

Damaged
Original screenplay by
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FADE IN:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Small and cramped. Noticeably devoid of windows. Lit by two flickering linear florescent light bulbs.

One flashes off.

Barely enough light remains to illuminate the ten chairs arranged in a sloppy circle. Nine women and one man. A support group of some sort.

The man is KELBY (24), tall and lean, slumped in his chair with his hands buried in his pockets, exuding resentment from every pore.

COURTNEY (20s), a plain Jane with over-sized glasses and a phenomenally bad haircut, has the floor, telling an emphatic story with frequent gesturing.

Instead of her voice, we hear:

KELBY (V.O.)

Death. That big dark unknown that brings fear to the hearts of young and old alike. The existential teeter-totter of good versus evil. Heaven versus Hell. The kingdom of God versus eternal damnation. Are the Christians onto something? Do we need to be damn near saint-like if we aspire to enter the pearly gates? Or are the Atheists as right as they think they are with their ultimate anti-climactic theory; young or old, accomplished or stagnant, pure or evil, all destined to rot in a box in the ground?

(pregnant pause)

Who the fuck knows.

Courtney sinks into her seat, exhausted from the flamboyancy of her tale.

A homely woman, easily twice the age of everyone else, GROUP LEADER, perks up.

GROUP LEADER

Anyone else?

Eager hands spring up, all but Kelby's and Courtney's.

KELBY
(under his breath)
It doesn't matter.

All heads snap in his direction. Someone even GASPS. He spoke. He's never spoken before.

Group leader sits up tall in her chair, fixes her inquisitive gaze on Kelby.

GROUP LEADER
I'm sorry?

Kelby still doesn't look up. Still doesn't want to be here.

KELBY
It doesn't matter.

GROUP LEADER
How could it not matter?

KELBY
When you get to the point where the hell you're living in couldn't possibly be any worse than the hypothetical hell that may or may not be waiting for you on the flip side... it doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

A gloomy silence stifles the energy in the room.

Group leader sits with her mouth ajar. This woman has probably never been speechless before and she doesn't quite know how to react.

All the eager hands slump down onto fidgety laps.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Intense sunlight bathes the busy street as pedestrians and motorists go about their day.

Kelby exits a building in a hurry and heads down the sidewalk, joining the foot traffic. He casts a resentful scowl at the sun before flipping up the hood on his sweatshirt. Retrieves a nearly empty pack of cigarettes from his pocket, lights one up.

COURTNEY (O.S.)
Kelby!

Kelby glances over his shoulder. Sees that he's being chased by the girl with the bad hair. Picks up his pace accordingly.

So does Courtney. She catches up as he is forced to stop at a crosswalk. Comes up alongside him. Bumps him playfully with her shoulder.

COURTNEY

Hey. I was calling. Guess you didn't hear.

Kelby's focus remains fixed straight ahead, on the traffic light. The only thing standing between him and getting away from this girl.

KELBY

I did.

Courtney is taken aback, but only for a second. She giggles, shrugs it off. She's one of those resilient types. Or oblivious.

COURTNEY

Oh. Well... wanna grab a coffee?

He fidgets. Checks his watch.

KELBY

I have a thing.

COURTNEY

What kind of thing?

Kelby focuses his attention in the opposite direction. Keeps quiet.

COURTNEY (cont'd)

Most people make something up. For authenticity sake.

(expectant pause)

To spare the other person's feelings.

(getting impatient)

You're not gonna make something up?

Mercifully, the light changes. Traffic ceases. Pedestrians cross the intersection.

Kelby moves with the flow. Courtney hurries to catch up.

COURTNEY (cont'd)
The group has some concerns.

Kelby continues on. He doesn't care. Just wants to be left alone.

COURTNEY (cont'd)
What you said back there... kinda sounds like... you're not gonna do anything... permanent... are you?

Kelby halts at the graffitied glass enclosure of a city bus stop. Extends his hands flat against the glass, as if he's about to be arrested.

A handful of people in the enclosure turn to watch the spectacle.

KELBY
Wanna frisk me? Nothing on my person, but I do have rat poison back at my place.

Courtney frowns. This isn't a joke to her.

KELBY (cont'd)
We done here?

He returns his arms to his sides. Leans up against a light pole. Pulls some earbuds out of his pants pocket and plugs them into his ears.

Courtney promptly pulls them out.

COURTNEY
Ms. Clarke wanted to make the call, but I told her I would talk to you.

She places air quotes around "the call", in case her morbid tone doesn't accurately relay its serious nature.

KELBY
Do I need to sign something, acknowledging that said talk was delivered?

He gives her ample time to respond, then sticks the earbuds back in when she doesn't. Swivels around on the pole so that his back is now to Courtney.

She yanks the other end of the earbuds out of his pocket. It's not connected to anything. She dangles it in front of his nose for a second, as if making some significant point, then stomps off.

Kelby turns to watch her go, then drops the plug end of the earbuds down the front of his hoodie.

INT. CITY BUS (MOVING) - DAY

A small scattering of mid-day riders, most on their cell phones. Some make idle conversation with neighboring passengers.

Kelby sits in the very back, segregating himself from everyone else. Earbuds still in, he stares stoically out the window as the world rushes by in the opposite direction.

EXT. REHABILITATION CENTER - DAY

An idyllic brick building surrounded by willow trees draped with Spanish moss.

INT. REHABILITATION CENTER - DAY

A RECEPTIONIST (40s) sits perched behind the front desk, in the middle of a personal call.

Kelby enters, taking down his hood and pulling out the earbuds. He approaches the desk but the Receptionist continues her conversation, oblivious to his presence.

KELBY

Excuse me.

Receptionist gives him the briefest of glances, then flashes the universal "give me a minute" sign.

When she continues to prattle on, he wanders off to a wall-mounted magazine rack stuffed with pamphlets.

Domestic abuse. Drug abuse. Alcohol abuse. Prescription pill abuse.

He chooses one as a distraction. The bold title reads: "Are you a nymphomaniac?".

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Do you need some help?

Kelby stuffs the pamphlet back in with urgency, as if he's just been caught looking at porn. Slides his hands into his pockets as he ambles over to her desk.

KELBY
I called yesterday. About checking
out a patient.

Receptionist rolls her task chair to the other end of the
desk, in front of her computer, fingers ready to type.

RECEPTIONIST
Name?

KELBY
Sloan.

RECEPTIONIST
Is that a last name?

KELBY
First.

RECEPTIONIST
I need the last name.

KELBY
How many Sloan's do you have?

Receptionist glances up, mildly annoyed.

RECEPTIONIST
The database goes by last name.

KELBY
Shaw comma Sloan.

Receptionist flashes a bemused smirk, then types.

RECEPTIONIST
It'll be a few minutes. Have a
seat.

Kelby aimlessly wanders the room, avoiding the hawk-like
gaze of the now peeved Receptionist.

Receptionist resumes her phone conversation, not quite as
hushed as before.

Kelby sinks down onto one of the leather chairs and picks up
a magazine. Aimlessly flips through it.

An article about mortgage rates at an all-time low. An ad
for erectile dysfunction. Another one for anti-anxiety
medication.

He tosses down the magazine. Picks up another one. It's an
AARP. With a snicker, he puts it back.

Glances over his shoulder at the closed door beside the Receptionist's desk, then at the Receptionist. She's still on the phone. Someone is getting married next week and she doesn't have a date for the wedding. Go figure.

Kelby returns his attention to the table of magazines beside him. Begins to straighten them meticulously, so that they overlap slightly.

Checks back with the Receptionist. Nothing has changed. He gets up and starts pacing.

A second table of disorganized magazines steals his attention as he starts to straighten those as well. Arranges them in alphabetical order. Before he can finish--

A DOOR OPENS, causing him to look away from the magazines.

A petite dark-haired girl, SLOAN (19), enters the waiting area dressed in a drab pair of over-sized sweats. Her complexion has a pallor to it that suggests she hasn't seen the sun in a while.

They stare at each other for a long, awkward beat, her just standing there, him just sitting there. Both reluctant to make the first move.

After quickly completing the magazine organization, Kelby goes to her, cradling her face in his hands. Studies her with intense concentration. The maturity in her eyes belies the youthfulness of her face.

He pulls her into his arms while hers remain stiffly at her sides. However, within seconds, she melts into his embrace, grabbing two fistfuls of his clothing as she buries her face against his chest.

Someone clears their throat loudly, jolting them apart.

REHAB DOCTOR (60s), lanky with an almost completely white mustache, stands behind them, clipboard hugged to his chest. Stern-faced. All business.

Sloan heads for the door.

SLOAN
I need a cigarette.

Kelby reaches into one of his pockets, then the other. Comes back empty on both attempts.

Sloan nonchalantly flashes the crumpled pack of cigarettes she just pick-pocketed as she exits.

He follows her to the door, then observes her closely through a window as she lights up a cigarette.

REHAB DOCTOR (O.S.)
She's not ready to be released.

Kelby keeps his gaze fixed out the window, refusing to give the doctor a fraction of his attention.

REHAB DOCTOR
She's been... reluctant to open up.
If I had more time--

KELBY
If you haven't gotten her to talk
in four months, the odds are not in
your favor.

Rehab Doctor joins him at the window in an attempt to garner his attention. Appears frustrated when he fails.

REHAB DOCTOR
Her issues go far beyond drugs and
alcohol. I apologize for being
blunt but... she's one seriously
damaged young lady. She's by far
the most dysfunctional patient I've
ever encountered in my 37 years as
a clinical psychologist.

Kelby flashes him an annoyed glare before focusing back out the window.

KELBY
She's fucked up. I get it.

WINDOW POV

Sloan stands in the middle of the parking lot blowing circles with the cigarette smoke. She makes eye contact with Kelby. Winks.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby smiles, despite himself.

REHAB DOCTOR
No, I don't think that you do. If
she leaves now, the way she is--

KELBY
(re: clipboard)
Do I have to sign something?

Rehab Doctor reluctantly hands over the clipboard and a pen that he has plucked from his pocket.

Kelby "practices" his signature above the line four times before scribbling it on the form. Rehab Doctor watches this with raised eyebrows.

Kelby hands back the clipboard but the Doctor hesitates to take it. Kelby pushes it at his chest, then heads for the door.

REHAB DOCTOR
Mr. Shaw, I strongly urge you to
reconsider.

Kelby pauses. Reconsiders. Exits.

EXT. REHABILITATION CENTER - MOMENTS LATER

Sloan climbs up on the hood of a shiny new Lexus and sprawls out across it, basking in the sunlight. She takes a drag of the cigarette as--

Kelby hops up beside her. She passes him the cigarette.

SLOAN
Sun feels good.

KELBY
It'll give you cancer.

He tokes on the cigarette before passing it back, smirking at the irony.

SLOAN
That fuckin' Nazi said smoking is a
gateway drug.

She takes a drag. It's almost down to the butt.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Like it's pot or something.

She passes it back to Kelby, who takes the last drag before flicking it away. The butt goes skipping across the asphalt like a rock on the surface of a lake.

SLOAN (cont'd)
This's his car. Fancy, huh? Just
got a brand new paint job.

Kelby shakily clambers to his feet, then climbs up onto the roof. The metal under his feet CREAKS as he offers Sloan a hand.

KELBY

M'lady?

Sloan giggles like a school girl as she takes his hand and allows him to help her onto the roof. Together they trample across the roof and jump down off the back, leaving minor dings and dents in their wake.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Two-story. A combination of brick and wood. Covered in graffiti. Rusted security bars on all the windows. Home sweet home.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The cramped space is minimally furnished but impeccably neat.

The front door opens and in trudges Kelby and Sloan. She immediately strips off her tennis shoes and discards them haphazardly on the floor.

SLOAN

I'm starving.

Kelby shuts and locks the door, then a deadbolt and chain. He unlocks the deadbolt and re-locks it four times. Slides the chain back and forth four times.

With his ritual now complete, he turns to find Sloan gone. A breadcrumb-like trail of shoes and socks leads into the kitchen.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - SAME

Sloan ransacks the freezer. Unable to find what she's looking for, she slams the door. Turns, surprised to find--

Kelby standing in the doorway. A disappointed frown hangs on his face.

KELBY

Flushed it.

She gives him a hard look, then squeezes past.

SLOAN
We're out of ice cream.

INT. APARTMENT - HALLWAY - DAY

Sloan's sweatpants lie on the floor, in front of a partially open door.

Kelby plucks them up, adding it to the socks and shoes already in hand. Nudges the door open the rest of the way.

BATHROOM

Like the rest of the apartment, modest and outdated but clean enough to eat off the floor.

The shower is on.

Sloan pulls off her sweatshirt. Lets it fall onto the floor, an inch away from the hamper. She wears no undergarments. Gets into the shower. Closes the curtain.

SLOAN (O.S.)
He wouldn't let us have bras or
panties because he said we could
use them to hang ourselves...

INSIDE SHOWER

She picks up an almost non-existent remnant of a pink soap bar, then opts for a bottle of body wash labeled "for men". Flips open the cap. Sniffs the contents.

SLOAN
...but I think it gave him wood
knowing we weren't wearing any.

OUTSIDE SHOWER

Kelby picks up the sweatshirt off the floor. Tosses it and the other clothes into the hamper. Straightens some decorative towels hanging from a bar on the wall.

SLOAN (O.S.)
A girl made a noose out of her
pants my second day there. They
found her dangling from the--

KELBY
Dad died.

INSIDE SHOWER

Sloan falls silent for a moment of comprehension, then continues vigorously scrubbing her body.

SLOAN

It's about fucking time.

KELBY (O.S.)

Funeral's on Friday.

SLOAN

I'll send a card. Do you think Hallmark makes one that says: "Burn in hell, you evil motherfucker"?

KELBY (O.S.)

You can deliver that message in person.

Sloan's expression changes drastically. Anger bubbles just below the surface as she rinses off. She turns off the water but remains in the shower.

OUTSIDE SHOWER

Kelby gets a towel out of the linen cabinet. Opens the curtain just enough to hand it to her.

Through the opaque curtain, we see Sloan wrap the towel around herself.

SLOAN (O.S.)

I thought you got me out because you missed me. Because you realized you were wrong and wanted me back. I'm so fucking stupid.

She rips open the curtain and bolts from the shower. Tries to make it out of the bathroom but Kelby grabs hold of her wrist. Pulls her against him. Lowers his lips to her ear.

KELBY

I missed you every single day. I wanted to get you out every single day.

