

.. And It Only Cost Me My Soul

By

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"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

-Genesis 2:7

FADE FROM BLACK:

Note: The following scene plays out almost in montage fashion as it quickly moves to tell this short story through action (no dialogue).

EXT. SAN JACINTO MOUNTAINS - MANY YEARS AGO

A tribe of the "Mountain" Cahuilla people (Native Americans) take residency here in these mountains.

MONTAGE OF THEM:

-They hunt

-They eat

-They sleep

The SHAMAN, named TAHQUITZ, dances his dance around the fire. Some of the tribe join him.

Later, ONE of the women joins him.. alone.

NEXT MORNING

ONE of the tribesmen finds the remains of the woman. He shows them to his CHIEF. CHIEF ALGOOT, weathered but tough, gathers his tribe in the hopes of finding the culprit.

It's not long until they do.. The shaman, Tahquitz, is outed as the murderous cannibal.

The tribe holds a gathering in which Chief Algoot banishes Tahquitz into the canyon (or rather, the peak), deep in the mountains, that will eventually derive its name from him.

Although banished, Chief Algoot does not abandon the old man Tahquitz completely. He sends a pair of his hunters to take him food so that he will not starve.

Days pass and the two do not return. Chief Algoot decides to send his son and three of his best hunters, knowing full well something is wrong.

(CONTINUED)

A day passes. They do not return. This time, Chief Algoot knows he has made a fatal mistake. He knows that he will never see his son and fellow tribesmen again.. not in one piece that is.

Chief Algoot prepares himself. He readies his camp so that they can continue on during his leave of absence. He journeys to Tahquitz Peak.

#### TAHQUITZ PEAK

Chief Algoot arrives to find all sorts of remains scattered messily outside of a dark cave. Bones of animals. Bones of fellow men.

The sky blackens. Chief Algoot is touched by the cold, evil presence in his midst. He stares down the cave, unsure of what he will find, but stares it down nonetheless. He prepares himself mentally for the thing he is to fight.

Tahquitz, the shaman-transformed-demon, growls from within the cave. He laughs and his laughter booms and echoes. It frightens away even the vultures. There would be no remains for them this time. Even so, Chief Algoot stands his ground. He's ready for the fight of his life. The fight for the lives of his tribe.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE RIVERSIDE - INT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

The year is 1969.

The small cabin-like home of JOHN BREYER sits in Lake Riverside, California (sitting by the actual lake itself), which is about twenty minutes away from the Cahuilla Reservation and an hour away from Tahquitz Peak and the San Jacinto mountains.

JOHN BREYER (30s, Native American descendant of the Cahuilla mountain tribes) sits at his dining table.

Across from him, a 10-year old VINCENT KANE sits, playing with his food.

Vincent is a mix of white Irish (his father) and Native American (his mother). He looks more like his father..

JOHN BREYER

Eat.

(CONTINUED)

KID VINCENT  
But you didn't finish the story.

JOHN BREYER  
If I finish it, will you finish  
your breakfast?

Kid Vincent nods.

JOHN BREYER  
(smiles)  
Chief Algoot knew that if he did  
not defeat Tahquitz, his people, at  
least those that resided in those  
mountains, would be hunted and  
killed and eaten.

KID VINCENT  
So what did he do?

JOHN BREYER  
He did the only thing he could. He  
stopped the Demon of Cahuilla. He  
fought and beat Tahquitz.. but  
there are those who claim he was  
never truly vanquished and that he  
continues to reside there,  
influencing others. Forever hungry.

Kid Vincent looks back at John, wide-eyed.

JOHN BREYER  
Eat.

Kid Vincent begins to. After a short time..

KID VINCENT  
Uncle John?

JOHN BREYER  
Nephew Vincent?

KID VINCENT  
Are you putting me on?

JOHN BREYER  
(laughs)  
What?

KID VINCENT  
Did this really happen?

(CONTINUED)

JOHN BREYER  
What do you think?

KID VINCENT  
(shrugs)  
I don't know.

JOHN BREYER  
That's why they call it a legend.  
It's a story.. but there are truths  
to some of these stories. Truths  
only some people know, others will  
learn, and most will never accept.

KID VINCENT  
Like dad?

JOHN BREYER  
(lightly chuckles)  
Your father isn't a spiritual man.  
Sometimes it takes that to  
understand these sorts of things.

KID VINCENT  
Hm...

John can feel Kid Vincent's questions. He turns to him.

JOHN BREYER  
You wanted to ask me something?

KID VINCENT  
Are you some kind of mind reader?

JOHN BREYER  
Was that your question?

KID VINCENT  
(shakes head)  
Why did he do that?

JOHN BREYER  
Why did who do what?

KID VINCENT  
Tah-Tahq-

JOHN BREYER  
Tahquitz.

KID VINCENT  
Yeah, him.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN BREYER

He was evil in his core. A demon  
that didn't play by the rules. He  
liked to cause mischief.

KID VINCENT

Demons have rules?

JOHN BREYER

Everyone has rules, but there are  
those few who choose to live  
outside of them.

KID VINCENT

But why did he eat them? Did they  
taste good?

JOHN BREYER

I wouldn't know how they tasted,  
but I imagine what he really wanted  
was inside of those poor men he  
slaughtered.

KID VINCENT

What?

JOHN BREYER

Their souls. Souls are power.. and  
everyone has a soul.

KID VINCENT

Everyone?

JOHN BREYER

Everyone.

Kid Vincent looks down at himself, wondering where this soul  
is. He looks back up at John.

KID VINCENT

What's mischief?

JOHN BREYER

(smiles)

Eat.

EXT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

John works on his truck as Kid Vincent plays near the lake.

(CONTINUED)

Something seems to call to Kid Vincent from the lake. An invisible force. An aura. An entity. It pulls at Kid Vincent. He inches his way towards the water as John continues to work on his truck.

Kid Vincent enters the water. He continues inward until his feet no longer touch the ground. He realizes too late what he's done. There is no way for him to turn back now. He can't swim and is too small to get back on the ground again. He begins to drown.

INT. VINCENT'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM

SAN DIEGO, California. May 1989. PRESENT DAY

Adult VINCENT (30) zones out in the shower. He chokes on the shower water for a moment before snapping back to reality. He spits out the water and coughs. He collects himself, regaining control of his breathing. He lets the water continue to hit him.

Note: Vincent is a mute who only speaks in ASL (American Sign Language). Whenever Vincent signs, there will be text on screen to follow along. (signing) will appear next to character names when they do ASL.

BEDROOM

Vincent gets ready for his day. He puts on some clothes (pants and a nice, just-pressed dress shirt). He puts on a bow tie to go with his outfit, finishing off with his dark blue Sherpa jacket over his button up shirt. The jacket looks like it's seen better days. It's worn, but still fashionable. It's clean, but there are a couple of small stains that can only be blood. He puts on a watch.

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

Vincent drives to work in his shiny new late 80's convertible Pontiac Firebird Trans Am. Black with the gold eagle across the hood, bumping *The Talking Heads' A Clean Break*.

The perfect place for opening credits to start..

EXT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

.. then end.

Vincent drives pulls into the lot.

SUPERIMPOSE TITLE: .. AND IT ONLY COST ME MY SOUL

He parks and exits his car. He looks up at the big sign that reads "Smiley Riley's Dentistry" then heads inside.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Your average dentistry for its time. Nothing particularly special or unique stands out about it.

Vincent approaches the front desk where AMY (early 20s), a slightly caked-up, blonde young woman, sits behind.

AMY  
Morning, Doctor Kane.

Vincent looks back at her, knowing full well what she's up to. Playing her games.

AMY  
Come here a sec, will ya?

Vincent moves closer to the desk, weary.

AMY  
(slyly)  
I don't bite.

Amy motions Vincent to lean in. He does slowly. Amy fixes his bow tie.

AMY  
Better.

Vincent smiles back, in a way to show he's thankful.. but not quite interested in her the way she is in him.

AMY  
Dr. Riley's waiting for you in his office.

Vincent nods "thank you".

Vincent walks past the desk and down a short hallway towards Dr Riley's office. The door is open so he enters.



INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Inside, DOCTOR RUTGER RILEY (50s, Caucasian of Irish descent), sits behind his desk. Riley is dressed up nice like Vincent. Nicer. He's a fashionable man. Bow tie as well. His right leg a prosthetic from the knee down.

Behind him posted on the wall are all his accolades. A bookshelf.

Across from the desk are a couple of chairs. One empty, the other housing a man around Vincent's age.

ANTOINE (30s, African American) sits, also dressed up down to the bow tie. His look isn't quite as on point as Vince's, he seems to take less care in his appearance.

ANTOINE  
What up, Vince.

Antoine goes for the fist pump, Vincent meets it.

RILEY  
Antoine.

Riley motions towards the door.

ANTOINE  
You got it.  
(to Vincent)  
I'll be outside, man.

Vincent nods.

Antoine steps out of the office and heads outside, stopping by Amy's desk on the way out (to flirt with her).

Riley looks up at Vincent, straight faced at first. He breaks it with that famous smile of his (they don't call him "Smiley Riley" for nothing).

RILEY  
Give this old man some loving.

Vincent walks over and hugs Riley. Riley hands him an envelope (birthday card).

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Thank you.

Vincent takes a seat across the desk from him.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

The big 3-0, huh? You're doing a lot better than I was at that age, I'll tell you that much. Any plans later?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I'm not sure yet.

RILEY

Well, enjoy it. You deserve all the success that comes to you.. When I first got in, I sat right here and started to.. reminiscence. It was twenty years ago that I adopted you after your father.. after he died. He was a good friend. My best friend. I knew after it happened that it couldn't be any other way.. and I'm glad it all turned out the way it did.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Me too.

RILEY

There's something that you understand that a lot of these other young men don't. Loyalty. You've always been loyal to me, Vincent. Through thick and thin. You've always trusted me. I love you for that. I just want you to know.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I love you.

MISTER MANN (O.S.)

Loyalty is for suckers.

Riley and Vincent look up as an old man enters the office.

The old man, MISTER MANN walks with a cane. It's unclear exactly how old he is, but he definitely wears his years on his face. His face seems to be glued in a permanent half-smirk.

RILEY

Mister Mann. I didn't realize we'd be seeing you again so soon.

(CONTINUED)

MISTER MANN

No appointment today, but we have much to discuss.

RILEY

(dodgy)

And we will.

Vincent catches Riley giving Mann a look.

RILEY

You're wrong.. by the way.

MISTER MANN

What about?

RILEY

Loyalty is everything.

MISTER MANN

(amused)

Hm.

(turns to Vincent)

When are you going to take this nice girl out? She's been pining after you as long as she's worked here.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Who?

MISTER MANN

The desk girl. I forget her name.

Vincent rolls his eyes.

RILEY

He's got a girlfriend. Hell, they're practically married.

Vincent gives Riley a look then turns back to Mann.

MISTER MANN

You ever hear the old saying, "don't bring work home"?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Speaking of old, how do you still have enough teeth to warrant check ups?

Mister Mann laughs very abruptly, startling Vincent.

(CONTINUED)

MISTER MANN

Quite the silver tongue for someone  
who doesn't have one.

Vincent winks at Mann. He stands up and pats Mann on his shoulder. He takes one last look over at Riley and waves goodbye.

RILEY

I owe you dinner. We'll talk.

Vincent gives a thumbs up and exits the office. Mann shuts the door behind him.

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD

Vincent and Antoine sit in the car, parked outside of an old house.

They bump the newest in Hip-Hop/Rap, making use of the Trans Am's cassette tape player.

ANTOINE

See, this shit right here.

Antoine bobs his head. Vincent only listens at first, head still.

ANTOINE

You ain't feeling this shit?

Vincent motions to his ear, "I'm listening."

ANTOINE

Then listen harder mutha fucka.  
What you know about this?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What you know about this? I could  
rap circles around you.

Antoine watches Vincent waving his hands around.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You ready? I'm going to go slow for  
you so you can follow along..

(beat)

You thought you could rap, but you  
ain't worth dung. This mother  
fucker spanked that ass, even  
though the cat got his tongue.

(CONTINUED)

ANTOINE

You know I don't know what the fuck  
you just said to me. Probably  
talking shit though, I know that  
much.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You're the biggest shit eater I  
know.

ANTOINE

Nigga.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

The sound of knocking from the next scene is heard and then:

CUT TO:

INT. CARLOS GONZALEZ' HOME

CARLOS GONZALEZ (50s, Mexican) answers the door. Carlos looks weathered and beat down. Antoine and Vincent stand there at the entrance, Antoine without his bow tie and Vincent carrying a unique looking BRIEFCASE at his side. The briefcase is covered in what looks to be ancient symbols. They appear to be carved in.

ANTOINE

Mister Gonzalez?

Carlos nods then turns around and leads them into the house.

They walk through the entrance living room (small) and down a long hallway. Everywhere they look there is imagery of Jesus Christ, the Virgin Mary and many Saints. It's a house full of devout Catholics.

ANTOINE

(sarcastically, quietly to  
Vincent)

You think these guys go to church  
every Sunday?

Vincent ignores him. His eyes wander.

They reach the end of the long hallway and end up in a second living room. This one is much bigger than the one at the entrance of the house. The house creaks and speaks to them, telling them exactly how old it is.

(CONTINUED)

Carlos motions at the pair of plastic covered couches. Vincent and Antoine sit. Vincent gently sets the odd briefcase down at his feet. Carlos exits the living room.

ANTOINE

Where the hell is he going?

Antoine looks at Vincent whose gaze is caught elsewhere. Antoine looks to see what he sees. An OLD MAN, at least 80s (Mexican), sits in a wheelchair. He has IVs connected to him. He grips a guitar (that almost seems to be bigger than him) in his hands and on his lap. He begins to pluck the strings, creating an eerie sound.

