# SPOTLIGHT

Written by

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Based on a True Story

**INT. HINGHAM POLICE STATION - NIGHT, 1974**

A quiet, cold winter night. A YOUNG COP sits behind the front desk. Two bundled up COPS exit the precinct.

AN OLDER COP EMERGES from an INTERVIEW ROOM. He makes a face. Whatever's going on the interview room isn't pretty.

YOUNG COP
How's that going?

OLDER COP
The mother's bawling and the uncle's pissed off.

YOUNG COP
She's not married?

OLDER COP
Divorced with four kids. I guess Father Geoghan was helping out.

YOUNG COP
Helping out?

The Older Cop shrugs. The front door opens and BURKE, FRESH FACED, 32, walks in. He wears a dark overcoat.

OLDER COP
Hey, Mr. Burke. They're in there talking to the Monsignor.

BURKE
And Father?

The Older Cop nods in the other direction.

OLDER COP
Holding.

BURKE
Any press?

OLDER COP
Just a guy from the Gazette, we sent him away. None of the big papers.

BURKE
Let's keep it that way.

OLDER COP
You got it.

Burke walks toward holding. The Young Cop nods "Who's that?"

OLDER COP (CONT'D)
Assistant DA.

YOUNG COP
Gonna be hard to avoid press at the arraignment.

OLDER COP
What arraignment?

He's matter of fact. Off the Young Cop, clocking it.

**INT. POLICE STATION, HALLWAY - LATER**

Burke arrives at holding and looks through the door. He sees FATHER GEOGHAN, 45, sitting quietly in the brightly lit room.

**INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

A MONSIGNOR, 50s, sits at a table with SHEILA, 33, and her brother FRANK, 38. TWO BOYS, 7 and 9, sit coloring. The Monsignor talks to Sheila and Frank in hushed tones.

Burke walks in, sits off to the side. He sees Sheila nervously fingering ROSARY BEADS.

MONSIGNOR
We'll just be another moment, Paul.

BURKE
Of course, Father.

The Monsignor takes a card from his pocket and hands it to Sheila. Her brother looks away, embarrassed and angry.

**EXT. POLICE STATION - LATER**

The Young Cop stands outside smoking. He watches as the Monsignor and the Priest exit the police station and get into a CAR. As they drive away, we HOLD ON the cop. PROCESSING.

**INT. ROW HOUSE, STAIRWELL - DAY, 2001**

A FIGURE walks up narrow stairs to a poorly lit top floor.

**INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - DAY**

A spare, empty studio apartment. More for a college kid than a 38 year old. A small desk, a futon without sheets.

A man walks in, carries a backpack and a LARGE DUFFEL BAG. **MIKE REZENDES**, good looks, bad haircut, wears a wedding ring.

Mike sets down the duffel, looks around. He walks to the sink, turns on the tap. Rust colored water. He turns it off, assessing his new digs, maybe his new life...

His phone rings, he checks it. The screen reads MARGARET. He lets it ring, doesn't pick up. A beat, then we PRELAP --

DAN (O.C.)
I told you, I can't help you.

**INT. LAUNDROMAT - NIGHT, 2001**

CLOSE ON a glass dryer door. Whites SPINNING.

MIKE
Yeah, see I don't believe you, Dan.

A crappy laundromat, empty, bad light. Mike's with DAN, 50s, thin, tiny glasses. Dan, nervous, puts clothes in a dryer.

MIKE (CONT'D)
We talked to Mary Malina in D.C., we talked to our guy at the Bureau of Justice Statistics...

Mike picks up a sock Dan dropped, drops it into the dryer.

DAN
Who?

MIKE
Doesn't matter who. We know the numbers and we know the Boston PD should have a lot more people behind bars. I'm not asking if they're lying, we know they are. I'm asking who's behind it.

Dan loads in quarters, starts the wash.

DAN
And I'm telling you, this isn't regulated by the comptroller's office, I don't know anything about it, would you let me do my freakin' laundry and stop busting my balls?

MIKE
Busting your balls? We're trying to help you and you think we're... alright, fine, I'll stop busting your balls, Dan. You can do your laundry and then read about it in the paper. I'm done with this.

Mike storms off, slamming the door of an empty machine on his way out. Dan shakes his head.

DAN
What's the matter with that guy?

ROBBY
Mike? He's just enthusiastic.

REVEAL an OLDER MAN in a chair off to the side. Meet **WALTER 'ROBBY' ROBINSON,** 55, Boston Everyman. An easy smile.

DAN
I just freakin' lost my house, Robby. We're in a crappy apartment in Alston and if, if you're right about this, people are gonna be mad.

ROBBY
Look, I get where you're coming from. And this thing, well, we both know there's no easy way to fix it. This gets out, you're right, people are gonna be mad. But a story like this, Danny, it'll force the powers that be to give the Boston PD more resources. Money they need to do their job.

Dan considers, Robby's right.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
You've known me a long time, Danny, you know I'm gonna get an answer from someone. Probably better if that someone is you.

Dan remains stone-faced. Robby pats him on the back, exits.

**INT. ROBBY'S CAR - LATER**

Mike sits reading the sports section of the Globe. The driver's side door opens. Robby sits into the driver's seat.

MIKE
I overplay it?

ROBBY
Felt about right.

MIKE
Gotta say, even if he folds, I'm not sure this story's big enough for us.

ROBBY
That's a surprise.
(starts ignition)
'My dropping you at home?

MIKE
Just drop me in Kenmore.

ROBBY
You sure? Never mind seeing Margaret.

MIKE
Nah, I'm gonna go see a buddy.

Robby clocks this, pulls out.

**INT. BOSTON GLOBE, NEWSROOM - DAY, 2001**

A large newsroom. REPORTERS and EDITORS gathered in the center. An older reporter, STEWART, 60s, sits by a cake.

ROBBY (O.C.)
Stewart's one of the few reporters who's been here longer than me...

FIND Robby sending off Stewart.. who's not quite ready to go.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Which I didn't think was possible.