Sloan's expression softens as her anger fades. Soon she resembles a little girl, scared and confused.

SLOAN

I've changed. Everything's gonna be better now. I'll be better.

KELBY

You walked in the front door and went straight for your stash.

SLOAN

To make sure it was gone. So I wouldn't be tempted. Dr. Pritchard said--

KELBY

I don't give a single fuck what Pritchard said. Listen to what I'm saying. I can't do this any more. I won't.

She cocks her head to the side as she carefully studies his eyes. In an instant, scared and confused Sloan is replaced with a bitter and rebellious version.

SLOAN

So this is just a field trip? Funeral, then right back in the fucking hole?

Kelby answers with a heavy sigh. He tries to embrace her, but she pushes him away and races out of the bathroom.

After a second, he follows into the--

HALLWAY

--where she slams the bedroom door in his face. He tries the handle only to find it locked.

KELBY

He had a will. There's money. A lot of money.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - SAME

Still damp from her shower, Sloan struggles into a pair of skin-tight leather short shorts. She then rummages through dresser drawers until locating a red corset top.

SLOAN

I don't want his fucking money.

She slips into the corset, leaving drawers open and clothing spewing out. Applies a superfluous amount of black eyeliner.

KELBY (O.S.)
After everything he's done to you,
you've earned this money. You
deserve it.

Sloan paints her lips a dark matte red. Smacks them together.

KELBY (O.S.) (cont'd)
You wouldn't have to live the way
you've been living. You could get
your GED, go to college, get a good
job.

She runs a brush through her damp hair. Stares down her reflection, unflinching.

HALLWAY

Kelby rests his forehead hopelessly against the door as he waits for her to come around.

After a long beat, the door flings open and Sloan exits, sheathing herself in a black trench coat. A pair of knee high boots completes her hooker chic look.

He tries to block her path, but she slips under his arm and takes off down the hallway and into the--

LIVING ROOM

--with Kelby one step behind.

KELBY
You just got home.

SLOAN
Vacation's over. Back to work.

She throws open the front door, on the verge of stepping outside when he grabs her by the arm. A firm, unyielding grip that leaves no room for negotiation.

KELBY
This is the last time you leave
here looking like that.

SLOAN
What are you gonna do next time
that you haven't had the balls to
do before?

Kelby grabs her by the face, squeezing her cheeks so hard that her lips pucker.

KELBY
I'm done living with a junkie
whore.

Sloan's blue eyes flood with tears. In an instant she's poor, fragile Sloan again.

SLOAN
You want that to be the last thing
you say to me?

Kelby's resolve begins to melt as remorse sets in. His hand slips off her face.

And just like that, she flips the switch again.

SLOAN (cont'd)
You don't own me. You don't get to
deliver scary ultimatums or dictate
how I make a living. And you sure
as fuck don't get to stop me from
leaving.

She glances down at his grip on her arm.

SLOAN (cont'd)
You want me to scream? I'll scream
so fucking loud your ears will
still be ringing when the cops show
up.

Kelby releases her. Watches helplessly in the doorway as she races off, the dark night swallowing her whole.

He steps back inside and calmly closes the door. Then, in a fit of rage, kicks over a house plant, scattering dirt all over the carpet.

After taking a moment to calm himself, he trudges into the--

KITCHEN

--and begins filling a bucket with hot water and cleaning chemicals.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Two-story model home in an upscale neighborhood.

The garage door opens as a customized BLACK HUMMER pulls into the driveway, its EXHAUST LOUDLY announcing the arrival.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

JORGE (30s), a handsome Latino with killer dimples, escorts Sloan in. No sooner than they are past the threshold does he start to remove her trench coat.

Sloan's eyes go wide when she notices that the bed is covered in plastic.

He drapes her coat on the back of a chair, then produces a wallet from his back pocket.

JORGE

First things first. Is it still a hundred?

Sloan just nods. She can't take her eyes off the bed.

Jorge pulls out a crisp hundred dollar bill and hands it over.

SLOAN

Mind if I use your bathroom?

Jorge motions to a door across the room.

Sloan enters the--

BATHROOM

Shuts and locks the door, then rests her forehead against it.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kelby lays one of Sloan's garments across the dresser, carefully folding it length-wise, then rolling it into a compact shape. Places it into a drawer filled with similarly rolled pieces of clothing.

The dresser drawers have been returned to their previously tidy appearance.

He begins dusting now, even though there isn't any dust to speak of. Makes his way to a framed photo on his side of the dresser.

INSERT - PHOTO

An emaciated woman propped up with pillows in a hospital bed. There is a scarf wrapped around her bald head and a huge smile on her face as she embraces a small boy.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby picks up the photo to dust it, his gaze lingering longer than necessary before he sets it back in place.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sloan turns the faucet on full blast. With the sound of the RUNNING WATER as a cover, she rummages through what the medicine cabinet has to offer.

There isn't much of a selection. Over the counter antacids, cold medicines, deodorant, cologne, aftershave.

Then, behind a box of bandages, she discovers a prescription bottle of OxyContin.

She glances back at the door over her shoulder, then quickly removes the lid and shakes out a couple tablets onto the vanity.

She uses a cologne bottle to crush the tablets into a powder. Rolling up the hundred dollar bill, she snorts her fear away.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kelby lies in bed, wide awake, focused intensely on the empty spot beside him. He squeezes his eyes shut, trying to sleep, trying to forget. When he opens them a second later, the empty spot still serves as a bitter reminder.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sloan lies on her stomach on the plastic-covered bed, wearing nothing but a pair of black lace panties. Her arms and legs are spread apart, tied to the four posts.

Jorge reaches for a razor blade on the nightstand. She squirms uncomfortably.

SLOAN

Don't hurt me.

JORGE

The only thing worse than a lying cheating whore is a lying cheating whore that doesn't know when to shut the fuck up.

He slices off her panties with the razor, revealing red hot hand prints covering her buttocks.

SLOAN
Mexico. Mexico!

Undeterred, Jorge stuffs the panties between her pursed lips.

A MUFFLED WAIL escapes her gagged mouth as the blade makes its first incision on her back.

As the wound slowly drips blood, we realize that her back is a roadmap of scars.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kelby tosses and turns a few times before sitting upright and swinging his legs over the side of the bed. He sinks his head into his hands, combs his fingers through his hair.

Giving up the fight, he climbs out of bed and wheels a vacuum out of the closet. Plugs it in and starts it up.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - BEDROOM - SAME

Jorge straddles Sloan's hips, thrusting into her from behind.

Still tied to the bed by her wrists and ankles, her back is smeared with blood. She cries intermittently.

He closes his eyes and tilts his head back in an effort to tune her out, but it's getting to him. Finally, he stops thrusting.

JORGE
Shut the fuck up. Dead people don't cry. They don't make a fucking sound. Your job is simple. Just lay there and be fucking dead!

He begins thrusting again, with renewed conviction.

Sloan steels her expression, suppressing any further sounds.

He expels a mighty groan before collapsing on top of her. Moves her hair aside so he can whisper in her ear.

JORGE
Worth every penny.

He rolls off the bed. Traces of her blood has transferred onto his stomach and chest. He rubs it into his skin, like he's moisturizing. Takes a bit more off her back and paints his face with it.

Sloan grunts loudly, desperate to be heard despite the gag. Jorge removes it from her mouth.

JORGE
What was that?

She's out of breath from all the crying and struggling.

SLOAN
Mex... Mexico.

He flashes a crooked smirk.

JORGE
Too late for the safe word, baby.
We're all done for tonight.

As he struts into the bathroom wearing her blood like war paint, Sloan's head rolls down against the bed.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

An ALARM blares. 6:00 a.m.

Kelby sits on the floor across the room, right beside the open door. Judging from the dark circles under his eyes, he's probably been there all night.

He gets to his feet sluggishly and shuts off the alarm. Changes into his work uniform: navy blue Dickies and a matching button-down shirt with his name on the pocket. He fastens all the buttons, then unfastens them and begins again.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - MORNING

Two place settings have been arranged at the tiny cafe table. Eggs Benedict adorns the faded China with a five-star presentation.

Kelby sits in front of his untouched plate, staring stoically across the table at the empty chair.

The clock on the stove reads: "7:37 a.m."

He lightly taps his fork against the table four times. Sets it down and picks up the spoon. TAP-TAP-TAP-TAP. He sets it down and reaches for the knife but is interrupted as--

An old, wall-mounted phone next to the refrigerator RINGS.

He sighs heavily, then abandons the knife to answer it.

KELBY

Hello?... speaking...

Incredibly long pause. His facial expression doesn't change, giving nothing away.

KELBY (cont'd)

Okay.

He hangs up. Sits back down. Picks up the knife and taps it against the table four times. Takes a deep breath, then...

...picks up his plate and throws it across the room.

CRASH! Food and glass everywhere.

He picks up the other plate, as if he's going to throw that one too, then returns it to the table.

INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

Kelby walks briskly down a long corridor, a tinfoil-covered plate in hand.

NURSE'S STATION

A preoccupied NURSE (50s) glances up from a mound of paperwork as he approaches.

KELBY

Sloan Shaw.

He doesn't stop at the desk. Instead, he keeps up the urgent pace, glancing into every open door he passes.

Nurse frowns sympathetically as she hurries along after him. She takes hold of his arm to stop him but he just keeps going.

NURSE

You can't go in yet. Not until they've done a rape kit.

KELBY
She wasn't raped.

Her frown deepens.

NURSE
I'm sorry. I know that's hard to hear.

KELBY
Did she say she was raped?

Nurse stops to think, as if she can't walk and concentrate simultaneously. He continues on without her.

YOUNG NURSE
Not in so many words, but it was obvious from her injuries.

He stops further down the hall. A good 10 feet separate them.

KELBY
Sloan likes to have sex. With all kinds of guys. All kinds of different ways.

Nurse quickly closes the gap between them, glancing nervously around the corridor.

NURSE
If you could just...

An Orderly pushing an empty wheelchair pretends not to have heard as he continues to the elevator bay.

A Visitor with flowers eyes Kelby as she hurries into a patient's room.

KELBY
Some of them do things to her. Fucked up things. Things she enjoys, even if it looks like she doesn't. Sometimes it goes too far, even for her.

NURSE
No, but this was--

KELBY
When you were stitching up her back, did you notice her scars?

NURSE

Yes, but...

Nurse furrows her brows as realization sets in.

KELBY

Is it still obvious?

Nurse stands there, speechless, while Kelby continues on.

KELBY (cont'd)

Which room?

She clears her throat. Hesitates.

NURSE

11B.

As Kelby rounds a corner up ahead...

NURSE (cont'd)

But we already called the police.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM 11B - SAME

Dressed in a hospital gown, Sloan sits up in bed, nervously gnawing at her fingernails.

Kelby enters silently. Pulls the curtain closed behind him. Sets the plate on her bedside table, positions it in front of her. Removes the tinfoil. All very mechanical and without a single word spoken. Then...

KELBY

We had eggs benedict today.

Sloan holds his gaze for a moment, studying him, but his poker face is impervious to her scrutiny.

KELBY (cont'd)

Eat.

She picks up the fork and starts eating, half-heartedly.

KELBY (cont'd)

They think you were raped.

Sloan chews, keeping quiet.

KELBY (cont'd)

Were you?

She reaches into the pocket of her trench coat. Pulls out the rolled up hundred dollar bill and straightens it out. There's still white dust residue on it from the Oxy. She gathers it up with a finger and pops it into her mouth. Offers the money to Kelby.

KELBY (cont'd)
 Couldn't even go 24 hours. Jesus
 fucking Christ.

With an exasperated sigh, he slides his hands into his pockets. He doesn't want anything to do with that money.

SLOAN
 Don't soil your panties. It's just
 Oxy.

KELBY
 Baby steps this time?

Sloan shoves the money back into her pocket. Chuckles.

KELBY (cont'd)
 This is funny?

SLOAN
 You should see your face right now.
 You're all...

She attempts to recreate the serious expression on Kelby's face but fails miserably. Shovels a forkful of eggs into her mouth.

KELBY
 They called the cops. Know what
 you're gonna say?

SLOAN
 (mouth full)
 Good morning, Officer. I don't
 usually do cops, but for you--

Kelby picks up her plate and sets it down roughly, causing the food to scatter everywhere.

[Note: Kelby stutters when he's angry]

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 You call me. You come to me. I fix
 it. I always fix it. What the fuck
 were you thinking?

SLOAN
It's hard to think when you're
unconscious.

Kelby immediately softens. Sinks down into a chair at the foot of the bed and lowers his head into his hands.

KELBY
You have to stop.

SLOAN
What should I do for money? Rake up
dog shit in the park?

He gets up abruptly, causing the chair legs to SQUEAL against the linoleum.

KELBY
(stuttering)
No, Sloan. Keep fucking for money.
Until one of them kills you.

He storms toward the door and yanks aside the curtain, nearly tearing it in half.

SLOAN
Kelby!

The desperation in her tone immediately halts his retreat but he doesn't turn around. When too much time goes by and she doesn't say another word, he continues out.

INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - DAY

Kelby and two uniformed POLICE OFFICERS converse at the opposite end of the hall from Sloan's room. One of the officers gestures wildly with his hands, face flushed with anger.

Soon a doctor joins in and the conversation stretches on.

INT. COUNTY HOSPITAL - ROOM 11B - LATER

Sloan sits on the edge of the bed, back in her slutty clothes, biting her nails again. She raises her eyes expectantly as--

Kelby enters. He tosses her coat at her.

KELBY

Put that on. It was hard enough
convincing them you aren't a
prostitute.

SLOAN

How'd you do it?

Sloan struggles to get into her coat. The slightest movement
causes her to grimace with pain.

Kelby helps her slide into it. Does up all the buttons.

Nurse enters. Waits patiently for him to finish before
handing Sloan a clipboard and pen.

NURSE

Discharge form.

While Sloan scribbles her signature, Nurse hands Kelby an
appointment slip.

NURSE (cont'd)

Make sure your wife gets to that
appointment.

Sloan looks up from the form, eyebrows raised. Hands it to
the nurse, who stares at her a little too long.

SLOAN

The fuck you lookin' at?

Nurse diverts her eyes and scurries out of the room. Once
they're alone, Sloan redirects her bitterness at Kelby.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Your wife?

KELBY

My crazy nympho wife.

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Sloan carefully peels off her top. Her back is covered in
gauze and medical tape. She scratches at a smudge of dried
blood on the inside of her top but the stain is set.

SLOAN

Fuck.

