

DEATH SENTENCE

by
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Based on "Death Sentence" by Brian Garfield

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FADE IN:

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE HIGH-RISE - BACK-BAY BOSTON - DAY

We float over a large corporate office, a grid of cubicles slides under us, perfect, symmetrical-- EMPLOYEES working at desks, milling in and around the cubicles--

We slide toward the outside walls-- light bathes in from the windows, reflections curve off glass-dividers, setting off the nicer offices--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

One of the nicer offices, glassed-in-- at the desk:

JOHN HUME, 40's-- tie, shirtsleeves, glasses perched-- company man, polished, not overly-so-- pores over spreadsheets, marking them up--

The spreadsheets-- columns of numbers arc, graceful-- John sifts through decimal-chains, crossing out-- shakes his head-- then: he sees something, a pattern in the chains-- he circles a long rising line-- half smiles--

We see headings: *DEATHS, NATURAL; DEATHS, MISHAP; CHILD FATALITIES; ACTS OF GOD; MARRIED, SINGLE, NUMBER OF CHILDREN-- FATALITY CLAIMS PAID, DENIED--* he circles another chain--

JOHN
(quietly-- amused)
Huh-- there you go--

John looks up-- AMY, his assistant, the EMPLOYEES out on the floor, working, joking, all ages, men, women-- happy, busy numbers--

KEVIN-- 30, appears at his door, file in hand--

KEVIN
Bother you?

John-- back at his numbers-- smiles--

JOHN
Just when you think there's no order anywhere, there's order looking right at you--

Kevin-- not following--

KEVIN

Oh-- right--

John looks at Kevin's file, Kevin brings it-- John scans--

JOHN

What do you need, here?

KEVIN

Annie said I need you to approve
this, no beneficiaries, wife dead--
no kids-- easy-peasy--

John looks up, on *easy-peasy*-- he doesn't sign it-- closes
the file, pushes it--

KEVIN (cont'd)

But-- there's no estate-- the
lawyer's got dementia--

JOHN

I saw that. So-- what do we do?

KEVIN

(galled)

Don't make me file with the state--
for a twenty-five-hundred dollar
policy?

John bristles-- Kevin sees it--

JOHN

We file with the state. So one
day, in the unlikely event somebody
looks back at this guy's death,
they'll know we did our job.

KEVIN

(scoops up the file)

Oh-- we cover our asses, duh-- got
it, sorry--

JOHN

No-- we do our job.

Kevin-- chastised-- John smiles--

JOHN (cont'd)

And we cover our asses for when the
illegitimate children show up--

KEVIN

(looks)

I didn't see-- illegitimates--

JOHN

Well, illegitimate children will leap into being and sue us pantless if you don't give enough of a shit about their dad to put on record that we in the office of life and death made an effort to pay somebody twenty-five hundred bucks in compensation for his passing--

John picks up his spreadsheet again-- smiles at Kevin--

JOHN (cont'd)

-- *lest he die in vain. OK?*

(back in his numbers)

Might even make some poor bastard feel better.

Kevin-- excused-- hesitates, nods at the spreadsheets--

KEVIN

What's the order-in-the-universe thing?

John-- poring over it--

JOHN

We spent three hundred thousand bucks for these guys to make us this new model, new field-data, new society, who-dies-when-and-how-- but they screwed up all the decimal weights. It's three-hundred thousand bucks worth of dogshit--

Kevin-- following as best he can--

JOHN (cont'd)

But even so, it says people with kids live longer than people with no kids, people with two live longer than people with one--

(flipping pages)

Smoking is bad-- speeding is bad. Divorce is bad. Deaths in the family are bad.

John smiles--

JOHN (cont'd)
 It's nice to see all that crap's
 still true. If you have twenty
 kids, anyway. So you'd better
 drive home under the speed-limit
 and get busy with that.

KEVIN
 (smiles)
 I've got my illegitimates.

John-- benign teacher-- he's dismissed--

JOHN
And aren't they the lucky tykes?

Kevin goes-- John, back to his numbers-- he glances up, eye
 catches the PHOTO on his desk--

HELEN, his wife, 30's, beautiful, sharp-eyed, as smart as
 him, or smarter-- *TWO BOYS-- BRENDAN*, the older, *LUCAS*, the
 younger-- John looks at the picture-- contented--

CUT TO:

INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL, ARLINGTON, MA - DAY

A prep-school office, rolling fields, fall trees outside--

LUCAS, 14-- a couple of years older-- and more pissed-off--
 than in his picture-- sits in front of the dean's desk,
 waiting-- the dean isn't there--

A WELL-DRESSED WOMAN steps across, putting a file back in a
 cabinet-- she turns, sits at the desk-- *It's HELEN-- LUCAS'*
 MOM--

HELEN
 Of course it isn't fair, but when
 you screw up, it's embarrassing--
 I'm supposed to be a dean--

LUCAS
 It's not like I killed somebody.

HELEN
 Telling a teacher to shove it is as
 close as we get here.

LUCAS

The guy's a buffoon, Mom, I was quoting-- it was like an ironic shove it.

HELEN

You want an ironic probation?

Lucas doesn't answer-- looks out the window-- KIDS are running track, outside, he watches them loop--

HELEN (cont'd)

We haven't even gotten to the home punishment, this is the school-end--

Lucas-- winces-- stares out the window-- she watches him--

HELEN (cont'd)

So-- what do we do?

Lucas-- still looking out: A BUNCH OF OLDER BOYS cuts across the track, bags, hockey-sticks slung-- BRENDAN, 16, Lucas' older brother, with them-- laughing, jocky-- golden-boy--

LUCAS

(still out the window)
Anything but community-service.

HELEN

(smiles, mock-amazed)
Luke, that's *brilliant*-- community service is a great idea--

He rolls his eyes--

HELEN (cont'd)

The assisted-living home's having a dance party, they need help-- you know-- Leisure World--

LUCAS

For the love of God, Mom-- *Seizure World?*

HELEN

(smiling-- benign torture)
OK-- hockey team needs a laundry boy-- you could help your brother out, support the team--

Lucas looks out, at Brendan and his crew, strutting, goofing--

LUCAS

I'll take the dance of the dead. I
can man the diaper-station.

Helen-- cheerfully tough-- loving, if he cared to notice-- he
notices-- isn't going to admit it--

HELEN

Last time, OK?

Lucas-- it's a fair bust-- he smiles, barely, nods-- Helen
takes it-- exhales--

HELEN (cont'd)

Thank you. Very much.

CUT TO:

INT. HOCKEY-RINK - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL - DAY

BRENDAN-- with other PLAYERS, skating sprints up the ice,
COACH WALDREN watching--

Brendan shoots along the ice, guiding the puck like it's
glued to his stick, fast-- effortless-- aggressive-- *the
whistle blows*-- everybody stops, except-- Brendan--

He keeps skating-- the coach blows the whistle again--
Brendan spins to a stop, breathing hard, smiling--

COACH WALDREN

*Who wants to start on Saturday, in
beautiful Roxbury?*

They wait-- trick-question-- he looks at his list--

COACH WALDREN (cont'd)

(reading off)

Larkin, Hume, Tomacek, Whelan--

Brendan-- smiles on 'Hume'-- nods--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - ARLINGTON, MA - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A nice old colonial, rambling kitchen-- HELEN, BRENDAN,
LUCAS, at the table, eating--

LUCAS

Yeah, because you're a *kiss-ass*--

HELEN

Hey--

BRENDAN

(laughs)

I got the skills, that's all-- God gave me the skills--

LUCAS

(to Helen)

Mom, I need to go kill myself, can I be excused?

Helen-- heard it before-- clearing her plate, putting food from the pots into containers--

HELEN

Of course you do, Lukey--

LUCAS

I've got a cretin for a brother--

BRENDAN

I've got a no-dick for a brother--

HELEN

(sharply, to Lucas)

OK-- you stop, right now--

(to Brendan-- softer)

And you should know better.

Luke catches the softer voice for Bren-- used to it--

BRENDAN

(all innocence, to Helen)

What?

Helen, back to the leftovers-- shaking her head--

HELEN

Let's be a family, shall we?

LUCAS

(snorts, laughing)

Do I get to say no?

(bangs the table, yelling)

I demand emancipation-- I want a lawyer, I'm filing, right now--

Brendan-- smacks Lucas on the head, not too hard-- Helen-- another warning-look--

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

JOHN pulls up-- but the driveway's blocked by *TRASH-CANS*-- he gets out, drags them aside-- *glaring at the neighbor's house*--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Helen's still looking at the boys, coming off her warning-shot-- the front-door bangs closed--

Helen-- smiles despite herself-- JOHN comes in, coat, briefcase-- exhausted--

JOHN
I missed dinner?

Helen-- dumps the containers back into the pots--

HELEN
No, there's-- plenty--

BRENDAN
(to John)
I need a ride to Southie Saturday.

JOHN
Southie?

BRENDAN
Roxbury-- it's an exchange game.
I'm starting again.

JOHN
(beaming)
That's fantastic-- Waldren loves you, huh?

Lucas sees the glow on John-- like Lucas isn't in the room anymore--

LUCAS
Yeah, 'cause he's a *kiss-ass*--

John nods-- he approves, in this case--

JOHN
Well, good for him-- we all going?

He bumps Helen aside, gently, loads a plate--

HELEN
Luke's got soccer.

LUCAS
But I'm not even starting, so--

BRENDAN
You should kiss some more ass. Or
not suck so bad--

Lucas flips Brendan the finger-- John bristles, looks at Helen-- Lucas-- knows he went too far-- Brendan-- steps in-- covers for Lucas--

BRENDAN (cont'd)
Come on Dad-- he's kidding-- he's
being an idiot--

Lucas-- grateful-- John looks to Helen-- she does this all day--

JOHN
(to Brendan-- benign)
Don't call him an idiot--
(to Lucas)
Lucas-- you have a loyal and loving
brother--

LUCAS
(he smiles)
Loyal loving *kiss-ass*--

Brendan laughs-- John-- tired and hungry--

JOHN
Let's be civilized, or I'll kill
somebody. Fair?

Brendan scrunches Lucas by the back of the neck-- Lucas shrugs him off, goes-- Brendan shoves him ahead--

BRENDAN
Whatever, weasel--

LUCAS
(mimics, dumb-jock voice)
Uhhh, whatever, weasel--

John watches them go, Helen dumps leftovers-- again--

HELEN
See what you miss when you don't
come home?

He nods, smiles--

JOHN
They stopped throwing food.

She nods-- smiles-- rinsing dishes-- he watches her--

JOHN (cont'd)
I can do those.

She drops the dish she's holding, grabs a wine-bottle, pours two glasses, sits-- day's end--

HELEN
Lukey told Roger Perle to shove it.

They look at each other, dead-serious-- then-- *John starts laughing-- cracking up-- she does too--*

JOHN
Didn't you tell that guy to shove it last year?

She's laughing harder, trying not to-- nodding--

HELEN
It was so hard to punish him without laughing--

JOHN
He's your son alright--

She bursts out laughing, louder, nodding, John too-- she looks to the door, tries to stop-- they fall quiet, finally-- she sips her wine, shakes her head--

HELEN
Two boys. No justice.

He smiles at her-- they look at each other--

CUT TO:

INT. HOCKEY RINK - SOUTH BOSTON - DAY

CROWD of blue-collar and white-collar PARENTS, hooting, yelling-- COACH WALDREN at the benches, intent-- JOHN-- in the stands, watching as--

BRENDAN-- like he was born on the ice, dodges DEFENDERS, drives forward, weaving-- he feints, shoots-- GOAL-- the score clicks up on the board-- the crowd's yelling--

John, stamping his feet, clapping, hooting-- he smiles, watching Brendan gliding on the ice, beaming--

He skates away, John watches-- his jersey-- 'HUME' in red letters, big '11'-- Brendan shakes his stick high, crowd roars again--

John smiles, shakes his head-- proud-- tickled--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR - SOUTHWEST STREETS - MOVING - DAY

Late in the day, light waning-- it's a crummy area, projects, slum-tenements, wasteland-lots-- far cry from Arlington--

JOHN, driving, BRENDAN, riding, smiling-- good day--

BRENDAN

(watching the streets)

Some of the guys have been talking about college in Canada--

JOHN

(driving-- smiles)

We're thinking about college?
Don't you have another birthday before we think about college?

BRENDAN

'*Plan for success,*' Dad--

JOHN

(impressed)

I said that? That's excellent advice.

Brendan doesn't answer-- John watches the road--

JOHN (cont'd)

Canada. Canada's-- far--

BRENDAN

(smiles)

You'll still have Lukey.

JOHN

There's a comfort--

Brendan winces, protective-- John catches it, smiles--

JOHN (cont'd)
 You had a very good game today.
 You've had a few good games. But
 professional hockey, Bren-- that
 what we're talking about?

Brendan shrugs-- nods--

JOHN (cont'd)
 -- that's a high-risk business.

BRENDAN
 This is from your extensive
 professional sports background--

JOHN
 My extensive risk assessment
 background. Risks-- liabilities--
 the stuff of life, son--

BRENDAN
 Stuff of *your* life-- exactly--

JOHN
 (smiles)
 Don't make fun of your father.

Brendan falls silent-- wasted streets slide by--

JOHN (cont'd)
 Well-- let's look at this-- you
 have a talent, I don't dispute
 that. Let's evaluate it, like any
 asset, see how far you can take it--
 in a business-way.

Brendan looks at him--

JOHN (cont'd)
 I can talk to Coach Waldren. We can
 research schools-- in Canada if we
 have to-- find somebody who can--
 educate us on hockey versus, say--
 law-school--

BRENDAN
Educate us? Dad, I just want to
 play some hockey--

JOHN
 (he smiles)
 I'm saying we can look into it.
 OK?

Brendan gets it-- nods-- smiles--

JOHN (cont'd)
Just don't tell Mom.

Brendan-- grins, laughs-- John rounds a corner, looks ahead--
stumped-- searching--

JOHN (cont'd)
Where the hell's the damn
expressway?

