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# HALLELUJAH

"Pilot"

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DRAFT

1st - January 10th, 2011  
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HALLELUJAH

"Pilot"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SWEET PETE'S ROAD HOUSE - NIGHT

OPEN ON a tawdry roadside bar. A man emerges, beer in hand.

This is CALEB TURNER, 38. As he walks into the parking lot, he downs the beer and tosses the can.

CALEB (V.O.)  
Let's start with the obvious. I am a  
miserable sinner.

Caleb happily struts to his car, keys in hand.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
My days are spent lying, drinking, and  
chasing women. And every so often...

As he is about to unlock his door, Caleb hears a sound. He turns to see TWO ROUGH-LOOKING MEN standing a few feet away.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
... I chase the wrong one.

Caleb suddenly bolts. The men go after him. Caleb heads back to the bar. Before he can get there, the men tackle him.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
That's how I get myself in trouble.

EXT. CAR - TRUNK - MOMENTS LATER

The men dump the struggling Caleb into the trunk of the car.

CALEB (V.O.)  
If these boys work for her husband,  
they're probably going to kill me.

INT. CAR - TRUNK - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON a determined Caleb.

CALEB (V.O.)  
But I won't beg for my life. 'Cause I  
know it won't be worth much.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - MINUTES LATER

A car pulls over to the side of a desolate dirt road.

CALEB (V.O.)  
But something's happening to our town.

INT. CAR - TRUNK - MOMENTS LATER

The trunk opens and four hands reach in drag Caleb out.

CALEB (V.O.)  
It's like the Devil's grabbed hold and  
he won't let go.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - CONTINUOUS

WIDE SHOT of the men as they drag Caleb from the car.

CALEB (V.O.)  
Everyone I know, my family, friends...  
they're all suffering in some way.

One man grabs Caleb and holds him while the other begins beating him. Caleb falls to his knees.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
It's not right. Their lives shouldn't  
be this hard. They deserve better. So  
I'll beg for them.

One man takes out a gun out and points it at Caleb.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
And if you also feel like saving my  
life tonight, I wouldn't object.

The man then pistol-whips Caleb. Caleb falls to the ground.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Anyway, that's all I got to say.

WIDE SHOT as the two men turn and walk away.

CALEB (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
In Jesus Christ's name, I pray. Amen.

CLOSE ON Caleb as he passes out and his eyes close shut.

We're ON an OVERHEAD SHOT of Caleb as he lies in the middle of the road. JOYOUS GOSPEL MUSIC begins to play.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

A pair of dusty old boots walk into frame.

CHOIR

*GONNA LAY DOWN MY BURDEN, DOWN BY THE  
RIVERSIDE...*

We're ON a man's back as he walks. He carries a duffel bag.

CHOIR (CONT'D)

*... DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE. DOWN BY THE  
RIVERSIDE...*

WIDE SHOT of this MAN as he walks down this deserted road.

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

*... GONNA LAY DOWN MY BURDEN, DOWN BY  
THE RIVERSIDE AND STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

MEDIUM SHOT of the back of the man's head as he walks past a sign that reads, "WELCOME TO HALLELUJAH. POP. 20,367."

INT. TURNER HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

ANGLE on a smiling RYE TURNER, 40, as he tightens his tie, getting ready for church.

CHOIR (V.O.)

*I AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

INT. TURNER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

ANGLE on a determined RUTH TURNER, 39, as she licks her hand and smooths down the hair of a stoic MATTHEW TURNER, 8.

CHOIR

*AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

INT. TURNER HOUSE - WILLOW'S BEDROOM - DAY

ANGLE on a thoughtful WILLOW TURNER, 18, brushing her hair.

CHOIR

*AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

INT. TURNER HOME - FOYER - DAY

ANGLE on a BIBLE. A hand enters frame and grabs it.

(CONTINUED)

CHOIR  
*HALLELUJAH...*

INT. ROMAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

ANGLE on a formidable DEL ROMAN, 42, as he flicks lint off of his expensive Italian suit.

CHOIR (V.O.)  
*AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

ANGLE on a sexy VEDA ROMAN, 26, as she puts on red lipstick.

CHOIR (CONT'D)  
*AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

EXT. ROMAN HOUSE - FOYER - DAY

ANGLE on a cocky GIDEON ROMAN, 21, as he preens in a mirror.

CHOIR  
*AIN'T GONNA STUDY WAR NO MORE...*

Del and Veda pass in the b.g. Gideon grabs a bible and exits.

EXT. TURNER HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Rye emerges from the house and hurries his family to the truck.

CHOIR  
*GONNA PUT ON A LONG WHITE ROBE, DOWN  
BY THE RIVERSIDE...*

EXT. ROMAN HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - DAY

Del and his family saunter to their car.

CHOIR  
*... DOWN BY THE RIVERSIDE, DOWN BY THE  
RIVERSIDE...*

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

WIDE SHOT of both vehicles as they head down the highway.

CHOIR  
*GONNA PUT ON A LONG WHITE ROBE, DOWN  
BY THE RIVERSIDE...*

They both pass by the MAN, still walking on the side of the road. He looks up to see that they are headed for a church that looms in the distance.

CHOIR (CONT'D)  
... AND STUDY WAR NO MORE.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

WE'RE ON a pair of hands on a keyboard holding the last chord of the song.

REVEAL Ruth at the organ. Matthew sits beside her.

REVEREND MOTT, 60, arrives at the podium.

REVEREND MOTT  
I want to thank the choir for singing that particular song. That's a helpful reminder to you all that we'll be holding services next week at Cooper's Creek. And we'll be baptizing folks in the river. Just like the old days...

ANGLE on Rye, seated beside Willow. He winks at someone O.S.

ANGLE on Ruth who smiles back at him. Matthew stares blankly at the keyboard.

REVEREND MOTT (CONT'D)  
I also want to acknowledge the man responsible for our brand new pipe organ. We must thank him once again for his unbelievable generosity. Del Roman, stand up and take a bow.

Del Roman stands up in the pew and waves to the congregation as they applaud. Del basks proudly in their appreciation.

As Rye joins others in clapping, DEACON MAY, 45, comes up behind him and taps him on the shoulder. He motions for Rye to follow him. Rye hands his bible to Willow and exits.

ANGLE on Del continue to wave to the congregation.

EXT. CHURCH - SIDE DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Deacon May and Rye emerge.

DEACON MAY

Got a call from the hospital. Your brother's been hurt.

RYE

(stunned)

How?

DEACON MAY

He was found on the side of the road this morning. Someone had beat him up.

RYE

Did he say who did it?

DEACON MAY

Caleb's still unconscious.

RYE

Okay. I've got to go to him. Can you let Ruth and Willow know what's happened?

DEACON MAY

Of course.

Rye starts to head out. Deacon May stops him.

DEACON MAY (CONT'D)

And Rye? I'll make sure everyone here prays for you and your brother.