She tosses it into a little trash bin beside the toilet. The
bin topples over and trash spills out.

KELBY (O.S.)
 What're you doing?

She glances over her shoulder to find Kelby in the doorway. Props her boot up on the toilet seat so she can reach the zipper.

SLOAN
 Thought I'd take a bubble bath in the jacuzzi tub while I sip Malbec and contemplate the meaning of life.

KELBY
 Did you bother to read the discharge form you signed? You're not supposed to get the stitches wet.

Undeterred, she removes her second boot followed closely by her shorts.

SLOAN
 Fuck the stitches. Fuck that stupid bitch nurse with her judgmental stare. And fuck you too if you think I'm crazy.

He takes her by the arm, turns her around so that she can see her back in the mirror. Gauze and scars stare back at her.

KELBY
 Does that look sane to you?

She rips her arm away. Turns on the shower.

KELBY (cont'd)
 Who was it this time? The lawyer? The artist? That sick fuck from the movie theatre?

SLOAN
 Fireman. He cut up his wife's credit cards so she cheated on him... with the whooooooooole station.

She climbs into the shower.

SLOAN (cont'd)
 He showed that bitch.

She draws the curtain as Kelby retreats. Then, just before he walks out the door...

SLOAN (cont'd)
How much money?

EXT. FIRE STATION - DAY

A FIRETRUCK bolts out of the station, LIGHTS and SIREN blaring.

Kelby watches it tear down the street, then heads toward a black Hummer parked in the lot. Jorge's black Hummer.

He spares a glance in all directions before pulling out a pocket knife and slashing one of the rear tires. As it peters out, the CAR ALARM goes off.

Unfazed, he slashes the remaining tires, then carves the word: "RAPIST" sloppily onto the hood.

EXT. COMMUNITY PARK - AFTERNOON

Bright sunshine beats down on Kelby as he rakes up a big pile of dog shit into an industrial-sized dustpan.

Joggers, mothers with strollers and kids alike all pass him by as if he's invisible.

A kid on a bike tosses a fast food wrapper at a trash bin but misses. It ricochets off Kelby's back as the kid pedals off.

Kelby sets down his rake to pick up the trash and deposit it in the can.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Small room crowded with a desk and overflowing file cabinets. Colorful kid drawings adorn the walls.

BOSS (50s), sits behind the desk, a large man who makes the room seem even smaller.

A KNOCK on the door.

He doesn't bother looking up from his computer.

BOSS

What?

Kelby enters awkwardly, hands buried in his pockets.

KELBY

I need some time off.

BOSS

We're short.

KELBY

It's important.

Boss looks up from his computer. Stares Kelby down over the rim of his glasses.

BOSS

What part of "we're short" sounds like I'm in a position to negotiate with you?

KELBY

There's been a death...

Kelby's Boss pushes up his glasses, attention back on the computer.

BOSS

The only death that gets you out of work is your own.

Kelby approaches the desk, stutter betraying the cool confidence of his poker face.

KELBY

(stuttering)

I said I need time off.

Boss narrows his eyes. Pulls off his glasses.

BOSS

(mocking)

I f-f-fuckin' heard you, retard.
But it ain't h-ha-hap-happenin'.

Kelby stands there for a second, stiffly, then lunges over and clears everything off the desk with a single swipe of his hand.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The apartment is in a state of disarray. Pizza boxes and beer cans on the coffee table. Huge stain on the carpet. Clothes on the floor.

Kelby enters, sporting a shiner over one of his eyes. Exhales a sharp sigh at the sight of the mess, then shuts and locks the door. Deadbolt four times. Chain four times.

As he starts to clean up, he finds a trace of cocaine and a piece of a straw under a pizza box.

Grumbling under his breath, he collects as much trash as his arms can hold, then trudges into the--

KITCHEN

--and disposes of it. On his way back out, he notices a cabinet above the oven is wide open. He reaches into it for--

A LITTLE METAL BOX

The lock is missing and the hinge hangs on by a thread. He flips open the lid. It's empty.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Much like the living room, it is completely trashed.

Sloan and a DRUGGED-UP MAN (20s) are passed out in bed, sheet draped across their naked bodies.

Kelby snatches up the male articles of clothing off the floor. Tosses it like a fastball pitch at the man, who responds by bolting upright.

KELBY

(stuttering)

Get the fuck out of my house!

Drugged-Up Man scrambles away, holding his clothes to his crotch.

Sloan lazily peeks out at Kelby from under the sheet.

KELBY (cont'd)

(stuttering)

Bringing your work home with you now?

SLOAN
 (high and drunk)
 This one was all pleasure.

Kelby hefts her over his shoulder--

INT. APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

--and dumps her into the tub. Turns the cold water on. She springs to life, trying to avoid the icy spray.

Kelby holds her face in the water for a few seconds before releasing her.

She coughs and sputters while shooting him a deadly glare.

SLOAN
 What the fuck is your problem?

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 I've got so many, I don't know
 where to start.
 (indicating his eye)
 I got fired from my job, the
 apartment looks like a tornado blew
 through and your nose is full of
 our airfare.

Sloan reaches blindly for the water faucet. Takes a couple tries before she makes contact and turns off the water.

SLOAN
 You shouldn't have left it where I
 could find it.

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 I shouldn't need to put my shit in
 a safe in my own fucking house.

Sloan curls up her bottom lip, like she's impersonating a child.

SLOAN
 Another tally mark in the naughty
 column?

He tosses a towel at her.

KELBY

We're leaving in 20 minutes.

Panic flushes Sloan's face. She tries to scramble to her feet but slips and slides back down.

SLOAN

Leaving for where? The money's gone, remember?

On his way out the door:

KELBY

Funeral or shrink appointment. Your choice.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING) - NIGHT/DAY

Packed with people. Everyone is asleep except Kelby, who sits rigidly with Sloan asleep on his shoulder.

TIME LAPSE

Other vehicles and scenery buzz past the window.

The sun gradually rises.

The passengers awake from their slumber and find various means of entertainment.

Kelby hasn't moved a muscle.

BACK TO SCENE

Sloan awakens, squinting at the sunlight streaming in through their window. She reaches into her bag for a pair of sunglasses, slides them on, then lays her head back on Kelby's shoulder.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

One full-sized bed. Dingy, outdated comforter and carpet. Looks like it's violating numerous health codes. A roach scampers across the floor for yet another.

SHOWER is on in the background.

A map is spread out on the bed in front of Kelby. He does some calculations on a fast food bag, carefully navigating around the grease stains.

SHOWER GOES OFF.

He folds up the map, perfectly matching every side. Unzips his suitcase.

Tucked under the neatly rolled clothing, we see the edge of that framed photo he dusted earlier. He slides the map into a pocket, then locates a bottle of over-the-counter sleeping pills. Shakes out two blue tablets and swallows them dry.

SLOAN (O.S.)

This place is gross.

He glances over to find Sloan standing in the bathroom doorway, towel drying her hair. She wears a big, raggedy T-shirt that must have previously belonged to Kelby.

KELBY

Unless your nose gives refunds,
it's the best I can do.

Sloan finishes with the towel and drops it at her feet. Climbs into the bed on the opposite side.

With a frustrated sigh, Kelby climbs out of bed and collects her towel off the floor.

SLOAN

If we clean up after ourselves,
what'll the maids do?

He puts the towel in the bathroom, then gets back into bed. Turns off the lamp.

Sloan scoots back until she is spooning with him, then pulls his arm across her waist.

INT. OLD HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT (NIGHTMARE)

Outdated wallpaper and decor. One small bed with no linens. The closet door hangs off its hinges. A massive antique armoire towers in a far corner.

The door bursts open and a tall, skinny boy races in, tugging a dazed little girl behind him.

YOUNG KELBY (10) and YOUNG SLOAN (5) scamper for shelter in the shadow cast by the armoire. He does his best to keep calm while the girl whimpers.

YOUNG KELBY

Shhh.

He pulls her close and wraps his arms around her. When this doesn't squelch her cries, he puts a hand over her mouth.

Their frightened eyes frantically search the darkness.

A HULKING MALE SILHOUETTE lumbers in. A LARGE CALLOUSED HAND rips down the closet door like it's made out of cardboard.

JOSEPH (O.S.)
Where the fuck are you?

Silhouette moves on to the bed. Picks up a corner of the frame and flips it over causing a loud CRASH.

JOSEPH (O.S.) (cont'd)
The more you make me look, the worse it's gonna be when I find you.

Young Sloan startles at the sound. Young Kelby tightens his arm around her. Clamps down even harder on her mouth. Whispers silent reassurances in her ear.

The Silhouette suddenly appears in front of them, causing Young Sloan to scream out from behind Young Kelby's hand.

The Silhouette snatches up Young Kelby by his shirt. Young Sloan clings to him for dear life as he's dragged away.

YOUNG SLOAN
Kelby!!

INT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Kelby awakens with a start, shielding himself from an invisible attack. His hands fall to his side as he realizes he's safe.

The bed beside him is empty, as is the rest of the room.

He consults the alarm clock to find that it's 11:47 a.m.

Ambling out of bed, he trudges toward the bathroom door that has been left slightly ajar.

A FEMALE MOAN comes from behind it, followed closely by a MALE GRUNT.

Kelby peers in through the crack.

KELBY'S POV

Sloan is bent over the sink while a grubby MOTEL JOHN (40s) takes her from behind. He pulls a fistful of her hair.

BATHROOM

Sloan glances at the door, her eyes meeting up with Kelby's. She holds his gaze for a moment, then turns away.

MOTEL JOHN

I'm coming. Lemme hear you, baby.

Sloan tightens her grip on the vanity as Motel John thrusts into her with renewed vigor. The deed culminates with her delivering a porn quality fake orgasm.

EXT. MOTEL ROOM - DAY

Kelby leans up against the second floor railing, smoking a cigarette.

SLOAN'S FAKE ORGASM echoes in his head, eerie and distorted.

The room door flings open and Motel John exits with a shit-eating grin that reveals missing front teeth. He slides some money into Kelby's shirt pocket and rests a hand on his shoulder.

Kelby quickly shrugs the hand off.

MOTEL JOHN

She's good. Real good. Got yourself a pretty lil' cash cow there.

He hustles down the corridor, WHISTLING a cheerful tune.

Sloan exits the room, barefoot and still wearing the T-shirt she slept in. Kelby takes the money out of his pocket and stuffs it into her hand.

KELBY

I'm not your pimp.

Sloan plucks the cigarette from between his lips, indulges in a long drag. Exhales the smoke into his face. Replaces the cigarette between his lips. Stuffs the money into his pocket.

SLOAN

Get us a better room next time.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING)- DAY

A MOTHER (30s) and LITTLE GIRL (6) watch an animated movie on a tablet, sharing a set of earbuds.

Kelby and Sloan sit in the row behind them. He watches the movie over the mother and girl's shoulders, absently tapping his fingers against the arm rest in sets of four.

Sloan turns in her seat, presenting Kelby with her clenched fists.

SLOAN

Which one?

Kelby all but ignores her. She nudges him with her fists.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Which one?

He taps her left fist. It's empty. Smiling broadly, she puts her hands behind her back and brings them out a moment later.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Which one?

He contemplates far longer than necessary before choosing her left hand again. And again he's wrong.

She juggles her hands behind her back and presents them once more.

KELBY

Not playing.

She nudges him again, harder this time. He chooses left. It's empty.

On the next try, he picks her right hand. Much to his chagrin, there's nothing there either.

KELBY (cont'd)

Lemme see your other hand.

SLOAN

Why?

When she refuses the request, Kelby pries her left hand open. It's empty, too. He's been had.

Sloan smiles triumphantly, then strokes his cheek. He brushes off her hand. Goes back to watching the movie. Doesn't take long before his compulsive finger tapping resumes.

Sloan slides her hand onto his and interlaces their fingers, making it impossible for him to continue.

After a beat, his left hand picks up where his right one left off.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Kelby hands over his debit card to the woman behind the counter, then casually glances outside while he waits.

KELBY'S POV

He combs the area for any sign of Sloan, but she's nowhere to be found.

BACK TO SCENE

Worried, Kelby snatches the tickets from the teller and hurries off.

INT. SUNDRIES SHOP - SAME

A revolving display rack spins round and round, cheap jewelry jingle-jangling.

When it stops, Sloan surveys her options before carefully selecting a girly charm bracelet. She looks around to ensure she's not being watched, then slips it into her pocket.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - SAME

Kelby rushes to the curb, to a spot where his and Sloan's suitcases sit unattended. He urgently searches the surrounding area.

INT. SUNDRIES SHOP - SAME

Sloan browses the meager selection of alcohol. Chooses a cheap bottle of vodka. Glances casually over her shoulder.

The wiry SUNDRIES CLERK (20s) watches her from behind the counter with his beady little eyes.

Effecting a coquettish grin, Sloan saunters over to the counter and sets down the vodka bottle.

SUNDRIES CLERK

I.D.

Sloan clears her throat, then glances around to make sure no one's watching before lifting her tank top.

SUNDRIES CLERK (cont'd)
Nice tits. Now show me your I.D.

EXT. SUNDRIES SHOP - SAME

Sloan exits the shop with a plastic shopping bag dangling from her wrist and a cup of coffee in hand. She immediately notices Kelby across the street at the bus station.

He appears on the verge of panic as he stops several people to question them. Although his words are unheard, it's obvious he's asking about Sloan.

She watches him for a moment, transfixed by the anguished look on his face. When she's seen enough, she WHISTLES loudly.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - SAME

Kelby turns toward the whistle. As soon as he spots her, the worry on his face immediately subsides and is replaced with his usual expressionless demeanor.

He grabs up their suitcases and casually walks away as Sloan approaches.

KELBY
Twenty minute wait for the next
bus. Is that food?

She hands him the cup of coffee, then retrieves a Spanish-English dictionary from the bag. Flashes the cover before flipping through.

KELBY (CONT'D)
What's that for?

SLOAN
We've never been to Mexico.

KELBY
We haven't been everywhere, Sloan.

Kelby sinks down onto a bench. Sloan remains standing.

SLOAN
We could take a little detour.

KELBY
After the funeral?

SLOAN
Instead of the funeral.

He sighs loudly. Sips the coffee.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
Please.

KELBY
We go to the funeral, put that
bastard into the ground, get the
money and then we discuss where to
go next. Okay?

Sloan twists her expression into a scowl, bites her bottom lip.

KELBY (CONT'D)
We're going for you. I'm doing all
of this for you, so you don't have
to be afraid anymore.