A number of the reporters laugh. Mike stands among them.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
And sad as I am to see him depart, I do find his choice of departure date quite curious. The corner office sits empty, we've got a new editor coming on Monday... and Stewart's a great reporter, so I gotta ask... Stewart, what the hell do you know?

Stewart covers his mouth. Speak no evil. The room LAUGHS.

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - LATER**

A CRAMPED OFFICE. Small windows, three desks, lots of paper.

Mike eats a slice of cake and stares at an old laptop amidst the UNHOLY MESS on his desk. A phone RINGS. He picks up.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Spotlight. No, he's not. Can I take a message? OK, got it. Thanks.

Mike hangs up, jots a note as **SACHA PFEIFFER**, 28, wholesome, and **MATTY CAROLL**, mid 30s, thick accent, moustache, walk in.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Matty, you got a call from DC.

Mike hands Matty the note. Matty takes it, sits at his desk, peppered with FAMILY PHOTOS. Sacha sits at her tidy desk.

MATTY
Thanks. Sad to see Stewart take a buyout, huh?

MIKE
Yeah. Damn good reporter. Hard to imagine this place without him.

MATTY
You hear they let ten more go from classifieds?

SACHA
And I heard Lubin and Connor are going to the Times.

MATTY
(shaking his head)
First they buy us, now they're leaching us.

MIKE
It's gonna get worse, new boss made a lot of cuts when he was in Miami.

SACHA
My friend there had some good things to say about him actually.

MIKE
I still think he's coming here to clean house.

MATTY
You think he's gonna look at Spotlight?

MIKE
(shrugs)
He's having lunch with Robby tomorrow.

MATTY
Great. Another thing to worry about.

SACHA
(to Mike, all business)
How'd it go with the guy from the comptroller's office?

MIKE
Okay. I just don't think there's enough there for a story.

MATTY
Let me guess, not big enough?

MIKE
We need a story that's gonna make a difference. We're not on a beat, this is Spotlight.

Matty and Sacha trade a look.

MATTY
Mike Rezendes. True believer.

**INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, RESTAURANT LOBBY - DAY**

Robby enters the restaurant and approaches the hostess.

ROBBY
Reservation is under Marty Baron.

HOSTESS
Yes. Mr. Baron is already here. Follow me, please.

Robby follows, checks his watch, not used to being upstaged.

**INT. FOUR SEASONS HOTEL, RESTAURANT - LATER**

**MARTY BARON**, 46, bearded, intellectual, sits at a table reading "The Curse of the Bambino," a NOTEPAD beside him.

ROBBY
Mr. Baron.

Marty looks up and rises to greet Robby.

MARTY
Uh, Walter?

ROBBY
Call me Robby.

MARTY
Thanks for taking time out of your weekend.

ROBBY
I was flattered to be asked.
(sitting)
That's a good book, it was written by one of our sports writers.

MARTY
It seems you can't properly consider Boston without considering the Red Sox.

ROBBY
(playfully)
I hope you're not a Marlins fan.

MARTY
Uh, no. I actually don't care much for baseball.

ROBBY
Oh.

Awkward moment.

MARTY
So I, uh, asked a few senior editors who I should sit down with and your name was at the top of every list.

ROBBY
Well, I'm sure I'm on a few of those lists for the wrong reasons.

MARTY
They were mostly positive.

Robby reacts. Mostly?

MARY
In fact, a few referred to you as an elder statesman.

Elder? Robby doesn't like the sound of that either.

ROBBY
I'm very proud to work as a reporter for this paper.

Marty eyes his notebook.

MARTY
You are an editor, though? For, uh, the Spotlight team?

ROBBY
I prefer to think of myself as more of a player coach. But yes. You're familiar with Spotlight?

MARTY
Uh, not particularly.

Nothing is smooth with this guy.

ROBBY
It's a four person team, long term investigative. Mike Rezendes, real bulldog; Sacha Pfeiffer, she's young but knows the courts; Matty Carroll, computer-assisted-reporting. And of course, we report to Ben Bradlee. We just put out a piece on this negligent construction outfit, now we're trolling around for our next story.

MARTY
How long does that usually take?

ROBBY
Few weeks, we don't like to rush it. Once we focus on something we invest a lot of time and resources.

MARTY
Yes, I can imagine.

Marty jots down some notes. Is he judging?

MARTY (CONT'D)
So what are you considering now?

Robby, used to asking the questions, turns it around.

ROBBY
Well, to be honest, we've all been doing a little investigating into Marty Baron.

Marty puts down his pen.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
First Editor from the outside. Shaky economic times, I think some people are jittery.

MARTY
That's understandable. All indicators suggest that we are going to lose all of our classified revenue before the end of year.

ROBBY
That's a lot of money lost.

MARTY
Yes it is.

ROBBY
I'm curious, is that why you're asking about Spotlight?

MARTY
No. It was unrelated.

He jots down more notes. Off Robby, unsure.

**INT. GLOBE, NEWSROOM - DAY**

DEPUTY MANAGING EDITOR **BEN BRADLEE, JR.**, 50s, gruff, strides across the bullpen. Robby falls in.

ROBBY
Morning, Mr. Bradlee.

BEN
Where are we with the crime numbers?

ROBBY
I think there's something there.

BEN
Good.
(realizing)
Where you going?

ROBBY
To the ten-thirty.

BEN
You? Since when?

ROBBY
Technically, I am an editor.

BEN
Technically. Your sit down with Baron go that well?

ROBBY
No, actually, but it did make me curious.

BEN
He's just another boss.

ROBBY
Maybe.

Ben shoots Robby a look as they approach the CONFERENCE ROOM.

**INT. GLOBE, LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER**

Editors around a horseshoe table, side seats filled. It's QUIET, nervous eyes on Marty, who reads some notes. Robby stands in the back, WATCHING. A beat, Ben leans in to Marty.

BEN
You want to say something, Marty?

MARTY
Uh, sure.
(to the group)
Hello. My name is Marty Baron, if you can tell me your name as we go around, that would be helpful.