RYE

Deacon, I'm going to find out who did this to Caleb. And when I do, that's who you should be praying for.

Rye exits. Off Deacon May's concerned reaction, we:

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Rye crosses through the church, up the aisle, passing Veda and Del who are seated in a pew. Veda adjusts her incredibly low-cut red dress. Del thumbs through his program.

Seated on the other side of Del is IDA SIMPSON, a trouble-making old bitty. Ida gives Veda the once-over. Del notices.

DEL

Morning, Mrs. Simpson. Don't you look nice today.

IDA

Why thank you, Mr. Roman. I have to ask. Do you really think your wife's dress is appropriate for church?

Del looks at Veda, then back at Ida.

DEL

Not sure. But every time I see her in it, I do say, 'Thank you, Jesus'.

Del grins. Ida looks at him with disdain.

IDA

Fine, make jokes. I think you should know that outfit makes some people uncomfortable.

Ida turns away. Del stares at her for a beat, then leans in.

DEL

(smiling)

I don't like upsetting people. Maybe Veda and I should go worship somewhere else. We could go hang out with the Methodists. They won't mind her sexy red dress 'cause they'll know it comes with my sexy green money. And I can start buying them stained glass windows and hymnals and pipe organs. Of course, the reverend will want to know why I took my Christian charity over to the competition. I wonder how he'll feel when he finds out I left 'cause Mrs. Simpson needed to insult my wife.

(pointedly)

Think he'll be... uncomfortable?

Del stops smiling. His anger is clear. Ida is now unnerved.

IDA

Sorry. I didn't mean to offend you.

DEL

I'd say I forgive you, but I don't like to lie in church.

Del smiles, then turns away. As Ida stares at him, we...

INT. HOSPITAL - CALEB'S ROOM - DAY

CLOSE on a severely bruised Caleb, as he lies unconscious in bed. The only sound is the beeping of a heart monitor.

REVEAL Rye, seated beside the bed, staring at his brother. No longer able to control his rising anger, sadness, and frustration, he suddenly gets up and races out of the room.

INT. COUNTRY STORE - DAY

CLOSE ON a hand dropping a six-pack on the counter.

REVEAL Rye at the counter. A CASHIER scans the item.

CASHIER

Rye, I thought you quit drinking.

RYE

(reaching for wallet)

I've had a real bad day.

INT. ROMAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE on a hand placing an open bottle of wine on the table.

REVEAL DEL seated at a table. Also seated are Veda, Gideon, and DULCIE PREJEAN, 70. Dulcie is black and blind.

GIDEON

Sorry you missed church today, Miss Dulcie. The service was real nice.

MISS DULCIE

Wish I could've gone, but my hip was acting me again.

DEL

Were you able to sleep at all?

MISS DULCIE

Not a wink.

(then)

Of course, I wasn't the only one around here who couldn't sleep. Isn't that right, Veda?

Veda looks up from her food, caught.

VEDA

I don't know what you mean.

(CONTINUED)

MISS DULCIE

Wasn't that you I heard driving away  
last night? Around midnight?

Veda shoots daggers at Dulcie, who grins slyly. Veda then  
looks over at Del, who is livid.

DEL

That true, Veda? Did you sneak out  
after I was asleep?

VEDA

I needed a little air, that's all.

DULCIE

She didn't come home 'til four.

Del slams his fist on the table. Veda turns to Dulcie.

VEDA

That's it. Next time you break a hip,  
I'm gonna let you just lay there.

DEL

You went dancing again, didn't you?

VEDA

I didn't do anything wrong.

DEL

You're a married women. You know  
better than to go to seedy bars and  
dance with strange men.

VEDA

I'm just trying to have a good time.

DEL

You're supposed to have a good time  
with me. I'm your husband.

VEDA

Well, you're never here. You're always  
off at that store of yours. And I got  
no one to talk to but an old blind  
woman who'd stab me in the back if she  
could see to find a knife.

DEL

You're not going dancing anymore,  
Veda. Do you hear me?

VEDA  
I don't work for you anymore. I'll do  
what I want.

DEL  
I forbid it.

VEDA  
And just how are you going to stop me?

There is silence. Veda and Del glare at each other. Finally:

MISS DULCIE  
This meat is awful tough. Could  
somebody hand me a knife?

Off Veda's reaction, we...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Rye's truck drives down the desolate road.

INT. RYE'S TRUCK - DAY

Rye is still clearly emotional. After a beat, he turns and  
looks down at his side.

Rye's POV - The six pack of beer sits in the passenger seat.

CLOSE ON Rye as he stares at the beer he knows he can't have.  
Rye sighs then looks back out the windshield.

Rye's POV - The truck has drifted to the side of the road and  
is about to hit the MAN we saw walking earlier.

A panicked Rye suddenly twists the steering wheel.

In a WIDE SHOT we see the truck as it swerves and flips over.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. ROAD - LATER

Rye, lying on the side of the road, opens his eyes to see...

... the man he almost hit. This is JARED, 33. Jared leans  
against the truck, sipping a beer. He sees that Rye is awake.

CONTINUED:

JARED

Hey. I'm drinking one of your beers. I figured you wouldn't mind, seeing as how you almost killed me.

Jared grins, then takes another swallow. Rye struggles to raise himself up.

RYE

What happened?

JARED

You had an accident. Remember?

Jared points to Rye's truck that now sits in the middle of the road, completely battered.

RYE

Oh, right. I swerved to avoid you.

JARED

And then you rolled your truck a few times. It was exciting.

RYE

Was I thrown clear?

JARED

No, I pulled you out.

RYE

Thank you.

JARED

Don't get too emotional. I pulled the beer out first. I'm Jared, by the way. Jared O'Neal.

RYE

Glad to meet you. My name is...

JARED

Rye Turner. Yeah, I know.

(off Rye's look)

I looked through your wallet.

RYE

What?

(CONTINUED)

JARED

You were unconscious for almost an hour. I got bored.

RYE

Why didn't you call an ambulance?

JARED

Didn't think you needed one.

As Rye walks to the truck he notices a beer can lying on the road. He looks at Jared.

RYE

Just so you know, I wasn't drinking.

JARED

I know.

Jared smiles gently. Rye gets in the truck and turns the key in the ignition. Nothing happens. Rye gets out.

RYE

Guess I should check under the hood.

JARED

What do you know about trucks?

RYE

Less than nothing.

Rye opens the hood and looks inside. As he does:

RYE (CONT'D)

So what were you doing out here?

JARED

Just walking.

RYE

This is the middle of nowhere. You must have been walking a long time.

JARED

You have no idea.

Rye gets back in the truck and tries to start it. Nothing.  
(NOTE: At this point, Rye can no longer see Jared.)

RYE

So what do you know about trucks?

JARED  
Less than you do.  
(then)  
But I can give it a shot.