Sloan stomps off in a huff.

KELBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Sloan?

She doesn't get far before whipping back around. Yells out, so that everyone in their general vicinity is now privy to their conversation.

SLOAN
I'm not afraid. I don't wake up
from nightmares, fending him off. I
haven't even thought about that
piece of shit in years. If you need
to see him in a box, if you need
proof that the boogeyman is dead,
then lets fucking go. But don't you
dare say this is for me.

As the onlookers exchange uncomfortable glances, Sloan trudges off again, this time without looking back.

INT. OLD HOME - BATHROOM - DAY (DREAM)

Disgustingly filthy.

Young Kelby lifts Young Sloan onto the vanity. She clutches a naked, dirty baby doll to her chest as he retrieves a first aid kit from under the counter.

Young Kelby cleans out a fresh cut above Young Sloan's eye with an antiseptic wipe, then affixes a bandage over it. She snatches up another bandage before he closes the kit and puts it back.

YOUNG KELBY
What're you gonna say?

Young Sloan gingerly removes the bandage from its wrapper. Pulls back the tape on each side.

YOUNG SLOAN
We were playing outside and I fell.

YOUNG KELBY
That was last time. You have to say different things or they're gonna know. This time you tripped and hit your head on the coffee table.

Young Sloan positions the bandage on her baby doll so that it's identical to her own.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Kelby's eyelids flutter before opening. He straightens up in his seat then reaches out for Sloan, but she's not beside him.

He searches the bus but finds no sign of her. Concern mounting, he rises to his feet just as--

The bathroom door swings open and Sloan exits. Without saying a word to Kelby, she lays across the empty seat in front of him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #2 - BATHROOM - NIGHT

The steam from the running shower fills the air with a hazy mist. We can barely make out Kelby's outline through the grimy shower curtain.

The water stops and Kelby steps out of the shower, wrapping a towel around his waist. His body is covered in CIGARETTE BURNS.

He swallows a couple of sleeping pills with a drink from the faucet, then stares at his reflection in the foggy mirror. Draws a giant "X" over his face.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #2 - NIGHT

Slightly more habitable than the last. Just as outdated but not dirty. There are two twin-sized beds instead of a double.

Sloan is huddled on the floor behind the bed furthest from the bathroom, fumbling in her suitcase. She uncovers a little baggie of cocaine nestled on the bottom.

Opening the baggie, she inserts a piece of straw, but as she lifts it to her nose--

Kelby emerges from the bathroom.

Sloan quickly stashes it under the mattress. Risking a glance in his direction, she discovers that he's eyeing her curiously.

SLOAN

Amen.

She performs the sign of the cross, then crawls into bed and rolls over on her side, away from his prying eyes.

He pulls back the comforter on the other bed and climbs in. Flips off the lamp. Almost immediately, Sloan flicks it back on.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Are you punishing me?

Kelby turns the lamp back off. She immediately turns it back on. He pulls the comforter up over his head. She joins him in his bed and pulls it down.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Is this about Mexico or the bus?
You're always mad at me. I can't
keep it all straight.

Kelby doesn't reply. She holds her ground, arms folded stubbornly across her chest.

The standoff is eventually broken as Kelby relents, lowering the covers enough for Sloan to slip in beside him. She nuzzles up against him and drapes his arm around her.

INT. OLD HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Same room we saw earlier with the hanging closet door and armoire, except now it's set up like a make-shift hospital room.

A frail, bald woman, KELBY'S MOM (20s), lies in bed, hooked up to oxygen and an I.V.

A little boy, TODDLER KELBY (4), is curled up next to her, sound asleep as she gently strokes his hair.

The door suddenly swings open and in stumbles JOSEPH (30s), an intimidatingly large man with a stern expression. Inebriated, he staggers to the bed and flops down, rousing Toddler Kelby from his sleep.

JOSEPH

Hospital sent another bill. Six
thousand dollars. Where the fuck am
I supposed to get that kinda money?

From his pocket, he produces a vial of morphine and a syringe. Kelby's Mom's eyes get a little bit wider as she watches him clumsily fill the syringe to capacity.

She makes several attempts before finally finding her voice...

KELBY'S MOM

Joe?

JOSEPH

Three months they said. At most.
And here you are, going on nine.
Barely hanging on. Just enough to
fuck everything up.

Toddler Kelby sits up alertly and rubs the sleep from his eyes. Even he knows something is terribly wrong.

TODDLER KELBY

Mommy?

Joseph injects the syringe into the I.V. line.

KELBY'S MOM

Joe, please. Don't.

Joseph depresses the plunger.

Tears form in the corners of Kelby's Mom's eyes but she's too weak to do much more.

JOSEPH

Why couldn't you just die quickly
like you were supposed to?

TODDLER KELBY

Mommy?

Joseph positions the vial and syringe in Kelby's Mom's hand and stumbles back out.

Toddler Kelby whimpers in fear. Kelby's Mom motions him to lay his head on her chest. She strokes his hair, slower and slower, until finally her hand comes to rest.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #2 - DAY

Kelby buries the photo of he and his mom beneath the neatly arranged clothing inside his suitcase. He's got the phone receiver tucked between his ear and shoulder, mid conversation.

KELBY

(into phone)

A couple more days... no, we're
fine... not necessary... yeah, I
know.

He hangs up. Glances toward the bathroom door which is closed.

KELBY (CONT'D)

There's a copy of the will at
Joseph's house. Aunt Jennie wants
us to get it on our way to the
church.

He zips up his suitcase, then takes a bite of a doughnut and washes it down with a sip of coffee. Sloan's breakfast sits untouched nearby. He looks back toward the door.

KELBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Sloan? We're gonna miss our bus.

Anxious, he unzips his suitcase, then unzips it again. Repeats the process three more times. When he's done, he places it in front of the room door, next to Sloan's.

Sloan still isn't out of the bathroom. He knocks on the door.

KELBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Sloan.

TOILET FLUSHES.

Sloan exits with her head bowed. Picks up her suitcase, keeping her back to Kelby.

KELBY

What were you doing in the
bathroom?

When she continues to avoid his interrogative glare, he bolts toward her. Tries to pry the suitcase from her hands, but she holds on tight.

KELBY (CONT'D)

Give it to me.

SLOAN

Why?!

A brief tug of war ensues which he wins without much effort. He unzips the suitcase, dumps the contents onto the floor. Sifts through with careless abandon, tossing her belongings every which way. Pours out a box of tampons and a pouch with makeup.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Don't you feel stupid?

The empty suitcase stares up at Kelby, taunting him. He takes a calming breath, seemingly letting it drop, then starts clawing at the lining.

Sloan lunges at him.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No. Kelby! Stop!

He shoves her away. The impact sends her tumbling back onto the floor. He continues his search with renewed determination.

Underneath the lining, tucked away in a corner, he discovers the baggie of cocaine.

He stares at it, then at her, betrayed.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Kelby...

He stomps off into the bathroom.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Kelby!!

She chases him into the--

BATHROOM

They wrestle for the baggie, but there isn't a force in the universe that could keep him from disposing of the contents into the toilet.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No!!

He turns to her with a fire in his eye.

KELBY

Is that it, or do I have to check
up your snatch, too?

Sloan stares despondently into the toilet as Kelby makes his way back out to the--

BEDROOM

He collects Sloan's strewn clothing and begins the tedious process of neatly folding everything and packing it back inside the suitcase.

Sloan watches him from the bathroom doorway, resentment building by the second. Finally she scoops up his suitcase and, in a bitter frenzy, shakes out the contents into a pile at her feet.

Unfazed, Kelby soldiers on.

Sloan rummages through his clothing, unfolding and tossing them aside haphazardly.

When even this fails to get his attention, she reaches for his cherished photo. He scrambles for it as well, but she beats him to it.

KELBY (CONT'D)

Give it to me.

She pulls her arm back, on the verge of launching the photo across the room.

Kelby's breathing quickens. Hands ball into fists.

KELBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Sloan...

He struggles to control his breathing, which is quickly bordering on hyperventilation.

SLOAN

Sucks, doesn't it?

He clenches his jaw so tightly that his face trembles. Attempts to steal the photo from her, but she rips it away.

KELBY

Give it to me.

She rips off the back of the frame and pulls out the photo. Positions her hands to tear it in half.

KELBY (CONT'D)

Sloan!

As he reaches for the photo, she swats his hand away, then slaps him across the face.

The force is enough to turn his cheek. He turns back, eyes cold and emotionless. Makes another grab for the photo. WHACK! She slaps him again.

Steeling his resolve, he tries to push her out of the way, but she slaps him again. And again. Then punches him. In the arm, chest, stomach.

SLOAN

Do you feel that? What about this?
Do you fucking feel anything?

When Kelby refuses to give her the satisfaction of a reaction, she unleashes her fury on him, pummeling him with both fists, no holds barred.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

You have no fucking idea what it's
like to feel everything, all the
time.

Her assault continues with increased aggression. In the process, the photo becomes crumbled and falls to the floor.

Kelby grabs hold of her, pinning her arms down, for her protection more than his. He rocks her gently in his arms, shushing into her ear, until she begins to calm down.

KELBY

There's a way to do it without
frying your brain. Do you want me
to teach you how?

Still in tears, all Sloan can manage is a nod.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING) - NIGHT

Sloan and Kelby sit shoulder to shoulder. He stares out the window while she studies the charm bracelet around her wrist, the one she stole from the sundries shop.

There are dark circles under her eyes and beads of sweat on her forehead. Withdrawal has kicked in something fierce.

KELBY (V.O.)

You have to build a box in your
mind. A strong box. Metal, with a
lock. You put everything in there.
Your fear. Sadness. Anger.
Resentment. Hatred. You lock it up,
tight. And you don't give anyone
that key. Ever.

She draws her knees up to her chest and hugs them, rocking slightly. Still infatuated with the charm bracelet.

FLASH TO:

-- Young Sloan tears open the wrapper of a small gift box.

-- Little fingers remove a charm bracelet from the box.

-- A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN fastens the bracelet around Young Sloan's wrist.

BACK TO SCENE

Sloan delicately caresses the charms of her bracelet.

SLOAN

She was so beautiful. My mom.

Kelby glances over. Takes note of the bracelet before focusing back out the window.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Do you think I look like her?

He says nothing.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Her eyes?

FLASH TO:

Close up of the Beautiful Woman's eyes, almost the same crystal blue shade as Sloan's.

BACK TO SCENE

Still Kelby chooses to remain silent.

SLOAN

Her hair?

FLASH TO:

Little fingers twirl in a blanket of silky dark hair.

BACK TO SCENE

Sloan smiles faintly at the memory.

KELBY

You were too young to remember what she was like.

SLOAN

I definitely have her cheekbones and her figure. Before she had me.

KELBY

She left you.

SLOAN

So did yours and you still think she walks on water.

He turns to her, confrontational.

KELBY

My mother died. Yours walked away. Don't you ever compare them.

Sulking, Sloan turns her back to him. Continues playing with the charms of her bracelet.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (STOPPED) - NIGHT

Passengers gather their belongings and disembark the bus.

INT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

At a pay phone, Sloan pulls a faded old photo out of her wallet.

INSERT - PHOTO

A candid moment of the Beautiful Woman, now pregnant, staring down at her stomach. But she isn't smiling. In fact, she appears melancholy.

BACK TO SCENE

She turns the photo over to reveal a phone number on the back. She drops some change into the phone and dials.

SLOAN
 (into phone)
 Yeah, hi, Amelia Sullivan?...yeah,
 I'm sure... okay...

While she waits, she gazes around the nearly empty station, but there isn't much to look at. It's late and there aren't many people around.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
 Still here...

Disappointment washes across her face like a tidal wave.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Are you sure? This is the number I
 was given... No, I didn't know. How
 long ago was that?... How do you
 spell that last name?... thanks.

She slams down the receiver. Releases a loud sigh, then picks it back up. Inserts more change, dials the operator.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Hi, I need the number for an Amelia
 Quintana. Q-u-i-n-t-a-n-a...
 somewhere around the Phoenix
 area... that's okay, I'll try both.
 Hold on...

She searches in her bag until producing a black eyeliner pencil.

SLOAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Okay, shoot.

She scribbles two phone numbers on her arm.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

A Bus Driver unloads the suitcases from his bus and places them on the curb.

Kelby collects his and Sloan's, then looks around for her.

INT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

Sloan is still poised in front of the pay phone, receiver to her ear.

SLOAN
Wrong number. Sorry.

She ends the call. Adds more quarters. Dials the second number off her arm.

ENDLESS RINGING.

She chews nervously at her fingernails while she waits.

MALE ON PHONE (V.O.)
Hello?

SLOAN
Hi, is, um... Amelia there?

MALE ON PHONE (V.O.)
Yeah, hold on.

A hint of a smile appears as Sloan releases a relieved sigh.

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)
Hello?

SLOAN
Amelia?

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)
Yeah, who's this?

SLOAN
It's Sloan.

A long, uncomfortable pause.

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)

Who?

SLOAN

Sloan. Your daughter.

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)

I don't have no daughter. Who is this? How'd you get this number?

Sloan tears up. Remains silent for a moment as she struggles to retain her composure.

SLOAN

Were you married to a man named Joseph Cartwright in the mid 90s?

Line goes silent for a long while.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Hello?

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)

(almost a whisper)

Joe put you up to this? Look, I dunno what the hell you want, but I ain't got no money.

SLOAN

I don't want your money. I just--

FEMALE ON PHONE (V.O.)

What then? An apology? An explanation? Did what I did. Did what I had to. You were better off. Don't call here again.

Line goes dead.

Tears trickle down Sloan's cheeks as she continues to hold the phone to her ear, frozen.

INT. BUS TERMINAL - NIGHT

Kelby enters, eyes peeled for Sloan. It doesn't take him but a second to locate her at the pay phone, in the exact same spot, phone still clenched in her hand.

He comes up behind her, notices the photo on top of the pay phone, turned upside down to show the number, then her tears.

He attempts to replace the receiver but Sloan hangs onto it with a death grip. Face frozen in anguish.

KELBY

Put it in the box.

Sloan eases her grip on the receiver until he's able to get it away from her. She takes a final glance at the photo before Kelby takes her by the hand and leads her away from it.

EXT. MOTEL #3 - NIGHT

Three-story walk up. Dark for this time of night, except for the luminous "vacancy" sign.

Kelby heads for the office while Sloan trails behind. Her attention averts to a diner across the street.

