

SNOWBLIND

PRAISE FOR SNOWBLIND



"SNOWBLIND is a riveting and fast-paced mystery/thriller that twists and turns its way to the very end."

— The Black List

"SNOWBLIND is a great read. [The] writing is smooth, entertaining, and engagingly complicated."

— Page Awards

"This is a great genre concept. Every page made me think Dennis Lehane in New Jersey."

— Page Awards

"[SNOWBLIND] has such great forward motion; each revelation increases tension and makes you want to read more."

— Austin Film Festival

"This is an amazingly intense story filled with drama, emotions and a lot of heart."

— BlueCat

"[SNOWBLIND] is gorgeously written and haunting."

— Script Pipeline

"The narrative at the core of this script is engrossing and compelling – this is a highly readable script with characters that seem to leap off the page and come to life right before you."

— WeScreenplay

SNOWBLIND

Written by

Dan Maurer

REPRESENTATION:

Christine Coggins
Manager/Producer
Heroes & Villains Entertainment
Em: chris@heroesandvillains-ent.com
Ph: 323-850-2990

FADE IN.

EXT. A STORMY WINTER SKY - NIGHT

Heavy snow fall. GUSTING WINDS. A Medevac chopper approaches, running lights cutting through the storm.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

SUPERIMPOSE: "Bergen County, New Jersey"

MEDEVAC PILOT (V.O.)
(radio transmission)
Hackensack University Medical, this
is NorthStar Medevac One. We are
inbound from the west. ETA five
minutes. Patient is male, fifties,
multiple GSWs to the chest.

The chopper *ROARS* past -- *WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...*

INT. MEDEVAC CHOPPER - NIGHT

WILLIAM STONE, 50s, lays on the gurney gasping for air behind an oxygen mask. His bare chest is covered with bloody bandages. The whine of the chopper's engines is deafening.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC (O.S.)
Stay with me! Mr. Stone! William!
Look at me!

Will opens his bleary eyes. A FEMALE PARAMEDIC leans into his line of sight.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)
Your lung has collapsed. I'm going to
insert a tube to help you breathe.

He nods weakly and watches the paramedic. She's calm, competent, and quick to ready the needle. Will sees a small GOLD CROSS dangling from a chain at her neck.

He focuses on it.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC (CONT'D)
You're going to feel a stab in your
left side. Ready? One... Two...

She drives the needle home. Will SCREAMS.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

SMASH CUT TO:

BLACK.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP . . .

From the darkness comes the muffled sound of WIND, and a metallic noise -- soft, distant, intermittent.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

SUPERIMPOSE: "43 Years Earlier."

PAN TO REVEAL a Coleman lantern, battered and rusted, resting on a dirt floor. The light fades and sputters.

Somewhere a door CREAKS OPEN, a HOWLING wind carries with it the distant wail of a POLICE SIREN. The door SLAMS SHUT.

FOOTSTEPS hurry down CREAKING wooden stairs, growing closer.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

Two young feet, clad in snow boots, step into the light.

BILLY (O.S.)
(anxious, whispered)
Hello?

The shadowy image kneels and works the pump. The lantern HISSES. The mantle glows.

REVEAL:

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy, 12, fair-haired and open-faced, now frightened and out of breath. This is Will's younger self. He's well-dressed for the snow, but wears only one knit glove.

He whimpers, leans into the light to examine his bare left hand, and grimaces at the bleeding gash across his palm.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

Billy grabs the lantern, whirls toward the noise, and through a broken window sees the source...

An old metal trash can buffeted by the wind.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

Billy scans the dark cellar and sees a shovel and pickaxe. Freshly turned soil. An empty, shallow hole.

He steps toward the hole, trips over something, staggers. The lantern swings wildly, revealing...

A balled-up gym sock.

Tattered underwear.

Wadded-up jeans.

A child's bare foot.

Stiff dead fingers.

Billy drops the light and goes down hard. The lantern hits the ground, revealing...

The bloodied and disfigured face of a DEAD BOY.

BILLY
Oh, God!

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

A trembling Billy crawls toward the lantern. His hand touches something in the dirt. It's gold.

He picks a small NECK CHAIN from the loose earth. The other end is woven between the dead boy's fingers.

Puzzled, Billy works it free. Dangling from the end of the chain is an INVERTED CRUCIFIX.

Upside down? What the hell?

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

A stuttering VOICE whispers from the darkness, young and distressed.

TOMMY (O.S.)
(whisper)
Bi-Billy?

Billy freezes for a second, listens.

TOMMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(whisper)
I di-didn't do nothin' wr-wrong,
Billy.

He grabs the light, holds it toward the voice.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

BILLY
(sotto voce)
Holy shit.

The light reveals a filthy, shivering TOMMY SCHNEIDER. He's 12, stringy red hair, blotchy freckles, and a twisted shrunken ear -- damaged goods.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Tommy? Wha... H-How did you get here?

Tommy flinches when the light touches him, as if expecting a blow. Tears have drawn lines in the dirt on his face.

He's under-dressed for the weather -- thread-bare jeans, a filthy P.A.L. (Police Athletic League) T-shirt over a red sweatshirt, and over-sized, unlaced work boots.

TOMMY
It wa-wasn't my fault, Billy. I ju-just wanted to play.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

Billy looks at the body, then at Tommy.

BILLY
Oh, God.

TOMMY
(whines)
Please don't tell. Please, I just wanted to play. Promise you won't tell. Please.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

Billy panics, begins to hyperventilate.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

He hears a WOMAN'S VOICE, distant, muted, slightly garbled.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
...As I count down, you will slowly return to your normal state.
Three...

Billy is choking, unable to breathe.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
You are no longer twelve. Two...
You are growing older...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY (PRESENT)

Will sits in a comfortable chair, eyes closed, in a trance. His labored breathing begins to steady.

CHANDRA (O.S.)
One... You are now back in the present. When I snap my fingers, you will open your eyes and feel refreshed.

SNAP.

Will opens his eyes. His graying hair and handsome features suggest the college prof all the coeds swoon over, but those eyes are haunted.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
How do you feel, William?

He sits across from DR. AMIYA CHANDRA, who hands him a glass of water.

Will just sips the water. No response.

Chandra, 30s, wears semi-casual business attire. She's a soft-spoken Indian woman with a nurturing demeanor and an accent that's a mix of Cambridge and New Delhi.

She writes in a notebook. The backs of her hands are lightly adorned with henna tattoos.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
You were having an anxiety attack.

He shakes his head, doesn't remember.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
Perhaps we should hold off on the hypnotherapy for now.

Will isn't listening. He idly scans the room as she talks.

The office is tastefully decorated with curios from a mix of cultures, including several pieces of Kintsugi, broken Japanese pottery mended with lacquer and gold leaf.

A picture window overlooks a thick forest. It is snowing.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
Meanwhile, I'm going to increase the dosage on your prescription.

WILL
'Kay.

CHANDRA
And I'd like to start seeing you
three times a week, if that's
agreeable.

He eyes a small SILVER BOWL with gold lacquer veining on the coffee table between them.

WILL
This one's new. It's beautiful.

Chandra stops writing, smiles patiently.

WILL (CONT'D)
You must like mending broken things.

CHANDRA
My question? About how you feel.

Will doesn't know how to answer. She closes her notes.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
You are still circling something.
Whatever it is, you've been
reluctant to engage with it.

WILL
Dr. Chandra... I'm sorry. So much
of my childhood is a blur. And I
remember only fleeting fragments of
that night. The rest is just...
gone.

CHANDRA
Traumatic memories are tricky
things, William. They can elude us,
betray us, but they are always
there, just below the surface.

PUSH IN ON WILL as we hear the distant sound of highway traffic WHOOSHING past.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
But what troubles me now are your
symptoms of late. When you first
came to me after your brother's
death, and after...

WILL
(not entirely present)
I told you, the pills were an
accident.

We hear the ROAR of an 18-wheeler as...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. ROADSIDE CRIME SCENE, NJ TURNPIKE - DAY (WEEKS AGO)

A truck speeds past on the turnpike.

Will, reporter's pad in hand, crouches in a weed-choked field beside a Turnpike exit. His PRESS CREDENTIALS hang from a lanyard at his neck.

Red and blue lights pulse across his face. Police RADIO CHATTER mixes with the *WHOOSH* of passing traffic.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
My point is, your symptoms were
manageable. Yet now your depression
and anxiety have grown worse. Did
something happen recently?

He casts a furtive glance at a distracted COP, then pokes at something on the ground with his pen.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
Perhaps connected to that night, to
the snow day, when you were twelve?
Is there something you'd like to
share with me?

It's a disinterred corpse in a shallow grave, just a pile of bones. He uses his pen to fish something from the mouth of the gaping skull. It is...

A dirt-encrusted gold neck chain with an inverted crucifix.

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

WILL
Nuh-uh... Nothin'.

Chandra doesn't buy it.

CHANDRA
Have you tried the writing therapy
we discussed?

Shit. Here it comes.

CHANDRA (CONT'D)
We all have deep secrets. Things we
would never tell another soul. They
define us. But the darkest of them
can be very dangerous.

We hear WIND and the gentle CREAKING of rusted metal
as...

EXT. PUBLIC PLAYGROUND - DAY

An empty child's swing sways in the wind, chains CREAKING. It is lightly snowing. The playground and surrounding park are deserted, silent, covered in snow.

CHANDRA (V.O.)

They're like a bacteria buried in a deep cut, they fester and eat away at us. Unchecked, they make us hollow husks of ourselves. It's painful, but sometimes we have to open old wounds before they can begin to heal.

PULL BACK through a driver's side car window.

REVEAL:

INT. WILL'S CAR, PLAYGROUND PARKING LOT - DAY

Will sits behind the wheel of his car, the family SUV.

His puffy red eyes scan the playground, the park, the walking trails.

Not a soul in sight. That's good. No witnesses.

CHANDRA (V.O.)

The very act of writing about it can be an excellent remedy. A positive, productive release.

WILL (V.O.)

Positive, productive... as opposed to what?

CHANDRA (V.O.)

Something negative.

Will rests a wood-handled Smith & Wesson revolver in his lap. He thumbs back the hammer -- *CLI-CLICK*.

He lays his head against the window, closes his eyes, shuts them tight.

We hear the distant, ghostly sound of a CHILD SINGING.

TOMMY (V.O.)

(softly singing)

One little angel,
all dressed in white.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BILLY'S BACKYARD - DAY (MID-1970S)

Tommy lies in deep snow singing and making a snow angel.

TOMMY
(softly singing)
Tryin' ta get ta heaven
on the end of a kite.

He wears jeans and his usual P.A.L. T-shirt pulled over a red sweatshirt. No coat. No hat. No gloves.

He is flanked on either side by RUDY STONE and FREDDY CARLSON, both 8, both innocent, unknowing followers; kids who will never hold the conch in the neighborhood tribe.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
(softly singing)
The kite it broke
and then he fell.
'Stead of goin' ta heaven,
the angel went ta--

BILLY (O.S.)
(annoyed)
Hey, Tommy.

Billy stands over Tommy.

He's flanked by 12-year-old pals SIMON RICHARDSON, the under-sized, overconfident jock with a batting average below the Mendoza line; and LUCY PRICE, the blonde waif and kind soul, the conscience of their group.

They watch Tommy, bewildered.

BILLY (CONT'D)
What gives? You're supposed to be
helpin' us with the snow fort, not
playin' with the *little kids*.

Tommy just hums, lost in his own head.

LUCY
Tommy, you're gettin' wet. You'll
get sick.

SIMON
Forget 'im, Lucy. He's a dork, a
potsie.

TOMMY
S-sit on it and ro-otate, Seye-mon.

SIMON
Th-th-th-that's all, folks.

LUCY
 (quietly to Simon)
 Don't make fun of 'im.

TOMMY
 Yeah, don't make fu-fun of me,
 Simon. I'm Bi-bi... I'm...

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. WILL'S CAR, PLAYGROUND PARKING LOT - DAY

TOMMY (V.O.) CONT'D
 ...Billy's best friend.

Will's eyes snap open, Tommy's words a fading echo.

Now he hears CHILDREN LAUGHING nearby.

THUMP-SPLATTER!

A snowball explodes against his car window.

CHILD (O.S.)
 (calling out)
 Sorry, Mister!

Will looks around, confused. SEVERAL CHILDREN now play in the snow on the playground. Tossing snowballs. Sliding down the wet slide. Making snow angels.

How long had he zoned out? Seconds? Minutes?

CHANDRA (V.O.)
 Your first obligation is to the truth...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Will stands by the window holding the glass of water. Outside, he sees the thick wood, its leaf-barren tangle of gnarled branches dappled with snow and ice.

CHANDRA
 Isn't that what you journalists always say?

WILL
 And if I never find the truth?

CHANDRA
In this room, we're only as blind
as we wish to be.

Will peers out the window into the woods, lost in them.

CHANDRA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
So, what do you say?

We hear *CLI-CLICK* as...

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. WILL'S CAR, PLAYGROUND PARKING LOT - DAY

Will thumbs the revolver's hammer back to the safe position, then places the gun in the glove box and shuts the compartment.

EXT. ROAD - DAY (LATER)

Snow continues to fall. Will's car cruises along a busy two-lane road, trailing behind a public works truck.

SIMON (V.O.)
(speaker phone)
Are you crazy?

INT. WILL'S CAR - DAY

Will drives while taking a call on his dash-mounted phone. The Caller ID reads "Simon Richardson." It displays a photo of 12-year-old Simon in a little league uniform.

WILL
Sy, it's only for a few--

SIMON
(speaker phone)
You have no idea how much shit I
get from the publisher about my
reporters taking sabbaticals.

WILL
It's not a sabbatical. I only need
a week or two so I--

SIMON
(speaker phone)
Weeks? Now? Really?

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

SIMON (CONT'D)
Just as the Bishop story breaks? Come on, buddy. It's all hands on deck.

O.S. a monitor softly BEEPS. An oxygen tank quietly HISSES.

SIMON RICHARDSON, now early 50s, paces the room talking on his cell phone. Hair thinning, middle thickening, he's a shadow of Will's childhood buddy.

As he talks, he eyes a muted TV tuned to CNN. On the screen, FBI AGENTS carry boxes out of an office building. The lower-third reads:

**BREAKING NEWS:
FEDS INVESTIGATE BILLIONAIRE ADDISON BISHOP**

WILL
(on phone)
I can't cover the Bishop story for you, I just--

SIMON
I already have Jerry working on that. I need your help filling in on the City Desk.

WILL
(on phone)
City? What? Wait, you're assigning Jerry to dig up the story on Bishop? Jesus, Sy. He can't find his ass with both hands. You--

SIMON WILL (CONT'D)
This time off you want. You're (on phone)
not interviewing, are you? Did No... Sy... Sy, listen...
The Huffington Post make you
an offer? Random House? Is it
another book contract?

WILL (CONT'D)
(on phone)
It's the body, Sy...

INT. WILL'S CAR - DAY

WILL (CONT'D)
The one they found during the turnpike expansion.

A curious silence.

SIMON
 (speaker phone)
 When you filed that story you told
 me the cops had nothin' 'til the
 M.E. did his thing. And his report
 won't be ready for weeks.

In his mirror, Will sees a WHITE CADILLAC ESCALADE with dark tinted windows emerge from a curtain of falling snow.

WILL
 Yeah, well... There may be more to it.

Will tries to pass the public works truck, but on-coming traffic is too heavy.

SIMON
 (speaker phone)
 You buried the lead, buddy. If that's it, then yeah, of course, you can have the time off.

WILL
 Thanks.

The Escalade draws closer.

SIMON
 (speaker phone)
 Whadaya got?

WILL
 Can't say.

SIMON
 (speaker phone)
 Don't give me that bullshit, Billy.

WILL
 I'll fill you in, promise, but...
 (eyes the Escalade)
 Not right now.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Simon drops down into a chair exasperated, bone-tired.

SIMON
 Billy...

WILL
 (on phone, disarming)
 You know, you're one of the few people who still calls me Billy.

SIMON
How 'bout I call you Dick.

Simon sighs, runs his fingers through what's left of his hair.

SIMON (CONT'D)
Whatever, fine. Chase your hunch,
but stay away from Bishop. I don't
need you crossing wires with Jerry.
It's his assignment.

WILL
(on phone)
Thanks. 'Preciate it. And listen...
Give my love to Lucy, will ya?

SIMON
Sure, bud.

WILL
Hang in there, Sy.

Simon signs off, drops his face into his hands as...

A WOMAN'S HAND, pale and frail, strokes his hair.

LUCY (O.S.)
It'll be fine. You can trust Billy.

He takes her hand and kisses it as he turns to...

LUCY PRICE RICHARDSON, now early 50s. She lays on the bed
beside him looking weak and wearing a silk head scarf.
Her oxygen tube gently HISSES, an IV bag hangs nearby.

Simon looks at her, his heart breaking.

SIMON
Lucy...

He can't find the words.

LUCY
We'll be okay, sweetie.

He nods and forces a smile that doesn't ring true.

She hands him the TV remote.

LUCY (CONT'D)
Here, gowan. I know you want it.

And now his smile is genuine. She knows him so well.

They turn to the TV, where CNN now shows a live feed of a
press conference.

At the podium is an ASIAN MAN, 30s, bespectacled. He wears an FBI windbreaker but looks more accountant than action hero.