No signs-- just dark, shabby streets, half-industrial,
housing projects beyond-- *an alarm pings-- John looks-- a
flashing orange gas-pump on the dash--*

JOHN (cont'd)
Great--

John looks around the bleak streets-- feels tension, biting--
then-- *he sees the lights of a gas station-- eases, slightly--*

JOHN (cont'd)
(goofing, like a general)
*We may be lost, men, but we'll have
gas, by God-- onward to petroleum--*

Brendan laughs-- they pull in--

CUT TO:

EXT. KWIK-STOP GAS STATION - SOUTH BOSTON - NIGHT

JOHN pulls up to the pump, lights from a convenience store
glare-- John looks around-- wary of the neighborhood--

OUTSIDE THE CAR -

JOHN gets out, squints at the pump-- BRENDAN gets out too,
starts for the convenience-store-- John stops--

JOHN
Where do you think you're going?

BRENDAN
(smiles)
Need my fluids, Dad--

John looks around-- wary-- but-- no obvious danger--

JOHN
Ahh-- the obligatory slushy-stop--

BRENDAN

They have 'em in there, right?

JOHN

That, or something worse for you.
You have money?

Brendan starts across-- John punches buttons on the pump--

JOHN (cont'd)

In and out, OK? We have to get
home--

Brendan smiles, walking backward, half-way there-- John props the pump in the tank, keeps an eye on Brendan until he disappears inside the store-- we glimpse him, pumping slushy--

John laughs, quiet, shakes his head-- pulls out his phone, speed-dials, gets Helen's voice-mail--

JOHN (cont'd)

(on cell)

Just letting you know your son's gone to Canada to play hockey. We didn't want to drag out goodbyes, so I left him at the airport. He'll call us. If he can. Of course, we may never see him again, but as long as he's happy, right?

He pauses-- cars flash by-- a big truck rolls in--

JOHN (cont'd)

Home soon.

He closes his phone, scans the street-- a strange hush falls-- a loose sheet of newspaper scuds across the street, twirls upward-- it catches John's eye, he follows its motion--

FROM THE ALLEY - BEHIND THE CONVENIENCE-STORE

Behind John-- wheels whining-- cars cornering fast--

John turns, sees: *two pimped-out muscle cars* rounding the corner, pulling up to the convenience-store--

John's guard goes up-- his eyes flick to the store, he sees BRENDAN-- paying-- sipping the slushy--

John's eyes flick back to the muscle cars-- he can barely see heads inside through black-tint windows-- arms going up-- like they're pulling masks on-- John's eyes go wide-- as:

GANG-BANGERS in black ski-masks burst out of the cars-- guns in hand-- charge toward the store--

John-- his eyes widen in fear, shock--

He charges forward, knocks right into the gas-hose, knocks it loose, it sprays him-- he clambers past, frantic, looking as--

CUT TO:

INT. KWIK-STOP - NIGHT

BANGERS burst in-- hold guns at Brendan, the CLERK-- Brendan, wide-eyed-- as a tall banger-- *BILLY DARLEY*-- the leader, scoops cash out-- the clerk reaches for an alarm, *Billy swings his gun and shoots him in the chest--* then, same instant, smacks a scrawny banger-- *JOE*, his little brother-- on the back of the head, hard--

BILLY
(smacking the scrawny one)
Do it, you faggot--

OUTSIDE -

JOHN-- running forward blindly, eyes on Brendan-- a car pulling in to pumps clips him, knocks him to the concrete-- he scrambles up, another car pulls out, barely misses crushing his head as he stumbles, runs-- as:

INSIDE -

JOE-- jittery-- scared-- eyes in his mask full of fear, hate-- Brendan-- staring-- terrified--

BILLY (cont'd)
Do it--
(grins, at Brendan-- yells)
Ready, kid? You ready?

John-- running-- hears Billy yell-- rushes up as:

Joe-- like mean liquid, turns-- walks to Brendan, snake-fast-- - pulls a LONG MACHETE from his jacket-- and slashes the blade up, across Brendan's throat-- gashing it open--

OUTSIDE--

JOHN-- sees-- in horror-- as:

Brendan-- stares-- staggers out, toward John-- falls through the door-- drops--

OUTSIDE -

JOHN-- charges toward Brendan--

BRENDAN-- throat open-- lying on the concrete-- blinking-- gasping--

JOE-- stares down at Brendan-- amazed, or terrified, at the sight-- what he's done to him--

BILLY and the other BANGERS charge through the door, scatter-- except: Joe-- he sees John-- hesitates-- machete in hand--

Joe-- runs for the street-- passes near him-- John lurches-- tries to grab him-- he gets him by the throat, throws him down-- he drops his machete-- *John gets his mask off-- sees his face-- as--*

The BANGERS stop-- look back at John and Joe-- Heco starts for Joe, to help, Billy holds him back-- smiles, *not yet-- lets Joe struggle--*

JOHN-- smacks Joe into the concrete-- trying to get free to get to Brendan-- Joe swipes at him-- John bangs him down--

JOE-- finally-- gets his weight out from under John, flips up, throwing John down on the concrete, smashing John's head against it-- John falters, almost blacking-- Joe jumps up, jumps over John-- runs for the cars, but--

Billy jumps in-- engines ripping, cars shoots backward--

Joe runs to them but the cars peels out without him-- Joe runs out into the street, looks back at John--

And is smacked by a pick-up truck-- spun by impact, Joe sprawls on black-top, out cold-- traffic stops, horns honk--

John-- on the concrete, barely conscious, blood drips in his eyes-- he blinks it away--

Brendan's motionless-- white-- John crawls to him-- fading-- takes Brendan's body in his arms, screaming--

JOHN
(screaming)
Help-- help me--

CUT TO:

INT. BOTH MUSCLE CARS (MOVING) - NIGHT

We see into the two muscle-car speeding away, racing, side-by-side-- *the bangers peel off their masks, we glimpse: BILLY-- 20's, Boston Irish-trash, hard as cross-nails-- BODIE, black, hard-timed, hard-eyed-- HECO, Salvadoran, silver bead on his lower lip, chin jutting-- BAGGY, Cuban, head shaved-- SPINK and JAMIE, Irish-trash, DOG and TOMMY, black, jailhouse-mean-- all pumped-- whooping-- Bodie looks back--*

BODIE
Where's your brother?

BILLY
(laughs-- callous)
He's a man now-- he can take the subway--

They cackle-- speed away, whooping--

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

A burst of activity-- Brendan wheeled into the ER, JOHN, agonized, trots by Brendan's side as ORDERLIES rush him in--

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT - LATER

In slow motion without sound: looking down a hospital corridor, we see a distraught HELEN and LUCAS run up to John--

The ER DOCTOR approaches, talks to them-- we can't hear-- but *Helen collapses into John, sobbing, shaking-- John holds her, tears well out of him but he doesn't break down, his face is stone-- Lucas, stunned, left-out--*

FADE TO BLACK.

A BLINDING WHITE-LIGHT SNAPS ON-- WE'RE IN A POLICE LINE UP:

INT. BOSTON POLICE DEPT. - ROXBURY STATION - NIGHT.

JOHN-- bandaged-- staring through one-way glass-- a group of Irish-trash STREET-RATS squint in the glaring light-- *JOE's among them, under a big '6'--*

John stares at Joe-- runty-- malevolent-- in a dead-dream--

DETECTIVE WALLIS, 50's-- waits-- John breathes--

JOHN
Six. Number six.

WALLIS
(nods)
Joe Darley.

JOHN
He's a-- *kid*--

WALLIS
He's a runt, almost twenty.
And he's an animal.

John stares at Joe, a trapped rat-- hate boiling up--

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Bleak. Raining. Cold. The HUMES watch as their first-born is lowered into the ground--

John watches the casket-- no tears-- he's far from Luke, far from Helen--

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Empty, silent kitchen-- we hear the front door close, off--

JOHN, in a funeral-suit, comes in, turned to stone, dry-eyed--
HELEN and *LUCAS*-- shell-shocked, follow-- none of them seems to know why they've gone in there--

Helen begins to cry, leans back against a counter, suppresses the tears-- she looks to John-- but he's locked-in-- silent--

Lucas-- sits at the table, looks at both John and Helen-- neither of them seems to notice him--

JOHN
I'll make some eggs.

Helen-- doesn't answer-- John drapes his jacket on a chair, goes to the fridge, gets eggs out, starts making them--

Helen watches him-- sits next to Lucas-- they sit in silence as John scrambles the eggs-- finally--

Helen looks down at her black dress-- picks at it.

HELEN

I should probably change.

She looks to John for a response, there isn't any-- she gets up, goes-- finally Lucas gets up--

LUCAS

(to John)

I guess I'll change too.

Nobody answers Luke-- John whisks the eggs-- Lucas watches him a moment-- and goes--

JOHN

(quietly-- after Lucas is gone)

OK.

John looks up, sees Luke's gone-- he stands there, stirring the eggs--

Suddenly-- he slams the pan across the stove, eggs splatter out, burn on the flame--

He stares at the mess-- grabs a towel, cleans it up-- starts a new batch.

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - JOHN & HELEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN and HELEN, in bed, in the dark, unable to sleep--

JOHN

They said there's a-- pre-trial hearing tomorrow, they want me to go. Make a statement or something. Do-- you want to go with me?

She stares-- fighting pain--

HELEN

You go. Put that-- animal in jail.

JOHN
That's what the cop called him, an
animal--

John-- trying to make order--

JOHN (cont'd)
Some kind of-- mad dog.

Helen stares into the dark-- she takes a breath--

HELEN
The school said they wanted to do a
memorial-- at the next game. The
team wanted to do something.

John-- it's cold comfort.

JOHN
That's-- nice of them.

HELEN
(she nods)
He would have been playing.

Helen closes her eyes-- reaches for John's hand-- he takes
it, she squeezes it, as hard as she can, crying, softly,
trying not to-- weary of crying-- John holds her hand--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - LUCAS' ROOM - NIGHT

LUCAS-- in bed, awake-- staring too-- He gets out of bed--

CUT TO:

INT. BRENDAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

LUCAS comes into Brendan's room-- stands in the doorway,
staring at it-- posters, his bed, books, his hockey-stuff--

He stays, a moment-- lays his hand on the bedstead-- goes--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN & HELEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

John hears LUCAS walk by their door, back to his room-- he hears Luke's door close again-- he doesn't move--

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVEWAY - MORNING

JOHN, on his way to court-- sees empty *TRASH-BARRELS* right behind his car, blocking the way-- he looks across to:

THE NEIGHBORING HOUSE - MORNING

BAKER, the neighbor, rushing back, obviously the culprit-- he glares at John-- righteous, annoyed--

BAKER
(yells over)
You're supposed to take them in--

John glares-- drags the barrels aside--

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL - DAY

LUCAS-- staring at his desk as MR. PERLE, 40's, drones, bg--

MR. PERLE
*-- there may not be much actual
justice, but if the code said 'an
eye for an eye' carved right into a
big stone slab, they could say,
look, it's in writing--*

Lucas-- rubbing his knuckles on the desk, distracted--

MR. PERLE (cont'd)
(in bg)
*-- don't riot, don't rebel, keep
slaving in the pyramids, watch
hieroglyphic cable'--*

Lucas rubs harder, the skin opens, starts to bleed--

A GIRL next to him sees-- he looks at his hand-- surprised--

HENNING-- a 'friend,' callow-- snickers-- Perle looks back--

MR. PERLE (cont'd)
 My friend Mr. Hume--
 (not without sympathy)
 Joining us today?

Luke sits up-- picks up his pen-- HENNING looks, ridiculing--

HENNING
Chill, Humey--

Lucas stares-- seething--

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL - DAY

HELEN, trying to work, looks out-- the HOCKEY TEAM, sticks on their shoulders, all very like Brendan-- she looks at her files-- and gently but firmly shoves them off the desk--

CUT TO:

INT. COURT BUILDING - DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

JOHN-- with MICHAEL BARING, ASSISTANT DA, 40's-- with some JUNIOR DA's, and DETECTIVE WALLIS--

BARING
 Today's easy--

John looks at Baring-- it isn't easy for him--

BARING (cont'd)
 I need you to sit there, put the fear of God in this guy-- if the judge asks you to, you tell him what you told us, and identify Darley in court--

John, nods--

BARING (cont'd)
 The minute I get your statement in, with you sitting right there, the public defender's going to wet his pants and fold, I'll make a deal in five minutes, get this guy in jail today-- *easy-peasy*--

John-- stares at Baring--

JOHN

What the hell are you talking
about? What deal? I want this guy
in jail-- *for the rest of his life--*

BARING

No-- I can get you three-to-five,
guaranteed-- that's a very decent
result in the--

John-- outraged--

JOHN

He killed my son--

Baring-- blinks-- sympathetic, but-- overwhelmed--

BARING

Guaranteed time-- not maybe, not
the jury didn't feel up to it--
that's worth more than chasing a
make-believe ten-to-life and the
guy walks free-- you want that?

John-- furious-- ready to jump out of his chair--

JOHN

*You aren't using my son's death for
a card-trick-- do you understand?*

Baring-- wishes it were otherwise--

BARING

Mr. Hume-- this is what my office
is willing to do. I'm fighting a
pattern here, initiation killings
are just part of it, I get a banger
off the street a year or so,
somebody does my job for me, he
never comes out alive, fine with
me, he finds Jesus, fine with me--

John-- missing something--

JOHN

What do you mean-- initiation
killing? *I thought it was a
robbery--*

Wallis shrugs-- uncomfortable--

WALLIS

It just looked like one. It was an initiation-- you kill someone at random, to get made in a gang. It's the-- price of admission.

JOHN

You're saying my son was murdered so some asshole could feel like a man? So he could be in some *club*?

Wallis-- Baring-- look at John-- he stares, numbly-- stunned--

JOHN (cont'd)

There's-- no sense to that--

John-- shock slips to-- rage-- growing second by second-- Baring-- sorry, but:

BARING

This is a take it or leave it thing, Mr. Hume. Sorry to say.

John-- stares at Baring--

CUT TO:

INT. COURT-ROOM - DAY

JOHN-- on the stand-- he looks at: JOE and his public defender, WILSEY, 30's suit, pony-tail-- BARING standing--

BARING

Your Honor, I'd like to enter the statement of a witness present at the attack-- father of the victim--

The judge glances at John-- at the clock--

JUDGE GOULD

We can enter that at trial, can we not, Mr. Baring?

BARING

I believe your honor, if we enter the statement today, defense will change their plea to guilty and save the people the time and expense of a trial--

The judge looks at John again-- John's staring at Joe-- the judge waves Baring to the bench--

JUDGE GOULD
That's the statement?