SLOAN

I'll get us a table.

Kelby follows her gaze to the diner, then regards the motel office.

KELBY

This'll only take a minute.

SLOAN

Then I'll see you in a minute.

She starts off for the diner without waiting for his permission. He stares after her, displeased.

INT. MOTEL #3 - OFFICE - NIGHT

A female clerk (20s) sits behind the counter wearing cut-off shorts and cowboy boots. A name tag clipped to her shirt identifies her as JOSIE.

A fan on the counter is aimed at her face while she uses a paper fan to cool off her cleavage. A huge smile lights up her overly made-up face as Kelby enters.

JOSIE

AC's busted. Don't suppose you still want a room?

INT. DINER - NIGHT

A bell above the door JINGLES as Sloan enters. She immediately takes stock of the customers.

Three unkempt 30-something men occupy a table next to the restroom, scarfing down platefuls of greasy cuisine. They all appear in desperate need of a shower and shave.

A family of four sit a few tables over. The adults share a decadent dessert while the two kids watch a movie on their iPad.

At the only other occupied table sits a middle-aged TRUCKER eating by himself.

A WAITRESS (40s) with bright red lipstick and platinum blonde dyed hair looks up from behind the register.

WAITRESS

Pick a seat, sweetie. Be right with ya.

One of the grubby men takes note of Sloan's entrance, watching her with beady eyes as she slides into the booth across from the Trucker.

Trucker gazes at Sloan over his rare steak.

TRUCKER

Can I help you?

Sloan alternates her attention between him and the door.

SLOAN

That your truck out front?

Trucker nods.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

Ever fucked someone in it?

INT. MOTEL #3 - OFFICE - NIGHT

Josie leans across the desk, breasts heaving out of her tank top. She bites the corner of her lip while watching Kelby fill out the registration slip.

JOSIE

Kelby. That's cute. What's it mean?

KELBY
It doesn't mean anything.

JOSIE
Everythin' means somethin',
darlin'.

When Kelby glances up, Josie's breasts are right in his face. She smiles flirtatiously as she exchanges the slip of paper for a key.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
I'm Josie, by the way.

Kelby nods toward her name tag.

KELBY
See that.

She glances down at it, as if just remembering it's there.

JOSIE
Oh, right.
(re: room key)
Put you in 14. It's up the stairs
and to your left. I'll drop by in
10 minutes to bring ya some fresh
towels.

KELBY
I'm... uh... meeting my wife in the
diner across the street in five.

All the wind let out of her sail, Josie frowns, but a quick glance at his bare ring finger returns a smile to her face.

JOSIE
Then I guess I'll be there in two.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Sloan's nervous glare leaves the door to focus solely on the Trucker, who doesn't appear too keen for her indecent proposal. She reaches across the table to stroke his arm.

SLOAN
I swear it'll be a good time, baby.

Trucker taps Sloan sympathetically on her hand before guiding it off his arm.

DINER

I'd be more than happy to buy you dinner, if you're hungry. But that's the best I can do.

Sloan steals a quick peek at the door, then around the diner. Grubby man is still looking her way. She lowers her voice, leans across the table.

SLOAN

I don't think you understand. I need this money.

Trucker just shakes his head. No can do.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

You don't wanna get me in trouble, do you?

Waitress approaches the table, order pad at the ready.

WAITRESS

What can I getcha?

Antsy, Sloan checks the door again, then flashes Trucker one last beseeching glance. He nods toward the Waitress, urging Sloan to order.

Sloan slams her fists down on the table, loud enough to attract the attention of the entire diner.

SLOAN

Not hungry.

She skulks over to an empty table and slides into the booth, drawing her knees to her chest.

Sweaty and twitchy, she's never looked more like a drugged out hooker than she does at this very moment.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #3 - SAME

Kelby tosses down the suitcases onto the double bed before wandering into the--

BATHROOM

He turns on the faucet, then absently rubs at a rust stain while waiting for it to heat up. He splashes some water on his face, consults his reflection.

A KNOCK in the next room draws him back out into the--

BEDROOM

On the other side of the door, he finds Josie holding a stack of towels, as promised.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

The grubby man, SCOTT, makes his way over to Sloan's table. His buddies take note over their shoulders.

Sloan picks up a menu and flips through it, trying to appear too busy to give him her attention. He stops beside her table, undeterred. Puts a hand out.

SCOTT

I'm Scott.

By the way she glowers at his hand, you'd think he just spit into it.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

And you are?

SLOAN

Not interested.

He buries his hand into his pocket.

SCOTT

How do you know? You haven't heard my sales pitch.

He takes a seat opposite her, which causes Sloan's temper to flair.

SLOAN

My boyfriend isn't gonna be happy to see you sitting there.

Scott chuckles.

SCOTT

Your boyfriend? Where's he at?

SLOAN

Getting us a room.

SCOTT

Better make this quick then.

He slides a hand across the table, palm down. Lifts it just enough so that she can see a baggie of pills underneath.

SCOTT (cont'd)
Look like you could use a
pick-me-up.

As she reaches for it, his hand retreats back into his pocket, taking the pills with it. He turns to regard the Waitress who is lazily wiping down the counter.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
Could we get a Coke over here?

Sloan fidgets nervously as they await the delivery. Waitress sets a glass down in front of Scott. Eyes Sloan.

WAITRESS
You okay, hun?

SCOTT
She's fine. Just thirsty.

He slides the glass in front of Sloan. Still being watched by the wary Waitress, Sloan takes a sip.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)
Hungry yet?

SCOTT
We'll letcha know.

Waitress flashes him a disapproving glance before wandering off. With her back to them, Scott presses a single white tablet into Sloan's palm.

SLOAN
I don't have any money.

SCOTT
Who said anything about money?

She contemplates the pill.

SLOAN
What is it?

SCOTT
Does it matter?

Without further ado, she slips the pill into her mouth and swallows it with a sip of soda.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #3 - SAME

Josie backs Kelby up into the room, kissing him hungrily while he puts minimal effort into returning her affections. As they reach the bed, she pushes him down onto his back and climbs on top.

Their lips meet again as she goes for his zipper. He pushes her hands away.

KELBY

No, wait...

JOSIE

We'll be quick.

She goes for his zipper again, this time managing to pull it down. A look of disappointment washes over her.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Wow, you really aren't interested, are you?

Mortified, she scurries off the bed and quickly makes her way to the door. Kelby zips up his fly.

KELBY

It's not that. I just--

JOSIE

It's fine. I get it. You're married. I just thought... most married men aren't married 100 percent of the time, ya know?

And with that, she ducks out of the room, shutting the door behind her.

Kelby sinks his head into his hands.

KELBY

Fuck.

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Scott glares across the table at Sloan as if she's the best thing on the menu.

SCOTT

Got a lotta shit back in my room. Pills, pot, blow, smack. Whatever you fancy.

Sloan uneasily gazes over her shoulder at Scott's friends.

SLOAN
Just you or... ?

SCOTT
Tall one's Chet and the other's
Wally. We'll take real good care of
you.

He fastens a hand around her wrist. Climbs out of the booth, attempting to tug her along, but she remains seated.

A bell above the door JINGLES.

Sloan looks over to see Kelby trudging in her direction. For a split second she looks relieved, then nervous as she wiggles out of Scott's grip.

SLOAN
Told you my boyfriend was coming.

Scott turns to find a pissed off Kelby towering over him. He looks Kelby up and down, sizing up the competition.

SCOTT
This guy?
(scoffs)
I'm in 25, if you wanna know what a
real cock--

Kelby slams Scott's face against the table. A geyser gushes from his broken nose as he comes back up.

Sloan bolts to her feet.

SLOAN
Kelby! Fuck!!

Scott's buddies rush to his aid, fists clenched, ready for action.

Trucker wipes his mouth on a napkin and rises to his feet as well.

The family sits in shock, mother desperately trying to keep her children's attention focused on the movie.

Waitress races over, getting in between Kelby and Scott.

WAITRESS
No way. Not in my diner. You
Neanderthals wanna fight, take it
outside.

Kelby stares down Scott, as if expecting him to make a move.

Scott presses a napkin to his nose. Heads back to his table, motioning CHET and WALLY to follow suit.

The two men cast an unspoken threat in Kelby's direction before complying. They slide back into their booth and continue their meal, as if nothing happened.

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

Kelby exits the diner, dragging Sloan along by her elbow.

KELBY
(stuttering)
You're like a fucking child. Can't
leave you alone for five minutes!

SLOAN
He offered me 50 bucks to suck on
his balls. Not his cock, now. Just
his balls.

She struggles to free herself, but his grip only increases.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
Said he'd throw in an extra 20 if
you'd watch.

She watches his expression for a reaction, continues on when she doesn't receive one.

SLOAN
Just like the good ol' days.

She pulls away from him just as he releases her. She stumbles backwards, landing on her ass in the dirt.

TRUCKER (O.S.)
Hey!

Kelby turns just in time to see Trucker's fist connect with his face. He staggers back, but quickly regains his footing. Pulls back his fist to defend himself, but--

Trucker lands a second punch then an immediate follow-up blow to the gut.

Kelby crumbles to the dirt beside Sloan.

SLOAN
 (to Trucker)
 What're you doing?!

Trucker all but ignores her. His beef is with Kelby.

TRUCKER
 You think you're tough shit?
 Beating on a girl?

As Kelby shields his face, Trucker kicks him in the side.

TRUCKER (CONT'D)
 How's it feel to be the victim?

He's about to kick Kelby again when Sloan leaps in front of Kelby, shielding him with her body.

SLOAN
 Leave him alone!

Trucker flashes her an incredulous look, not quite understanding why she isn't grateful for his help.

SLOAN (CONT'D)
 Get the fuck out of here!!

Trucker shakes his head with disgust before stomping off into the diner.

Sloan rolls Kelby over to assess his injuries. Blood oozes from his nose and split lip.

INT. MOTEL #3 - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kelby sits on the floor slumped against the vanity while Sloan dabs at the dried blood below his nose with a damp cloth. He doesn't even flinch.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #3 - BEDROOM - NIGHT

An old TV plays, mostly static. Volume barely audible.

Sloan and Kelby lie in bed, in their usual spooning position. He's asleep and she's wide awake.

She slides a hand between her legs, guiding it rhythmically. Squeezes her eyes shut. Parts her lips. A disappointed sigh escapes in lieu of a moan.

She positions Kelby's hand over one of her breasts. Continues to masturbate but still receives no pleasure. She slides Kelby's hand down her stomach and between her legs. Finally, a smile crosses her lips as her head rolls back.

EXT. MOTEL #3 - OUTSIDE KELBY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sloan smokes a cigarette, hand shaking considerably, as is the rest of her. Her hair is a matted, sweaty mess.

A PAIR OF HANDS emerge from the darkness, groping her. She whips around to find Scott there with a perverse smirk on his face. She brushes him off but he comes right back, determined.

SCOTT

Is that any way to talk to someone
that did you a favor?

Sloan drops the cigarette. Stomps it out with her bare foot. Heads for the room door.

SLOAN

Why don't you go back to your room
and do yourself a favor?

She simulates a hand job. As she reaches for the doorknob, Scott grabs a chunk of her hair, yanking her back. She whips around with some fight in her, punching him hard in the chest, but it in no way persuades him to release her.

SLOAN (CONT'D)

I'll scream.

SCOTT

You owe me.

SLOAN

I told you I didn't have money. You
gave me the pill anyway. Figured it
was a gift.

SCOTT

You got the shakes real bad. Oxy
took the edge off, but it's all
coming back, isn't it? Worse than
before.

He corners her against the room door. Pulls her head back by her hair, so that she's looking him in the eye.

SCOTT (CONT'D)
I'm gonna fix it, but you have to
be a good girl and invite us in.

Chet and Wally creep out of the shadows, announcing their presence.

INT. MOTEL #3 - KELBY'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sloan enters, followed closely by Scott and company. Scott takes note of Kelby asleep in bed.

SCOTT
Get him up.

Chet and Wally rush to the bed and rouse Kelby from his sleep.

Scott escorts Sloan to the table where he unloads some drug paraphernalia from his pockets. Spoon, lighter, syringe, tourniquet and heroin.

SLOAN
I don't do heroin.

SCOTT
Then you're in for a real treat.

Sloan's anxiety grows as Scott taps out some heroin onto the spoon.

KELBY (O.S.)
What the fuck? Sloan?!

Kelby struggles into a sitting position only to have Chet and Wally push him back down.

Scott regards Sloan over his shoulder while continuing to prep the heroin for injection.

SCOTT
Go get on the bed.

SLOAN
I'll pay you for the pill. That's
all I owe you.

KELBY
Sloan?!

SCOTT

I said get on the bed, baby girl. I ain't got all night.

Sloan glances back at Kelby, eyes brimming with tears, bottom lip quivering. A little girl desperately seeking his help.

SLOAN

Mexico.

Kelby lunges upright, nearly slipping free of the two thugs holding him down.

KELBY

(stuttering)

Get the fuck off me!

SCOTT

Shut him up.

Chet slugs Kelby in the mouth. Wally follows it up with a punch to his ribs.

SLOAN

Okay, okay. I'll get on the bed.
Stop. I'll get on the fucking bed!

As Sloan crawls into bed, Chet and Wally ease up on Kelby.

Kelby and Sloan exchange a glance as Scott joins them with the loaded syringe and tourniquet.

KELBY

Sloan, don't!

Chet punches Kelby in the face again, silencing him.

Scott affixes the rubber tourniquet to the top of Sloan's arm. Burrows the needle into the inside crease of her elbow. Smiles broadly as he presses the plunger.

Almost immediately, Sloan's body falls limply back against the bed, landing beside a still struggling Kelby. Their eyes meet, once again, before hers flutter closed.

SCOTT

Time to negotiate payment.

Scott flips Sloan over onto her stomach then unfastens his belt and pulls down his fly.

Kelby struggles valiantly to come to her aid.

KELBY
(stuttering)
Don't you fucking touch her!

Chet gets him in a choke hold, not only silencing him but forcing him to watch as well.

Kelby goes stoney-faced as Scott's GRUNTS begin in the background.

INT. OLD HOME - KELBY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

GRUNTING continues.

Young Kelby lies with his cheek pressed against the bare mattress, one of his eyes swollen shut.

A little girl's WHIMPER can be heard faintly in the background.

The GRUNTING reaches a crescendo, then ceases. HEAVY FOOTSTEPS recede out of the room followed by a door shutting.