ANTOINE

What a beautiful piece.. You got anything less spooky?

Vincent elbows Antoine.

ANTOINE

What? Making me feel like something creepin' around the corner.

The Old Man continues to play. Vincent looks down at his watch to check the time. He looks a little concerned.

The Old Man's song is simple, but tells a tale of sadness, loneliness and hopelessness. Vincent's eyes focus in on the guitar strings as the Old Man plucks them. Cold breath emits from Vincent's mouth.

FLASHBACK - INT. VINCENT'S CHILDHOOD HOME

20 years ago..

Carlos Gonzalez' home is replaced by Vincent's childhood home. A memory.

The Old Man is replaced by Vincent's father, CHRISTOPHER KANE (30s, Caucasian of Irish descent like Riley). Christopher bares medium to long hair that falls to the sides of his head. He brushes back the hair behind his ear. Christopher wears the same dark blue Sherpa jacket we've seen adult Vincent wearing (it's the same exact one). There are no blood stains and it is in pretty good condition.

Vincent has become Kid Vincent. Kid Vincent sits on the ground criss-cross applesauce in front of his father. Christopher strums the guitar resting on his lap. An unpleasant sound.

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTOPHER  
You hear that?

Kid Vincent nods. Christopher strums again then plucks the strings of the guitar one by one, from top to bottom.

KID VINCENT  
It sounds wrong.

CHRISTOPHER  
How did you know that?

KID VINCENT  
I don't know.

CHRISTOPHER  
You just did. Right?

Kid Vincent nods again.

CHRISTOPHER  
That's your gut talking. Always  
listen to your gut.  
(as he tunes the guitar)  
It's out of tune.. and when  
something's out of tune.. that  
means something ain't quite right.

Christopher begins to play the now-tuned guitar, plucking the strings and playing something similarly eerie to the Old Man. There's a look in Christopher's eyes as if he knows something isn't quite right.

A voice calls out from behind Kid Vincent.

RILEY (O.S.)  
You ready?

CHRISTOPHER  
Yeah.

Christopher stands up and sets the guitar down against the wall.

CHRISTOPHER  
Let's go.

KID VINCENT  
Where are we going?

CHRISTOPHER  
I'm taking you to Uncle John's.

(CONTINUED)

Kid Vincent stands up from the floor and turns to see a young (early 30s) Rutger Riley waiting in the door frame.

RILEY

You just keep growing and growing.  
Now give Uncle Riley a smile.

Riley smiles his famous smile.

INT. CARLOS GONZALEZ' HOME - BIG LIVING ROOM

Vincent is back in the present. He snaps back to reality as Carlos comes back into the room (the sound of him walking back in seemingly breaking the silence, outside of the guitar string plucking).

Carlos sits down on the plastic covered couch perpendicular to Antoine and Vincent. Vincent grabs the briefcase and sets it on his lap. He opens it up. There is a strange aura around it, one they can all feel.

The Old Man stops plucking his guitar strings. All of the sounds within the house seem to stop, as if the plumbing and electricity have ceased to exist.

Vincent removes a packet of papers, a contract, and hands it to Carlos. Carlos accepts it. He also removes a peculiar looking pen. It looks something like a sacrificial dagger, bearing similar symbols to the ones on the briefcase. He holds onto it for now.

Carlos' eyes well up. He sighs then begins to read through the packet.

Antoine and Vincent sit there in awkward silence as they wait. Vincent checks his watch.

Finally, Carlos skips over to the very last page in the packet. Vincent hands Antoine the peculiar pen. Carlos watches as Antoine removes the bottom end cap to reveal a small blade.

ANTOINE

Let me see your hand.

Carlos looks over at Vincent. Vincent nods, telling him it's alright. Carlos slowly brings up his left hand. Antoine gently grabs it and has him hold out his thumb. He pricks Carlos' thumb with the point. Carlos bleeds from his thumb. Antoine pinches his thumb and guides it to the paperwork.

(CONTINUED)



A single tear rolls down his cheek. He hands the contract back to Antoine, who hands it to Vincent, who places it back inside the briefcase. The aura feels different now.

Vincent shuts the briefcase and it makes a clicking sound, seemingly locking itself. The carved symbols on the briefcase appear to glow. It's ever so slight, but it's there if you look for it.

Vincent stands first, followed by Antoine, then Carlos. Vincent extends his hand out to Carlos. Carlos reluctantly shakes it, then Antoine's. He walks them out.

EXT. CARLOS GONZALEZ' HOME

Vincent steps out first, seemingly in a rush. He checks his watch again as Antoine follows after him and Carlos shuts his front door on them.

ANTOINE

Where the hell you gotta be?

As Vincent walks over to his car, again checking his watch, DESHAWN MONTEZ (early 30s, Afro-Mexican American) pulls up in his ride.

DeShawn is also dressed up down to the bow tie. He has a little more style than Vincent. Just a little. Vincent hands DeShawn the briefcase through his driver passenger window.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(taps watch)

Til the last minute. Every time  
with you.

DESHAWN

I'm here aren't I? You know I could  
have just picked her up myself.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Yeah, but she's expecting me.

DESHAWN

Yeah, yeah. She likes you better  
anyway.

Vincent winks at DeShawn. He smirks back and gives a half-shake of his head.

ANTOINE

What up, Vince? You gonna leave me  
alone with this mangy-lookin'  
nigga?

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN  
I'm mangy-looking?  
(back to Vincent)  
You owe me for this shit.

DESHAWN (SIGNING)  
Happy birthday.

Vincent nods "thank you," then gets into his ride and rolls out.

EXT. MORLEY FIELD (PARK) - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD

Vincent, windows rolled down, pulls up to the park. Kids play on the playground and run around on the grass.

LUNA, a sweet little girl about 10-years old, runs up to the passenger side window. Luna, niece to DeShawn, wears a blue soccer uniform with dirt-smearred soccer cleats. She smiles a big smile at Vincent: the most genuine "I'm happy to see you" smile you ever saw.

Luna enters the passenger side. She hugs Vincent. He embraces her.

Luna seems to always speak with an excitement in her voice.

LUNA  
So where to?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Are you hungry?

Luna squints and smirks.

Vincent shakes his head smiling, then:

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Why do I even ask?

LUNA  
(shrugs)  
Beats me!

Luna turns up the volume on the stereo as a new song starts (something incredibly 80s). Vincent begins to lip sync to the song, making Luna laugh aloud. Vincent displays his skills as a master of lip syncing. Luna tries to keep up. They drive off.

INT. BOB'S BIG BOY (CHULA VISTA)

Vincent and Luna sit across from each other eating cheeseburgers with fries and milkshakes.

They stare back at one another, neither blinking. This goes on for some time. Luna keeps her eyes opened wide. After they begin to close, she sets her burger down and uses both hands to keep her eyes open (using her fingers to keep her eyelids apart on each eye). Vincent shakes his head. Luna groans. She tries to keep her eyes open a bit longer as Vincent seems to have not wavered one bit in the stare down and continues to consume his burger. He takes a huge sip of his milkshake, slurping away at the straw, effectively distracting Luna. Finally, she gives in and blinks.

LUNA

AHH!!

Vincent smiles.

LUNA

You win this time..

VINCENT (SIGNING)

How was school?

LUNA (SIGNING)

It was school.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You didn't learn anything today?

LUNA (SIGNING)

I guess.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(half grimace)

Did you even go to school?

LUNA

(laughs, excitedly)

Yes, I went to school!

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What did they serve for lunch?

LUNA (SIGNING)

That nasty hamburger the lunch lady always makes!

(CONTINUED)

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Nasty? I thought it was your  
favorite?

LUNA  
What!?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
(laughs)  
What about practice?

LUNA (SIGNING)  
It went good except for Suzie.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Oh no. What did Suzie do this time?

LUNA  
What doesn't she do.

Vincent can't help but laugh. Luna joins in.

A group of older kids watch Vincent and Luna in their signing conversation, unsure what to make of it.

Vincent and Luna pay them no mind. They continue on.

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Vincent, still in his clothes sans bow tie, sits on the couch. Luna, in pajamas, sits on the floor in front of him. Her hair is damp, having just showered. Vincent brushes Luna's hair, the brush having a difficult time of it. He has to really pull to get through a few knots.

LUNA  
Ow!

Luna never turns though, as she and Vincent are totally engrossed in one of the cartoons of the time. Their eyes remain glued to the television.

KNOCK KNOCK

LUNA  
I'll get it!

Luna jumps up from the floor, brush still caught in her hair. Vincent attempts to reach out to grab her, but misses. He gets up from the couch. Luna, brush hanging out of her hair, answers the door to find her mother and Vincent's girlfriend (and DeShawn's sister), CRYSTAL, standing there

(CONTINUED)

holding a birthday cake, keys in one hand and purse around her shoulder.

Crystal, late 20s Afro-Mexican American, is dressed business casual.

CRYSTAL

Hey! Don't you know better than to answer the door?

LUNA

(shrugs)

I guess nobody taught me.

CRYSTAL

(squints)

You funny monkey. Here, go set this on the table.

LUNA

What's the magic word?

CRYSTAL

Please!

Luna grabs the cake from her mother and runs off. Once her back is to Crystal, Crystal reaches out and grabs the brush hanging in her hair.

LUNA

Ow!

CRYSTAL

You need to start brushing your hair, girl.

LUNA

I don't have to!

CRYSTAL

Oh yeah? Why's that?

LUNA

Because Vincent does it for me!

Luna runs off to take the cake to the kitchen table. Vincent stands in front of the couch, waiting for Crystal.

CRYSTAL

Ha-ha. Be careful with that!

(CONTINUED)

LUNA  
I'm always careful.

CRYSTAL  
Mm..

Crystal finally turns her attention to Vincent. She stares back at him, blindly shutting the door behind it by giving it a light kick with her foot. Vincent smiles at her first, then she returns the smile right back, even bigger. Crystal walks up to Vincent and he embraces her. They hug tight then look each other in the eyes. They kiss deep for a moment.

LUNA  
Ew!

CRYSTAL  
Shush it!  
(turns attention to Vincent)  
Happy birthday, Vince.

CUT TO:

KITCHEN

Vincent sits at the kitchen table with the birthday cake in front of him. A sealed envelope (birthday card) rests beside it. Two candles sit on top of the cake lit that together make a "30". Crystal and Luna stand opposite the table to Vincent. Vincent's smile grows wider as they sing to him.

CRYSTAL AND LUNA (BOTH)  
*Happy birthday, dear Vincent! Happy  
birthday to you!*

Vincent blows out his candles as Luna claps.

LUNA  
Wait here!

Luna runs off to her bedroom, leaving Vincent and Crystal to wonder where else they would go. Vincent and Crystal look at each other. Crystal lets out an amused laugh. Luna comes running back with one hand behind her back. She stops in front of Vincent, then brings a gift wrapped flat rectangle (small) of an object in front of his face as she extends it out.

LUNA  
Happy birthday! I made this for  
you!

(CONTINUED)

Vincent looks at Crystal then back at Luna. He accepts the gift. He unwraps the wrapping paper to reveal a cassette tape in a case. It reads "mixtape" on the front.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
(astonished)  
You made this for me?

LUNA (SIGNING)  
Yup. It has all your favorite songs.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
(growing smile)  
Thank you.

LUNA  
Do you like it?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
(beat)  
I'm speechless.

LUNA  
(to Crystal)  
See, mommy! I told you he would!

CRYSTAL  
Yeah, yeah, you told me. Go brush your teeth, it's time for bed.

LUNA  
I didn't even have cake!

CUT TO:

SHORTLY AFTER..

Luna sits in the living room, eyes glued to the television again, eating a big slice of Vincent's birthday cake.

Vincent and Crystal remain in the kitchen. Vincent has already finished his slice. Crystal is halfway through hers.

CRYSTAL  
You want another piece?

Vincent shakes his head "no" and waves his hands. He pats his belly.

CRYSTAL  
How was work? Anything exciting happen today?

(CONTINUED)

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Nothing out of the ordinary. You?

CRYSTAL  
(shakes her head as she chews)  
I guess we had about the same day.  
How does it feel to be thirty?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
I'm not going through puberty  
again, if that's what you mean.

CRYSTAL  
Obviously, dummy. But how does it  
feel? I mean, do you feel old yet?

Vincent dunks his fingers into the cake then spreads it  
across Crystal's face.

CRYSTAL  
No, you didn't.

Vincent smiles mischievously.

LUNA  
Haha!

CRYSTAL  
You're next!

LUNA  
No, mommy!

LUNA'S BEDROOM

Vincent tucks Luna in.

LUNA  
Goodnight, Vincent!

Vincent leans in and Luna meets him halfway, practically  
springing out of her bed to squeeze Vincent tight.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Goodnight.

Vincent turns off the bedroom light and leaves the door  
cracked behind him. He enters Crystal's room.



## CRYSTAL'S BEDROOM

Crystal climbs under the covers. Vincent turns off the light and does the same. He sighs, relieved that the day is finally over.

CRYSTAL  
 She really liked talking to you before. Back when she talked and you listened. You are a pretty good listener..

Vincent gently smacks Crystal with a pillow.

CRYSTAL  
 (laughing)  
 I'm serious. I'm honestly so impressed by how quick she's learned to sign.. She **really** likes talking to you, Vince. I always knew you were a good one, but.. that's what really stole my heart.

Vincent turns on the lamp beside him.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Are you asking me to move in?

CRYSTAL  
 (beat)  
 Yeah.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Only if you put a ring on it.

Vincent holds up his ring finger.

CRYSTAL  
 (laugh)  
 Oh, you want a diamond?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 The biggest and the brightest, girl.

Vincent interrupts Crystal's laughing with a kiss.

He lowers his head under hers, but above her chest.

CRYSTAL  
 So that's a yes?

