

IN THE BEDROOM

Written by

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FADE IN:

THE SOUND OF WIND AND NOTHING ELSE

EXT. GI'S POINT

We are in the midst of a field of tall grass wild flowers. A long rutted road stretches into the distance. Faintly at first and then closer - we hear a woman squealing with laughter. We see her legs cut through the grass and fly up a hill. Close on her heels is a young man, a good ten years younger, in hot pursuit.

Over the field - across the tops of blades, sits an ancient apple tree. We rise out of the grass and see the two young people under the tree. They are entwined - in a deep

embrace.

CLOSER NOW

We see them in glimpses:

Their eyes - Lips - Hands

Finally they part - the woman rests her head on his chest.

She reaches out and strokes his hand.

He stares at their fingers mingling together.

The woman sighs.

WOMAN

I Love it here.

I know you do...

WOMAN

I can feel my life - ya know.

He stares up into the boughs above him and sHd.les.

A legend appears: Il -_ 1

THE SOUND OF BALLGAmE OVER:

T. RURAL ROUTE 90 - PREDAWN

A BLUE 1973 CHEW PICK-UP winds around a corner and disappears down a long stretch of road. "And that's it from Fenway the final score Oakland 3 t1 Redsox 7. You have been listening to the re-broadcast of last night's game. This

broadcast is the sole property of -- -)r League Baseball and cannot be-" -

EXT. EMERSON ROAD - S

year
The truck pulls onto a small road flanked by rows of 100
old clapboard two-story affairs.

2

EXT. NATALIE'S HOUSE - S

from
Standing. on the lawn in front of one of them is the woman
the opening scene, NATALIE STRUT, prett - eautifl actually
with a little more sleep. She stands wit two small boys who
are doing their best to stay warm in the morning air. Her
son
JASON 8 , and his brother DUNCAN 4, who has his face buried
in
his mother's coat--refusing to see or be seen.
The truck comes to a stop and two men get out. One is young,
early 20's, and even at this hour his step is lively, his
face full of warmth. He walks over to Natalie and gives her
a
kiss. The young man from the opening scene, rRANK FOWLER.
The other man leans back against the passenger door. He is
in his early 50's. Kind face, good looking, athletic in his
day - Frank's father, MATT. He smiles at Natalie.
Natalie smiles back.

NATALIE

Morn'in Dr. Fowler.

MATT

Morn'in Natalie. How you doing boys?

JASON

Great!
Jason starts for the truck. Matt opens the door and the boy
climbs inside the cab.
Frank kneels down to Duncan.

F

Hey buddy ... you upset that you're not coming?
Frank reaches out and puts his hand on the boys shoulder.
Duncan pulls away.
Frank looks up to Natalie for help.

F

He can come if he wants ...we can manage, really.
She smiles and shakes her head.

NATALIE

ahead. He wants to stay here.

F

Don't worry Dunk. You can come next time.
,Qy
Natalie kisses him and they're off.

INTO TRUCK - SAME - MOVING

Jason in the middle. He glances over to Frank - a trace of hero :worship in his face.

I NT. STROUT & SONS CANNERY - DAWN

on their
we
Sardines are processed at lightening speed. We follow them
journey, which ends with the sealed cans being packed into
cardboard shipping boxes. They are taped shut by a young man
will meet later (TIM, 3) . The tops read STROUT & SONS.

I NT. ATKINS LOBSTER CO-OP - DAWN

turn their
morning
repairs
been
A double-55-gallon-drum wood stove is humping. Several men
bodies rotisserie-fashion around the thing, while making
small talk - The starting price of lobsters, the prospect of
to their equipment, and so on.
A SCARRED HAND scribbles some figures on a wall that has
used as a scratch pad for years.

Two scales are emptied of RED FISH into a PLASTIC PICKLE
BUCKET.

EXT. HARBOR - SAME

A pair of CANVAS TENNIS SHOES shuffle down a gangway. The
bucket sways directly over them. A small hand struggles with
the weight of the thing. A pair of BEACON FALLS waders
appear
- the shoes stop. A strong hand grabs hold of the handle -
the shoes pick up the pace.

EXT. HARBOR - S

Matt & Frank prepare the rig.
Jason stands on the dock, taking it all in. A field of
LOBSTER POTS stacked like cordwood and surrounded by a
collection of SCARRED BUOYS, GRAPNEL and coiled FISHING GEAR
stiff with sea salt - all so wildly unreasonable as to seem
exotic.
Jason's eyes find the hull of "GIGI" an old Boudreau built
lobsterboat. Starboard side covered in barnacles.

F

C'mon up Jace.

MATT

Hold on a second. Need to know if he's
ready first - Jason, can you tell me
what's important?
Jason hesitates.

F

on tell h°

JASON

(NERVOUS)

"A shaft of sunlight at the end of a dark
afternoon, a note in music--

L

He takes a breath.

JASON

and the way the back of a baby's neck
smells if its mother keeps it tidy."

MATT

(TO FRANK)

You taught h' well.
Jason beams.

MATT

- come aboard sailor.
Matt reaches down to give a hand up.
Frank turns the engine over. It roars to life.

EXT. HARBOR LATER

The sun is fast climbing into the morning sky as "GIGI"
glides out of the channel and past a LIGHTHOUSE that sits
Just off the point of a good sized ISLAND.
Jason shields his eyes with his hand. He gazes out at the
island. Matt comes up beside him and sticks a baseball cap
onto his head. The crown reads U.S.S. CONSTELLATION.

JASON

Thank you.

MATT

Ever been over there?

JASON

No sir.

MATT

It's beautiful. Isn't an island anymore
though. It's a city. They have electric
lights. Artesian wells, even a jail
lighthouse isn't manned anymore - it's
run by a computer When I lived there,
had no ferry then` so we didn't even have
cars, can you believe that?

JASON

How'd you get back?

MATT

Off the island?
Jason nods.
We rowed.
Matt smiles at the memory.

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MATT

Then we got a little outboard. That was great. A seven and a half horsepower it was - we lived there until I was about your age - then we left and became "harbor people".
Jason seems to be digesting this.

JASON

I a "harbor person"?
Matt hides a smile about to form.

MATT

Yep, Jason - we all are.
Jason is full of questions. Matt knows the answers and doesn't talk down to him. Something the boy is grateful for.

F

At the helm. His eyes tinted from glare and cold. He cuts back on the throttle and heads for the winch. GLOVED HANDS pull up a BLUE-GREEN BUOY and slide the MANILA LINE into the WINCH. A POT surfaces and Frank sets it "Doors up" on the edge. He opens the doors. His hands work quickly and efficiently. He tosses a SMALL CRAB back into the water, pulls out a LOBSTER and measures the back. Too small. Then a nice sized LOBSTER is pulled out - it's missing the SCISSOR CLAW. He hands it

to

Matt. Baits the trap. Throws the winch and the next pot surfaces.

Matt sits inside, Jason on his lap. He reaches into a WOODEN BOX of RUBBER BANDS with a BANDING WRENCH and bands the crustacean's remaining CRUNCHER CLAW.
Jason stares at the disfigured creature.

MATT

Oh boy you see what happened to this poor fellow?

JASON

.what?

MATT

Well, the trap has nylon nets called heads--2 side heads at b ends, so the lobster can crawl in. The "Bedroom" head inside, holds the bait and keeps it from escaping--you know the old saying "two's company three-s a crowd"?

Jason nods.

MATT

Well{ it's like that. You get more than two in a bedroom and chances are something like this is going to happen. That's why Frank can't leave these traps for more than a day.

Matt holds up another Lobster and turns it belly-up. There are black balls on both sides of the tail.

MATT

Now the older females like this of gal, are the most dan erous - especially when they're growin' eyries.

JASON

Berries?

MATT

Eggs... .one of these can take out two males easy - Then you wind up with lobster you can't sell - and as for this fine lady, she gets off easy, the state says you have to let her go.

Matt throws her back in the water. Holds up the other one to

Jason.

TT

Can you handle this?

Jason nods.

MATT

(GENTLY)

You sure?

He really isn't. Matt hands it to him.

MATT

Go ahead now, put it in the tank.
Jason can't get the thing in the tank fast enough.

EXT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

Looking around, you see a big yard, double lot. The grass is manicured to perfection, someone takes a lot of pride in their garden. In the middle of this sits a two story cape, post Hopper/Wyeth, early 20th Century - simple, beautiful, and you don't freeze in the winter.

The truck backs up into the driveway, Frank jumps out, drops the gate. Resting on the bed is a LARGE BOX with a line

drawing

of a SWING-SET.

Q

FRANK O.S.

Hey, dad can you give me a hand?
The transistorized sounds of a baseball game.

EXT. FOWLER BACKYARD LATER

Frank pushes Duncan, who sits proudly on his new swing-set.

D C

Higher! HIGHER!
SMALL CHILDREN are everywhere. A serious Super Soaker Squirt Gun fight in progress.

ACROSS THE YARD

a steaming hot grill, with a huge assortment of hot-dogs & burgers. A spatula flips a patty.

The sounds of Fenway park emanate from a cheap portable radio.

WILLIS GRINNEL, early 50's, a stout, silver-haired man,

works

the grill. Standing next to him is Matt, his best friend for forty plus years.

Matt takes a pull off a can of Moxie. Sets it down and

searches

through a plastic bread bag.

Willis looks past him, distracted.

MATT

h, Ruth hates this kind.
What?

MATT

I bought the wrong buns.

WILLIS

Maybe we can borrow hers.

Matt follows Willis's gaze, to the object of his
distraction:

A PRETTY WOMAN IN TIGHT DENIM SHORTS. She's bent over to
wipe
the ketchup-stained face of Jason (he's wearing Matt's cap).

WILLIS

Ah, what I would give to have back my
youth.

MATT

Willis, you never had that in your youth.

The woman turns around and catches Willis staring. It's
Natalia.

Willis looks down, nonchalantly rifling through the bun bag.
Matt waves to a passing man in khaki shorts, FATHER OBERTI,

50-S-

MATT

Father! You made it!

FATHER OBERTI

Hey, if I don't see you fellas here, I
don't get to see you at all.

ON F

He backwards-hugs Natalie.

F

You want a beer?

NATALIE

I think I'll see if your Mom needs any

help.

FRANK

Good luck.

She laughs-He grabs and tickles her but she breaks away and escapes inside the house.

Matt watches on, and falls into a wistful daydream.

WILLIS

Jealous?

slightly,
Matt turns to him and, to Willis's surprise, ever so
nods.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - S

table
Natalie walks in through the living room, pausing to examine
a half finished ARCHITECTURAL MODEL that sits on a card-

next to a jigsaw puzzle.

sink.
She looks toward the kitchen where a woman works at the

She takes a breath and starts there.

I NT. FOWLER GARAGE - DAY

OF THE GE

pulls
Frank reaches into an old Westinghouse refrigerator. He

it
out a case of Schaeffer's and a six-pack of Moxie. He loads
all into a metal tub filled with ice.

VOICE O.S.

YOO

Frank, hunched over as he works, loo. ip at

FRONT OF THE GARAGE

SONS.
TIM BRYSON, 22, still in his work clothes: He wears a White
soiled smock. A° patch on his Right pocket says STROUT &

Over the left sply TIM. A hair-net nests on his head.

Thanks for coming by. Wooo, is that new cologne? You really oughta take a shower when you leave that place.

TIM

Very funny.

F

Take off that head dress, chief, and give me a hand?

Tim reaches up and pulls the hair-net off his head.

EXT - FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

SIDE OF THE HOUSE

Tim and Frank lug the heavy cooler around the house, heading toward the backyard.

TIM

So, Mr. Strout mentioned you again.

FRANK

I bet he did.

TIM

Seriously, man. He still talks about you coming back. Says you're the best can packer he ever had.
Be nods.

F

He always was a nice guy.

TIM

(EXHAUSTED)

Are we there yet?

Tim and Frank emerge from the side of the house. Willis cuts them off, grabs two beers.

WILLIS

Excuse me boys - an offering. Catch Father.

He throws one to Father Oberti who sits talking with Willis's wife

KATIE GRINNEL 50's, she is tal ing the priest's ear off.

KATIE

Becky went to the hairdressing academy after high school, but aft she got married and had the boys, she decided she wanted to stay home - she still loves

doing hair though. Where do you go
Father?

FATHER OBERTI

I just go to Super Cuts.

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KATIE

You can't request the same girl at Super
Cuts - you have to take what you can get.
They don't know your hair - how can you
get a good cut if they don't know the
hair?

Father Oberti has the patience of...well, of a priest.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

RUTH FOWLER 50, attractive, is washing and arranging
vegetables on a plate. Natalie chops carrots on a cutting
board.

They barely make eye-contact. Natalie attempts small talk.

RUTH

Can you hand me that bowl dear?
She does.

RUTH

Thank you.

NATALIE

I'm looking forward to the concert on
Labor day. The music is so...unusual
haunting really..

Ruth keeps chopping. Natalie chooses her words carefully.

NATALIE

How did you learn about that particular
style?

RUTH

At Faro y thesis was on Eastern
European .folk music.

Natalie's lips tighten uncomfortably. The topic seems to
int° date.

NATALIE

(LIGHTLY)

I thought o becoming a teacher.

RUTH

Why didn't you?

cheeks

The answer to Ruth's question (Duncan) wanders in. His
as big as Dizzy Gillespie's.

NATALIE

What are you eating?

Duncan's mouth is so full he can hardly speak.

DUN

.nothing.

The two regard each other

NATALIE

How is it?

D C

(SMILING)

Good.

He tugs on her shirt.

D C

Swing me, Swing me.

NATALIE

Okay, okay Dunk...

She gets dragged out of the kitchen. The screen door slams.

Ruth finishes arranging the plate. Matt enters, and starts

opening up the cupboards loo

king for something.

He squats down, burrowing into a cabinet.

MATT

It was nice of you to invite the boys.

RUTH

She hasn't brought them before because she's embarrassed. She shouldn't be embarrassed.
Matt looks up from the floor.

MATT

(TO RUTH)

Nice view from down here.
She ignores him, but smiles.

EXT. FOWLER BACKYARD - DAY

is hunched over, with his arms gently wrapped around Jason, coaching him on the finer points of Kitting. While Tim pitches.

F

There you go . good, hands up, higher.
That's it. Be - your knees

THE SWING-SET

Duncan is being pushed by Natalie, Ruth, watches from the kitchen window.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

MATCH CUT: Ruth, staring out the window.

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RUTH

I don't know why you had to put that monstrosity up. You're just going to have to take it apart when they leave.
Matt rises, a bottle of lighter fluid in hand.

MATT

C'mon, Ruth, he's a kid. What did you expect? "Happy Birthday, here's a box. why don't you drag it around for a while?"
He s a kid. He wants it now.
Something across the yard catches her attention.

RUTH

Oh, no.

EXT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

Matt exits the house.

ACROSS THE YARD

Duncan jumps off his swing and sprints.

TO RICHARD

who has just arrived. He stays at the far end of the yard.
Duncan does a running jump into his father's arms.

D C

Daddy!
Frank with Jason, looks up.
Jason sees his father. He doesn't move.
Natalie walks over to Frank, they exchange glances.

NATALIE

C'mon Jason.

JASON

No.

NATALIE

Now.
Shedgrabs his hand. Straining to appear casual, traverses

the

YARD

C DUN

Richard play-boxes Duncan.
Duncan looks up at his mother.

D C

Daddy's takino us to the arcade.

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Richard, eating Duncan's hot dog, rises to meet Natalie and Jason.

RIC

Hey there buddy --.Come on over here Jace-
Jason looks away.

DUN

(TO JASON)

I told you held come uttface-
Jason reaches over and whacks Duncan on the head.

RIC

(ANGRY)

Hey Jason - Don't do that to your
brother. You want me to do that to you?
He probably has. Jason backs away.
Frank makes his way over to Natalie.

AT THE GRILL

Matt watches on- absently flipping burgers.
Ruth comes over to h°

RUTH

MATT

MATT

IT'S OK-

Ruth shakes her head.
Richard, Frank and Natalie are talking, but there are long

pauses

between words. Tim wanders over and says something to

Richard

Finally, Richard smiles, turns, and exits. Alone.
Jason playfully chases Duncan across the yard.
Frank and Natalie stay behind, talking quietly.
Matt takes a breath, and exhales. He turns to Ruth with a
comforting smile, but
she's just entering the house. The screen door closes behind
her.

- FOWLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - S

Ruth is at the counter pouring dressing onto a salad. Frank
comes up behind her and hugs her.

F

Thanks for doing this mom.

1

RUTH

Are you alright?

F

Sure. Natalie and I want to take you and dad out tonight.