Jared crosses to the engine. He looks inside.

JARED (CONT'D)  
Try it again.

Rye does. It doesn't start.

RYE  
If we have to walk to town, we better  
get started. It'll be dark soon.

JARED  
Try it one more time.

Jared puts his hand on the side of the truck. He closes his eyes and then... the truck starts.

JARED (CONT'D)  
How about that? You are good to go.

RYE  
Thank you. So... you need a lift? I'll  
take you anywhere you want to go.

JARED  
Know of a place to eat? I'm starving.

RYE  
As it happens, my family owns the best  
diner in Hallelujah. And you can have  
whatever you want. On the house.

JARED  
Free food and I didn't get hit by a  
truck. It's my lucky day.

Jared crosses and gets into the truck.

RYE  
This has been a real bad day for me. I  
was so upset I wasn't paying attention  
to the road. You came out of nowhere.  
It's a miracle I didn't hit you.

JARED  
Truer words have never been spoken.

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CONTINUED: (4)

Rye puts the truck into gear. As they drive down the road,  
we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. CRACKED KETTLE DINER - NIGHT

We're CLOSE ON a child's hand gently tapping his fingers.

REVEAL Matthew seated at a table, staring into space as his hand quietly taps out a rhythm only he can hear.

In a WIDE SHOT we see a busy diner. Gideon sits by himself at a table. Willow crosses to him, bill in hand.

WILLOW  
Anything else?

GIDEON  
Thanks. I'm good. Keep the change.

Gideon hands her cash. Willow starts to go, then stops.

WILLOW  
This is a hundred dollar bill.

GIDEON  
Well, you deserve a big tip. You're a good waitress.

WILLOW  
I forgot your toast and spilled coffee on your boots. What is this?

GIDEON  
Honestly? I wanted to do something nice for you.

WILLOW  
Why?

GIDEON  
I've been away at school for a few years. You probably don't remember me.

WILLOW  
I remember you, Gideon.

GIDEON  
See, I wasn't sure. When I first came in, you were pretty cold to me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WILLOW

That's 'cause I remember you.

Willow goes to the cash register. Gideon rises and follows.

GIDEON

Guess I deserve that. I was never very nice to you and your friends.

WILLOW

You were quarterback of the football team. We were giggly freshman girls. You had every right to make fun of us.

GIDEON

Still, I could've been nicer.

WILLOW

I'm sure we've both grown up a lot since then.

GIDEON

So... you don't hate me?

WILLOW

No. I do not hate you.

GIDEON

Do you not hate me enough to go out with me?

Willow stops counting out bills and looks up at him. She is both surprised and intrigued, but before she can answer...

RUTH

Everything okay here, Willow?

WILLOW

Oh, yeah. I was just telling this gentleman he gave me a hundred dollar bill by mistake.

(handing money)

Hope you come again.

GIDEON

Oh, you can count on it.

Gideon grins and crosses off. As Willow watches him go...

(CONTINUED)

RUTH

Del Roman's son... I wish he wouldn't  
come around here.

ANGLE on the entrance. As Gideon crosses out, he passes Rye  
and Jared who enter.

Ruth sees them and quickly crosses over.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Rye, where have you been? The hospital  
said you left hours ago.

RYE

It's quite the story. But before I  
tell you, I want you to meet someone.  
(indicating Jared)  
This is Jared O'Neal. Jared, this is  
my wife, Ruth.

JARED

Pleasure to meet you, Ruth. Rye's told  
me a lot about you.

Jared holds out his hand. Ruth steps forward, but doesn't  
take it. She pushes past him and Rye and goes to the door.

RUTH

(looking out door)  
What the heck happened to our truck?

Rye and Jared exchange a smile.

INT. CRACKED KETTLE - LATER THAT EVENING

Willow carries a plate of bread to a table where Jared, Rye,  
Ruth, and Matthew are seated and eating.

RYE

... and when I woke up, there was  
Jared. He was watching over me. And  
then he helped me get the truck  
started.

Rye looks at Jared who smiles as he continues to eat.

RUTH

Well, I guess we owe you a debt of  
gratitude, Mr. O'Neal.

JARED

This is best meal I've had in I don't know how long. I think we're even.

WILLOW

So what were you doing all the way out on the interstate?

JARED

I was coming to Hallelujah.

WILLOW

But... you were walking?

JARED

Yeah. I don't have a car.

WILLOW

If you were coming from Huntly, that's thirty miles away. You must have been walking for an awfully long time.

JARED

That I was.

Jared notices Ruth using her fork to feed Matthew, who sits passively, eating what she gives him. Jared reacts.

RYE

You're liking that meatloaf, huh?

JARED

It's my favorite meal.

RYE

Really?

JARED

Oh, yeah. It was the one thing they served in prison that I could tolerate.

Jared continues eating. The family stares at him, stunned.

RYE

You were in prison?

JARED

Yeah. Could someone pass the gravy?

RUTH

Why?

JARED

'Cause I can't reach it from here.

RUTH

(annoyed)

Why were you in prison?

JARED

Oh. I sort of hurled a man through a plate glass window.

WILLOW

How come?

JARED

It's hard to explain.

RUTH

Try.

Jared sets down his fork and looks at Ruth quite seriously.

JARED

We all come face to face with evil at some point in our lives. It may take the form of cruelty, brutality, corruption. Whatever it is, some people can see this evil up close and walk right on by. I can't.

Jared picks up his fork and begins to eat again. The family watches him in stunned silence. Finally:

JARED (CONT'D)

Yes, sir. Mighty fine meatloaf.

As Ruth and Rye exchange a look, we...

INT. ROMAN HOUSE - MISS DULCIE'S BEDROOM - DAY

Miss Dulcie sits in a chair, playing an auto harp.

MISS DULCIE

(singing)

*LEANING, LEANING, SAFE AND SECURE FROM  
ALL ALARMS; LEANING, LEANING, LEANING  
ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS...*

As she continues to sing, she hears a voice join in, singing the contrapuntal melody. REVEAL Del standing in her doorway.

DEL (singing) <i>LEANING ON JESUS, LEANING ON JESUS, SAFE AND SECURE FROM ALL ALARMS; LEANING ON JESUS, LEANING ON JESUS, LEANING ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS.</i>	MISS DULCIE (singing) <i>LEANING, LEANING, SAFE AND SECURE FROM ALL ALARMS; LEANING, LEANING, LEANING ON THE EVERLASTING ARMS.</i>
--	--

They finish. Del enters and sits on the stool next to Dulcie. He takes her hand.

MISS DULCIE (CONT'D)  
Well, I know you didn't come here to  
sing hymns with me. What's wrong?

Del sits quietly for a moment, then:

DEL  
What am I going to do about Veda?

MISS DULCIE  
I told you not to marry her. I was on  
my knees begging you not to bring that  
gaudy piece of trash into this house.  
And what did you say to me?