Marty looks back to his notes.

BEN
Is that it?

MARTY
Yes.

BEN
Okay. Tom?

METRO EDITOR TOM DROHAN, in the corner, jumps in.

DROHAN
Tom Drohan, Metro. We've got a major Big Dig closure that's just been scheduled for early August, we're expecting a verdict in the...

Marty makes notes. Off Robby, watching Marty.

**INT. GLOBE, BULLPEN - LATER.**

Mike walks over to **STEVE KURKJIAN**'s desk. 60s, an old timer.

MIKE
Hey Steve. Crummy game last night.

KURKJIAN
A disgrace, they can't hit worth a nickle.

MIKE
How you think it's going in the ten-thirty?

KURKJIAN
Like it goes every morning.

Mike looks toward the conference room.

MIKE
What's Eileen doing in there? She's not an editor.

KURKJIAN
Do you need something, Mike?

MIKE
No. Just curious.

KURKJIAN
I'm on deadline. Go be curious somewhere else, will you?

**INT. GLOBE, LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER**

The meeting is wrapping up.

SPORTS EDITOR
...and it looks like Pedro's gonna be out until September 1st.

A groan in the newsroom.

SPORTS EDITOR (CONT'D)
Jimmy says he'll be back this year, but the doc looked pretty grim.

BEN
When do the Pats open camp?

Laughter.

MARTY
Is that everybody?

BEN
Yeah, that's it.

MARTY
Great, thank you. Uh, did everyone read Eileen McNamara's column this weekend?

He holds up a column: Passing the Buck. The room reacts. Huh? Editors look over at EILEEN MCNAMARA, 50s, battle axe.

BEN
This is the Geoghan case?

MARTY
Yeah, what's the folo on it?

BEN
It's a column, what kind of folo were you thinking?

MARTY
Well this priest molested kids in six different parishes over the last thirty years and the attorney for the victims, Mr...

EILEEN
Garabedian.

MARTY
Thank you. Mr. Garabedian says Cardinal Law found out about it fifteen years ago and did nothing.

DROHAN
The attorney's a bit of a crank. And the Cardinal said he didn't know, he wasn't actually aware --

EILEEN
He said, she said.

MARTY
Yes. And whether Mr. Garabedian is a crank or not, he claims to have documents that prove Law was negligent. Is that right, Eileen?

EILEEN
That's right.

MARTY
Okay. So is this lawyer shooting his mouth off or does he have something?

Silence. No one knows what to do. Robby watches. *

MARTY (CONT'D)
Look, I know I'm just walking in here, but from what I could find, we've written all of...
(checking his notes)
...two stories on this in the last six months.

A few people stir. This is getting unpleasant.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Let me be clear about something. This is a very good paper, but the business is changing and if this paper is to survive, we will have to make ourselves essential to this community. Geoghan allegedly abused eighty kids, we've got a lawyer who says he has proof the Cardinal knew about it, why aren't we going after those documents?

No one says anything. Robby speaks up.

ROBBY
As I understand it, the documents are under seal.

MARTY
Okay, well I don't know what the laws are here, but in Florida we would go to court.

Robby raises an eyebrow. In fact, the whole room does.

BEN
You want to sue the church?

MARTY
Technically we wouldn't sue the Church. We would file a motion to lift the seal on those documents.

BEN
The church will read that as us suing them. So will everybody else.

MARTY
Good to know.

Off Robby, intrigued --

**INT. GLOBE, BEN'S OFFICE - LATER.**

Mike sits on the couch flipping through a Ted Williams book. He looks up as Ben and Robby enter, shut the door.

MIKE
Ted Williams, he was a player.

BEN
What do you want?

MIKE
How'd it go?

BEN
Certainly didn't tiptoe in.

Mike looks at Robby. What's up?

ROBBY
Baron wants to sue for the sealed docs in the Geoghan case.

MIKE
No shit. Really?

BEN
No way this plays down front.

ROBBY
With our numbers? Gilman's gonna shit a brick.

MIKE
You think the suit has a chance?

BEN
(no fucking way)
In Boston?

ROBBY
Oh boy.

Robby's looking through the window. Ben and Mike follow his gaze, see Marty walk into his office with Eileen.

BEN
Jesus. She's got her teeth in now.

MIKE
Kind of a gutsy move, going after the church.

BEN
That's one word for it...

The phone rings.

BEN (CONT'D)
...but somehow I doubt it's the best way to make the paper essential to a city full of Catholics...

Ben turns to the phone, eyes the extension. And picks up.

BEN (INTO THE PHONE) (CONT'D)
Bradlee. Yeah. Okay.
(hanging up, to Robby)
Baron wants to talk to us.

Off Robby, surprised --

**INT. GLOBE, MARTY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Marty talks to Eileen. Ben and Robby show up at the door. Marty waves them in.

MARTY
Uh, and how far is the Residence?

EILEEN
Lake Street? It's in Brookline, twenty minutes away, forty with traffic.

BEN
You telling the Cardinal in person?

MARTY
We had a meeting on the books. His idea.

EILEEN
Don't eat the sandwiches. They're horrible.

MARTY
Uh, okay.
(then, checking his pad)
I'm going to sit down with...
Jon Albano from legal tomorrow.

BEN
Who's the Judge on this case?

EILEEN
Constance Sweeney.

ROBBY
Good Catholic girl.

BEN
At least she'll be polite when she tells us to fuck off.

Marty lets it pass.

MARTY
So, uh, I understand we haven't done any investigation on this?

Ben shoots Mac a look.

BEN
On Geoghan? Paulson ran it out.

EILEEN
Paulson's a beat reporter.

BEN
A good one and he covered it.

EILEEN
Agreed. Now it's time to investigate it.

BEN
Come on, Eileen.

EILEEN
It's not a sin, Ben.

MARTY
Um, so, I just want to understand. Have we committed any real investigative resources to this particular question?

BEN
No. We have not.