RUTH

Oh that's very sweet dear, but we already have plans.

F

You going over to the Grinnel's?
Ruth shakes her head.

RUTH

(SMILES)

Your father's taking me to the Strand.

FRANK

Oh, what are you seeing?

RUTH

The first film we ever saw together.

THE SOUND OF PISTOL FIRE.

INT. STRAND THEATER - NIGHT

Matt & Ruth sit watching BARRY L DON. The duel between Barry Lord Bullingdon is on screen. Bullingdon's pistol misfires.

LORD BULLINGDON

Sir Richard this pistol must be faulty -
I must have another.

AIDE TO RIC

I'm sorry Lord Bullingdon but you must first stand your ground and allow Mr. Lyndon his turn to fire.

SIR RIC

That is correct Lord Bullingdon - your pistol has fired and that counts as your shot--Mr. Lyndon are the rules of firing

clear to you?

YES -

SIR RICHARD

Lord Bullingdon are you rsdy to receive
Mr- Lyndon's fire?

LORD BULLINGDON

-.o yes -

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SIR RIC

very well then - Mr. Lyndon cock your
pistol and prepare to fire.
Bullingdon is overwrought. He looks like he may vomit.
Ruth leans over to Matt.

RUTH

Let's go.
Ruth gets out of her seat. Matt looking confused follows.

EXT. STRAND THEATRE - S

Ruth heads out the doors with Matt on her heels.

MATT

What's wrong?

RUTH

I don't remember it being so tragic.

MATT

O h h always felt sorry for Barry.

RUTH

Please.

MATT

No, I mean it - maybe I relate to him.

RUTH

What are you talking about?

MATT

Well, we both married above our station.

RUTH

Don't start that again.

into
A moment. He takes her in his arms and kisses her. Looks
her eyes.

MATT

Happy anniversary.

RUTH

(SMILES)

Happy anniversary.

He buries his face in her hair.

9 G

MATT ` RUTH

I love you. I know -

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I NT. FOWLER HOUSE BEDROOM - NIGHT

nightly
Ruth sits at her bureau facing the mirror. She begins a

ritual of removing the pins from her hair once made from the
shells of tortoises and now the plastics of Dupont.

down
Matt lies in bed reading. He lowers his book and watches her
brush her tresses with only, delicious strokes. She sets

her brush and turns. Matt looks back to his book.
She climbs into bed next to him.

RUTH

She's not divorced yet.

MATT

It's the same thing. Maine has crazy
laws, that's all...he likes the boys.

RUTH

You don't think he's thinking about-

TT

No...he's not going to marry her.

RUTH

Then what's he doing with her?

MATT

She probably loves him, Ruth. Girls always have. Why can't we just leave it at that?

RUTH

Hmmmm. He won't listen to me. I asked him three times to dismantle that swing-set.

MATT

Oh, let it stay up. Looks like a young couple lives here.

RUTH

He needs his head in school. Not in her.

MATT

So to speak.
Ruth pinches his shoulder.

RUTH

it would help if you were my side.

MATT

(PLAYFULLY)

I'll get on your side.
She laughs and pushes him away.

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INTO UNION CLINIC - WAITING ROOM - DAY

A small waiting room with an alcove reception. ROCKWELL

PRINTS

adorn the walls, a long table covered with dog-eared periodicals, rests in front of a couch that has seen better days. ADAMSON 80's, glances over at her husband, ELWYN 80's, who vacantly thumbs through a HIGHLIGHTS MAGAZINE. He pauses to catch-up on the latest exploits of GOOFUS & GALLANT. The nurse, JANELLE 40's, calls out from the alcove.

JANELLE O.S.

Mr. and Mrs. Adamson?

INT. UNION CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM

his Elwyn sits bare chested on a table. Matt finishes bandaging elbow - then listens to his chest with a stethoscope. He is careful and thoughtful. Alma looks to him. Worried.

MATT

You can put your shirt back on now. Alma stands and helps her husband dress. Yesterday he was up and around all afternoon, but toda - he tumbled. He's fallen down twice. have all I can do to get him up. He's weak and the longer you lay in bed - the weaker you get.

MATT

Elwyn, you need to do those exercises, you promised me, twice a day. I know you miss the work - important. but it's

ALMA

TO MATT)

Man idn't have ache nor pain--he's just gave up-said when he couldn't work no more, he didn't want to live. For a while he'd sit and just mend on nets - but he can't do that anymore.

ELWYN

(speaks with difficulty)
How's your dad Matt?
I'm sorry Dr. now Elwyn you remember Jesse Fowler passed on somi&ime back, we were at the funeral. Remember?
Elwyn nods.

18

like
that

Matt knows. He's heard this before. Sometimes he feels more
a mechanic than a doctor, working on old cars with parts
have long been discontinued. He nods sympathetically.

INT. MATT'S OFFICE HALLWAY LATER

as

Matt pulls on his jacket. He passes Janelle in the hallway
he heads for the back door.

MATT

I'll be back in an hour. Forgot my lunch.

JANELLE

Starting to become a habit. I can get you
something from Willis's.
He's already out the door.

EXT. HARBOR - SAME

Matt trots down the gangway and up to where the "GIGI" is
moored. He looks in. No sign of Frank. A VOICE BOOMS from a
new 35ft. JONESPORTER - it belongs to HENRY OZAR 50's.

HENRY

Just missed him Matt, he went home for
lunch today.

MATT

Right ...I forgot he's got that interview.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

Matt enters. Looks around. Calls up the stairs.

MATT

Frank? Frank? Hello?

FRANK O.S.

Dad.
Matt turns around, and sees Frank,

MATT

Frank? .. What are you doin ? Thought you

were driving to Boston for t at
interview?
rank slowly nos. His clothes are rumped.

FRANK V Q°
yeah - he we rescheduled.

MATT

(KNOWING)

uh huh.

19

NATALIE - walks out, from a room in the hall. She combs her
hair through with her fingers, but her skirt, on backwards,

is

somewhat of a giveaway.
Frank rolls his eyes.

NATALIE

Hello, Dr. Fowler.

MATT

Hi, where are the boys?

NATALIE

(SHEEPISHLY)

.with my mom.
Then.

MATT

(TO NATALIE)

oh-Like coleslaw?

THE KITCHEN TABLE

Matt sits across from Natalie and Frank. Sandwiches, iced

tea

and coleslaw are laid out.

Frank looks to Matt for some kind of acknowledgement of his
lunch-t°e activities. Matt seems more interested in the

slaw.

EXT. ELK'S FIELD - DAY

BLEACHERS

Frank is sandwiched between Matt and Ruth. They are surrounded

by dozens of young parents.
Ruth doesn't look too thrilled to be here.

FRANK

Wave you guys.
Matt and Ruth follows Frank's gaze, to:

DOWN BELOW

Natalie has her hands full adjusting Jason's uniform while Duncan clings to her. She is waving up to the Fowlers amidst the chaos.

THE BLEACHERS.

The Fowlers wave back.

%Q,

Matt 's suddenly inspired. He leans in past Ruth, to Frank.

MATT

Did you tell your Mom how good it was?

20

RUTH

How good what was?

MATT

Frank had quite a time this afternoon
Loved your coleslaw. Ate enough for two.

RUTH

That's what it's there for...
Frank leans back behind Ruth to give his father the evil
eye.
He gets a grin from Matt for his trouble. Ruth almost
catches
it.

firm

Matt rises, shuffles past Ruth and Frank, whom he gives a
pat on the knee.
Hot dogs?

FRANK

I'll take one.
Ruth puts her arm around Frank.

RUTH

(re: Duncan and Jason)
So, how are the kids?
Frank's caught off-guard. He shakes his head.

RUTH

. things okay?

F

Fine.

RUTH

Good, good.
Then.

RUTH

How'd your interview go?

F

(TOO FAST)

Great.

RUTH

Oh, good.
Ruth watches Natalie below.

RUTH

She's such a brave girl.

2

F

That's it. You're driving e nuts, Ma.
Really. I've had lots of girlfriends.

F

I don't understand why this one is any different.

RUTH

I know you don't.

FRANK

Were not serious, Mom.

RUTH

No?

F

No. It's a summer thing.
She would like to believe him.

RUTH

I see.

INT. NATALIE'S CAR - DAY

Natalie drives down Emerson Road.
As she approaches her house, she sees a Brown Suburban sitting in her driveway. She looks confused.

INT. NATALIE'S HOUSE - DAY

THE KITCHEN

Natalie enters with groceries.
Richard is seated at the kitchen table. He's finishing the first half of a sandwich. He drains a glass of milk.
Natalie sets her purse down on the counter, and starts cleaning up his mess.

NATALIE

How'd you get in this time?

RIC

(PLAYING ALONG)

chimney.
She takes the carton of milk that Richard, no doubt, left out. She pours the final drops into his glass

RIC

Thank you.
She throws the carton out. She takes a seat, and stares at
him
like a teacher counselling a troubled youth.

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NATALIE

What can I help you with?
He kicks back the last of the milk, wipes his mouth.

RIC

I was just dropping that off for Jason.

NATALIE

What?

RIC

That.
He points to a BASEBALL TROPHY sitting on top of the
microwave.
inscription bears his name and "Rockland High School 1982
Regional Championship."

RIC

I didn't know where you'd want to put it.
It was about time he got it. What am I
going to do with it?
Richard's wistful gaze stays locked on the trophy.
For a moment, Natalie's and slips away.

NATALIE

I think it will mean a lot to him,
Richard. He's really been improving
lately ...

RIC

(a sharp turn)
So I've heard.

NATALIE

It would have been nice if you'd come to
his game.

RIC

I just got your message. Where are t
with him?

NATALIE

That's none of your business.

RIC

I see. They're my kids but they're none of
my business.

NATALIE

You know what I mean.

E-??

heavy Richard presses his fingers to his eyes. He takes a long,
breath.

RIC

I - - I was thinking about moving back.
Here. With you and the boys.

23

NATALIE

What are you talking about?

RIC

What I talking about? I'm talking about
moving back, that's what I'm talking
about - I know what you're thinking, but
it's different now.

NATALIE

Oh reall ? How's the job? Your father
t ake you back on at the cannery?

RIC

(DRILY)

That's funny. You're still getting checks
aren't you?
She ignores him

RICHARD

Ya see my new rig out there?
Natalie looks annoyed.

NATALIE

Yeah - it's real nice.

RIC

It's not exactly new, I traded David the truck
for it. It's got room for all of us - a good
grocery gettin car.
A moment.

RIC

You wantta take a ride?

NATALIE

(LAUGHING)

Jesus - you don't change, do you?.

RIC

Change? No, I don't change. Everything
around me changes. You change. You take my
house, you take my kids, you fuck this
other y- No, I don't change at all.

NATALIE

It's not your house.

RIC

Oh- No?

NAT I o•?

No- And as far as fucking oes - .who was it
that answered your phone t %e other morning?

RIC

She...

2-

NAT IE

I don't care. Really, you can just stop

now. It's not working.
He takes a breath.

RIC

I just want.. -a chance.

NATALIE

For what? To fool them for a few days into thinking they have a real father, and then it's back to

RIC

(cutting her off)
I their father.

NATALIE

(VEHEMENT)

No, Richard. You know what defines a father? It's what he does, not what he promises. It's being a positive, consistent presence.
Richard eyes her suspiciously. 13

RIC

(mimicking ° her)
"Positive consistent presence." Wow. What does that mean? I just don't get it. But I'm not fucking a college boy, am I?

NATALIE

Look ...can you just go now? I really don't want you here when they get back.

RIC

Oh, no, wouldn't want that.
He doesn't budge.

NATALIE

You have to leave.
Finally, as if struck b some small discove . Richard places his large hands on the kitchen table and pus es himself up. He heads past Natalie without looking back. He closes the

door

firmly be ind him.

'I. NAT IE' S HOUSE - FRONT YARD -,RUSK

Frank's truck parked out front
The lawn is littered with the boy's various plastic weapons
a small wading pool.

25

A children's television show is heard from inside.
Natalie is sprawled out on a chaise lounge, nursing a beer,
and
sharing a cigarette with Frank, who is on his hands & knees
finishing an elaborate structure with a set of FROEBEL wooden
blocks.

NATALIE

You know I've been ignoring our
difference in age, but if you keep
playing with those blocks, I'm gonna
start to worry.

F

They're not blocks - they're gifts.

NATALIE

I'm sorry I know they're a gift and a
very generous one. I'm just concerned
that Dunk might think they're a little old
to be playing with them.

FRANK

They're not for playing - they're to learn about
unity & balance. Froebel called them "Gifts."
This is the second gift - a sphere, a cube, and a
cylinder. A five year old can learn the
difference in form depending on how they look at
them.
Why didn't he say so in the first place?

NATALIE

Oh you said second gift. How many are
there?

FRANK

Twenty.
A moment.

NATALIE

You've been playing with these - excuse
me, working with these for how long?

F

Since I was about Dunk's age. My mom took me tough all twenty. So that's what a good mother does.

NATALIE

.oh.

FRANK ???

Come on down here and take a look. She sets down her beer and Joins him. The small wooden structure looks like a home that could have been built by Lautner or Wright Frank looks pleased. Natalie is distracted.

26

NATALIE

Your Mother gave you these Frank - I feel funny Duncan having them.

F

Don't be silly, it was her idea.

NATALIE

(SCEPTICAL)

Really?

F

You're not looking at the house - look. It's not all mine, it's part Mack. Frank speaks excitedly, as he makes a quick sketch on a colored piece of construction paper using one of the boys' markers.

F

See the whole ideal of what Mack was trying to achieve was a common area in the middle of the house. I mean - a large, common space wasn't uni e to Mack, but the idea of separating the family so that the kids were on one side and the parents on the other, so they would all spill into

the center ...
He looks over to Natalie, checking in.
She smiles, and shifts her gaze.

F

I'm boring you, aren't I?

NATALIE

(SOFTLY)

No, not at all, I was just... . just
thinking.

F

About what?

NATALIE

About you. . ,school,

F

I'd rather talk about our house.

NATALIE

I know you would.

F

What if I wait a year?

NATALIE

R

F

A year's not going to make a difference.

27

NATALIE

You can't do that, Frank.

F

I've thought a lot about this.

NATALIE

But you told me it takes forever just to establish yourself.

F

Exactl , so what's a year in forever?
Know w at Duncan said today?
She can't suppress a smile.

NATALIE

You wouldn't be changing the subject would you?

FRANK

Yes.

NATALIE

What now?

F

He said, "Frank, I don't think Jason really understands girls."

NATALIE

(LAUGHING)

He didn't!

F

He did ... "understands girls!"

NATALIE

What did you say?

F

I said, "give him time, Duncan."
They both break up.

F

I didn't know what to say! if this is how
he is now - boy are we in trouble-
He stops short. The word - We - hangs in the air. They watch
each other, unsure of how to react. Changing the subject quickly.
Frank reaches down to the grass and comes up with one of Duncan's
toys. A real musclebound superhero. Somewhat grotesque.

F

(reading the tag)

ACTION MAN?

NATALIE

Richard gave it to Dunk for his birthday.

28

Frank sets it down.

The HEADLIGHTS OF APPROACHING CAR rake across ACTION

I NT. ROCKLAND HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

Half a dozen girls age 15 to 18, are gathered in Ruth's classroom. Desks and chairs are stacked up for summer

recess.

The girls are in shorts and T-shirts, one with a picture of the solar system, and another with the Pink Panther. Bright bathing-suit straps are visible around some of their necks: This afternoon they were swimming. A few look sleepy enough to be in bed already. Ruth stands with her arms up- keeping time and controlling the dynamics. A single girl sings "The Drone" - a low monotone one hears underneath the other

voices.

They sing the Balkan folk song "Oj Savice."

CHORUS (SUBTITLED)

Oh, Sava, carry me across our quiet cool water. There is my dear village and in that village, the prettiest girl.

Without embarrassment, they shriek they drone, and at their ease they whistle. The music transports these girls - who

are

normally pre-occupied with images of MTV and Brad Pitt, to a place of pure self. The song ends.

RUTH

That was really good! OK it's 7:30 we should stop. The girls gather up their things quickly.

RUTH

Remember when you sing these words- The way we feel about the harbor, is how the Balkans felt about the river Sava. The girls start out of the room.

RUTH

Listen to your tapes "Moilih Tan is still
very rough and we've of a 40 minute
program to get ready by Labor Day.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - NIGHT - LIVINGROOM

when Ruth enters. She's beat. She starts to put her purse down,

SHE NOTICES:

to Matt, kneeling in front of the reclining chair. It's back is
her.

MATT

Just hold still ...

29

Ruth drops her purse and quickly comes around the recliner.
Something stops her.