DEL  
Miss Dulcie, please.

MISS DULCIE  
"Shut up." That's what you said. The  
woman who put diapers on you. And  
taught you every hymn you know. You  
said it was none of my business who  
you married. And now you have the gall  
to complain about her? If I could see  
you, I'd kick you cross the room.

DEL  
I had fallen in love, Miss Dulcie. I  
wasn't ready to hear the truth then.

MISS DULCIE  
(grinning)  
Does that mean you're ready now?

DEL  
You know something?

MISS DULCIE

Where I'm sitting is right above the guest room. If someone makes a call, I can hear it through the vent. Veda uses the phone in there sometimes. I've heard her tell him she loves him.  
(off Del's silence)  
You okay?

DEL

No. But I needed to hear it. Thanks.

Del rises, kisses her on the head, then crosses to the door.

MISS DULCIE

And Del? She's not only humiliating you, she's humiliating our entire family. Anything you do to her is justified.

Del nods, then exits. Miss Dulcie resumes playing her harp.

INT. CRACKED KETTLE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jared washes dishes. He hands them to Rye, who dries.

JARED

I must say, you got a lovely family, Rye Turner.

RYE

I like to think so.

JARED

Couldn't help but notice your son is kind of quiet.

RYE

Yeah. He had an accident a few years back.

JARED

What happened?

RYE

Matthew was upstairs playing in his room. Ruth left the window open. Just a crack. Somehow he fell out and... well, we got him to the E.R. as soon as we could. But we were too late. There was brain damage.

JARED

I'm so sorry.

RYE

The doctors told us Matthew would never be the same. Truth is, Ruth changed as much as he did. I wish you could have known her before. She was so filled with joy. Her smile could light up a room.

(then)

She doesn't smile so much anymore.

JARED

That'll change. In time.

RYE

I don't know. Bad things keep happening to us. Right after we got married, I lost my father, very unexpectedly. Then Matthew got hurt. Now my brother is in the hospital. It's like God is testing me and I don't know why.

JARED

You'll understand when he wants you to.

RYE

I guess so.

(then)

What's your story? Got a family? A home you're trying to get back to?

JARED

I don't have a home. And whatever family I had, well, they're long gone.

RYE

Then where were you walking to?

JARED

No place. Any place.

RYE

Well, until you find a place, why don't you stay here?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. TURNER HOUSE - HALLWAY - AN HOUR LATER

Ruth enters frame.

RUTH

What do you mean he's staying here?!

REVEAL Ruth is talking to Rye as he pulls linens and a pillow from a hallway closet.

RYE

If we don't put him up, he'll spend the night sleeping in a field.

RUTH

That's what he signed up for when he decided to become a drifter in the first place.

RYE

I promise you, he's not dangerous.

RUTH

You sure about that? Only thing we know about him is that he likes to throw men threw plate glass windows.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - FOYER/LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jared stands at the bottom of the stairs. He grins as he listens to the muffled sounds of Ruth and Rye fighting.

After a beat, Jared's gaze drifts over to the living room. He sees something which draws him in.

Jared's POV - Matthew sits alone in a chair.

Jared crosses in slowly, as if not to scare the boy. Jared takes the boy in for a beat, then notices something unusual.

Jared's POV - Matthew hands rest on his legs, miming a typing motion on his thighs.

Jared is intrigued by this.

Suddenly the phone next to Jared rings. He looks at it.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Rye and Ruth are still there. The phone rings again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RYE

Ruth, I'm going to help this man and that's all there is to it.

RUTH

Fine! I just wish I understood why this is so important to you.

RYE

This is an chance for us to practice what we preach. We can show kindness and compassion to a fellow human being, who is down on his luck. And I think that's something God would approve of.

RUTH

Is that what this is? You're trying to score points with the Almighty?

RYE

After the misery we've endured, do you blame me?

Rye heads down the stairs. Ruth follows.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Rye and Ruth come down the stairs.

RUTH

Well, I am sorry to disappoint you, Rye. The Lord isn't some cosmic slot machine you put good deeds into, hoping to get something wonderful in return. It just doesn't work that way.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter to find Jared holding the phone. He turns to them.

JARED

It's the hospital. Your brother just woke up.

Ruth and Rye exchange a slow look at each other. As a knowing smile spreads across Jared's face...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

An injured Caleb waits anxiously at the curb. He looks around nervously. Suddenly, he sees Rye who rushes up.

CALEB

Hey, big brother. What are you doing here this time of night?

RYE

The hospital called. They said you woke up and were trying to leave.

CALEB

Yeah. My taxi should be here soon.

RYE

You can't go anywhere. You're hurt.

CALEB

Well, there are folks in this town who would prefer I heal elsewhere.

RYE

You mean the guys that beat you up?

CALEB

They came real close to killing me. I'm not giving 'em a second chance.

RYE

Caleb, at this point I gotta ask. Why did they do this to you?

CALEB

(sighs)

It's my own damn fault. I knew she was married. I knew people would talk. But she was so fine. And I was so drunk.

RYE

Just tell me her name.

CALEB

Veda Roman.

RYE

Del Roman's wife?!

(CONTINUED)

CALEB

Just so we're clear, she asked me to dance. I should've said 'no', but the pretty ones never ask me to dance.

RYE

Is that all you did? Just dance?

CALEB

See, that's the thing. She was real sad that night. I could see it in her eyes. I asked what was wrong. She said she had this 'friend'. And he didn't want to see her no more 'cause he was feeling guilty. Then I said I'd never feel guilty about being with someone as fine as her. That made her laugh. And then... she kissed me.

(off Rye's reaction)

I know. This is why I should only dance with ugly women.

RYE

Look, I understand you're scared. But you got to report this to the police.

CALEB

No way.

RYE

If you don't, Del will get away with it.

CALEB

That's what rich men do. They get away with things. I don't begrudge 'em that. Hell, some day, when I'm rich, I want to get away with things, too.

The taxi pulls up. Caleb starts to go to it. Rye stops him.

RYE

Come on, K. We got to get you justice.

CALEB

You get it for me. Okay, big brother?

Rye nods. Caleb gets into the cab. As it drives off, we...

INT. CRACKED KETTLE - DINING ROOM - DAY

Ruth wipes down a table. She looks up to see Jared standing in the doorway.

RUTH

I thought you were still at the house.

JARED

I came into town to see if you needed any help. I'd like to earn my keep while I'm staying with you.

RUTH

(dryly)

Got any idea how long that's going to be?

JARED

Not too long judging by the sound of your voice.

Jared laughs. Ruth stares at him.

JARED (CONT'D)

You know, some people tell me I'm funny.

RUTH

Yeah, I got people who lie to me too.

(grabbing broom)

You know how to use one of these.

JARED

Yes, ma'am.

Ruth hands the broom to Jared, then goes back to her cleaning. As Jared begins sweeping, he looks at O.S.