Young Kelby extends a hand across the bed to Young Sloan, who lies face down on the bed, tears streaming down her cheeks.

INT. MOTEL #3 - KELBY'S ROOM - DAY

Kelby and Sloan lie in bed, in the exact same position, holding hands, their gazes still locked. One of Kelby's eyes is swollen almost completely shut.

Morning sunlight streams in through the ratty curtains, illuminating the room and the mess left behind.

Their suitcases lay open on the floor, clothing scattered everywhere. Dresser drawers all open, some pulled completely out.

A KNOCK at the door. Neither Kelby nor Sloan seem to notice.

Another KNOCK follows, this one more forceful.

JOSIE (O.S.)
You missed check-out.

EXT. MOTEL #3 - OUTSIDE KELBY'S ROOM - DAY

Josie waits an appropriate amount of time before knocking again.

JOSIE
You in there? Hello?

Her questions are met with more silence. She pulls out a set of keys from her pocket. Searches through them for the right one.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
I'm comin' in.

INT. MOTEL #3 - KELBY'S ROOM - DAY

Holding his side in pain, Kelby climbs out of bed and begins gathering the scattered clothing into a pile.

The door SQUEALS open as Josie peeks her head in. A gasp parts her lips.

JOSIE
Jesus fuckin' Christ. What happened?

She rushes in, shutting the door behind her. Gazes around at the mess before cautiously approaching Kelby. Then she notices Sloan laid out across the bed with a blanket draped over her.

JOSIE (CONT'D)
She okay?

Kelby says nothing, continues rounding up their belongings.

JOSIE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Who did this?
(off his silence)
Did you call the cops?

Still no response. She takes out her cell phone, starts to dial.

KELBY
No!

The desperate look in his eyes forces her to bury the phone back in her pocket. Then, getting on her hands and knees, she helps Kelby collect the rest of their things.

She picks up a pair of jeans, unearthing Kelby's photo, housed behind the shattered glass of the picture frame. He quickly takes it from her, but not before she gets a look at the photo.

Her sympathetic eyes meet up with his as she expresses an unspoken apology.

Kelby removes the tattered photo, shakes off the fragments of glass and sets it in his empty suitcase. He tosses in his clothes on top, not bothering to fold anything.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

A car pulls up in front.

INT. JOSIE'S CAR (STOPPED) - DAY

Poised behind the wheel, Josie glances solemnly at a badly beaten Kelby beside her then at Sloan in the rear view mirror.

Sloan sits slumped in her seat with her sunglasses on, almost devoid of life.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Kelby pulls a suitcase out of the trunk, gritting his teeth through the pain. Josie joins him and removes the other.

JOSIE

If I didn't have to get to my
second job...

She reflexively checks her watch. Kelby relieves her of the suitcase, then sets them both on the curb.

KELBY

We've got the bus.

She reaches into her pocket, pulls out some crumpled money. Offers it to him awkwardly.

JOSIE

It's not much, but...

Kelby glances at the money then heads back to close the trunk. Josie follows.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

Take it.

When he doesn't, she slips it into his jacket pocket.

JOSIE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

If you ever...

The unspoken possibility hangs there between them until Kelby opens the back door and eases Sloan out of the car.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Kelby stands at the ticket counter, hands shaking slightly as he flips through his wallet.

BUS STATION CLERK looks on sympathetically, examining his battered face.

He finally locates his debit card, hands it to her.

She types on her computer, then slides the card through a reader.

As he waits, Kelby glances over his shoulder at Sloan, who sits idly on a bench just outside the entrance.

BUS STATION CLERK (O.S.)

Declined.

Kelby whips back around.

KELBY

What?

BUS STATION CLERK

Your card. Sorry. Do you have another one?

She hands back his debit card.

Embarrassed, Kelby slides it into his wallet. Pulls out the crumpled cash from his pocket. Hands it over.

KELBY

How far can we get on this?

She straightens out and counts the bills. Types on her computer. Looks up, apologetic.

BUS STATION CLERK

Tucson.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Kelby inserts whatever change he finds in his pockets into a vending machine. Selects a protein bar and a bottle of water. Slides onto the bench beside Sloan. Hands her the food.

KELBY

Bus is boarding in five.

Sloan doesn't take it. Doesn't even seem to hear him.

KELBY (CONT'D)

Sloan?

Still nothing. He lifts the sunglasses to study her eyes. There is an alarmingly empty look to them as they stare off at nothing in particular.

KELBY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

You with me?

Sloan comes around a bit, nods. Takes the protein bar and water. All very mechanical, as if she's just going through the motions.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Sloan sits motionless, head rested against the window as she stares out with a blank look. Kelby sits equally silent beside her, observing her worrisome demeanor.

She's a bomb and he's counting down the seconds until she explodes.

EXT. ARIZONA - HIGHWAY - EVENING

A colorful sign on the side of the road boasts: "Welcome to Arizona".

Behind it, the sun sets over the horizon.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - NIGHT

Kelby and Sloan trudge along, just off the road. They both appear fatigued to their breaking points.

Sloan throws in the towel, setting down her suitcase and plopping down on top of it.

Kelby mops some sweat off his brow, out of breath...

KELBY

Another mile, then we'll rest.

He continues on a short distance before realizing that Sloan hasn't followed. Exasperated, he trudges back, sets his suitcase beside hers and sits.

Sloan's head sinks into her hands. It isn't until her shoulders start to tremble that we realize she's crying.

He loops an arm around her shoulder, pulling her against him. Instead of comforting her, he only succeeds in causing her to cry harder.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - LATER

HEADLIGHTS approach, illuminating Kelby and Sloan as they lean against each other, barely awake.

Sloan perks up, sticking out her thumb.

As the HEADLIGHTS get closer and the vehicle doesn't slow down, she pops to her feet and moves onto the road.

Kelby yanks her back to safety as the car whizzes by.

EXT. SIDE OF THE ROAD - LATER

Sloan and Kelby amble down the road, just off the street.

Another set of HEADLIGHTS attracts their attention. This time both of them stick out their thumbs.

A old PICK-UP TRUCK pulls up and idles beside them. The DRIVER (male, 20s) rolls down the passenger window.

DRIVER

Where you headed?

KELBY
As far as you are.

DRIVER
You guys aren't armed or anything,
are you?

Kelby can't help but release a tiny chuckle.

KELBY
No. What about you?

EXT. PICK-UP TRUCK (MOVING) - NIGHT

Kelby and Sloan sit slumped against the tailgate in the bed of the truck, passing a cigarette between them.

SLOAN
Do you think he suffered? Before he
died?

KELBY
God, I hope so.

SLOAN
Do you think he suffered enough?

He thinks long and hard on this. Takes a pull of the cigarette. Hands it to Sloan.

KELBY
What would be enough?

Sloan replies with a shrug.

KELBY (CONT'D)
If he had gotten drunk and drove
his car off the road and landed in
a ditch breaking every single bone
in his body and no one found the
car for days and days while he
slowly bled to death... that
wouldn't be enough for me.

Sloan puffs on the cigarette. Passes it back to Kelby.

SLOAN
Driven out to the desert, stripped
naked, hog-tied and left for dead.
Two days for dehydration to set in,
one more before the buzzards
started swarming. He'd probably

SLOAN
 still be conscious enough to feel
 them pick the flesh off his bones
 but too weak to stop them. Not
 enough.

KELBY
 Skinned alive. Dunked in a pool of
 rubbing alcohol every hour on the
 hour, until he passed out from the
 pain. Then wait until he came to
 and repeat.

SLOAN
 Dismembered. Unimportant parts
 first. Fingers. Toes. Arms. Legs.
 Then gut him, so he could see his
 insides fall out in a puddle at his
 feet.

As their cigarette reaches its end, Kelby puts it out on his
 arm without so much as a flinch.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - NIGHT

Dark and dilapidated. The only sign that it's in working
 order is the little glow from inside the men's bathroom.

INT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Kelby stands at the urinal, doing his business. Flushes. As
 he heads for the exit, he passes a stall with Sloan's shoes
 underneath the door.

KELBY
 I'll wait outside.

INSIDE STALL

Sloan sits there, pants still up, staring off at nothing in
 particular.

JOSEPH (V.O.)
 I shoulda had you sucked outta your
 mama as fast as you were put up
 there. Kids are nothing but fucking
 leeches.

Sloan bursts out of the stall, heads for the--

SINK AREA

She washes her hands, then stares blankly at her reflection. The mirror is cracked, distorting what she sees. Not just one messed up girl, but numerous.

She rubs at her eyes, smudging her black eyeliner everywhere.

FLASH TO:

A girly charm bracelet dangles from Young Sloan's wrist as she picks through an assortment of her mother's belongings. She carefully selects a black eyeliner. With an unsteady hand, she draws a thick black line beneath both eyes.

She then applies some bright red lipstick, enlarging her lips to twice their normal size.

JOSEPH (O.S.)
What the fuck is all over
your face?

Terrified, Young Sloan turns to find Joseph towering over her.

JOSEPH
You look like a fucking whore!
Know what happens to whores?!

He snatches her up and tosses her onto the bed while she fights him off, kicking and screaming.

In the struggle, her charm bracelet is ripped from her arm. Charms and beads skitter across the floor.

One large hand restrains her by her hair while the other swipes a thumb across her lips, smearing the red lipstick everywhere.

BACK TO SCENE

Young Sloan's CRIES echo hauntingly.

Having made a black greasy mess of her eyes, Sloan moves on to her lips.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - NIGHT

Kelby paces outside the men's bathroom. Pulls out a crumpled pack of cigarettes from his back pocket. Realizes it's empty, he crushes the wrapper in his fist and launches it off into the darkness.

He paces even quicker now, running his hands through his hair, trying to control his breathing. Finally, he heads back inside.

INT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Sloan is still in front of the mirror trying to smudge off her makeup when Kelby enters.

KELBY

We should go.

Sloan regards him in the mirror, then grabs a handful of paper towels and attempts to clean up her face. The more she rubs, the worse she makes it.

Kelby takes the wad from her, moistens it and picks up where she left off.

Once all the makeup is cleared away, he pulls her into an embrace and rests his forehead against hers.

SLOAN

What're we--?

KELBY

Shhhh. Just let me think.

He combs his fingers through her hair. She strokes his cheek, then guides her mouth to his. Their lips meet for the briefest of moments before--

A BUSINESSMAN (50s) enters, startled to find that he's not alone. His wrinkled suit and loosened tie suggests he's been on the road for quite some time.

Kelby and Sloan break apart like teenagers caught in the act. He catches the door before it can close all the way, nudges her toward it.

BUSINESSMAN

Holy fuck, you scared me!

Sloan tugs Kelby's arm, urging him to follow.

KELBY

Think you could give us a ride?

Businessman tries to get a better look at Sloan, but Kelby pulls her behind him. Undeterred, Businessman winks suggestively at her.

BUSINESSMAN
How's about I just give her a ride.

KELBY
Fuck you.

Businessman heads for one of the stalls.

BUSINESSMAN
That's what I thought. Get outta
here before I fuck that face up
even more.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - NIGHT

Kelby and Sloan emerge from the men's bathroom, him tugging her along.

SLOAN
You shoulda let me do the talking.

He releases her to pick up their suitcases.

SLOAN (cont'd)
I'm going back in.

She attempts it, but Kelby blocks the doorway. He contemplates the nearly empty parking lot, then the lone car parked sideways in two handicapped stall.

KELBY
Take these and wait by the car.

He loads her down with the suitcases. When she doesn't move, he gives her an encouraging nudge.

SLOAN
What are you gonna do?

Kelby storms back into the bathroom.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Kelby!

Just before entering, he positions the hood of his jacket up over his head and tugs on the drawstring.

INT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Businessman finishes up in the stall. Flushes. Pulls up his pants. Opens the door to find--

Kelby standing there, expression hardened with resolve.

BUSINESSMAN
Change your mind?

Kelby punches him. He goes down hard, but quickly attempts to scramble to his feet. Before he can make it all the way up, Kelby swings the stall door against his head.

EXT. HIGHWAY REST STOP - LATER

Kelby walks briskly out of the restroom. Finds Sloan waiting nearby, still holding the suitcases.

KELBY
I said wait by the car.

He takes the suitcases from her, then rushes toward the parking lot. She has no choice but to follow.

Retrieving a set of keys from his pocket, he unlocks the doors by remote. Tosses the suitcases into the trunk.

KELBY (cont'd)
Get in.

Sloan stands frozen beside the passenger door, fear and worry displayed in her eyes.

KELBY (cont'd)
Get in the car.

When she doesn't follow his directions, he opens the door and shoves her in.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Radio plays an OLDIES TUNE faintly in the background as--

Kelby and Sloan ride in silence. She alternates glances at Kelby and out the front window. His attention on the road ahead is unwavering.

SLOAN
What'd you do?

He doesn't answer. Tightens his grip on the wheel until his knuckles turn white.

She waits for a response, sighs loudly when she doesn't receive one. Reaches for the radio dial.

He catches her wrist just before she makes contact.

KELBY
Don't touch anything.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #4 - NIGHT

Sloan sits rigidly on the bed, back facing the door. She stares down, entranced, by something on her lap.

Kelby enters, pulling off the hood of his jacket. Removes a wallet from his back pocket.

KELBY
Got rid of the car. I'll toss
the wallet on our way to Coronado.

He sinks into a seat at the table near the door. Flips through the wallet, pauses a second on the driver's license photo, then hits the cash. Counts it out onto the table.

KELBY (cont'd)
647. Who keeps that kind of
money in their wallet?

When he receives no response, he glances at Sloan. She hasn't moved a fraction of an inch.

KELBY (cont'd)
Sloan?

She doesn't acknowledge him in any way. He sets down the money and approaches the bed. As he notices what's distracting her, a gasp parts his lips.

SLOAN HAS A GUN.

KELBY (cont'd)
Sloan...

SLOAN
There's two left. One for you
and one for me. If that's not a
sign--

KELBY
Where'd you get that?

SLOAN
Glove box.

Kelby extends a shaky hand.

KELBY
Give it to me.

SLOAN
I can't decide who should go first.
(pause, revelation)
Maybe I should do the whole
thing myself. I don't think you
have the stomach for it.

She aims the gun at him. He flinches.

SLOAN (cont'd)
You.

She presses the barrel against her own forehead.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Then me.

He eases onto his knees beside her. Nudges his open palm
a little closer.

KELBY
Give me the gun, Sloan.

She aims the gun at him again, finger hovering dangerously
close to the trigger.