Baring brings John's statement, the judge looks at it--
John's still looking at Joe--

JUDGE GOULD (cont'd)
Mr. Hume, you're giving evidence
that Mr. Darley here, before your
eyes, attacked your son and caused
his death? You're saying you'll
testify to that in a trial?

John-- staring straight at Joe--

JOHN
No sir. I am not.

BARING
What?

John looks at Baring-- Joe's starting to smile--

JOHN
There were a lot of them. It was
dark. I can't be sure any more.

Baring-- furious-- Joe-- grinning like a coyote-- John stares
at him--

JUDGE GOULD
Do you expect to obtain evidence
other than Mr. Hume's here?

Baring-- dead-ended--

BARING
No your Honor. I do not.

The judge-- skeptical-- but nowhere to go--

JUDGE GOULD
I'm dismissing this case-- I humbly
note you might have been better off
taking your chances with a jury,
Mr. Baring--

John stares at Joe as the judge talks--

JUDGE GOULD (cont'd)
(to Joe)
You are released from custody.

You may return with a bailiff to
the holding cells to retrieve your
personal effects.

Joe gets up-- struts out, right by John, smiling-- John
watches him go--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE COURT-BUILDING - DAY

Winds blowing-- colder weather moving in--

JOE-- carrying a plastic bag of personal effects-- talking on
his cell, laughing-- hunching in his jacket from the cold--

ACROSS THE STREET -

JOHN-- in his car, staring at Joe-- eyes burning into him--
Joe sits on a bus-stop bench-back, waiting--

John watches him-- glances in his rear-view-- *Brendan's gym-
bag, his hockey stick--* still in the back seat-- he looks at
it, a moment-- then looks ahead as:

*The muscle cars pull up-- BILLY the others, pile out,
laughing, smacking Joe around, he laughs-- they do a sort of
leering cheer, roasting him--*

BILLY
(we just hear, from
across)
*You fucked that up pretty good,
huh? Who's a man, now?*

Joe laughs-- all cocky, now--

JOE
That fucker was sitting in a pool
of pee, man-- that's *right* I'm
walking, pucker the fuck up--

John-- seething-- stares at their faces-- Billy-- Bodie,
Heco, all of them-- he knows who they are-- JOE-- gets in,
they pull away--

John watches the muscle cars go-- he hesitates-- breathing
hard-- and starts his car-- *follows--*

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR - SOUTHIE STREETS - DAY

JOHN-- following the cars-- deeper and deeper into the Southie war-zone-- he catches glimpses of JOE, through the window--

The neighborhood turns darker, more ragged-- closer to the part of town where Brendan was killed--

John follows, watches-- finally-- they pull up, JOE gets out-- Billy and the others are grinning--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - SOUTHIE PROJECTS BUILDING - DUSK

A GIRL-- waiting on the step of the decrepit project building she pulls a little vial out of her pocket, shakes it, grinning-- BILLY and the others shove him forward, laughing--

BILLY

Have a nice time, weasel--

Billy smiles-- goes to her-- she and Joe kiss as the cars pull away--

JOHN-- parked up the street-- watching--

She pulls Joe's keys out of pants for him-- they go in-- the door of the building closes behind Joe--

John stares at the door-- leans his head on the steering wheel, lost-- no idea what to do--

He sits up, gripping the wheel with all his might-- starts the car, finally-- pulls away--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT

John pulls up-- jumps out of the car-- starts looking around the garage-- he scans the tools hanging on the walls--

He picks up a weeding spade, grabs it-- puts it down again-- he opens a locker-- an axe-- he hefts it-- not right, drops it--

He reaches up to a top shelf-- straining-- pulling down a big dusty plastic tool-tub-- riffling through, loudly--

LUCAS has come out-- he stands at the door, watching John--

LUCAS

Hey--

John stops, briefly-- then--

JOHN

(searching again)

Hey--

Lucas keeps watching him--

LUCAS

What are you doing?

John pulls out a large scythe-- hefts it--

JOHN

Nothing-- son--

John scans the garage for another weapon-- he drops the scythe back in, we see: *a half-rusted old hunting-knife-- dirty, dull-- but deadly enough-- John takes it in his hand--*

Lucas watches John, not seeing what's in John's hands-- he picks up a box-cutter from the tool-bench, fiddles with it--

John sees--

JOHN (cont'd)

Don't play with that-- put it down--

Lucas puts it back-- thinking--

LUCAS

So-- it was like a gas-station?

John stops-- agitated--

LUCAS (cont'd)

Where Bren got killed--

John-- thrown-- on edge-- covering--

JOHN

Yes. It was a gas-station--

(he hesitates)

Why do you want to know?

Lucas doesn't know himself-- trying to make sense of it--

LUCAS

I wondered where he died.

John-- not what he wants to talk about now-- but--

JOHN

(as gently as he can)

It was a-- Kwik-Stop. In Roxbury.

John-- scans around again, still searching-- on edge-- *still holding the knife--*

LUCAS

(nods)

Do you think he was scared?

John can barely stand it-- he nods-- looks at the knife in his hand--

JOHN

(gently-- near-cracking)

Yes. I think he probably was scared, Lucas.

The headlights of an approaching car, hit them-- HELEN, arriving home from work-- John drops the knife through the open window of his car, on to the seat-- out of sight--

Helen gets out-- she comes closer--

HELEN

How did it go?

John hesitates-- gathers his courage--

JOHN

They let him go.

Her eyes widen-- she stares at him-- so does Lucas-- Helen can't believe it--

HELEN

They did what? Why?

John-- dying-- lying--

JOHN

I don't think it was him.

Helen-- disbelieving-- Lucas too--

HELEN
 But-- you said it was him-- you
said they had him--

John doesn't answer Helen-- staring incredulously-- undone--

HELEN (cont'd)
 Are they going to keep looking?

JOHN
 (lying again)
 They said they would.

She keeps staring at him-- bereft--

JOHN (cont'd)
 (quietly)
 I'm sorry.

John-- still agitated, still covering-- he heads for his car--

JOHN (cont'd)
 I think I left something I need at
 the office-- I'd-- better go back--

HELEN
 Now? Jesus, John--

John bursting-- gets into his car--

JOHN
 I'll be home as soon as I can--

John drives off-- leaving Helen and Lucas standing there--

Helen turns-- storms past Lucas into the house, smashing
 aside the partially opened door-- Lucas stands there, alone--
 he looks at the box-cutter-- pockets it-- goes--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR - SOUTHIE PROJECTS - NIGHT

JOHN-- parked up the block from the building Joe disappeared
 into-- watching-- forcing himself to take measured breaths--

A YOUNG MOM, pretty, latina, rounds the corner, rushing, baby
 strapped to her, stroller loaded with grocery bags-- she
 crosses, hurries into her building--

John watches another moment-- *then shakes his head-- blows*
out air-- he reaches for the key, about to turn it--

He stops, suddenly-- doesn't turn the key-- the building door is opening-- John watches--

JOE steps out, carrying a bag of trash, smoking a cigarette, heading or the alley-- John's eyes widen-- he watches Joe walk toward him--

Joe-- stuffs his free hand in his pocket, against the cold-- sucks on the cig--

John-- hyper-ventilating, gasping, trying to stay calm-- he looks across the sidewalk, through shadows-- the trash-alley--

John gets out of the car-- no idea what he's doing, but he's doing it--

Joe half-slips on the sidewalk-- dogshit on his shoes, he starts scraping it--

JOE
Jesus-- christ--

John pulls his collar up, goes into the alley-- Joe scrapes the dogshit off, pays no attention to John--

Joe-- walks on-- nearing the alley--

JOHN-- steps out, in front of him-- Joe looks up-- doesn't recognize him at first-- then he does-- fear flickers-- they're alone--

John-- enraged-- terrified-- Joe-- *laughs* at John--

JOE (cont'd)
You're kidding me--

Joe holds the trash out to drop it, but before he can, *John lunges forward, grabs Joe by the jacket-- the trash drops, Joe stumbles backward over it-- John drags him with all his might toward the alley--*

Joe, shocked by the force John is dragging him with-- tries to wrestle out of his grip--

John-- drags Joe backwards into the alley-- light of street receding-- Joe's panting, fighting-- surprised, afraid of John now--

John-- huffing-- grunting-- dragging Joe further and further back into the dark, cinder-blocks, over trash, no matter how much Joe kicks and twists and claws--

Joe can't get leverage, John keeps dragging him--

John finally slams Joe to the ground, slams Joe into the concrete again and again and again-- Joe grabs at John's throat, John pulls back, slams Joe again--

Joe-- grabs at John's coat, yanks him sideways trying to get over him-- John loses his balance, slips down--

The knife falls out of John's coat, bounces--

Joe and John both see it-- both lunge for it-- Joe gets it first, gets over John, kicks him down, jumps up, pulls the knife out-- hops back, wielding it--

John-- on his knees-- looks up at Joe-- the blade-- Joe swoops in at him, swiping the blade at John--

John charges at him-- slams Joe back into the wall-- grabs the knife-hand, holds it as tight as he can, trying to contain it-- tries to pin Joe with his body-- his elbow pressing his head down--

They're locked on the ground, breathing, gasping, deadlocked, John pinning him-- Joe choking John-- strangling him--

John shifts one hand, starts to edge the handle out of Joe's fingers, slowly-- Joe's wriggling, but can't budge John--

John gets the blade free, yanks his throat back away from Joe, and suddenly swoops the blade into Joe's gut-- a savage blow, it shocks John-- and Joe--

Joe gasps-- rattles-- and stops-- silent--

John stares in shock-- staggers backward, drops the blade-- he turns away, falls on all fours, guts wrenching--

He vomits-- sweat beads over him, he rolls back away from the pool of sick-- stares at Joe's body-- amazed--

AT THE END OF THE ALLEY--

In upper windows, curtains part-- NEIGHBORS looking out--

John claws backward, into the shadows-- the curtains close again-- no yelling-- no sirens-- quiet--

He scrambles to his car-- and takes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTHIE - RIVERFRONT - NIGHT

JOHN pulls up in his car-- he steps out-- *and hurls his knife into the water-- it splashes, disappears-- he goes--*

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

HELEN, on the living-room floor, piles of video-tapes around her, a big basket-- she's sorting, manic-- LUCAS, near her on the floor, sorting through too-- staring at old video-tapes-- *an old family video, a town New Year's Eve party, plays, bg--*

Helen looks at Lucas, no idea what to say to him-- she tries--

HELEN

(sorting-- keeping busy)
I've been meaning to do this for--
months-- it's very-- grown-up of
you to help--

She catches herself, knows she came off patronizing-- Luke keeps sorting through-- *a big laugh, roar, on the tape on the tv--* JOHN, HELEN, BRENDAN, LUCAS laughing-- goofing--

HELEN (cont'd)

(taken-- touched)
What a bunch of knuckleheads--

Luke watches-- doesn't answer-- the front door bangs shut, they both look up--

JOHN walks in-- smeared with mud, sweat, his coat torn-up-- Helen sees, jumps up--

HELEN (cont'd)

Jesus-- what the hell happened to
you?

John sits in a chair, heavily-- he looks down at himself--

JOHN

I-- slipped-- at the station. It
was icy--

Helen-- staring--

HELEN

Jesus Christ--

Lucas studies John-- Helen-- starts pulling his coat off, fussing over him--

HELEN (cont'd)
My God, look at you--

He looks at her-- his face is open-- almost at peace-- Helen notices it-- warms to it--

JOHN
I'm going to-- get in the shower--

HELEN
I'll bring you something to eat--

John gets up-- some kind of relieved trance, a weight lifted-- he sees Lucas staring at him--

JOHN
How are you doing. You OK?

Lucas nods, barely-- welcomes the connection, brief or not-- on video, in bg: the countdown starts, bg-- 10-9-8--

LUCAS
I'm OK. I guess.

John nods-- lays his hand on Lucas' head, scruffs-- first time he's touched him since Brendan died, Helen catches it-- Lucas looks at John, their eyes meet-- John nods-- the crowd counts down: 7-6-5--

JOHN
Good. That's good.

John goes-- Lucas, warmed briefly, sinks cold again-- in bg, on video-- 3-2-1--

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

John stands in the shower with his head hung, water washing away pain-- guilt-- and the front he's kept up--

Overwhelmed, he breaks down-- slides down the wall into a foetal position, crying for his son-- naked, vulnerable--

HELEN comes in-- sees him--

HELEN
John--

She rushes to him, turns off the water, kneels, embraces him--
John, shaking-- crying with grief-- relief--

JOHN

I'm-- sorry-- I'm so sorry--

She tightens her hold on him-- begins to cry with him.

HELEN

Oh, John-- shh-- shh--

They're together now, for the first time since Brendan died--

They hold each other, squeezing the pain away, as best they
can-- Helen, part-relieved-- at least John's with her, now--

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - MORNING

JOHN, heading for work, comes out as *BAKER*, the neighbor, is
leaving the trash-barrels behind John's car again--

John-- throws his briefcase down-- starts marching across the
lawn at Baker--

Baker blanches-- starts backing away-- sees the look on
John's face-- homicidal--

BAKER

(backing away)

Uh-- I'm only--

John storms after him, grabs him by the shirt-- gives a hard
shake, neck-snapping-- Baker's gasping, terrified--

JOHN

You want to clean something up?
You want to?

Baker-- spluttering--

BAKER

Jesus-- Christ--

John-- drags Baker across toward Baker's trash-barrels--
through grass and flower-beds, mud-- Baker can't get free--

BAKER (cont'd)

Let me go-- Jesus--

John-- shoves him with all his might into Baker's barrels--
Baker falls backwards, slips, skins his elbows--

John stands over him-- points a finger in his face--

JOHN
(quiet-- deadly)
If I see you on my lawn again, I'll
kill you. OK? That OK with you?

Baker-- stunned-- nods--

John walks away, amazed-- that felt good--

FRONT DOOR -

HELEN and LUCAS-- on the front porch, heading out-- they've
been watching-- John straightens his tie, clears his throat--

JOHN (cont'd)
Sorry guys--
(lying through his teeth)
I, uh-- I shouldn't have done that.

He gets in his car, pulls out-- they watch him go--

CUT TO:

INT. BODY-SHOP - OFFICE - SOUTHIE - MORNING

A body-shop office, half in shadow--

BILLY comes in, duffel in hand, heads for the back-- we hear--

BONES (O.S.)
Where the fuck you been, Nancy?