The lower-third says he is:

SPECIAL AGENT DANIEL CHEN

Simon turns up the sound.

CHEN

Yes, this warrant is part of our investigation into Bishop Corp for suspicion of money laundering related to organized crime groups.

REPORTERS SHOUT questions from off mic.

CHEN (CONT'D)

That's correct. There is no photo of Mr. Bishop available. He is known to be a recluse. Thus far, all communications have been through his legal representatives.

In the distance, we hear the PULSE of windshield wipers and a RINGING smartphone.

INT. WILL'S CAR - DAY

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

By reputation, Mr. Bishop is something of a ghost.

The RINGING stops. The caller ID reading "Unknown" winks out.

Will nervously eyes the Escalade in his rearview mirror.

His phone PINGS. He glances at the screen.

SUPERIMPOSE FLOATING TEXT MESSAGE:

"You should have answered your phone"

PING!

"I have another msg from Mr Bishop"

PING!

"He wishes to speak w/ you"

PING!

"Pls don't make this difficult"

Will sees the white Escalade pull up on his tail. Its HIGH BEAMS flash.

That does it. Will hammers the gas, jerks the wheel.

ON THE ROAD, his tires spray slush, gain purchase, cross the double-yellow line, then...

A BLARING HORN. BLINDING HEADLIGHTS.

An on-coming FEDEX TRUCK bares down on him.

IN THE CAR, Will jerks the wheel in the opposite direction. The Fedex truck rockets past, missing him by inches.

Another jerk of the wheel to straighten up, but...

The car continues turning, fishtailing, now spinning. His tires *SHUSSH* over the slush-covered road.

Will hears CHILDREN LAUGHING in the distance as he sees the world outside his windshield whirl out of control.

BILLY (V.O.)
Frank, quit it! Ow! Quit!

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BILLY'S BACKYARD - DAY (MID-1970S)

FRANK STONE, 14, pushes snow down the back of Billy's coat. Frank is a handsome altar boy-type, but with the soul of a Neanderthal.

His pals CARL PRICE and CRAZY JIMMY BARNES, both 14, look on.

Crazy Jimmy bares scars around his left eye, which is dead and milky white. He holds Tommy by the collar of his P.A.L T-shirt.

Carl, face pocked with volcanic acne, shares his sister Lucy's fair hair. He now holds her back. It's not their fight.

LUCY
Cut it out, Frank. Let go, Carl, or
I'm tellin' mom.

Simon, Rudy and Freddy hang back, their smiles fading.

FRANK
You protectin' the retard, Billy?

Crazy Jimmy smiles as he playfully flicks Tommy's malformed ear with his finger.

BILLY
Stop it!

Somewhere, a window sash *SHUSHES* open.

PHYLLIS (O.S.)
Francis Edward Stone! Stop teasing
your brother. Right now!

Frank turns to see their mother, PHYLLIS STONE, 30s,
leaning out a high kitchen window overlooking the yard.

She's a June Cleaver wanna-be who wears comfortable shoes
and a silver cross instead of heels and pearls.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
I mean it. You, Carl and Jimmy leave
the little kids alone, hear me?

Frank turns to Billy so only he can hear.

FRANK
(sotto voce)
One of the *little kids*.

STAY ON Billy as Frank, Carl and Crazy Jimmy walk off.

HIGH POV of Billy from inside the dark kitchen as Phyllis
shuts the window -- *SHUSSSS...*

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

...*SSSSH-WHUMP!*

Will's car lands in a ditch.

It rests against a snowbank, seemingly undamaged. The
wipers PULSE intermittently. No sign of life from the cab.

The white Escalade slowly pulls to the shoulder beside
Will's car. Its hazards begin to flash -- *TICK... TICK...*

FADE TO WHITE.

TICK... TICK... TICK... TICK... TICK...

Over this, a BRITISH VOICE with a Nigerian lilt.

JULIAN (O.S.)
My name is Julian. I am Mr.
Bishop's business advisor.

CRANE DOWN from a white cloudy sky to...

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Will walks with two men along a winding path through a thick wood. A dead landscape dappled white.

One of the men is JULIAN ATTAH, 40s, a soft-spoken Nigerian with a British accent, a wool and cashmere coat, and a polite manner that belies the danger he poses.

The other man is DOMINICK ROMANO, 28, bald, wears a black Armani overcoat. Put him in camo and he could be the cover model for *Mercenaries Monthly*.

WILL

I told you. I'm not interested in anything your employer has to say.

JULIAN

Mr. Bishop simply wishes to meet with an old friend. He wanted to extend his condolences to you in person. For the recent passing of your brother, Francis.

Will notices that Dominick carries his wood-handled revolver, taken from the SUV's glove box.

He sees Dominick slip the gun into his overcoat pocket.

WILL

I don't know Bishop.

JULIAN

(smiles a little)
Nonetheless, Mr. Bishop will be disappointed.

WILL

That's not the only reason you're here.

JULIAN

Indeed. You see, Mr. Bishop is very dear to me. His welfare is paramount, as well as our business interests.

WILL

Business interests. Would that include laundering drug money for crime families?

JULIAN

Mr. Bishop is a great man. The charities he finances in countries around the world provide clean water, food, and--

WILL
A cover.

JULIAN
(simmering)
A kindness... which would end if
the authorities have their way. Our
work is vital. I will let no one
stand in our way.

Will eyes Julian as they walk, looking for the cool-aide
stains on his lips.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
In 1975--

WILL
I was twelve.

JULIAN
You made Mr. Bishop a promise...

WILL
You have the wrong guy.

JULIAN
...to keep certain information
confidential.

WILL
You're way off base. Ask my editor.
I'm not covering the Bishop story.

JULIAN
And yet...

Julian pulls out a newspaper clipping with Will's by-line
on it. The headline read:

BODY FOUND DURING TURNPIKE EXPANSION

JULIAN (CONT'D)
...you've been making inquiries
into a story best left untold.

Julian gives Will an icy stare. Will returns it.

Their breath clouds in the cold air.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
You're familiar with our clientele,
Mr. Stone. So you know we take an
oath of silence very seriously.

Dominick steps closer.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
 I'm here to ensure that you honor
 yours.

Dominick gut punches Will, who crumples to the ground.
 The side of his face lays prone in the virgin white snow.

BILLY (V.O.)
Aaaah, Quit! Quit it!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM, BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy's face is painfully squashed into a white mattress.

Frank presses his elbow into the back of Billy's neck,
 hissing in his ear.

FRANK
Well? You gonna keep it a secret?

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Will still lays in the snow. Dominick presses the muzzle
 of his Glock 9mm against Will's temple.

Julian crouches beside him.

JULIAN
 Were it up to me, I would bury you in
 a hole and be done with it. But Mr.
 Bishop considers you a dear friend.
 So you get this one and only warning.
 If you keep digging, if you go to the
 authorities, if you say a word of
 this to anyone, I will kill you, and
 everyone you love.

Julian stands, towering over Will.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
 I'll give Mr. Bishop your regrets.
 Be sure that's all I have to do.

STAY ON WILL as Julian and Dominick walk off. He rolls
 onto his back in the snow and winces.

WILL (V.O.)
Don't go off the block.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT YARD, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

A snowman, its face and pained expression formed with pebbles placed by young hands.

Nearby, Will chastises his children, Peter and Kaitlyn, in the snow-covered front yard.

PETER, 6, innocent, uncomprehending, is a mini-me of Will. KAITLYN, 10, a whip-smart young girl, wears an exasperated look on her face.

WILL

(to Kaitlyn)

How many times have I told you
that? Don't go off--

KAITLYN

The block. I get it. I was just
over with Chelsea. She and Holly--

Will grabs her arm.

WILL

I don't care. What's more, you left
your brother alone. He is *your*
responsibility. You're old enough
to know better.

KAITLYN

But--

WILL

I don't want to hear it. Go wash up
for dinner. Both of you.

He shoves her toward the house and both kids head inside.

Will, uneasy, scans the empty street. No sign of the white Escalade. No sign of anyone.

He shakes it off, turns to leave, and steps right into a Peter-sized snow angel. He just stares at it, frozen.

Tommy's voice whispers in his head like a fading echo.

TOMMY (V.O.)

(whisper-singing)

One little angel,
all dressed in white...

SARAH (V.O.)

Will?

INT. DINING ROOM, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

Will is lost in thought.

SARAH (O.S.)
Will.

He snaps out of it.

WILL
Wha?

Will is having dinner with his family.

Peter wears a green rubber ghoul mask while he eats. Kaitlyn has a Harry Potter paperback clutched in her hand, finger in a page.

Wife SARAH, 40s, sits across from Will. She's an aspiring Sheryl Sandberg-type who's good at maintaining the illusion she has everything under control, even when it's not.

Sarah's glance directs him to...

KAITLYN
I asked are we gettin' a snow day
tomorrow?

WILL
I dunno.

KAITLYN
You always know. Tell me.

SARAH
Katey.

WILL
Nothing on the news yet.

KAITLYN
Please, please tell me?

WILL
(a little too sharp)
Enough!

Kaitlyn is stung. Side eyes from Sarah. She's about fed up.

WILL (CONT'D)
(softens)
Okay, yeah, you'll get a snow day.

KAITLYN
Yesssss.

She pumps her fist, pulls the bottom drawer.

SARAH
That's a prediction not a fact.
You're still doing your homework.

Sarah's smartphone RINGS. She picks up.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(into phone)
Hey, Becca... Yes, thirty million...
If the weather... Right... So we'll
Skype the pitch...

She exits to the next room to talk, eyeing Will as she goes.

Will watches Peter make a mess feeding mashed potatoes into his mouth through his mask. Peter sees Will watching him. He pretends to be a monster and ROARS at his father.

WILL
Petey.

Peter pauses. The mask face is smeared with food.

PETER
My mask doesn't scare you?

WILL
What mask?

KAITLYN
(laugh-snicker)
Oooh, shots fired.

WILL
You can wear this later.

Will pulls the mask off Peter's head.

He MOCK-SCREAMS at the sight of Peter's smiling, cherubic face, then holds up crossed fingers, vampire hunter-style.

WILL (CONT'D)
Aaaaaah! No! No! Get it away! Oh,
the horror! Back! Back!

Peter giggles and Kaitlyn laughs, but Will's own smile seems hollow.

INT. FAMILY ROOM, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

The wind HOWLS and RATTLES the window. The fireplace blazes. Will sips a beer and chills on the couch as an exhausted Sarah settles in beside him.

SARAH
The kids are asleep...

She tosses her smartphone on the coffee table.

SARAH (CONT'D)
And my presentation is put to bed.

She curls up with him and leans her head on his chest.
Silence. Just the CRACKLE of the fireplace.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Will?

WILL
Hmm?

SARAH
(cautiously)
How did it go with Dr. Chandra
today?

He sips his beer. Nothing.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Please talk to me, Will.

WILL
Nothin' to tell. It'll be okay.

He leans in to kiss her cheek reassuringly, but she moves her face and kisses him on the lips instead.

She holds the kiss. Then, with her index finger, she touches his chin and opens his mouth. She slides her tongue between his lips for a long, hot, wet kiss. Then...

WILL (CONT'D)
(whispers, half-kidding)
Sarah, are you trying to seduce me?

She looks at him, more serious than she wants to be.

SARAH
(whispers)
Maybe.

She kisses him again, long and deep.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

The room is dark, lit only by a street lamp glowing outside the window.

Will and Sarah fall on to the bed kissing and fumbling with each other's clothing. They begin making love like teenagers.

Sarah's on top now, moaning and rocking.

DREAM SEQUENCE:

PAN OVER from the couple to reveal...

Will, outside of his body, naked, sits on the bed.

PUSH IN ON WILL as he sees FLASHES OF IMAGES.

A shadowy boy, bathed in red light, careens down a hall.

A jet of blood splatters across a mirror.

A hand streaks blood across virgin snow.

Someone SCREAMS. It is...

END DREAM.

...Sarah as she climaxes.

LATER.

The glowing digital alarm clock reads: 1:03 AM. Sarah rolls over to find Will is gone.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

EXT. STONE HOUSE AND STREET - NIGHT

Snow falls. In the street, the GUSTING WIND lolls a metal trash can back and forth banging it against a lamp post.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

INT. WILL'S OFFICE, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

A robed Will sits at a desk with an ratty shoebox full of keep-sakes, circa 1975.

A faded, dented Sucrets tin. Frayed baseball cards. A scattering of old Polaroids.

He considers a photo. It's Billy, flanked by Simon and Lucy, arms draped over shoulders. The classic buddy pose.

And one more child, way in the background. Blurry. Not in the picture, but leaning in, wanting to join. It's Tommy.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

SARAH (O.S.)
Will...

He turns to find a robed Sarah sitting in his reading chair. She's been watching him.

SARA
Is there someone else?

WILL
...no.

She doesn't know whether to laugh or cry.

SARAH
I almost wish there was. *That I could understand...* Since Frank died... the pills... You won't let me in... The way you treat the kids... I can't even keep you in our bed... I'm worried I'll come home one day...
(whispers)
Will, you're frightening me.

Silence from Will, guilty as charged.

SARAH (CONT'D)
In our vows, we promised each other a life of honesty, fidelity, trust, and love. How can I trust you if you won't let me in.

FLASH BACK TO

THE WOODS, and the muzzle of a Glock 9mm pressing deeper into Will's temple.

RETURN TO:

WILL
I can't.

SARAH
Then you're not the man I thought I married.

She leaves, taking Will's oxygen with her.

Will sees a shadowy figure move behind the reading chair. Its eyes gleam cat-like in the dark.

Terrified, he looks away. But we see it's the indistinct shadow of a small boy (SHADOW BOY).

CHANDRA (V.O.)
 You should have told me about these
 flashbacks sooner. It's dangerous.
 With a patient like you--

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

WILL
 Like me?

CHANDRA
 Hypnotherapy on patients with deep
 rooted psychological scars may open
 doors we can't close. Not just
 flashbacks, but psychosis and even
 hallucinations. It's no longer
 safe. We shouldn't do it any more.

WILL
 We have to.

CHANDRA
 Why?

WILL
 It's working.

Chandra considers this.

CHANDRA
 You're taking a risk. To truly
 understand the events of that night
 when you were twelve, you--

WILL (V.O.)
 Dr. Chandra... For me, there is no
 way out, only through.

She finally concedes.

Chandra extends her upraised hand toward Will, revealing
 the henna tattoo of an elegant lotus flower on her palm.

CHANDRA
 As before, focus your eyes on the
 palm of my hand. Relax...

INT. WILL'S OFFICE, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

Will plugs his RED FLASH DRIVE into a USB port.

CHANDRA (V.O.) CONT'D
 Steady your breathing. Relax your
 mind and your body...

He takes a deep breath and stares at the monitor, which displays an open document.

The words at the top read:

The Snow Day

The rest of the page is blank. The blinking cursor beckons.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

CHANDRA (V.O.)
Open yourself up. Memories are
simply shadows of things past...

From behind him, the Shadow Boy's hand slowly reaches for Will's shoulder.

Will refuses to turn around. He shakes with fear.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

CHANDRA (V.O.)
They hold only meaning, not
power...

ANOTHER ANGLE. Will is alone. No Shadow Boy.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
Remember, if you seek the truth,
trust the voice inside you. *Listen
for it.*

He begins to type.

EXT. STONE HOUSE AND STREET - NIGHT

We hear the CLACKING of a keyboard as the storm worsens.

PULL BACK from the curb, to the road, and so on, as the snowfall obscures our view of the house, like static on a TV screen.

ANCHORMAN (V.O.)
...President Ford devoted the
lion's share of last night's speech
to rising gas prices and America's
dependence on foreign oil. But he--

Someone changes the channel on a TV with an old rotary dial.

KA-CHECK.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. THE BLOCK - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

A summer evening. BILLY'S HOUSE is set in a neighborhood of run-down three bedroom homes on streets lined with second-hand cars.

Bikes and Big Wheels left abandoned. A clothes line sways in a breeze. A cat curls up on a back porch.

This is "The Block."

ANCHORWOMAN (V.O.)
...another young child is reported missing this evening, the third in three months. An eight-year-old Hackensack resident by the name of--

KA-CHECK.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BILLY'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy, dressed in PJs, flips channels on a cheap color TV. He turns the broken dial using a pair of pliers.

COMMERCIAL ANNOUNCER
...Hai Karate aftershave is so powerful, it drives women right out of their minds. That's why --

KA-CHECK. KA-CHECK.

CREepy MUSIC. The title card for H.G. Wells' THE INVISIBLE MAN directed by James Whale appears on the TV.

RUDY (O.S.)
Whoa, keep it there.

Rudy sits nearby, also wearing PJs.

Billy takes a seat on the couch as the phone RINGS. He sees into the kitchen, where Phyllis picks up the extension.

Billy's eyes flit from the TV, where CLAUDE RAINS in an overcoat, scarf and hat trudges through deep snow, to...

Phyllis, agitated, talking on the phone in the kitchen.

He picks up the living room extension, careful to cover the mouth piece. He listens while watching the movie.

BILLY'S DAD (V.O.)
...and don't start in on me.

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 This is the third time in a row
 you've cancelled. What am I
 supposed to tell the boys?