Jared's POV: Matthew sits at a booth, doing nothing.

Jared looks back at Ruth. He begins sweeping. Then:

JARED (CONT'D)

You know, Rye talked to me about Matt last night. I can't begin to imagine what it's like having a child with such 'special' needs.

Ruth doesn't respond. She keeps cleaning.

(CONTINUED)

JARED (CONT'D)

What's been the hardest part?

Ruth stops cleaning. She looks intently at Jared.

RUTH

No one's ever asked me that before.

JARED

You don't have to talk about it if you don't want to.

Ruth thinks for a beat, then lays down her sponge.

RUTH

The doctors told me he will never talk and he will never be able to accomplish anything you'd expect of a normal child. That was difficult. But when they told me he will always need to be taken care of, that was the hardest part. Because it meant I can't die first.

JARED

You have strength I can only dream of.

RUTH

I'd fall apart if it wasn't for Rye. He's the only thing that holds this family together.

(then)

He never blamed me. He never held it against me that I allowed his child to be... damaged. And as the years go by and I get angrier and more resentful, he just... keeps forgiving me.

(then)

Now that I think about it... that's the hardest part.

Ruth exits. A sympathetic Jared watches her go. His interest is then stirred by something he sees out the window.

Jared's POV - Rye in an argument with SHERIFF BOB, 45.

Jared is intrigued by this development.

EXT. HALLELUJAH TOWN SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Rye and Sheriff Bob are in the middle of a heated discussion.

RYE

You have to investigate!

SHERIFF BOB

Investigate what? Your brother hasn't reported a crime.

RYE

Talk to the hospital. They have records of his injuries.

SHERIFF BOB

Which he could have gotten falling in a ditch.

RYE

You want proof he was attacked? Talk to the folks who were at Sweet Pete's that night. Maybe they saw something.

SHERIFF BOB

No. I don't have time for this.

The sheriff starts to walk away.

RYE

I guess you don't. You're probably busy driving around in that new police cruiser.

The sheriff stops.

RYE (CONT'D)

That is what I heard. Right? Del Roman donated two new cars to the department last month.

SHERIFF BOB

You got no proof Del was involved in this.

RYE

I told you about Caleb and Veda. That's motive.

SHERIFF BOB

That's gossip.

RYE

And this is a conflict of interest.  
I'll be mentioning that when I talk to  
the state police.

Rye starts to leave. The sheriff follows after him.

SHERIFF BOB

Go ahead. And I'll tell 'em about your  
grudge against Del.

RYE

This isn't about that.

SHERIFF BOB

I think it is. I think you hate him so  
much you'd drag his name through the  
mud just for sport.

RYE

He hurt my brother.

SHERIFF BOB

Can't wait to see some proof.

Sheriff Bob turns and crosses away. Rye watches him go, then  
quickly exits frame the other way.

INT. CRACKED KETTLE DINER - MOMENTS LATER

Rye storms in off the street. He passes Jared, who stands  
there sweeping, and crosses into the kitchen. Jared follows.

INT. CRACKED KETTLE DINER - CONTINUOUS

Rye enters, goes to the refrigerator and grabs a beer. He  
sets it down on the counter and looks at it. Jared appears.  
They both stand silently for a moment. Finally:

JARED

Tell me.

RYE

Del Roman had my brother beaten just  
because he kissed his wife. Sheriff  
Bob won't investigate because he likes  
Del's money.

(picking up the beer)

And I want a drink real bad.

JARED

What are you going to do?

RYE

There's nothing I can do.

JARED

Sure there is. You just don't see it yet. But you will.

RYE

You think more of me than I do.

JARED

You can't see yourself. But I see you. I see you're not the kinda person who sees corruption and walks on by.

(then)

So, again, what are you going to do?

Rye takes this in. Then:

RYE

I might have an idea.

JARED

Thought you might.

Jared takes the beer away. Rye watches as he puts it back in the refrigerator. Jared smiles at him, then exits.

INT. MOVING TRUCK - DAY

Del stands in a darkened space. We don't know where we are.

DEL

I don't know why I wanted to marry a beautiful woman.

(then)

I guess I thought it'd be fun to walk down the street with Veda on my arm. But when I look into the eyes of the men that pass us, I don't see envy. I don't see them being jealous of me. No, I see them all thinking of ways to take her away from me. And that drives me absolutely crazy.

(then)

Now I want to say two things to you. First, are your wives attractive?

REVEAL the TWO MEN in who beat up Caleb.

MAN #1  
Not really.

DEL  
Well, you're lucky.

MAN #2  
What's the second thing?

DEL  
If you find out who Veda's been  
screwing, you can both have an extra  
week of vacation.

The two men smile. Del crosses out.

EXT. LOADING DOCK - CONTINUOUS

Del emerges from a truck onto a platform. As he walks away we see ROMAN EMPORIUM insignia on the side of the truck.

INT. ROMAN EMPORIUM - DAY

Willow is there, staring longingly at dresses.

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Are you stalking me?

She turns to see Gideon, working as a floor manager, behind her.

WILLOW  
No, I'm just waiting for my friend,  
Amy. She works here.

GIDEON  
Would you like to stalk me? 'Cause I  
can give you my schedule.

WILLOW  
I'd love to be obsessed with you, but  
between work and school...

They exchange a smile. Willow then turns and begins looking at more dresses. Gideon follows her.

GIDEON

So I'm not sure if you heard about this big fund-raiser they're having at the college. There's gonna be a band and lots of fancy food to eat. Maybe you want to go with me. Check it out.

WILLOW

I heard about that. It's black tie. I have nothing to wear to that. But thank you.

GIDEON

We got some real nice dresses right there. Just pick one out.

WILLOW

I can't afford those.

GIDEON

You can use my employee discount.

WILLOW

Gideon...

GIDEON

That's twenty per cent off. Come on. You can't afford not to date me.

Willow laughs. Gideon grins. Then:

WILLOW

It's just... I'm not allowed to shop here.

GIDEON

Oh.

WILLOW

My father doesn't have a lot of rules, but that's one of them.

There is an awkward silence. Then:

GIDEON

Hey, here's an idea. Why don't I just buy you a dress?

WILLOW

(stunned)  
What?

GIDEON

Your dad can't get mad about a gift.

WILLOW

Hold on.

GIDEON

And this way you'll have something to wear to the party.

WILLOW

I can't go out with you, Gideon!

This stops Gideon cold. He looks at her, hurt.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Our fathers hate each other. It's just never going to happen.

They begin walking again. Beat. Gideon stops.

GIDEON

Why is your dad still angry about all that stuff? That was twenty years ago.

WILLOW

I don't know. But he is.

GIDEON

Well, I think it's time he got over it. Why should he ruin your life just cause he doesn't understand business?!

Willow wheels around and faces Gideon.