RUTH

Oh my God.
Matt holds Frank's jaw. He gently turns his face toward the
lamp.
Frank has stitches over his right eye. The blood under the
white of the pupil oozing. Both lips are bright and swollen.

F

DAD

MATT

Come on, Frank. Hold still.
Ruth hovers, in shock.

RUTH

This was her husband, wasn't it?
Frank nods wearily.

F

his Ex, he dropped in.
He takes the compress from Matt and gingerly applies it to
forehead.

MATT

Press charges.

F

No.

RUTH

What's to stop him from doing it again?

MATT

Did you hit him at all? Tell me you hit him! Enough so he won't want to next time?

F

I don't think I touched him.
Matt pulls up the skin around the bloody eye.

F

! Jesus, Dad!
Ruth stares at the Hospital band around Frank's wrist.

8 - `V

MATT

So what are you going to do?

F

(SMILING)

Take Karate.

30

RUTH

That's not the problem.

F

You know you like her.

RUTH

I like a lot of people. What about the boys? Did they see it?

F

They were asleep.

RUTH

Did you leave her alone with him?

FRANK

He left first. She was yelling at him. I believe she had a skillet in her hand.

RUTH

Oh for God's sake.

(TO MATT)

Did you call the police?
Not yet.

RUTH

You didn't call them?

MATT

When was I going to call the police, Ruth?
He just got in.
Ruth scans the room.

RUTH

Where's the phone?

F

MOM! hold on a second,
Calm down. Let's just talk about this.
Ruth wavers.
Now the cops'll go to her place first --
and it'll scare the hell out of the kids.

RUTH

Matt.

I

MATT %Q,
We have to call them Frank.

F

It wasn't that serious.

31

RUTH

Of course. Just like the relationship
isn't serious.

HATT

Ruth, this is not the time.

RUTH

Well, when is the time? After he knocks
him into a coma? This is stopping. Now.

F

Oh really?

RUTH

Come Fall, you're on a plane. Are you
taking them with you? How- do you think the
boys will feel when you disappear?

F

HEY A

RUTH

This isn't just some sweetie from Vassar,
that you'll see on holidays, Frank.
You're not in this alone.
Frank rises and leaves the room.

RUTH

Please listen. The sooner you end this
thing the better.

Ruth exhales.

She returns to Matt, who is leaning against the recliner,

chin

in hand, deep in thought.

RUTH

What are we going to do?
Matt deliberates.

MATT

I don't know.

RUTH

.you've got to talk to him.

HATT

I don't ow,,,I think he's right about scaring the kids. Why don't we call it a night? We'll deal with it tomorrow.

RUTH

Matt are you going to call the police or do I have to?
You just ..s- Bd me what I think. if you want to call them. call them.

32

Ruth looks at him, stupefied.
Without warning, Ruth leaves and goes upstairs.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth lies on her side reading. Matt comes in from the hallway.
He stares at her.
She ignores him.
Finally, she turns over and faces him.

RUTH

It's not the first time she's played around.
Matt seems relieved that she's talking to him. He sits on
the bed and starts taking off his shoes.

MATT

She's not with the guy anymore.

RUTH

I mean from before.

MATT

What are you talking about?

RUTH

Oh, come on - you've heard the same things I have.

MATT

I think you forget. I don't take my lunch in the teachers lounge -

RUTH

Maybe he still loves her.
Matt looks from Ruth, out the bedroom door, and into the hallway. He sees Frank rounding the top of the stairs. He gets up and closes the bedroom door.

I NT. F R HOUSE F 'S ROOM - S

Frank enters the room, pulls off his T-shirt and drops it on the floor. He walks over and faces a wall mirror. He seems nonplussed by what he sees.

INTO HENRY'S FISH SHACK - DAY

Henry Czar sits holding court with Jason Frank, whose facial bruises have all but healed, the stitches replaced by a butterfly bandage. They eat cod tongues and cheeks. Drink

soda

pop from bottles.

33

HENRY

Best part of the cod - but most
outsiders, they won't touch it.
The shack is too warm and smells of cordage and paint,
spilled beer and male sweat. Jason is in heaven.

HENRY

The summer fishermen, the part-timers,
like Frank here - get in your hair.

HENRY

There's as many as 80 of em with licenses
now - should put up a sign - "Fish your
own backyard or lose your traps"
Frank smiles at Jason.

FRANK

A lobster is simple enough Jason. But if
the guy going after him is even simpler
well he might as well give up.

HENRY

Don't hurt my feelings any. Easy to talk

Try fishing in the winter, cold as hell
10, 12, 20 below - no matter Go, go,
go, you've gotta go. You want your bread
& flour, you gotta goo

F

Henry's just sore cause I catch twice as
much as he does, with an old second hand
Boudreau.

HENRY

Don't you listen to him son - that boat
is fine. She was my first.
Takes a sip of pop.

HENRY

Kinda miss her sometimes, and that truck
you're driving .when you headed back to
school Frank?-
For some reason this strikes both of them as funny and they
crack up. Not Jason, he seems concerned by the question.
Frank sees this.

EXT. GANGWAY - DAY

Jason heads off down the pier on his bicycle. He passes
Matto

JASON

Hi, Dr. Fowler
Matt waves.

31+

EXT. "GIGI" - S

Frank is hosing down the hull, as Matt makes his way down
the gangway.

MATT

What'd you pull?
Frank glances up, then continues with his work.

F

Not too bad, about forty pounds.

MATT

Haven't caught sight of you in days.

F

You know where to find me.

MATT

When you coming home?
Frank turns off the spigot.

F

Has it come to this?
He jumps back into the boat and retrieves the bait bucket.

MATT

Come to what?
Frank hops back onto the dock and sets down the container.

F

(SMILES)

You having to run errands for Mom.
Matt ignores the jibe. Frank starts stacking holding crates.

F

I'm thinking of building a couple hundred
more traps - see if I can do better than
break even.
Matt doesn't comment. He picks up a crate and throws it up

top.

MATT

it'll take you two years to get a licence
to fish off-season.

FRANK

Right ...unless Henry takes me on as his
ster an. % Q
They continue stacking.

MATT

You think he'd do that?

35

F

Maybe ...it's as good a life as any. Good enough for your father - sometimes things skip a generation.

MATT

(trying to stay calm)
C'mon Frank - you owe you need something more.

F

Why? So I can have an Ivy League education like you? Christ, is it's so great - how come you sneak out of that office everyday to come down here?

MATT

I like spending time with my son.

FRANK

(DUBIOUS)

UH HUHA

A MOMENT

Frank lugs up the last container and takes a seat on the stack. He's worn out - takes a breather.
Frank shakes his head.

FRANK

(PAINFUL)

I don't know dad---I don't know.
Matt takes a seat next to him.
A moment.

F

She's a wonderful girl ...I see that.
Frank looks lost.
The silence is broken by a loud voice.

HENRY O.S.

Franks how long you gonna be parked there
I'd like to unload.
The two of them regard each other.

F

(TO MATT)

Give me a hand?

TT

(SMILES)

Sure.

36

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - NIGHT - STAIRWAY

her,
Ruth comes down the stairs, wrapping her bathrobe around
The Dining room light is on.

THE DININGROOM

fully
Frank sits at the table His drafting tools are out. He's
immersed in a sketch.
Ruth enters quietly.

RUTH

container
Your father is snoring. Don't mind me.
She takes a container from the fridge, smells it, makes a
questioning face, then puts it back - grabs another
and opens a cupboard. Pulls out a loaf of bread.
She quietly places a sandwich in front of him, and takes a
seat.

RUTH

Eat---you must be hungry.
Frank doesn't look up. his tone is flat, removed.

F

I'm not hungry.

RUTH

Coffee?
He doesn't answer. Ruth sits there, awkwardly.

RUTH

So---you talked with her?

FRANK

Yep.

RUTH

d-,,how is she?

F

(SHARPLY)

Oh, she's great.
I just wanted to tell you that we
I - liked her, Do like her. She's a

WONDERFUL GIRL

Frank finally puts down his pencil, ', -and looks at her,

F

You're not reall going to have this
conversation wit me now, Ma? Are you?
Frank returns to his work. He doesn't look up again.

37

She leaves the food for him. Like a zoo keeper.

EXT. HARBOR - DAY

Frank hauls traps. He appears lethargic, dull - the hands a
little slower. The eyes tired. The joy of the work, replaced
by
dread.

INT. HENRY'S FISH SHACK - DAY

Hen sits alone at the wooden table. There are three plates
of cod,
and 3 soda-pops. Frank comes in exhausted. Henry looks up.

HENRY

You're nn'in late.
Frank nods. Takes a seat, and starts in on the cod.
Henry looks at the empty seat next to Frank.

HENRY

Where's our boy?
Frank ignores the question.

INT. FRANK'S TRUCK - DAY

Frank drives. Traps stacked in the bed.
He slows down to gaze out his window, as he passes

NATIE'S HOUSE.

The truck crawls to a stop.
He takes the moment, storing each detail: Folded up lounge chairs. Scattered toys on the porch. A tipped-over tricycle. He idles, as if waiting for someone. After one last look he drives off.

INT. GRINNEL HOUSE - BASEMENT - E. ...g

The sights and sounds of men gathered around a poker table. A regular game. Everyone well into their umpteenth beer, with the exception of Matt, who nurses a can of Moxien, Matt frowns at his hand. He glances over to Frank also at the table. Frank stares at his cards, but

his

and is elsewhere.

WILLIS

You can't hypnotize the cards into changing, Matt.
, late 50's, peers above his reading glasses. He is a lobster man by trade but fancies himself a poet.

38

WILLIS

For Christ's sake bet - or you know
Carl's gonna start.
Carl is indeed.
"The beggar's do and widow's cat, Feed
them and thou wilt grow fat. The gnat that
sings his serenade's song-
Collective groans.
Poison gets from slander's tongue. The
poison of the snake and newt- Is the sweat
of envy's foot. The poison of the honey
bee. Is the artist's jealousy-"

MATT

Alright Carl. Two bucks.
Matt throws his two bucks in.

MATT

Carl, you've really got to get off this
Blake thing ... you're in a rut.
Frank tries to smile.

HENRY

Don't get him going Matt.

CARL

When I do my own stuff, you guys bitch & moan.

WILLIS MATT

That's not true. No! we like your stuff.
The place breaks up with laughter.

WI IS

Everybody in? Frankie you in?
Frank calls.
Hands are shown. All eyes to Frank.

F

(FORCED ENTHUSIASM)

Guess I'm the winner.
More groans, as Frank pulls in his winnings.

WILLIS

Always the quiet ones.
The game continues --.

39

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE WAY. DAY

Frank walks down the hallway^otalking on a cordless phone.
His tone casual but serious. He jots down notes in a sketch
book.

F

Sure. Right . I get in on the sixth. Oh,

I'll send that out tomorrow, sir, no problem... Well, compared to your models no, they don't compare to your models

(LAUGHING)

He enters the:

BEDROOM

and plops down at his drafting table.

FRANK

I'm getting another call. Can you hang on a second? Thanks.
clicks on the other call.

F

Face? Jace is that you? What's going on?
He listens.

F

I'll be right over.

(FIRMLY)

Just stay put.

- TIE'S HOUSE - DAY

toys

The house looks like a storm hit it: chairs tipped over, scattered, papers strewn across the floor.

G ROOM

mess,

Frank looks around the room. Natalie, her hair atangled her face streaked from tears, paces nervously. She looks up at Frank.
looks to el-e.

NATALIE

He.. just pushed me - he didn't hit me.

F

Oh, he didn't hit you? Should we throw a party for him.

NATALIE

rank.

40

F

Enough of this. We have to call the police.

NATALIE

I'm airs ht, Frank. I don't know what to do, aoka I hate this. I hate the kids seeing this.
Frank eraces her. She buries her head in his neck.

F

Its okay, now. Listen to me, I'm not going anywhere ...

INT. JASON'S BEDROOM - UPSTAIRS

Jason looks down from the window. He sees Richard's Suburban pull up front.

JASON O.S.

Mom!!!

DOWNSTAIRS

A POUNDING AT THE FRONT DOOR

Natalie gives a horrified look to Frank.

F

Get them back upstairs.

NATALIE

But...

FRANK

Now.

NATALIE

Come on, you guys.
Natalie hustles the boys upstairs.

THE POUNDING CONTINUES.

Frank moves to the FRONT DOOR.
He's about to check the doorknob when
THE DOORKNOB JIGGLES from the other side. It's locked.

F

Richard, just get away fr here-

Silence.
Frank turns, his eyes lock on

THE BACK-DOOR

1

Frank races across the living room, just as THE DOOR FLIES

OPEN.

RICHARD. eyes burning, marches in.

I NT. JASON'S BEDROOM UPSTAIRS

The boys huddle around Natalie.

DUNCAN is wailing-

JASON looks terrified-

NAT IE strains to hear-

SO THING CRASHES FROM DOWNSTAIRS-

WE AND FRANK YELLING.

NATALIE starts to the door-

NATALIE

Listen kids - Stay here.

D C won't let go of her sleeve. He starts to move with her.

NATALIE

(SCREAMING)

I said stay here!

He lets go and,

JASON takes him up in his small arms.

JASON

(TO DUNCAN)

It's OK Dunk .--Mommy's coming
back.

NATALIE hesitates - then heads out the door.

We MOVE WITH HER out the bedroom to the,

TOP OF THE STAIRS

She slowly steps down the stairs.

A GUNSHOT.

SHE SC

NATALIE

She moves quickly down the stairs.

-2

Cautiously - she looks over the landing.

HER P.O.V.: From above, Richard stands, his back to her, his head hung.

in his hand. a 9mm Pistol.

Natalie lets out a plaintive wail.

NATALIE

NO...

Emotionless, Richard turns to her - looks down at the floor then starts toward the kitchen.

Natalie races down the steps and stops.

FRANKS'S BODY ON THE FLOOR. HIS FACE'IS HALF BLOWN AWAY.

She's paralyzed, a scream trapped somewhere inside.

She turns away.

JASON O.S. DUNCAN O.S.

(SCREAMING) (CRYING)

MO ! D C 'S COMING LET GO OF ! ! !

DOWNSTAIRS!

Richard sits at the kitchen table.

The gun rests in front of him.

His right sleeve splattered with Frank's blood.

BLACK

FADE IN:

THE SCREEN FILLS WITH OPAQUE D E. LIGHT APPEARS.

INT. UNION CLINIC ROOM - DAY

att's face appears distorted behind the surface.

JANELLE O.S.

(FRIGHTENED)

Matt?

He lowers what we now see to be X.Ray and kills the light.

TT'S OFFICE

He hesitates, presses the blinking hold button, picks up the receiver.

MATT

Hello? ...Hello? Natalie?

3

The blood drains from his face.

WE HEAR THE DISTANT SOUNDS OF MACEDONIA.

INT. R C D HIGH SCHOOL L- DUSK

Matt stands in the hallway outside of the auditorium that is Ruth's classroom. A banner across the hall reads HAVE A

WONDERFUL SUMMER, SEE YOU IN THE FALL.

The choir finishes the last strains. Ruth is happy the rehearsal has gone well. She smiles in a way that expresses the simple joy she will never know again.

RUTH

Great.

The girls gather their things and start out, laughing and running after each other. Matt stands in the hallway as they rush past.

BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. ST. FRANCIS CEMETERY - DAY

Frank's casket is lowered into the ground.

Father A large gathering of relatives and friends stand before
Oberti as he finishes the eulogy.
Matt's arm is tightly interlocked with Ruth's, beneath her
eyes - swelling from three days of suffering. Their hands
c enched to ether make one fist, both parents keeping the
other uprig t. The rain glides down their faces, mixing
easily with tears.
Matt steps up to Frank's open grave.
The gathering watches as Matt peers down into the hole,
silently speaking to it. He reaches down, grabs a fistful of
dirt. Then tosses it into the open grave.
Matt pauses, staring down, into the hole ---
He steps back, as Father Oberti delivers the end of his
eulogy.
Matt looks blankly around, noticing the family's many
friends
and includin ; Carl and Henry from the game, Willis and Katie,
Frank's friend, T°
Matt's eyes linger on someone behind T°

A LONE FEMALE FIGURE IN BLACK, away from the crowd. Natalie.
Their eyes meet.
Matt, almost imperceptibly, nods.

INT - FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

assorted A large casserole is placed on a long table with many
onto dishes. A HAND REACHES IN, scoops up some of the casserole
a small plate, and carries it to

A SMALL CLUSTER OF PEOPLE

reception standing in the middle of a much larger gathering, the
after the funeral.
Matt stands in the downstairs hallway. He looks around the
room, as if it is all a dream.
Children getting soda pop. Others in conversation. The odd
person looks up at him, then turns away.
Willis steps up to Matt.
His wife, Katie, stands nearby.
Matt doesn't seem to notice Willis.