Billy stops dead, turns and sees-- hidden in shadow--

BONES-- 40's-- black-Irish, black-heart, heavy as death--
behind the counter, locking away his prized possessions-- an
array of guns, laid out--

Billy tosses the duffel-- it lands near the guns--

BONES (cont'd)
Watch the pieces. They're worth
something-- unlike you--

Billy, slow-blinks-- Bones looks in the bag-- angrier--

BONES (cont'd)
 What the fuck you call this?

BILLY
 That's our night.

Bones-- pops a gun-slide-- chambers a round-- pops the round out again-- looks at Billy--

BONES
 When I take pity on you and your
 faggot half-wit friends, give you a
 couple of corners to run--
 (raises his voice, just)
 You better deliver, or I'll know
 you're stealing from me. *And I'll
 kill you.*

Bones stands up-- Billy flinches-- barely.

BONES (cont'd)
 You can be the prince of Pa-Yan,
 you're light-bagging me, I'll kill
 you. Good?

Billy-- shrugs as much as he dares-- nods-- full of hate--

BILLY
 (quiet-- just as deadly)
 Good.

Bones-- scoops the cash out of the bag-- throws the empty bag at Billy's feet-- turns back to his guns--

BONES
 (not looking up)
Lord knows I've been patient--
 (still not looking up)
 Yes, you can get out of my sight,
 now.

Billy-- full of hate-- grabs the bag and heads out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. BODY-SHOP - SOUTHIE - DAY

Billy storms out of the body shop-- couple of YARD-DOGS, chained, low-growling, behind him-- he heads for his car--

A car screeches up, cuts him off-- *BODIE* jumps out-- Billy-- guard up--

BILLY
What are you doing here?

BODIE
You hear? Your brother, dude--
Bodie-- doesn't know how else to say it--

BODIE (cont'd)
Somebody stuck him. He's dead.

Billy-- *shocked-- burning--*

BILLY
What? You're lyin'--

Bodie's not lying-- Billy looks back at Bones' shop-- and marches to his car--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

JOHN-- at his desk-- devouring a sandwich-- cranking through his numbers again, swift-- sharp--

MARSHALL, 50's, John's boss-- stops at his door, sees John zipping through-- John looks up--

MARSHALL
You're doing a huge job for us with this thing of yours--

JOHN
Well-- work helps--

Marshall-- sympathetic--

MARSHALL
How are you guys faring? You-- getting through it?

JOHN
We're ok. You find compensations. It's what we do, right? We compensate for loss-- move on--

Marshall-- taken aback-- John seems almost too recovered--

MARSHALL
If anything like that ever happened to me I think I'd-- snap--

JOHN
 (covering)
 You really don't know what you'll
 do. Until it happens. You--
 surprise yourself--

WALLIS appears in the doorway-- *John tenses-- on guard--*

WALLIS
 I'm sorry to break in on your day--

JOHN
 (tense)
 No, that's--
 (he stops)
 Marshall-- this is the detective--
 for Brendan's--

John can't quite say 'murder'-- he waits--

WALLIS
 That guy we thought killed your
 son. Somebody killed him.

John-- on edge-- waiting for Wallis to accuse him--

JOHN
 (covering)
 What was it-- some kind of-- gang
 thing?

WALLIS
 (nods)
 We think so.

John eases, relieved-- he's getting away with it--

MARSHALL
 Jesus-- there is justice, huh?

John looks at Marshall-- Wallis-- blinks--

JOHN
 I suppose there is.

Wallis-- sympathetic-- or suspicious-- both--

WALLIS
 I thought you'd like to know. I
 thought that might mean something
 to you. If he was the one, I mean.

JOHN
 (quiet-- covering)
 Thank you.

Wallis glances at John's work, spread across his desk--

WALLIS
 I'll leave you to it, then--

Wallis goes-- Marshall steps to the door too--

MARSHALL
 Me too-- I'm here when you need me--
 Counseling, anything--

John buries a smile-- half-haunted--

JOHN
 We'll-- manage--

Marshall leaves-- John sits back-- breathes-- looks out the window, a shining day, blue sky, white clouds.

CUT TO:

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL - DAY

LUCAS-- other PLAYERS, leaving the field after soccer--
 sweaty, muddy-- played to the death-- HENNING-- taunting--

HENNING
 Jesus, Hume, you're like a blind-
 man, three guys open and you take a
 nap on the ball--

Lucas-- ignoring him-- Henning-- knows he shouldn't, but--

HENNING (cont'd)
 I'm sick of losing 'cause you have
 your head up your ass about your
 damn brother--

Lucas wheels-- punches Henning in the face, Henning drops--
 Lucas jumps on him, punching, brutally-- he can't stop--

KIDS try to pull him off-- Henning cowers, tries to get his
 hands up-- Lucas punches through them-- over and over--

LUCAS
 (punching and punching)
 Shut up-- shut up, you prick--

Lucas-- punching-- savage, rage boiling out of him--

CUT TO:

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - BARTHOLOMEW SCHOOL - DAY

HELEN-- with LUCAS-- her heart breaking for him, but doesn't know where to start-- cold silence--

LUCAS

Can we get to the punishing now?

HELEN

(clears her throat)
Certainly.

CUT TO:

INT. FOUR ROSES BAR - SOUTHIE - DAY

A hole-and-corner river-rat bar--

BILLY, BODIE at a booth, with HECO, BAGGY, JAMIE, SPINK, DOG and TOMMY-- beer and whiskey, *silence*--

BILLY

I'd like to find the motherfucker who did that to him--

They nod--

SPINK

I'd take a piece of that.

BODIE

Me too. He was a good boy.

Billy-- waiting--

BILLY

So? Who the fuck was it?

BAGGY

Wasn't MS-13-- I'd know about it.

Billy stares at him--

BAGGY (cont'd)

I'd know, OK?

They look to Bodie--

BODIE

Wasn't B-Street, wasn't the Hall.
Wasn't any of those assholes, none
that's bragging on it, anyway--
nobody's saying shit, nobody was
over there, anyway. It's *bullshit*--

Silence--

BAGGY

My sister said she saw some fucker
in a suit down there--

BILLY

How many fuckers in suits you ever
see in Dover Hall?

Billy gets up, goes to the bar--

AT THE BAR -

Billy passes SAM, the bartender, goes to a stack of
newspapers scattered at the end, riffs through-- he stops-- a
headline, about Brendan's death-- Sam watches--

"ARLINGTON YOUTH SLAIN IN ROXBURY"

Billy comes back to the table--

BILLY

There's a comical thing-- we never
make the papers when one of us gets
killed--

(reading)

Son of a senior vice-president of
Boston-based Aurora Life Insurance--

Billy throws the paper on the table-- looks at them--

BILLY (cont'd)

We sentence this motherfucker.
He's done breathing.

They nod, real as death--

CUT TO:

INT. LUCAS' ROOM - DAY

LUCAS, on his bed, holds the box-cutter over his wrist-- starts cutting-- stops-- punches the blade into his arm-- throws it across the room, punches the wall, raging--

He gets up-- grabs the box-cutter, his back-pack-- walks out--

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE JOHN'S OFFICE BUILDING - COPLEY SQUARE - NIGHT

JOHN-- with a few other LATE-WORKERS-- comes out of his building, edges the square, heading for the 'T' train--

He sees a POLICE-CAR cruising, seems to slow down as it passes-- he flinches, reflex-- it keeps going-- so does he--

We see a blur-- somebody darting into a doorway-- John looks behind him-- nobody but a few last late commuters--

CUT TO:

EXT. SOUTH ST. STATION - PLATFORM - NIGHT

JOHN, a few COMMUTERS board the train-- we catch flashes-- somebody looks like SPINK-- somebody looks like HECO-- John looks down the cars-- no sign of them, if they were there--

CUT TO:

INT. ON TRAIN - LATER - NIGHT

JOHN, riding-- the car deserted-- the train pulls to a stop--

CUT TO:

EXT. ARLINGTON TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

JOHN gets off-- deserted platform, old cast-iron station-- he looks around again-- wary-- heads for the stairs--

BILLY-- steps out of a tunnel, behind John-- gun in hand-- strides up behind John, gun aimed at John's head-- John sees him, dives downward, as:

Billy shoots-- misses John-- John whirls, running, looking back-- Billy shoots again, John flinches, cowers, stumbles backwards on to the stairs--

He looks-- TOMMY, SPINK, DOG, BODIE, JAMIE, BAGGY, HECO-- rushing forward-- he sees their faces-- recognizes them, remembers them circling Brendan--

Billy shoots again-- it pings on the metal stairs--

John clammers up the lower steps-- runs up the metal staircase-- Billy shoots after him again--

CUT TO:

INT. BRIDGE OVER TRACKS - NIGHT

BILLY-- runs up onto the bridge from the stairs-- no sign of John-- Billy whirls-- as--

JOHN-- jumps out of an archway, smashes Billy in the face with his elbow, grabs Billy by the forearms, shoves him backward, all his might-- Billy digs his heels in, his arm bangs a pillar, he drops his gun, it clatters--

John, too scared to let go, swings Billy-- keeps shoving Billy backwards toward another set of stairs--

Billy-- back-wheels, fighting it, but-- John shoves him, all his might, he falls down the stairs-- he smacks the metal stairs halfway down, bleeding--

Dog yells:

DOG

Billy--

John looks at Billy-- he knows his name now-- looks at DOG-- TOMMY-- the OTHERS-- guns up and blazing, charging at John--

John-- dives, cowers-- sprints for the other end of the bridge for other stairs-- BULLETS PINGING AROUND HIM, concrete popping, wired-glass shattering--

John stumbles at the top--

ON THE METAL STAIRCASE--

He somersaults down, head, elbows, smacking--

He rolls out, at the bottom, runs to--

CUT TO:

INT. FOOTBRIDGE - TO PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

JOHN-- runs for his life across the footbridge-- just as TOMMY crests the stairs at the other end-- John dodges around the corner into--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - NIGHT

JOHN runs in-- bolts for a row of cars across the concrete, diving behind one-- cowering, peeking out--

BILLY runs in, gun up-- scanning-- John-- scrabbles sideways, behind the car-- he looks up-- a FIRE-EXTINGUISHER on the wall-- he starts to crawl toward it-- sets off a car-alarm-- he scrabbles away, frantic--

BODIE-- all the OTHERS- swarmed into the lot now-- start shooting at the car sounding the alarm, riddle the car, the wall, with bullets--

John's surrounded-- he looks at the stairway-- looks at the extinguisher-- he crouches and bangs car after car after car, in a row, staying behind them, as alarm after alarm sets off--

BILLY and the others fire and fire, only glimpsing John between cars, clouds of concrete busting out as bullets smack and alarms go off--

John finally gets to the extinguisher, yanks it off the wall-- metal squeaks, it's deafening, even among the alarms-- he holds it in front of his head, charges straight for the stairs--

JAMIE is in his path, John roundhouses the extinguisher around, smashes Jamie in the face-- and keeps running for the stairs-- shots pepper the wall-- he throws the extinguisher behind him, bullets pop into it, explode it--

John runs-- smashes a fire-alarm as he goes into the stairwell-- emergency-lights flash on, blinding-- Billy and the others, squint, shooting wild-- sprinklers shower down on Billy, the others-- John runs up the stairs--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

JOHN-- frantic, running-- shots smacking the walls below him-- he passes one level, keeps going up to--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - JOHN'S LEVEL - NIGHT

JOHN runs straight for another row of car-- crouches, crawling along-- watching the stairs-- BILLY and the others run by-- Billy hesitates-- looks down the stairs, other levels-- he nods to Tommy--

BILLY

In there--

Tommy runs in, Billy and the others charge up--

JOHN crawls along behind cars-- tracking as TOMMY runs in--

John-- sees his car-- Tommy's right next to it-- John takes his keys-- beeps the locks-- Tommy spins, looks at the car--

John charges him from behind-- grabs him, wheels him, doing anything to keep him from turning around and getting his gun or his hands on him-- he smack-wheels him into a concrete pillar, Tommy bounces, his gun spins away--

John scrambles for his car-- gets the door open-- as Tommy rushes him from behind, grabs John, strangling--

John-- his head inside-- Tommy pulling him out, to kill him-- John sees, in the back-seat, Bren's hockey-stick-- he grabs it, shoves it backward with all his might into Tommy's face--

Tommy reels back, John jumps out, holds the hockey stick across Tommy's throat-- Tommy struggles, John squeezes down-- the stick snaps in two--

John spins it and stabs it against Tommy's chest, it hits bone, barely sinks in-- but Tommy's pinned, gasping-- bleeding-- Tommy reaches his gun, on the concrete, starts spraying bullets, but he can't get the gun to point at John-- car-windows, windshields shatter, more alarms--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - ANOTHER LEVEL - NIGHT

BILLY and the others hear-- Billy and Bodie look at each other-- *run back--*

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - JOHN'S LEVEL

Tommy finally beats John backward, John falls, with the hockey stick-- rushes to the nearest car, windows' smashed, yanks the door, trying to slide through to the other side before Tommy can shoot--

TOMMY jumps after him-- dives on him in the car-- they wrestle, death-lock--

John starts to get out of Tommy's grip-- desperate-- he stabs the hockey-stick deep into his throat-- it sinks in-- Tommy gasps-- splutters-- but still clabbers with his hands, trying to wring John's neck--

The brake-lever pops up, as they fight-- the car starts rolling backward, down the slope-- they're going together-- closer to a thin metal-rail-- John fights, madly-- closer-- Tommy, spluttering-- fights as hard--

The car rolls back faster and faster-- *they're almost at the edge--*

John-- still holding Tommy he kicks the windshield, all his might-- 1--2-- 3 times-- it pops-- he *bangs his elbow down into Tommy's face, gets loose--* he wraps the seatbelt around Tommy's neck, around the gear-stick-- he scrambles out, slides over the hood:

Tommy-- wedged inside, caught in the seat-belt--

AT THE STAIRS--

BILLY and the others run in-- as Tommy, trapped in the car, smashes through the railing-- Billy and the others stare as:

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING-GARAGE - OUTSIDE - NIGHT

The car-- Tommy in it-- smashes through, dead-drops a hundred feet, and-- smashes at the bottom, the entire front collapses, Tommy's crushed-- dead--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - JOHN'S LEVEL - NIGHT

JOHN-- frantic, desperate, jumping his car, starting it-- screeches out of there, leaves Billy and the others standing-- they wheel, look at him, he races away--

Billy stares-- furious-- he sees something on the ground-- he peers closer-- it's John's wallet, he dropped it-- Billy picks it up-- looks inside-- smiles--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

John-- driving-- panting-- haunted-- he careens around turn after turn, getting out of there, he can't seem to slow down-- he looks in his rearview, again and again-- nobody seems to be following-- he keeps looking, in fear for his life--

His cell rings-- he jumps-- looks, it's Helen-- he answers, looks at his watch--

JOHN

(trying to sound half normal)

Hi-- I'm sorry I'm late, I--
(he stops)

What do you mean, you can't find him? Did you call his friends?