BILLY'S DAD (V.O.)
 I don't know.

Claude Rains wipes snow from a sign reading "Iping 1/2 mile."

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 And what about the check?

BILLY'S DAD (V.O.)
 You'll get it when I have it.

A scene in the Lion's Head Pub where men play darts.

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 I have bills, and Monsignor Lovell
 is calling about the tuition. It's
 late. How am I supposed to--

BILLY'S DAD (V.O.)
 You wanted three kids, you got
 three kids. Look, I can't talk
 about this right now.

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 But--

CLICK.

Claude Rains enters the pub. It's the classic shot of Rains with the bandaged face, dark glasses, slouch hat.

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 Francis?

A HUMMING dead line.

PHYLLIS (V.O.)
 (sotto voce)
 Bastard.

INT. STAIRS/2ND FLOOR HALL - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy trudges up the stairs into the hallway.

BILLY
 Hey, Frank. Dad's not comin'. And
 we gotta give mom our newspaper and
 barbershop money ag--

Billy pushes open the bedroom door and freezes.

From the hall, he sees Frank sitting on his bed with a Playboy in one hand and scrambling to pull up his wranglers with the other.

FRANK
You... A-hole!

INT. BOYS' BEDROOM - NIGHT (SECONDS LATER) (MID-1970S)

Billy's face is painfully squashed into his mattress as Frank jams his elbow into the back of his neck.

BILLY
Ow! That hurts, quit!

FRANK
Pickle dick. You say anything to anyone about this...

Billy starts to cry.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Aaaaw, you gonna cry? Why don't you cry like a baby, baby. Like you did that one time.
(mocking, pretend crying)
I'm sorry I stole that candy from the store, Mommy. I just wanted to be like one of the *big kids*.

BILLY
(getting angry)
Quit it!

FRANK
(whispers in Billy's ear)
Well? You gonna keep it a secret?

Frank presses his elbow deeper into Billy's neck.

BILLY
Aaaaah! Yeah! Okay! Okay!

Frank gives Billy a last shove, then retreats across the room to his own bed, and to Miss July.

Billy rubs his neck and eyes Frank with a determined expression. It's a slow burn, but a fuse has been lit.

CRAZY JIMMY (V.O.)
Listen, Billy... I never said before, but... Sorry 'bout your brother, Frankie.

CLICK-WHIRR... CLICK-WHIRR...

INT. COUNTY MORGUE EXAM ROOM - DAY

CLICK-WHIRR.

Will uses his smartphone to snap photos of the turnpike body as it lays on an autopsy table.

CRAZY JIMMY (O.S.)
I mean, dyn' of rectal cancer,
jeez. God's a prick sometimes,
isn't he.

WILL
(half listening)
Uh-huh.

A morgue tech sits on a counter top smoking a vape pen.

The white vapor cloud is the same color as his milky dead eye, and we see it is CRAZY JIMMY BARNES, now mid-50s.

CRAZY JIMMY
Ya gotta make it quick, Billy. My
boss 'ill be back soon.

On the counter beside him sits a large plastic evidence bag. On top of that lays Will's red flash drive.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
I put a copy of the file on your
drive. It's just pree-lim stuff.
Labs and the final report won't be
ready for a few weeks.

Crazy Jimmy tosses Will the flash drive.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
No ID. Coroner says McCoy here was
beaten and strangled. And he's got
weird, deep cuts across the bones
of one hand, and on one cheek.

WILL
So what are the cops thinkin'?

CRAZY JIMMY
D'fuck do I know? I just drive the
wagon.

Come on, Jimmy.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
Awright, I heard the coroner talkin'.

WILL
Talking.

CRAZY JIMMY
Over lunch. The fat bastard's a
ghoul. Who the hell talks dead
bodies over a liverwurst sandwich.

WILL
Jimmy...

CRAZY JIMMY
He thinks the guy who did this has
done it before. You know, like, a
lot of times before. I dunno.
That's all he said. But...

PUSH IN ON WILL as Crazy Jimmy continues.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
...you know the story. Some kid
grows up all mental an' twisted,
starts killing dogs and cats for
kicks. An' one day he graduates to
bigger game.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy and Tommy standing over the body.

TOMMY
(whines)
*Please don't tell. Please, I just
wanted to play.*

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. COUNTY MORGUE EXAM ROOM - DAY

CRAZY JIMMY
Who knows, man. These days a kid
could start out a Boy Scout and end
up a fuckin' Jeffrey Dahmer-type.

Will walks over and hands Crazy Jimmy some cash.

WILL
Thanks, Jimmy.

As Crazy Jimmy pockets the cash, Will takes the evidence bag.

CRAZY JIMMY
Hey, hey, hey, you can't...

He opens it.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
...do that. Go'damn it, Billy.
That's evidence. Mess with that
you'll get me shit-canned for sure.

Will uses a pencil from the counter to fish an item from the bag.

CRAZY JIMMY (CONT'D)
(shrugs)
Murder weapon, they think.

It's the muddy remains of a BARBER TOWEL. It was once narrow and white, with a red stripe.

DELUCA (V.O.)
Ya can't ever be afraid, Billy. Ya gotta stand your ground.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

LUIGI the barber, late 60s, drapes a BARBER TOWEL, white with a red stripe, over his shoulder as he cuts Sal Deluca's hair.

DELUCA (CONT'D)
When the pitcher stares down at you, ya gotta stare right back at 'em.

SAL DELUCA, 50s, dark hair and van dyke beard, flicks ashes from his cigarette on to the checkerboard linoleum floor.

DELUCA (CONT'D)
And when he throws the ball, you gotta lean into the pitch and crush it.

Billy leans on a broom, nodding, hanging on Deluca's every word.

The shop is crowded with CUSTOMERS, mostly old men.

A Yankee game plays on a radio. The muffled sound of RINGING PHONES rises from a back room to mix with the murmur of Bill White's play-by-play.

DELUCA (CONT'D)
Every time I see you swing, you step in the bucket and yank yer head towards third. Ya can't make good contact that way.

LUIGI

You listen to Mr. Deluca. That's how you learn. He's a good man. A good coach.

BILLY

Yes, sir.

DELUCA

Keep working at it, Kid.

Luigi removes Deluca's apron and brushes stray hairs from his shoulders with the barber towel.

DELUCA (CONT'D)

(to Luigi, sotto voce)

You got somethin' for me?

Luigi, anxious, pulls a thick envelope from his pocket and hands it to Deluca, who tucks it into his jacket.

Deluca steps down from the chair. He wears a sport coat, polished shoes, and pinky ring. His open collared shirt offers the glimpse of a gold chain.

He tousles Billy's hair, then caresses his cheek.

DELUCA (CONT'D)

See ya at practice, Billy.

Behind them, the shop bell above the door JANGLES.

They turn as...

INT. FABRIC/BARBERSHOP SHOP - DAY

...the door swings open.

Will enters, followed by a REAL ESTATE AGENT, 20s. It's the old barbershop, but the space was once converted to a fabric shop, now dusty and abandoned.

REAL ESTATE AGENT

Pardon the mess. They're still in probate. But I'm sure I can get you a good deal on the place.

Will takes in the abandoned space.

WILL

's Okay.

He tries to picture the barbershop. He toes the old checkerboard linoleum floor, now cracked and yellowed.

REAL ESTATE AGENT
(backing toward the door)
I appreciate your understanding. I
have to get to my closing.

Will doesn't turn around, just nods.

WILL
I'll close up when I'm finished.

The Real Estate Agent exits, the shop bell JANGLES as...

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

ALBERT SCHNEIDER enters. He's 40, red-haired, with a bad
comb-over.

Deluca exits as Schneider enters.

SCHNEIDER
(too cheerful)
Afternoon, Luigi.

Schneider turns to the CUSTOMERS, who avoid his gaze.

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
Hey there, fellas.

No response.

Schneider, a little drunk, leans down into Billy's face.

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
Hi-ya, Billy-boy.

BILLY
(uneasy)
Hello, Mr. Schneider.

LUIGI
Come, Mr. Schneider. I take you
next.

Schneider slides into the chair.

SCHNEIDER
Just a shave today, Luigi.

Luigi SNAPS his fingers.

LUIGI
Billy, the good blade.

Luigi lather's Schneider's face, while Billy fetches him
an ivory handled straight razor from the next station.

Billy goes back to sweeping, but watches as Luigi opens the blade with the flick of his wrist, locking it into place with a SNICK.

His eyes follow Luigi's as the old barber glances furtively out the window.

They see a mid-1960s BLACK LINCOLN CONTINENTAL, driver unseen, pull to the curb. Deluca climbs in and the Lincoln pulls away, its bad muffler GURGLING.

LUIGI (CONT'D)
So, Mr. Schneider. You consider that business arrangement we discussed?

SCHNEIDER
Oh, yeah, yeah... Matter of fact--

Through the window, Schneider sees his wife, DELILAH SCHNEIDER, 40s, a large bespectacled woman, approaching.

She drags Tommy along behind her. An infant, BABY CLAIRE, is tucked in the crook of her elbow.

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
(sotto voce)
Oh, shit.

Schneider, still wearing the apron and shave cream, leaps from the chair and races out the door to a chorus of LAUGHTER from the customers.

Before the door swings closed Billy hears...

DELILAH
What the hell do you think you're doing here? I told you to--

The door shuts, the shop bell JANGLES, her words are silenced.

Billy watches through the window as he sweeps.

Schneider motions for his angry wife to calm down.

Tommy stands there, hands in pockets, staring at his Keds.

He suddenly looks up and meets Billy's gaze, catching him by surprise. He stares at Billy with expressionless eyes.

Billy turns away, looks down at the floor he needlessly sweeps. But still, he idles closer, listening.

SCHNEIDER
But Delilah, baby, I have business to take care of.

DELILAH

Business? Is that what you call this? I told you to get a goddamned job, not hang out with these losers.

SCHNEIDER

But they're my friends.

Billy eyes the disinterested customers. *His friends?*

He turns back to the argument outside, surprised to find Tommy gone. Neither Schneider nor Delilah have noticed.

SSSSSHUFF... SSSSHUFF...

INT. FABRIC/BARBERSHOP SHOP - DAY

SSSSSHUFF...

Will pulls aside several drapes, revealing the mirrored walls of the original barbershop, excavating the past.

Satisfied, he heads for the back hall, but pauses when he notices the mirror beside the hallway door is damaged.

A spiderweb of cracks has blossomed into a small circle. He runs his fingers tips over the cracks, curious.

LUIGI (V.O.)

Billy.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy, broom in hand, peers out the window past Schneider and Delilah, looking for Tommy.

LUIGI (O.S.)

(sharply)

Billy.

Billy turns to Luigi.

LUIGI (CONT'D)

The trash.

INT. BACK HALLWAY, BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

The RINGING PHONES are louder as Billy drags a trash bag down a narrow hall. He passes a small office, door ajar.

Inside, he sees a tiny OLD WOMAN, 70. She's manning several RINGING phones and speaks with an Italian accent.

OLD WOMAN
(into phone)
We gave you two to one odds. No
bullshit. That's right, you pay up,
or--

She sees Billy, switches to speaking in Italian, and
shuts the door.

AT THE BACK FIRE EXIT, Billy peels an old strip of duct
tape from the door jam. He uses it to tape down the latch
on the fire exit door so it won't lock behind him.

He grabs the trash bag and moves to push open the door.

CLICK...

INT. FABRIC/BARBER SHOP - DAY

...*CHICK!*

A bare light bulb glows. A pull chain swings. We are...

IN THE BASEMENT, Will stands among storage bins and
broken retail displays. His eyes fall on the old barber
pole propped in a corner. He grins. Jackpot.

UPSTAIRS, the door creeps open. A hand grabs the bell
before it can sound. The door swings wide and...

Dominick enters.

IN THE BASEMENT, Will sifts through a box labeled "BARBER."
Dusty old combs, scissors, towels, and magazines. He
smiles, wistful, when he finds a 1975 Sports Illustrated.

Billy Martin glares at him from the cover. Will thumbs
the pages. His smile fades as he turns to a page with...

A CHILD'S BLOODY HAND PRINT.

The basement door shuts with a SLAM, locks with a CLICK!

UPSTAIRS, Dominick ignites a road flare. He begins
torching the old drapes and bolts of fabric.

Will pounds on the locked basement door.

WILL (O.S.)
Hey! Open up!

Dominick slips out the front door on to an empty street.

The entire shop is aflame.

IN THE BASEMENT, Will hurries back down the stairs. Smoke is already filling the space.

He stuffs the magazine into his belt, then starts clearing a path through the refuse toward the back of the room.

A DISTANT VOICE. *From the smoke? From a memory?*

TOMMY (V.O.)
(whispers)
This way! This way!

He sees what he's looking for; steps leading up to the metal loading doors that give onto the side walk.

The lights flicker. The smoke grows thicker.

Will can't see. He's groping, coughing, straining.

More voices. Young boys, their words frantic and jumbled.

TOMMY/BILLY (OVERLAPPING)
I can do it! No, I got it! Let me
do it! I can --

Will's groping hand lands on the door's handle.

He grabs. He twists. He pulls.

The loading door gives. A beam of daylight streams in as...

EXT. FIRE EXIT, BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

The Fire Exit door sings open.

Billy drags the full trash bag into the parking lot.

TOMMY (O.S.)
Hi-ya, Bi-Billy.

He turns to find Tommy sitting on the ground, his back against a trash dumpster, watching him.

Tommy toys with an old, narrow barber towel. It was once white with a red stripe, but is now worn and filthy.

BILLY
Oh... Hey.

It's hot. Flies buzz both the dumpster and Tommy.

BILLY (CONT'D)
I, ah... haven't seen you in school
much.

Tommy shrugs.

TOMMY
Y-Ya know, m-my mom an' dad don't
know I'm here.

Billy stands on one hip, silent, uncomfortable. His eyes fall on the dumpster, but Tommy blocks his path.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Su-sometimes I pretend...

He wraps the ends of the barber's towel around each hand and stretches it out into a make-shift garrote.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I pretend like I'm a monster on TV.

Billy is puzzled.

Tommy wraps the narrow towel around his own neck, then starts to wrap it around his face as he talks.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Y-ya know, like on *The 4:30 Movie*,
or *Ch-Chiller Theater*.
(brightens a little)
Didja see it last week? They had a
s-special on all the monsters, one
each day -- the Wolfman, Dracula,
the Gi-Gill-man...

His whole face is now wrapped in the filthy towel.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Look, Billy. Who am I?

Billy doesn't bite.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I'm the Invisible Man.

Tommy giggles as Billy grows more uncomfortable.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
A-anyway, s-sometimes, when I'm
h-home alone, I make-believe I'm
invisible... An' m-my mom and dad
will come home and c-can't find
me... I imagine them l-looking for
me, an'...

Tommy falls silent.

He stuffs the towel into his back pocket, then stands, brushes off the back of his dirty pants with dirty hands, and lifts the heavy dumpster lid for Billy.

The two boys wrestle the heavy trash bag into the tall dumpster.

BILLY
Well... see ya 'round.

He's about to leave.

TOMMY
Billy?

Aw, damn.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Wha-why don't you like me?

BILLY
I didn't say that.

TOMMY
S-so you do like me.

BILLY
I guess you're okay.

TOMMY
Will you be my bu-best friend?

Billy shrugs.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
What?

BILLY
It doesn't work that way.

TOMMY
W-why not?

Tommy extends his filthy hand, hoping for a handshake. Billy eyes Tommy's offered hand.

WILL (V.O.)
They called him "The Mental Case."

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Another day, another session.

CHANDRA
Your friend Tommy's nickname was--

WILL

He wasn't my friend. But yeah, they would...

CHANDRA

They?

WILL

They... we. Frank and his friends mostly, but yeah, we called him that, too. My buddy, Sy, and me. Not to his face. Not usually.

CHANDRA

And how do you feel about that now?

WILL

We were kids. We were just... Tommy was an odd duck. We never thought he was really... you know. But, I guess when you're twelve you think that kind of shit rubs off on you. So...

Chandra eyes him.

WILL (CONT'D)

It was stupid and heartless and I regret it, okay?

CHANDRA

Perhaps you can tell him how you feel. Make an effort to set things right.

INT. HALLWAY, FBI NEWARK OFFICE - DAY

Agent Chen, and a team of bleary-eyed FBI AGENTS, straggles out of a conference room into the hall.

SPECIAL AGENT OLIVIA BANKS, late 20s, his partner, an unflappable black woman, approaches Chen with a tablet in her hand.

CHEN

Banks, tell me you're having better luck than I am.

BANKS

That bad?

CHEN

Forensic Accounting says he's using international charities to launder the mob money. But still nothing to unmask our mysterious Mr. Bishop. What about you?

Banks hands him the tablet. Chen, puzzled, swipes through crime scene photos of the Turnpike body.

BANKS
Remember the news story about the body found during turnpike construction?

She swipes the tablet for him, revealing a photo of Will.

BANKS (CONT'D)
One day after this journalist, William Stone, writes a story about it...

She swipes again to reveal a file with Julian's photo

BANKS (CONT'D)
Bishop's puts a tail on him.

CHEN
Why is Bishop putting his fixer on this reporter?

BANKS
Julian Attah is more than a just fixer. Look at his dossier.

They walk and talk as Chen scans the document.