Vincent nods. Crystal squeezes him.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

I guess we should probably  
celebrate.. plus it's your  
birthday.

(beat)

Turn off the light.

Vincent quickly turns around and turns off the lamp.

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING - NEXT MORNING

Vincent pops in the mixtape Luna made for him. He smiles as  
the first track plays and he already knows he's going to  
love this thing.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Vincent enters the dentistry, feeling like all of the air  
has been sucked out of the office. He approaches the front  
desk, trying to pass by it unnoticed.

AMY

Morning, Doctor Kane.

Vincent turns, caught. He smiles a friendly smile. He points  
towards Riley's office.

AMY

You might want to wait a sec..  
Doctor Riley's really not having it  
today.

Voices can be heard from Riley's office.

RILEY (O.S.)

Is that what you thought?!

Vincent turns his attention back to Riley's office, trying  
to listen in on the commotion.

RILEY (O.S.)

I guess I don't look like someone  
to be taken serious?

ANTOINE (O.S.)

(lower and more muffled than  
Riley)

Mister Riley, you know I didn't  
mean it like that, man.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY (O.S.)

I don't care how you meant it.  
Nobody cares how you meant it. But  
it's how it makes me look. And how  
makes me think of you.

ANTOINE (O.S.)

(low)

.. I just wanted my life back.

RILEY (O.S.)

Doesn't everybody?

ANTOINE (O.S.)

What about the pick up?

RILEY (O.S.)

I guess you're not going to the  
pick up, are you? I don't trust you  
anymore.

ANTOINE (O.S.)

(beat)

Smiley Riley's afraid of the big  
bad wolf. I guess everyone's got  
their own personal demon.

RILEY (O.S.)

You better watch that mouth of  
yours.

A moment of silence.. Antoine gets up from his chair and  
exits Riley's office.

Vincent and Amy turn their attention away, to each other,  
and pretend that they haven't been eavesdropping this whole  
time.

Antoine struggles with his bow tie as he walks down the  
hall. Riley steps halfway out of his office.

RILEY

(aggressively)

Don't fix it here. Let it be a  
symbol of your disloyalty. I want  
everyone to see.

Antoine grits his teeth as he rips away the bow tie from his  
collar and storms past Vincent and Amy.

RILEY

Vincent.

(CONTINUED)

Vincent turns to meet Riley's gaze. Riley turns around and goes back into his office before he can.

Vincent looks at Amy. She looks a little concerned for everyone at this point. Vincent enters Riley's office.

INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Riley's back faces Vincent (Riley remains standing). He stares at his bookshelf, smoking a cigarette. Smoke trails up to the ceiling.

Vincent watches him for a moment, expecting Riley to turn and face him and explain what's going on. He doesn't. Vincent gently knocks on the door.

Riley blows smoke from his mouth before turning to grab the familiar looking briefcase (with the carved-in symbols) off his desk and turns around to face Vincent.

His eyes travel to Vincent's bow tie first, then up to meet his eyes. Riley offers the briefcase to Vincent, cigarette in his mouth.

Vincent takes it, all the while looking back at Riley curiously.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You seemed a little tough on him.

RILEY

(pause)

I didn't want to include you this time around, but.. you're the only one I trust..

(beat)

DeShawn is waiting outside.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What's going on?

RILEY

I really try not to smoke. It's not a good look on a dentist. I'm known for this.

Riley smiles big and bright.

Vincent stares back, awaiting a real answer.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

(beat)

It's honestly better the less you know.

Vincent gives a look of disappointment.

EXT. NATIONAL AVE - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING - NOON

Vincent and DeShawn drive down National Ave. DeShawn carries the carved-up briefcase on his lap.

DESHAWN

Yo. You hungry?

Vincent looks over at DeShawn.

DESHAWN

This spot coming up has the best goddamn carnitas burritos I've ever had. Chavela's my woman, man.

Vincent smirks.

DESHAWN

Bitch, after you try one of these, you'll want to marry this woman too.

Vincent pulls up and parks outside of EL PORVENIR (a tortilleria).

INT. EL PORVENIR

Vincent and DeShawn enter the tortilleria. DeShawn approaches the counter. A WOMAN (Mexican) in her mid 20s stands behind the counter.

DESHAWN

(playful)

Hey, Chavela.

CHAVELA

Hi, DeShawn.

DESHAWN

Juanita?

CHAVELA

She's not in right now.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN  
Well, I came here for you anyway.

CHAVELA  
Mhm. Carnitas burrito?

DeShawn turns to Vincent smirking. Vincent shakes his head laughing.

DESHAWN  
You want anything?

Vincent shakes his head "no".

DESHAWN  
You sure? I'm not sharing.

Vincent waves his hand "no".

DESHAWN  
(turns attention back to  
Chavela)  
Forgive him for he knows not what  
he does.

EXT. NATIONAL AVE - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

Vincent and DeShawn drive down National Ave again, alongside Chicano Park (on their left side). There's a lot of activity in Chicano Park. People coming in and out La Central Market (liquor store to their right).

DeShawn swallows down his burrito. Vincent eyes it.. it looks like Heaven. DeShawn catches his eye, Vincent quickly looks back up at the road.

DESHAWN  
I saw you.

Vincent ignores him. DeShawn smirks then offers up what's left of his burrito. Vincent takes it without even looking then takes a bite. The change in his face can be seen from a mile away. He turns to DeShawn with a look of astonishment.

DESHAWN  
Regrets?

Vincent nods. DeShawn snatches back the end of the burrito. Vincent's face changes again, this time to a look of disappointment.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

You only have yourself to blame.

They get to the end of the street.

DESHAWN

(as he finishes his burrito)

Make a right here, then another  
quick right.

Vincent makes the first right then turns down the ALLEYWAY  
behind National Ave.

EXT. ALLEY - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

They continue halfway down the tight alley.

DESHAWN

This next house I believe.

Vincent pulls over, trying to leave as much space as  
possible in the alleyway still. Vincent turns off the car  
and they head inside.

INT. ALLEY HOUSE

The house is a bit dark. The lights are dimming. The windows  
are shut with curtains over them.

Vincent, carrying the briefcase, and DeShawn are let into  
the house by an OLDER WOMAN (Mexican, 60s). They pass by a  
table that's littered with a variety of Mexican candies.

DESHAWN

Ooh, Chaka Chakas are my shit.

Vincent elbows DeShawn.

DESHAWN

I'm just trying to ease the  
tension.

OLDER WOMAN

Quieres uno?

CUT TO:

Vincent and DeShawn sit next to each other on the living  
room couch. DeShawn snacks on a Chaka Chaka. The briefcase  
rests at Vincent's feet.

(CONTINUED)

The Older Woman sits on her own chair, a few feet away from them.

OLDER WOMAN

I'm sorry. My son is running late.

DESHAWN

That's OK. We have a little bit of time.

They sit and wait. Some time passes. The heat is starting to build. A bead of sweat drops from Vincent's brow. He wipes his forehead.

DESHAWN

You been living here long?

OLDER WOMAN

I came over from Tijuana when I was twenty four. I had a child. Rigo. I wanted to give him a better life.

DESHAWN

As one should. Times been hard as of late?

OLDER WOMAN

Rigo has gotten into much trouble. He doesn't have a lot of choices left.

DESHAWN

Right..

Some more time passes..

BAM!

The front door goes flying open. The Older Woman's son, RIGO (early 40s), dressed like a homie and covered in tattoos, comes limping inside. He grips his bloody stomach with his right hand.

OLDER WOMAN

Ay, mijo!

RIGO

Mah.

(standoffish)

Who the fuck are these guys?

(CONTINUED)



DESHAWN

Easy, man. We're friends.

RIGO

I ain't got friends here.

DESHAWN

Well, you have at least two now.  
Your momma too. And she counts as  
like ten.

OLDER WOMAN

Esperas.

The Older Woman leaves to the bathroom. DeShawn and Vincent help Rigo to the couch. He plops right down. Vincent uses his foot to slide the briefcase away from the couch. Rigo's mom returns with supplies. Vincent and DeShawn step away and let her tend to Rigo's stab wound.

Vincent shuts and locks the front door.

DESHAWN

What happened?

RIGO

Couple a guys rolled up on me. I  
tried to get the fuck out, but I  
got tagged, man. OW FUCK!

OLDER WOMAN

Estas bien, mijo. Estas bien.

Loud oldies music blasts from the alleyway, from somebody's car.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

RIGO

Oh shit.

DESHAWN

They followed you?

RIGO

I dunno, they must have.

HOMIE (O.S.)

Get the fuck out here, pinche  
culero!

(CONTINUED)

RIGO  
Mah, tengo que ir.

OLDER WOMAN  
No, no.

RIGO  
Ellos me quieren.

OLDER WOMAN  
NO!

Vincent taps DeShawn to get his attention.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Way out through the back to get  
back on National?

DESHAWN  
Is there a way out through the  
back?

OLDER WOMAN  
Yes. There is a back door. We can  
go through the yard of the house in  
front of us.

HOMIE (O.S.)  
Ven fuera puta!

DESHAWN  
Let's do that.

RIGO  
We'll never make it!

DESHAWN  
We'll keep them busy.

Vincent nods.

OLDER WOMAN  
Thank you.

RIGO  
Wait. We have to do the thing  
first.

OLDER WOMAN  
No. Ya no tienes que hacer eso.

(CONTINUED)

RIGO

I don't have a fucking choice!

Vincent grabs the briefcase and sets it on the table after sliding away the pile of candy. He removes a packet like before. He hands it to DeShawn.

DeShawn takes it to Rigo. DeShawn gets down on one knee, carefully lifts the bandages from Rigo's wound then skips over to the last page of the contract. He guides Rigo's thumb to his bloody wound, covering in blood, then to the contract. He presses his thumb against it.

Rigo's mom fixes the bandage back to how it was. DeShawn hands the packet over to Vincent and he locks it away inside the briefcase. It glows for a moment then fades.

Rigo and his mom head for the back door. The Older Woman smiles back at Vincent and DeShawn. He gives them a nod. They leave. Just as they do, Vincent (briefcase in hand) opens the front door to find:

EXT. ALLEY HOUSE

FOUR CHOLOS (Mexican homies), which includes The Homie (the leader of the group) we already heard from, standing out front. They stand beside a lowrider (still blasting music) that is parked directly facing Vincent's car. They're blocked from driving forward out of the alley.

HOMIE

Who the fuck are you pendejos?

DESHAWN

We're nobody. Just trying to leave.  
Got places to be.

HOMIE

Where's Rigo?

DESHAWN

Who?

HOMIE

"Who?" You know who the fuck I'm  
talking about, pinche mayate.

DESHAWN

This pinche mayate will beat some  
pinche ass. Get in the car,  
Vincent.

(CONTINUED)

HOMIE

That's a nice ride you got there.  
It's going with us.

With a quickness, DeShawn whips out a GUN from his pants and sets its sights on the Homie. The Homie attempts to go for his, but is too late.

DESHAWN

Nah-ah-ah. Vincent.

Vincent, surprised at the sight of an armed DeShawn, gets into the driver side of his car.

DESHAWN

(back to the homies)  
Get in your car. Slow. Actually,  
you first.

One Cholo gets into the lowrider.

DESHAWN

Now you.

A second enters. DeShawn nods. A third enters. DeShawn stares down The Homie. The Homie isn't having it.

DESHAWN

You waiting for a fucking  
invitation?

The Homie glares back at DeShawn. His hand starts to slide down toward his pants. The other Cholos appear to be ready to whip out their guns as well.

SIRENS. POLICE SIRENS sound off from near Chicano park.

HOMIE

Let's go.

The Homie gets into his lowrider and begins to drive in reverse. DeShawn, still locked onto the Homie, slowly backs away and into Vincent's car.

DESHAWN

They looked like a fucking clown  
car.

Vincent reverses. They both kind of chuckle.

EXT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Vincent parks.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Since when did you carry a gun?

DESHAWN  
 It's easier for you to get around,  
 my light skinned friend. Shit is no  
 joke for folks like me.

Vincent doesn't respond.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Vincent and DeShawn walk in, past Amy, and into Riley's office.

INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Vincent sets down the briefcase onto the desk, semi startling Riley out of his daze. He sits behind his desk. He looks up at the two, noting blood on their shirts.

RILEY  
 (concerned)  
 What happened to you two?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 It's not ours.

DESHAWN  
 We got caught up in someone else's  
 business.

RILEY  
 (beat)  
 Did you..?

Vincent nods.

Riley takes the briefcase and sets it on the ground behind his desk. As he stands he brings up a different, but similar appearing briefcase, onto the desk.

Vincent and DeShawn look at each other then back at the briefcase double. It has some of the same carvings as the usual briefcase, but with some added symbols they haven't seen before.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

What the fuck is this?

RILEY

We're going to try something.

DESHAWN

"We" as in me and Vincent. I don't know that you understand what you're playing with here.

RILEY

Oh, I don't understand?

DESHAWN

No, I don't think you do.

RILEY

There's going to be some changes around here. I need you to just do as you're told. **That** remains the same.

Vincent clearly doesn't understand what's really going on, but he knows that something isn't right, hasn't been right all day, and this change likely won't help that.

RILEY

(to Vincent)

I need you to trust me.

Vincent takes the briefcase. DeShawn doesn't like this, that much is obvious from the look on his face. They exit the office.

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING - EN ROUTE TO DROP OFF  
(NIGHT)

Vincent drives. DeShawn sits in the passenger seat with the briefcase double on his lap. He studies it.

DESHAWN

I don't know what he's trying to pull, but I don't like it.

Vincent listens, continuing to drive them to the drop off point.

DESHAWN

For as long as I've been doing this, we've always, ALWAYS, used the same briefcase. I can still

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN (cont'd)  
smell that thing. I can run my  
fingers over it and feel the  
chipped corners of it and tell you  
that it's the same damn one..  
Sometimes there's a reason for this  
shit.