MARTY
And this is the kind of thing you do?

He turns to Robby. Who blinks, surprised.

ROBBY
Spotlight?

MARTY
Yes. Spotlight.

ROBBY
Well, we're prospecting another story right now, we think Boston PD is inflating the number of violent crime cases they've cleared.

MARTY
But you haven't committed to it yet?

ROBBY
No.

BEN
Typically Spotlight picks their own projects.

MARTY
I see. Well, uh, would you consider picking this one?

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - LATER**

Mike, Sacha and Matty all working. Mike is on the phone.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Can I talk to him? Uh huh. Okay.

Robby enters.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I have to call you back.
(He hangs up.)
Are we on this?

ROBBY
We're gonna look into it, yeah.

MATTY
We're going after Cardinal Law?

MIKE
Did Baron ask or did you offer?

ROBBY
How about I talk and then you ask questions?

The team quiets. Robby perches on a desk.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Yeah, Baron's considering a lawsuit. Meantime, he asked us to fish around, see what we can find on Geoghan and the church.

MATTY
Geoghan's been in the papers for years, what's fresh here?

MIKE
Garabedian's alleging Cardinal Law knew about this and covered it up. We prove that, it's big.

SACHA
Is this guy Garabedian legit?

MIKE
Eileen thinks he is.

MATTY
Could be an ambulance chaser.

ROBBY
Drohan said he's a crank.

MIKE
I like cranks.

ROBBY
Fine. He's yours.

MATTY
What about the lawyer who was all over TV for the Porter case?

MIKE
Eric MacLeish.

SACHA
What was the Porter case?

MATTY
Father Porter, he was the Geoghan before Geoghan. Story broke in '92.

MIKE
Scumbag molested dozens of kids in Southern mass, MacLeish repped the victims. Should have some insight.

ROBBY
Yeah, let's set a meeting.

SACHA
So we're dropping crime stats?

MIKE
I vote yes.

ROBBY
We're just putting it aside until we get up to speed on this. And folks, let's be discreet.

MIKE
Aren't we always?

ROBBY
This is different, it's the church, people are gonna talk, even our people. I don't want Lake Street getting wind of this before we even know if there's a story here.

MATTY
Good luck with that.

They reach for phones and laptops. Robby leaves them to it.

**INT. ROBBY'S HOUSE, DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Robby finishes up dinner with his wife, BARBARA, 50s.

BARBARA
Your sister's gonna flip.

ROBBY
I would imagine half the city's gonna flip.

BARBARA
We should just cancel dinner with the O'Neills now.

ROBBY
I'm not even sure there's a story there, Barbara.

BARBARA
"Globe sues Church?" There's gonna be a story, Robby. And another libel suit if you're not careful.

ROBBY
I've won all three of those.

BARBARA
They didn't feel like victories at the time. And I'm telling you this one is gonna hit close to home.

ROBBY
Not our home.

BARBARA
Robby.

Robby stands up, starts to clear the table.

ROBBY
I'm just saying...

BARBARA
You know the Apostles' creed by heart, don't you?

ROBBY
Everyone in town knows that by heart.

BARBARA
Exactly.

ROBBY
Look, if not me, than who?

BARBARA
Someone who doesn't care about ending their career with a black eye.

**INT. MITCHELL GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Mike steps off an elevator and into a DUMP of an office. He eyes a small reception desk covered with FILE BOXES. In fact, there are file boxes just about everywhere.

MIKE
Hello. Hello?

Mike peeks through an open door... a small office, crammed FLOOR TO CEILING with BOXES, each with GEOGHAN written on it.

FEMALE VOICE (O.C.)
Can I help you?

Mike turns. In a SIDE OFFICE, A YOUNG WOMAN sits at a desk.

MIKE
Oh. Hi. I'm Mike Rezendes from the Boston Globe. I'm here to see Mitchell Garabedian.

RECEPTIONIST
He's on a call. Please have a seat.

She exits. Mike grabs a seat, checks his watch. He hears YELLING coming from behind a closed door. Garabedian?

**INT. LOBBY, ONE INTERNATIONAL PLACE - DAY**

An enormous, marble and stone lobby, a STARK CONTRAST to Garabedian's digs. Robby and Sacha walk in --

**INT. GREENBERG TRAURIG LOBBY, ONE INTERNATIONAL PLACE - DAY**

A SLEEK, MODERN LOBBY. Robby and Sacha walk up to reception. As the receptionist stands, leads them down the hall, PRELAP--

SACHA (PRELAP)
You work on the Father Porter story?

ROBBY (PRELAP)
No, I was covering Iraq. That was Ben and Kurkjian and Linda Matchan.

**INT. GREENBERG TRAURIG CONFERENCE ROOM, ONE INTL PLACE - DAY**

Robby and Sacha stand by a grand conference table.

ROBBY
It pissed a lot of readers off, they thought we were church bashing. MacLeish said he had death threats.

SACHA
Didn't seem to hurt his practice.

Robby smiles, taking in the CRAZY VIEW of the harbor.

ROBBY
Beats our view, huh?

ERIC MACLEISH (O.C.)
The famous Walter Robinson in my conference room.

ERIC MACLEISH, broad-shouldered, good looking, black Irish, quick with a story and smile. Robby shakes his hand.

ROBBY
Great to see you again, Eric. Sacha Pfeiffer, Eric MacLeish.

ERIC MACLEISH
Nice to meet you. Do you golf?

SACHA
(caught off guard)
Golf? No.

ERIC MACLEISH
Good. Your colleague took some money off me at a charity event last year.

ROBBY
Lucky putt. I had my eyes shut.

ERIC MACLEISH
So, what can I do for you?

ROBBY
You been following the Geoghan case?

ERIC MACLEISH
Sure. Eighty plaintiffs. And they're all individual cases, Garabedian must be swimming.

ROBBY
And the allegations he's made about Law?

ERIC MACLEISH
He's playing the hand he's been dealt. Look, the thing you need to understand is that these are shitty cases.

SACHA
The Geoghan cases?