CHEN
(scanning)
West Africa... child soldier...

BANKS
Rescued and educated by an international charity funded by Bishop. Look at his degrees.

CHEN
(a little impressed)
Weaned on a death squad, raised to be a Wall Street pirate. Bishop's consigliere?

BANKS
They say his loyalty to Bishop is obsessive. Sees Bishop as a father figure, and himself as the heir apparent.

CHEN
He sounds like a fanatic.

BANKS
And Bishop Corp is his religion.

CHEN
Any leads on the stiff?

BANKS
No ID yet. Current theory places
death and burial sometime during
the Ford administration.

Chen puzzles over this, then finally smiles.

CHEN
Upon this rock I will build my
church.

BANKS
Are you having a stroke?

CHEN
Hear me out. Forensic accounting
said the company's business records
go back to the mid-1970s. The
coroner said this body went into
the ground around the same time.
And now this guy Julian is worried
about a story leaking out.

BANKS
You think this murder is directly
linked to Bishop? Maybe connected
to the *founding* of Bishop Corp?

CHEN
It's possible.

BANKS
That's a stretch, don't you think?

CHEN
I think we need to talk to the
Bureau's old-timers who worked
Organized Crime in the '70s, see
what we can learn about the
landscape in those days. And then
let's check out this reporter,
Stone. Find out what he knows.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

Schneider wears Luigi's barber's smock and a proud smile
as he motions to the room.

SCHNEIDER
Well, Billy-boy... Whadaya think?

It's only Schneider and Billy. No customers in sight.

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
 Bought the place for a song. Don't
 worry, though. You can stay on.
 Wouldn't thinka kickin' out my
 boy's best friend.

Best friend?

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
 'Specially since we're gonna be
 neighbors now?

He shows Billy a real estate flier with specs on a house.

SCHNEIDER (CONT'D)
 I just bought the place next door
 to your mom.

Billy looks sick.

EXT. TOMMY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

Delilah sorts through boxes on the front porch. Tommy
 unloads more boxes from a truck on to the curb.

Schneider is there with Deluca. They talk privately on
 the sidewalk and shake hands.

SCHNEIDER (V.O.)
 The down payment on this house took
 my last penny, but with a new
 business and all.

Deluca tousles Tommy's hair, strokes his cheek.

He then climbs into the back seat of the black Lincoln.
 The unseen driver pulls away, its muffler GURGLING.

SIMON (O.S.)
 Aw, jeez. Now we got the mental
 case for a neighbor.

Across the street, Billy, Simon and Lucy straddle their
 bikes, watching Tommy.

LUCY
 Come on, Sy. Don't call 'im that.
 Be nice to the kid.

BILLY
 Maybe Tommy's an okay kid.
 (to Lucy)
 You ever talk to him?

She shrugs, looks away.

SIMON
He gives Lucy the creeps.

LUCY
I don't like the way he looks at
me.

SIMON
Is his dad weird, too?

Billy watches Tommy pick up a box, cast an eye in their direction, and wave awkwardly. No one waves back.

BILLY
Don't know much about him.

The sound of RINGING PHONES grows in the distance.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Alls I know is...

INT. BACK OFFICE, BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

The RINGING PHONES are nearly deafening.

BILLY (V.O.)
...he sucks at business.

Schneider struggles to answer the constantly ringing phones, and take bets.

Billy passes by the office door carrying a broom. He sees Schneider, continues on.

We hear the distant, ghostly sound of a SHOVEL SCRAPING against paving stones.

SCURRRRRUP... SCURRRRRUP...

EXT. THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

SCURRRRRUP...

Will shovels snow from the path leading to his front door.

INT. WILL'S OFFICE, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

Sarah watches Will from the office window. Satisfied he's occupied...

SCURRRRRUP... SCURRRRRUP...

She sits at Will's computer finds crudely scanned documents -- police reports, crime scene photos, newspaper clippings -- all ink-stamped with a date.

JANUARY, 1975

SCURRRRRUP... SCURRRRRUP...

A quick SCAN AND PAN of images and headlines INTERCUT with Sarah's growing expression of concern.

A house with boarded up windows. Crime scene tape. A snow-capped "For Sale" sign.

"...House of Horror Police Say..."

The cellar. Piles of dirt. A sheet-draped BODY.

"...Boy Murdered in..."

The open shallow grave. A DETECTIVE examines the lantern.

And then there's the document titled "The Snow Day." It is packed with page after page of Will's returning memories.

SCURRRRRUP... SCURRRRRUP...

PULL BACK from the computer screen.

REVEAL:

INT. WHITE ESCALADE - DAY

The images are displayed on a laptop mounted in the Escalade's cab. A blinking tab in the corner of the laptop's screen reads: MIRRORING.

SCURRRRRUP... SCURRRRRUP...

Dominick sits behind the wheel watching Sarah sift through Will's files, then looks over the dash, peers down the street and watches Will shovel his walk.

Julian sits in the back seat talking on his cell phone.

JULIAN

(into phone)

Mr. Stone has proven obstinate. And now Mrs. Stone is getting curious as well. Yes, there will be consequences.

Several PHONES RING ceaselessly in the distance.

A shopkeeper's bell JANGLES.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy looks up from reading the Billy Martin issue of *Sports Illustrated* to see...

Two MOB ENFORCERS enter the otherwise empty shop. One is tall and wide like a heavyweight wrestler, the other short and solid like a welterweight boxer.

They ignore Billy and make their way down the back hall toward the RINGING phones.

Billy hears SMASHING TELEPHONES and BREAKING GLASS.

INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (DAYS LATER) (MID-1970S)

Schneider, nose broken and eyes blackened, sips from a flask as he looks out the front window of his barbershop.

No customers. No Billy. No ringing phones.

LUCY (V.O.)
What do you think happened to him?

RUDY (V.O.)
Maybe he's a secret agent, an' he
went away on a mission.

GROANS and TONGUE CLUCKS from the gang.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF TOMMY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

BILLY
An' maybe you shouldn't watch so
many reruns of *I Spy*.

Billy, Simon, and Lucy lean against a parked car and watch something we don't see. Blue and red lights flash rhythmically across their faces.

Beside them, Rudy and Freddy straddle their bikes.

Simon spits in the street.

SIMON
Crazy Jimmy said he thought Mr.
Schneider ran off with some woman.
Maybe the blonde down at the
butcher shop. The one with the big
titties.

Billy stares at the source of the pulsing lights.

LUCY
 She's married to the butcher,
 dummy.

REVEAL a police cruiser double parked in front of Tommy's house, lights flashing, radio crackling with STATIC and occasional CHATTER.

SIMON
 Yeah? So's he. Married, I mean.
 Could be. Anything's better than
 fat Delilah Schneider.

On Tommy's front porch, Billy sees TWO POLICE OFFICERS speak with Delilah. She wipes away tears with a tissue.

Phyllis stands nearby cradling Baby Claire.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 Whadya think, Billy?

No response from Billy, who sees a light on in an upstairs bedroom of Tommy's house, and a young boy's silhouette cast on the drawn curtains.

The boy seems to be watching him.

SIMON (CONT'D)
 My money's on the blonde with the
 big--

LUCY
 Okay, we get it.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy sits in a dimly lit church with a small group of Catholic elementary school STUDENTS. A NUN stands watch.

He wipes his sweaty palms on his trouser legs as a YOUNG GIRL exits the confessional.

He peers into the dark chamber. It's his turn.

SIMON (V.O.)
 So?

BILLY (V.O.)
 So what?

SIMON (V.O.)
 You worked for him. So come clean.
 Tell us what happened?

BILLY (V.O.)
I guess... I guess he got tired of
it all. Tired of the shop... of
Delilah, of... of everything, and
just split. I don't know.

SHHHH...

INT. CONFESSORIAL, CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY (MID-1970S)

...HHHUCK!

The confessional window slides open. Billy sees the silhouette of a PRIEST appear.

BILLY
Bless me father for I have sinned... It's been three months since my last confession.

PRIEST (O.S.)
What have you done, Billy.

BILLY
I... I lied.

EXT. BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy turns the corner and across the street sees...

The two Mob Enforcers exit the Barbershop. They escort a drunk and terrified Schneider to the black Lincoln.

Billy ducks behind a parked car and watches.

He sees THE DRIVER, 30s, behind the wheel. The man is built like a linebacker, crew cut, sport coat, dark sunglasses.

The Driver rests an arm out the car window. His left hand is missing both pinky and ring finger.

Billy hears the men talking.

THE DRIVER
Well?

INT. BLACK LINCOLN - DAY (MID-1970S)

The Driver peers into the back seat via his mirror. The two Enforcers flank a nervous and dazed Schneider.

THE DRIVER
We doin' this?

TALL MOB ENFORCER
Uh-huh.

PRIEST (V.O.)
You must do penance for your sin,
Billy, and then make amends.

INT. CONFESSORIAL, CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY (MID-1970S)

PRIEST
I want you to say three Hail Mary's
and one Our Father.

BILLY
Thank you, Fa--

PRIEST
Then you'll apologize to your
mother for lying about stealing the
candy...

BILLY
Thank--

PRIEST
And then you'll return to the candy
store and pay the shopkeeper
restitution.

BILLY
Yes, Father.

Awkward silence.

PRIEST
Is there anything else?

Billy hesitates.

EXT. STREET AND BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

From across the street, Billy watches and listens.

THE DRIVER
Which place this time?

SHORT MOB ENFORCER
Doesn't matter. We get our shoes
muddy either way.

The Driver glimpses Billy behind a parked car. Their eyes meet for a second before Billy ducks out of sight.

BILLY (V.O.)
No, Father. Nothin' else.

The Driver says nothing as he maneuvers the car into traffic and drives away, the muffler GURGLING.

PRIEST (V.O.)
Are you sure?

Billy emerges from hiding, crosses the street and watches the car disappear down the road.

BILLY (V.O.)
...yeah.

PRIEST (V.O.)
(not convinced, but...)
Okay then.

EXT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Billy stands before the Barbershop. He cups his hand to look through the window into the dark, crypt-like shop.

PRIEST (V.O.)
May God grant you pardon and peace.

He sees something scurry animal-like in the shadows.

Was that a dog?

PRIEST (V.O.)
I absolve you of your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

REVERSE ANGLE. From inside the shop, we PUSH IN on Billy as he presses against the glass, peers into the shadows and...

PRIEST (V.O.)
Now go forth and sin no--

Shadow Boy jumps up in the window.

Nose-to-nose with Billy.

Someone SCREAMS, and SCREAMS, and...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

Will is *SCREAMING* as he wakes from a nightmare. He bolts upright in bed, gasping for air. Sarah is startled awake.

SARAH
What?! What?!

Will struggles to catch his breath.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Please, Will. Talk to me.

Nothing from Will.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Then let me call Dr. Chandra for
you. I know it's late, but--

WILL
(angry)
Stop! Just leave me the fuck alone!

Sarah is stung. That cut deep. Her next words are hard for her.

SARAH
If that's what you want... If you
really want nothing to do with
me... Then...

Will's cellphone RINGS.

Sarah bites back her next words.

Will and Sarah just look at each other, not sure if they should cross the Rubicon.

The phone RINGS again.

Without another word, Sarah rolls over, turning her back to Will.

Will grabs his phone. The Caller ID photo displays 12-year-old Simon in his little league uniform.

We hear ORGAN MUSIC playing over...

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

A funeral. The church is packed. A casket rests before the altar, a portrait of a once healthy Lucy stands beside it.

Will and Sarah sit with Peter and Kaitlyn in a crowded pew. Kaitlyn discreetly reads another Harry Potter novel.

PETER
Mom?

SARAH
Shhh...

PETER
(more softly)
Is Aunt Lucy in heaven with Grandma
and Uncle Frank?

SARAH
I'm sure she is, sweetie.
(to Kaitlyn)
Psst...

She glares at Kaitlyn, who rolls her eyes and closes the book.

PETER
Mom? What's heaven like?

Sarah eyes Will, who shrugs.

SARAH
It's... It's like a day off from
school that never ends.

Peter absorbs this.

PETER
Cool.

SARAH
But you have to earn it, sweetie.
You have to earn it.

The ORGAN MUSIC changes, the congregation stands.

EXT. CHURCH - DAY (LATER)

Simon accepts condolences as people exit the church. Sarah embraces him and leads Peter and Kaitlyn to the car.

Then it's Will's turn. The two men embrace, teary-eyed.

WILL
She was the best of us.

Simon sees FBI Special Agent Daniel Chen hovering nearby.

SIMON
Agent Chen.

CHEN
I didn't mean to intrude. I only
came to pay my respects.

SIMON
Thank you. Will, this is...

Chen shakes Will's hand.

CHEN
FBI Special Agent Daniel Chen.

SIMON
Agent Chen is working the Bishop
case. He's been kind enough to keep
me in the loop, while skilled enough
not to tell me anything useful.

CHEN
(to Will)
So you're William Stone?

AT THE CURB, Sarah ushers the kids into the car. She watches,
puzzled, as Will walks toward the cemetery with Chen. Then...

ACROSS THE STREET, she see the White Escalade pull to the
curb opposite the cemetery. Dominick is at the wheel.

She realizes he's watching Will.

EXT. CHURCH CEMETERY - DAY (MINUTES LATER)

A statue of a blindfolded angel, wings spread and dappled
with snow, over looks the cemetery beside the church.

CHEN (O.S.)
How's your memory, Mr. Stone?

WILL (O.S.)
Guess we'll find out?

AT THE BASE OF THE STATUE, Chen is showing Will a tablet
displaying an B&W photo of a man getting out of a black
Lincoln, circa 1975.

It's Sal Deluca.

CHEN
Give him a good look. His name is
Salvatore Deluca.

Chen's voice becomes distant and muted in Will's ears.

CHEN (CONT'D)
 You might have known him when you
 were a child. He owned a home not
 far from where you grew up. People
 say he was a regular in the
 neighborhood.

Yet the *CRACK* of a baseball bat is crisp and clear, and then...

HISSSSSSSSS...

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. BASEBALL PRACTICE FIELD - DAY (MID-1970S)

...SSSSSSSS-POP!

A baseball rockets into Billy's mitt as he stands near home plate wearing catcher's gear a size too big, mask and helmet at his feet.

A coach, bat on shoulder, reaches out for the ball. It's Sal Deluca. He's running infield drills with a group of 12-year-old boys.

Billy tosses Deluca the ball.

INFIELDERS
 (various, overlapping)
 Me next, Uncle Sal!
 Over here, Coach!
 Throw a little action my way!

At third base, Simon pounds his glove.

SIMON
 Mr. Deluca! Over here. Gimme
 somethin' hot down the line. I'll
 show ya my Graig Nettles.

Deluca hits a ground ball to Simon, who scoops it up and fires it to the FIRST BASEMAN, who fires it to Billy.

The throw is in the dirt. The ball ricochets off his glove.

DELUCA
 (calling to first baseman)
 Come on, Johnny! Getcha throws up!

The ball rolls behind the backstop, where it settles against the tire of a parked car.

Billy hustles after the ball. He reaches for it, but another hand grabs it first.

It is a man's hand with two missing fingers.

Billy's eyes rise slowly from the ball and hand, to...

An inverted crucifix that dangles from a gold chain around the man's neck, to...

A holstered pistol strapped under the man's armpit beneath his open jacket, to...

The dark sunglasses hiding the man's eyes.

THE DRIVER

Hello, Billy.

Billy freezes, eyes wide.

The Driver rises, leans back against the car's side panel and Billy now sees it's the black Lincoln.

The Driver smiles. *That's right kid. I know who you are.*

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)

Heads.

He finally tosses the ball to Billy.

DELUCA (O.S.)

(calling out)

Hey, Billy. Let's get this show on the road.

Unsettled, Billy hurries back to home plate.

THE DRIVER

(calling out)

Mr. Deluca!

The Driver holds up his scarred hand, taps his watch.

Deluca nods, holds up 5 fingers. Message sent and received. Then he holds his hand out to Billy.

DELUCA

Ball.

Billy pauses, uncertain. He looks from Deluca, to The Driver, who smirks.

CHEN (V.O.)

Mr. Stone?

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

EXT. CHURCH CEMETERY - DAY

Will shakes it off.

WILL
It's been a long time.

CHEN
He was a lieutenant in the Clementi
crime family. Ran his own crew.

Will shakes his head, but freezes when Chen swipes the
tablet to another screen revealing...

The photo of an inverted crucifix.

CHEN (CONT'D)
They say Deluca made his entire
crew wear these as a sign of their
loyalty to him.

Chen watches Will closely.

CHEN (CONT'D)
Do you know what this is?

WILL
It's just a crucifix.

CHEN
No, it's the cross of Saint Peter,
the first Bishop of Rome. Do you
know the story?

No answer from Will.

CHEN (CONT'D)
Emperor Nero sentence Peter to
death by crucifixion. But Peter
thought himself unworthy of dying
in the fashion of Christ, so he
asked to be crucified upside down.
Unworthy. Apropos for a mob crew
like Deluca's wouldn't you say?

WILL
I'm sorry, I can't help you.

CHEN
Too bad, Mr. Richardson's memory
was no better.

WILL
So you think Deluca is connected to
Addison Bishop.

CHEN
Thank you for your time, Mr. Stone.

Chen is about to close the tablet.