Willis puts a gentle hand on his friend's arm.

WILLIS

(SOFTLY)

Can I get you anything?

Matt suddenly looks up at them, as if confused.

MATT

ere-s Ruth?

KATIE

She went to lie down, Matt.

He turns d heads upstairs. Willis and Katie watch him go.

UPSTAIRS

Matt approaches their bedroom. The door is a

BEDROOM

He steps in, to Ruth, who is on the bed. Her back is to him, a arently sleeping. Crumbled tissues litter the bed, the f oor,

Matt ietl moves to her. He reaches down, about to touch her head. Something stops h°

1-5

He turns, and leaves.

UPSTAIRS

the Frank's room is facing him. Instinctively, he goes to open door, then pauses.

'S ROOM

in Matt slowly enters. He looks around, as if freezing the room his memory.

pinned to the The place is untouched. Frank's many sketches are still wall. Some clothes lie scattered on the floor. His fishing cap.

floor Matt starts to pick up. He takes Frank's clothes from the and places them on his bed.

He looks at a dirty T-shirt in his hand. He brings it to his face. He inhales deeply, able to smell his son's lingering scent- Finally, he sets the shirt on the bed. Wanders around. Strays near Frank's drafting table- He reaches out, touching the table, grazing°the topogra h of scattered pencils - drawings strewn across it- The Froe e Gifts. He takes a seat at the table. Feeling its frame, the sketches, the seat below- And without warning he is overcome. He lurches forward, burying his face in his hands. The sobs come unrestrained, violently, like a sudden tidal wave.

INT. FOWLER HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT - 2 WEEKS LATER

A LAUGH-TRACK fills the air. Ruth in pajamas and bathrobe, watches a stand-up comic on TV. She sips tea from a mug. Matt appears at the door, kettle in hand.

MATT

Some more?
Ruth looks up and nods.

T . FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

THE FRONT LAWN

Matt stands atop a ladder underneath a large Maple, he struggles with a pair of pruning shears. At war with a large br c - the branch seems to be winning.

46

INT. FOWLER HOUSE - UPSTAIRS

Ruth, still dressed in her robe, pads down the hallway. Stops to glance out the window at NATT - working.

EXT. FOWLER HOUSE

Ruth stands transfixed. REFLECTED IN THE WINDOW PANE BELOW

HER FACE: SEE

QuJ glimpses through branches, of a small boy scampering up

a

tree. Flashes of arms, legs, a smile.

We can make out the GIGGLES of the child, but they are distorted, wobbly, as if deteriorated by memory.

The tree shudders as the boy climbs higher.

MATT O.S. RUTH O.S.

Okay - watch it now, Frank. Frank, listen to your father.

That's high enough ...

The tree continues shaking.

Ruth allows the memory, then turns back and pads back down

the

hallway.

INT. UNION CLINIC MATT'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt sits behind his desk catching up on some paperwork.

Janelle appears in the doorway.

JANELLE

I'm going to lunch Dr. Fowler--

.alright

She continues smiling as though ting to extend her

tenderness. Matt

avoids eye-contact. cie Leaves. Matt looks relieved.

. GRINNEL'S CR W-S NEST - DAY

Willis opened this place after serving as a chief petty

officer

in the Vietnam War. The theme, if there is one, is

definitely

nautical. Snapshots of longtime customers are stapled on the walls between the booths and tables, two are framed, and prominent. They are from Willis' - -, days; The first an

entry photo of A YOUNG WILLIS front of the ha f. The

second a sun faded color photo of : att and Willis. Both ook to be in their twenties, both dressed in Navy Whites.

The trade here is mostly ve early breakfast, and then lunch for the men who work at the leather and shoe factories.

A MUTED news show plays on a ceiling at the far end of the booths. A sign on the wall reads T your "Forget about lunch" breakfast.

Willis carries over two plates with omelettes, parks them on the table, and takes a seat across from Matt.

WILLIS

Don't worry, I didn't make em.
Matt takes a bite. He winces.

WILLIS

What? Oh, that's mine.
He switches plates.

WILLIS

Sorry.
Matt takes another bite. Better,

WILLIS

You got back to work so quick, Matt. It's not too soon?

MATT

I can't stay home. So, how's business?

WILLIS

Oh, you know, same old crap. Got held up again, you knew that.

MATT

No. I didn't.

WILLIS

yeah...they got seventy five bucks.

MATT

Were you on the till?
Willis chuckles, shakes his head.

WILLIS

They would have gotten something else if I'd been on the till.
Matt nods.

WILLIS

How you doin', Matt?
You on't write, you don't call. Where'd the love go? '0-

MATT

Nag nag nag.
stapled Matt glances at an old clipping from the BOSTON GLOBE
to the wall. It's a photo from the 67 Redsox dream to

48

Petrocelli, Yaztremski and Reggie Smith, each hold up two fingers, they are smiling after hitting consecutive homeruns. Matt remembers. Happier days.

WILLIS

They set the bail hearing yet?

MATT

Sometime in the next few days, ye,

WILLIS

Are you going?

MATT

I don't know. Davis says it's a formality really. I haven't talked to Ruth about weather she thinks we should go or not.

WILLIS

If it's too much for Ruth, I'll come with you Matt.

MATT

Thanks, but I'm sure it'll be alright- Davis says it's a formality really.

WILLIS

The criminal trial set yet?

MATT

October.

WILLIS

October?

MATT

That's what they tell me, anyway.

WILLIS

Christ, they take their time.

MATT

.yeah, well, he's in there now.

WILLIS

They're keeping him busy, I'm sure - You know where they'll move h once he's sentenced?

Matt shifts the focus to his omelette.

MATT

You have any Tabasco sauce?

Willis pauses. He looks around, ca `out to the kitc hen.

WILLIS

Hey, Pete. Tabasco. Pete! Ah, shit.

He heads to the back. Matt looks out the window. A refrigera

ted

truck with the STROUT logo on it's side pulls to a stop at

the

light. Willis returns with sauce in hand.

49

He takes a seat. Shifts his tone again.

WILLIS

Next weekend Matt- We really want you to come up to the c p- Katie's insisting. Not to pressure you or anything. But if you don't come se's going to invite her sister and that idiot and I know I'm going to wind up insulting him again. Matt considers this.

WILLIS

The future of my family is in your hands.

MATT

Let me ask Ruth.

WILLIS

You know, your seat is getting cold at the

game. We have Carl's kid subbing for you.
Not that we mind - he loses every time
But we'd rather take your money.

MA T T T

(SMILING)

Thanks.
Matt stares aimlessly out the window.
Willis goes back to his eggs.
Both men comfortable enough with each other to be silent.

WILLIS

How's Ruth doing?

MATT

Alright. Her...her car broke down.

WILLIS

Always something.

T PHONE RINGS OVER:

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - LIVING ROOM DAY

The phone continues to ring. Then sto s- Ruth lies on the
couc , dressed in her robe. Her hair looks neglected. She
stares at the television. ad for Su ay Chevrolet comes on
the screen - a testimonial from a bald man saying "The best
thing about the sales people is they're not pushy." A large
graphic nla s over the an' s face NOT PUSHY - WE HEAR a c
ul into t e driveway. Ruth doesnt eem to notice. ad
or a long-term residential nursing retirement center. Ruth
looks interested.
The front door opens and Matt comes in with groceries.

50

RUTH

(not looking up)
How was your day?
Matt carries the bags into the kitchen.

MATT .S.

Fine. Saw Willis-

RUTH

My day was fine, too, thanks.
Matt comes out of the kitchen.

MATT

Sorry. ,how was your day?
Tried calling - thought you might have
gone out. The Grinnel's invited us up to
the camp next weekend. Said I'd check with
you, if we had other plans

RUTH

That sounds fine.
He turns, a little surprised.

MATT

We don't have to.
She looks up at him.

RUTH

You don't want to go?

TT

(WEAKLY)

No, I want to

RUTH

Great. Tell them yes.

MATT

(HOPEFUL)

I thoug t you might be busy getting the
girls ready.
answer. She's back into her show.

THE KITCHEN

The sink still has the plates and cups from breakfast. Matt
starts
to clean u Reaching for a dishrag on the counter, he notices
the
blinking o the answering machine. There are a half dozen
messages.
He hits play. Nothing. He finds th ,ol e.

V. 0-

Hello, Mr. & Mrs. Fowler, this is Regina
at the District attorney's office
Mr.Davis would like to speak with you
both just as soon as possible.

INT. OX COUTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

A windowless rotunda. JUDGE WILLIAM WILKENSON presides.

CLOSE WILKENSON

WILKENSON

Mr. Strout has been in the custody of The Knox County Sherrif's department since August second, held without bail. The court is obliged to hold a bail hearing within two weeks of incarceration, which is the purpose of our proceedings here today. Given the schedule considerations on this docket, the court feels that we should conduct the probable cause hearing in tandem. Witnesses will be called at this time. Unless there are any objections to the contrary this court will recess until 2:00 p.m.

EXT. KNOX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Natalie comes up the brick walk and enters the building.

INT. OX COUNTY COURTHOUSE LATER

A gray concrete room, washed out by the buzzing overhead florescent.

Matt and Ruth sit on metal fold-out chairs, alongside twenty
or
so spectators, and a smattering of reporters, in the
gallery.

Richard unkempt and dressed in an ORANGE JUMPSUIT, sits patientiy next to one of his two attorneys.

Matt and Ruth glance over at

NATHAN STROUT, 62, sitting directly behind Richard.

Nathan's two other sons, both big men like Richard, sit at
his
side.

the
and a

Nathan feels the Fowlers, stares. His eyes stay focused on front of the room.
Richard's trial attorney, MARLA S, 301s, smart, expensive, long way from her home in Boston, stands in the COURT WELL. Natalie Strout in the witness box.
So, Mr. Fowler had asked you to go upstairs with your chil, ?z s your husband was trying to enter...
DISTRICT ATTORNEY WILLIAM DAVIS, 40, rises.

52

DAVIS

objection. Mrs. Strout's police interview is already documented, the defense has a copy of it. There's no reason to waste anymore of the court's time . - .

KEYES

Your Honor, we just want to review exactly what s. Strout saw on the afternoon of July 17th. Isn't that why we're here?
The Judge nods.

JUDGE

overruled.

(TO NATALIE)

Please continue.
Natalie tries to recapture her place. Keyes nods.

MARLA KEYES

(RECAPPING)

So you were bringing your children up to their bedroom ...
Natalie's glance wanders to the gallery, to Matt and Ruth. She,sits on her hands to keep them from shaking.

NATALIE

0 Right. I was in Jason and Dunk's room I didn't know what was happening downstairs. I was

getting worried. I asked Jason to read Dunk a story. He didn't want a story - He wanted to come with me ... so I sat him back down on the bunk and I left them in the room.

KEYES

You left "them"?

NATALIE

My boys.
She starts to cry.

KEYES

(SOFTLY)

Of course - I'm sorry. on.

NATALIE

I closed the door...I moved down the hall. I looked back to make sure they weren't behind me. I had just started down the stairs, when I heard the shot. I ran down...
A deep sob ...

NATALIE

.and Richard...

53

KEYES

I'm sorry, can we just back up? You said you "heard the shot"?

NATALIE

Yes.

KEYES

You "heard"? s- Strout, did you witness the accident?
Prosecutor Davis jumps up.

DAVIS

b`ection. There are no grounds to in icate this was an "accident"

The Judge nods.

JUDGE

(TO STENOGRAPHER)

Please strike "accident" from the record.

(to Marla Keyes)

Ms. Keyes, please rephrase the question.

Marla Keyes hasn't taken her eyes off Natalie. They both
know
what's next.

KEYES

(GENTLY)

Mrs. Strout ...did you actually see the
sidearm discharge?

I NT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

leather
Davis hands a cup of coffee to Matt, who sits on a faux
couch with Ruth.

DAVIS

(to Ruth re: coffee)

You sure you don't want?

RUTH

I'm fine.

Davis takes a seat across from them.

DAVIS

You see, we can't appeal bail - It's just
not set up that way.

RUTH - -y

You let that bastard walk out and we're
supposed to just sit here? Don't tell us
there's nothing to do about this.

DAVIS

It's not us, s. Fowler. The state's bail
code is to ensure future court appearances

DAVIS

In this case Strout's family was prepared to put up a substantial amount of property as bail - That, along with his ties to the community made it hard for us to convince the judge of a serious "Risk of Flight".

RUTH

Oh - I see.

DAVIS

It's not just your case. Now you can file a civil suit. I recommend it. But not now, wait till after the criminal trial.

is
man
Matt stares at a small cartoonish statue on Davis's desk. It
one of those things that were popular in the 70's. A little
chasing an ambulance. It reads "World's Greatest Lawyer."

RUTH

And when will that be? Next week, next month?

DAVIS

Well... honestly - anywhere between twelve and eighteen months?

RUTH

I thought you said there would be a jury trial sometime in October!?

DAVIS

If he was incarcerated the judge would move for an October date - basically to save the County the cost of housing and feeding him as an inmate - But with bail the court date, unfortunately, is always later.

RUTH

Oh my god, oh my god.
Matt jumps in.

MATT

But you're confident you'll be able to put him away for good then... Right?
Davis looks uncomfortable with the question.
Ruth sees this. She gathers herself.

??

RUTH EJ

The things she said in there ...what is the damage?

DAVIS

Manslaughter.

55

RUTH DAVIS

What? Oh, Jesus Christ! The way this is going, that'd be my bet - especially since Nathan Strout brought up that barracuda from Boston - she's very smart.

RUTH

This was no accident. He killed our son in cold blood.
Ruth.

RUTH

What?

MATT

How long would he be sent away for?

DAVIS

Hard to say really. Anywhere between five to fifteen years. We think we have a good shot at the max - fifteen. Even with good behavior, he'd do a full ten.

RUTH

Ten years? Five years? Are you out of your mind!? He killed my son. Does anyone know this?
Matt looks at his shoes, as Ruth glares down Davis. Davis sits back, a little shook up.

DAVIS

I'm sorry, s. Fowler. I understand.
Unfortunately, in situations like this

when there is no eye witness, there ...
well, there's not a lot we can do.

INT. MATT'S CAR - DAY - MOVING

Matt drives. Ruth looks out the windshield.
Both in their own worlds.
Ruth turns to look out her side window.

T CANNERY'S STACKS ARE HUMPING.

RUTH

You took the whole day?
Matt nods.

CAR DRIVES PAST T SITE.

EXT. FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

A handful of reporters and photographers lingering on the
lawn, are galvanized by the arrival of the Fowlers.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE DAY

Ruth is just entering, jostled, relieved to be home.
She turns. Matt's not there. She looks out the front door to

SEE

MATT AT THE BASE OF THE

surrounded by reporters.

REPORTER #1

Dr. Fowler, how do you feel about
Richard's Strout's bail?

REPORTER #2

Do you plan to take any further legal
action, Dr. Fowler?

REPORTER #3

Dr. Fowler, have you had any contact with
Mr- Strout?
Matt stands paralyzed, a deer caught in the headlights.

THE KITCHEN

her
Matt enters as Ruth takes the plates to the sink. She keeps
back to him. He pulls off his coat.

MATT

Can you believe this? I ask those idiots to
leave. No one budges. Not one. What the hell
are we supposed to do, bring them sandwiches?

RUTH

(her back to h°
What are you asking or?
What?
Ruth turns to h

RUTH

(SHARPLY)

If you want them to leave. Tell them to
leave.

INTO FOWLER HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ruth is aslee Matt stares at the ceiling. He turns to the s
clock. It- a ter three.

57

KITCHEN

He opens a cupboard door and grabs some Fig Newtons. He
stands there eating them, the door of the cupboard is long,
the kind you see in old capes. Matt stares at the inside of
the door. His finger slides down the length, he kneels down.
We see what he's looking at. Pen and pencil marks straight
lines each about two inches apart - each with Frank's name
and age.

T DEN

Matt sits in his chair. The plays, muted. He °s looks at it,
but he's not watching.
Finally, he rises, clicks the off, with the remote, and
flicks off the light.

EXT. RIC STROUT'S DUPLEX - NIGHT

The
sign
A small development of modest, duplex apartment buildings.
architecture is outdated, the landscape unkempt.
CLOSER ON one corner unit. The lights are off; there is no
of life.

A Brown Suburban sits in the driveway
WE HEAR the RADIO "The following is a re-broadcast of last
nights game, the third in a four game series{ between the
Boston Red Sox and the Cleveland Indians. This broadcast is
the property of Major League Baseball etc."