SLOAN
What if one of us died and
the other survived?

He inches his hand closer still. Daringly close.

SLOAN (cont'd)
What if we went to
different places? They say if you
kill yourself, you go to hell.

KELBY
If we die, he wins. Do
you understand that?

SLOAN

I don't care any more. It'll
be over. That's all I want. Isn't
that what you want?

KELBY

I want the gun. Can you do that?
Can you hand it to me?

Sloan shakes her head vehemently.

SLOAN

There can't be a hell. If there
was a hell, there'd have to be
a heaven. And if there was a
heaven, there'd have to be a god.
But there's no god. There couldn't
be.

He lunges for the gun, but Sloan bolts to her feet, removing
it from his grasp. She cocks it.

He stumbles backwards onto the floor, hands up in surrender.

KELBY

Okay, I'm sorry. I won't take it.
Just... put the safety on.

SLOAN

Even if there was a god, he'd have
to make an exception, right? Just
this once?

There's a cold look in her eye that signals she has
completely lost touch with reality. There's no talking her
out of this.

KELBY

Sloan... please...

Her eyes flutter closed and she inhales sharply before
squeezing the trigger. Kelby shields himself.

KELBY (cont'd)

Sloan!!

A hollow CLICK! echoes throughout the room.

He slowly lowers his arms, eyes wide with disbelief.

SLOAN

Maybe I'm supposed to go first.

She turns the gun in her hands, awkwardly positioning the barrel in the center of her forehead. In the process, her finger comes off the trigger.

Kelby slowly staggers to his feet, drunk with fear. Hands out in front of him in the most non-threatening demeanor he can manage.

KELBY

Okay, okay. But let me do it. If you miss, even by a fraction of an inch...

A spastic grin forms on Sloan's pale face.

SLOAN

You would do that for me?

KELBY

I would do anything for you. You know that. You've always known that.

Tears of relief rain down her cheeks.

SLOAN

Promise you'll be right behind me?

KELBY

I promise. Okay?

Satisfied, Sloan nods. He cautiously moves in for the gun, but before he can take possession, her smile fades and a stony resolve replaces it.

SLOAN

No, it has to be me.

Her finger edges toward the trigger as Kelby slaps the gun out of her hand.

SLOAN (cont'd)

No!

She lunges for it as Kelby tackles her to the floor. She struggles valiantly, but her attempt at escape is short lived as she dissolves to tears.

When he feels it's safe, Kelby releases her and goes for the gun. He opens the chamber and peers down at the two bullets.

The next shot would have been fatal.

He dumps the bullets into his hand. Puts them in his pocket. Sets the gun on the nightstand.

SLOAN (cont'd)
This is our only chance at freedom.
You understand that, right? You
understand that you're ruining it?

KELBY
A bullet won't make you free,
Sloan. It'll just make you dead.

He climbs to his feet, fastens the deadbolt and chain on the door, then stuffs the money into his back pocket. Returns to the bed, turning down the comforter.

KELBY (cont'd)
Get some rest.

Sloan stubbornly remains poised on the floor at the foot of the bed. He offers her a hand up, which she all but ignores.

KELBY (cont'd)
Sloan...

When she still doesn't make a move, he scoops her into his arms and sets her into bed. Lovingly strokes her cheek as he brushes some stray hair aside.

KELBY (cont'd)
Tomorrow this will all be over.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #4 - LATER

Kelby and Sloan are wide awake, lying on their sides, backs facing each other.

A tear pools in the corner of her eye, rolls across the bridge of her nose and down her cheek.

SLOAN
Did you kill that guy?

KELBY
No.

SLOAN
Are you sure?

KELBY
He was still breathing when I left.

SLOAN

You should've killed him. He saw
our faces.

He glances at her over his shoulder, incredulous.

KELBY

He barely saw yours and mine's too
fucked up for an I.D.

SLOAN

If you had just let me fuck him...

KELBY

Maybe I should've. What's one more
low-life with his dick in you?

Silence encompasses them for what seems like an
eternity before Sloan shatters it...

SLOAN

You know how I do it? How I can
be with all those men? When
they're whispering disgusting
things in my ear and choking me and
when they're inside me? I close my
eyes... and I pretend it's you.

She rolls over to face him, but he is unable to follow suit.
Undeterred, she strokes his cheek.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Because if it's you, it
doesn't hurt any more. And all the
vile things they do to me don't
seem so vile.

Kelby tightens his jaw. Swallows hard.

KELBY

Don't talk like that.

SLOAN

There's nothing I wouldn't do
for you. Nothing I wouldn't let you
do to me.

She trails her fingers down his neck, over his chest,
across his stomach, toward his zipper. He takes her by the
wrist before she can get any lower.

SLOAN (cont'd)
I'd give it all up for you. I could
be good. Tell me what you want me
to do and I'll do it.

KELBY
Nothing you do could ever make this
okay.

She rests her head on his chest.

SLOAN
No one else is gonna love us. No
one's gonna understand what we've
been through. We're too damaged for
anyone to fix. You're all I have,
and I'm all you have. And that's
enough.

KELBY
Somewhere, deep down in there,
you know it's wrong.

SLOAN
What if everyone else is wrong and
we're the only thing in this whole
fucked up world that's right?

Kelby eases his hold of her wrist. She slips her hand under
his shirt, guides it up his stomach and chest. Lowers her
lips to his.

He kisses her back, just a peck at first but
quickly escalating. He rolls her onto her back, positioning
himself on top. Squeezes his eyes shut as their lips meet
again.

FLASH TO:

Sloan is bent over the sink while Motel John takes her from
behind.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby pushes away from Sloan, but she holds his face to
hers, stealing more kisses.

FLASH TO:

Scott flips Sloan over onto her stomach then unfastens his
belt and pulls down his fly.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby rolls off of Sloan, holds her away at arm's length while she tries desperately to ease back into his embrace.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Nobody has to know.

FLASH TO:

Joseph corners Young Kelby in the small, cramped bathroom. Young Kelby backs away as the hulking figure closes in.

JOSEPH (O.S.)
Nobody has to know.

BACK TO SCENE

Sloan clings to him, resisting all his efforts to keep her away.

SLOAN
Please, Kelby. Please. I need you.

Kelby flips her over onto her stomach. With one hand he restrains both her wrists behind her back and with the other he fumbles with his zipper.

But that's as far as he gets before his conscience catches up to him. He releases her wrists.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Don't stop.

He climbs out of bed, pacing back and forth like a caged animal slowly going insane. Breathing out of control, body trembling.

SLOAN (cont'd)
Kelby...

KELBY
(stuttering)
Don't talk. Don't say anything.
Just... just for once, shut the
fuck up.

SLOAN
I'm sorry.

She crawls to the bottom of the bed, reaches out to him.

KELBY
Don't touch me.

Gripped with anxiety, he puts some distance between them, slumping against the room door and sliding down to sit on the floor. With his face buried in his hands, he bangs his head back, over and over and over.

Sloan climbs out of bed, frightened.

SLOAN

Let's just sleep, okay? I'll get your pills.

Rummaging through his suitcase full of crumpled clothes, she comes across the bottle of sleeping pills. Shakes a couple out into her hand.

Glancing over her shoulder, she realizes that he's pounding his head even harder. She shakes out two additional pills.

Swiftly, she disappears into the bathroom. Emerges a few seconds later with a glass of water. Sinking onto the floor beside him, she gingerly takes hold of his head.

He opens his eyes and, for the very first time, we see unbridled emotion of the rawest form. Rage, fear, despair, hopelessness. His little metal box has been pried open and all that was locked safely away for so long has been allowed to escape.

SLOAN (cont'd)

Let's just sleep.

She pushes one of the sleeping pills through his pursed lips. Gives him a sip of water. Then she feeds him another, and another, and another. He swallows each one without question.

INT. OLD HOME - GIRL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT (NIGHTMARE)

Small room with light pink walls.

Young Kelby is pushed roughly into frame by someone that remains in the shadows.

JOSEPH (O.S.)

Get on the bed.

Young Sloan lies on a twin-sized bed, wrists duct taped to the frame. Young Kelby weeps at the sight of her.

JOSEPH (O.S.) (cont'd)

Get on the bed! Unless you want me to do it.

Young Kelby eases onto the edge of the bed. Young Sloan watches him with wide, terrified eyes.

SLOAN (O.S.)
Tell me you love me.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #4 - DAY

CLOSE ON Kelby, as his eyes bolt open. He turns his head to look around. He's in bed. Sloan is there beside him.

He tries to get up but finds that he can't move. That's when he realizes his wrists are secured behind his head to the bed frame with duct tape.

The ROOM BLURS around him. He blinks wildly in an attempt to bring it into focus. Pulls against the restraint to no avail.

KELBY
What's going on?

Sloan says nothing, just silently observes his desperate attempt to free himself.

KELBY (cont'd)
What is this? What're you doing?

SLOAN
You were out of control. I was scared.

KELBY
I'm fine. Take this off.

She climbs on top of him, straddling his hips.

SLOAN
You want this. I know you do.

KELBY
No. Sloan, no. I don't.

SLOAN
I need you to tell me that you love me. Can you do that?

He tries more fervently to break free of the duct tape, but his efforts are in vain.

KELBY

Sloan. Please.

She undoes his button and zipper.

KELBY (cont'd)

Jesus Christ. Don't do this.

She guides him into her.

KELBY (cont'd)

Sloan!

Slowly and rhythmically, she undulates against him. Head rolls back in pleasure.

KELBY (cont'd)

Get off me. Stop!

She licks his lips, then slips her tongue into his mouth. He turns his head to deny her. Undeterred, she kisses his neck. Trails her lips down to his chest, then stomach, and lower.

Kelby squeezes his eyes shut. Concentrating. Willing himself not to enjoy it. Willing himself to stop being aroused. But he can't.

Sloan rides him harder and faster, on the verge of orgasm. She convulses wildly on top of him, head thrown back, moaning with reckless abandon.

He clenches his jaw into a stubborn line and releases a mighty wail of defeat as he shamefully loses the battle.

Sloan collapses on top of him, her sweat-soaked body heaving with every labored breath.

SLOAN

Tell me you love me.

Kelby pulls violently against the duct tape.

KELBY

Get this off of me.

She rolls off of him. Lies on her back for a second to catch her breath. A satisfied smirk creeps across her lips.

SLOAN

Next time will be better.

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 Get this off!

He struggles again, this time rocking the entire bed. The instant Sloan sets him free, he scoops her into his arms and rushes into the--

BATHROOM

--where he dumps her into the tub and turns on the water. Grabbing a wash cloth, he scrubs vigorously between her legs while she fights him off.

SLOAN
 You can't wash it away.

He throws the sopping wet rag at her, like a slap across the face. Paces to the door. Rests his forehead against it, utterly defeated.

SLOAN (cont'd)
 Kelby?

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 Do you have any fucking idea what you've done?!

She flinches at the volume of his voice.

SLOAN
 We could've made a baby. Half you and half me. Living, breathing proof that we love each other.

He turns to regard her as if she's insane. Collapses back against the door, physically and emotionally drained.

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 If that happens, you're getting rid of it.

SLOAN
 I won't.

KELBY
 (stuttering)
 You will or I'll rip it out of you with my bare hands.

SLOAN

Why? Because everyone will
know? Because you're a coward who's
too fucking ashamed to admit--

KELBY

(stuttering)

Because you're my sister!

SLOAN

Half sister.

KELBY

(stuttering)

You think that matters? You think
that makes it okay?

Sloan turns off the water. Wraps herself in a towel.
Steps out of the tub. He points at her with a trembling
finger.

KELBY (cont'd)

(stuttering)

Stay away from me!

She ignores the warning and comes up behind him, pushing
the door shut as he tries to escape.

He turns with a fire in his eye. Grabs her by the neck and
forces her against the wall.

She lets out a strangled cry as his fingers tighten,
gasps for air that won't come. She swats at his hands and
beats against his chest, but he doesn't ease up. Not even a
little.

KELBY (cont'd)

(stuttering)

Now I'm a fucking monster.
Just like him.

Sloan's feet leave the floor as he lifts her up the
wall. She tries to pry his fingers off her neck while her
legs flail.

Her arms gradually go limp at her sides as the fight leaves
her. Just as she's about to lose consciousness, he releases
her.

She collapses to the floor, gasping greedily for
air, holding her neck.

He bursts out of the room, leaving Sloan slumped in a barely
conscious heap on the floor.

EXT. MOTEL #4 - NIGHT

Kelby smokes a cigarette, pacing back and forth, mind racing. Suddenly he stops to punch the wall. Again and again and again, like he's completely lost his mind.

INT. ABORTION CLINIC - DAY (FLASHBACK)

TEENAGE SLOAN (14) and TEENAGE KELBY (19) sit side by side in an empty waiting room.

Teenage Sloan's legs twitch nervously as she chews her black fingernails. Teenage Kelby places a hand on her knee, causing the twitch to cease.

A CLINIC NURSE dressed in scrubs exits from a back room.

CLINIC NURSE

Sloan... we're ready for you.

Teenage Sloan and Teenage Kelby rise from their seats in unison. She clamps onto his hand, pulling him along.

CLINIC NURSE (cont'd)

I'm sorry but your boyfriend has to wait here.

INT. MOTEL ROOM #4 - DAY

The room is empty. No sign of Sloan.

Kelby enters, calm now. Almost too calm, considering his right hand is dripping blood onto the carpet.

He heads for the bathroom but discovers the door is now closed.

KELBY

Sloan...

Upon receiving no response, he wiggles the doorknob. It's also locked.

KELBY (cont'd)

Did I hurt you?

He puts a hand against the door, leaving a blood stain. Glances back at the nightstand.

THE GUN IS MISSING.

Panicked, he reaches into his pocket, draws out only one bullet.

KELBY (cont'd)
Sloan!?!

BANG! A GUNSHOT rings out from inside the bathroom.

Kelby rams his shoulder into the door several times before it bursts open, sending him tumbling into the--

BATHROOM

Sloan's lifeless body is slumped against the shower, eyes wide and blank. BLOOD and BRAIN MATTER trickle down the curtain.

Kelby crumbles to his knees, scooping Sloan into his arms and dragging her onto his lap.

KELBY (cont'd)
No, no, no. Sloan. No. Don't leave me. You can't leave me. We'll go to Mexico. I'll take you to Mexico. Just you and me. Just the two of us. Please.

He shakes her, as if she's just asleep. As if with the right amount of effort, she'll wake up and everything will be okay.