WILL
Who's the other guy?

Chen returns to the photo of Deluca.

CHEN
What other guy?

Will points to a fuzzy figure just over Deluca's shoulder, barely in the frame. It's the Driver.

WILL
Him.

CHA-CHICK... CHA-CHICK

INT. WHITE ESCALADE - DAY

Dominick sits behind the wheel, a camera in hand, snapping photos of Will and Chen from across the street.

CHA-CHICK... CHA-CHICK

WILL (V.O.)
Do you believe in ghosts, Dr.
Chandra?

Dominick sees Chen hand Will his business card.

CHANDRA (V.O.)
(patiently)
There are many theories regarding
ghostly phenomenon and the human
psyche...

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Another day, another session.

CHANDRA
Some believe they are a
psychological manifestation of
repressed guilt, or echoes of a
childhood trauma, or even a form of
wish fulfillment.

Something moves behind Chandra's chair. She doesn't see it, but Will does, and he knows it's the Shadow Boy.

WILL

When I was an altar boy, I asked the Monsignor that same question. He told me ghosts are a lot like angels. He said their purpose was to teach, or warn, or sometimes to request some favor from the living. Do you believe the dead speak to us?

The Shadow boy's hands slowly reach over the back of Chandra's chair.

CHANDRA

No... I believe it's we who have an obligation to speak for the dead.

Will looks sick, breaks into a sweat. He shuts his eyes.

BILLY (V.O.)

It doesn't work that way.

TOMMY (V.O.)

W-why not?

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. FIRE EXIT, BARBERSHOP - DAY (MID-1970S)

The moment Tommy extends his hand, hoping for a handshake.

Billy eyes Tommy's offered hand.

TOMMY

Be my friend?

Billy finally shakes Tommy's hand.

BILLY

Yeah, sure.

Tommy beams.

TOMMY

Promise?

SMASH CUT BACK TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Will opens his eyes. There's nothing behind Chandra's chair.

CHANDRA

William?

WILL

I need you to put me under again.
I'm close. I can feel it.

He turns to the window, and the snow dappled trees beyond. PUSH IN on those gnarled, lifeless trees.

CHANDRA (O.S.)

Very well.

We hear a DOOR BELL RING.

INT. FOYER, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

Sarah opens the front door to find a NJ State Trooper in dark sunglasses standing there. She sees it's Dominick.

DOMINICK

I'm here about your husband, Mrs. Stone. He's in a bit of trouble. I can take you to see him.

Sarah recognizes the WHITE ESCALADE at the curb. THREE MERCENARIES climb out dressed in suits and black overcoats.

No patrol cars. No badges. No uniforms. No fucking way.

She tries to shut the door. Dominick grabs it, but she slams it hard on his fingers.

DOMINICK (CONT'D)

Damn it!

He yanks his fingers out.

Sarah shuts and locks the door, then looks down the hall to the kitchen.

Through the glass door there, she sees TWO MERCENARIES approaching from the patio.

KAITLYN (O.S.)

Mommy, who's there?

Sarah sees Kaitlyn and Peter at the top of the staircase.

BAM! BAM!

The front door shutters, the door frame cracks.

They're coming.

BAM!

SARAH
Go! Mommy's room! Now!

BAM!

Sarah races up the stairs after them.

We hear GLASS BREAKING at the back door, then...

BAM-SLAM!

The front door flies open.

Dominick pushes past TWO MERCENARIES who wield a tactical battering ram.

He sees Sarah race up the stairs and follows.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

Sarah chases Kaitlyn and Peter into the room, locks the door behind them, props a chair against the door knob.

SARAH
In here!

She throws open a closet with louvered doors, pulls a lock box from the shelf, and conceals the children in the closet.

Terrified, she kneels on the floor, fumbles with the lock...

She can't remember the combination!

SARAH (CONT'D)
Damn it!

THUD!

The bedroom door shutters, it barely holds.

IN THE CLOSET the children watch through the louvers as their world falls apart.

THUD!

Sarah finally springs the lock...

Throws open the lid...

IT'S EMPTY!

She stares at a foam mold where Will's revolver once lay.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Shit!

Sarah tosses the lock box, then remembers something.

THUD!

She looks under the bed, a gleam of hope in her eyes.

She reaches into the darkness for something, her fingers stretching, clawing...

INT. HALLWAY, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

Dominick throws his shoulder into the door again.

THUD!

He finally steps back. Two Mercenaries approach with the battering ram, just as...

KA-BOOM!

The door explodes out into the hall. The attackers scatter.

The gaping hole in the door reveals Sarah, barely able to keep her feet, a smoking shotgun in her hands.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

Sarah fumbles to reload the shotgun, drops the shells.

BAM-SLAM!

Dominick and his men force the door open and charge in.

Peter's about to scream. Kaitlyn covers his mouth, then his eyes. She holds him tight.

Dominick grabs the shotgun from Sarah...

DOMINICK
Bitch!

...and slams her in the head with the rifle butt.

SMASH CUT TO:

WHITE.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL that it's Snow. Lots of it.

FURTHER REVEAL:

EXT. THE BLOCK - DAY (MID-1970S)

It's January. Billy's neighborhood is covered with a blanket of white.

Snow-entombed parked cars. Snow-capped picket fences. An icicle-adorned basketball net. Ice-choked rain gutters.

TV WEATHER MAN (V.O.)
 That's right, the kids have a snow day. All public and parochial schools are reported closed in Bergen, Essex, and Union counties, as well as government offices, and --

INT. LIVING ROOM, BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

CLICK.

Phyllis turns off the television. She has a steamy Harold Robbins paperback in hand as she curls up on the couch.

BILLY (O.S.)
 (calling out)
 Ma?

PHYLLIS
 Yeah?

BILLY (O.S.)
 I can't find the good gloves, the leather ones.

The door bell RINGS.

She puts the book down on the table and conceals its racy cover with a church bulletin.

INT. FOYER CLOSET, BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy, dressed in coat and hat, kneels by the open closet sifting through a shoebox of gloves.

BILLY
 These are all *little-kid* gloves.

Phyllis passes by.

PHYLLIS
Here, use these.

She pulls a pair of lime-green knit gloves from the box.

STAY ON Billy as Phyllis continues to the front door.

BILLY
(whining)
Awww, jeez. These look like
radioactive puke.

He pulls on the gloves and puts the rest away.

PHYLLIS (O.S.)
Billy, someone's here for you.

BILLY
I'm Comin', Sy.

INT. FRONT DOOR, BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

Phyllis steps aside and Billy sees...

A grinning Tommy standing in the door. He wears his make-shift cold weather gear, the P.A.L. T-shirt pulled over a red sweat shirt.

TOMMY
Hi, B-Billy.

BILLY
Oh... Hi, Tommy.

TOMMY
L-Look.

Tommy points to the bold letters P.A.L. (Police Athletic League) on his own shirt. Billy looks confused.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
I'm your pal, Billy. G-Get it?

Tommy laughs at his joke, Billy does not.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
C-come on, Billy. L-let's play.

BILLY
Listen, Tommy. Wait for me up on
the corner. I'll be right out.

He closes the door and heads in the opposite direction.

PHYLLIS
Where are you going?

FOLLOW BILLY as he hurries through the hall, through the living room, into the kitchen, to escape out the back door.

EXT. BILLY'S BACK PORCH - DAY (MID-1970S)

As Billy emerges onto his back porch, Tommy turns the corner and appears at the bottom of the steps, having just run around the house.

TOMMY
(a little winded)
L-Let's play, Billy

Billy steps back. He bumps into Phyllis, who now stands in the kitchen doorway.

She leans against the door jam below a hanging metal dinner bell and smirks. She's eating this up.

PHYLLIS
Have fun.

Billy looks pained.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
We're eating early. I'll ring the bell. When you hear it, don't dawdle. I have plans tonight.

Billy starts down the steps.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
And Billy...

He pauses, looks back. His mother's expression hardens.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
Don't go off the block.

Billy rolls his eyes.

PHYLLIS (CONT'D)
I mean it. Don't go off the block.

Billy finally heads down the steps.

We hear the distant, throaty GURGLE of a bad car muffler.

EXT. STREET BESIDE BILLY'S BACKYARD - DAY (MID-1970S)

From across the street, we see Billy descend his porch steps into the yard as Phyllis retreats into the house.

The GURGLING MUFFLER grows closer.

In the F.G., the black Lincoln creeps past, the driver unseen, snow CRUNCHING beneath its tires.

SIMON (V.O.)
(mocking)
Th-th-th-that's all, folks.

EXT. BILLY'S BACKYARD - DAY (LATER) (MID-1970S)

LUCY
(quietly to Simon)
Don't make fun of 'im.

TOMMY
Yeah, don't make fu-fun of me,
Simon. I'm Bi-bi... I'm Billy's
best friend.

Simon and Lucy turn to Billy. *What the hell?*

BILLY
(to Simon and Lucy)
Forget it.

Billy turns away and grabs a handful of snow, packs it into a snow ball.

SIMON
(sotto voce)
So, he's your best friend now?

BILLY
(sotto voce)
Just... just drop it.

IN THE YARD NEXT DOOR, Unseen by Billy and his friends, Carl and Crazy Jimmy slip from behind some bushes and hide behind a snow-capped picnic table.

INTERCUT between Billy/Lucy/Simon and Carl/Crazy Jimmy in the adjoining backyard.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(changing the subject)
Hey, Lucy. Where'd Frank and the others go?

LUCY

They went 'round the backa the
block after your mom chased 'em.

BILLY

We should go after 'em.

Now Crazy Jimmy climbs a tree behind Billy's garage. He moves up the branches nimbly, despite having only one eye.

SIMON

Why? You eager to eat some yellow
snow?

BILLY

That was one time and we were six.
Give it a rest. Come on, we can do
this.

SIMON

Go after them? Are you mental?
They'll cream us.

Rudy and Freddy, followed by Tommy, finish their snow angels and join Billy, Simon and Lucy in building up their snow fort and making snowballs.

LUCY

Let's stay here and finish the
fort, in case they come back.

SIMON

Why do we always get stuck with the
little kids.

LUCY

They can hear you.

HISSSSSSS...

SIMON

They can barely throw a--

A snowball hits Simon in the back - *SMACK!*

SIMON (CONT'D)

Ow!

Carl carries an armful of snowballs and attacks from the yard next door.

Lucy points skyward.

LUCY

Look out!

Crazy Jimmy balances precariously on the snowy roof of Billy's garage, throwing snowballs from above.

Billy and his friends return fire.

BILLY
Where's Frank?!

HISSSSSSSSSSS...

He turns and sees Frank behind him, just as a snowball hits him in the side of the head -- *SMACK!*

Billy slips, goes down hard on his ass.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Ahhh! Son of a...

Billy staggers to his feet and returns fire.

Icy projectiles zip through the air in a buzzing swarm. The LAUGHTER is contagious. Memories are being made.

Then Crazy Jimmy loses his footing.

CRAZY JIMMY
Oh, Shit!

The melee stops. All eyes turn to the garage roof.

Crazy Jimmy lands on his tail and slides down the inclined roof, rolls on his belly, claws for purchase. He grabs the rain gutter. It *RRRRIPS* out of the wood frame and...

He falls onto the snow fort -- *THUD!*

Silence.

No movement from the fort. The kids all stare, unbelieving.

Crazy Jimmy staggers to his feet, dazed, a twisted piece of rain gutter clutched in his hand.

He smiles. And then he laughs. Relief ripples through the group and they all laugh.

FRANK
That was wicked, man!

Then a snowball from O.S. hits Crazy Jimmy in the chest. The laughter stops. Everyone turns to see who threw it.

A guilty Tommy giggles.

CRAZY JIMMY
(his good eye narrowing)
Hey, mental case. You just opened a
whole canna ass-whoop.

Tommy reaches for another snowball.

BILLY
No, Tommy! Run!

HISSSSSSS....

A Frank Stone snowball rockets past Billy and hits Tommy
in the head -- *SMACK!*

Tommy reels backward, red-faced, off balance, exposed.

Crazy Jimmy, Carl and Frank unleash a fusillade of icy
projectiles on Tommy.

SMACK! SMACK, SMACK!

The rest of the kids just watch, and laugh. Even Billy.

Tommy backpedals, waves his arms as if to chase away a
swarm of stinging hornets -- *SMACK, SMACK, SMACK, SMACK!*

He falls hard on his ass atop the ruined snow angel.

Billy's laughter peters. His smile fades. He sees...

Everyone laughing at Tommy.

The snowballs stabbing at Tommy.

The agony in Tommy's eyes.

Finally, the rain of snowballs and the laughter stops.

Tommy lays quiet in the snow, unmoving.

The gang all creep closer for a look.

Tommy is silent, red-faced, open-mouthed. He cries so hard
no sound will come. He catches his breath, and then WAILS
like a wounded animal.

FRANK
(shouts)
Let's go! Let's go! Let's go!

The kids all scatter, leaving Tommy behind.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE BLOCK - DAY (MID-1970S)

Route 5 is a two lane highway that runs behind Billy's block and out of parental sight. This is *The Back of the Block*.

Billy and Simon approach at a dead run, turn the corner, and hide behind some shrubs. Hands on thighs, sucking wind, they laugh.

SIMON
(sotto voce)
Three. Two. One.

DELILAH (O.S.)
Tommieeeee! Tommieeeee!

They laugh harder, and peer through the shrubs, where they have a view of the Schneider back porch a few houses away.

They watch as a sniveling Tommy climbs the porch steps.

EXT. SCHNEIDER BACK PORCH - DAY (MID-1970S)

The door swings open with a CRASH! Tommy flinches. Somewhere in the house a BABY CRIES.

Delilah steps out onto the porch. She wears a faded one-piece house dress and slippers.

INTERCUT between Delilah and Tommy, and Billy and Simon.

DELILAH
(angry, rapid-fire)
How many times have I told you to
stay away from those goddamned
kids?! Now get in here!

Tommy pauses, just out of her reach.

DELILAH (CONT'D)
(screaming)
I said *GET! IN! HERE! NOW!*

Cowed, Tommy inches toward her.

When he gets within reach, Delilah beats Tommy with an open hand, slapping the side of his head and neck, each blow punctuating a word.

DELILAH (CONT'D)
HOW...
(SMACK!)
MANY...
(SMACK!)
TIMES...
(MORE)

DELILAH (CONT'D)
(SMACK!)
HAVE...
(SMACK!)
I...
(SMACK!)
TOLD...
(SMACK!)
YOU...
(SMACK!)

Delilah continues beating Tommy.

TOMMY
No! I didn't do nothing wrong. No!
Stop! I just wanted to play!

Billy and Simon are shocked by the sight.

Tommy backs away while fending off the blows.

DELILAH
Come here, goddamn it!

Delilah pulls him back, and beats him ferociously.

Tommy finally pushes Delilah away.

TOMMY
(angry)
F-fuck you, you fat cow!

Delilah slaps him hard across the face -- CRACK!

Billy and Simon flinch.

Tommy staggers, then tumbles down the porch steps to the ground below.

DELILAH
Get back here!

Tommy gains his feet and runs away.

DELILAH (CONT'D)
Little shit.

Delilah retreats to the kitchen, and SLAMS the door.

Billy and Simon are stunned into silence.

EXT. THE BACK OF THE BLOCK - DAY (MINUTES LATER) (MID-1970S)

Billy and Simon walk in awkward silence along Route 5, well-concealed from parents by a row of trees and bushes.

Lucy emerges from behind some shrubs.

LUCY
Hey, wait up.

She falls in step behind them.

LUCY (CONT'D)
You guys see?

BILLY
(still affected)
Yeah, we saw.

Billy pulls a dented tin of Sucrets from his back pocket.

He thumbs open the lid to reveal four lozenges. Simon and Lucy, take one each. Billy takes one for himself. One remains.

Lucy picks up her pace and falls in beside Simon so they now walk side-by-side ahead of Billy.

LUCY
Hey, Simon? You going to the school
dance next month?

Billy rolls his eyes.

SIMON
Not sure, maybe. I don't know.

LUCY
Yeah, I don't know either.

Billy pretends to stick a finger down his throat.

SIMON
I'm not a big dancer, so, you know.

LUCY
It's not about the dancing, silly.

SIMON
Oh...
(dawning on him)
Oh.

Billy falls back, putting distance between himself and the awkward conversation that continues unheard.

Tommy's distant voice calls out. Only Billy hears it.

TOMMY (O.S.)
Billeeee!

He peers over his shoulder to see Tommy, far behind, waving, heading in their direction.

Oh, shit. Not again.

Billy turns away, pretends not to see him.

TOMMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Billeeee!

Billy shakes his head, refuses to turn around. Then...

CA-CHUNK!

The sound of a slamming car door freezes Billy in his tracks.

An ENGINE RACES, a bad muffler GURGLES and COUGHS.

Billy peeks over his shoulder as the black Lincoln pulls from the curb, passing him on his left.

He glimpses only the back of the driver's dark-haired head.

But as the car pulls away, Billy sees Tommy in the back window looking out at him with those expressionless eyes.

He's chewing a piece of candy.

Billy considers the Sucrets tin. There is one left.

Simon and Lucy have seen none of this.

Billy's breath grows short. His heartbeat thrums in his ears.

THUMP-THUMP... THUMP-THUMP...