INT. TT'S CAR - NIGHT

back
Matt wearing a light coat over his pajamas, sits behind the
wheel of his car listening to the game.
He glances down at a piece of paper with an address. Then
out his windshield, looking at the corner duplex unit.

INT. FOWLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

at
Ruth sits at the table in her bathrobe. Smoking. The CAMDEN
HERALD in one hand. The COURIER GAZETTE, and THE WORKING
WATERFRONT within easy reach.
Matt enters, fully dressed in jeans and a sweater. He winces
the smoke.

RUTH

You slept late. For you.
Matt pours himself some coffee.

MATT

I took one of your pills.

58

RUTH

You never do that.
She turns the page, absorbed in an article.
Shaking her head, she slaps the paper down.

RUTH

Well there it is in black and white. You should read some of the things he says. Unbelievable.

Matt takes a sip of coffee. He glances down at the paper. He nods, without really looking.

MATT

yeah.
He checks his watch.

MATT

I should get going.

RUTH

Where? It's Saturday.

MATT

I won't be gone long.
He bends, kisses her lightly on the cheek.

MATT

I'm meeting Willis. I'll tell him we're coming.
She stares at the kitchen doorway long after he exits. Finally, she pulls the paper back and resumes reading.

. CANDY'S QUICK SHOP - DAY

POP
fish
the
Natalie stands behind the only counter of a small MOM AND STORE whose specialty is cold beer, wine, cigarettes, and & Game Licenses. She rings up some items for a couple of teenagers.
Matt enters the place, keeping his distance, a few feet from the counter.
Natalie sees him.
She pauses, as if quickly trying to gather her thoughts, teenagers are waiting for their change .
She counts it back to them, and they exit.
Matt steps forward.

Hi.

NATALIE

. Hi.
elderly woman places a half -gallon of milk, a dozen eggs,
i s t e r c o u n t e r
d a c a r t o n o f L & M c i g a r e t t e s d o w n o r . t h e r e g
Natalie quickly rings up the items and bags them.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Can you break a fifty?
Natalie takes the bill, places it in a drawer underneath the
register, and hands the woman her change, with a smile.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Thank you, dear.

NATALIE

You're welcome.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Could I possibly get another bag?
Natalie quickly double bags the woman's groceries.
There is a break in the customer flow. Natalie steps to the
end
of the counter.

MATT

I just wanted to see how you're doing. I
tried reaching you ...

NATALIE

Oh. We're at my mother's house now. I'm
sorry, I wanted to call you ...

MATT

It's okay.
She looks over. A man hovers over some ina?azines near the
re inter.

NATALIE

(ALMOST WHISPERING)

Dr. Fowler ..-I' so...I don't even know
how to begin...

MATT

You don't have to.
NATALIE ? er
I didn't lie the first time, I didn't,
it's just - how it came out. I'm so sorry.
matt nods, as if he had assumed as much.

60

NATALIE

Is s- Fowler .-- does she know you're here?

looks
The Man places a 12- ack of beer on the counter. Natalie
to
to Matt, who shakes his head no.
Natalie steps back to the register and rings up the beer.
Her chin quivers. She makes a mistake on the register, has
start over.
A few more customers gather on line.

NATALIE

(TO CUSTOMER)

Can I get you anything else?
She rings him up. Makes change as another customer steps up.
Matt steps near her, trying to maintain privacy.

MATT

(QUIETLY)

pays.
How are the boys? Are they okay?
Natalie, choked by emotion, cannot respond. Near tears, she
puts her hand up, unable to speak.
Matt reaches out to touch her arm.
His gesture is interrupted as:
She pulls the cigarettes from an overhead rack. The Man
Matt stays a moment longer. There's nothing else to say.
He leaves.
She returns to her job.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS CEMETERY ADJACENT CHUR CH

She
places some potted daisies on a grave. She kneels down.

EXT. ST. FRANCIS CHURCH - PARKING LOT LATER

Ruth walks through an empty lot and heads for her c

RUTH'S

She opens the door. Suddenly there ... hand on her shoulder.

She is startled.

She turns around. It's Father Oberti.

61

EXT. ST. FRANCIS CEMETERY LATER

Ruth and Father Oberti sit smoking on a bench.

RUTH

It comes in waves, .and then nothing. Like a rest in music. No sound - but so loud. A moment.

RUTH

I don't know what to do.
Father Oberti nods.

RUTH

I feel so ang
Father Oberti looks off in the distance.

FATHER OBERTI

Louise McVey lost a child a few years back. Maybe you remember.

RUTH

(SEARCHING)

mmmm she had four - it was the youngest girl, wasn't it?

FATHER OBERTI

Yes. She told me about a vision she had when she found out her daughter had died ...she saw herself at a great distance from the earth encircling it, an endless line - as she got closer she saw that it was made up of mothers

traveling forward. She fell into line, and began walking with them. When they reached a certain point, the line divided. She said she knew - that all the millions of women on her side - were the mothers who had lost children-she seemed to find great comfort in that. Ruth doesn't react.

RUTH

How did she die?

FATHER OBERTI

A drowning ... some kind of swimming accident.

RUTH

oh.

FOWLER HOUSE - DAY

mower moves across the lawn, spitting up a shower of grass. Matt pushes the mower.

62

INT. 'S SPECIALTY SHOPPE - DAY

A small boutique frequented by mature women. Blouses with a flair, pantsuits, and nice dresses hang from the racks. The sort of place a woman can still buy a pair of white gloves. The front of the store is devoted to footwear. Ruth sits while YVONNE, 45, kneels in front of her, holding Ruth's stockinged foot. She slips on a dress shoe.

YVONNE

Oh, they're beautiful on you Ruth. Ruth stands up, takes a few steps. She stares at the shoes. They are a rich black.

RUTH

Do you have them in brown?

YVONNE

I think so, let me check.
Yvonne disappears into the back.
Ruth walks to the front of the store, browsing.
She moves to the display window and brings a pair of very young pumps u to her nose, and inhales. She smiles and sets the shoes bac on the ledge.
Something OUTSIDE catches her attention.

EXT. YVONNE'S SPECIALTY SHOPPE - SAME TIME

be The REFLECTION OF A COUPLE, walking down the sidewalk, can glimpsed in the window, their movement WASHES ACROSS RUTH'S FACE.

ON THE COUPLE.

a YOUNG BLOND WO holding hands with a dark haired, young he turns to smile at her. We see his face.

RIC

Oblivious to Ruth's presence.

INT. O 61 S SPECIALTY SHOPPE - E-" TI

Ruth looks disoriented.

YVONNE O.S.

I'm sorry Ruth - there's only the black.

63

open She turns from the window. Yvonne stands next to her, an shoe box in her hands.

EXT. FOWLER HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Two Hefty bags are dragged along the walk. Matt tosses one next to a garbage that sits just inside the garage. He picks up the other bag tossing it inside.

The bottom splits and grass spills out onto the drive-way.

He

goes inside and returns with a broom.

He sweeps the grass into a pile. Picking up handfuls and refilling the bag. He takes the broom and sweeps what's left back toward the lawn. He stops, stares down at his feet.

IN THE CEMENT; A child's handprints and writing, Frank 82 Ruth's car pulls into the driveway.

She gets out, almost slamming the car door.

Without a word, she moves past Matt, and into the house. Matt continues sweeping.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Ruth wakes to the sound of metal on metal. She looks over to Matt, he's not there.

RUTH

(SCARED)

Matt?

She steps to the window, pulls back the shades and looks out.

Through the window, in the dark, alone, flashlight in hand. Matt is dismantling the swivel set.

- GRINNEL CABIN - DAY

A four room dwelling, surrounded by a wrap around porch that looks out over a canopy of forest below. The place was built before insulation was practical. Planks, beams, and studs

are

exposed. There is a bathroom, two bedrooms, and a common

room

consisting of a kitchen/dining area, and living room, with a large, river stone fireplace.

There are two oil burning lamps hanging from cross beams at each end of the room. Ruth sits next to Katie at a table in the middle of the room. Katie is pouring over a stack of snapshot books, describing her children and grandchildren in each pose. The photos, while many, are all from a single trip that the family made to Florida. There is a clear difference in vernacular between the two women, Katie also has a voice that has been trained to reach anyone who might be in the far corners of her house.

9 +

KATIE

s lil Charles down at the
Oh and here'
pool - He figured out how to get down to
the pool on the elevator all by himself.

RUTH

(PATIENTLY)

He must of been very proud.

KATIE

LINE

Oh yeah. Oh here's Shannon waitin in
for that rollercoaster - You know the
one?
Ruth has no idea.

RUTH

(POLITELY)

Were the lines very long?

KATIE

Well some of em. yeah - sixty minutes
and upward-Unless of coarse ya got the
"Fast-Pass."

RUTH

What's the fast pass?

KATIE

MS"

Well ya got all the different "Kingdo -
there---and so you take the fast pass
it's a kind of a laminated card and you
put it intah a machine and it tells you
what time to come back - so you can go
right in without waitin in lane. You guys
ever go down to Florida?
Ruth smiles at the thought and shakes her head-

RUTH

0 -.no0 How many grandchildren do yo u
have now?
Katie turns from the snapshots and takes a breath while
holding up her fingers to count-She is genuinely unsure.

KATIE

(under her breath
Well there's lil Charles, Shannon, the
three older ones and the babies ... eleven.

RUTH

That must wonderful.

Q 0-??

Katie smiles and nods - it is a

KATIE

(by rote) "I
Well. Willis always says guess there's
no danger of us dying off -

65

She catches herself. Too late. She looks at Ruth.
Embarrassed.

KATIE

I'm sorry - I wasn't...
Ruth waves her off good naturedly-

RUTH

I wanted to have more ..abut we had Frank,
and Matt was just starting his practice..
- - -I guess it made sense.

KATIE

(GUILLELESS)

Well sometimes I wished I was an only
child - let me tell you. When I was
little, my big sister could get me to do
anything. More than once she got me to
throw m self down the stairs by telling
inc the blanket she wrapped me in was a
magic car et- Naturally, not being that
swift, I believed her. Plus which, on
this trip to Florida, we was in one of
the Kingdoms there, and she was going on
about how's we had to go on this one ride
that was in this sort of mountain.

I said -"K as long as it's not a roller coaster- on account of my back-" Well, we get strapped intah the little car there she starts laughing - Oh it's a rollercoaster alright - that one there. She points to the pictures.

KATIE (CONT'D)

A ride in the dark, no less.

EXT. GRINNEL CABIN - S

A great, endless, expanse of Fir trees.

We are f up, looking out at this timbered landscape that seems to stretch forever.

Matt stands before the edge of a cliff, d.ressr ` "- a short sleeved shirt. He takes a deep breath of the (ri. . -

ountain

A steady CHOPPING rhythm is heard in the background.

Matt turns. Willis is chopping the last of some firewood.

MATT

How much of this is yours?

Willis plants his in the stump.

WILLIS

(SMILING)

You ask me that eve t° e. You know the cove, the other side of the c in?

yeah ...?

WILLIS

All the way to the other shoreline.

Matt turns to him, grinning.

WILLIS

Almost three hundred and fifty acres.

Know what it went for when I bought it?

You don't want to know.

Matt continues surveying, awed.

Willis turns, starts walking back to his chore.

WILLIS

Come on, I'll let you help me.
Matt joins him. Together, they bundle up the wood.

TRAIL TO GRINNEL CABIN - DAY

TO

Matt and Willis load the wood into a small trailer attached
a GREEN POLARIS MAGNUM 500 ATV.

WILLIS

Only got 1/2 a chord of Oak left at home
and you know how much that bastard Daniels
charges - least I can stack this up to the
cabin ... have something to burn this fall.

TRAIL TO CABIN - SAME - MOVING

THE

Matt sits behind Willis on the ATV as they pull the wood up
road. The trees clear and we see the cabin. A GREEN SUBARU
FORESTER is parked in front.

I NT. GRINNEL CABIN - DAY

Willis, Katie, Matt and Ruth, sit around a copious holiday
spread, well into their meal.

KATIE

It's a wonderful product and the treat you
pretty good. It was on account oz, selling Mary
Kay, that we got the new Subaru.

RUTH

(SMALL TALK)

The ride up was very comfortable. It's a
very nice car.

67

WILLIS

Well it's not really a car, it's got four-wheel drive.
It's a little SUV.
The Grinnel's custom, is to loudly, and with very little

effort,

finish each others sentences. This is how they have fun.

KATIE

What the hell is that S crap?

WILLIS

Sports utillity vehicle.

KATIE

(to Matt and Ruth)

It's a little jeep. S , ATV, C - what's
with all these .--?

She searches for the word. Little help? Anyone, anyone?

RUTH

(FINALLY)

Acronyms.

KATIE

Yeah, guess it's too much trouble to just
say what something is anymore.

WILLIS

(to the table)

What does PMS stand for?

KATIE

Yeah well,I was an army brat.
I grew up with jeeps. Willy is just
uncomfortable that I know more about one
masculine thing than he does.
Just one?
The pty chuckles.

WILLIS

Thanks, buddy.

Matt hel s himself to the last of the wine- Re se s to have
a ite bit

Ruth watches as he drains the bottle.

She shoots him a look.

He catches it - , V o-,

A moment.

68

RUTH

(LOOKING AWA)

You've done a suc a nice job here, Katie.
Don't tell me you made those drapes
yourself ...is that antique linen?

KATIE

(LAUGHING)

Sort of..
She walks over to the window and fingers the fabric.

KATIE

They're pillowcases from our first house.
Ruth smiles at the memory. Katie sits back down at the
table.

KATIE

Oh, I've saved every knick=knack & whim-wham we
ever had.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - DAY

A post stands proudly at the end of a dirt and gravel road.
Attached to it are two signs. One reads PRIVATE ROAD. The
other, NO HUNTING.
It butts up against two lanes of blacktop - a small logging
road.
Headlights cut through the early evening.
Willis's idea of a S a green, SUBARU FORESTER, kicks up some
rocks. it pauses briefly before taking a right onto the
pavement.

IN/EXT. SUBARU - TREVETT SWING BRIDGE - DAY

The car is stopped behind a wooden guard arm. A swing bridge
opens for a large fishing boat. The bridge is operated by
one
man. Be uses a long metal tool, that he loops into a pulley
system, which lies beneath a grid in the center of the
bridge.

EXT. TREVITT BRIDGE - SUBARU - DAY

Ruth asleep in the back seat, it-s been a long weekend. Matt
glances over at her, then up to the front
We are outside the car as it waits for the Drawbridge to
close, so it may continue. We hear the following from
perspective.

I

MATT 1?? 0`1

How's David doing up there in Castine?

WILLIS

Well he dunnit want to go overseas - oh
no...he told them he'd Reep doinit as
long as he could stay in Maine or Vermont-

69

KATIE

(INTER PTIN)

But David says if they want him to go out
to New Mexico or California, he'll go
back to infantry - he don't care. Long as
he stays out here. He's not about to--

WI IS

Course he don't like working in
recruitment anyhow's - Christ he gets
them bo s come down to to the office at
the mal - he gets them half-way
processed and they decide they want that
delayed entry thing - Christ I could't do

IT--

TIE

Or they decide not to join up at all and--

WI IS

Well, like that one kid - he had him all
the way through the works and then - Oh

CHRIST-

KATIE

His folks called David and said that the
boy wanted out so bad -- that he'd taken
his own life.

so They all look at each other. How did this conversation get
depressing?

WILLIS

Yeah well something like that gets to you
Christ, I couldn't do it.

INT. FOWLER HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

done. Ruth is at the table, alone, dressed for rehearsal, hair

weekend's She finishes her breakfast as she pours through the
mail.

Matt in a suit, steps in to say goodbye.

MATT

I'm going now.
She looks up.

RUTH

(FLAT)

Okay.

MATT

You ready to go back?

RUTH

70

MATT

(T IN)

You loo nice.

ANGLE

Who looks to Ruth for some kind of reaction. Nothing.

Matt heads out the door.

Ruth continues sorting the mail.

She stops on one piece. Seems stunned, repeatedly reading
it.

THE ENVELOPE

It's from Publisher's Clearinghouse.
In oversized block letters, it reads,

FRANK FOWLER, YOU MAY HAVE ALREADY WON \$10,000,000!

She stares at the piece for a long time.
Looks off. Smiles. And starts giggling. She can't stop.
The giggles quickly flow into a deep laughing fit, harder
and harder as the tears rain down.

INT. MATT'S OFFICE - DAY

Matt is in his office, on the phone.