ERIC MACLEISH
The Geoghan cases, the Porter cases, all of them. See, the statute of limitations is only 3 years, most of the victims don't come forward until long after it happens.

SACHA
Why?

ERIC MACLEISH
Shame. Guilt. These kids come from tough neighborhoods, no one wants to admit this kind of thing. So you're screwed on the time limit and even if you argue your way around that, the charitable immunity statute caps damages at twenty grand.

ROBBY
That's it? Twenty grand for raping a kid?

ERIC MACLEISH
Your only chance is to try these cases in the press like I did on Porter. But most of the Geoghan victims are skittish about press. That's a huge handicap.

SACHA
How do you know they're skittish?

ERIC MACLEISH
I represented some of them.

Robby leans forward. This is getting interesting.

SACHA
These were other Geoghan vicims? And you tried their cases?

ERIC MACLEISH
No, we settled. Look, most of these folks just want some acknowledgement of what happened. We got them a sit down with the bishop and a little dough. It was the best they could hope for.

ROBBY
Mitch Garabedian seems to have a different approach.

ERIC MACLEISH
Yeah, he's taking a huge risk. He's investing a lot of resources and, frankly, I think the Church is just going to stall until he runs out of money. My guess? He doesn't have anything on Law, he's just trying to up the ante to cut a better deal.

ROBBY
Sounds a bit reckless.

ERIC MACLEISH
Have you met Mitch Garabedian?

**INT. MITCHELL GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE - LATER**

Mike, still waiting, checks his watch. He hears more YELLING behind the door. Suddenly the door opens. A SHORT MAN exits.

Mike looks at the receptionist, points: "*Is that him?*" She shakes her head. Mike, impatient, stands, walks into --

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE, CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A small converted boardroom. **MITCHELL GARABEDIAN**, wire thin, 50s, sits at an oval table buried in paperwork. Mitch is abrasive, to say the least.

GARABEDIAN
Who are you?

MIKE
Mike Rezendes, Boston Globe. I had an appointment about an hour ago.

GARABEDIAN
I'm sorry but I'm very busy...

Mike continues toward Garabedian's desk.

MIKE
I'm sure you are, I'm just following up on an article...

GARABEDIAN
The one in the Phoenix?

MIKE
No. In the Globe.

GARABEDIAN
Oh. Did you see the one in the Phoenix? I thought it was very good. I have a copy here somewhere.

He starts to dig through the heap of papers.

MIKE
That's okay. I'll track it down. I'm actually following up on a column that Eileen McNamara wrote for the Globe about your suit.

GARABEDIAN
Suits. There are 86 of them, you should get your facts straight.

True to word. Garabedian is a bit of crank.

MIKE
You're right. I should. I'm just trying to get some background information on the Geoghan case...

GARABEDIAN
(brusk)
I can't show you the church documents if that's what you're after, they're under seal.

MIKE
I know that.

GARABEDIAN
Do you? Do you also know the church has tried to bring me before the Massachusetts board of overseers three times? They'd like to get me disbarred, they are watching me very closely. I probably shouldn't even be speaking to you. You're not recording this are you?

MIKE
I wouldn't do that without asking. Look, Mr. Garabedian, I know there are things you can't tell me. But I also know that there's a story here. I think it's an important story.

GARABEDIAN
I already talked to the Phoenix.

MIKE
Yeah, and there's a reason I didn't read about it. No one reads the Phoenix anymore. They're broke, they don't have any power. But the Globe does. And if we cover this story, everybody will hear about it. The Catholic church is a very powerful institution. But so are we.

He finishes his pitch.

GARABEDIAN
Well, I can't tell you anything. You want to understand this story, you need to talk to the victims.

MIKE
Can I do that? Can I talk to some of your victims?

Garabedian eyes him.

GARABEDIAN
I don't know. Call me tomorrow. I need to think about this.

**INT. GLOBE, GILMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

A large, plush office. **RICHARD GILMAN**, 50s, a surface calm to match his Brooks Brothers suit. He's on the phone.

GILMAN (INTO THE PHONE)
Yeah, tomorrow is fine. Great. Thanks, Steve.

Gilman hangs up, joins Marty on a couch in the sitting area.

GILMAN (CONT'D)
So, how are you settling, Marty?

MARTY
Just fine, thanks. Uh, how are you?

GILMAN
Well, aside from the Q2 prelims which have us down 100 million year to year, not bad. But I'm sure you didn't come here to discuss that.

MARTY
No, I didn't. I'd like to challenge the protective order in the Geoghan case.

GILMAN
(not completely following)
The priest?

MARTY
Yes. Father Geoghan, the one who allegedly molested...

GILMAN
You want to sue the church?

MARTY
Technically, it's not suing the church, we're just filing a motion. But yes.

Gilman considers this for a long moment.

GILMAN
You know that our subscriber base is 53% Catholic.

MARTY
Uh, well, I'm sure they'll be very interested.

GILMAN
So will our advertisers. Did you speak with legal?

MARTY
John Albano. He gave us even odds.

GILMAN
Even odds?

Marty shrugs. Yep. Gilman looks unsettled.

GILMAN (CONT'D)
You think this is the right thing to do?

MARTY
I do.

Gilman eyes Marty.

GILMAN
Okay.

MARTY
Thanks, Dick.

Marty exits. Quickly. Off Gilman, concerned --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - LATER**

A desk covered with old newspaper clips, Matt and Sacha read. There's a knock, a YOUNG INTERN in the door. With a box.

YOUNG INTERN
I got more clips from the library.

The intern drops them by Matty's desk.

YOUNG INTERN (CONT'D)
So you guys looking into the church?

MATTY
We can't talk about that.

The intern reacts, sheepish. He goes.

SACHA
You find anything on this guy Phil Saviano?

MATTY
No. Who's that?

SACHA
He's part of a survivors' organization. Kurkjian ran a story on him just after the Porter case.

Robby's walked into the room. He grabs some coffee.

ROBBY
There's a survivors' organization?