CHANDRA (V.O.)
Three...

Simon and Lucy, who continue walking, oblivious.

THUMP-THUMP... THUMP-THUMP...

CHANDRA (V.O.)
Two...

Billy can't breath. He reaches out for Simon and Lucy...

THUMP-THUMP... THUMP-THUMP... THUMP-THUMP... THUMP-

CHANDRA (V.O.)
One.

SNAP.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

Will wakes from his trance, rubs his eyes.

CHANDRA
You were in distress. What was it?

WILL
I know who did it. And who didn't.
I remember... I remember it all.

Will hurries over to her desk, fires up Chandra's laptop.

CHANDRA
Tell me what you saw.

WILL
No. In writing. I need to write it
down before it's gone. I need your
computer.

He pulls the red flash drive from his pocket and plugs it in.

CHANDRA
Talking about it can--

WILL
No. They'll want it in writing.

CHANDRA
Who?

WILL
The police, the court, the judge. They
always want confessions in writing.

PUSH IN ON WILL as he frantically types away.

EXT. CORNER OF ROUTE 5 & WOODLAWN - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy is lost in thought as he, Simon and Lucy turn the corner onto Woodlawn Avenue.

Billy reaches out to tap Simon on the shoulder.

BILLY
Hey guys, I think Tommy just--

Lucy puts out a hand to stop them.

LUCY
Shhhhhh....

SIMON
Wha?

Up ahead, at the next street corner, they see Frank, Carl, and Crazy Jimmy standing by a Stop sign.

Lucy grins.

LUCY
(sotto voce)
Watch.

They see a Chevy Impala pass them on the left, and brake at the Stop sign where the older boys are waiting.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY (MID-1970S)

Frank and Carl cross in front of the Impala. Crazy Jimmy crosses behind.

IN THE CAR, an OLD MAN behind the wheel eyes Frank and Carl.

BEHIND THE CAR, Crazy Jimmy crouches unseen behind the trunk, feet flat on the packed snow, knees bent like an alpine skier.

He grips the chrome bumper, palms up, fingers curling under.

The Old Man presses the accelerator and...

The Impala pulls away with Crazy Jimmy in tow!

The car picks up speed and drags Crazy Jimmy on his boot bottoms across the surface of the icy road...

Twenty feet... Faster... Thirty feet... Faster... Fifty feet...

He lets go, falls on his tail, slides even further down the road on his ass, pumping a fist in victory -- SCORE!

The gang CHEERS.

LUCY
Come on! We're next!

Lucy and Simon rush toward the intersection.

Billy hesitates, then follows, caught up in the excitement.

They leave Route 5 behind them.

Route 5 is quiet now.

No traffic.

No black Lincoln.

Tommy is just... gone.

MONTAGE - BUMPER SKIING

The gang take turns bumper skiing -- everyone but Billy. Kids drag behind car bumpers, slide, spin and wipe out on the ice, laughing all the time. Once more, they are making memories.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. INTERSECTION - DAY (LATER) (MID-1970S)

Daylight is fading fast. Carl is half-way down the street waving good-bye.

FRANK
(calling out)
Catchya on the flip-side, good
buddy.
(to Billy)
Come on. We have to go, too.

BILLY
No, not yet. I gotta get my turn.

FRANK
Aaaw, wittle baby Biwee didn't get
his turn.

Crazy Jimmy, Simon, and Lucy gather 'round.

BILLY
Quit it.

FRANK
Babies don't bumper ski.

All eyes fall on Billy. He feels it. And then he decides.

BILLY
Hey, Jimmy. Did I tell you that one
day I walked in on Frank while he...

Frank grabs Billy by the arm and roughly pulls him aside.

FRANK
(sotto voce)
You're playin' with fire.

He squeezes Billy's arm like a vice.

BILLY
(sotto voce)
I'm catchin' the next ride. And
you're gonna to help me.

FRANK
(sotto voce)
You tell, and I'll break your face.

Billy makes a pumping motion with his fist that only Frank sees.

Frank finally eases his grip.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Hey, Jimmy. Let's do one more. It's
Billy's turn.

Above them, the street lamp flutters to life.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(to Billy)
Just one. It's gettin' dark and
Mom's gonna ring the bell soon.

MOMENTS LATER.

A Pontiac Grandville pulls to a stop at the corner. Its V8 engine RUMBLES. The gang starts to cross.

IN THE CAR, the driver, a BEARDED MAN, 20s, watches Frank, Crazy Jimmy, and Simon pass in front of him. Billy and Lucy cross in the back.

BEHIND THE CAR, Billy crouches behind the trunk.

He grips the lip of the rear bumper, and then... *Nothing*.

The Grandville's engine just RUMBLES softly.

The exhaust pipe blows a plume of moist, hot air.

Billy's hands shake, his breath fogs.

IN THE CAR, the Bearded Man's foot is about to step on the gas, but freezes. It hovers above the pedal.

He's annoyed, as a sedan slowly passes through the intersection in front of him.

Finally...

HE SLAMS HIS FOOT DOWN ON THE GAS PEDAL!

The engine ROARS!

The tachometer SPIKES!

IN THE STREET, Frank's head whips 'round, eyes searching for Billy.

BEHIND THE CAR, Billy sees the rear tires spin and WHINE on the snow and ice.

Rooster tails of slush jet into the sky.

The boot of the Grandville begins to fishtail. Billy sees a spinning tire slide across the ice toward him.

His eyes grow wide with terror!

The WHINING changes to SCREECHING as the tires trade slush for black top and...

The car explodes through the intersection and down Woodlawn Avenue with Billy hanging on for his life!

CRAZY JIMMY
(impressed)
Holy shit.

Frank and the others are frightened.

SIMON'S MOM (O.S.)
(calling out)
Siiiiimooooon! Diiinerrrr!

SIMON
Damn it.

FRANK
(to Simon and Lucy)
You two better go.

LUCY
Nuh-uh, no way. He's off the block.
We gotta--

FRANK
No. I'll get 'im. This is my fault.
You have to get outta here.

Simon tries to pull Lucy away.

SIMON
He's right. My mom can't find out,
or we're screwed. Let's go.

Lucy reluctantly heads off with Simon as...

A CITY BUS turns on to Woodlawn heading in Billy's direction.

FRANK
Oh, God.

EXT. WOODLAWN AVENUE - DUSK (MID-1970S)

Billy rockets down the road on the Grandville's bumper. WIND ROARS in his ears. His terrified grimace turns to a grin, then a broad smile.

BILLY
Yeeeeeehaaaaaa!

The road slopes downhill. The Grandville speeds up, then...

BEEEEEEEEP! BEEP, BEEP, BEEEEEEEEEPEP!

A startled Billy peers over his shoulder where...

The city bus bears down on him. In the windshield, he sees a panicked BUS DRIVER pounding the horn.

BEEEEEEEEP! BEEP, BEEP, BEEEEEEEEEPEP!

Billy tries to get off the bumper, but HE'S STUCK!

UNDER THE BUMPER, we see a bolt has pierced Billy's knit glove and become tangled in the weave.

BEEEEEEEEP! BEEP, BEEP, BEEEEEEEEEPEP!

The bus looms closer!

BILLY (CONT'D)
(panicked, rapid-fire)
Hail Mary, full of grace. Our Lord
is with thee...

He yanks hard at the glove...

It rips open...

The bolt cuts deep into his hand, draws blood...

BUT HE STILL CAN'T GET FREE!

IN THE GRANDVILLE, the Bearded Man sees the bus behind, a red traffic light ahead, and hits the brakes.

ON THE BUMPER, red tail lights flash in Billy's eyes.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Blessed art thou among women, and
blessed is the fruit of they womb,
Jesus...

He thrashes his hand -- yanking, twisting -- and finally...

BILLY PULLS HIS HAND FREE OF THE GLOVE!

BILLY (CONT'D)
Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for
us sinners...

The Bus Driver forces all his weight down on the brake.
The straining compressors cry out!

CHI SSSSSSSSS!

METAL GROANS in the vehicle's undercarriage. The bus starts to fishtail. The Bus Driver struggles for control.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Now and at the hour of our death.

Billy swings free of the bumper...

Slides into the parking lane...

Hits a large pile of packed snow and ice...

Rockets up the ice ramp...

And soars through the air!

BEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE...

AT THE INTERSECTION...

KA-BOOM!

The bus impacts the Grandville, slamming it into the car ahead, lifting and crushing the trunk, rear window exploding in a shower of glass.

The damaged bus horn blares -- *BWA AAAAAAA...*

DOWN THE STREET, Frank and Crazy Jimmy see the crash in the distance.

FRANK
Noooo!

AAAA AAAAAA...

IN A DRIFT, near the accident, Billy lies concealed in the snow, exhausted but unharmed.

AAAA AAAAAA--

The bus horn stops as the engine dies.

Billy scrambles out of the drift to see The Bearded Man and the Bus Driver exit their vehicles.

STAY ON BILLY as he runs away, hurrying along...

THE SIDEWALK. His boots piston up and down in the deep snow as he races to escape blame for the crash.

BEARDED MAN (O.S.)
(calling out)
Come back here, you little bastard!
Look what you did!

BUS DRIVER (O.S.)
(calling out)
You idiot! You could have been killed. Come here!

Billy hurries past...

AN ABANDONED HOUSE -- dark, neglected, boarded up Windows.

Billy suddenly stops when he sees porch lights all around him flicker on. Front doors begin to open.

He's frozen in fear. Behind him the angry Bus Driver and Bearded Man, ahead the RUBBER NECKING NEIGHBORS.

Desperate, Billy turns up the driveway of the abandoned house, races through an arched trellis and into...

DARK SHADOWS.

Billy bangs his shin on something, goes down hard, knocks over a metal trash can...

CRASH-BOOM!

He pushes the can aside, bounces up, runs into...

THUMP-RATTLE!

A tall wooden fence.

He gropes for the gate, grapples at the latch -- locked.

Billy turns back to the street. He's trapped in...

REVEAL:

EXT. SIDE-YARD OF THE ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

A small enclosed yard. It's littered with junk. The old trash can. A bent bicycle frame. A baby carriage without wheels.

Billy eyes the side door of the house and the NO TRESPASSING sign.

Bad idea.

Instead, he creeps back toward the trellis, it's view of the street, and a sliver of light cast by a street lamp.

He peers out and sees...

The bus entangled with the trunk of the Grandville.

The Bearded Man talking with a HOMEOWNER on the doorstep of a nearby house.

NEIGHBORS rubber-necking from windows and porches.

BUS PASSENGERS standing in the street talking. One points in Billy's direction.

Just then, the wail of a distant POLICE SIREN reaches his ears and...

TAP... TAP, CLANG!

Billy jumps at a sound behind him.

He turns to see the gusting wind play with the overturned trash can. The handles flapping -- *TAP, TAP* -- as the can rolls against the bicycle frame with a *CLANG*.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

The POLICE SIREN grows closer.

His eyes shift to the door, and the NO TRESPASSING sign.

Now he stands before the door, staring at it.

His hand reaches out as...

The POLICE SIREN grows louder.

His tentative fingers touch the door knob.

It turns easily in his hand.

The POLICE SIREN is screaming now.

Red and blue lights pulse in the street.

The cruiser has pulled onto Woodlawn.

They're here.

And so Billy opens the door...

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

And slips inside.

EXT. WOODLAWN AVENUE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

A stunned Frank and a sober Crazy Jimmy hide behind a tree looking down the street at the accident.

Police lights pulse red and blue. A distant police radio CRACKLES WITH STATIC and intermittent CHATTER.

CRAZY JIMMY
Come on, man. We should go.

Frank doesn't move. He looks sick. And then a distant bell sounds.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

EXT. BACK PORCH, BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Phyllis bangs the handle of a butter knife against the lip of the dinner bell as her worried eyes scan the neighborhood.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - NIGHT

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

Chandra enters with a bag of take-out.

CHANDRA
I hope you like Chinese...

Will is gone. At the desk, she finds a post-it note on her laptop. It reads:

*I see now the beauty in mending
broken things. I only hope it's not
too late to say what needs to be
said.*

-- Will

POP! POP!

Two bullets rip through Chandra's chest from behind. She staggers, then falls onto the coffee table.

The silver bowl hits the floor and shatters.

Dominick steps from the shadows, smoke rising from his silenced 9mm.

He takes the laptop and exits, fragments of pottery CRUNCHING beneath his shoes.

INT. KITCHEN, THE STONE HOUSE - NIGHT

The house is dark. From the kitchen we see down the hall where Will is a silhouette standing in the broken front door.

WILL (V.O.)
(calling out)
Sarah?! Kaitlyn?! Peter?!

He enters the Kitchen from the foyer, sees the broken patio door, the shards of glass on the floor.

SIMON (O.S.)
The kids are safe. They're at my house.

REVEAL Simon sitting on a chair in a corner of the dark room.

WILL
Where the hell is Sarah?

SIMON
They took her.

WILL
(dawning on him)
They...

SIMON
No one was supposed to get hurt.

WILL
What the hell did you do?

SIMON
I'm sorry, Billy. I was just supposed to keep you away from Bishop. If I'd known he was connected to your story--

Will grabs Simon by his jacket.

WILL
You son of a bitch!

He hurls Simon against the fridge. Simon crumples to the floor.

SIMON
I had to take their money. Lucy was sick... the bills were crushing us... *I had no choice!*

WILL
I trusted you!

Will is stung by his own words as Tommy's voice starts to whisper in his head.

TOMMY (V.O.)
(whisper-singing)
One little angel,
all dressed in white...

WILL (cont'd)
Oh, god...

He staggers across the kitchen. That's when he catches...

A glimpse of the Shadow Boy as he scurries under the table.

Will's hands start to shake. He turns away, leans on the counter, his back to the room.

SIMON (O.S.)
If they go down, I could go to
prison, too. Please, just give
Bishop what he wants.

WILL
I wasn't chasing Bishop.

SIMON
What then?

WILL
The truth... about that day... That
snow day.

Simon staggers to his feet.

SIMON
Snow day...?
(dawning on him)
Jesus, Will. That wasn't your fault.

WILL
Wasn't it? The truth is, Sy... He
was my friend. He trusted me. I let
him down, and it cost us both.

He pulls the red flash drive out of his pocket, considers it.

WILL (CONT'D)
But maybe I can finally set things
right.

Simon inches toward Will's turned back.

SIMON

I don't know what you have on that drive, but they'll kill us all if you don't burry it in the deepest hole you can find.

Simon grabs a TOASTER from the counter and slams it over the back of Will's head -- *CRASH!*

SIMON (CONT'D)

Give it to me!

Will is thrown forward into the counter. Knickknacks scatter, a utensil caddy tips, a few knives spill out.

Simon jumps him, grabs for the red flash drive. They struggle.

WILL

No!

Will throws him off. Simon charges again. Will pulls a knife from the counter. He whirls and...

Will stabs Simon deep in the shoulder -- *THUCK!*

Simon *SCREAMS* in shock and pain.

WILL (CONT'D)

Oh, shit.

Both men are stunned.

SIMON

Jesus...

Simon slumps to his knees, yanks out the knife, drops it to the floor.

WILL

Oh, Sy...

Will props him against a cabinet, grabs a dish towel from the counter, pressed it against Simon's wound.

WILL (CONT'D)

What the hell are we doing?

SIMON

I think I'm bleeding, what's it look like to you?

WILL

I'll call for help. But I'm out of time, so before I do, I'm going to have to trust you one last time.

He pulls the Sports Illustrated from his coat pocket, hands it to Simon, revealing the bloody hand print.

WILL (CONT'D)
If our friendship ever meant anything to you, you'll make sure the authorities get this when they arrive. Tell them to check for two sets of DNA. Mine will be one of them.

Will heads for the door.

SIMON
Where the hell are you going?

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

WILL
To see an old friend.

BILLY (V.O.)
Oh, God!

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

We're back in the cellar, in the midst of the worst moment of Billy's young life.

He's holding the gold chain with the inverted crucifix, puzzling over it.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

A stuttering VOICE whispers from the darkness, young and distressed.

TOMMY (O.S.)
(whisper)
Bi-Billy?

Billy freezes for a second, listens.

TOMMY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(whisper)
I di-didn't do nothin' wr-wrong,
Billy.

He grabs the light, holds it toward the voice.

TAP... TAP, CLANG...

BILLY
(sotto voce)
Holy shit.

The light reveals the filthy, shivering Tommy. He flinches when the light touches him, as if expecting a blow.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Tommy? Wha... H-How did you get here?

TOMMY
It wa-wasn't my fault, Billy. I ju-just wanted to play.

CLANG, CLANG... CLANG, CLANG...

Billy looks at the body, then at Tommy.

BILLY
Oh, God.

TOMMY
(whines)
Please don't tell. Please, I just wanted to play. Promise you won't tell. Please.

Billy takes a deep breath. He eyes Tommy and considers the streaks of dirt on his face made by his tears.

BILLY
If not you... then who did this?

TOMMY
It was...

Above them, a floor board CREAKS. The boys freeze.

Tommy points a finger skyward.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
(whispers)
...him. The man driving the black car.

Billy lifts the lantern to the exposed beams overhead.

More FOOTSTEPS.

Bill glances from the source of the footsteps to the crucifix in his hand.

BILLY
Oh, no.