MATT

(INTO PHONE

Well that's totall unacceptable isn't
it? - Well what did he say? uh huh
well, we can't allow that m I guess
we're gonna have to show him how the cow
eats the cabbage.
Janelle knocks on the door.

MATT

Hold on a second.
He puts his mouth over the speaker and lowers the phone.
Nods to Janelle and she enters.

JANELLE

Dr. Fowler, I'm sorry. There's someone '
Ryan Collit. His mother`N brought him
in. He doesn't have an appointment but--
I'm sorry bL _; you'll have to re-schedule.
Janelle's a little taken aback.

71

JANELLE

He's Ann Collit's son. I thought. Well, you know, I
thought you might want to

MATT

(into the phone)
I'll call back later.
He hangs up.
He gets up and grabs his jacket

MATT

Sorry Janelle, I'll be back at four.

JANELLE

(UNCOMFORTABLE)

.o.k.
Matt leaves her standing there.

I NT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

LOBBY

William Davis's secretary, REGINA, 40, sits at her desk. She
is on a call, Matt stands waiting.

REGINA

(HANGING UP)

I'm Sorry, Dr. Fowler, you just missed
him.

MATT

I really need to see him. He go to lunch?

REGINA

That's right.
She senses something in his tone.

REGINA

He's across the street.
I NT. KUURRET ON MAIN RESTAURANT DAY
A bustling dining room, packed with businessmen. The nice
place in town
it's lunch hour.
The doors open. Matt enters.
He scans the room. His eyes set on

WILLIAM DAVIS

sitting at a table with colleagues, sharing a laugh.

72

Matt makes his way over to the table.
Davis sees h'

DAVIS

Hey, Matt.
Matt stands awkwardly, as Davis' companions look on.

DAVIS

(POLITE)

Have a seat.
Matt hesitates, takes a seat next to Davis.
Manages an obligatory smile to the others. The conversation resumes.

EXT - MARKET ON MAIN RESTAURANT - STREET LATER

On the street outside the restaurant, walking.

DAVIS

We're doing all we can, Matto I promise
you that.

MATT

What can I do Bill?

DAVIS

There's nothing...
Matt takes Davis' arm.

MATT

It can't be manslaughter. There's got to
be something - isn't there something you
can find? A piece of evidence? That
happens - doesn't that happen?
He realizes he's holding Davis' arm. He lets go
Davis looks at Matt sympathetically.

DAVIS

We really are doing everything we can,
Matt - But I'm not going to lie to you -
We've got no witnesses - only Strout - who
claims there was a struggle - and forensic
can't determine if there was a struggle.
because of the condition the house was in
when Frank got there.
Matt says nothing. ¢Q.,
They come to the corner.
Matt steps under an awning and into the shade.

73

Davis stops. He shifts feet a couple of t°es. Pla ing with the change in his pocket, the way people do when they're uncomfortable.

DAVIS

I'm sorry att. if it helps, we all want this guy put away. We have kids, too. Matt nods, without looking at him. Matt looks at Davis's hand moving the change. He becomes hypnotized by the sound. Davis continues talking. Matt can't hear a word of it, though. All he hears is the clinking of the coins in the pocket.

EXT. GIGI HARBOR - DAY

Matt stands in the wheelhouse, he brings the helm about, .cuts back on the throttle and heads for the winch, the stern is stacked with four high rows of Frank's empty traps. Matt pulls up a string of pots. Opens the door and pulls out a young male. He flinches and drops it. His finger goes to his mouth.

EXT. GIGI HARBOR LATER

Loaded up to the gills with pots. She turns toward harbor.

EXT. GIGI HARBOR - S

reaches Matt at the wheelhouse heading in. His hand on the wheel, blood trickles from his finger. He sucks on it again, down underneath his feet and pulls a band-aid from a box and applies it to the finger.

EXT. "GIGI" LATER

gangway. Matt unloads Frank's traps onto the landing. He stops. Seems to sense something. He looks back up the Jason sits on his bicycle watching.

The two regard each other for a moment. Then without a word Jason rides off.

I NT. GRI L'S CROW'S NEST - DAY

Willis dries a glass. He keeps an eye on
Matt sitting at a booth in the front of the diner,
silhouetted
by a window. He pushes a half-eaten burger away, drains a
bottle of beer. It's not the first.

T BOOTH

Willis sets down a cup of coffee for himself. Takes a seat
across from h'
They both gaze absently out the window.

I NT. ROCELAND HIGH SCHOOL - RUTH'S OFFICE - DAY

Ruth is alone at her desk, she wears headphones and is busy
making notations on a sheet of manuscript paper.
There's a KNOCK on her door. She doesn't look up.

RUTH

(taking off the phones)
Yes?
There's a pause, then the door slowly opens.
Natalie takes a step in.
Ruth looks up. If she's surprised, she doesn't show it,

NATALIE

I - -a I hope this is okay.
Ruth says nothing. Natalie moves closer.

NATALIE

I've been hoping we might be able to get
together - to talk.
Ruth watches her as she approaches the desk. Natalie bends
and
cautiously extends her hand for Ruth to hold.

NATALIE

I just want to tell you how -e-
And in a flash Ruth SLAPS Natalie across the face with her
open
hand.
Natalie springs back, paralyzed with shock.

She tries to catch her breath, staring directly at Ruth.
Eyes ablaze, Ruth says nothing.

- The two women look at each other for a very long time
And final , as if she finally somehow got the resolution she
came for, lead held high, Natalie turns and walks out.

E X T STROUT & SONS CANNERY T

cyclone fence surrounds the lace. sign reads "Strout

SONS"-

it is the end of the day.

75

A grow of workers file out, gabbing, starting to strip
the eves of their smocks and hair-nets.

Tim, Frank's friend, exits with his co-workers.

He climbs into his mini pick-up, and pulls out of the lot.

A few seconds later, from outside the lot, Matt's car pulls

AWAY-

INT. SHOW & TELL - AFTERNOON - LATER

jerky at
A crowded working class tavern. Video oker machines, beef

the bar, Schaeffer's on tap. We're in fuck. it's happy-hour.
Tim sits around a table with a couple of buddies, laughing.

CHARLES

We lost a few strings and we had a fair
idea it was him who was doing it - so's I
just flat out asked him "No wasn't me."
You should of seen what he tried to pull
last wintah. He was up to the island there
- and he claimed our traps were in his
part of the cove - Bobb was up to the
tavern on the head and e d him shooting
his mouth off about how he and his
stet an was gonna take a bat to the old
man & me - so's I told the old man about
it and he says "Don't hurt my feelings
none."He says "Go on down to the Walmart
and buy a couple of plastic bats."
Next day the old man walks intah the

office at the market - near the scales - where he know's the son of a bitch is gonna come in with his catch. He's got two six penny nails a hammer, and the bats o'coarse, so he nails those things right intah the wall. The guy at the scales looks at him like he's nuts "Whatta ya doing there Ivan" he says "Just sending a message" and the old man walks out. I come in and I could see what he wrote across them things.
The door to the bar opens.

TIM

What?

CHARLES

"Here's the bats - if you got the balls."
Tim and the others crack up.

CHARLES

Didn't touch our traps aftah that.
stops mid sentence.

76

Matt is passing by his table.

TIM

Dr. Fowler?
Matt flinches, "surprised" to see Tim.

A FEW MINUTES LATER

Matt and Tim have moved to another booth.
Matt leans heavily on his elbows, listening to Tim.

TIM

No - no, I don't even see Richard anymore.
And he'd never tell me anything, believe Me.
Matt takes a pull of beer.

MATT

Sure, of course. I was just wondering, you know, maybe there was something you

heard, through the grapevine, maybe one of his buddies said something ---

TIM

(SEARCHING MEMORY)

No -a-

MATT

I was thinking, Richard's brothers, they're still working with you, right? They must talk.

Tim throws a nervous look over to the table where his friends
ea They're oblivious to the conversation. He looks back to Matt, shifting in his seat. Matt leans forward. He speaks in an intense whisper.

MATT

I'm just saying, Tim, if we could find something, something concrete. If you could just ... it could be just a slip of the tongue ---
Tim looks into Matt's eyes, feeling the torment.

TIM

I'll keep my ears open.
Matt looks at him, dissatisfied.

TIM

It's funny running into you here, Dr. Fowler.
Matt looks at Tim blankly, then finishes his beer.

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IN/EXT. TIT'S CAR - AFTERNOON - LATER

Matt drives end of highway.

NEXT LIGHT

Matt pulls into the left-hand turn lane and signals. There is a car in front of h° Above the licence plate is a

itself yellow sticker which reads "Student Driver-" The plate
is a vanity plate it says P Y4US-
next A 73 BLUE PICK- truck eases to a stop in the right lane,
to Matt's car.
Frank. Matt glances over, for a moment he half expects to see
He cracks the passenger side window, for a better look.
He stares at the driver's window.
Their window rolls down.
attractive girl with short brunette hair stares back at
Matt.
Lost in the absurdity, he doesn't look away.
The light changes.
The girl smiles sweetly and blows him a kiss, before
continuing through the light.
Matt watches her go - he smiles - as if somehow relieved.
The car behind him gives a polite toot - Matt makes the
left.

- SOUTH END MARKET - S
Ruth enters, passing the empty front register.
She strolls down an aisle, pulling some items from the
shelves.
TWO N CHAT from the next aisle.

E #1 O-S-
yeah, man, I - d better get back to the
grind ---

MALE #2 O.S.
Alright, pal ---

E #1 O-S-
Just don't ste al anything.
tag tha: NIC, 301S, wearing a clerk-s apron, price gun, and plastic
says IC, rounds the end of the aisle. As he does, he spots
-

RUTH, moving down the aisle toward him. He freezes
A nervous smile - He throws a quick look to the other

aisle.

NICK

(a little too loudly)
Good evening, s - Fowler.

AT THE COUNTER

Ruth pulls out her purse as Nick rings her up.

RUTH

Oh, and a pack of Marlboro Lights,

NICK

Sure,
As NICK reaches up to the overhead cigarette area, he can't help but glance past Ruth.
Ruth catches this, she turns, and sees -

RIC

appear from a far aisle - he makes a BEELINE FOR THE DOOR,

SHE TURNS WHITE.

he leaves, LOOKS BACK,

THEIR EYES MEET - AND THEN HE'S GONE.

It's a long time before Ruth moves.
Finally, she turns back to Nick.
He looks at her, embarrassed, awaiting her reaction.
She just stares at h°

- FOWLER HOUSE- THE DEN - DUSK

Hatt sits comfortably, feet up, beer in hand, deep into the book ORTE DIURBAN by J-F Rowers,
He EMARS the front door S
He doesn't move.
most immediately, he hears the banging of cupboards opening and closing.

KITCHEN

Ruth is putting groceries away, ignoring, or trying to, Matt who has appeared in the doorway.

long

She puts milk in the refrigerator and stares into it for a time, trying to decide what to do. He can feel her judging

H'

F'inall , .having resolved something in her mind, she closes the refrigerator door- revealing, taped to it, several newspaper articles on the case, gathered by her, no doubt, including one with a picture of Frank.

MATT

How did it go today?
She doesn't answer.

MATT

Something wrong?
She doesn't turn around.

RUTH

Wrong? Like what, Matt? What could be wrong?
She continues "straightening up", starts recklessly washing dishes.
Matt doesn't leave.
A plate SHATTERS in the sink.
This stops her. She stares at it, then feels his presence.
She turns around.

RUTH

What do you want?
He looks unsure of himself.

MATT

I want to know what's going on.

RUTH

Right.

MATT

You're obviously upset. If there's something you want to talk about ...

RUTH

Talk? Who, us? Oh, you mean to each other? What if somebody waked in? They wouldn't recognize us. They'd think they had the wrong house.

80

Matt takes this in. He breathes deeply.

MATT

Do you want to talk or not?

RUTH

("SEARCHING")

Talk, talk ... oh, you must mean about our
dead son. No, we haven't before, why
should we bother now?
They stare at each other across the kitchen.

MATT

(SLOW BURN)

What can I do, Ruth?
Ruth looks at him for a long time.

RUTH

Forget it, Matt. Why don't you just go ...

MATT

(BUILDING)

What do you want from me?

RUTH

I want you to stop acting like nothing's
happened! That's what I want.

MATT

Why? because I'm not bouncing off the
walls?

RUTH

No, Matt, That would require feelings. We
don't want you to hurt yourself.

MATT

Do me a favor, Ruth. You want to have a
grieving contest, go find someone else.
He starts to turn.

RUTH

yeah, I know how you grieve. have

another beer.
He spins back.

MATT

WHAT DO YOU OW? WHAT? You know nothing!
You know nothing about me. What I go
through every day - ever lousy,
stinking day.

RUTH

No, I don't know, Matt. I don't know what
you go through, or if you go through
ything. But that's your choice, dear,
not mine...

81

MATT

You're goddamn right it is. My choice is
to not scream at the world. Maybe one of
us has to be reasonable here, did you ever
think of that?

RUTH

Reasonable? e, Matt, I don' t know about
you, but I ss my son. I'm glad you have
time for reason. That's what you imparted
to Frank, That sense of reason - Oh, he
thought you were very reasonable.

MATT

What the hell is that supposed to mean?
She is about to say something, but stops short.

RUTH

Nothing.
She turns back to the dishes.
He moves in on her, seething.

MATT

What are you really trying to say anyway?
She says nothing, picking up the broken plates.

TT

.that I'm the one responsible?
She drops the pieces back in the sink and exits.

THE HALL

He's fast on her heels. She heads for the bedroom.

MATT

Let me tell you something. Let me tell you something!

She throws the door closed behind her, but he bangs it open with his palm.

MATT

You of it backwards. I know what you think. That I was too lenient, that I let him get away with ...

RUTH

Everything. Everything!
She exits into

THE

He's right behind her.

82

MATT

Oh, really?!? Why do you think he never came to you?

RUTH

He wouldn't talk to me, Matt. He didn't trust me. You made sure of that.

LIVING ROOM.

MATT

Why would he talk to you, Ruth? You never listened!

RUTH

No. But you did. You were winking at him the whole time. You encouraged him. You wanted what he had. Her.

MATT

You've got to be kidding...

RUTH

You know it. Come on. You wanted it, and you couldn't get it - that's why you didn't stop him so you could get your kicks through your son. You know that's what happened. And now you can't cope with it. You can't admit the truth - To me, or to yourself - You can't admit that he died for your fantasy piece of ass. Matt, stunned, reels for a second And then, finally, explodes.

TT

You want to know why our son is dead, Ruth? He wasn't with her because of me, he went there because of you. Because you were so controllins, so overbearing, so angry that he was it, that he was our only one.

RUTH

That is not true.

MATT

It is! From the time he was little you were telling him why he was wrong. Everything he did was wrong. What was wrong with him, Ruth? She stares at him, dumbfounded.

1 011

MATT

You are so unfor ivinge You are. That's what he said. Ana you're playing the same shit out with me - That's a horrible way to be! Horrible. You're bitter, Ruth. You can point your finger at me all you want

MATT

.but you better take a good look at
yourself first.
She already has, of course.

RUTH

(WE)

I just wanted to talk about what happened,
Matt.

MATT

You expect me just to open up to you?
Embrace you? You scare me. How can I talk
to you? I can't even look at you.
They suddenly become aware of the DOORBELL, ringing, over

and

over.

They watch each other, both reeling, both out of breath. The
DOORBELL continues.

MATT

(COMPLETELY DRAINED)

That's probably ... the police.

THE DOOR

young

Matt opens it. There is no cop, just Kristen Gellar, 12, a
gymnast who'd like to compete in Hawaii.

KRISTEN

(REHEARSED)

Hi there. I'm Kristen Gellar from the
Rockland Gymnastics Association - Today
we're selling brand name candy. Each
purchase is matched by the Tandy
corporation to help us meet our goal of
travelling to Oahu to compete in the
East/West conference.
Matt's in another world. He stares at her.

MATT

I... ..sure. I'll take some.

KRISTEN

Terrific, how many? We have a special
today, 6 bars for ten dollars.
Ok...sure.
if by rote, Matt pulls out his wallet and hands her a ten.

KRISTEN

Great! " particular brands you like? We
have , Goobers, Hershey's-
Anything. Anything is fine ...

81+

She finally hands him an assortment.

MATT

Okay ---
He's about to close the door.

KRISTEN

if you could just sign this. I have to
give you a receipt. I'm sorry .this pen--
Matt hands her one from his pocket.
Matt waits as the girl fills out and hands him the receipt.
He closes the door before she can thank h°

THE LIVING ROOM

Ruth is curled up on the couch.
Matt stands over her, unsure of which way to go.
He stares absently into the small mountain of candy in his
hands - sets it on the coffee table
He takes a seat at the other end of the couch.