They pull up on a NAMELESS BAR right on the corner of  
Division St and Dalbergia Ct beside the 5 Freeway (where  
there would be only a grass hill in actuality, even back  
then), and enter the tiny empty parking lot.

EXT. NAMELESS BAR

Vincent and DeShawn exit the car.

DeShawn carries the briefcase double at his side. DeShawn  
sets it down on the hood of the car for a moment. He digs  
into the back of his pants to remove the same gun seen  
earlier. He offers it to Vincent.

DESHAWN  
You know how to use one of these?

Vincent nods, but doesn't take the gun.

DESHAWN  
I need you to have my back.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
I do. I always do.

DESHAWN  
So then take it.

Vincent shakes his head "no"

DeShawn waits then sighs then jams the gun back into his  
pants.

INT. NAMELESS BAR

They enter the bar. As they do, the briefcase double glows  
then fades. There's a small sense of relief in DeShawn.  
Vincent watches him close.

The bar has a strange aura to it. Vincent and DeShawn feel a  
wave of it over them. Their eyes wander around the bar. It's  
dreamy and feels out of place. There are little details  
about the architecture that don't make sense.

(CONTINUED)

There are SEVERAL PATRONS spread out amongst the otherwise empty bar, whether on the bar itself or in the lounging areas. The bar is much larger than it appears from the outside. There's a glow within and all throughout. The colors of the inside of the bar seem to slowly alternate, but the lights that hang above have not seemed to change.

Vincent notes the light fog emitting from the floor. No smoke machine in sight. It's like walking into a dream.

Vincent exhales cold breath. Vincent begins to look around the place with strange familiarity as if just being hit by *deja vu*. The same happens to DeShawn. They look at each other.

DESHAWN

You feel that too?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(nods)

I feel like I've been here before.

DESHAWN

Yeah.. That's not possible. We've never hit the same drop off twice..  
Fucking Riley.

They approach the bar counter. The BARTENDER continues cleaning glasses, ignoring them. DeShawn gives the *get-your-attention-cough*. The Bartender still ignores him.

DESHAWN

What do you have to do for service around here?

The Bartender looks up at them, expressionless.

DESHAWN

It's only when you start talking shit that they take notice.

The Bartender doesn't bat an eye.

DeShawn raises the briefcase double from his side and sets it down onto the bar top between himself and the Bartender. The Bartender's eyes slowly travel from DeShawn to the briefcase. He studies it intently. He grabs it then walks away to the back of the bar.

They wait for him to return and give them the a-OK. Vincent sees a guitar standing up against the bar, by his feet. He grabs it and admires it. He plucks the strings one by one. The last string is wildly out of tune. Once he plucks it,

(CONTINUED)



you can hear a needle drop.. as the bar has gone deathly quiet. He can feel it. He can feel eyes on him. Vincent's eyes gradually make their way from the guitar and towards the closest Patron.

The Patron is staring straight at him and like the Bartender, expressionless. Vincent turns his head more in that direction to find a couple more Patrons all staring back at him as well. He looks around the rest of the bar to find that every person in there is staring at him and DeShawn. DeShawn stares back too.

DESHAWN

(hushed)

I told you something isn't right.

Vincent grows concerned, while DeShawn is becoming frustrated and ready for a fight. They are both startled when the Bartender sets the briefcase double back down on the bar top. Vincent and DeShawn wait for the Bartender to say or do something, but he just stands and stares at them, although not quite as expressionless as before. There is a hint of anger behind his eyes.

DESHAWN

I think we're going to go now.

DeShawn places a hand on the briefcase double to take it, but the Bartender's grip is too strong. DeShawn pulls harder. The Bartender does not let go.

Vincent turns around again to see if the Patrons are still watching them. They've suddenly all gotten closer to them. Vincent taps DeShawn's shoulder. DeShawn ignores him and tries again at the briefcase.

DESHAWN

I'm just going to--

The Bartender yanks it back, this time effectively getting it out from DeShawn's hands entirely. Vincent punches DeShawn in the shoulder and gets his attention this time.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Fuck the briefcase.

DESHAWN

(nods)

.. Fuck the briefcase.

DeShawn backs up from the bar top. Vincent gently sets down the guitar then backs away as well.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

You know what? Keep it, man. It's yours. I don't actually want--

DeShawn is cut off, as well as startled (again), when the Bartender begins to smash the briefcase double against the bar top.

The Patrons don't move, but feel as if they've gotten closer again.

Vincent keeps his head on a swivel, checking all around them as they walk backwards towards the entrance of the bar. DeShawn keeps his eyes on the Bartender as he continues smashing the briefcase down into nothing. They finally reach the exit.

EXT. NAMELESS BAR

Vincent and DeShawn catch their breath, gathering themselves. Vincent pulls up his sleeve to check his arm. Goosebumps.

DESHAWN

What the fuck?

(beat)

They knew something was off about the briefcase.. Riley knows more than he's saying.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

We'll keep an eye on him.

DESHAWN

(nods)

I just hope nobody's got their eye on us.

Vincent understands DeShawn's concern. He looks around as if to check and make sure no one is watching them.

The lights from inside the bar have shut off. No more sounds come from it. It appears closed.

INT. VINCENT'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM (NIGHT)

Vincent sleeps in his bed. He shifts. He sweats. He breathes heavy. He begins to seemingly choke on his own saliva.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK

EXT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME (LAKE RIVERSIDE)

1969.

Kid Vincent struggles for air as he drowns in the lake. He violently splashes and wails his body around, unable to put feet back to dirt. He feels himself losing consciousness, air no longer finding its way into his lungs, he starts to sink under the water. John Breyer makes it in time to lift him from out under the water. John swims back to shore with an unconscious Kid Vincent.

John lays him down on his back then pushes down on his chest and gives him mouth to mouth resuscitation. After a little bit of this, Kid Vincent finally returns to us. He regains consciousness, puking up water. He coughs and coughs, his lungs burning. He tries to prop himself back up, but collapses again.

JOHN BREYER

Slow. Take it slow.

John pats Kid Vincent's back. He pukes up more water.

INT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

Kid Vincent is in bed, under sheets and blankets. He sweats profusely and can barely open his eyes. John sits at his feet. Kid Vincent attempts to speak.

KID VINCENT

Da--Da--Da--Da--

JOHN BREYER

What is it, Vincent?

KID VINCENT

Da--Da--

John watches Kid Vincent as he stutters up a storm.

JOHN BREYER

We don't have to talk right now.  
You just need to rest. You're sick.

KID VINCENT

Da--Da--Da--

JOHN BREYER

(rubs Kid Vincent's chest)  
Shh. It's okay. Just rest.

(CONTINUED)

KID VINCENT  
(hushed and broken)  
Something happened..

JOHN BREYER  
You almost drowned is what  
happened. But you're here now. You  
just need to rest.

KID VINCENT  
(shakes his head)  
Something happened to my dad.  
Dad--da--

JOHN BREYER  
Your father is fine. I need you to  
rest though so that you can be  
strong for him. Can you do that for  
me, Vincent?

Kid Vincent nods then attempts to speak again. Choking sounds come his mouth, but no words. Just sounds. He exhales cold breath and fails to find his words. John sees this. A look of concern creeps over his face, but one of familiarity as well. He may not know what's happening exactly, but he may have an idea of the forces at work. Kid Vincent passes out.

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM

Adult Vincent, drenched in sweat and making strange guttural sounds, suddenly wakes. Violently. He takes a deep breath as if having just been without air for a long time. His breath is cold. He tries to gather himself, but before he can, he is struck by a frightening and startling image:

John Breyer stands at Vincent's feet. His eyes are missing. Nothing there where they should be. Vincent is visibly shook, but is mostly confused. His brain feels ready to explode in his skull.

John opens his mouth and a waterfall spills from it. It seems endless. Vincent just wants it to stop. It doesn't when he wishes it to.. then after a few more moments of this:

John vanishes as if having never been there. This only adds to Vincent's confusion. He breathes heavy, wiping the sweat and drool from off his face then lets his head fall back onto his pillow. He stares up at the ceiling, still trying to catch his breath. He looks over to see Crystal has already gone to work.

EXT. DAILARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD

Vincent pulls up at the school, with Luna in the passenger seat.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Remember, I'm picking you up early  
for your appointment.

LUNA (SIGNING)  
I will. See you soon!

Luna hops on out of the car and runs off to her classroom. Vincent watches her go to make sure she gets inside okay, then pulls away.

EXT. CORNER OF DIVISION ST AND DALBERGIA CT - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

Vincent arrives to check out the nameless bar from the night before.. the only problem being that its not there. Where the bar should be there is only a hill of grass beside the freeway. He pulls up to the sidewalk and parks.

EXT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD

He gets out of his car and walks onto the grass scratching his head. He looks around, hoping maybe he came to the wrong spot.. he's right though. There is no bar where it should be, where it was last night. Not a trace.

EXT. DAILARD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD

Vincent pulls up to Luna's school again. He waits for her for a moment, thinking about the bar.

IMAGES OF THE NAMELESS BAR FLASH ON SCREEN:

- the exterior
- the interior
- the strange staring patrons
- the bartender smashing the briefcase double

LUNA  
Hi!

Vincent snaps back, a little startled. Luna climbs into the passenger seat and shuts her door.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA

I told you I would remember.

Vincent smiles back and pulls away.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Vincent and Luna enter the Dentistry. They approach the front counter. Amy looks up, smiling at Vincent the way she does, then notices Luna standing at his side.

AMY

Aw, look who we have here. How are you, little Luna?

Luna doesn't respond. She squints at Amy. Vincent squeezes her arm and gets her attention. Luna looks up at him.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Don't be rude.

Luna squints at him too.

LUNA

Good..

AMY

And how's school?

LUNA

School's school.

AMY

Oh, well that's.. er, good.

Luna continues to mad-dog her.

AMY

(to Vincent)

She have an appointment right now with Doctor Gutierrez?

Vincent nods.

AMY

Doctor Riley sent everybody out for an extended lunch.

Vincent gives Amy a curious look.

(CONTINUED)

AMY

I think he's in his office speaking with Mister Mann still. Just go on back there and sit her down if you'd like.

Vincent nods and smiles.

He and Luna walk past Amy, Luna still watching Amy closely. They walk towards Riley's office. His door is slightly ajar.

Vincent has Luna sit at the dental chair nearest to Riley's office then gives a slight wrap on the office door. He opens it a little more to pop his head in.

Riley stops mid-sentence and looks up at Vincent. Mister Mann doesn't bother to turn around (which is unlike him).

RILEY

Give us a moment, Vincent, will you?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Should I take over for Luna?

RILEY

Oh, right, I'm sorry. How careless of me to forget little Luna was coming in to see us today. I just sent Doctor Gutierrez home early.

Riley smiles a weird smile.

RILEY

Just give me a moment to finish up here and I'll be right out. Okay?

Vincent watches him closely. He gives a thumbs up.

RILEY

Close the door on your way out.

Vincent looks over at Mister Mann, who still hasn't turned towards his direction.

Vincent slowly closes the door, but does so in a manner in which it does not latch on and shut all the way.

Vincent approaches Luna, who is playing dead in the dental chair, keeping his back to Riley's office. He pokes her in the belly. She half-smiles, continuing to play dead. He pokes her again. Her smile grows wider. He starts to tickle her.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA

Okay, okay, you got me! No more!

Vincent stops then brings a finger to his lips to motion her to be quiet. He listens close, but doesn't hear another word from Riley's office, as if they know he's still out there and listening.

Amy comes over from the front desk.

AMY

I'm sorry, Doctor Kane, but apparently we've missed somebody else today. Mrs. Lumet had a 12:30 appointment with Doctor Scott, who is.. well, also not here at the moment. Should I ask her to reschedule?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(shakes head)

Tell her I'll see her now.

LUNA

He said you should kick rocks.

Vincent puts a hand to his face.

LUNA

Just kidding. He said he'll see her now.

Amy walks back to the front desk, a little embarrassed.

Vincent gives Luna a look.

LUNA

What? I was just joshing.

AMY (O.S.)

I am so sorry, Mrs. Lumet, but Doctor Scott is out for lunch. Fortunately, Doctor Kane is available and would love to take over if you wouldn't mind.

MRS. LUMET (O.S.)

Oh, of course not!

AMY (O.S.)

Ok, right this way then.

Amy leads Mrs. Lumet to the back.

(CONTINUED)



AMY

Here she is.

MRS. LUMET

(flirting)

Doctor Kane, aren't you a sight for  
sore eyes. A pleasure to see you.  
My, you just keep growing. Can't  
say I'm sorry Doctor Scott isn't  
in..

Vincent smiles politely. Luna makes a gross out face.  
Vincent catches her.

Vincent motions for Mrs. Lumet to sit down in the dental  
chair across from Luna (Luna still being nearest to Riley's  
office. Vincent listens close, hearing Riley and Mister Mann  
still deep in their secretive conversation, but he can't  
hear more than mumbles and whispers.

Vincent signs to Luna. She isn't paying attention. He snaps  
to get her attention and does.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What are they saying?

LUNA (SIGNING)

You want me to spy on them?

Vincent nods.

LUNA (SIGNING)

Like James Bond?!

VINCENT (SIGNING)

This is a top secret mission and I  
need my best agent. Better than  
James Bond.

LUNA

Hmmm.

LUNA (SIGNING)

Do I get a reward?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Yes.

LUNA (SIGNING)

What's my reward?

(CONTINUED)

MRS. LUMET

You know, I was telling my son  
about you not long ago. I told him  
this might be a good avenue for  
him..

Vincent, ignoring Mrs Lumet (she continues talking).

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Whatever you want.

LUNA (SIGNING)

A puppy?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I was thinking ice cream.

LUNA

You're gonna have to do better than  
that.