The cellar door opens with a SPUTTERING SQUEAL.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(whispers)
We have to get out of here. We have
to get home.

TOMMY
(whispers)
This way! This way!

Tommy grabs his arm. Billy drops the chain in the dirt.

The two boys race deeper into the cellar and through a
UTILITY DOOR. They lock it behind them, hurry past the oil
furnace to...

The back corner of the cellar, where the lantern reveals
concrete stairs leading up to large metal storm doors.

HURRIED FOOTSTEPS trundle down the CREAKY wooden stairs.

BILLY
He's coming!

They both grapple with the handle of the storm doors.

TOMMY/BILLY (OVERLAPPING)
I can do it! No, I got it! Let me
do it! I can --

THUD!

The utility door shudders. Then again...

THUD!

Billy and Tommy work the handle -- IT GIVES!

BILLY
That's it! That's it!

CRASH!

A pickaxe blade EXPLODES through the utility door.

Then again...

CRASH!

The boys push the door open...

But it slams back down on them -- IT'S TOO HEAVY!

BILLY (CONT'D)
One, two, now!

A final, desperate shove...

The storm door swings high on its hinges...

Pauses at its apex...

Threatens to slam shut...

A foot kicks open the utility door -- CRASH!

The storm door swings completely open, crashing to the patio -- BONG!

The boys tumble out just as a shadowy figure swings the pickaxe, the blade finding only the concrete step, sparks flying.

EXT. PATIO/YARD, ABANDONED HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy and Tommy run across the patio and into the backyard.

They reach a chain link fence, throw themselves over it.

Tommy keeps his feet and sprints away into the night.

Billy falls to the snowy ground on the other side. As he regains his feet, he steals a look back and sees...

The silhouette of a man, cast by the lantern's glow, stands at the threshold of the cellar steps, pickaxe in hand, watching him.

Billy races off into the night in search of Tommy.

EXT. EAST GLENDALE AVENUE - NIGHT (LATER) (MID-1970S)

Billy emerges from behind a house and begins to cross the road. He stops in the middle of the deserted street.

BILLY
(whisper-shout)
Tommy!

No sign of Tommy. He is alone, and far from home.

A wash of headlights turn on to the road in the distance.

He crosses the street and hides behind a bush.

The car approaches. Its broken muffler COUGHS and GURGLES.

Billy peers through the bush to see the black Lincoln slowly roll past. A shadowy figure behind the wheel scans the neighborhood, searching.

Billy slips into the shadows and disappears through a hedge.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

EXT. HELIPAD, RURAL AIRPORT - NIGHT

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

On the tarmac, Julian stands beside a Bishop Corp chopper, blades cutting the air in prep for take-off.

Will approaches, a confidence in his stride.

WILL
Are my conditions clear?

JULIAN
Your wife is safe, Mr. Stone.
Provided, that is, you've kept Mr.
Bishop's confidence.

WILL
And I speak with Bishop face to
face.

JULIAN
He's been looking forward to it.

Will hands over the red flash drive and they climb aboard the chopper.

EXT. COLUMBIA AVENUE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy walks along Columbia Avenue, a highway lined with small businesses. The shops are closed, the street deserted. Still no sign of Tommy.

RUMBLE-GURGLE-RUMBLE...

He turns. It's the black Lincoln. Headlights snap on. They're blinding.

Billy jackrabbits down Columbia Avenue and crosses an intersection, right in front of a pickup truck.

The driver hits the brakes and horn.

BEEEEEEEEE....

Billy jumps back. The pickup hydroplanes past him.

...EEEEEEEEEPP!

PICKUP DRIVER
Asshole!

Billy races across the street and into the only business that's open.

The sign above the door reads:

**THE COLUMBIA
Bar and Packaged Goods**

INT. COLUMBIA BAR - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

A claustrophobic little gin mill filthy with a mix of tobacco ash, grease, dust, and a whiff of desperation.

Billy bursts through the door and freezes. The few solitary DRINKERS turn and stare.

The BARTENDER, 40s, with tattooed forearms and a filthy apron, eyeballs Billy.

Beside him at the bar sits a PATRON, 30s, shaggy-haired, and sporting a well-worn hound's-tooth coat and cap.

The Patron casts a quizzical eye at Billy, then turns back to his drink.

BILLY
(to Bartender)
Mister? You got a john in here?

The bartender waggles a thumb.

BARTENDER
(annoyed)
Back hall.

Billy eyes the Patron sitting at the bar. The man doesn't look at him. Instead, he watches something in the mirror behind the bar.

Billy whirls, looks out the plate glass window, sees the black Lincoln at the curb.

The cab is dark. Its headlights glow. Its wipers pulse rhythmically.

He's waiting.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Do your business an' get out.

Drunk with terror, Billy staggers toward the back hall.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Hey, kid. This ain't no goddamned
playground.

IN THE BACK HALL, he breaks into a run, races *past* the Men's Room door.

AT THE BAR, the large Patron still sits on his stool, still pretends to ignore Billy, still watches the black Lincoln in the mirror.

Past him, in the B.G., we see down the hall as Billy pushes open the fire exit and races out, triggering the door alarm.

BUZZZZZ...

BARTENDER (CONT'D)
Son of a bitch.

ZZZZZZZ...

The others in the bar watch Billy's exit, but not the Patron at the bar.

He drops a fiver beside a full glass of beer. His hand is scarred and missing two fingers. It's The Driver.

ZZZZZZZ...

EXT. ALLEY PARKING LOT - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

ZZZZZZZ...

Billy, hands on knees, gasps for air as the fire exit closes behind him.

...ZZZZZ-CA-CHUNK.

He takes in the narrow, deserted parking lot. A few snow-covered parked cars. Second floor apartment windows with shades drawn.

A street lamp illuminates the lot's entrance and the street beyond. It's snowing harder now.

He hurries deeper into the alley, passing the rear fire exits of small businesses. Signs above each door read AL JOHNS, TAXI STAND, HAIR SALON, and finally, the BARBERSHOP.

The alley leads Billy to the trash dumpster, and a high fence.

He's trapped, exhausted, terrified.

RUMBLE-GURGLE-RUMBLE...

Billy cocks an ear. *He's coming...*

The black Lincoln turns into the alley parking lot.
Headlights wash over Billy, blinding him, as...

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

EXT. SKIES OVER THE BISHOP COMPOUND - NIGHT

We're blinded by the glare of a chopper's running lights.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

The Bishop Corp Chopper ROARS past to REVEAL an AERIAL VIEW of a Kennedy-esque compound surrounded by forest.

INT. BISHOP CHOPPER - NIGHT

BUZZZZ--

Julian presses a switch, kills the buzzer.

JULIAN
Yes, Martin.

BISHOP PILOT
(over intercom)
Prepare for landing.

Will secretly types a text message into his smartphone.

JULIAN (O.S.)
Send word. Have Mr. Bishop made
ready.

Will presses SEND.

INT. KITCHEN, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY

A gaggle of FBI AGENTS and local POLICE OFFICERS work the crime scene. Banks bags up the bloody Sports Illustrated as Chen looks on.

BANKS
If your hunch is right about Bishop Corp covering up an old murder,
this DNA could be our smoking gun.
I'll have the lab put a rush on it.

Chen, pissed off, turns to Simon who's having his shoulder bandaged by an EMT.

CHEN

We are way beyond bank fraud here. Now it's obstruction of justice and *kidnapping*. This is where the pencils get put away and the guns come out, so you better start talking, before it's too late to save your friends.

SIMON

I didn't know it would lead to this, I swear.

Chen's smartphone *PINGS*. Simon's *PINGS* as well.

SUPERIMPOSE FLOATING TEXT MESSAGE:

"173.3.11.70.30.011775"

CHEN

(eyeing smartphone)
It's from Stone.

SIMON

(eyeing smartphone)
I got it too.

CHEN

One hundred seventy three. Three.
Eleven...

Chen hands his phone to Banks.

CHEN (CONT'D)
What do you make of this?

BANKS

Could be anything. But the format... these first few digits... Might be an IP address. It's a long-shot.

Banks fires up her laptop on the kitchen table.

CHEN

These last digits... Oh-one-one-seven-seven-five... Could be a date, January 1975, but... thirty? What the hell could thirty mean?

SIMON

(dawning on him)
It means the end.

CHEN
Of what?

SIMON
"Thirty" is a code journalists
place at the bottom of their copy
to signify the end of the story.

CHEN
The story Stone was chasing.

PING! PING! PI-PING!

Simon's smartphone erupts with a swarm of notifications.
He checks his phone.

CHEN (CONT'D)
What is it?

SIMON
Jesus... He sent that same text to
our friends across the media. The
Times, The Post, The Globe, Time
Magazine. *Shit.* Now they're all
crawling up my ass for answers.

CHEN
Whatever he has, he wants the world
to know it.

SIMON
They'll figure out this code on
their own. It's just a matter of
time. You need to find him first,
before this all breaks.

CHEN
Think. You know him best.

BANKS
I have something.

They lean over Banks's shoulder where she has a window
open on her laptop. It's calling for a password.

BANKS (CONT'D)
Anybody know the magic word?

Chen eyes Simon.

SIMON
Yeah... I think I do.

He shoos Banks aside and types seven letters...

S N O W D A Y

Simon hits enter. A flood of folders, documents, and photos suddenly fills the laptop screen.

CHEN

Jackpot.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

EXT. SOCCER FIELD - NIGHT (LATER)

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

A high school soccer field across the street from the Stone house. Chen and Banks do a walk-and-talk as they hurry toward an idling FBI Chopper.

BANKS

Stone left us a crumb trail. His message was bounced off a cell tower only a hundred yards from the Bishop Compound.

CHEN

And the warrant?

BANKS

The judge is signing it now. The tactical response team will have it enroute... Oh, and that photo you asked me to check on...

She pulls out her tablet and shows Chen the photo of Deluca and the Driver that Chen had shown to Will.

BANKS (CONT'D)

Deluca's driver was Victor Angotti. Two tours in Vietnam. Bronze Star. Purple Heart. Discharged in '74 when he lost two fingers to mortar fire. Besides the distinguishing scars, none of old-timers seems to remember much about him, except that he was *very efficient at his work.*

She hands him the tablet. He scans it.

BANKS (CONT'D)

When the turf wars among the east coast families started in the mid-70s.

(MORE)

BANKS (CONT'D)
Some guys went in to retirement.
Some went in the ground. This guy
just slipped away. Probably took a
new identity. No record of him
since. Just disappeared.

Chen hands back the tablet, satisfied.

CHEN
Like a ghost.

Chen boards the chopper.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...
RUMBLE-GURGLE-RUMBLE...

EXT. ALLEY PARKING LOT - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

GURGLE-RUMBLE...

Headlights wash over Billy, then click off as the Lincoln
creeps toward him like a stalking beast.

Billy is frozen in terror when...

CA-CHUNK!

...somewhere a metal door opens.

TOMMY (O.S.)
(whisper-shout)
Over here!

Billy turns to see Tommy, standing at the threshold of the
barbershop's open fire exit door, beckoning.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
C-come on! Hurry!

Tommy disappears into the dark passage and Billy races
after him. As he hurries through the threshold...

REVEAL the tape over the door latch that Billy had left
there long before.

BACK TO THE BLACK LINCOLN where the engine cuts off, the
door swings open, and...

Out from behind the wheel steps... **SAL DELUCA!**

He wears a black peacoat and ski cap. A bloody scratch
runs down his face and there is rage in his eyes.

INT. BACK HALLWAY, THE BARBERSHOP - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

The door shuts behind Billy. He's now the shadowy figure from Will's nightmare, standing alone in the dim red light cast by the Exit sign.

BILLY
(whisper-shout)
Tommy?!

He hurries along the dark tunnel-like hall.

INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy enters the main barbershop.

Silence. No sign of Tommy.

Light from a street lamp across the road streams through the shop's plate glass window.

The trees outside, the letters on the window, and the barber chairs all conspire to cut the room into a jungle of Fritz Lang-inspired shadows.

BILLY
(getting angry)
Come on, you little pussy. Quit hidin' or --

Deluca emerges from the dark hallway behind Billy, grabs him, and slams his face into the wall.

SMASH CUT TO:

BLACK.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

EXT. BISHOP COMPOUND HELIPAD - NIGHT

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

Snow swirls as the Bishop Chopper touches down.

INT. HALLWAY, BISHOP ESTATE - NIGHT

Sarah and Will embrace outside the door to Bishop's Study, surrounded by Julian, Dominick, and FOUR MERCENARIES, in black overcoats.

SARAH
Katey and Peter?

WILL
They're okay. They're safe.

Sarah pushes back from their embrace and punches him hard in the chest.

SARAH
Damn you! Damn you for keeping this to yourself!

She follows this up with another hug, even tighter this time.

WILL
I'm so sorry, Sweetheart. I don't deserve you.

SARAH
Damn right, you don't.

She kisses him.

JULIAN
Mr. Bishop will see you now... alone.

He directs Will to the study's large double oak doors.

Will cautiously places his hand on one of the knobs, turns it.

INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy, a bit dazed, sits in one of the guest chairs, behind him is one of the mirrored walls.

Deluca works to bind Billy's hands with rope.

DELUCA
Well, Kid. Looks like ya struck out again.

Billy now realizes it was Deluca all along and not The Driver. He starts to weep.

DELUCA (CONT'D)
(starting to enjoy it)
Just like the others. Cryin' like a baby.

Billy freezes, as if switch has been thrown. The tears stop. He stares at Deluca with determination and rage.

He drives his boot into Deluca's groin with all his strength. Deluca doubles over.

Billy frees himself from the tangle of ropes but...

Deluca recovers and drives his big, open right hand into Billy's throat, pounding his trachea, stealing his air, driving the back of Billy's head into the mirrored wall, where a spider web of cracks blossoms.

Billy is dazed, but still he struggles.

BILLY
Noooooooo! Noooooooo!

Billy flails his fists like a drowning man.

Deluca brings his left hand up to join his right hand at Billy's throat, but...

Billy reaches out with his mouth and bites Deluca's hand between thumb and forefinger.

Deluca SCREAMS in pain.

Billy bares down, determined to eat the motherfucker's hand. Blood seeps from between his clenched teeth.

Deluca yanks his hand with all his strength.

Billy's body rises out of the chair. He grabs the arms of the chair for support, yanks back, and...

Billy RRRRIPS a mouthful of flesh from Deluca's hand.

Deluca SCREAMS in agony, falls to one knee.

Billy spits the chunk of bloody flesh into his face.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Fuck you, you ugly cow!

Then he kicks, turns and scrambles away, crawling across a row of guest chairs, sending old magazines skittering to the floor.

Deluca, his bloody hand tucked in his armpit, shuffles sideways, staying between Billy and the door to the street.

A desperate Billy leaps at Deluca, pounding his fists into the man's face.

Deluca takes a step back, slips on the Sports Illustrated, goes down hard, and slams his head on the floor.

Billy races for the front door, yanks on the knob, twists the dead bolt key.

IT WON'T OPEN!

BILLY (CONT'D)
Heeeeelp!

EXT. FRONT DOOR, BARBERSHOP - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Through the glass we see Billy pounding on the door, his SCREAMS muffled by the HOWLING WIND.

PUSH IN TO REVEAL a shinny new padlock secures the door.

A hand printed sign reads:

SEE MANAGER ABOUT BACK RENT

INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy raises his elbow to smash the glass when...

Deluca grabs him and hurls him across the room. He collides with the barber chair, sending it sprawling.

Billy scrambles to his knees... Grabs hold of the shelf below the barber's mirror... Pulls himself up, raggedly and blindly... Scissors, combs, glassware and Barbicide spill everywhere.

Deluca circles around between Billy and the hallway exit.

DELUCA
Game's over, Kid.

Billy's hands fumble with something we don't see.

Deluca reaches out with his good hand to grab Billy.

BILLY
(whispers to himself)
Lean into the pitch.

SNICK!

The sound of Luigi's straight razor locking into place rings out like bell.

Billy wheels 'round and attacks. The blade...

Gleams in the lamp light...

Blurs as it races toward its target...

SWOOSHES as it cuts though the air...

Cleaves open Deluca's outstretched hand.

Blood splatters and streaks across the barber's mirror.

Deluca SCREAMS like he's been burned by a torch.

He goes down to one knee, stunned.

Billy doesn't let up. He slashes at Deluca's face, wrenching open his cheek.

Deluca SCREAMS again.

Billy is also SCREAMING now, a primal scream. Tears blind his vision, but still, he doesn't slow, doesn't relent.

He brings the blade down on his tormentor again...

And again...

And again.

Deluca flails his hands to fend off the attack. Blood rains in droplets everywhere...

The radio...

The Sports Illustrated...

Billy's face...

It's a baptism of blood.

Deluca staggers to this feet.

Desperate and enraged, he reaches out and grabs the razor and Billy's hand together in a vice-like grip.

The blade bites into both their hands. Blood washes over their conjoined fingers. Billy HOWLS in pain!

Deluca GRUNTS through clenched teeth as he raises the blade and Billy's hand.

Billy's feet start to leave the ground.

Deluca finally opens his hand.

Billy falls to the floor, his bloody hand landing on the open Sports Illustrated, leaving the bloody hand print.

The blade remains stuck in Deluca's hand, buried to the bone. He whips his hand frantically until the razor flies free and sails into the shadows.