MATT

Ruth...

RUTH

(SOFTLY)

Yes?

MATT

Ruth .001 had no right. . .what I said -0. no
one, no one should ever have to hear
that...

RUTH

(BARELY AUDIBLE)

I'm so sorry...
He looks at her, as she starts to cry.

He moves closer to her.

MATT

It's okay...

RUTH

No, you're right, Matt, You are
am-.. horrible. ?-`

MATT

Please--.

85

RUTH

I don't blame you, Matt. I just...
that girl came by. She came by the
school, and I couldn't forgive her. I was
so...

She lets go, crying hard.

He lifts her head onto his lap.

He reaches out, stroking her head, pulling her matted hair

from

her forehead as she sobs into his lap.

RUTH

I'm sorry. I have been so an - I keep
seeing him, Matt. I've seen him.
Matt nods, but he's not really clear.

MATT

(CONFUSED)

..Oh I know - up in his room - Sometimes
I swear Frank's in there - on the way home
just now - at a stop light - for a second

I COULD 'VE--

RUTH

(SOFTLY)

Not Frank.
Matt freezes.

Then.

RUTH

Richard...
She breaks into sobs.

RUTH

.and I don't know what to do.

MATT

Where did you see him?

RUTH

Eve here - Downtown, and the market. I
saw at South End. He smiled at me,
Matt - I keep running into him ... he
s °led.
Matt still strokes her hair.
But he's in another world.

86

INTO GRINNEL HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Willis The game has just started. Willis deals. Henry, Carl &
pick up the old banter as if Matt had onl been away on
vacation; but he can see the affection an courtesy.in their
eyes.

WILLIS

The ne of the game is Texas Chase'
He groans.

WILLIS

Is there a problem?

HENRY

Why do you delude yourself with that
crap?

WILLIS

What are you talking about?

HENRY

Look we're not in Vegas. It's five card draw, or seven card stud.

WILLIS

(ENJOYING THIS)

That's what I said five card draw - jacks to open - Carl?

HENRY

Asshole,
Matt smiles. He's missed these guys.

CARL

I'll open with a dollar.

HENRY

Raise a buck.
The bet's to Matt. He stares at his cards for a very long time. Willis looks to say something, when Henry hits his

arm.

This stops him.
Matt looks up. He sees the patience they are all exercising for his typical indecisiveness. This bothers him.
He stares back down at his cards. Stalling, waiting for someone to bust him.
He looks u at Willis - Henry - Carl. They all sort of smile uncomfortably. He can't take it.

TT

Oh, for Christ sake say something!
This wakes them up.

87

MATT

Quit pussy footing around me d 't! You just gonna let me stare at these cards all night!?
No one wants to make the first move.
This upsets Matt even more.

MATT

O.K. fine!

He stares back down at his cards.
Finally it is Carl who speaks.
There are things of which I may not speak;
There are dreams that cannot die;
There are thoughts that make the strong heart weak,
And bring a pallor into the cheek,
And a mist before the eye.
And the words of that fatal song
come over me like a chill:
A boy's will is the wind's will,
And the thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.
Matt looks up from his cards into Carl's eyes.
The two men regard each other.

EXT. GRINNEL HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

as
about to
hand
The game has ended. Matt says goodnight to Henry and Carl,
the two of them pull out of Willis Is driveway. Matt is
leave. Just climbing in the front seat. When Willis puts a
hand
on his shoulder.

WILLIS

Come back in for a drink.

I NT. GRINNEL HOUSE- ENTRY HALL - NIGHT

Willis and Matt step back in, closing the door behind them.

KATIE O.S.

Honey, are you coming to bed now?
Willis moves to the steps leading upstairs.

WILLIS

Soon baby, Matt's still here.

KATIE O.S. 11 %-?.:

Oh f hi Matt - Hone , would you mind
bringing me my pit s? They're downstairs
from when the kids were here.

WILLIS

I'll be right there.

I NT. GRINNEL HOUSE - BASEMENT - NIGHT

A few minutes later.

Matt sits alone in the room. He gets up to examine a picture hanging on the opposite wall. He's not particularly interested, he's seen it a million times, he's just killing time. A corner of the room devoted to Naval memories. A pristine version of Matt's U.S.S. CONSTELLATION cap serves

as

the center piece.

Willis comes down from upstairs.

WILLIS

She's all set - now what can I get you?

MATT

I'm fine thanks.

Willis nods and takes a seat.

WILLIS

- you back on the wagon?

He is.

WILLIS

Sit down Matt you're making me nervous.

Matt takes a seat.

WILLIS

I'm glad you came tonight.

MATT

Me too.

WILLIS

Boy, Carl really laid on the verse huh?

MATT

(CHUCKLING)

ye ..ye he did. Got me thinking

OUT-

e stops himself.

WILLIS

What?

MATT

I don't know - sort of silly really.

WILLIS

C'mon what is it?

MATT

This thing with - with Frank when he was about three, I guess. We were over at my folks house.

MATT

Mom always liked little dogs - this one was a - Pekingese, I think. I remember hearing this yelp, and then a scream. Frank ran out pointing to his finger. I looked at it couldn't see an thino. Mom said Frank must have "cornered the dog" and I knew she was probably right. We were driving home, and Ruth noticed Frank itching his a ..she pulled back his sleeve, and there were these two deep, bloody, puncture marks...

WILLIS

Why do you think he pointed to his finger?
Matt shakes his head.

TT

(SEARCHING)

.I cruess he didn't want us to ow.
He stares into his hands, as the memory crystallizes.
Willis looks confused, and somewhat uncomfortable.

WILLIS

He gets up and heads to the bar.

MATT

(TO HIMSELF)

.had to put that dog down.
Willis throws some ice in a tumbler.

WILLIS

I was thinking just the other day about

the last time Frankie was-
Matt cuts him off.
His name was Ar k. Not Frankie.
Willis looks stunned.

WILLIS

.I'm sorry Matt.
I don't care ...he just never liked being
called that.

90

WILLIS

O.K.

Matt nods. He looks away.

MATT

She didn't tell me, Willis. She never
said a word - She saw him at South End.

WILLIS

Christ.

MATT

She's seen him before. It's killing her
I didn't think about bail. I thought I
wouldn't have to worry about him for

YE S-

WILLIS

You know what I heard? He's tending bar
up to Old Orchard Beach.
Matt looks up.

WILLIS

For a friend. Ever notice even the worst
bastards have friends? Nobody knows him
over there. If they°do, they don't care.
They drink what he mixes
Willis sets a can of Moxie down in front of Matt.

WILLIS

(referring to the can)
I don't know how you drink this stuff
it's what drove me to beer as a child.
He sits down with his own drink.
A moment.

WILLIS

I hate him, Matt. My boys went to school
with h° He was the same thei.,- Know
what he' ll do? Five at the most - And
then you' ll e bumping into h all over

AGAIN

I ow.

WILLIS

Remember that woman about seven years
a o? Shot her husband sopped him of f
t e bridge in the St - Gac-: with a
hundred pound sack of cement and said the
whole way through it nobody helped her.
Know where she is now? She's in Sears ort
now, a secretary. And whoever helped her,
where the hell is he?

91

WILLIS

it'd break my heart Matt, it would, but -
you ever think about just - moving away?
Matt nods. Stares into his hands for a long time.

MA, TT

yeah, we have.
Finally, he looks up, his eyes meeting Willis I s.

MATT

It wouldn't matter.

THE SOUND OF A LONE F VOICE - SINGING

EXT. CAMDEN AMPHITHEATER - MAGIC HOUR

to
The voice is joined by another and becomes a duet. We turn
find the voices and see we are at the foot of a small knoll.
A steeple in the distance pokes thorough the last blue husk
as the sun dies. Looking around we see an ancient gazebo -
then stairs leading up to a stone library - A boulder at the
foot of another knoll - above - descending toward us -
The girls, each holding a single candle, dressed in brightly
embroidered smocks, enter in procession singing -Jennie Mae
Mama. "
The effect is beautiful and feels like a sort of quickening.
The group proceeds down the hill and blossoms into an -
AMPHITHEATER which faces the harbor. Ruth stands at the
bottom of the proscenium - her arms up - directing the
choir.
The place is filled with half the town.

ANGLE MATT

Trying to take it all in. But not really present.
Suddenly he turns and leaves.

EXT. OLD ORCHARD BEACH- NIGHT

The town goes to sleep for the night. The signs businesses
power down.

EXT- PETER'S NIGHT

turn
The establishment's various Beer Signs & interior lights
off.

EXT. PETER'S - NIGHT

heels.
A LARGE CHAIN OF KEYS Turns the tumbler of a deadbolt lock.
Two cars are all that's left.
A WAITRESS emerges from the bar. Richard is fast on her
He exits, making conversation as he quickly locks the doors.

RIC

Hey -o- wait up.

WAITRESS

Good night, Richard. See ya tomorrows
She starts to walk to her car- He catches up to her,
accompanying her to her car.

RIC

You want to come over for a drink? Just a
drink.
She stops in front of her car.

WAITRESS

No, thanks. Maybe some other night.
He stands in front of his Brown Suburban, watching as the
Waitress gets in her car, pulls away and leaves.

RICHARD

Fuckin' bitch.
He turns and freezes.
Matt Fowler stands a few feet away, an Ortaies calibre
7.65 automatic directly at Richard's face. His gloved hand
grips the gun tightly.

poin

RICHARD

Dr. Fowler?

MATT

Don't talk. Unlock it and get in.

RIC

He . wait a minute. Let's, let's just
calm down...
Matt COCKS the gun.

RIC

Alright! Shit.
Richard obeys. He unlocks both doors.
Matt opens the back door, but stays planted, the gun trained

on

Richard.
Richard gets in the driver's seat. Matt climbs in the back.
He presses the gun's muzzle against the back of Richard's

head.

V 0-,

MATT

Is there any one at your place?

RIC

(IRONICALLY)

NOT TONIGHT

93

MATT

Good. Drive there.
Richard looks over his shoulder to back the car up.
Matt aims at his temple, but does not look at his eyes.
Richard finishes backing up and puts it into drive.

MATT

Drive slowly - don't try to get stopped.

EXT. PETER'S PARKING LOT ALLEY

Matt can see the ocean. He uncocks the revolver.
Matt cracks the window.
Matt leans down in his seat. He transfers the gun into his left hand, removes the glove from his right, and wipes the sweat from his bare palm onto his pantleg. He puts the glove back on, gripping the gun.
Richard's Brown Suburban drives down an alley adjacent to

Fun

Park and turns onto a deserted Main Street.

INT/EXT. BROWN SUBURBAN - NIGHT

hiding

They drive back through town, the sea wall on their left
the beach.
on the right are the places, most with their neon signs off,
that do so much business in s er: the lounges and cafes and
pizza houses. The street itself empty of traffic.

RICHARD

He was making it with my wife.
His voice is careful, not pleading.
Matt presses hard with the muzzle against Richard's head.
Richard flinches and moves his head forward.
Matt lowers the gun to his lap.

MATT

Don-t talk.

/EXT. BROWN SUBURBAN RICHARD S TROUT'S DUPLEX - NIGHT

The Brown Suburban slowly pulls up to the front.
Matt leans forward. Th. muzzle grazing Richard's head.
Drive it to the back.

91+

RIC

You wouldn't have it cocked, would you?
For when I put on the brakes.
Matt COCKS it.
It is now.
Richard tenses. He drives around the side of the building.

EXT. RICHARD STROUT'S DUPLEX BACK YARD - NIGHT

The Brown Suburban inches forward toward the garage and
brakes. The engine shuts off.
Matt keeps the cocked gun firmly trained on Richard. He gets
out and shuts the door with his hip.

MATT

All right.
Richard looks at the gun, then gets out. He moves across the
grass.
Matt closely behind, looking at the row of small backyards

on

either side of them and scattered tall trees.
He glances from house to house. Looking for signs of one
insomniac neighbor, some man or woman sitting alone watching
the all-night channel from Boston. All is quiet.
They move up the back walk and to the side kitchen door.
Matt stands directly behind Richard as he opens the door.
It-s pitch black inside the duplex.

MATT

Turn on the light.
Richard flips the wall switch.
in the light.
Matt stares at his wide back, and long reach.

I NT. RICHARD S TROUT'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN NIGHT

Richard stops just inside the kitchen. Matt closes the door softly behind him.

MATT

Where's your suitcase?
Richard almost turns around.

RIC

My suitcase?

95

Matt grips the gun tighter, straining to keep it from slipping.

MATT

Where is it?

RIC

in the bedroom closet.

MATT

That's where we were going then. When we get to a door you stop and turn on the light. They cross the kitchen. Matt can't help but glance at the sink and stove and refrigerator: no dishes in the sink or even the dish rack beside it, no grease splashes on the stove, the refrigerator clean and white. Matt becomes momentarily reoccupied with one of Duncan's drawings taped to its door.

MATT

Wait.
Richard stops.
Matt looks conflicted. Doubt has crept into his face. For a moment he seems to have lost his resolve.

RICHARD O.S.

(IRRITATED)

.Jesus.
Matt looks to Richard with a renewed sense of purpose.

TT

.keep going.

LIVING ROOM

A light flicks on. They take the hall past the living room. Matt doesn't want to see anymore of Richard's life. But he can't help himself. He takes it all in: Magazines and newspapers in a wicker basket, clean ashtrays, a stereo, CD's neatly shelved next to it.

They continue down a hallway. Richard stops outside a door.

RIC

There's no wall switch.

MATT

Where's the light?

RIC

the bed.

96

Let's go.

Richard steps into the darkness. Matt is careful to stay a pace behind. Richard leans over by the bed. Matt braces. lick. A small bedside lamp turns on.

The bed, a double one, is neatly made; the ashtray on the bedside table clean the bureau top dustless and no photographs- probably so the girl - who is scared? - won't have to see Natalie in the bedroom she believes is theirs. But because Matt is a father and a husband, though never ex-husband, he knows (and does not want to own that this bedroom has never been theirs alone.

Richard turns around; Matt looks at his lips, his wide jaw.

RICHARD

I wanted to work things out with her.

Try to get together with her again.

But I couldn't even talk to her.

He was always with her.

Dr. Fowler, I'm going to jail for it.

I am going to jail. If I ever get out

I'll be an old man. Isn't that enough ?

MAXT

You're not going to jail.
Pack clothes for warm weather.

RIC

What's going on? You're not gonna let me
go!

Matt looks away. He doesn't answer.

RICHARD

Dr. Fowler?

MATT

You're jumping bail.

RIC

.Dr. Fowler.

Matt points the pistol at Richard's face. The barrel
trembles

a little.

Richard reaches up into his closet and pulls out two large
canvas bags. He places them on the - He pulls a third
bag, a small, red, woman's suitcase, Natalie's no doubt,

next

to the others.

He moves to the bureau.

MATT

It's the trial. We can't go through that,
my wife and me. So you're leaving. I've
got you a ticket. My wife keeps seeing
you. I can't have that anymore...

97

RIC

He was making it with my wife.

I'd go pick up my kids and he'd be there.

Sometimes he spent the night. Duncan
told me.

He doesn't look at Matt as he speaks. He opens the to
ewer. Matt steps closer so he can see Richard's hangs.
underwear and the socks rolled, the underwear folded and
stacked. Richard arranges them neatly in the suitcase. The
kitchen the livin room the clothes. Matt is struck b

this man's sense of order, o iscio ine.
Matt watches the absurdity of Richard sorting clothes by season. He even packs a small instamatic camera. He packs the things a man accumulates and become part of him.

MATT

(re: the suitcases)
Okay, that's enough.

RICHARD

I need some things from the bathroom.

MATT

alright.

THE BATHROOM

Richard steps just inside the bathroom door and stops.

MATT

Keep going.

RICHARD

Gotta pee.
Matt realizes Richard means to have privacy.
He pushes him into the room. Takes a step back and pulls the door so it is only slightly ajar. He keeps his foot between the jam and the door.
He eyes Richard's back reflected in the mirror. He can hear him make water. He looks like he wonders about allowing this courtesy.
Mattes glances at:
A picture on the wall outside of the bathroom: Natalie Richard and their two boys, in front of someone's house. Smiling. She looks happy.

C

looks around the room frantically - his eyes find nothing that will help his situation - he flushes the toilet - Matt swings the door fully open - Richard fills a travel kit with toiletries.

Richard tucks the travel kit into a bag. Matt keeps the gun on him.

Richard closes the suitcase, and faces Matt. He looks at the Matt moves around behind him. Now Richard is between Matt and the lighted hall. Richard carries a canvas bag in each hand. Matt pulls another glove from his pocket. He uses it to turn off the bedside lamp. Richard now d'_lhouetted in the doorway.