SACHA
Yeah, it's called SNAP, Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests.

MATTY
Clumsy acronym.

SACHA
Guy sounds a bit sketchy but he might be helpful.

ROBBY
Let's track him down.

MATTY
Hey guys...

Robby and Sacha turn. Matt stares down at a clip.

MATTY (CONT'D)
There's a clip here from '98... I think I got another priest.

SACHA
Porter?

Matty shows them the clip.

MATTY
No. Robert Burns. He molested some kids in Ohio then was moved here to Boston and he did the same thing.

ROBBY
This was one of our clips?

MATTY
Yeah. Byline's John Ellement. Back when he was working religion.

Matty holds out the article. Robby's perplexed.

ROBBY
Was there any folo?

MATTY
Not much. One short piece.
(then)
Isn't Tim O'Neill a friend of yours?

ROBBY
Yeah, why?

MATTY
Looks like he was Burns' lawyer.

Robby looks at the article. Mike walks in.

SACHA
How'd it go with Garabedian?

MIKE
He's paranoid as hell but I'll get him. What's going on?

MATTY
We found another priest in the clips.

MIKE
Really? Under Law?

SACHA
Before Law. Cardinal Medeiros. But the suit alleges Medeiros knew.

Sacha hands Mike the clip. Mike reads.

MIKE
This is the same story as Geoghan.

SACHA
And Porter.

MIKE
That's three priests. Porter, Geoghan and now Burns, shuffled from parish to parish, it's like an M.O.

ROBBY
Priests are rotated all the time.

MIKE
Not this frequently, look at the clip.
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
Parents complain about the guy, they ship him to another parish, couple years later parents complain again, they ship him somewhere else.
(then)
This is a pattern, Robby.

ROBBY
Maybe.

MIKE
Maybe what? A pattern's a pattern.

ROBBY
Maybe.

Robby walks into his office. Mike watches him go, confused.

**INT. GLOBE, ROBBY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Robby reaches for his coat. Mike walks in, shuts the door.

MIKE
What's going on with you?

ROBBY
With me? Nothing. I'm just looking for something solid.

MIKE
This is solid, we got something here.

ROBBY
Eric MacLeish thinks Garabedian's bluffing.

MIKE
What about the three priests?

ROBBY
Three is not a pattern. It's vague, Mike.

Robby puts on his jacket on.

MIKE
All leads are vague, that's what a lead is. Come on, Robby, we had less on the crime stat story and we'd been working on that for weeks.

ROBBY
This is different.

MIKE
Why? Because it's the church?

ROBBY
Yeah, Mike. Because it's the church.

And he's out the door.

**INT. MAMMA MARIA ITALIAN RESTAURANT, NORTH END - NIGHT**

A lovely, candlelit room. Robby and Barbara have dinner with **TIM O'NEILL, 50s,** and his wife, KATHY. Robby is distracted.

TIM
So Robby's going on and on the whole game about what a jerk this guy is and then we get up to leave...he's sitting two seats behind us.

The group laughs. Robby makes an effort to join in the fun.

TIM (CONT'D) BARBARA
"Hello Jim, good to see you!" Walter.

**EXT. MAMMA MARIA, NORTH END - LATER**

Tim and Robby walk to get the cars. In the distance, we see their wives waiting by the entrance to the restaurant.

TIM
How's the new Editor?

ROBBY
Well, he doesn't like baseball.

TIM
Come on. Domineering wife?

ROBBY
He's not married.

TIM
Divorced?

ROBBY
Don't think so.

Tim blinks.

TIM
So the new Editor of the Globe is an unmarried man of the Jewish faith who hates baseball?

Robby smiles. Tim shakes his head.

TIM (CONT'D)
Shoulda given it to Ben. Or you.

ROBBY
I'm a reporter. I don't need that.

They smile. A beat, then --

ROBBY (CONT'D)
By the way, I was reading about this priest the other day, Robert Burns. It said you represented him?

Tim looks up, surprised.

TIM
Yeah. I represented Burns. Bad egg.

ROBBY
Since when do you work with the Archdiocese?

TIM
They needed help, I was asked to step in.

ROBBY
The victims said Cardinal Medeiros knew about it.

TIM
You know I can't talk about the case, Robby.

ROBBY
Off the record?

Tim looks at his friend.

TIM
Off the record, I can't talk about it. Is this related to the lawsuit?

Now Robby hides his surprise.

ROBBY
You heard about that, huh?

TIM
It's a small town, Robby.
(then)
Just be careful with this one, pal.
(MORE)

TIM (CONT'D)
I don’t know what your new editor’s agenda is and frankly I don’t care, I just don’t want you taking a bullet for him.
(a pat on the back)
See you at book club.

Tim walks away. Robby watches him, processing --

PRIEST (PRELAP)
‘Scandalum.’ It’s Latin for scandal.

**INT. ST. PETER’S CHURCH, SOUTH BOSTON - DAY**

Sunday morning mass. The MIDDLE AGE PRIEST is mid homily.

PRIEST
Does anyone still speak Latin? Oh. One there in the back.

The Church laughs.

PRIEST (CONT’D)
We all read the papers, watch the television. Some of us even go on the World Wide Web.

Polite laughter from the parish congregation. Sacha sits a bit apart with her husband, HANS, 35 and her GRANDMOTHER, 77.

PRIEST (CONT’D)
And what do we see there? Scandal. With our politicians. Our bankers. Our athletes. And even our Church.

Hans checks his watch. Sacha looks over at her grandmother.

**EXT. ANOTHER CHURCH - DAY**

A different Priest stands out front greeting parishioners. In line we find Matty with his wife, ELAINE, 30s. Matty holds a 2-year-old, three other small children clustered around them.

PRIEST (V.O.)
One scandal after another. Let’s face it, it’s depressing. So how do we not let these scandals overwhelm us? Overwhelm our faith in each other? And our faith in God?

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

Mike sits in the empty office in shorts and a T-shirt.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Hey Mitch. It's Mike Rezendes again. Calling you on Sunday, August 12th, can you give me a call? Thanks.