MRS. LUMET

What was that you said, little one?

LUNA

Oh nothing, I was just talking to  
my imaginary..  
(squints at Vincent)  
.. puppy.

MRS. LUMET

Oh.

Mrs Lumet continues talking, what she says is not heard as  
it really doesn't matter..

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(sighs)

OK, sure, a puppy.

LUNA (SIGNING)

(smiles big)

Deal.

Vincent half-assedly checks Mrs Lumet's teeth as he looks up  
at Luna signing to him Riley and Mister Mann's conversation.  
We get close to the action to overhear with Luna:

RILEY (O.S.)

They never brought back a briefcase  
because there was no briefcase to  
bring back. The seal didn't work.

(CONTINUED)

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
It was never going to fool them.  
Not entirely.

RILEY (O.S.)  
Then what was the point?

LUNA (SIGNING)  
Somebody didn't bring back a  
briefcase.. Something about a seal?  
Grandpa Riley is mad, I think.

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
We have their attention now..  
Saleos **will** come. They don't like  
it when the natural order is  
tampered with.

RILEY (O.S.)  
So you've painted a target on my  
back.

LUNA (SIGNING)  
They're talking too fast.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Just try.

RILEY (O.S.)  
You've made me bait.

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
Come now. We're partners, Riley. We  
still want the same thing.

RILEY (O.S.)  
So what's next?

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
We lure him to the Peak where the  
"sacrifice" will be made. We trap  
him and he will take the place of  
the youngster.

LUNA (SIGNING)  
They're partners, but Grandpa Riley  
is mad because they're trying to  
trap someone in some place.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Where?

Luna shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY (O.S.)  
Youngster?

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
The more innocent, the better.

RILEY (O.S.)  
Why?

MISTER MANN (O.S.)  
Most of us live in sin.. what is  
there left to corrupt? There's no  
fun in that. He'll be tempted.

LUNA (SIGNING)  
Innocent--

Suddenly Riley gets up from behind his desk and opens his  
office door.

Luna looks suspicious.

RILEY  
Vincent, you finished with Mrs.  
Lumet?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Just about.

RILEY  
(smiles)  
Let's finish her up and get her out  
of here. I apologize for the hurry,  
Mrs. Lumet, but we actually have  
some important business regarding  
some renovations.

Vincent gives Riley a look.

MRS. LUMET  
Oh no worries at all, mister Riley.  
Your boy here, just a dream. If  
only all men listened as well as he  
does.

RILEY  
Well, unfortunately we only  
specialize in teeth here, not the  
removal of tongues.

MRS. LUMET  
(laughs)  
You sly Devil you.

(CONTINUED)

Riley keeps up his big fake smile. It fools most. Not Vincent.

RILEY

I'm sorry, little one. We're going to have to reschedule for another time.

LUNA

That's okay, I still got out of school early.

RILEY

Now there's looking at the bright side.

Something seems to click in Riley as he looks down at Luna, an uneasy look on his face.

EXT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

Vincent and Luna are walking back to Vincent's car.

LUNA

Grandpa Riley said "peak". I don't know what that is so I didn't know how to tell you.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Was this the place they mentioned?

LUNA

Yeah, I think so. What's a peak?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

(thinks)

Like a mountain top.

LUNA

Does sacrifice mean kill?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

It can.

LUNA

So they're gonna trap an innocent baby seal on top of a mountain and kill it?

(beat)

Grown ups are so weird.

INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Riley looks out to make sure the place is truly empty.

MISTER MANN

The fool who tried to steal his  
contract back..

RILEY

What about him?

MISTER MANN

Call him.. give him a shot at  
"redemption".

Riley pieces the plan together in his mind.

RILEY

(sighs)

.. As long as **I'm** not the bait.

INT. ANTOINE'S APARTMENT

Antoine, taking a hard nap, is woken by the sound of his  
telephone ringing.

He moves slow to answer it, but eventually does.

ANTOINE

Yeah?

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Vincent, Crystal, DeShawn and Luna sit around the table  
playing a game of operation.

Luna is carefully making her move.

DESHAWN

Oh!

LUNA

Uncle Shawn, you're gonna mess me  
up!

DESHAWN

Okay okay, I won't.

Luna is moving in again.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

No wait!

Luna looks up at DeShawn. He's trying not to laugh. He zips his mouth. Luna goes in again.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Are you going for the heart or the liver?

LUNA

I'm not looking. I'm trying to concentrate, stop trying to distract me.

Luna finally makes her move, grabbing the heart. As she works to slowly pull it out she's startled by Crystal.

CRYSTAL

(sudden)

No, not that one!

Luna hits the edge and it buzzes. She screams.

LUNA

Mooooom!

INT. LUNA'S BEDROOM

Crystal is sitting at the edge of the bed. Luna is partly under the covers.

CRYSTAL

Be good for mommy's friend, okay?

LUNA

I'm just gonna be sleeping.

CRYSTAL

Mhmm, you better be.

Crystal kisses Luna on the forehead then starts to cover her up.

LUNA

Can Vincent tuck me in?

CRYSTAL

(beat, smiles)

Sure, baby. Goodnight.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA  
Goodnight, momma.

Crystal walks over to the doorway and whispers in Vincent's ear. He smiles then walks over to sit down at Luna's side.

Vincent tucks Luna in, covering her up. As Vincent leans over to turn off the lamp, Luna reaches up and kisses him on the cheek (to his surprise).

Crystal notices. She smiles. So does Vincent.

He turns off the lamp then leaves.

LUNA  
Goodnight, Vincent.

INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT

Vincent, Crystal and DeShawn are talking and drinking. Their conversation is drowned out by the music.

CUT TO:

Vincent is on a small stage.

LL Cool J's *I Need Love* comes on (the actual song since Vincent obviously can't sing).

Vincent perfectly mouths to the words.

Crystal and DeShawn are laughing from their table.

CUT TO:

Now DeShawn has joined Vincent up on stage.

DeShawn sings along (and Vincent continues to lip sync) to the first chorus of LL Cool J's *Big Ole Butt*.

DESHAWN  
*Tina got a big ole butt! I know I  
told you I'd be true.. But Tina got  
a big ole butt! So I'm leavin' you!*

Crystal is dying laughing over at the table. She starts to join in, as do more people in the bar.



INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Vincent and DeShawn, still buzzed, sit on the couch watching Baseball highlights.

Crystal is with her FRIEND (Luna's babysitter) in the kitchen, they can be heard chatting in the background.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 (smacks DeShawn's leg)  
 Mister Mann was there today at the office.

DESHAWN  
 Do tell.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Overheard him and Riley. Riley was pissed. The seal didn't work.

DESHAWN  
 That much we know. The homie at the bar, the one who smashed up the briefcase double, he knew it too. That means he isn't the only one that knows.. Mister Mann? I can't say I know anything about the guy. I just thought he was some old rich white fuck.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Yeah.. me too.. Also.. they said something about a sacrifice at some peak. They're planning to trap someone there. That's all I got.

DESHAWN  
 Okay.  
 (thinks)  
 Riley sends us with the double. He wants to see if it works. It doesn't. It probably pissed off whoever's in charge. Maybe that's who they wanna trap?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
 Riley's after whoever's running the show?

DESHAWN  
 "I even heard that the demon living here in Rashōmon fled in fear of the ferocity of man."

(CONTINUED)

(beat)  
That's to say.. Even men aspire to  
great evils.

Vincent shrugs.

DeShawn's pager goes off.

He looks down at it. There's a phone number followed by 187.

DeShawn gets up to use the house phone. He calls the number.

As it's ringing, Vincent's breath turns cold. He can see it  
in front of him.

ANTOINE (V.O.)  
(hushed)  
Yo, DeShawn, that you?

DESHAWN  
Antoine, you good?

ANTOINE (V.O.)  
Riley sent me on a drop, but this  
place is deserted. I came to room  
203, nothing. But right when I go  
back outside I see some fools  
rolling up. Oh shit.

DESHAWN  
Give me a location, man.

ANTOINE (V.O.)  
Hold up.

DESHAWN  
Where?

Vincent's breath is still cold. He watches DeShawn as they  
wait for a response.

It's silent for a few seconds.

ANTOINE (V.O.)  
Yo, they're fucking looking for me.  
I'm at this shit-hole motel behind  
the 5. Off E.

DESHAWN  
Shit, Chula? We'll be there in  
five. Stay in that room.

(CONTINUED)

ANTOINE (V.O.)  
Way ahead of you, nigga.

DeShawn hangs up then turns to Vincent who is back on his feet.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
I'll drive.

EXT. MOTEL

Vincent and DeShawn pull up in Vincent's Firebird.

DeShawn pulls out two guns. He presents a GLOCK to Vincent.

DESHAWN  
I need to know you'll have my back  
out there.

Vincent takes a beat then takes the gun reluctantly.

They exit the car then immediately duck when they look up to see a MASKED GUNMAN kicking in a motel room door at the far right on the second floor (of two possible floors).

They pass along a blacked out, tinted windows, SUV.

Vincent and DeShawn look at each other, curious.

Another MASKED MAN sits in the driver seat of the SUV, watching them (unknown to them) through his tinted window. His mask is of a demon. He and the other gunmen wear the same demon mask and all-black getup.

DeShawn scans the second floor.

DESHAWN  
203. We stick together.

Vincent points over at the staircase nearby (on the left side of the building). DeShawn nods.

They make their way up the stairs, listening close as more doors are kicked open. It sounds close.

They slowly pass along room 201 to see it's been cleared already (door kicked open).

DESHAWN  
Fuck, let's hurry.

(CONTINUED)

They pass 202, also cleared then duck when the Gunman on the right side reemerges from room 208 then kicks in the door to room 207.

They move towards 203, so close now.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Shots go off from Room 203.

The Gunman in 207 quickly bolts out, spotting Vincent and DeShawn across. He fires at them. They duck and hide behind cover.

DESHAWN

Back down the stairs, come on!

The Driver (the second Gunman) exits the SUV, brings up an AK-47, and fires at the staircase just as DeShawn and Vincent are running towards it. They stop to take cover.

Suddenly, Antoine comes charging out, tackling the third Gunman. They break through the railing and hit the cement, near the pool. The Gunman takes the hit, breaking Antoine's fall. Antoine appears to be unconscious.

Without thinking, Vincent fires a few shots towards both directions (Driver and Gunman on the right) then steps up on the railing and jumps into the pool.

DeShawn quickly adjusts, giving him cover fire. He manages to hit the Gunman on the right a few times. He goes down. Then a flurry of AK bullets hit along the walls and railings around DeShawn. He's hit several times.

Vincent is underwater. For a moment the memory of him drowning as a kid flashes in his mind. Suddenly, Vincent snaps out of it to find he can't breathe. He emerges from the water, spitting out water and catching his breath.

The Driver lowers his AK towards Vincent.

BANG!

There's a small explosion of water in front of Vincent as he fires a shot into the Driver's chest. The Driver is frozen for a moment before falling backward.

Vincent looks around to see the action is over. No Antoine in sight. He spots DeShawn upstairs, stiff. He climbs out of the pool.

(CONTINUED)

Vincent runs up the stairs and drops to his knees at DeShawn's body. He feels for a pulse. Nothing. He stares down at DeShawn, unsure what to do. He stares into his lifeless eyes.. then..

Life returns to DeShawn's eyes as he inhales deep.

Vincent is shocked.

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

DeShawn is plopped into the couch, shirtless. The two mortal gun wounds have stopped bleeding and are healing at a faster rate than normal.

Crystal sits in a kitchen chair nearby, some blood on her.

Vincent stands further away, covered in DeShawn's blood, his eyes wide. He can't stop staring at DeShawn.

DESHAWN

What, you've never seen someone  
come back like Lazarus before?

Vincent continues to stare back. He puts his head down, takes a breath, then brings his head back up with a look of bewilderment on his face. "What the fuck do you think?"

CRYSTAL

He didn't know.

DESHAWN

That much is obvious. It's not  
usually like this.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What? Collecting souls?

DESHAWN

Yeah.. This week's been fucking  
crazy. I haven't seen this much  
action since.. shit, since the last  
time I got plugged.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Who came to you?

DESHAWN

You know.. I've been trying for  
about fifteen years to put that  
face back together.. but..

(shakes head)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN (cont'd)  
.. It's like it never even happened. Sometimes I believe that. Then you have the week we've been having.. My soul belongs to someone and I can't even remember their face.. They got me by my strings.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
(hesitant)  
.. Demons are real?

DESHAWN  
(beat)  
Is he fucking serious right now?

CRYSTAL  
He wasn't brought in the way you were. Not the way most people are. Besides, he's only been helping Riley's little side business the last few weeks.

Vincent looks over at Crystal like "you knew and didn't tell me?"

DESHAWN  
Alright, fair enough. But why? Why would he involve you?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
.. He needed someone he could trust.

CRYSTAL  
Sometimes I wonder if everything he's done for you is just part of some act. No one will love you like your children. You're the closest thing he has to one. He's kept you in the dark too long, Vince.

DESHAWN  
He's kept all of us in the dark too long. What I want to know is.. Did he send Antoine into a trap?

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
I'm going to find out first thing in the morning.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

Not without me. I want to hear some truth come out of that man's lips.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You just died.

DESHAWN

I'll tell you, this shit isn't exactly like getting tickled.. but I'm good. Nothing a few hours of sleep won't fix.

Vincent sighs and shakes his head.

DESHAWN

Don't shake your fucking head at me, man.

Vincent can't help but chuckle. He flips DeShawn the finger and walks outside.

EXT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE

Vincent stands outside, staring at the moon, serious again.

Crystal comes out to check on him. They share a moment of silence then

CRYSTAL

I'm sorry. I figured you knew and just stayed out of all of it. I'm sure you wish you had now, but.. I think Riley was always going to pull you in. I didn't know about DeShawn for the longest. I think it really was starting to drive him crazy. Not knowing what was real and what wasn't.