John-- a chill goes through him--

JOHN (cont'd)

Jesus-- honey-- I'll call you back--
I think I know where he is--

He throws the phone at the seat-- fish-tails the car around.

CUT TO:

EXT. KWIK-STOP - NIGHT

John driving, fast, anxious-- it's the street where Brendan was killed-- *the same gas-station-- he looks ahead:*

John's eyes widen-- LUCAS-- in the distance-- standing on the spot where Brendan died--

John pulls up-- jumps out-- looking around-- LUCAS-- hands in his pockets-- shivering-- staring at the ground--

JOHN runs to him-- Lucas looks up--

JOHN
(furious-- yelling)
What the hell are you doing? Your
mother's terrified--

Lucas blinks-- John-- wary-- he barks-- pointing--

JOHN (cont'd)
Get in the car--

Lucas-- staring to cry-- backs away--

LUCAS
No--

JOHN
I said get in the car--

LUCAS
I don't want to get in the car--

John-- had enough-- he marches over, grabs Lucas-- picks him up-- Lucas writhes, fighting John-- kicking-- punching-- he gets out of John's grip-- collapses to the concrete, sobbing--

LUCAS (cont'd)
(screams)
Fuck you--

John stops, on guard-- fearful for Lucas--

JOHN
This isn't a safe place.

LUCAS
Yeah, I know that much, don't I?

John-- can't answer him--

LUCAS (cont'd)
 Would it have been better if it was
 me? Is that what it is? You guys
 could have handled that a lot
 easier than losing Bren the golden-
 boy--

John-- stares at him-- Lucas finally has his attention--

JOHN
 Jesus-- son--

John grabs Lucas, hugs him-- looks in his eyes--

JOHN (cont'd)
 I swear to you, son-- that isn't
 true. I love you. I swear to you--

Lucas-- breaks down, sobbing-- John helps him up, still on
 guard--

JOHN (cont'd)
 (quietly)
 Come on. Let's get you home.

They walk toward the car-- John watching, on guard, every
 step--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

*JOHN and LUCAS come in-- HELEN rushes to them, wraps her arms
 around Lucas, holding him for dear life-- John stands by,
 almost an outsider, then wraps his arms around both of them--*

JOHN
 (quietly)
 It'll be better-- I promise you--

Helen looks up at him--

JOHN (cont'd)
 We'll be a family again. Soon.

-- but he has no idea how-- he looks out-- holding them--

CUT TO:

INT. FUNERAL HOME OFFICE - SOUTHIE - DAY

A cheap store-front, fake-wood panelling, plastic chairs, counter with bars-- more like a bail-bonder than a funeral home--

BODIE, the OTHERS stand by the counter waiting-- silent-- *furios--*

BILLY-- his back to them, stares out to the street, hard as nails-- *tapping John's wallet on the door--*

A CLERK comes back to the counter with some forms, cranks numbers on old paper-tape calculator-- looks at Bodie--

CLERK
Memorial service is only another
hundred--

Billy looks at the clerk from the door-- as if he'd like to kill him--

BILLY
(calls over)
*He doesn't need a service. Just
burn him.*

The clerk hesitates-- Bodie leans in-- threatening--

BODIE
How about we respect the bereaved's
wishes or I'm burning you too--

The clerk punches the calculator-- it rattles out tape--

CLERK
Cremation and disposal. Seven-
hundred.

*Billy pulls John's wallet open-- walks to the counter-- flips
out two bills--*

BILLY
You see this wallet? This wallet's
got two hundred. And this two
hundred takes care of my brother.

Billy stares at the clerk-- daring him to argue-- the clerk's throat creaks, a scared little cough--

CLERK

(he nods)

Two hundred.

(clears his throat)

We're-- sorry for your loss--

Billy turns for the door-- he stops, looks at the body-bag on a gurney, next to the counter-- *Joe's body*-- he looks at the bag-- *then he looks at the wallet, walks out*-- they follow--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE FUNERAL HOME - DAY

BILLY-- *still carrying John's wallet*-- comes out with the OTHERS-- Billy locks eyes with:

BONES-- sliding by in his sedan-- staring at them, serious as a hanging-- Billy, the rest tighten-- fear shows--

Bones pulls up, hard, steps out-- crosses to them, a scrunched-up newspaper in his fist--

BONES

What are we doing here? Huh?

Billy eyeballs him-- the others somewhere between backing Billy and fearing Bones-- nobody answers--

BONES (cont'd)

-- maybe somebody's going to tell me when you girls are planning to put in a few minutes on the perfectly good corner I gave you?

He slaps Bodie in the face with the newspaper, Bodie flares, doesn't budge--

BONES (cont'd)

And now I get to read all about gang-wars and dead pieces of shit because somebody had to go kill a rich little faggot. Way to make the papers-- I don't need help like that--

They look at him-- hating him-- but more afraid of him-- Bones-- steps closer, like death himself--

BONES (cont'd)

Listen to me, kids. You work for me, you work for me.

You don't in-and-out, you don't
 half-ass, you pay me. I say when
 you're done, and when I say that,
 one of you leaves the shit-hole you
 live in after your morning needle
 one pretty day and wakes up
 bleeding to death in the trunk of
 my car, OK? 'Cause when you're
 with me I'm your life and death.
I'm the world on a cracker.

He stares at them--

BONES (cont'd)
 So which one of you boys going to
 bleed to death in my trunk?
 (in Billy's eyes)
 Huh? You, Billy boy? Gang-lord?

Bones snorts, derisive--

BONES (cont'd)
 Whatever you little fucks think is
 important ain't important. So stop
 it. Right fucking now.
 (paternal, good-coach)
 You're all good boys. Now buckle
 down for me.

He turns-- starts walking away-- Billy looks at the funeral
 home-- *sees a little plume of brown-gray smoke, billowing--*

BILLY
 (calls after him)
*They're burning Joe-- if you're
 interested--*

Bones nods, walking-- tenses, barely, but-- not interested--

BONES
 (walking away-- sing-song)
He'll be the lucky one, boys--

Billy-- watches Bones go-- madder-- burning-- *he looks at
 John's wallet in his hand-- throws it to Bodie, it slaps on
 his chest, he catches--*

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - MORNING

John getting dressed, looks on the dresser, pats his hip-pocket-- *his wallet's missing*-- he goes to the closet, pats the suit he was wearing yesterday-- not there either--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - JOHN'S LEVEL - DAY

John pulls up into the parking garage-- COPS, YELLOW TAPE everywhere-- he keeps going to:

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - ANOTHER LEVEL - DAY

No cops on this floor-- John parks, goes to the edge, looks down-- a crane is lifting the smashed car up-- MORE COPS are everywhere, STATION OFFICIALS-- *Tommy's body* is covered up with a white sheet--

He looks down around the wreck-- sees WALLIS-- he scans the ground for any sign of his wallet-- none--

Wallis looks up, at the broken guard-rail-- John pulls back, out of sight-- breathing hard--

He looks across to the tracks-- COPS there, too-- he's driving to work today-- he goes back to his car-- pulls out--

CUT TO:

INT. PARKING-GARAGE - JOHN'S LEVEL

JOHN drives by the broken railing, the COPS-- scans the ground as he goes-- *no sign of his wallet-- he drives on--*

CUT TO:

EXT. PARKING-GARAGE - OUTSIDE

WALLIS-- looking at the smashed car-- the evidence-bag of bullet-casings-- thinking-- he watches the bloody hockey-stick going into a bag--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John-- agitated-- tries to focus on his project, his numbers-- he can't-- he slams the spreadsheet down, gets up-- paces--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - LOBBY - DAY

BODIE-- crosses the lobby of John's office building-- carrying a package--

He looks at the directory-- heads for the elevator-- a GUARD at the desk sees him--

DESK GUARD
You need to sign in--

Bodie looks at the guard--

DESK GUARD (cont'd)
Messengers drop off over there--

The guard points the other way to a messenger center, other MESSENGERS dropping off-- another GUARD-- armed-- nearby--

BODIE
No-- I need to hand-deliver this--
to John Hume--

The armed guard glances at Bodie-- looks him over--

ARMED GUARD
You can sign in and drop it off
like everyone else.

Bodie looks at the elevators-- the guard's defenses up--

Ding-- the elevator door opens-- Bodie waits-- as the elevator door closes, he runs for it--

ARMED GUARD/ DESK GUARD
Hey!

The armed guard chases after Bodie, but the door shuts before he gets there-- he runs to an adjoining elevator.

The desk guard rolls his eyes-- picks up the phone--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John-- trying to focus-- hears yelling, outside-- he looks up, sees:

BODIE-- zig-zagging through the cubicles, knocking into people and furniture-- trailed by four SECURITY GUARDS--

BODIE
(yelling)
John Hume-- John Hume--

John sees Bodie-- he gets up, goes to his door-- Bodie spots John-- heads straight for him, comes up face to face--

BODIE (cont'd)
Nice office. Motherfucker.

John-- seething with anger--

JOHN
What the hell do you want?

Bodie hands John the box--

BODIE
That's the gift of freedom, baby--

The guards grab Bodie-- Bodie eye-balls John-- the lead GUARD looks at John-- thrown, they seem to know each other--

GUARD
Sir? Should we escort this person out?

John-- doesn't answer-- Bodie grins--

GUARD (cont'd)
(to John)
Sir?

BODIE
(staring at John)
You're free from wondering how you're going to die, now.
(he smiles)
You're free from wondering if you're going to die alone. Hear?

Bodie laughs-- deadly-- low-laughs--

BODIE (cont'd)
 (sings-- low-- deadly)
 -- 'cause you'll get pie, in the
 sky, when you die--

John stares-- Bodie snaps the guards' hold off him, fast as a snake, and walks away-- the guards try to hustle him, he shakes them off again-- keeps walking--

MARSHALL-- KEVIN-- AMY-- and everyone else in the office staring at John--

John takes the box inside, sets it on his desk like it's going to explode in his face-- he stares at it, tension growing-- *he lifts the lid-- revealing:*

His wallet--

John lifts the wallet out-- opens it-- riffling through it-- stopping at a picture of him and his family--

He pulls the photo out-- *its smeared in blood--* John's eyes wide, in horror-- *something catches his eye--*

Reflected in the shiny surface of his desk-lamp-- the back of the photo-- a phone-number, backwards-- he turns the photo around--

He stares at the phone-- he picks up, dials the number-- each breath harder than the last--

CUT TO:

INT. FOUR ROSES BAR - BACK HALLWAY - DAY

We move through a dark corridor, lit only by a red, overhanging lamp, to a ringing pay-phone.

A hand picks up-- *it's Billy-- but he doesn't say anything--* he smiles, waits, *breathes, loud enough for John to hear--*

INTERCUT:

JOHN
Where are you, you bastard?

Billy smiles, waits-- let's John twist--

BILLY
*Family's everything, eh? Isn't it?
 It is to me.*

JOHN
Where are you?

BILLY
*Oh, I see, you'd do me down like
you did my brother. He was a kid
you know, once. Did you know?*

JOHN
(yells-- furious)
Like my son?

BILLY
*We had birthdays, we had all that.
You had a few for your boy? Cake?
Singing?*

John-- too enraged-- too gut-twisted to answer--

BILLY (cont'd)
*Well-- you and your little loves--
see?*

John waits-- bursting-- Billy-- calm as death--

BILLY (cont'd)
*You just bought yourselves a death
sentence. All of you.*

Billy hangs up-- dial tone-- John-- in a panic--

JOHN
Don't hang up-- god damn you--

John-- hyperventilating-- everyone's staring-- he yanks out
his desk drawer, spilling papers, a stapler-- digs-- as he
dials, frantic--

INTERCUT:

INT. HELEN'S OFFICE - DAY

HELEN's desk-- her phone rings-- she's not there--

John-- frantic-- listening to the rings--

JOHN
Damn it--

Helen comes in, looks for something, letting the phone ring--
she finally picks up--

JOHN (cont'd)
*Jesus, honey are you OK? Is Luke
 OK?*

Helen-- frightened--

HELEN
 Yes-- we're--

JOHN
*-- stay there-- keep Luke there--
 don't go home, alright?*

HELEN
 John? What's happened?

JOHN
 Just stay there until somebody
 comes-- promise me--

She's thrown-- *terrified--*

HELEN
 Who? Who's coming?

JOHN
 The police--

She goes cold--

HELEN
 John? What the hell is going on?

JOHN
*Just stay there until the police
 come-- then go home, I'm coming
 home-- alright?*

He hangs up-- he's still digging through-- he finds Wallis'
 card-- grabs it-- and runs out--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S BUILDING - ELEVATORS - DAY

JOHN runs to the elevators, chasing Bodie-- bangs the button--
 can't wait-- he runs for the stairs-- charges through the
 door--

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN'S BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

JOHN runs through the lobby-- crowds of PEOPLE-- no Bodie--
he runs out to--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

JOHN runs out-- crowds, cars-- no sign of Bodie-- *he's gone--*
he sees a UNIFORM COP, moving a double-parked truck along--
he looks at the cop--

He peers at Wallis' card, hesitates-- then dials his cell,
frantic-- as he's running for his car--

He runs, frantic-- gets in his car as an operator picks up--

JOHN
(on cell)
I need Detective Wallis-- *now--*

OPERATOR
Hold--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. JOHN'S CAR - DAY

JOHN-- starts up, yanks the wheel, pulls out into traffic--

JOHN
(yells-- jamming the
wheel)
*No-- I need to talk to him right
now--*

Cars screech, horns blast at him, he peels through--

Operator hesitates-- John-- panting, breathless, desperate--

OPERATOR
I'm putting you through--

CUT TO:

INT. WALLIS' OFFICE - DAY

WALLIS, typing-- the phone rings--

INTERCUT--

JOHN-- driving like a banshee-- careening through gaps--

JOHN

They've threatened my family--

Wallis-- catching up--

WALLIS

Mr. Hume?