Billy lays in a heap on the floor.

He looks up, sees Deluca looming over him, sees something move in the shadows behind Deluca.

BILLY (CONT'D)
(croaking whisper)
Tommy?

Deluca takes a step toward Billy.

DELUCA
You son of a--

A HULKING SHADOWY FIGURE appears behind Deluca and cracks him over the back of the head.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK:

EXT. ALLEY PARKING LOT - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

A light snow is falling.

Billy staggers from the barbershop into the parking lot.

He kneels, wipes his injured hands on the virgin snow, leaving streaks of blood. Then he grabs a ball of snow in his fist and looks around to take in...

The silent street beyond the parking lot.

The second floor apartment windows with shades drawn.

The black Lincoln, now growing its own coat of snow.

No one to see. No one to hear.

The Driver drags a bloodied Deluca out of the Barbershop. He has one meaty fist tangled in Deluca's hair and another holding Deluca's arm behind his back.

THE DRIVER
Kids have nothin' to do with our business.

DELUCA
Let go!

THE DRIVER
 I can't let you do this, not again.

DELUCA
 You work for me!

The Driver stabs his heel into the back of Deluca's knee, sending him to the icy pavement.

THE DRIVER
 Not any more!

The Driver yanks the crucifix from his own neck and stuffs it into Deluca's mouth.

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Consider this my resignation
 letter, you piece of shit.

With the speed of practiced hands, he wraps a barber's towel (you guessed it, white with a red stripe) around Deluca's face like a gag.

Duct tape appears almost magically from his pocket, winding its way around Deluca's hands.

The Driver pulls the whimpering, prostrate Deluca across the parking lot by his collar, stopping behind the trunk of the Lincoln.

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Looks like I'm getting my shoes
 muddy again.

As Billy looks on, the Driver pulls his pistol and beats Deluca bloody and unconscious. It's a violent beating.

He opens the trunk and Billy sees it's lined with a sheet of plastic. There's a shovel inside.

Out of breath, the Driver sits on the Lincoln's bumper.

He looks at Billy and just shakes his head: *What the hell am I going to do with you?*

And then he decides...

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
 I suppose this makes us accomplices,
 huh, Billy. Do you know what that
 word means? *Accomplice*?

Billy fights back tears, unable to speak.

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
 It means *equally guilty*. So we're gonna keep this between the two of us, right? All of it. Forever.
 'Cause now we're friends, and friends don't betray friends, do they? Well, Billy? Can I trust you to keep our secret?

Billy, terrified, eyes the bloody pistol in the Driver's hand, then looks down at the snowball in his own hand. It is also streaked with blood.

He barely nods.

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
Promise?

BILLY
 (croaking whisper)
 ...yes.

THE DRIVER
 (satisfied)
 Awright then. It's late. You should go home.

Billy is unable to move, the trauma is too much.

THE DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Go on. You need to take care of those cuts. And get cleaned up. Before your mother sees ya.

Billy sleepwalks toward the street, flinching a little when the trunk of the Lincoln SLAMS shut behind him.

He finally reaches the well-lit street, and freedom.

INT. BISHOP'S STUDY - NIGHT

A man's frail, liver-spotted hand lays exposed above bed sheets. It is scarred and missing two fingers.

O.S. a ventilator HISSES in unison with the patient's breathing.

Will's hand, scared deeply across the palm, reaches out to take the old man's hand in his.

DRIVER/BISHOP (O.S.)
 (whispered, labored)
 It would seem our sins have left their scars on us, Billy.

We see Will stands beside a hospital bed and medical equipment that has been wheeled into a book-lined study.

Bishop, now revealed to be the Driver, is over 70, but looks 100. He's a quadriplegic, his body shriveled and useless. The empty husk of a man.

A tube connects his throat to the ventilator.

WILL

I'm lucky to be alive. You were my guardian angel that night. So why all this? Why now?

The Driver gasps his words through the ventilator.

DRIVER/BISHOP

I've done *horrible* things in my life...

(gasp)

...but helping you was the one *good* thing I could hold on to.

(gasp)

I would never undo that.

(gasp)

No, I'm as much a prisoner here as you are.

WILL

It's Julian, isn't it. He worships you.

DRIVER/BISHOP

(gasp)

And now he controls me, and my entire business.

WILL

So this was all his doing.

DRIVER/BISHOP

Except for one thing.

(gasp)

It really was me who wanted you to come.

(gasp)

I have a favor to ask.

EXT. SIDE DOOR, BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy emerges from the shadows, looks around, then quietly slips in through the side door.

INT. BASEMENT UTILITY ROOM, BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy, sans coat, washes up at a utility sink.

He examines both hands. The cuts are bloody, yet mostly superficial.

The gentle stream of running water rinses the blood from his palms and swirls it down the drain.

Billy slurps a mouthful of water, swishes, spits.

He picks a piece of Deluca's flesh from between his teeth and flicks it into the sink where it lays among streaks of dried paint.

The trickling water finally washes the last of Deluca down the drain.

INT. KITCHEN, BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

Billy emerges from the basement into the empty kitchen.

He feels a COLD BREEZE and hears distant, intermittent bursts of police RADIO CHATTER.

Billy looks down the hall to the foyer and sees...

Phyllis stands by the open front door.

Red and blue lights from a police cruiser in the street pulse rhythmically through the open door.

Phyllis looks back over her shoulder, sees Billy. There is fear and hurt in her eyes. She steps back to REVEAL...

A POLICE OFFICER stands in the door way. He holds something in his hand.

It is Billy's torn, bloody, lime green knit glove.

SMACK, SMACK, SMACK!

INT. THE BOY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (MID-1970S)

SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!

Billy lays on his bed face down as Phyllis repeatedly slams a single open hand down on his ass.

Billy hugs his pillow with both hands, staining it with blood. There are no tears, just an accepting, steely-eyed look...

Because real men don't cry.

PHYLLIS

I told you to never go off the block with out permission! Never go off the block! You could have been killed!

Phyllis uses two hands now.

SMACK-SMACK! SMACK-SMACK!

She weeps as she continues the beating, her hands balling up into fists.

POW-POW, POW-POW!

The beating slows. Phyllis is over come by the tears. She collapses, embraces Billy, and sobs.

INT. THE BLOCK - DAY (MID-1970S)

A fresh blanket of snow covers Billy's neighborhood.

TV WEATHER MAN (V.O.)
Gooood mornin', New Jersey!
 Temperatures will remain chilly
 with breezy conditions...

INT. KITCHEN, BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

Phyllis enters with a basket of laundry and heads down into the basement. The living room TV plays in the B.G.

TV WEATHER MAN (O.S.)
 Look for a high of 44 degrees.
 Current temperature is 36 degrees
 in Bergen County, 33 degrees in...

At the kitchen table, Billy slurps breakfast cereal from a bowl and munches on a banana.

Frank sits across from Billy folding a stack of newspapers and stuffing them in a delivery boy's satchel.

He glares at Billy.

FRANK
 (quietly)
 A-hole.

Billy slurps his cereal, uncaring.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (mocking)
 How 'bout my turn. I want my turn.

Still nothing from Billy.

FRANK (CONT'D)
It's your fault.

BILLY
What?

FRANK
That we got grounded, dip-shit.

Billy takes a bite of his banana.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Betcha wish that banana was a dick.

BILLY
You still wackin' off to the Sears
catalog?

Frank finally concedes, shakes his head.

FRANK
(can't help but laugh)
You wrecked a city bus.
Man, you are one crazy S.O.B.

And then they both share a laugh... as equals.

ANCHORWOMAN (O.S.)
...horrific news from Bergen County
this morning. Police say there was
an accident near the intersection
of Woodlawn and Broad Avenue in
Blackwater, yesterday, when a city
bus rear-ended a passenger vehicle.

Billy looks sick.

FRANK
What?

ANCHORWOMAN (O.S.)
No one was hurt in the collision, but
while questioning residents about the
accident, police were led to an
abandoned property on Woodlawn.

INT. LIVING ROOM, BILLY'S HOUSE - DAY (MID-1970S)

Billy and Frank ease themselves down in front of the TV.
On the screen, the ANCHORWOMAN sits at the news desk.

ANCHORWOMAN

There, they discovered the body of a 12-year-old boy. Police say the boy was assaulted and murdered. They believe the killer was in the process of burying the boy under the cellar floor when the collision and subsequent police presence intervened. After notifying the child's family, police have identified the boy as...

The photo of a smiling Tommy appears over the Anchorwoman's shoulder.

ANCHORWOMAN (CONT'D)

...Thomas Schneider, of East Glen Dale Avenue. Young Schneider was a student at...

Billy's eyes bore into the image of Tommy. The red hair. The freckled face. The shrunken, malformed ear.

TOMMY (V.O.)
(whispered)
I'm your p-pal, Billy.

The sound of a car door slamming -- *CA-CHUNK!*

FLASHBACK - CELLAR, THE SNOW DAY

Billy's hand turns a door knob... Discarded underpants... Wadded-up jeans... A bare foot beneath loose earth... A naked thigh... A bare shoulder... A bloodied face... and Tommy's P.A.L. T-shirt.

END FLASHBACK.

Billy is pale-faced, mute, in shock. Tear well in his eyes.

INT. BISHOP'S STUDY - NIGHT

WILL
You want to be free of Julian.
That's the favor you're asking of
me? And how do you propose I do
that?

The Driver's gaze slowly moves from Will's eyes to the corner of the bed sheet.

Will pulls the sheet aside to reveal his wood-handled Smith & Wesson revolver taken by Dominick.

DRIVER/BISHOP
 (gasp)
 I still have some pull with the
 nurses.

Will eyes the gun.

WILL
 I'm no hero.

DRIVER/BISHOP
 (gasp)
 God knows I don't deserve it, but I
 need a friend right now.
 (gasp)
 So, whadaya say, Billy?

EXT. THE BISHOP COMPOUND - NIGHT

KA-POW, KA-POW, KA-POW

AERIAL VIEW of a fire fight in progress. Muzzle flashes. Pulsing blue lights. FBI vehicles surround one of the buildings as the FBI chopper circles to land.

LIEUTENANT (V.O.)
 (shouting to be heard)
 Say again, Command?!

INT. FBI CHOPPER - NIGHT

Chen turns to his team of FOUR FBI SWAT AGENTS as a LIEUTENANT shouts into his helmet radio.

LIEUTENANT
 (shouting, nodding, eyeing
 team)
 Shots fired! Officers down!
 Multiple shooters! Roger, that!

CHEN
 Any sign of the hostages?!

The Lieutenant waves him off, listens, repeats the orders to his men.

LIEUTENANT
 (shouting)
 We have the green light. We're
 going in! Roger that, Command!

CHEN
 What about the hostage protocol?!

LIEUTENANT
 (shouting)
 Command, We're on the ground in
 five, four...

Through the window, Chen see the ground rush up at them as the chopper starts to set down. He draws his own pistol, checks the load.

LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)
 (shouting)
 Three, two...

CHEN
 (sotto voce)
 Oh, fuck me.

INT. BISHOP'S STUDY - NIGHT

KA-POW, KA-POW, KA-POW, KA-POW

The sound of gunfire reaches Will and The Driver.

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

And now they hear the FBI chopper landing, see its flood lights wash over the study windows.

DRIVER/BISHOP
 (smiles)
 You brought the cavalry.

WILL
 Everybody likes a party.

INT. HALLWAY, BISHOP ESTATE - NIGHT

Chen's Swat Team enters the building. They are engaged by a group of BISHOP'S MERCENARIES.

Another fire fight ensues.

INT. BISHOP'S STUDY - NIGHT

KA-POW, KA-POW, KA-POW

The sound of gunfire grows closer as...

The study doors fly open. Dominick rushes in dragging a struggling Sarah.

Julian follows, locking the door behind him.

Will covers the revolver with the bed sheet.

SARAH
(frightened)
Will?

WILL
Sarah... It'll be okay. *Trust me.*

And in that moment, she sees a different man.

SARAH
I do.

JULIAN
Mr. Bishop, I have everything under control. The ambulance is ready for you down in the parking garage. Your jet is waiting at the airport.

He grabs a remote from the desk, presses a button, and two bookcases slide open revealing a large elevator.

INT. HALLWAY, BISHOP ESTATE - NIGHT

The Swat Team fights its way toward Bishop's Study doors. Chen follows close behind.

INT. BISHOP'S STUDY - NIGHT

JULIAN
We'll be gone before they can reach this room. But before we leave...

He looks daggers at Will.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Dominick, show our guests what we do to people who betray Mr. Bishop.

Dominick, holding Sarah with one hand, reaches into his jacket for his weapon with the other.

SARAH
No!

Sarah throws her shoulder into Dominick. She breaks free from his grip but stumbles right into Julian who grabs her.

Dominick draws his Glock and...

KA-BLAM! KA-BLAM!

Two bullets rip through Dominick's chest, dropping him to the floor.

Everyone is stunned. All eyes turn to...

Will, standing beside Bishop, smoke rising from the barrel of his revolver. He turns to a stunned Julian.

WILL
Take your fucking hands off my wife.

A surprised Julian reaches for his own gun.

KA-BLAM! KA-BLAM!

Sarah SCREAMS as Will's next two shots take off the top of Julian's head.

There's a RINGING in Will's ears from all the gun shots.

SARAH
Will...

Will starts to lower the revolver as...

BAM-SLAM!

The study doors explode open.

SWAT AGENTS pour in, weapons drawn. Green sight lasers dance around the room.

The green beams fall on...

Will as he turns toward the door.

SWAT AGENT
Gun!

KA-POW! KA-POW! KA-POW!

Their bullets rip through Will's chest.

Sarah hits the deck and SCREAMS!

Chen rushes in.

CHEN
Hold your fire! Hold your fire!

Will falls to his knees, then to the floor.

His vision blurs and...

He sees something gleam. It's gold.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC (V.O.)
Hang on, William...

WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP-WHUP...

His eyes strain to focus. It is...

INT. MEDEVAC CHOPPER - NIGHT

The cross dangling from the chain at the paramedic's neck.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
We're here. Just hang on for me.

THUMP-SHUTTER!

The chopper vibrates as its skids hit the hospital's roof-top helipad. The door SWOOSHES open.

A team of DOCTORS and NURSES are there with a gurney... and a PRIEST.

FEMALE PARAMEDIC (V.O.)
One... Two...

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

FEMALE PARAMEDIC
Three!

On three, the paramedic and an ORDERLY lift Will from the gurney on to the O.R Table.

A NURSE starts to cut off his bloody clothes. The Priest MUMBLES a prayer, anoints his forehead with oil.

A DOCTOR swings an operating light into place. It shines in Will's eyes. He turns away. His vision is blurry and spotty, but he sees...

There, hiding in the corner behind a cabinet, is the Shadow Boy. He steps out into the open as Will blinks away the blurriness.

And we see now that the boy is Tommy. He's young and fresh and smiling. It's a soft, reassuring smile.

Will smiles back. Tears slip from the corners of his eyes.

TOMMY (V.O.)
(softly singing)
One little angel,
all dressed in white.
Hmmm, Hmmm Hmm-hmm...

FADE THROUGH WHITE TO:

EXT. BILLY'S BACKYARD - DAY (AFTERLIFE)

Billy lays on his back in a fresh, deep blanket of snow.

Someone is HUMMING.

He turns to see that it's Tommy, lying next to him, humming as he makes a snow angel. Tommy smiles at him.

Now they are both making snow angels side-by-side, giggling and playing together in the snow, as friends.

...EEEEEEEEEEEEE-EEEEEEEEE-BEEP-BEEP-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT

BANG-CHUCK!

The defibrillator paddles fire as an unconscious Will convulses on the table.

The doctor pauses, paddles raised, waiting, hoping.

DOCTOR
Come on! Come on!

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OPERATING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Sarah consoles Kaitlyn and Peter as they sit in chairs outside the O.R.

The doctor emerges looking exhausted. But he finally smiles and nods, reassuringly.

Sarah hugs him, overcome with tears of joy.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM, STONE HOUSE - NIGHT (WEEKS LATER)

Will and Sarah are curled up in bed together, still half asleep. Early morning light streams through the window.

Will's bare chest is heavily bandaged and he's lost a lot of weight, but he looks... peaceful.

INT. KITCHEN, THE STONE HOUSE - DAY (LATER)

Sarah is fixing coffee when Will enters and kisses her.

On the counter sits the latest issue of TIME MAGAZINE.

The cover features a child's snow angel at night, abandoned, lit only by the glow of an old Coleman lantern.

The headline reads:

THE SNOW DAY
How Solving a Cold Case Murder
Brought Down Bishop Corp

EXT. THE STONE HOUSE - DAY (LATER)

Will leans on the jamb of the open front door, sips his coffee.

He looks out on a blanket of fresh snow covering the neighborhood, the kind that makes everything seem new and clean and safe and fun.

Kaitlyn and Peter, dressed for the snow, brush past him and race out into the yard.

Sarah comes up behind him, slips an arm around his waist, leans on his shoulder. The embrace is genuine.

IN THE YARD, Kaitlyn and Peter play in the snow.

WILL
Hey, Guys?

The kids pause and look back.

WILL (CONT'D)
Don't go off the block.

They roll their eyes and continue playing in the snow.

FADE OUT:

THE END