He smooths back her hair, kisses her, hugs her to his chest. All the while weeping like a child.

KELBY (cont'd)
You can't leave me. Please don't leave me. I can't do this without you. I can't be here without you. Sloan!!

INT. TAXI (MOVING) - DAY

Kelby sits stoically in back, face eerily expressionless considering what he's just endured.

His CRIES ECHO hauntingly.

TAXI DRIVER glances at him several times in the mirror.

TAXI DRIVER
You okay, buddy?

Kelby doesn't reply. Continues his deadpan.

Taxi driver adjusts the rear view mirror, noticing a smear of blood on Kelby's neck, just above the zipper of his hoodie.

TAXI DRIVER (cont'd)
You got something there on your...

Kelby pulls up the zipper to his chin.

EXT. OLD HOME - DAY

An old Dutch colonial farm house, in a state of neglect and disrepair. Weeds and vines creep and crawl across the wrought iron rail around the porch.

A taxi pulls up to the curb in front of the house.

Kelby exits, handing the driver a wad of cash. It looks like everything he got off the Businessman.

Taxi Driver starts to count, then pauses in disbelief.

TAXI DRIVER
You only owe me forty.

Kelby heads off for the front porch.

INT. OLD HOME - DAY

The inside looks even worse than the outside. Faded, peeling wall paper. Dirty, scuffed hardwood floors. An inch of dust on everything. What little furniture remains doesn't appear worth salvaging.

Kelby stands just inside the threshold, the front of his pants covered in Sloan's blood.

He steels his nerves before walking up the rickety staircase to the--

SECOND FLOOR

Two doors on the left, two on the right.

Kelby chooses the first on the left. Opens it to peer inside.

Completely bare. Pale blue paint-chipped walls are the only hint as to whom this room used to belong.

FLASH TO:

Young Kelby lies awake in bed, the room around him darkened.

The door CREAKS open and Young Sloan slips in. She closes the door behind her, but remains timidly beside it.

YOUNG SLOAN

Kelby?

Young Kelby doesn't say a word, just pulls back the covers on the opposite side of the bed. Young Sloan crawls in beside him. He draws the covers over her, then drapes his arm around her and holds her tight.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby closes the door. Continues on a slow trudge down the hallway. Opens a door on the left, glances in.

The bathroom is filthy with its stained tub and mildewed grout. An empty spot on the floor indicates where the toilet and sink used to be.

FLASH TO:

Young Kelby and Young Sloan sit in the tub together, soapy water up to the brim.

YOUNG SLOAN (cont'd)

My turn.

Young Sloan turns her back to Young Kelby. He draws a big puffy shape on her skin with his finger.

YOUNG SLOAN (cont'd)

Cloud?

The door flies open, causing the kids to shriek in fear. They shield their faces as a belt snaps down on them.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby moves on to the next door. As he puts a hand to the knob, his ears are filled with the sound of a young girl's bone-chilling SCREAMS.

He hurries urgently in the opposite direction. Back down the--

STAIRCASE

-- and into the--

LIVING ROOM

A cacophony of voices reverberate inside his head, taunting him.

JOSEPH (V.O.)
Stop crying like a little bitch!

YOUNG SLOAN (V.O.)
I don't want to play today. Please don't make me.

JOSEPH (V.O.)
You think you're tough? Get out of the way before you get her share!
(then)
Don't let me see you so much as flinch!

A LEATHER BELT SNAPS AGAINST FLESH.

YOUNG KELBY (V.O.)
Leave her alone!

JOSEPH (V.O.)
You're a fucking whore, just like your mother.

YOUNG SLOAN (V.O.)
No! Stop!! Kelby!!!

JOSEPH (V.O.)
Say it. Tell me you love me.

SLOAN (V.O.)
Tell me you love me... what if everyone else is wrong and we're the only thing in this whole fucked up world that's right?... Tell me you love me... We could've made a baby. Half you and half me... Tell me you love me... I close my eyes, and I pretend it's you... Tell me you love me...

Unable to bear it any more, Kelby removes the gun out of the back of his waistband. Opens the cylinder. With a trembling hand, he struggles to load the lone bullet. Pulls back the hammer. Positions it at his temple.

His breathing is ragged as his finger twitches above the trigger.

A lengthy stand-off. The memories versus his will to live.

Finally, he lowers the gun. After a deep cleansing breath, he opens the cylinder, removes the bullet and drops it into his pocket. Tosses the gun into the crumbling brick fireplace.

His attention averts to a small table in the dining area shrouded in plastic sheeting. A copy of Joseph's will sits on top. He lazily makes his way over.

INSERT - DOCUMENT COVER

Last Will and Testament of Joseph Cartwright.

BACK TO SCENE

Kelby flips open to the first page. Skims through the numerous blocks of type written font, until arriving at the information he's searching for.

KELBY

I direct that all property be sold
and the proceeds of such sale be
distributed evenly between my
biological son, Kelby Cartwright
and my non...

He pauses, struggling to make sense of what he's reading.

KELBY (cont'd)

... non-biological daughter, Sloan
Cartwright.

Kelby stares blankly at the document while the information sinks in. When he's done processing, he goes into a rage, violently flipping the table and scattering the pages of the will.

He bolts into the--

KITCHEN

--and searches frantically through the cabinets. It isn't until the very last one that he locates a bottle of Irish whiskey.

INT. OLD HOME - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kelby unscrews the top off the whiskey bottle and empties the contents onto the will. With a hardened stare, he produces a lighter from his pocket and sets the whiskey ablaze.

He slowly backs out of the room, watching the flames engulf everything with hate-filled eyes.

INT. CHURCH - SAME

Filled to capacity with black-clad mourners. There's a closed casket positioned on the altar.

A large frame displays a photo of Joseph looking much like he did in Kelby's nightmares.

A gray-haired woman with bloodshot eyes, AUNT JENNIE (60s), stands at a podium, delivering a heartfelt eulogy.

AUNT JENNIE

He was in so much pain at the end,
but he still had his sense of
humor. He took my hand and looked
me in the eye and said: "Have I
ever told you how ugly you look
when you cry?"

Aunt Jennie chuckles through her tears, causing a chain reaction with the mourners. She absently dabs at her eyes with a balled up tissue.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)

He wasn't one to mince words.
It was one of those things you
either loved about him or hated.

A few of the mourners nod their heads in agreement.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)

His last words to me were:
"I've made a lot of mistakes in my
life, but I've done a lot of good,
too. Make sure I'm remembered more
for the good".

Her bottom lip quivers as she struggles to keep her composure.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)

Please, please. Remember the good.

With tears in her eyes, Aunt Jennie approaches the casket. She kisses her fingertips, then places them against the photo.

On her way back to her seat, she is caught off guard by a distraction at the back of the room as--

Kelby rises from his seat in the last pew. In a daze, he trudges up the center aisle, still donned in his blood-stained clothing.

As he reaches the altar, he unzips and removes his hoodie. The white T-shirt he wears underneath is soaked in Sloan's blood.

Aunt Jennie tries to approach him, but a man next to her pulls her back.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)
Kelby? What happened?

An uncomfortable lull descends upon the room and all its occupants.

With all eyes on him, Kelby approaches the casket.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)
Where's Sloan?

Kelby regards the photo for a moment then THWACK!, throws it to the floor with a swipe of his hand.

The frame SHATTERS, startling the mourners and sucking out what little air remains in the room.

AUNT JENNIE (cont'd)
Kelby!

Kelby flips open the lid of the casket, causing shocked GASPS and MUTED CONVERSATIONS to reverberate throughout the room.

Joseph lies inside wearing an ill-fitting suit. He looks so old and frail. Not a trace remains of the formidable man from the photo.

Kelby stands there for what seems like an eternity. No words. No emotion. Finally, he positions himself behind the podium.

KELBY
Charming, charismatic,
funny, loyal, hardworking. Those
are adjectives used by all of you
to describe Joseph Cartwright. But
Sloan and I knew him a
little different.

Aunt Jennie attempts another interception, but again she's stopped by her husband.

KELBY (cont'd)

He used to put cigarettes out on my back, to teach me how to be a man. How to take pain and internalize it. I cried the first time and he threatened to castrate me. He said if I wasn't gonna be a man, I didn't deserve to have the equipment.

AUNT JENNIE

Kelby, he's gone. Let him rest in peace.

KELBY

Sloan put a bullet in her head because of him. Where's her peace?

Aunt Jennie weeps into her hands.

KELBY (cont'd)

Most of you didn't know, not with any amount of certainty, but you probably suspected. Little Kelby and Sloan always had a bruise, busted lip or a swollen eye. Must be a couple of rambunctious kids. Poor Joseph, widowed by his first wife and abandoned by his second. He's doing the best he can. Is that what you all told yourself? Because the alternative would've meant you had to do something.

AUNT JENNIE

Kelby, please...

KELBY

I sat back there and listened to you spout utter bullshit. Now it's your turn to listen.

He fixes a pointed glare on her until she slumps down into her seat, defeated.

KELBY (cont'd)

After my mother's funeral, when everyone had gone home, he took off his belt and beat me until I couldn't stand up anymore. Then he tied me to the kitchen chair and beat me some more. I was four.

The mourners shift uncomfortably in their seats, exchanging uneasy glances. A select few with small children get up and leave.

Kelby trudges on, undaunted.

KELBY (cont'd)

Later that year, he met and married Amelia, Sloan's mother. She would give me a lollipop almost every day... one of those huge ones the size of a kid's face. She'd assure me that she'd be home before I was done with it and then I'd watch through my bedroom window while she got into someone's car. A new car every day. I don't know which one of them knocked her up, but it sure as hell wasn't Joseph because, according to his will, Sloan wasn't his biological child. She wasn't my sister.

AUNT JENNIE

He loved you, Kelby. He loved you both.

KELBY

He didn't love her. I loved her. In a way none of you could ever possibly understand.

AUNT JENNIE

Explain it to me. I want to understand.

Kelby turns away from her to focus on the other mourners, like he's a priest delivering a sermon to his congregation.

KELBY

Amelia started drinking and taking sedatives a couple years later, which made it a lot easier for Joseph to pay me and Sloan those nightly visits.

Aunt Jennie buries her face against her husband's chest while he does his best to comfort her.

KELBY (cont'd)

As we got older, he would have friends over. They'd get drunk and come in our rooms. Sometimes they'd

KELBY

take pictures. Other times they'd do things to her and make me watch, or to me and make her watch.

Even more families usher their children quickly away, grumbling under their breaths in disapproval.

Kelby continues on, oblivious to his receding audience.

KELBY (cont'd)

The night Amelia left, I decided it was time Sloan and I left, too. Joseph was angry. Angrier than I had ever seen him. Drinking. Throwing things. I packed up as much as I could fit into a duffle and lowered Sloan out my bedroom window. We got as far as the next county before he pulled up in his pick-up truck and threw us inside. I thought he would kill us that night. Sometimes I wish he had.

Aunt Jennie frees herself from her husband's protective hold and approaches the podium. She tries to take Kelby in her arms but he brushes her away.

KELBY (cont'd)

She had three abortions before she made it out of high school. I paid for them. I took her to the appointments. Held her hand before and after, while a doctor destroyed Joseph's dirty little secrets.

He clutches onto the podium with a white-knuckled grip. Takes a deep, shaky breath.

KELBY (cont'd)

I got her out of rehab, someplace where she was safe from herself and the world, and I dragged her across the country because I thought if she saw that that monster had finally gotten what he deserved, everything would be okay. She'd be okay. We'd be okay together. She might have pulled that trigger, but her blood is on my hands and all of yours, too.

Aunt Jennie makes another attempt to embrace Kelby but is again rebuffed as he trudges down the center aisle and out the back door.

KELBY (V.O.)

Life sucks and then you die. That's what they say, on shirts and mugs and internet memes. But I've learned that death isn't a punishment. For some it comes way too soon and for others not soon enough.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Still small and cramped. Still noticeably devoid of windows. Lit by two bright linear florescent light bulbs.

Ten chairs are arranged in a neat circle. Nine women and one man.

An easel beside the door identifies it as a "Survivors of Sexual Abuse" support group.

Kelby sits up erect in his chair. Alert and participatory. He tells an emphatic story with frequent gesturing.

The other members of the group hang on his every word.

Instead of the story he's currently telling, we hear:

KELBY (V.O.)

It comes whether you're happy, sad, loved, needed, prepared, fulfilled or incomplete. Death is indiscriminate. You can spend your life questioning the fairness of it all, or you can give it the finger and keep going.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Intense sunlight bathes the busy street as pedestrians and motorists go about their day.

Kelby exits a building in a hurry and heads down the sidewalk, flipping up the hood on his sweatshirt. He takes out a foil sheet of nicotine gum. Pops several into his mouth.

COURTNEY (O.S.)

Kelby!

Kelby glances over his shoulder. Sees that he's being chased. Reduces his pace, allowing Courtney to catch up.

They walk, side by side, before stopping at the blinking red hand of a crosswalk signal.

COURTNEY

Loved what you said today. About Sloan. You should bring her to a meeting some time.

Kelby smiles politely, but that's all he can manage.

COURTNEY (cont'd)

I was thinking... if you're not busy... maybe we could get some lunch.

He fidgets. Checks his watch.

KELBY

I can't.

Courtney looks defeated.

The light changes. Traffic ceases. Pedestrians cross the intersection.

Kelby moves with the flow but Courtney doesn't follow. He doesn't notice until he gets to the opposite side of the street and glances back.

He yells across the traffic that is now flowing again...

KELBY (cont'd)

I have to do this thing... for Sloan. When I get back?

Courtney smiles, hope returned. Nods.

Kelby continues on to a city bus stop. Leans up against a light pole. Pulls some earbuds out of his pocket and plugs them into his ears.

This time they're connected to an mp3 player. He shuffles through a few songs before making a decision.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS (MOVING) - DAY

Kelby sits slumped against the window, forehead pressed to the glass.

A "WELCOME TO MEXICO" sign blurs by outside.

EXT. BEACH - MEXICO - EVENING

White sand beach. Tranquil turquoise water meets the vibrantly hued pre-sunset horizon.

Kelby trudges through the sand into the shoreline and beyond. The waves lap against him as he walks further in, fully dressed.

As the water comes up to his waist, he reaches into his pocket and produces the bullet. The one that was meant to reunite him and Sloan.

With a heavy heart, he pitches it into the ocean as far as he can manage.

He lies back in the water, arms and legs extended, allowing himself to drift with the current.

FADE OUT