WILLOW

You are not allowed to criticize my father. He's the best man I've ever known. I will honor him anyway I can. And if that's means having nothing to do with your family, then so be it.

She starts to storm off when her friend, Amy, appears.

AMY

Hey, Willow. Hope I didn't keep you waiting.

Willow grabs her friend and drags her off. As a troubled Gideon watches them exit the store, we...

INT. TURNER HOUSE - NIGHT

Rye and Deacon May stand, talking, by the Deacon's car.

RYE

So. You think I'm off-base?

DEACON MAY

No. You're right on. When it comes to Del Roman, Sheriff Bob's been looking the other way for a long time now.

(then)

Remember when Ed Polk's bar caught on fire? Most folks don't know this but the week before Del tried to buy some of Ed's land. Ed went to the sheriff, but he refused to investigate. And now...

RYE

... Ed's land is Del's parking lot.

DEACON MAY

He's threatened his competition, he's bribed city officials. Del's hands have gotten dirty the past few years.

RYE

And you're sure about all this?

DEACON MAY

I have a very reliable source.

RYE

Well, that's it then. We got to start by removing Sheriff Bob from office. And that's not going to be easy.

DEACON MAY

Just tell me what you need me to do.

As the two men exchange a grim smile, we...

EXT. TURNER HOUSE - DAY

Rye enters to find Ruth preparing dinner. She looks up.

RUTH

What were you talking to Deacon May about?

RYE

He's going to help me organize a meeting tomorrow.

RUTH

What kind of meeting?

RYE

I asked some important folks in the town to come to the church tomorrow. I'm going to convince them to help me remove Sheriff Bob from office.

RUTH

Why? Because he won't help Caleb?

RYE

That's just part of it. I've learned Del Roman's got a lot of skeletons in his closet and the sheriff is the one who keeps 'em polished.

RUTH

You're going to take on Del Roman?

RYE

I'm not afraid of him.

RUTH

Well, I am. He's got money and power and important friends. Why would you think you could go up against him?

RYE

Someone's got to try.

RUTH

Why does it have to be you?

JARED (O.S.)

Why not him?

Ruth and Rye turn to see Jared standing in the doorway.

RUTH

This is a private conversation.

JARED

Not when you're talking that loud.  
(then)

(MORE)

JARED (CONT'D)

Don't you understand your husband is trying to do the right thing here?

RYE

It's okay, Jared.

JARED

Why can't you support him?

RUTH

'Cause I'm afraid of what could happen to us!

JARED

Yes, there are risks. But this is where faith comes in!

RUTH

That's a problem then! 'Cause most of my faith got used up waiting for my son to start talking again. The rest of it was spent looking into his eyes for some sort of sign he was still in there. Yeah. If you want to talk about faith, you came to the wrong house!

JARED

(quietly)

You know, sometimes you got to look up from your own problems to see there's something so much bigger than us in this world. And then we have to remind ourselves to trust in it.

Ruth glares at Jared, trying to control herself.

RUTH

I don't trust anything anymore. Least of all you. Come morning, I want you out of my house.

Ruth exits. As Rye and exchange a look, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

We're ON a RED LIPSTICK. A woman's hand enters frame and picks it up. REVEAL Veda looking into a mirror.

VEDA

My daddy always liked his liquor. More than he liked Mama even. He'd sneak out of the house after supper so he could be alone with that flask of his. Mama would holler, but he wouldn't come in till his whiskey had run out.

(applying lipstick)

One night I went out looking for him. I couldn't have been more than five. I found him behind the silo and I asked Daddy why he drank so much. And he said, 'There are times when I need the pain to go away.' He then put his coat around me and sang some old Baptist hymn till I fell asleep in his arms. My daddy liked his liquor. But he loved me. The doctors diagnosed him with Alzheimer's seven years ago. They said he'd need constant care. And I didn't have a cent to my name. That's when I decided to marry Del Roman. I knew he was cruel. And I knew I'd be unhappy. But my daddy now stays in the fanciest nursing home in the state. And he's gonna stay there till... the pain has gone away.

(then)

What I'm trying to say is... you don't have to feel guilty about what we've been doing here. God knows how much I need you. Remember that. We will be forgiven.

Veda rises and exits. REVEAL she was talking to Deacon May.

EXT. DEACON MAY'S HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Veda cautiously steps out onto the front porch and furtively looks around. Once she's confident that her departure will go unnoticed, she quickly exits.

(CONTINUED)

PULL BACK to REVEAL Del's men watching from a nearby parked car. They exchange a look. One of the men pulls out his mobile phone.

CLOSE ON the phone as the man begins to text Del.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Rye has gathered a handful of local business people to discuss removing the sheriff from office. As the meeting comes to an end and the crowd disperses, Del enters and angrily confronts Rye about his actions. Del accuses Rye of being motivated by jealousy and a misguided need for retribution. As they argue, we learn more about the long and twisted history between the Roman and Turner families. Del threatens to use his power and influence to ruin Rye. But Rye stands his ground. Del is shocked. But, before he can regroup, he is interrupted by the text from his men revealing that Veda has been having an affair with Deacon May. To Rye's surprise, Del angrily retreats.

INT/EXT. DEACON MAY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/PORCH - DAY

Deacon May is sipping a cup of tea. The doorbell rings. He crosses and opens the door to reveal a subdued Del.

DEL  
(gently)  
Deacon. I'm sorry for not calling  
first. Can we talk?

Deacon May, trying to hide his unease, forces a smile and nods.

INT. DEACON MAY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

CLOSE ON tea being poured into a cup. PULL BACK to REVEAL a nervous Deacon May pouring it into a cup being held by Del.

DEACON MAY  
You seem upset, Del. Something wrong?

DEL  
Guess you could say I'm having a  
'spiritual crisis'.

DEACON MAY  
In what way?

DEL

It's come to my attention that some people I trusted, have betrayed me.

DEACON MAY

(sweating)

Oh?

DEL

And my heart has just filled up with hatred for them.

DEACON MAY

So... how can I help you?

DEL

I can't live with this darkness in my heart. I need to... expel it. But I don't know how.

DEACON MAY

Perhaps you should start by forgiving these people.

DEL

Even if what they did to me is... practically unforgivable.

DEACON MAY

If God teaches us anything, it's that nothing is unforgiveable.

DEL

Really?

DEACON MAY

Yes. No matter how bad we've strayed, no matter how great the sin, God can forgive us.

DEL

Just like that?

DEACON MAY

Well, you have to repent. You have to pray and ask for his forgiveness.

Del looks at Deacon May and smiles.

DEL  
You know, this is exactly what I  
needed to hear. Thank you, Deacon.

DEACON MAY  
It was my pleasure.

Deacon May starts to rise. Del grabs him by the arm.

DEL  
Before I go, could we pray about this?

DEACON MAY  
Well, sure.

Deacon May closes his eyes and clasps his hands.