(beat)

I don't know Riley like you do and I know he means a lot to you.. but you deserve answers.

Vincent waits a moment then turns to her

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I'm starting to miss just being a dentist.

Crystal laughs. Vincent tries to.

Crystal moves in to comfort him. He puts his arm over her.

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

Vincent stirs in his sleep. Crystal has already left to work.

IMAGES FLASH in Vincent's mind of Tahquitz Peak. The peak from the legend Uncle John Breyer told him about as a child. The images speed up as we then see bits and pieces of that same story again (the beginning of the film) until we hit the image of the dark cave where the demon Tahquitz awaits. Slowly creeping towards it.

KIONA KANE (V.O.)  
Vincent, listen to your Uncle John.

Vincent has been replaced by Kid Vincent. He has the covers pulled up to his chin.

KID VINCENT  
Mom?

Kid Vincent has cold breath. He looks around the room for her, but nothing. Tears fill his eyes.

Kid Vincent is replaced by adult Vincent. He slowly wakes to tears in his eyes. He looks around the room then wipes his face.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY - INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Rutger Riley sits behind his desk (which has been flipped on its side). His office has been completely turned over.

BILLY (40, Caucasian), who kind of looks like a billy goat (beard and all), sits in a chair near the office door.

Riley raises up his pant leg, revealing his prosthetic leg (right). He fixes his sock and shoe then pulls the pant leg back down. He taps it gently.

Billy listens, but Riley might as well be talking to himself.

RILEY  
Most days it's like I never lost it. Like a ghost. You feel it, even if it's not really there. This does the job.. but what I wouldn't give for the real thing.  
(beat)  
That's the one silver lining was that it'd feel as close to the real thing as possible.. Right now..

(CONTINUED)



(fear in his voice)  
I don't feel a thing.

## ENTRANCE

Vincent and DeShawn arrive together.  
The entire place has been turned over and trashed.  
The two look at each other, curious.  
They make their way towards Riley's office.

## INT. RILEY'S OFFICE

Vincent knocks as he enters with DeShawn.  
Billy doesn't bother to look up. Riley does.

RILEY  
Oh, good, you're here.

DESHAWN  
Riley, what the Hell is going on?  
And don't give us anymore of the  
run around, man.

Riley looks over at Vincent. Vincent stares back, awaiting  
an answer.

DeShawn's attention shifts to Billy. His eyes study him up  
and down.

DESHAWN  
What happened with Antoine? He said  
you sent him on a drop. Next thing  
we know we're being shot at by  
thugs in Halloween masks. Poor  
Vincent here had no idea what he  
was being involved in.

RILEY  
What do you mean?

DESHAWN  
Come on.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
I saw it, Riley. I saw him die.

Riley processes everything.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

The truth is Antoine is a disloyal traitor and his actions may have put us all in danger.

DESHAWN

(waiting)

Well don't stop now.

RILEY

Antoine was trying to steal back his contract. Break from bondage if you will.

A look shoots across DeShawn's face that reads "Really, dawg?"

DESHAWN

So he's got the OG briefcase?

Riley pauses then nods. DeShawn isn't buying it.

BILLY

So many damn questions.

DESHAWN

I'm sorry, who the fuck is this?

RILEY

(beat)

Outside help. Speaking of which, I'm sending him with you.

DESHAWN

For what?

RILEY

Go scope out Antoine's, see if you can find anything. Where he might have gone.

DESHAWN

Vincent and I can handle it just fine.

RILEY

No. Just you. You and Billy.

DESHAWN

And then?

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

And then nothing. We wait until the dust settles.

DESHAWN

I'm getting real tired of you beating around the proverbial bush. You're incapable of giving us straight answers.

RILEY

I wish I could, but I don't have them. Antoine's mistakes are his own. I don't know why he did what he did, but he did. He needs to learn there's consequences for his actions.

DESHAWN

So why do I get the feeling he's not the only one acting right now?

Billy stands up very suddenly.

BILLY

You sure like to run your mouth.

DESHAWN

What the fuck?

DeShawn gets in Billy's face.

RILEY

(sighs)

Boys. There's no time for this. Go to Antoine's. See what you can find.

Vincent puts a hand on DeShawn's shoulder. He turns to him. Vincent nods. DeShawn backs away, leaving the office.

Billy, a slight smirk on his face, follows.

Riley waits until they're a little further away.

RILEY

I understand you have a lot of questions.

Vincent stares back at Riley, hands at his side. Some things don't need to be said (or in this case signed).

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

I never meant for you to get wrapped up in all this. I just didn't have anyone I could trust. DeShawn, sure. But he's not family.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You're wrong.

RILEY

That's nice you think that way. You've always had a kind soul.. but.. it's you and me. It has been for twenty years. I **am** sorry I brought you into this.. What did you think all this was?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

.. I don't know.

(beat)

How can I help?

RILEY

You can help by getting far away from this thing. You don't have any ties, no contract, you can still walk away clean.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What's going to happen at the Peak?

RILEY

(thinks)

You're out, kid.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I wish you'd stop keeping things from me.

RILEY

It's what kept you safe. It wasn't until I started telling you and involving you that it all became so dangerous. Do me a favor.. for you, for the girls.. let me clean up this mess.

Vincent shakes his head, unsatisfied.

RILEY

I'm asking you. Father to son. We all have demons, Vincent, but as you know now.. some are real. Let

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RILEY (cont'd)  
me deal with mine. We'll make it  
out to the other side. I promise  
you.

Vincent stares back at Riley, unconvinced.

INT. WAREHOUSE

The warehouse is almost entirely shrouded in darkness.

Antoine, tied down to a chair, starts to wake. His eyes  
search frantically. He's panicking. Sweating.

Antoine's attention is diverted forward when he hears  
shuffling from inside the darkness.

ANTOINE  
Hello?

SALEOS (O.S.)  
Hello.

Antoine almost jumps out of the chair and probably would  
have if not for the rope.

SALEOS (O.S.)  
And what is your name, my lowly  
servant?

ANTOINE  
Wha-servant?

SALEOS (O.S.)  
Employee. Same thing. I'm your  
boss' boss.

Antoine's eyes grow wide as he realizes who he's speaking  
to.

ANTOINE  
Look, I don't know what the fuck  
Riley's been up to, but I'm  
innocent.

SALEOS (O.S.)  
Innocent? Hmm. Mankind's insistence  
to profess their innocence always  
gives me a good chuckle.

(CONTINUED)

ANTOINE

Yeah, it's a real belly laugh. What do you want from me?

SALEOS (O.S.)

Me, me, me. I don't want anything from **you**.

Suddenly, SALEOS' outline becomes more visible. He appears to be wearing a crown. There are other sounds around him, on the ground.

He emerges from the darkness, no crown on his head. He's a beautiful, angelic "man", very regal and gallant (think Lancelot in Boorman's *Excalibur*), wearing a military officer's uniform (not belonging to any specific place or time, but a sort of mishmash). Tall.

SALEOS

What could you possibly offer me?

Antoine sweats harder as if a fire was put in front of him.

Something snaps its jaws behind Saleos.

ANTOINE

What the fuck is that?

Antoine's vision starts to blur. He shakes his head and looks again, but no luck. He's startled again when Saleos' human form has been replaced by something demonic, monstrous. Antoine shakes uncontrollably.

Everything is becoming colorful and melting into each other like a bad acid trip.

Saleos appears human again, but Antoine can't think or see straight anymore.

The creature in the dark snaps its jaws again. Antoine can no longer speak, instead letting out cries.

SALEOS

You know, I'm not one for violence. Quite the opposite in fact. Probably funny to hear "I'm a lover, not a fighter," from me, but it's true. Though sometimes.. well, the occasion calls for it.

Out of the darkness emerges a gigantic CROCODILE.

Antoine pisses his pants, not sure what's real anymore as his acid trip meltdown continues in a downward spiral.

(CONTINUED)

The crocodile attacks

Antoine screams the kind of scream that would haunt your nightmares.

The croc rips away Antoine's legs and we hard cut as copious blood shoots out everywhere.

CUT TO:

SKYLINE - EXT. ANTOINE'S PLACE

Antoine's place is in the hood.

DeShawn is first out of Billy's car. He slams the door behind him. Billy has an annoyed look on his face.

DeShawn looks back to see Billy is still sitting in the driver seat. He stares back at DeShawn, but doesn't budge.

DeShawn turns his attention back to Antoine's place. The door has been kicked down.

DESHAWN

Oh shit. We're too late.

DeShawn removes his gun while looking around the neighborhood. He carefully enters, stepping over the broken door.

Billy finally gets out of the car, but does not go to join DeShawn. Instead, he moves towards the back of his car and opens his trunk.

INT. ANTOINE'S PLACE

The house is on the smaller end. Framed pictures of Antoine as a kid and his siblings and mom are hung up on walls and broken on the ground. A few high school graduation pics, but not of Antoine. All of the windows have been broken.

DeShawn keeps his gun ready. He creeps down the hallway towards the bedrooms.

INTERCUT Billy is doing something in his trunk. It's unclear what.

DeShawn quietly opens Antoine's door. Nothing. He tries another. No one. Then moves towards Antoine's mother's room. He puts his hand on the knob..

(CONTINUED)

INTERCUT Billy shuts his trunk, revealing a SHOTGUN in hand. He cocks it.

.. and turns.

INT. MOTHER'S BEDROOM

DeShawn enters the room to find Antoine's MOTHER DEAD in her bed, bloody and torn apart. He puts a hand to his mouth.

DESHAWN  
(heartbroken)  
.. And Hell came with them..

DeShawn can't look at the grisly sight any longer. He looks everywhere else but there, searching for any sort of clues as to where the attackers have gone next. Nothing.

DeShawn exits the bedroom and walks back down the hall towards the

LIVING ROOM

BLAM!

DeShawn is almost hit by Billy's shotgun blast. It tears apart the couch blocking his aim of DeShawn.

DeShawn quickly drops to the ground.

Another shotgun blast tears apart the couch further. It's innards rain down on DeShawn hiding behind it.

DESHAWN  
I'm not taking another fucking  
bullet this week. Especially not  
from some white trash billy goat  
looking mother-

BLAM!

DeShawn pushes himself off sideways and fires multiple shots towards Billy.

Most miss, but one hits him in the shoulder, causing him to miss his next shotgun blast.

DeShawn takes advantage, firing another shot into Billy.. right in the center of his forehead.

The shotgun hangs down then drops from his hands then Billy falls backward out of the house.

(CONTINUED)



DESHAWN  
(catching his breath)  
What'd I tell you?

EXT. MORLEY FIELD (PARK) - AFTERNOON

Vincent leans against the front of his Firebird Trans Am. He watches Luna in soccer practice. He's got a concerned look on his face.

Luna's COACH (woman, late 20s) meets him with her eyes. She smiles and waves, flirting.

Vincent gives a false half smile, nods then looks away. That's when he spots a black SUV on the other side of the field, not unlike the one from the other night. He watches it closely for a good moment, but nobody comes out. There doesn't appear to be anyone inside.

He gives in and leaves his spot to hit the porta potty.

Vincent relieves himself. Just as he's about to zip up, something small blows through the walls of the porta potty creating entrance and exit wounds. He turns to look at the hole then the other. He swiftly finishes zipping up then

leans down to peek through the hole. In front of the black SUV are now TWO ARMED DEMON-MASKED THUGS.

Vincent quickly pulls away from the bullet-made peep hole when more bullets come through. He practically jumps out of the porta potty and onto the grass, rolling into a ducking run towards Luna and the other girls.

Suppressed bullets (which can still be heard contrary to what most films display) fly through the air past, behind, over him. Vincent waves his arms like crazy as he runs towards the girls.

One of the other little girls notices and bumps Luna.

LITTLE GIRL  
Hey, Luna.

Luna turns to see the panicked look on Vincent's face.

VINCENT (SIGNING)  
Danger! Danger! Tell them to run!

Luna squints, trying to make out what he's signing, but it comes to her soon enough.

(CONTINUED)

The rest of the team of girls, as well as their coach, turn to see the commotion, then realizing what is happening as they see the thugs running across the field, shooting almost in their direction.

LUNA

Everybody run for your lives!

Some of the girls scream in terror as they start to scatter. The coach does her best to keep them together, but is also trying to survive.

Vincent makes it to Luna, picking her up and running with her in his arms back to his car. The thugs are growing near, but have to stop shooting briefly in order to reload. One trips and falls. The other stops to help his partner back up.

Vincent has made it to the car. He drops Luna in and starts it as the thugs are getting closer. They fire shots into the front of the car, a couple crack the windshield. Luna screams, covering her head to hide.

Vincent reverses back and peels away like he's in a *Fast and the Furious* movie.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

Vincent's firebird pulls into the parking lot. It's riddled with bullets.

He turns to Luna and signs faster than ever. She's trying to keep up.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Some bad people are after us. I  
need you to run inside and find  
your mom. Tell her it's an  
emergency and to go out the back.  
I'll be waiting for you. Go!

Luna jumps out and runs into the office.

Vincent peels away and drives around the corner to the back of the office.

Right as he's out of sight, the black SUV comes screeching to a halt out front. The two thugs in demon masks jump out.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

Luna runs around the office, looking into each cubicle, startling some, confusing others.

INTERCUT Vincent sitting impatiently, sweaty and nervy, looking around every direction.

Luna tries another cubicle. Not Crystal.

LUNA  
MOMMMAAA!!

Crystal pops up from her cubicle.

CRYSTAL  
Luna?

Crystal leaves her cubicle as Luna runs to her. She grabs her hand and tries to lead her to the back.

CRYSTAL  
What are you doing here? What's going on? Where's Vincent?