JOHN

Those trash threatened to kill my
family--

WALLIS

(takes control-- working)

OK-- where are your family right
now?

JOHN

They're at the school-- St.
Bartholomew--

John-- panting-- barrels through a red light--

WALLIS

Now-- what trash are threatening
your family? Why would they want
to do that, Mr. Hume?

John-- panting--

JOHN

Just-- help us-- please--

WALLIS

I will.

John throws his phone aside-- jams the accelerator, jets on
to the expressway--

Wallis-- line dead-- gets up, grabs his jacket--

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE HUME'S HOUSE - DAY

JOHN pulls up, still driving like a maniac-- the COP CAR is there, TWO COPS inside-- John runs inside--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

LUCAS and HELEN are at the table-- frightened--

HELEN

What the hell is happening?

He looks at her-- looks to the cop-car outside-- he can't answer her-- he starts running through, locking doors, windows, closing blinds-- Helen watches-- fear mounting--

John heads to the living-room--

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING-ROOM - DAY

JOHN-- rushes through, locking windows, dropping blinds-- he stops-- all he can do-- HELEN comes in-- stares at him--

The doorbell rings--

John tenses, looks-- as WALLIS peers in through the window--

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT HALL - DAY

John goes to the door, opens it-- Wallis comes in-- John leads him toward the living room--

JOHN

Thank God you're here--

Wallis looks at John-- weighing--

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING-ROOM - DAY

JOHN and WALLIS come in--

Wallis looks at the living-room, sees an alcove bristling with Brendan's hockey trophies-- medals-- bronze pucks-- a pair of crossed hockey-sticks--

WALLIS

Your son was a hockey player.

John-- thrown-- Wallis nods--

WALLIS (cont'd)

The car'll stay here tonight--

(keeps staring)

I think it's time you told me-- who did what to who?

John doesn't answer-- Helen stares at John-- Wallis-- angry--

WALLIS (cont'd)

You make war on the wrong dog?

That what you did? You figured you could just go kill some little asshole because you live out here?

Helen stares at John, at Wallis, horrified--

HELEN

What are you saying?

(to John)

What is he saying, John?

John-- twisting-- he lies-- miserable-- desperate--

JOHN

I've done nothing wrong.

WALLIS

How about you tell me how you get Billy Darley this pissed off at you? Huh?

John-- cuts him off-- Helen is staring at him--

JOHN

Billy? Billy's Darley's brother?

Wallis-- nods, guarded--

JOHN (cont'd)

He's the one who made Joe Darley kill my son? He's the one who runs these animals?

Wallis-- hardens--

WALLIS

Listen to me, Mr. Hume. Just get through tonight. And Thank God you're alive this long. *But if you started a war, God help you.*

Wallis-- snorts--

WALLIS (cont'd)

I meet a lot of killers say the same damn thing.

Helen looks at John-- breaking in two-- Wallis goes out into the hall--

Helen stares at John-- doesn't dare ask him-- but:

HELEN

What have you done?

John looks at her-- he can't say it-- but he doesn't have to-- *Helen realizes, she half-collapses in shock, fear, leans back against the couch-- staring at him--*

John looks away from her-- and follows Wallis out--

CUT TO:

INT. FRONT HALL - DAY

JOHN comes out after Wallis-- Wallis stops--

JOHN

How do I stop this?

WALLIS

Did you start it?

John-- says nothing-- but his eyes admit it-- Wallis nodding-- weighing-- John's waiting for him to arrest him--

JOHN

*I don't care what happens to me.
But I need them safe-- how do I
stop this?*

Wallis looks at John-- weighing--

WALLIS

(nods to the squad car)
Do everything those guys tell you.

(starts out)
You might pray, too.

Wallis goes-- Helen comes out-- stares at him, in shock--
fear-- he looks away again-- locks the door--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. PATROL-CAR - IN FRONT OF HUME'S HOUSE - NIGHT

All's quiet-- wind rustles the trees, the house is dark--

The COPS sit, waiting, silent-- the one in driver's seat
takes a last drag on his cigarette-- hits the button to lower
his window, just a couple of inches, tosses the cig out-- as:

*The blade of a machete-- slides through the gap, drives right
into the cop's throat-- he gasps, twists, tries to reach the
blade it goes deeper, he goes limp-- the OTHER cop tries to
pull his gun-- the passenger door opens behind him, he's
grabbed from behind, yanked backwards-- he tries to reach the
radio but a blade rips across, opens his throat-- he gurgles--
slumps--*

CUT TO:

INT. JOHN & HELEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

HELEN-- sleeping, fitful-- wind blows outside-- curtains
lift, blown by drafts-- the window rattles in the old frame--

JOHN-- wide-awake-- on guard, on edge-- looks at the window--
almost frozen with fear--

He gets up, goes to the window, jams it tighter, the rattling
stops--

He looks out-- the POLICE CAR, still there, under the
streetlight-- he just makes out the driver COP'S uniformed
elbow, resting against the driver-side window-- branches blow
in the wind--

John looks up and down the street-- not a soul in sight--

*He hears a thump-- downstairs-- can't tell what it is-- he
looks at Helen-- reaches under the bed-- the scythe, from the
garage-- he takes it-- goes out to--*

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - HALL OUTSIDE LUCAS' ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN looks in on LUCAS-- he's sleeping-- wind blows outside, Lucas' window rattles too-- John looks behind him, into the hall, spooked suddenly-- some shadow, moving-- nothing there--

He looks up and down the hall-- another thump-- a creak-- can't tell if its the wind, or what-- his blood chills--

He looks at Lucas' door, at Helen's-- he goes to the end of the hall, looks out that window, sees--

THE COP CAR-- from another angle now-- reflections of blowing branches slide over the windshield, he can't see inside-- but then-- as the trees blow harder the reflection shifts, he sees inside:

THE COPS-- dead-- throats cut--

JOHN'S EYES GO WIDE-- he spins-- as:

BILLY, BODIE and the OTHERS charge up the stairs, straight at him-- shooting-- swarming at him-- plaster, glass, explodes--

John flinches as glass splatters his face, the gun-flashes are blinding-- he drops his scythe as a bullet pops his thigh open, red bursts out across the wall--

He half-drops, grabs the scythe-- he darts his eyes to Lucas and Helen's doors-- but Bodie and the others are charging in already, swarming right, left, screaming--

John bolts up, his scythe raised, eyeballing Billy, who's standing in the center of the hall, smiling at him-- John charges-- him as--

HELEN-- with Heco dragging her by the hair-- is dragged out, screaming-- John rushes toward her but HECO rushes in, smashes John in the face-- John drops, struggles to get up--

But they are dragging Helen away-- LUCAS, dragged by SPINK, is half-thrown out into the hall, Lucas smashes against the wall-- John's eyes meet Lucas'-- they look at each other--

John charges up again-- Spink laughs, looking at John, as Heco smashes John down again-- and drags Lucas away as Heco grabs John by the throat, grinds his boot into John's wounded leg--

John looks-- as Helen and Lucas are dragged away from him, down the stairs-- helpless-- Heco pokes him in the temple with a gun, laughing-- starts to drag John along too--

HECO
 (laughing)
 Come on and kiss my ass while we
 watch them dying--

John explodes-- twists out of Heco's grip-- gets the gun away from him-- fumbles trying to get a shot, but Heco kicks John in the face--

John drops the gun-- but he's out of Heco's grip, he scrambles along the floor, charges for the stairs-- Heco shoots after him, plaster bursts from the wall--

John disappears down the stairs-- Heco chases him--

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

HELEN-- crying hysterically, on her knees, Lucas, bleeding, looking with hate in his eyes--

BILLY and the OTHERS-- looking at them, guns raised--

JOHN bursts in-- yells--

JOHN
 HELEN-- LUKE--

They turn-- their eyes meet John's-- John rushes at Billy and the others, straight into their guns, putting his body between the bullets and his family--

BAGGY
 (whoops, looks to Billy)
Let's get it done!

Billy nods-- he and the others open fire, gunflashes everywhere, walls, porcelain, exploding-- John wades straight at them, going for Billy--

John's hit in the side but-- *he keeps going for Billy--*

HELEN is hit in the chest-- blood bursts, she falls-- Lucas is hit in the face, then the shoulder, he drops, spinning--

John turns-- sees Helen and Lucas falling, dead-- Billy smiles, looks at John-- shoots him in the back-- John's body spins-- then: *Billy takes aim at John's head-- fires-- it grazes his head, slices through his scalp, but his head snaps back, bleeding as if head-shot-- he drops--*

Silence-- no more guns-- Billy and the others look at Helen, Lucas, John, a wounded heap on the floor-- Billy looks at John, takes a step closer-- sirens wailing, closer--

BODIE
Come on. He's dead.

Billy turns-- we follow their boots, walking out, over debris, over the bodies of John and his family-- we hear smashing, crashing, off-screen, as Billy and the others casually rush the place as they go, tipping over shelves, laughing-- finally they're gone, silence presses in--

HELEN-- dead-- LUCAS-- dead--

JOHN-- dead-still-- lifeless, but-- we go closer-- closer--

We hear the smallest, merest rasping breath pass from his seemingly dead lips-- he's still breathing--

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN in a hospital-bed-- hair shorn where the bullet grazed his head-- raging, drugged, half-conscious, tearing at tubes, wires-- screaming with loss-- horror-- guilt--

ORDERLIES rush in, past the UNIFORM COP outside, the cop rushes in too, they try to subdue John-- John fights them, slides off to the floor, fighting-- finally they gang up, hold him down-- *inject him--* he yells out, louder--

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAYS LATER - DAY

JOHN's eyes open-- *blinding lights--* he's in bed, bandaged-- the horror of the memory floods him-- an ORDERLY hangs a new bag on his I-V-- the monitor beeps, softly, John's heart-- he seems to hate the sound of it--

JOHN
Can we turn that off?

The orderly-- half-afraid of the look on John's face-- tries a joke--

ORDERLY
The monitor or your heart?

John-- no answer--

ORDERLY (cont'd)
I'll ask the doctor.

John stares-- the orderly goes, past the COP on guard just outside-- as:

WALLIS comes up the hall, comes in-- looks at John-- the patch on his head where the bullet snaked through his scalp--

WALLIS
You know, my Dad was on the job thirty years, got shot twice, missed his organs, hail-mary's-- clean-through's, just like you. *"They keep missing me"* he said. Then he takes another one, five years before pension. Went into his guts, he bled to death, slowly though, took a week. My Mom and I came every day.

WALLIS (cont'd)
You know what he said to me before he died? *"It's the last one that gets you."* Funny, huh?

John-- doesn't answer--

WALLIS (cont'd)
You're done. Understand?

Wallis nods at the guard--

WALLIS (cont'd)
You think he's here protecting you? He's here to haul your ass to jail if I say so. I got a DA doesn't want to put you away, thinks he'll lose votes, thinks you're going to look like a hero. You don't look like a hero to me.

Wallis blinks--

WALLIS (cont'd)
This thing stops right now. God knows why you're alive but you're getting a second chance. Don't fuck it up.

John-- doesn't seem to care if he lives or dies--

JOHN
I'm going home.

Wallis doesn't buy it-- shakes his head--

WALLIS
You're going home when I tell you
to. You're going home when I
believe you.

John-- struggling-- breaks off-- he can't go on-- he closes
his eyes-- fighting tears down--

JOHN
I killed my family. I killed them.

Wallis looks at him-- half-comfort, but half-damning-- isn't
going to let him off--

WALLIS
I'm sorry you lost your family.
But we'll find those fuckers and
we'll bring them to justice.

JOHN
If there was justice my family
would still be here.

WALLIS
And where's your retribution gotten
you?

John-- no answer--

WALLIS (cont'd)
Everybody's right in a war, aren't
they? Everybody's doing the right
thing.

John looks at him--

WALLIS (cont'd)
Well, all of them end up dead. You
were never going to win this thing.
You're not going to win it now.

John-- looks at him-- pain shifting, hardening again-- to
anger--

Wallis stares at him-- and walks out-- John watches him go--
looks at the cop-- *then*:

John looks at the closet, sees his clothes--

He sees his wallet, keys, and cell-phone in a plastic tray on a table-- he pulls himself up-- gathers his strength, gets out of bed--

He goes to the table, opens his wallet-- the picture, with the number on the back--

He coughs-- leans on the table-- picks up his cell-- powers it-- it works-- he dials--

JOHN

(on cell)

Kevin-- I need you to run a number--

555-9815-- yeah--

(waits-- he sags)

-- nothing? Look somewhere else.

Get it for me.

He hangs up-- gets his clothes, starts getting dressed--

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - HALL OUTSIDE JOHN'S ROOM - DAY

JOHN-- dressed-- comes out-- the COP goes on guard--

JOHN

Am I under arrest?

COP

You're not going anywhere, I can tell you that much--

JOHN

(in his eyes)

Do you have kids?

The cop nods-- barely--

JOHN (cont'd)

I had kids. I had a wife.

John looks as if his soul has died-- the cop can see his heart breaking-- it affects him--

JOHN (cont'd)

And now I want to go home.

The cop-- affected-- but-- wary--

JOHN (cont'd)

Let me go home.

The cop-- wants to do it, but-- can't-- he pulls on his radio-mic-- sees the look in John's eyes--

COP
 Sorry, buddy-- you don't get to go
 home right now--

John-- *ready to explode--*

Something snaps inside John-- the cop looks at him--

COP (cont'd)
 (on radio)
 -- 2-3, 2-3-- I'm gonna need--

He stops talking-- because his night-stick just got jammed into his gut-- he bends over-- John's holding the club-- the cop reaches for it, and John swipes it across his head, knocks him cold--

John looks up and down the hall-- nobody saw-- he drags the cop through the door--

JOHN
 (quiet-- dragging him)
Yes I do. Sorry-- buddy--

CUT TO:

EXT. HUME'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Raining-- bleak--

JOHN walks toward his door-- police-tape everywhere-- he stops, his eyes dead-looking-- he rips the police tape aside-- goes inside--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JOHN-- alone-- raining, bleak-- the horror of what's happened pressing in on him-- he can barely stand it--

He stands, staring-- smashed debris-- he looks through to the kitchen, and can't quite stand it-- but he goes through to--

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

JOHN comes in-- looks at the floor where Helen and Lucas fell, debris everywhere-- crime-scene tape-- grief flooding over him--

He sinks back against a window-ledge-- he turns, looks out, at the pouring rain-- torrential, whipping--

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. WAL-MART - MORNING

Next morning-- WAL-MART- the gun-counter-- mild-looking CLERK helping an OLD MAN with an automatic-- John walks up, doesn't wait--

JOHN
(loudly)
I want a gun. Now.