DEACON MAY (CONT'D)  
Dear Lord, please help Del as he tries  
to rid his heart of the hatred that  
has invaded it...

As the deacon continues to pray, Del opens his eyes.

CLOSE on Del's hand as he takes a gun from his jacket.

CLOSE ON Deacon May as he continues to pray.

DEACON MAY (CONT'D)  
... and show him that forgiveness is  
it's own reward.

CLOSE on the white tea pot. There is a gun shot. Blood  
spatters all over it. There is the sound of a thud.

REVEAL Del as he looks down at Deacon May's body.

After a beat, Del takes out his phone and dials.

DEL  
(into phone)  
Sheriff, I need you over here at  
Deacon May's house. Come alone. And  
bring a shovel.

Del ends the call and looks down at Deacon May's corpse.

FEMALE SINGER  
(singing)  
*I'M ON MY WAY, TO CANAAN LAND...*

INT. DEACON MAY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

CLOSE ON Deacon May's body as it is rolled up in an oriental rug.

FEMALE SINGER

(singing)

... I'M ON MY WAY, OH TO CANAAN  
LAND...

PULL BACK to REVEAL Del and the sheriff struggling to lift it.

EXT. FOREST - LATER

CLOSE ON a shovel piecing the earth.

FEMALE SINGER

(singing)

... ON MY WAY, CANAAN LAND, ON MY WAY,  
GLORY HALLELUJAH, I'M ON MY WAY...

PULL BACK to REVEAL Del and the sheriff digging a grave.

EXT. FOREST - HOURS LATER

CLOSE ON Deacon May's body, still wrapped in the rug.

FEMALE SINGER

(singing)

... WELL, ON MY WAY, TO CANAAN LAND;  
I'M ON MY WAY, OH TO CANAAN LAND...

PULL BACK to REVEAL Del and the sheriff callously tossing it into the grave.

EXT. FOREST - HOURS LATER

CLOSE ON a shovel patting down the dirt. PULL BACK to REVEAL Del and the sheriff as they give one last look at what they've done.

FEMALE SINGER

(singing)

ON MY WAY, CANAAN LAND, ON MY WAY,  
GLORY HALLELUJAH, I'M ON MY WAY...

As they get in the cruiser and pull away, an unknown POV REVEALS that someone else has been watching them.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Ruth, Rye, Willow, and Matthew stand at the foot of the stairs, clearly waiting for something. After a beat:

RUTH

I know you're both angry with me.

RYE

We're not angry. Just sad.

RUTH

I don't see why. You hardly know the man.

RYE

I can't explain it. There's just something about him. He's special.

RUTH

Well, I don't see it.

RYE

Well, you never looked.

WILLOW

Please don't fight.

There is silence. Finally:

RYE

I'm going to go pull the truck around front.

WILLOW

I'll go with you.

They exit. Ruth stands there, trying to contain her emotions. She crosses to Matthew who stands off to the side. She runs her hand through his hair. He doesn't respond.

JARED (O.S.)

Good morning, Ruth.

Ruth looks up to see Jared standing on the staircase.

RUTH

Morning.

JARED

Where's Rye?

CONTINUED:

RUTH

He's bringing the truck around for you.

JARED

He doesn't have to do that. I was just gonna start walking. Like I always do.

Ruth stares at Jared for a beat. Then:

RUTH

What kind of life is that for a grown man? Wandering around aimlessly. You need to settle. Put down some roots. Be around people who love you.

JARED

To be honest, lately, I've been thinking the same thing.

Jared and Ruth stand for a beat. Then:

RUTH

I made you a sack lunch for your trip. I'll go in and get it.

Ruth exits into the kitchen. Jared watches her go. He then turns to Matthew. He looks at the boy who stares off into nothingness. He crosses to him and kneels down on one knee. Matthew doesn't acknowledge him.

JARED

Hey. I prayed last night. I asked Him what your folks needed. And He told me... it's you. You've got come out of there. It's time for you to show them what you are capable of. Would you do that for me? Would you show 'em?

Matthew suddenly looks at Jared. And for the first time, we see Matthew focus his eyes on another human being. As he does, Jared grins.

INT. TURNER HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Ruth wraps a sandwich in plastic. As she puts it inside a brown paper sack, she hears a slow version of 'Down By the Riverside' being played on a piano. She looks up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RUTH

Willow, what are you doing here? I thought you were going with your daddy to get the truck.

Hearing no response, Ruth looks up from what she is doing. She sees something outside the window that confuses her.

Ruth's POV - Rye and Willow are standing by the truck.

Ruth frowns. This doesn't make sense to her. She takes a step to the living room.

RUTH (CONT'D)

Jared...?

She slowly moves toward the doorway. She stops when she sees Jared standing in the middle of the room. He is looking at something O.S. and smiling.

Ruth enters the room and we PULL BACK to REVEAL a child's hands in the foreground slowly, but firmly playing the keyboard.

CLOSE ON Ruth's face as she stares, thunderstruck.

OVER her shoulder we REVEAL Matthew playing the piano.

ANGLE ON Rye and Willow as they enter the front door.

RYE

Ruth, you can tell Jared we're ready to go.

Rye, hearing the music, stops. He looks at Willow, who shrugs. They enter the living room to see...

... an emotional Ruth kneeling beside Matthew who continues to play.

Rye and Willow stare, stunned and confused at what they're seeing.

CLOSE ON Matthew's hands as he finishes the hymn.

Ruth stares at him for a beat, unsure of what to do. She then grabs him and begins hugging him, rocking him back and forth. Matthew doesn't react to this.

Ruth looks up at Rye, tears in her eyes, but smiling a glorious smile.

(CONTINUED)

RUTH

Did you see him? Did you hear what he  
did? Our baby made music.

Ruth buries her head in Matthew's shoulder. Willow crosses  
and joins her mother and brother.

A stunned Rye looks over at Jared who looks at the tableau in  
front of him with a satisfied smile.

RYE

Did you do this?

JARED

Matthew did it. I just... encouraged  
him.

RYE

(emotional)

We never thought he'd ever... We just  
gave up hope, you know?

JARED

That's never a good idea.

Rye looks back at Ruth, who is rocking Matthew back and forth  
in a passionate embrace. Rye, starting to understand what has  
happened, slowly looks back at Jared.

RYE

Who are you?

Jared reaches out and puts his hand on Rye's shoulder.

JARED

I'm a friend.

As Jared grins, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

EXT. RIVER BANK - DAY

OPEN ON a WIDE SHOT of various churchgoers walking down the side of a hill to the river. Music is heard in the distance.

CLOSE ON a MALE SOLOIST playing a guitar. Choir members stand behind him, clapping in time to the music.

CLOSE ON a MALE SOLOIST playing a guitar. Choir members stand behind him, clapping in time to the music.