Mike hangs up.

ROBBY
You bothering people on Sundays now?

Mike turns. Robby's in the door.

MIKE
Shouldn't you be golfing?

ROBBY
Couldn't get a tee time.

MIKE
Is that what they call it? A tee time?

ROBBY
Yeah, they also call it a leisure activity. You should try it.

MIKE
I run.

ROBBY
You run to work.

MIKE
Saves gas money.

Robby walks over the coffee machine, pours a cup of coffee.

ROBBY
Garabedian still dodging you?

MIKE
I'll get him.
(then)
So, really, what are you doing here?

Robby turns to Mike, pensive.

ROBBY
You ever know me to hesitate on a story?

MIKE
Never.

ROBBY
Me neither.

Robby looks to Mike who shrugs.

MIKE
Maybe not the time to start.

ROBBY
Maybe not. So what do we have?

Robby sits down next to Mike.

MIKE
Burns clips are here. And you should look at these clips on Phil Saviano, Sacha reached out, he's coming in.

Mike hands Robby some clips. As they start to dig in...

**EXT. LAKE STREET - DAY**

An old Buick pulls up in a large parking lot. Marty gets out, looks up at the Cardinal's MASSIVE LAKE STREET MANSION.

Marty takes it in, walks towards the large porte-cochere.

CARDINAL LAW (PRELAP)
I've always been fascinated by the newspaper business.

**INT. LAKE STREET, PRIVATE STUDY - DAY**

Mahogany bookshelves, impressive leather furniture. CARDINAL LAW, large, 50s, wears a collar and sits across from Marty. A servant places a tray of sandwiches in front of them.

CARDINAL LAW
I used to sit in on lectures at the Nieman School when I was at Harvard.
(off the tray)
Care for a sandwich?

MARTY
No thank you. Not for me.

The servant exits. Law takes a sandwich.

CARDINAL LAW
And I was an editor myself once.
(off Marty's look)
The Mississippi Register.
(MORE)

CARDINAL LAW (CONT'D)
A small, diocesan newspaper in Vicksburg, but for a 30-year-old assistant pastor it was a lot of responsibility.

MARTY
In Vicksburg?

CARDINAL LAW
Yes, in the 60s. I was close with the Evers brothers, the paper took a strong stand on the civil rights movement. So did our readership.

MARTY
I can imagine.

CARDINAL LAW
Did you have any trouble in Miami?

MARTY
We were fairly critical of the Gonzalez family during Elian. That, uh, didn't go over well.

CARDINAL LAW
Hard sitting in that seat.

MARTY
And a privilege.

CARDINAL LAW
Indeed. Well, I look forward to working together, Mr. Baron. This city flourishes when all of its great institutions work together. And I certainly count the Globe as one of our great institutions.

MARTY
Yes, well, uh, thanks. Of course, I am of the belief that for the paper to best perform its function it needs to, uh, stand alone.

Law doesn't like that answer.

CARDINAL LAW
Of course.
(then)
The Register lost a lot of our subscribers when we threw our weight behind the civil rights movement. It hurt the paper.
(MORE)

CARDINAL LAW (CONT'D)
But I never lost any sleep over it because I was certain our cause was just.

Pointed. A beat, then there's a KNOCK on the door.

CARDINAL LAW (CONT'D)
Come in.

An older SECRETARY comes in with a SMALL WRAPPED GIFT.

CARDINAL LAW (CONT'D)
Ah. A little welcome gift. Think of it as a Cardinal's guide to Boston.

Law hands the gift to Marty. Who looks at it. Bemused.

MARTY
Uh, thank you.

**EXT. LAKE STREET/INT. MARTY'S CAR (PARKED) - LATER**

Marty returns to his car. He gets in, unwraps the gift. A thick book, THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. Off Marty--

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

The entire team sits at a table facing PHIL SAVIANO. PHIL is mid-40's, thin and twitchy. He rifles through some papers.

SAVIANO
So am I the first survivor you've talked to?

ROBBY
Yes, Phil. You are.

SAVIANO
Oh. Well, then this should be fun.

Mike and Matty share a look, fun?

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
Okay, so first of all, you gotta know that this is a very big problem. And my organization SNAP is at your disposal.

ROBBY
How many members are there in your organization, Phil?

SAVIANO
In my chapter. Seven. No six. One moved.

The team trades a look. Is this for real?

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
But you gotta remember, whenever I talk about getting molested, I'm not talking about Phil Saviano now. I'm talking about Phil Saviano then.

He reaches into a file, pulls a PHOTO of himself as a kid.

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
I was eleven. And I was preyed upon by Reverend David Holley in Worcester. And I don't mean prayed for. I mean preyed upon. Are any of you Catholic?

The whole team looks at each other. Good question.

MATTY
I was raised Catholic but now I go to my wife's Presbyterian church.

SACHA
I go to church with my grandmother sometimes, but that's about it.

ROBBY
Eh, I think we were all raised Catholic but now...

MIKE
Not so much.

SAVIANO
OK. Good to know. I was a cradle Catholic and you gotta remember back then when a parish priest pays attention to you it's a big deal. It's like God asking for help. So one day, when he asks you to jerk him off, you do it.

The group blinks.

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
You see, it's physical abuse but even worse, it's spiritual abuse. A priest does this to you, he robs you of your faith.
(MORE)

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
And you're so damn ashamed, you're not gonna talk about it. You think you're the only one. So you reach for the bottle or the needle and if those don't kill you, you jump off a freakin' bridge. That's why we call ourselves survivors.

The team stares, gobsmacked.

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
But you get the word out on this, let people know how big this is and they'll know they're not alone! You'll be saving lives. No shit.
(then)
You read Jason Berry's book?

ROBBY
Who?

SAVIANO
Jason Berry, he wrote a book about the Gauthe case in Louisiana?

ROBBY
We're not familiar.

SACHA
That's G-U...