Let's go.

small

Richard steps into the hall. Matt follows, carrying the suitcase in one hand, the gun in the other.

They start down the hallway. Matt turns off lights with his elbow as they go. Past the living room into the kitchen. Wait.

Richard tenses, he stops at the kitchen door.

Matt sets the suitcase down. He uses that hand to reach into his jacket. He pulls out a red, white, and blue piece of paper. He drops it on the counter top. Words on the paper read AMT RACK.

Matt picks up the suitcase again. He steps closer to him. Presses the gun into Richard's back.

MATT

open the door.

Richard's reaches down and carefully turns the knob. He slowly pulls the door open. Matt takes a step back.

MATT

Get the light.

Richard reaches down and hits the switch. Click. The two men now in silhouette.

Richard exits first. Matt close behind.

EXT. RIC S DUPLEX - S

Matt sets the case down, reaches bacjcan gently closes the door. They walk down the two brick steps to the lawn. s the cross the lawn. Matt's eves and ears once a ain alert for any sign of life. Not Eng. They reac the garage walk to the back of the Brown Suburban. Richard drops the two bags near the rear bumper.

Matt keeps the gun steady as Richard pops open the hatch and loads the bags. Matt sets the small suitcase at Richard's feet.

He reaches down and loads it last.

/EXT. BROWN SUBURBAN S

Richard gets into the driver's seat. Matt in the back. Richard looks up in the rear-view. For a moment, Matt connects with the desperate eyes.

RIC

They'll catch me. They'll check passenger lists.

MATT

I didn't use your name.

RIC

They'll figure that out too. You think I wouldn't have done it myself if it was that easy?
Silence.

He starts it up, slides into reverse. He looks back over his shoulder as they back down the driveway. Matt averts his stare.

Looking down at the gun barrel but not at the profiled face beyond it.

MATT

You were alone. We've got it worked out.

RIC

.who's we?
Good estion. Matt doesn't answer though. Richard shifts into drive.

EXT. RICHARD'S CONDO - PARKING LOT - S

The Brown Suburban pulls out of the lot and onto the street.

I NT. BROWN SUBURBAN - S

RIC

There's no planes this time of night, Dr. Fowler.

MATT

back through town. Then north on 73.

RIC

The airport's South...

MATT

Somebody's going to keep you for a while.
They'll take you to the airport - turn on
the radio. Find the game.

100

RIC

It's after three

MATT

They run it again.
Matt leans back, quietly uncorking the hammer.

MATT

No more talking.
Richard tries to read Matt °s face in the mirror, but it -s

now

in shadows. Richard fumbles with the radio, surfing the
stations. Matt is right. The game is on.
Nomar Garcia arra hits a long drive to left with runners in

scoring

position "A cinch to collect 200 hits this season."
Richard sets his eyes on the road.

EXT. BROWN SUBURBAN - HIGHWAY 1 SOUTH - NIGHT

The Brown Suburban heads away from Old orchard, onto a small
two lane rural hi hway. The road is flanked on both sides

by

open fields, and lonely capes. Few cars on the road.

INT BROWN SUB /WISSC SET BRIDGE

They come up over the high bride over the channel: to the

left

the smacking curling white at the breakwater and beyond that
the dark sea and a full moon, and down to the right the

small

fishing boats bobbing at anchor in the cove.
Swirling colors from behind catch their attention.
Richard and Matt both look in the rear-view.
A state trooper's car with its gumballs flashing races up in

the distance behind them.
Matt jams the gun into Richard's ribs and slouches down.

MATT

(Trying to stay calm
right take it easy - pull over to the
shoulder.

Matt & Richard sit tight waiting for the inevitable. The
light gains in intensity, as the cab fills with crimson.

EXT. WISCASSET BRIDGE

The cruiser tears right past them. Quickly fading into the
distance. ? e

INT. BROWNS - S

Matt leans back he looks shaken. Richard watches his chance

DISAPPE

101

EXT. OWLS HEAD - NIGHT

Onl
move

the vague outline of mountains, It is almost pitch black.
hid' the moon. Then, from far off, a pair of headlights
toward us, fighting through the thick night

.BROWN SUBURBAN 73 NORTH JUNCTION

Richard sees the sign for the 73 North. He glances back at
Matt in the rearview mirror. He makes the turn.

EXT. OWL'S HEAD GRANGE - S

The Brown Suburban makes the turn.

INT. BROWN SUBURBAN - S

Matt & Richard check out their surroundings.

EXT. SMALL BRIDGE - NIGHT TREVETTE BRIDGE

The Brown Suburban drives across a small steel bridge that

covers a salt river. The tires make a low thumping sound on the grid.

I NT. BROWN SUBURBAN - B Y C ROAD (OWLS HEAD) - NIGHT

They have left the 73 and are driving on a small rural route.

Richard's Matt leans forward, the gun rests against the top of seat.

He looks around, trying to get a bearing.

MATT

Turn around.

RICHARD

Why?

MATT

We missed it. Turn around. back and turn in at the last road.

EXT. R ROUTE - SAME - NIGHT

Richard slows, and makes a U-turn.

His lights illuminate

PRIVATE -ROAD and NO HUNTING signs.

He takes a right, onto a dirt road flanked on both sides by trees.

E .DIRT ROAD

We track with the Brown Suburban as fir trees strobe in the foreground.

1 02

IN/EXT. BROWN SUBURBAN - DIRT ROAD

RIC

There's nothing back here Dr. Fowler? I don't understand why you don't just

MATT

It's for you're car. You don't think we'd
leave it at the airport do you?

WHEEL. **MATT WATCHES RIC S LARGE, BIG KNUCKLED HANDS TIGHTEN ON THE**

the
a
cabin
the
They crawl up the trail, the wheels crunching the gravel,
headlights shining into the dense woods.
The road seems endless. Richard cringes as they bounce over
bump.
Both of them eagerly peer beyond the windshield.
Finally, at a great distance, the tiny lit windows of a
come into view. A BLUE CHEVY PICKUP is parked in front of
place.

MATT

engine
Stop here.
The Brown Suburban crawls to a stop. Richard keeps the
running. Matt presses the gun hard against his neck. He
straightens in his seat and looks in the rearview mirror.
Matt's eyes meet his in the glass for an instant before
focusing on the hair at the end of the gun barrel.

TT

Turn it off.
Richard does. The ball game disappears, and the silence is
strangely a anent. He continues to hold the w eel with both
hands. He ooks in the mirror.

RIC

I'll do twenty years, Dr. Fowler,
I'll be fifty-four years old.

MATT

That's two years younger than I

EXT. DIRT ROAD - S

Matt gets out and k°cks the door shut. Richard opens his
door. He doesn't move. Just sits in the interior light.
His face now pleading. Matt can see it in his lips.

MATT

Get the bags.

RIC-

(TERRIFIED)

Where are we Dr. Fowler?

103

MATT

Almost there.
Richard carefully gets out. Instinctively, he raises his
hands
about shoulder level. They move to the back of the Brown
Suburban. Richard pops the hatch.
ground.
He pulls out the two canvas bags. He sets them on the
He reaches in and pulls out the small suitcase.
We hear a SCREEN DOOR slam shut. Richard looks surprised.
He turns back to Matt.
C'mon now.
Richard reaches down and picks up the bags. He struggles to
carry all three.
Matt grabs the small suitcase from him.

MATT

That way.
Richard lugs the bags toward the cabin.
We hear HEAVY CRUNCHING FOOTSTEPS OF SOMEONE APPROACHING.
Richard stops.

WILLIS APPEARS FROM DOWN THE PATH.

He nods to Matt.

RIC

Mr. Grinnel?

WILLIS

I'll get them, son.
Willis takes the bags from Richard, turns, and carries them
up
the long path back to the cabin.
RICHARD LOOKS SERIOUSLY RELIEVED.
He waits a moment, unsure of what to do.
Finally, he starts walking up the path after Willis.

1

Wait.
Richard stops, nods-step. He tenses, waiting.

MATT

You can carry this one.
Richard turns.

LO

He reaches out to take the bag from Matt.
Matt keeps it at his side, and takes a step back, his gun
trained on Richard.

RICHARD CONNECTS WITH TT'S EYES.

KNOWS.

**RICHARD DUCKS AND TAKES ONE STEP THAT'S THE BEGINNING OF A
SPRINT.**

BOOM

THE GUN KICKS IN MATT'S HAND.

THE GUN'S REPORT ECHOES FOR ETERNITY.

MATT STANDS ABSOLUTELY STILL.

STILL HOLDS THE LITTLE SUITCASE.

**LOOKS DOWN AT RICHARD STROUT SQUIRMING ON HIS BELLY. KICKING
ONE LEG BEHIND HIM, PUSHING HIMSELF FORWARD, TOWARD THE
WOODS.**

MATT WATCHES DISPASSIONATELY.

STEPS FORWARD, RAISES THE GUN AND FIRES ONE MORE SHOT.

RICHARD STOPS MOVING.

Matt stands there motionless.
We hear FOOTSTEPS.
Willis runs up to Matt.

STOPS AT RICHARD'S CORPSE.

WILLIS

(BREATHLESS)

MATT

The two men look into each others eyes. Matt seems to be
somewhe re else

He looks back down at the body.

WILLIS

This isn't what we talked out,

MATT

He tried to run.

Willis looks at the gun still in Matt's hand, the little
suitcase in the other.

WILLIS

We were going to wait, and take him out in
the woods.

Matt raises his head. He looks at Willis flatly.

105

MATT

I coul °t wait.

BODY -

a d in a BLUE TARP, is suddenly dragged away by the ATV. It
es quite a racket.

We follow it as it scrapes along, the road back into the
woods

WOODS -

They have roved the body from the ATV and are now draggin it
deep into the wood. The only sound is the breaking of brans
es

and their continual grunting.

The stop°at the top of a small knoll, panting and sweating.

Wil is quietly removes a small mass of branches, revealing a
o t

large, well-dug hole. Together, they drag the body t he edge
of the hole. Move behind it. Lift the legs, and push it in.

THE WOODS - LATER -

Willis and Matt come up from the woods. They carry Richard's lug age. Willis drops the canvas bags into the hole. Matt loo s at the suitcase and then drops it in. Willis takes a couple of steps away, and grabs two shovels leaning against a small birch. He hands one to Matt. Together, they begin filling in the hole.

SAME PLACE - LATER -

Matt holds the flashlight as Willis sprinkles leaves and branches over the hole. Willis freezes, as if he has heard something. Matt cuts the light. They hear some footsteps approaching, closer, then they see

it -

A DEER

not 30 yards distant watchin them A Buck with a splendid rack, a deep chestsnowy white, a l of him in his prime His flag up d twitching. His eyes u Quin Then he bounds off and is gone.

WOODS LATER -

The walk through the woods. The light on the ground. They bot look up through the trees where they end at the lake. Neither of them speak, only the sounds of their hea breathing and clumsy strides through the low brush and over fa len branches.

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EXT. BOW

Wide and dark, lap ing softly at the bank, a small island near it's middle, with black, tall evergreens. Matt, gun in hand, takes two steps back, he strides with the throw and goes to one knee as he follows through. The dark shapeless object arcing downward, splashing.

T DIRT ROAD, T BROWN SUBURBAN.

/EXT. BROWN S - TREVETT SWINGBRIDCD - NIGHT

Matt in the Brown Suburban, is stopped behind the wooden and arm, Willis in his own car behind. The swing bridge is open for the 5:00a.m. fishing boats. The operator uses his long metal tool, the bridge swings back around. The arm rises.

MATT

Seems somewhere else.

WILLIS

WILLIS

(ANGRY)

C'mon g M tt.

O A

Matt drives the Brown Suburban over the bridge. The operator gives him a friendly nod. Waves to Willis in the Ford.

EXT. WISCASSET BRIDGE - PRE-DAWN

Willis's truck & Richard's S travel towards us away from Wiscasset. On their way to Cheesy Town Island.

I NT. FORD - OLD ORCD STATION - PRE-DAWN

Willis watches out his windshield as the Brown Suburban parks in the station's lot. Matt gets out of the Brown Suburban and locks the driver's door. Be walks the Ford, and gets in the passenger side. They drive off.

/EXT- WISSC SET BRIDGE - S

Willis's car moves slowly over the channel bridge, back to Wiscasset. Matt rolls down his window. Be tosses Richard's keys over the side of the brad e . The trim shapes of lobster boats and smal craft anchored in t he hExbor below, loo like old toys in a bathtub, He rolls up the window as the car continues across. Both men silent, lost in thought, staring out the windshield at the road ahead.

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WILLIS

{SOFTLY}

What time is it?
Matt checks his watch.

MATT

Ten to six. We lost an hour. Sorry.
Willis's jaw tightens.

WILLIS

(almost losing his temper)
Yep...high tide. Can't stop people from
fish'in Matt - uck'in brides
Matt looks over at Willis.

MATT

I'm sor Willis.
Willis looks at Matt. He knows. Eyes back to the road.

WILLIS

(FORCED CALM)

Stopped in to his little shed there once
place reeked ...the guy's spilled more
whiskey than we've ever drunk. Just pray
he's already three sheets to the wind.
Matt doesn't reply.

WILLIS

Katie's pill will be wearing off soon.

I /EXT.FO MAIN STREET ROCKLAND - DAWN

They drive down the empty streets of a sleeping Rockland.

PAST THE

IMER OF ROCKLAND CIVIL W MEMORIAL, TWO SENTRY'S STAND GU,

PAST

HIGH SCHOOL.

PAST

ROCIULAMPOLICE DEPT.

PAST

3TONNE'S SPECIALTY SHOPPE

Something catches Matt's attention in the store front.
The anne ins in the window They seem to be staring at h°

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STRUT & SONS CANNERY

PAST -

AWEEN ARCH

EXT. SIDE STREET - MATT'S NEIGHBORHOOD DAWN

The Ford pulls up to the curb. Matt gets out.
Willis drives away.
Matt starts walking.

EXT. F RSTREET -S

The STREET LIGHTS suddenly turn off',.
The world is waking up now.

EXT. FOWLER STREET - S

In the distance, Matt can see his house.
The birds all seem to wake at once.
Matt gazes up into the trees overhead, the first light just
kissing their branches, the sky now a husky blue. The
surrounding houses with the windows still dark, asleep.
He picks up his pace.

I NT. FOWLER HOUSE - B.

Matt enters.

T LAUNDRY ROOM - S

He roves his tennis shoes, his pants, he starts unbuttoning
his shirt. Now in his T-shirt and boxers, he examines his
clothes and shoes carefully, before putting them into the
washer - He pours detergent inside - and starts the cycle.

He steps to a little sink and washes up.

DINING ROOM

The light has been left on, he kills it and heads upstairs.

UPSTAIRS - S.

Matt slowly walks down the hall, to

BEDROOM -S

And stands in the doorway. He pauses, seeing only the orange ember of Ruth's cigarette, in the dark.

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RUTH

(UNSEEN)

Did you do it?

He doesn't answer. He walks in and comes to bed, climbing in

as

Ruth moves over.

RUTH

Are you all right?

He lies down. **FACES THE WINDOW, AWAY FROM HER.**

She is on her side, she props herself up on her elbow - watching him.

He waits a longtime before speaking

MATT

There was a picture with Natalie and the boys hanging on his wall -

Ruth looks at him strangely.

RUTH

(GENTLY)

.what is it, Matt?

MATT

- the way she was smiling.

RUTH

What?

MATT

I don't know -
Ruth looks at the back of Matt's head.

RUTH

Matt?
He doesn't move. He says nothing else.
She continues to stare at him.
Uncertainty beginning to form on her face. She looks lost.

If only

things could be as they were.
Then.

RUTH

at I thinking - you must be hungry.
She waits for a response, but gets none. She gets out of bed,
leaves the room and heads down stairs.

LONG EMPTY WAY.

WE HEAR RUTH downstairs in the kitchen.

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RUTH O. S.

Matt?
Matt just lies there, in another world.

RUTH

Matt dear, do you want coffee?
He doesn't respond. Instead he looks at his finger.
The bandage wet from washing up.
He slides it off easily, like oversized ring.
The skin has healed.

LATER NOW

Sun light creeps in through the curtains, onto Matt's face.
Ruth lies sleeping on his chest.
A breakfast tray at his bedside which he hasn't touched
Matt is cede awake. He stares at the ceiling Reliving it
His eyes full of an unspeakable sadness.
The lids heavy. If only he could sleep.

But he won't. Not today.
There is a small crack in the ceiling.
He'll have to fix that.

BLACK

- THE FAINT SOUNDS FADE UP

THE END