LUNA  
He's waiting for us. We have to go now!

CRYSTAL  
Go where?

LUNA  
It's an emergency!

Suddenly, the two thugs enter the building. Crystal spots them, noting their demon masks, then drops down behind one of the nearby cubicles.

CRYSTAL  
Okay, let's go.

Luna pulls her towards the back door. They sneak their way there as the two thugs are looking into each cubicle as they work their way to the back.

EXT. DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES

Luna leads Crystal outside through the back door. They get into Vincent's car. He speeds off and makes a sharp right turn.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

Are those the same guys that  
attacked you and DeShawn?

Vincent is too busy watching the road and checking behind  
them through his mirrors.

CRYSTAL

(worried)

Vincent, what's going on?

LUNA

They're trying to kill us!

Crystal's face drops. Vincent turns to her briefly to nod.  
He tries to sign without keeping his eyes off the road too  
long.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Page your brother.

INT. FAMILY HOUSE

Vincent, Crystal and Luna enter the old school restaurant in  
a hurry to find DeShawn munching on some bacon. He has a  
mostly finished plate of food in front of him.

He hugs Luna as she runs up to him.

LUNA

Uncle Shawn!

DESHAWN

Hey, you okay? Let me see.

DeShawn looks her over.

LUNA

I'm okay!

CRYSTAL

How'd you get here so fast?

DESHAWN

Don't ask me how many speeding  
tickets I've had to pay off. I  
ordered for you guys already.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

We didn't come here to eat.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

It's a fucking restaurant, Vince, what can I say. I eat when I'm nervous. And almost getting killed a third time really worked up my appetite.

Luna looks confused and like she's about to ask a question, but doesn't.

CRYSTAL

It's true. He was a fat, anxious kid.

DESHAWN

Hey, don't be telling anybody my business!

Vincent, frustrated, slams his hand on the table, startling them and a few of the other nearby patrons.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

No time. The gangsters in the demon masks are back. Same guys hit you?

DESHAWN

Nah, it was that Billy asshole.

LUNA

Oooh!

CRYSTAL

Luna, not right now.

DESHAWN

He tried to assassinate me. Riley set me up.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

No. He's not one of Riley's.

DESHAWN

Mann? What about the trick r treaters?

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Somebody more dangerous.

DESHAWN

(thinks)  
Oh shit.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA

Uncle Shawn, you have a real potty mouth.

Crystal gives Luna a stern look. She quiets again.

CRYSTAL

What's the plan?

DESHAWN

I've got nothing.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I need you to take them to the old cabin. My Uncle John's.

CRYSTAL

Nuh uh, we need to stick together.

DESHAWN

She's right, man.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

I think I know where this thing is going to end. I need to find Riley. He's the only one who can put a stop to all this. I can't protect them like you can. If I die..

Vincent makes a face like "you know".

CRYSTAL

Vincent.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

You have to trust me. I love you. Now go.

Vincent kisses her on the lips then turns to Luna. He squats down then squeezes her tight. He kisses her on the cheek.

He looks back at DeShawn. DeShawn nods. He nods back then leaves.

DESHAWN

Check please!

## INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

Vincent drives by Crystal's place. He doesn't stop, but slows down to have a look. The windows have been broken, the door kicked in. He speeds up again and takes off.

## EXT. RILEY'S HOME

Vincent exits his car and approaches Riley's home. It's nothing fancy, but is fairly nice and well-kept. Single story, three bedrooms with a decent-sized backyard. Riley's been living here since the 70's.

Vincent finds the front door is open.

## INT. RILEY'S HOME

Just like Crystal's place, the house has been turned over. Furniture flipped and cabinets and dressers torn apart.

Vincent peeks into the backyard. Nothing but a mess.

He looks into the bathroom, the spare office then Riley's bedroom. Nothing. More mess.

He stops at the third bedroom door then opens it hesitantly. It's his old bedroom. There are stacks of 60's and 70's records. Empty dressers. The walls are covered in 70's movie posters. Movies like *The Godfather part II*, *Jaws*, *Mad Max*, *Alien*, and *Taxi Driver*. Framed pictures of Vincent's parents, his mother (Kiona) and father (Christopher), his Uncle John Breyer (Kiona's brother). He takes a double take on a picture of him and his mother. He's about five or six there. Vincent takes one last look then shuts his bedroom door.

Before leaving the house, he stops to look at the wall of framed photographs. Some of Riley, younger Riley with Christopher. Vincent looks down at the ground where a few have fallen and shattered. One in particular catches his eye. A picture of a kid-him with Riley. Riley's genuine smile is so big and bright we understand why they call him "Smiley Riley". It's cracked down the middle, splitting them apart. He can't seem to look away from it.

INT. STOLEN CAR - MOVING - EVENING

DeShawn drives with Crystal in the passenger seat and Luna on her lap. The sun is setting. Crystal stares out the passenger window a moment before turning to DeShawn.

CRYSTAL  
Whose car is this?

DESHAWN  
Don't ask questions you don't want  
answers to..  
(beat)  
.. or that you already know the  
answer to.

Crystal makes a face like "fair enough"

DeShawn turns up the radio just as The Shirelles' *Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow* is starting up.

DESHAWN  
(laughs)  
Oh, wow. This thing must be a time  
machine.

LUNA  
(excited)  
Is this a Da-loree-in?!

DeShawn and Crystal laugh.

CRYSTAL  
(to Luna)  
It's old school is what he means.  
This was one of your grandma's  
favorite songs.

DESHAWN  
She used to play it all the damn  
time.. I miss hearing it.

CRYSTAL  
.. Me too.

BOTH  
(singing)  
*But will you love me too-morrow?*

They both chuckle and can't help but smile. Luna laughs then rocks her head side to side to the music, only making them chuckle more.

(CONTINUED)



DeShawn notices the smile on Crystal's face fade. He turns just as serious.

DESHAWN

Hey, he's going to be okay. You know that right?

Crystal takes a moment before nodding.

DESHAWN

Luna, tell your momma Vincent's going to be okay.

LUNA

He's gonna be A-okay, momma!

Luna twists her body to tightly hug Crystal.

CRYSTAL

I know, baby.

DESHAWN

Everything's going work out and..  
we're going to be just fine.  
(beat, singing again)  
*I'd like to know that your love..  
Is love I can be sure of..*

Luna sings along, though mostly saying the ends of words late since she doesn't know the lyrics. Crystal slowly joins back in.

BOTH

*So tell me now, and I won't ask  
again.. will you still love me  
too-morrow?*

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING - NIGHT

Vincent is pulling into the parking lot of Smiley Riley's Dentistry, except something is very off. The place is lit up like a club, spotlights on the roof flashing the sky.

Vincent parks right out front then exits his car.

EXT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

The Doors' *Take It as It Comes* starts up from inside, blaring.

Vincent stops right outside and looks up at the sign. It reads "The Crooked Cat". He breathes cold. Then enters.

## INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

The inside looks like a club too. Everything has been transported back to 1969. There are colors flashing, people dancing. The place is packed.

Vincent works his way past some of the dancing people and spots Riley sitting alone towards the back. He goes to him.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

What is all this?

RILEY

Ghosts come in many forms.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

How is this possible?

RILEY

Anything's possible, maybe not always probable, but anything's possible. I think if you'd have learned something from this week it'd be that. This place was really something back in its time. Its prime.

Vincent catches a familiar face in his peripheral. He turns to see Riley and Christopher (in 1969) walking past him. Christopher wears the very same jacket Vincent has on now. Vincent can't believe his eyes. Younger Riley and Christopher continue without noticing.

RILEY

Your father and I used to frequent this place a lot, but not for the obvious reasons. We were going to buy it. Take it over and be partners. Straight down the middle.

Vincent has a knowing look on his face. He knows why that never happened as planned.

FLASHBACK

EXT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME - INT. CAR - MOVING (1969)

We pick up from the same night Christopher gave Vincent a little guitar lesson. They've just dropped him off at his Uncle John's.

Christopher drives, Riley sits in the passenger seat.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

Why's your brother-in-law always so angry looking?

CHRISTOPHER

That's just his face. He's a bigger softie than you think.

RILEY

I don't think he likes me.

CHRISTOPHER

When he sees people like us he's reminded of what was taken from him.

RILEY

What a load of shit. There's a reservation not too far from him. Why doesn't he just stay there? Away from all the eviil white boogeymen.

CHRISTOPHER

He and Kiona had a lot of family problems growing up. Then he changed his name.. and that really pissed them off.

RILEY

(amused)

Hm. I guess that makes him a man without a country.

CHRISTOPHER

John's a hard son of a bitch. He finds his own way. What's going on up there?

The car's headlights reveal a line of 2x4s covered in long nails sticking up. Christopher thinks a beat then puts the car in reverse and speeds backward.

RILEY

What are you doing?

CHRISTOPHER

We've been set-up.

Christopher continues speeding backwards when two cars emerge from the darkness, throwing on their headlights. They speed after him.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

You better just stop before anyone  
gets hurt.

CHRISTOPHER

(suspicious)

What are you talking about?

CRASH!

A third unseen car comes from Christopher's side and smashes  
into him, flipping the car into a violent, tangled mess.

CUT TO:

Riley slowly regains consciousness. He's been thrown out of  
the car, which bursts into flames.

He looks down to find his right leg dangling and shredded.  
He's bleeding out. He's in so much pain, barely hanging on.

A figure emerges from the darkness and stands over him, the  
growing fire raging behind him.

SALEOS

Not exactly how you thought this  
would play out?

Riley looks up at the familiar figure, but can't speak. He's  
too focused on surviving.

SALEOS

Say it. Before it's too late. Say  
it.

RILEY

(pause)

I'm yours.

INT. SMILEY RILEY'S DENTISTRY

The ghosts are gone. The club has turned back into the  
turned over Dentistry.

RILEY

And ever since then I've been  
trying to find a way to break  
servitude to him.

Riley reveals the original briefcase.

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

I was trying to free them too. Free all of us. Nobody understands what it means to sell yourself, to wholly give yourself over. There is no fine print to read.

Vincent doesn't appear to believe him.

RILEY

You don't believe me.. It was my momma, Vincent. She spoke to me. Told me there was a way out of this mess. And that got me to thinking.. if there's a Hell then.. well god fucking dammit there must be a heaven too.

(pause, emotional)

I wanted to make sure she made it up there. Where she belongs. You wouldn't ever know it looking at me, but that woman was a saint.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

It was Mann. He used you.

RILEY

That much I know.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

So why are you here?

RILEY

.. Believe it or not.. I came back here to try and lure Saleos away.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

He's the one who owns your contract?

RILEY

(nods)

I thought since I still had the original briefcase with all the contracts that maybe he'd change course and come after me.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

So you're telling me you had a change of heart?

(CONTINUED)

RILEY

(teary-eyed)

I saw her, Vincent. I saw her and I felt her and I just knew.. It was really her this time. She was trying to tell me something, but the only word I could make out was.. disappointed.

Riley is fighting tears.

RILEY

Then I thought about my boy. You. And I knew I fucked everything up. I should have never involved you.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

But you did.

(beat)

So how are we going to fix this?

INT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

DeShawn gets the fireplace going.

Crystal holds Luna in her arms on the couch, a blanket over them.

CRYSTAL

Come on, let's get you warmed up.

Crystal and Luna move to sit in front of the fireplace.

Something moves outside. Crystal looks up at DeShawn.

DESHAWN

Stay here.

DeShawn removes his gun. He checks the magazine. Half full. He cocks it.

LUNA

Are the bad people here?

CRYSTAL

It's okay. Probably just some raccoons or something. Uncle Shawn's going to check it out.

DeShawn opens the door and stops in the doorway. He looks out into the darkness, but sees nothing.

(CONTINUED)

DESHAWN

Yeah, probably just a hungry critter.

LUNA

Like a bear? We should give him food.

CRYSTAL

No, we definitely should not feed the animals. Especially not a bear.

LUNA

Maybe it's a puppy! Vincent did promise me a puppy.

CRYSTAL

He what?

LUNA

If we give the bear food then he'll be our friend and protect us from the bad people.

DESHAWN

(jokes)

It's a pretty good plan, actually.

CRYSTAL

Don't encourage her..

DeShawn starts to laugh as he turns his back to the door when he's attacked from behind by Billy.

Billy, a scar on his forehead where DeShawn had shot him, tackles DeShawn to the ground.

He raises his shotgun up, but Crystal moves in front of Luna to protect her.

BILLY

All we want is the girl.

CRYSTAL

(sarcastic)

Oh, that's all huh?

DeShawn yells and tackles Billy back down. He's trying to wrestle away the shotgun.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

Run to the room and hide. NOW!

Luna runs towards the bedroom to look for a place to hide.

Crystal tries to help DeShawn wrestle away the shotgun. DeShawn fires a shot, but misses Billy. Billy smacks him in the head with the shotgun then pulls away. He backs up enough to be in shooting range of Crystal.

Right as he's about to fire, a can hits him in the head. It's Luna from the hallway.

BILLY

Ah, you fucking little-

Billy turns towards her then is shot by DeShawn twice in his side and back. Billy turns to DeShawn and blasts him with his shotgun.

Crystal stops frozen.

DeShawn is bleeding badly, but is still alive.

INTERCUT Mister Mann sitting in a running car (passenger seat) outside the cabin. He brings up a small stack of papers in front of him.

MANN

You're services are no longer needed, mister DeShawn Montez.

Mann rips the stack down the middle.

INT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

Crystal watches DeShawn as he starts to gurgle blood, struggling to breathe. The life starts to fade from his eyes.

Crystal, while shaken up and upset, knows he'll just come back again.

They wait in silence for a moment after DeShawn dies.. but he's not waking up.

CRYSTAL

Shawn? DeShawn?!

Billy grins.

(CONTINUED)



BILLY

I guess his contract was up.