The clerk-- busy-- thrown--

GUN-CLERK
Be right-- with you--

John looks at the wall-- shotguns-- pistols-- he points--

JOHN
I want two of those and two of those--

The clerk and the old man stare-- John looks like a mad-man-- wide-eyed--

CLERK
Well-- you can-- start with the forms there--
(nervous)
There's a-- three-day wait--

JOHN
I can't wait three days-- understand? I need them--

John stops-- aware he's masking a scene--

The clerk picks up the phone, as if he's going to need to call security--

John turns, walks out-- he walks past: *a wall of machetes-- looks at them-- keeps going--*

CUT TO:

EXT. WAL-MART PARKING LOT - DAY

Outside, in his car, dead-ended, at a loss-- tears start to come, he fights them down--

His phone rings-- he answers--

JOHN

Yeah--

It's Kevin--

KEVIN

(on phone)

I got that number run-- it's a bar
in Southie-- the Four Roses--
what's the--

John-- he breathes-- cuts him off--

JOHN

Thank you. Goodbye, Kevin.

He hangs up--

CUT TO:

INT. ARLINGTON - MASS FEDERATED BANK - DAY

JOHN at a teller-window-- the TELLER is counting out huge stacks of cash-- looking at John-- the look on his face--

TELLER

(counting-- on edge)

Do-- you want bags for this?

John-- nods his head-- she keeps counting, still on edge-- she hesitates--

TELLER (cont'd)

And you said the savings too?

John-- nods--

JOHN

Everything. All of it.

TELLER

Pulling out the college fund, huh?

John-- bites down-- doesn't answer-- she keeps counting--
eyeing him-- nervous--

TELLER (cont'd)

And do you want a-- guard-escort?
To your car?

John laughs, barely-- breathes out-- he stands there like a
ghost-walker-- waiting--

JOHN

(quiet)
No. Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. FOUR ROSES BAR - DAY

JOHN comes in, a duffel-bag in hand-- it's dark, deserted
except for a HARD-TIMER, a DOCK-RAT, drinking his pay, and
SAM, the bartender-- loading cases off the bar--

John walks to the bar--

JOHN

I'm looking for Billy Darley. Or
any of his friends.

Sam-- appraising-- John's looking almost like a local--
haggard-- his face battered-- he goes on loading-- nods to
the door--

SAM

They're outside that door
somewhere. So get the hell out.

John-- pulls out a wad of cash-- slaps it on the bar-- the
bartender hesitates-- sneers--

SAM (cont'd)

You get a popper through your ear,
might help you hear a little
better, yeah? That what you want?

John lunges across the counter, grabs Sam by the shirt, slams
his face down, bangs it on the counter-- the hard-timer gets
his blood up, climbs off his stool, starts walking at John--

SAM (cont'd)
 (struggling)
 Fuck you-- fuck you--

Sam-- feels his cheek where John bashed it down-- the hard-timer comes at John-- grabs him by the back of the head with his free hand, bounces him off the bar-- the guy drops, dead to the world--

Just as the DOCK-RAT rushes up--

DOCK-RAT
 Hey-- piss-ant-- back it up--

John-- still holding Sam down, doesn't know what else to do-- he swings his elbow with all his might into the dock-rat's face--

The dock-rat falters, and John kicks his feet out from under him, he goes over backwards-- stumbles up--

John looks at the dock-rat-- blinks-- and--

John bashes Sam's head down again--

SAM
 (yells)
Get the hell off me--

John-- shakes him-- growling--

JOHN
 Tell me where to find Billy Darley--
tell me--

Sam-- a little gash on his cheekbone-- blinking-- John scoops more money out, practically shoves it in Sam's face--

SAM
 You don't want Billy Darley, buddy--

John-- bangs him again--

JOHN
Where is he?

John slaps another wad out with his free hand-- bangs Sam again--

JOHN (cont'd)
I've got business with him--

Sam looks at the small mountain of cash inches from his face--
he gives, finally--

SAM
OK-- *let me go, OK? Let me go*--

John eases off-- Sam straightens up-- starts shovelling cash--

SAM (cont'd)
(he nods)
His boy Heco's crashing in 113, up
the block. Top back.

John nods-- still staring--

SAM (cont'd)
(mimes a syringe poking
his arm-- smiles)
He's usually hooking up around
dinner-time, you know? OK?

John-- nods-- he hesitates-- slaps another wad of cash on the
bar--

JOHN
And I need to buy some guns.

Sam-- wary-- what's he done-- but then he looks at the money--
and shovels it up--

SAM
LaVallete and Forge-- only thing
over there. Guy named Bones.

John nods-- heads for the door--

SAM (cont'd)
Don't let his little friends eat
you--

John-- hesitates-- goes--

CUT TO:

EXT. BODY-SHOP - DAY

JOHN walks to the gate-- *sees the pair of yard-dogs, at rest,
low-growling*-- John moves past them, cautious--

He heads for the office--

CUT TO:

INT. BODY SHOP - OFFICE - DAY

JOHN comes in-- wary-- sees BONES, half-obscured in shadow, sitting on the cheap metal chair like Satan on his throne, counting cash into a metal box-- metal baseball bat in view on the counter-- gun under a ledge, beyond that--

Bones's head comes up, wary-- stops counting-- eyes John, weighing--

BONES
Help you?

John-- cautious-- stony--

JOHN
I need guns.

Bones hardens-- squints-- his eyes are animal-- John catches something-- ferocity-- John's own fear--

BONES
I don't know you.

Bones-- his eyes flick to the baseball-bat-- then to the gun-- John catches it-- tightens--

JOHN
I came from the Four Roses.

John turns-- looks at the dogs, outside, low-growling-- Bones follows John with his eyes-- watchful-- meaner by the beat--

BONES
I'm going to guess you're a little
bit far from home.

John opens the duffel-- shows Bones the cash--

Bones looks at it-- nods-- pulls a key from under the counter, unlocks a steel wall-cabinet--

John stares-- every kind of gun you can imagine, bigger, shinier, deadlier than anything Billy or his gang have had--

BONES (cont'd)
(handling each, showing
off, popping actions)

You got your Colt Python-- that's a
 sweetie got your Smith and Wesson
 .45, that's a hungry-man-sized
 friend-- got your Desert Eagle--
 king of mayhem, take this to the
 holy-land, do your own crusade--
 (to John-- heavy)
 Any one of these'll get it done.

John scans the guns-- bewildered-- in a strange country--

 JOHN
 (nods to the Python and
 the Smith and Wesson)
 Those-- and--

John looks behind-- to a double-barreled breech shotgun--

 JOHN (cont'd)
 That--

Bones pulls it down-- looks at the neat stack--

 BONES
 That's three fucking grand worth of
 killing. You got three grand worth
 of killing to do?

John doesn't answer-- his face says it all-- he counts out
 the cash-- Bones lays up cartridges for him-- and some belts,
 holsters--

 BONES (cont'd)
 I'm going to comp you some
 accessories, 'cause you got a thing
 about you--

Bones looks at him-- a death-look, almost smiles-- John
 blinks it away-- starts loading the guns into his bag--

 BONES (cont'd)
 You got a killing thing about you,
 you surely do--

Bones starts to laugh-- John doesn't answer-- shoves the
 belts, the bullets into the bag--

John zips it-- starts out for the door-- he feels Bones eyes
 on him-- Bones, watching him, looks at the gun under the
 ledge, but then-- lifts a big automatic down, the Desert
 Eagle, half a foot long-- he loads it-- John hears the
 'click'-- hesitates, keeps going--

BONES (cont'd)
 You the motherfucker after my son
 Billy?

John stops dead-- turns, looks at Bones-- he gets it--

JOHN
Billy?

Bones stares at John-- malignant-- a deadly look, more deadly than anything John's seen in Billy or the others--

John's hand twitches on the handle of the bag-- looks Bones dead in the eye-- swallows hard-- and says it:

JOHN (cont'd)
 Yes. I'm after your son.

BONES
 Well, he's no damn doing of mine.
 And anything he did's no damn doing
 of mine. OK?

Bones-- sets his gun on the counter-- in easy reach-- keeping his eyes on John-- rests his hand on the counter, close-- John sees--

They look at each other--

BONES (cont'd)
 So-- somebody needs to make
 somebody pay for something to make
 themselves feel better, Billy'd be
 the one to pay. Kill the little
 piss-pants-- see if it makes a damn
 day's difference to me, Dad to Dad--

John flinches-- recoils-- Bones picks up his gun--

BONES (cont'd)
 -- don't tell me about it. Just go
 do it.
 (smiles-- deadly)
Lord knows I've been patient--

John-- horrified-- Bones-- slow-blinks-- smiles-- points the gun at John-- cocks it-- ready to go--

BONES (cont'd)
 But you think about asking me where
 he is, I'll kill you. You go your
 way, now.

(he laughs)
Go with God and a bag-full of guns--

John-- horror-- fear-- he eyes the door-- nods, barely--

Bones-- reaches button on the counter-- pushes it-- the chain-link gate outside-- starts rolling closed--

John looks at the gate-- just wide enough for John to still get through-- Bones takes his finger off the button-- the gate stops-- Bones nods at it--

BONES (cont'd)
(deadly-- warning)
I'm not going to be seeing you
again. Good?

John backs away-- then turns, past the dogs-- through the gate--

BONES-- watching him-- thinking-- he locks his guns away--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

JOHN-- alone in the garage-- he closes the big doors, it goes dark-- he pulls on an overhead light, pulls his shirt off, pulls open a first-aid kit, re-bandages his wounds-- wrapping for battle-- he pulls his shirt back on, buttons up-- he looks hardened, now, battle-scarred-- like a warrior--

He opens the duffle-- looks-- the stack of guns-- and:

Lays out the array of weapons-- trying to load them, bewildered, at first, trying to see which cartridges go to which-- how to work the safety, he gets it wrong, first, then finds it-- he clicks back and forth--

He's awkward, half-frightened, at first, but-- then-- starts snapping cartridges like a pro-- re-loading, one-handed-- he does it over and over-- until he looks half-masterful-- and all the way deadly--

He loads up, for real, clips in the .45, slugs in the Python-- he snaps the breech-gun, shut, double-up-- then--

He clicks all the safety's off, red-dots showing--

He holds the Python out, pointing at a spot on the wall-- we see his face, he's imagining killing someone-- he half-blinks, half-flinches-- but-- breathes-- hardens--

Uses the belts, harnesses up weapon after weapon-- the Colt-- the Smith & Wesson-- he figures out a way to sling the shotgun, one of the belts-- he stands there-- he's ready to kill--

He goes to a laundry basket, pulls out a battered old black jacket, pulls it on, covering the guns-- then:

He climbs into his car-- guns harnessed-- uses the remote to open the garage-- and pulls out--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HECO'S - NIGHT

JOHN pulls up to the tenement-- a wasteland place-- he sits there-- takes a deep breath-- gets out--

CUT TO:

INT. HECO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A shitty tenement-- *HECO* is melting heroin in a spoon, ready to shoot up-- watching cartoons-- the door busts in--

JOHN, rushes in at him, gun up-- as Heco jumps up, reaches for his gun, *he shoots Heco in the leg*-- amazed that he hit him--

Heco, bleeding, reaches for his gun again--

John grabs him by the throat, shoves Heco's gun away-- holds his gun to Heco's head--

John-- he wants to shoot Heco-- he's trying not to--

JOHN

Where the fuck is Billy?

Heco-- wincing-- spitting--

HECO

Fuck you--

John-- smacks the gun-butt right into Heco's teeth-- we hear the crack, his tooth chips-- he spits-- furious--

HECO (cont'd)

That's my tooth-- you asshole--

John-- points the gun back in Heco's face-- no time for this--

JOHN
 (yells)
Tell me where he is--

Heco-- hate-- some kind of pride-- but:

JOHN (cont'd)
 Are you ready to die right now?

Heco keeps staring-- Heco gives--

HECO
 Fort Point House. By the bridge.

JOHN
Where's that?

HECO
 The hotel, by the fucking bridge,
 alright?

John sees Heco's cell-phone, on the table-- he jabs the gun
 at Heco--

JOHN
 (calm-- quiet)
 Call him.

*Heco-- hesitates-- John fires a round into the couch, inches
 from Heco's ear-- stuffing explodes, vaporized thread floats
 down-- Heco's screaming, holding his ear, deafened--*

Heco hesitates-- then picks up his cell, speed-dials-- John
 fires another round into the couch--

JOHN (cont'd)
 (quiet-- deadly)
 Put it on speaker.

Heco-- hits a button--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - BILLY'S CORNER - NIGHT

BILLY and the OTHERS, on their corner-- SPINK leaning in a
 car-window, palming bills--

Billy's cell rings, he looks-- answers--

INTERCUT--

BILLY
 (on cell-- speaker)
*Where are you, you bag of shit?
 You pipe-lining on me, asshole?*

HECO-- the gun in his face-- scared-- hurting-- starting to cry--

HECO
Don't go home, Billy--

BILLY-- hearing on speaker-- thrown-- he tenses--

BILLY
 What the fuck-- what the fuck are
 you talking about, Heco?

HECO-- looks at the gun pointed in his face--

HECO
 (starting to cry-- afraid)
He says-- you're sentenced, viejo--

BILLY-- hears Heco-- on speaker-- laughs--

BILLY
 So fucking what?

JOHN-- points his gun at Heco's head--

JOHN
So this--

BILLY-- hears-- his eyes go wide--

*JOHN-- shoots Heco-- dead-- the cell flies, Heco's body falls
 across the table, scattering his shooting works, spilling
 liquid heroin--*

*BILLY-- hears the deafening blast on the phone, jerks the
 phone away from his ear--*

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - BILLY'S CORNER - NIGHT

BILLY-- furious-- starts marching to his car--

BILLY
 (yells)
Come on--

BILLY, storming ahead, sees: BONES-- in his car-- he's been watching--

Billy stares-- hating-- BONES slides out--

Billy keeps going for his car-- Bones marches up to Billy, fast-- when he's close--

BONES

Well, what are we fucking up now, son? You look like you're in a hurry--

Bones-- staring--

BONES (cont'd)

You know how much I've got to wipe your nose? I've got to get some back-bay faggot off my back by telling him he can fucking have you. You think I enjoyed that?

(looks at Billy)

See son, what you don't get is, I care about what happens to you-- 'cause it can hurt me--

Billy-- eyeballing, hating-- dead-eyed-- *doesn't answer*-- Bones steps closer-- threatening--

BONES (cont'd)

You need some more fucking instruction from me, you piece of piss?

Billy-- whips out his gun, swings up his gun and blasts Bones in the chest-- blood blooms, on his chest-- he falls, dead--

BILLY

No thanks. Dad.

Billy steps over him, takes Bone's car-keys, leaning to his ear--

BILLY (cont'd)

I'm taking the car.

Billy looks at his boys-- heads for the car--

BILLY (cont'd)

Let's go home.

BODIE and the OTHERS follow-- they screech out--

CUT TO:

INT. HECO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John-- looks at Heco's body-- walks out--

At the door-- John sees car-keys-- he takes them--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HECO'S - NIGHT

Outside-- JOHN looks at his car-- then looks across to Heco's muscle-car--

He goes to Heco's car, gets in-- and pulls out, fast--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET - OUTSIDE BODY-SHOP - NIGHT

BILLY and the others march to their cars--

Billy gets into Bones' car-- they spin out of there, wheels smoking--

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. HECO'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT

JOHN-- driving Heco's car-- slams through the streets, cornering like a mad-man-- fast--

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE FORT POINT TENEMENT - NIGHT

BILLY and the OTHERS pull up-- it's a transient hotel, or was, now it's half-deserted, half ruined-- Billy steps out, stone-faced, staring at the street-- no sign of John--

They file inside, bristling with guns-- Billy-- watching-- waiting-- smiling--

CUT TO:

INT. FORT POINT TENEMENT - TOP FLOOR - NIGHT

BILLY-- going into a doorway-- looks out a window, watches the street-- eager--

CUT TO:

INT/EXT. HECO'S CAR - OUTSIDE FORT POINT TENEMENT - NIGHT

JOHN pulls up-- sees Billy's and the muscle-cars parked-- he pauses, low-idling, exhaust billows as the engine throats, waiting--

John looks at the front door-- he sees SPINK, behind the glass, on post-- gun in hand-- John takes a deep breath--

Spink looks up-- sees Heco's car, watches, as:

John-- steps on the accelerator, gunning straight for SPINK, behind the glass door--

Spink-- blinded by the headlights-- his eyes go wide-- he raises his gun--

CUT TO:

INT. ENTRY - NIGHT

John, in Heco's car, smashes through the front of the building, shattering metal, plaster, glass everywhere--

John-- at the wheel as the car rockets through the entryway, rams into Spink and bangs him into the far wall-- smashing Spink, and the car, half through it--

A huge cloud of plaster dust billows down, peeling paper, wires, pipes-- John-- blinking as debris falls--

The whole building is awake now-- ADDICTS, like dawn of the dead-- SEMI-TRANSIENTS, terrified-- peek out, blinking--

JOHN-- grabs his double-barrelled shotgun-- has to shove with all his might to get the bent car door open-- steps out of the car-- feet crunching glass--

John looks at Spink-- dead-- he looks up-- starts climbing the stair to the first floor--

CUT TO:

INT. FORT POINT - FIRST FLOOR - NIGHT

JOHN-- peering down the dark hall, lit intermittently by pools of light from overhanging lamps we can't see what's in the darkness at the end-- he makes his way--

DOG steps out of a doorway, he heard the crash-- sees John-- John swings the shotgun to his waist-- Dog's eyes go wide-- he scrambles for his gun-- he fumbles--

Dog gets his gun up-- aims at John--

John fires off a shot-- it blows off Dog's left leg, at the knee-- Dog drops his gun, screams-- starts to topple over--

Dog looks at his gun on the floor--

John raises the shotgun to eye-level and squeezes off another blast--

Dog's chest explodes, he's ripped backwards by the force-- sliding all the way to the end of the corridor, stopping at the entrance of an open apartment door--

John stands, looks at his body-- he breathes-- walks slowly away--

CUT TO:

INT. INSIDE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Inside the door-- *BAGGY--* realizing what's happening, grabs his handgun-- runs to the doorway, shooting blindly out into the corridor-- scared shitless--

JOHN-- takes refuge around a corner-- he clacks open his shotgun-- reloads-- slams it shut-- he takes a breath--

He whips around-- and *FIRES--* shattering the doorway and clipping Baggy's shoulder--

Baggy tears himself away from the door, screaming--

John-- implacable-- rounds the corner, marches calmly down the corridor, reloading-- his face set-- he's walking into his own death-- and doesn't care--

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

John rips in and chases Baggy through the living-room, exchanging rapid-fire shots-- John-- half-cowering-- still blinking at the sound of blasts-- but still shooting-- chasing Baggy into:

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

BAGGY-- cornered-- John's coming closer-- Baggy panics, climbs onto the kitchen counter-top to get to the window--

JOHN-- steps into the kitchen-- looks up at Baggy--

JOHN

You want to get it done?

Baggy raises his gun-- terrified-- furious-- John-- faster-- angrier-- half-turns his face away from the blast and *blows Baggy right out the kitchen window--*

The blast takes Baggy, the window, part of the wall, leaves a gaping hole of black night, shred of filthy old curtain, blowing--

John-- looks back at the space where Baggy was-- turns-- reloads, breathing hard-- *in-half-madness-- in death--*

He looks out to:

CUT TO:

INT. FORT POINT - FIRST FLOOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

He steps out of the apartment-- *and is greeted by gunfire--*

He bends double, dodges, scurries down the hall to the end-- runs up the stairs--

BODIE-- and JAMIE-- guns out-- chase after him--

John-- charging up the stairs-- he fires behind him, running as fast as he can--

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT

Halfway up-- Bang-- the railing beside him shatters--

John flinches back as wood debris spray everywhere-- he leans over the edge-- and shoots back at Bodie and Jamie, below--

CUT TO:

INT. TOP FLOOR - BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

BILLY-- calmly sitting-- loading Bones' guns-- getting ready--

CUT TO:

INT. STAIRS - NIGHT

JOHN-- waiting, silent-- then he lets loose a blast of fire again-- below him:

CUT TO:

INT. FORT POINT - FIRST FLOOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

BODIE ducks behind a wall, just in time...as the wall obliterates-- *JAMIE* scampers--

JAMIE-- hiding behind the wall-- re-loading-- he yells to John:

JAMIE
(yelling)
You know you're going to die in here--

ON THE STAIRS -

JOHN looks down-- he slow-blinks-- nods--

JOHN
(just loud enough)
I know.

Bodie hears-- he blinks, half-spooked-- then:

BODIE and *JAMIE* run out, shooting at him-- he fires back-- runs up to the second floor--

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

An abandoned floor-- converted to a crack-house--

JOHN, wary, looking up and down, tries a door-- it opens-- he goes into:

CUT TO:

INT. CRACK-HOUSE MAZE - NIGHT

JOHN moves through-- dark-- stripped-- holes the size of doorways punched through the walls, connecting a series of apartments-- maze-like--

John-- gun ready-- looking for Billy-- passes from one room to the next-- the zapping neon-sign pulsing outside--

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR - HALLWAY - NIGHT

BODIE and JAMIE arrive on the landing of the second floor-- split up--

Bodie goes into the door John went through-- Jamie heads down the hall to cut John off--

CUT TO:

INT. CRACK-HOUSE MAZE - NIGHT

JOHN moves cautiously, he knows Bodie and Jamie are close-- syringes, vials, pen-cap powder-spoons strewn everywhere-- crunching underfoot--

Eerily quiet-- just the neon zap, faint whistling of wind across the face of the building--

INTERCUT BETWEEN ALL THREE:

Cat-and-mouse through the maze, one step at a time-- guns out ahead of them-- all on guard--

A floorboard creaks under his weight-- he holds his breath--

Another creak-- around the corner--

John whirls to it, raising his shotgun:

He waits a beat-- blinks-- nothing--

BODIE-- a shadow passes over his vision-- he whips around-- and fires--

-- hitting bare walls-- nothing there-- just the neon-light dying out--

Bodie-- actually scared-- it's almost pitch-black--he moves away, along the other wall-- as:

John and Jamie are on opposite sides of the same thin wall-- moving along it-- neither knows the other is there--

John steps on a sheared-out sheet of glass-- it cracks, loudly-- he freezes--

Jamie whips around, hearing--

At the same time, the neon-light zaps back on-- casts Jamie's shadow onto the adjacent wall--

John sees Jamie's shadow-- as Jamie raises his shotgun to the wall--

John ducks just in time, as the wall above his head explodes in a shower of debris--

On one knee, John raises his shotgun-- and fires at the wall--

WE DOLLY INTO THE WALL as a massive hole is blown into it-- *DOLLYING THROUGH THE HOLE TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WALL*, to see:

JAMIE-- ripped to shreds by John's second blast-- he falls forward, flat on his face--

BODIE-- hears-- starts running--

JOHN-- breathing heavily, John tosses his empty shotgun-- pulls out his .45-- cocks it--

He charges to the window-- yanks it open, clambers to the fire-escape--

BY FIRE-ESCAPE -

Bodie catches up to John-- they trade gunfire-- bullets pock the walls, smash glass by John--

John ducks, cowers, blinking-- covers his eyes with one arm and fires blindly, expecting to die-- but:

Bodie's clipped in the side-- bleeding-- he staggers, raises his gun-- John scrambles up, out of his fire-line--

CUT TO:

EXT. FIRE-ESCAPE - NIGHT

JOHN clammers upward, checking each window as he passes-- he crawls into a window-- into:

CUT TO:

INT. TOP FLOOR - BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JOHN tumbles through the window, on to the floor, getting to his feet, looking up as--

Through the open door--

BILLY out in the hall-- gun up, whirls-- a long, deadly beat-- then--

BILLY

*There's my dead friend-- looking
for your wife and baby-boys?*

John-- looks at him-- quiet-- certain-- deadly--

JOHN

No. I'm here to kill you.

Billy-- hate hardening-- he blinks--

In blinding-quick succession:

Billy raises his gun to fire--

John-- snaps his gun up, shoots Billy's fingers off-- and half his hand-- Billy, spun by the blast, searing pain, goes down temporarily-- a muffled scream lets out of him, half-gone hand shaking--

John-- steps closer-- raises his gun, aims at Billy, ready to shoot, as:

From behind, John gets shot in the neck--

John whips around-- sees BODIE, behind him-- he arcs his gun up, and blows Bodie's head off-- John claps his free hand over his neck-wound-- John turns to face Billy, and:

Billy shoots John in the stomach-- John goes down-- but fires a shot into Billy's chest--

John and Billy collapse-- silence-- nothing moves--

Then-- John-- rears his head up-- trying to get up, to breathe-- to get to Billy-- he looks across the floor as:

Billy-- twitches-- summons up all his strength-- manages to get to his feet, stumble toward John--

Billy-- stumbling at John-- barely able to raise and keep his gun straight-- but he aims it at John----

John-- gets to his feet-- tries to raise his gun, but-- he's bleeding too much-- almost unable to fight anymore, he isn't going to be quick enough--

Billy still coming-- he squeezes off two shots he braces himself for death, but-- both shots miss him--

Billy's gun clicks-- empty-- he falters-- Billy-- bleeding out-- collapses by John's feet. The two men look at each other-- pure hatred-- Billy-- half-dead-- still trying to crawl at John, to hurt him any way he can--

John-- staggers back, a couple of steps--

John grabs a piece of splintered bannister-- he staggers close to Billy, standing over him--

He raises it-- breathing-- almost-dead-- Billy looks up at him-- John breathes--

JOHN (cont'd)
(quietly)
Ready?

On John-- as John looks down-- hating him--

On Billy's eyes-- he sees what's coming-- as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. FORT POINT TENEMENT - NIGHT

JOHN-- stumbles out, holding his wounds-- heads for the car-- as sirens wail, approaching--

He gets in-- and drives away--

CUT TO:

INT. HUME'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

JOHN-- stumbles in, through the remains of what was their home, trashed by Billy and his gang--

Finally-- *he starts to quietly pick up the debris scattered everywhere-- very quietly making order--*

He gathers up a pile of video-tapes, strewn across the floor-- one catches his eye-- he looks, puts it in the vcr-- it plays:

The old video Helen was playing: new year's eve party in a park, townsfolk gathered-- JOHN, HELEN, BRENDAN, LUCAS-- John's holding the camera, turning it on Helen, the boys, himself, with them, all goofing--

John stands there, stares at the screen-- everyone's counting down to midnight, loudly-- the family counts along--

FAMILY, ON TAPE

10-9-8--

WALLIS appears-- standing in the door-- John turns-- they look at each other--

John holding his hands across his stomach-- falls back into a chair, staring the at the party on the screen--

FAMILY, ON TAPE (cont'd)

-- 7-6-5--

Wallis looks out, yells-- to COPS, gathered--

WALLIS

(yelling)

We need an ambulance-- now--

Wallis comes in, sees what John is watching--

FAMILY, ON TAPE

-- 3-2-1-- *Happy New Year--*

Wallis looks at John-- the state he's in-- sympathetic, finally--

On the screen: the crowd cheers-- John turns the camera to catch it as he and Helen kiss, lovingly-- laughing-- the boys raise their hands in the air, yelling, whooping--

Wallis looks at John--

WALLIS

If you hang on, we can get you to a
hospital-- if you just-- hang on,
OK?

(yells out-- agitated)

An ambulance-- now--

On the screen: as John watches-- a firework display pops off,
lights the sky red, gold, white--

John-- still watching the screen-- Wallis sits in a chair--
watches with John--

We push in on the video-- the crowd starts singing Auld Lang
Syne-- John, Helen, Lucas, Bren, all laughing, all happy,
singing--

FADE OUT.