MALE SOLOIST

(singing)

*... JOSHUA FIT THE BATTLE OF JERICHO,  
JERICHO, JERICHO; JOSHUA FIT THE  
BATTLE OF JERICHO AND THE WALLS COME  
TUMBLING DOWN...*

REVEAL members of the congregation listening to the music. They sit on assorted benches and lawn chairs.

REVEAL Del, Veda, and Gideon as they emerge from their car. While they walk, Veda checks herself in her compact.

They cross to Reverend Mott who is in the middle of a serious conversation with the sheriff.

DEL

Reverend, what are you doing out here?  
I thought you be in the river by now,  
praying up a storm.

REVEREND MOTT

Deacon May never showed up.

Veda looks up from her compact.

DEL

That so?

REVEREND MOTT

He was supposed to be here an hour ago  
to help me set up. He's not picking up  
his phone. I'm starting to worry.

SHERIFF BOB

Reverend wants to have one of my boys  
drive to his house. See if he's okay.

(CONTINUED)

Del and the Sheriff exchange a look.

DEL  
Sounds like a plan. Now if you'll  
excuse us.

Del keeps walking. Veda and Gideon follow.

VEDA  
This isn't like Deacon May. He's  
usually so responsible.

DEL  
Well, I hope he's okay. I know how  
much you like him.

Del exits frame. Veda gives him a look of concern as she  
exits frame. Gideon stops when he notices something O.S.

Gideon's POV - Willow and Rye walking down the hill.

Gideon looks back at his family, then exits frame the  
opposite direction.

ANGLE ON Willow and Rye. Willow freezes when she sees a  
smiling Gideon walk right up to them.

GIDEON  
Hey there, Mr. Turner.

A beat as Rye stares at him.

GIDEON (CONT'D)  
Hi. I'm Gideon Roman.

RYE  
I know who you are. What can I do for  
you?

GIDEON  
I heard what happened between you and  
my father the other day. I'm sorry  
about that. He shouldn't have said  
those things. I've always heard you  
and your family are good people. And,  
truth be told, now that I'm back in  
town, I'd really like to get to know  
you all better.

RYE

Well... that's very kind of you. Thank  
you for talking to me.

Gideon crosses away. Rye and Willow resume walking.

RYE (CONT'D)

Willow, I'm curious. Does he ever come  
into the diner?

WILLOW

Sometimes.

RYE

And you talk to him.

WILLOW

Not really. A little.

RYE

Okay.  
(then)  
You like him.

Willow looks at her father, who wears a gently smile.

WILLOW

I don't know. Maybe.

Rye stops walking. Willow stops as well.

RYE

Well... that's too bad. Because he's  
the one boy in town I will not allow  
you to see. I'm sorry, but that's how  
it's got to be. Understand?

WILLOW

Yes, Daddy.

Rye crosses away. Willow watches him, her eyes brimming with  
her hurt.

ANGLE ON Gideon walking away. Suddenly Willow runs up to him.

WILLOW (CONT'D)

Thursday nights I run the diner by  
myself. That'd be a good night for you  
to stop by. Okay?

GIDEON

Okay.

Willow quickly crosses away. A grin spreads across Gideon's face as he watches her go.

ANGLE ON Reverend Mott, talking to the sheriff.

SHERIFF BOB

My boys should be arriving at the deacon's house any second now. If you can wait a few more minutes...

REVEREND MOTT

No, I gotta start baptizing before my arthritis medication wears off. I'd hate to dunk these folks and not be able to bring 'em back up again.

The reverend crosses away. He passes by Ruth, who stands with Matthew, talking to a group of woman. We STAY on Ruth.

RUTH

... and I called Doc Stone to tell him what happened and he didn't believe me. Said it was scientifically impossible. And I told him maybe so, but my boy was playing the piano, regardless. I tell you, Ida, I don't know the last time I was this happy.

Ruth gives Matthew a squeeze. Matthew looks at someone O.S. He gives a slight smile.

Matthew's POV - Jared stands a few feet away, looking at him.

CLOSE ON Jared as he grins back at the child.

EXT. RIVER - MINUTES LATER

REVEREND MOTT stands waist-high in the water. Beside him is a teenage girl, dressed in a white robe.

REVEREND MOTT

... and Jesus said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

REVEAL the congregation and choir who are crowded around on the river bank, watching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGLE ON Del and Sheriff Clement who stand halfway up the hill, watching the proceedings and talking.

SHERIFF BOB

The deacon's only been missing a couple of hours and folks are already starting to ask questions.

DEL

That's what people in a small town do. Let 'em.

Del watches as the sheriff fidgets nervously.

DEL (CONT'D)

Will you calm down?

SHERIFF BOB

I helped you bury a body last night. That means I'm an accessory after the fact. I could go to jail.

DEL

Relax. No one saw us.

SHERIFF BOB

I couldn't sleep when I got home. I just laid in bed for hours wondering what hell would feel like.

Del looks at the sheriff with disdain.

DEL

I slept fine.

The sheriff reacts.

ANGLE ON the REVEREND as he prepares to immerse the teenage girl.

REVEREND MOTT

... and I baptize you in the name of the father, the son and the holy ghost.

The REVEREND guides the girl backwards into the water. She is immersed. He quickly brings her back up.

The crowd on the bank begins applauding. The choir breaks into song.

(CONTINUED)

As everyone is singing and cheering, we are CLOSE on Matthew as he looks off to the side. Something catches his eye. He stares impassively.

Ruth looks down and sees that Matthew is staring at something. She looks to see what has caught his attention. She walks forward a few steps, unsure of what she is seeing.

Ruth's POV - The body of a man floats face down in the water just a few feet away, slightly hidden by some reeds.

Ruth opens her mouth. She is unable to scream. She points to the body. She runs to the crowd and points. People begin to look. Suddenly a woman in the crowd screams.

Everyone in the choir turns to look. The music stops. The reverend, emerging from the water, looks. CLOSE on Rye and Willow as they look. People begin running toward the body.

Two men lift the body out of the water and flip it over onto the muddy bank of the river. One of them looks at the man's face.

MAN

It's Deacon May.  
(calling out)  
It's Deacon May.

CLOSE on Del and the Sheriff who exchange incredulous looks.

People begin to react. Women begin to cry. Most everyone begins running to the body. A few mothers grab their children and try to drag them away.

CLOSE on Del as he notices something strange.

Del's POV - Everyone in the crowd is running around panicked or is looking towards the body. Except for one man.

Jared stands apart from the crowd looking directly at Del.

After a moment, Del turns to the sheriff.

DEL

Who is that man? And why is he looking  
at us?

The sheriff looks at Del and reacts, concerned.

SHERIFF BOB

I don't know.

HALLELUJAH  
CONTINUED: (3)

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53.

DEL  
Find out.

CLOSE ON Jared as he continues to angrily stare. There is no trace of forgiveness in his eyes.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW