ride with me.

JACK
 No no, I'm good.

He sways a little.

JACK (CONT'D)
I'm good. I'll get a cab.

They all look uncomfortable.

JACK (CONT'D)
Word of honor. Cab.

156 EXT. BAR/RESTAURANT - NIGHT 156

Jack exits, stumbling a little. He gets in his car and fires it up. *

157 EXT./INT. STREET/JACK'S CAR - NIGHT 157

Jack drives. Focused on something. Simmering.

158 EXT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 158

Jack sits in his car. Waiting and watching. The door opens and STONE emerges. He walks off down the dark street. Jack opens the glove box and takes out his GUN, gets out of the car and follows him on foot.

TIGHT ON: Stone - as he looks up and double takes.

STONE'S POV: Jack is blocking his path.

They stare at each other a long time. Still. Jack approaches. He's clearly off balance but he's boring into Stone with his eyes. He pulls his hand out of his jacket pocket, showing the edge of his gun.

159 EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT 159

Shadowy. One high light in an adjacent parking lot throwing a pool of light into the alley. Jack and Stone come along the back wall of the market. Jack stops him against a wall just on the edge of lights.

A STREET LIGHT IS BUZZING OVERHEAD...

STONE
Jack, what's...

JACK SHOVES HIM HARD AGAINST THE WALL, GUN OUT AND RIGHT IN STONE'S FACE...

Jack's face tight with rage. Stone is oddly calm, observing him, not fighting.

JACK
(drunk)
What'd you do?

Stone looks quizzical.

JACK (CONT'D)
Why did you do this? *

Stone just smiles and shakes his head.

JACK (CONT'D)
You think I won't! *

THE BUZZ OF THAT LINE IS TURNING INTO A DRONE, VIBRATING.

Stone's eyes seem to widen a little. JACK COCKS THE GUN.

JACK (CONT'D)
You think I won't! *

Jack bores into him, demanding that he accept the blame for it all. But Stone just stares at him and shakes his head the tiniest bit. Jack threatens with the gun, bullying...but his bluff has been called.

STONE eases out of his grasp and walks away. He doesn't even look back. He just walks out of the pool of light and into the shadow and disappears around the corner.

THE SOUND is loud...humming.

Jack is alone with himself, nobody else to blame. *

Jack HOWLS, looks at the gun... *

WE CUT TO BLACK AND THE SOUND STOPS.

160

EXT. CANDACE'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - DAY

160

BRIGHT SUN. A BEE buzzing around brings us to...

CANDACE 40'ish, with her father's black hair, is putting sunscreen on a little girl, 4 years old, who is protesting.

CANDACE
I know sweetie. But it's the
sunburns you get now that give you
the cancer later.

MADYLYN, watching. Gives her daughter a look of admonition.

MADYLYN
Who knew? We didn't know. If we'd
known, of course we would
have...done differently.

Madylyn takes a drag from her cigarette and turns the page,
looking at the photo album. Candace lets Katie go.

CANDACE
You're greased.

Katie jumps up and down in a kiddie pool.

Candace joins her mother under the umbrella, taking a drag
from her mother's cigarette and giving it back to her.
She peers down at the photo album

MADYLYN
(re the photos)
Cut-glass lamps.

CANDACE
Where is that?

MADYLYN
Place we used to rent at the beach.
You don't remember it? You loved
playing in the water with your
father.

CANDACE
I love that shag carpet.

A long beat as they watch Katie.

CANDACE (CONT'D)
Don't know how you stuck it out as
long as you did. I can't believe
you didn't do this sooner.

MADYLYN
I almost did. Once.

CANDACE
What happened?

Madylyn doesn't answer. Just smokes.

MADYLYN
You have a limited point of view.
It got better. Gentler.

Candace looks at her mother. Madylyn stares off into the middle distance.

CANDACE
What are you thinking?

MADYLYN
I hope he's eating.

Candace groans and gets up to go inside.

CANDACE
I'm monitoring your calls.

She leaves her mother. Madylyn stares and thinks.

The faint SOUND OF A BEE starts rising....

AND WE HEAR A MAN'S VOICE BEGIN TO SPEAK. Inarticulate and strange, struggling to find the words...the voice runs over the following scenes.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
I ain't know...how can I know?

161 INT. LUCETTA'S APARTMENT - SUNDAY MORNING 161

Stone is packing a small duffel bag. No Lucetta.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Ain't nobody come into this place
and want to stay the same. That I
know for sure.

162 EXT. CITY ROAD - CONTINUOUS 162

Stone with duffel bag, looking around

A POWER LINE IS HUMMING, merging with that SOUND FROM THE BEE, growing subtly...

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Do I deserve to be free?

163 INT. BAR - SUNDAY MORNING 163

Lucetta in a bar. Bartender brings a drink and points to a guy down the bar. He nods at Lucetta. She gives her siren smile.

There's a neon bar sign BUZZING.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
Up to me I say I do. I want to be.
I hope to be.

164 EXT./INT. PRISON - SUNDAY MORNING 164

Jack arrives at the complex he's made into his life. Entering the outside. Walking down a hall with a cardboard box in his hand.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
But I don't know...

165 INT. PRISON - JANICE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 165

Over the shoulder of JANICE, we see an INMATE, discussing himself and we see that this is the man who has been talking in VOICE OVER.

In the open door behind him, Jack crosses with the box...he pauses only slightly to look in on the Inmate speaking then moves on.

INMATE
I don't know who get to make that
decision you know...

166 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 166

Entering he sets the box on his desk and surveys everything that made up his life. And then he starts to box it up.

167 EXT. CANDACE'S BACKYARD - SUNDAY MORNING 167

Madylyn sits staring, smoking and thinking.

The BUZZING LOUDER NOW.

168 INT. BEDROOM SOMEWHERE - SUNDAY MORNING 168

Lucetta sits naked on the edge of a bed. A man's body out of focus behind her. She's happily painting her toenails and smoking. Takes a drag and stares into space.

The SOUND rising...

169 EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS 169

Weird light. Getting out into the empty spaces beyond a city. But not beautiful. Neutral, uncertain.

STONE is walking along the road under power lines humming. Unreadable. Impossible to tell where he's going or what he's doing.

The Sound now powerfully vibrating...

170 INT. PRISON - JACK'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 170

Wide on Jack behind his desk with a box on it, room stripped bare and empty. Jack's life is dismantled and packed up in boxes. There is one last picture frame on the desk. We can't see what it is. He picks it up and packs it up, looking down into the box. He stands there, head down, lost in thought.

The SOUND is LOUDER NOW, CLEARER. VIBRATING.

Almost unconsciously Jack turns his head, towards the sound. Just barely.

THE END