Billy laughs.

Crystal rushes towards him with the closest object she can grab. He fires the shotgun to find its empty. He reacts just in time though, smacking her against the head with his shotgun. She hits the ground, again hitting her head and is knocked unconscious momentarily.

Luna is still in the hallway, but has no words. She's too frightened and confused.

Billy inches towards her and she runs away to the bedroom.

We can hear her fighting back as he tries to wrangle her.

BILLY

Ow, you fucking bit me!

After a moment of struggle, Billy comes back out with Luna wrapped in a blanket. She's kicking her legs like crazy.

Crystal slowly comes to, only seeing their outlines as Billy walks past her. Her vision is returning as she realizes what is happening.

CRYSTAL

Luna? Luna!

Crystal tries her damndest to get back up, though it's a struggle.

EXT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

She hurries outside just as Mann and Billy are driving away.

She runs to the stolen car, but the tires have been slashed by Billy. She looks out as Mann gets further and further away with Luna. She has a hopeless look in her eyes.

INT. VINCENT'S FIREBIRD - MOVING

Vincent drives while Riley sits in the passenger seat.

RILEY

Vincent, I just want you to know. I never meant for any of this.

They pull up to John's cabin.

(CONTINUED)

Vincent takes a beat before turning to Riley.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

That kid.. is everything to me. She looks up to me like a father. Same way I did to you. If you consider me a son.. then you'll consider her a granddaughter. And that's whose life you've traded.

Riley looks Vincent in his eye. He knows he's right.

Vincent gets out of the car. Riley takes a moment then follows.

INT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

Vincent notices the open door almost off its hinges. He looks inside to see Crystal crying over DeShawn's body.

She looks up at Vincent in the doorway. He realizes DeShawn is truly dead this time.

He walks over to comfort her. They hug.

Vincent looks around for Luna.

CRYSTAL

They took her. They took my little girl, Vince.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

Then let's go get her back.

Vincent helps Crystal up. He lightly shoves her towards the door then turns his attention back to DeShawn.

He gets down on one knee again and closes DeShawn's eyes. He nods then gets back up and heads outside

EXT. JOHN BREYER'S HOME

CRYSTAL

This is all your fault, isn't it?

Crystal runs up to Riley and punches him in the face, throwing him back against the car.

Vincent hurries over to stop her from beating the living daylight out of him. He shakes his head at her.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

My brother's dead and my daughter's gone. Why don't you smile now so I can knock your fucking teeth right out!

Vincent pulls her away.

VINCENT (SIGNING)

We need him. We have to hurry. No time.

Crystal glares back at Riley then looks back at Vincent. She gets into the passenger seat of the car.

Vincent rushes back over to the driver side while Riley gets into the backseat.

EXT. TAHQUITZ PEAK

Vincent, Crystal and Riley pull up in his firebird.

CRYSTAL

How are we going to find them?  
Where do we-

Vincent taps her then looks up at the peak. He points to it. She looks.

Riley does too, but with a look of dread.

CUT TO:

The three hike up a trail leading to the peak.

Riley is struggling. He has the briefcase.

RILEY

Crystal.. I just wanted to say how so-

CRYSTAL

Save your fucking sorrys and make this right.

RILEY

(pause, nods)  
Okay then.

CUT TO:

The three reach the peak.

(CONTINUED)

They look onward to see a dark cave. The same cave from the Legend of Tahquitz, the story Uncle John Breyer told Vincent as a child.

Vincent breathes cold, but it's clear it's not from the cold weather. There's something ghostly here. Haunting.

Vincent continues walking towards the cave. Crystal follows.

Riley takes longer to do so. He stares into the black abyss, unprepared for what awaits.

Vincent stops halfway to the cave. He turns around to face the oncoming threat he can feel like a shiver down his spine.

Crystal stops near him and turns too. So does Riley.

Saleos appears, coming over the hill. He continues towards them.

Vincent can't help but notice the look on Riley's face. The impending doom in it.

As Saleos nears, Vincent and Crystal are struck by his beautiful, otherworldly appearance. They can't seem to look away either.

SALEOS

Rutger Riley. What great headaches  
you've caused me.

Riley has trouble speaking at first, as if too afraid to.

Saleos stops a short distance from them.

RILEY

I want to make things right.

SALEOS

(beat)

The briefcase?

Riley hesitates before presenting the briefcase to him. He takes it.

SALEOS

Let's go.

CRYSTAL

You have what you wanted. Leave us  
alone.

(CONTINUED)

SALEOS

Mister Riley here belongs to me in perpetuity. As my servant, I shall do with him as I very well please.

Saleos grabs Riley by the arm. Vincent is ready to fight.

BILLY (O.S.)

Excuse me!

Saleos looks past the group and they all turn to see Billy standing in front of the dark cave. He's shirtless and covered in Satanic tattoos. Even one of a satanic goat.

SALEOS

What is this?

RILEY

I don't know.

Saleos' voice changes, it sounds as if two people are speaking over each other. Eerie.

SALEOS

You LIE. I know when you're lying to me, Riley. That's what you do best. It's your gift to the rest of your fellow men.

(to Vincent)

Ask him what really happened that night. The night we met.

Vincent shifts his attention to Riley.

SALEOS

Oh yes.. it was he after all who put the plan into motion. You see, your father was always meant to die.

(to Riley)

But you didn't plan on me. You selfish, selfish man. You put demons I know to shame.

Vincent stares at Riley with a look that says he both can and can't believe it.

Crystal has a look of disgust on her face.

BILLY (O.S.)

Hey! We doing business or not, pretty boy?

Saleos again looks over at Billy.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

I got an offer for you, oh dark lord.

SALEOS

What could you possibly have to offer me?

BILLY

How about the soul of an innocent?

Crystal almost bolts towards the cave, but Vincent stops her. He shakes his head, it's not the right time.

SALEOS

(thinks)

Let's go, Riley.

Saleos starts to turn to walk away, still gripping Riley's arm.

BILLY

How about the contracts in that briefcase?

Saleos stops in his tracks. He releases Riley to open the briefcase. It's empty. Saleos faces Billy again. A fire burns in his eyes. He slams the briefcase onto the ground.

Saleos grabs Riley again and marches him over to Billy.

SALEOS

Do not play these games with me, mortal. Give me the contracts. NOW!

BILLY

Whatever you say.

Out of the blue, Saleos feels the dark cave calling to him. He tries to back away, but is being pulled towards it like a riptide.

A frightening voice booms from inside the dark cave. It belongs to Mister Mann aka the demon, Tahquitz.

TAHQUITZ (MANN) (V.O.)

I missed you, Saleos. How many years has it been? Since you trapped me above ground? In this wretched, disgusting place.

(CONTINUED)

Saleos recognizes that voice. He fights back even harder, but to no avail. He reaches for his temples as his mind and head are being attacked, as if by telekinesis. A pressure building up inside. It's making it impossible for him to even speak.

TAHQUITZ (V.O.)

I had to pull a lot of strings, but it all worked out in the end. Here you are before me, a victim of vanity. You thought yourself so great. So.. untouchable. But now.. you're in my make-shift home. Where my power has only grown throughout the years. Awaiting this day. And what a special day it is.

Saleos continues to attempt to fight back, but Tahquitz' power is too great now. He falls to his knees as his head is gradually being crushed. Like there's a black hole in his brain.

TAHQUITZ (V.O.)

What's my name?

Saleos' handsome beautiful face is being torn apart, almost but not quite revealing his demonic face beneath his human skin.

Everyone watches in horror.

Riley takes a few steps back (towards the ledge).

TAHQUITZ (V.O.)

SAY IT!

SALEOS

(barely able to speak)

Tah-quit. Tahquitz. Tahquitz!

TAHQUITZ (V.O.)

You have no power here. Not anymore.

Saleos' face is distorting as if being torn between two realities. His head continues to be crushed into itself. In a flash, Saleos bursts into flames. The flames change color from a bright orange to blue until finally..

Saleos is no more. His body falls forward, exploding into ash.

There's a shared silence for several seconds before

(CONTINUED)

Luna runs out from the dark cave, screaming her head off. She runs straight into Crystal and Vincent's arms.

Unexpectedly, Billy kicks Riley's prosthetic leg out from under him, causing him to collapse to the ground. He tries to crawl away.

Billy picks up the prosthetic leg and proceeds to beat Riley with it.

Vincent hesitates. He watches for a moment, contemplating what Riley has done to him, to his father, to his new family then

rushes to his rescue. He fights off Billy, trying to pull the prosthetic away from him. He manages to yank it from Billy's control, but is then headbutted by Billy's hard ass head. He rams him like a billy goat.

Vincent falls back. He tries to get back up on his feet as Billy comes towards him.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Billy looks down at his chest and stomach to find three bullet wounds starting to bleed. He looks back up at Crystal, holding the smoking gun. She's out of ammo.

Before Billy can move towards her, he feels himself being pulled into the dark cave behind him.

BILLY

What-wait! No! What are you-

Billy is yanked into the cave. It echoes with his screams as he's being torn apart alive.

Crystal drops the gun and covers Luna's ears. Luna is shaking.

Vincent stands near Riley, who's still on the ground. He sits on his butt near the ledge.

They all wait with baited breath.

Tahquitz steps out of the dark cave, back in his old man form (Mister Mann).

Vincent, Crystal, Luna and Riley all stare at him, frozen in fear of the demonic man.

As if on cue, the sun is just now starting to rise. It's the break of dawn.

(CONTINUED)



TAHQUITZ

Come, Riley. There is more work to be done.

RILEY

(disturbed)

What do you mean?

TAHQUITZ

You didn't think I'd just let you go free, did you?

RILEY

(pause)

Well.. actually, yes.

Tahquitz laughs then quickly becomes serious again.

TAHQUITZ

After everything you've done, you really think you deserve another chance? Do you see feathery wings sprouting from my back? A glowing halo floating inches above my head?

RILEY

(sorrowful)

.. I did everything you asked of me. I risked it all.

TAHQUITZ

And I'm grateful for your sacrifices. And the **others** you so willingly sacrificed along the way.

RILEY

(crying)

I never wanted to hurt anyone.. I just wanted to see my momma.. one last time.

Tahquitz, amused, thinks for a moment, his eyes shifting from person to person then stopping on Vincent.

TAHQUITZ

Okay.. For old time's sake. I'll offer you a deal, Vincent. Your life for his. Servitude for freedom.

(beat)

Else his soul be damned to Hell. For all eternity of course.

(CONTINUED)

Riley looks up at Vincent with fear in his eyes and something that looks like regret.. but he doesn't speak up or defend Vincent.

Vincent stares back at him, going through a range of emotions. He looks over at Crystal and Luna then back at Riley.

TAHQUITZ

So how about it?

Vincent speaks his first word (since he lost his voice as a kid). It's a struggle, but it comes out clear.

VINCENT

(pause)

.. No.

Riley and Crystal share a look of shock, but the moment is fleeting as Tahquitz kicks Riley off of the ledge.

Riley falls to the rocks below, still alive, though barely.

He bleeds out from where his right leg once was. Just like in the accident.

Vincent looks down, a look of regret on his face, as Riley's life fades away.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

Riley looks around the room, frantic. Recognition slowly fills his eyes as the sound of a life support machine can be heard.

He turns his attention towards it to see a SICK ELDERLY WOMAN lying in the hospital bed, under the covers. She's on her last leg.

RILEY

Momma?

Riley starts to tear up as he moves closer to her. He grabs her hand in his.

RILEY

No, not again. I can't do this again. I love you, Momma. I'm sorry.

Riley is crying now.

Suddenly, the curtain on the window catches fire.

(CONTINUED)

Riley now realizes what this is.

The flames spread quickly. Like a wildfire.

Tahquitz' evil laughter booms over the room.

The heart monitor flatlines.

Riley holds his mother tighter as the fire swallows them up.

INT. CRYSTAL'S HOUSE - GARAGE

Vincent pulls into the garage in his firebird. He exits then takes something out of the car.

The garage door closes as he walks over to the door to get into the house, carrying the large object in hand. Something cries and whimpers from it.

Vincent puts his hand on the door and goes to twist the knob.

KIONA (O.S.)

Vincent.

He freezes, recognizing the voice to be his mother's. He turns around to see

Kiona in the flesh. Though there's something inhuman about her. She's angelic. So beautiful it's almost blinding.

Vincent almost tears up just looking at her.

KIONA

I never stopped watching over you.  
I never will. Not even death could  
prevent a parent from loving their  
child. I only came to say.. I'm so  
proud of the man you've become..  
and that I'll always be there  
whenever you need me.

Vincent's eyes water. A tear escapes. He can't help but smile at her.

Someone on the other side can be heard walking down the hall towards the garage. As they turn the knob, Vincent rapidly wipes away the tear and dries his eyes.

Crystal stands in the doorway.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

Hey, you. What's wrong? You okay?

Vincent smiles again and before he can answer-

LUNA (O.S.)

Is that Vincent?

CRYSTAL

Yeess, it's Vincent. And he has a present for youu.

Luna comes running down the hall.

LUNA

What, a present?!

Vincent enters the hallway holding a dog carrier. He sets it down and opens it. A PUPPY comes tumbling out.

Luna practically melts.

LUNA

No. Way.

CRYSTAL

It took a **lot** of convincing.

Luna picks up her new puppy and hugs it.

CRYSTAL

You're picking up the poop.

LUNA

What?

CRYSTAL

Hey, little missy, you have to learn to be a responsible mother. I changed your diapers, now you can change hers.

LUNA

Puppies don't wear diapers.

CRYSTAL

It's a figure of speech. Now what do you say?

Luna turns to Vincent, filled with joy.

(CONTINUED)

LUNA

Thank you, Vincent.

Vincent smiles, bigger and brighter than we've ever seen him. A smile that'd make Riley proud.

END