SAVIANO (CONT'D)
G-A-U-T-H-E. It was the first big case, back in 1985, you should start there. And talk to Richard Sipe, he's been studying this for years.

MIKE
Who's that?

SAVIANO
Sipe? He was a priest, he used to work in one of the big 'treatment' centers in Baltimore, before he left the priesthood. He married a nun, it's pretty typical, actually.

SACHA
Uh, Phil, what's a treatment center?

SAVIANO
It's where they send priests when they get caught. For 'treatment.' It's all in the packet I have for you guys. By the way, I sent the Globe a lot of this before.

MIKE
You did?

Robby clocks this.

SAVIANO
Yeah, four, five years ago, but I never heard nothing. I was shocked I mean, like I said, this is big. It's not just Boston, it's the whole country. And it goes right up to the Vatican. How else could they have hidden it for so long? I mean, there's a ton of these guys.

MIKE
A ton of priests, Phil?

SAVIANO
Oh yeah. I know of eight right here in Boston.

Robby and Mike share a look. Is this guy nuts?

ROBBY
You know of eight priests who have molested children in Boston?

SAVIANO
Yes. It's in the packet, it's all in the packet... Let's see here...

Phil pulls a CLUTTER OF PAPERS out of a packet, starts fishing through them. The team watches him, uneasy. Is Phil a mad prophet or simply mad? Off the team, UNSURE --

**INT. FENWAY PARK - NIGHT**

Robby and Mike hurry down the stairs and make their way along the seats to join Ben and Steve Kurkjian.

KURKJIAN
'Bout time. It's the third inning for Christ sake.

BEN
Where the hell you been?

ROBBY
Interview. I think we finally got something solid.

BEN
What?

Robby looks at Kurkjian. Ben follows his gaze.

KURKJIAN
It stays here. Carry on.

ROBBY
A guy named Phil Saviano, he's a part of some organization called...

Steve snorts.

KURKJIAN
Oh Lord...

MIKE
What? You know him?

BEN
Yeah, we know Phil.

KURKJIAN
He's pretty banged up. I think he's got AIDS.

BEN
He's not a reliable source.

KURKJIAN
He must have sent me a hundred letters after Porter. We ran a story on him and he still wouldn't stop.

ROBBY
He said some pretty interesting things today.

KURKJIAN
I'm sure he did. Phil wants jihad. Boy, does that guy hate the church.

BEN
He's too emotional, he's not gonna advance your story.

MIKE
He's got a list of priests.

BEN
What? A few priests in Worcester?

ROBBY
They're not just in Worcester.

BEN
So he says. We been down that road, trust me, it's all dead ends with that guy.
(then)
How's it going with Garabedian?

MIKE
I'm working on him.

BEN
So he's not talking yet?

MIKE
No, not yet.

KURKJIAN
Hey guys, can we not talk shop the whole game?

BEN
Doesn't sound like we have much to talk about anyway.

**EXT. FENWAY PARK - LATER**

Mike and Robby walk through the crowd, silent. They slip down an alley, find a THICK GUY watching a couple of CARS.

THICK GUY
Night, Robby.

Robby slips him a ten. He and Mike get into --

**INT. MIKE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS**

They get in. Mike sits behind the wheel for a beat, stews.

ROBBY
You gotta put the key in the ignition, Mike.

MIKE
Saviano's our best lead.

ROBBY
Unless he's a nut job.

MIKE
Kurkjian seemed pretty sure about that.

ROBBY
Maybe Kurkjian missed it.

MIKE
Kurkjian broke freakin' Chappaquiddick, he doesn't miss much.

ROBBY
Yeah.
(thinking)
You try following up with the ex-priest Saviano mentioned?

MIKE
I did. Wrong number.

Robby looks at him. That's not good. Mike pounds the wheel.

MIKE (CONT'D)
If he's a nut job, I'm gonna kill him.

ROBBY
Just keep working Garabedian, Sacha and I will push on Saviano.

Mike starts the car, shaking his head.

MIKE
Garabedian's a pain in the ass.

ROBBY
You can be a pain in the ass, Michael.

Off Mike's look --

**EXT. STATE STREET, BOSTON - DAY**

Garabedian walks down State Street. Mike falls in with him.

MIKE
Mitch, what a surprise. How are you?

GARABEDIAN
I'm fine, Mr. Rezendes.

The light changes and Garabedian walks. Mike tags along.

MIKE
I never heard back from you.

GARABEDIAN
I've been very busy.

MIKE
Jeez, I'm sure you are. Look, Mitch, lemme talk to one of your victims... You can sit there, if you're not happy you can kill the interview.

GARABEDIAN
I spoke to my clients, they don't want to be in the press.

Garabedian walks into --

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S BUILDING, LOBBY - CONTINUOUS**

A shitty lobby, Mike follows Mitch in, continues --

MIKE
I don't need names, Mitch.

GARABEDIAN
Whaddya mean, you don't need names?

Mitch walks to the elevator, presses the button.

MIKE
We're not writing a profile here. We're working on something bigger.

The elevator opens. Mitch walks on. Mike follows him into --

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S BUIDLING, ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS**

The doors close. It's cramped, but Mike keeps going.

MIKE
Look Mitch, I'm not supposed to tell you this, but we're considering it for a Spotlight piece. That's a four part series, front page of the Globe.
(then)
I know a lot of people don't believe in what you're doing. I'm gonna be honest, Mitch, some of my own colleagues think we're wasting our time. But I think you're one of the good guys. That's why I'm here, that's why I'm talking to you.

Mitch studies him.

MITCH
Spotlight's on this?

MIKE
Yeah, Mitch. Between us, that's right. Just give me a shot here.

GARABEDIAN
(beat, then)
Come back on Thursday. 9:30am.

Doors open. Garabedian walks out. Mike smiles. Got him.

**EXT. FANEUIL HALL - DAY**

Robby and Sacha sit at an outdoor table with Saviano. Saviano tucks into a sandwich.

SAVIANO
You think I made this shit up?

ROBBY
That's not what I said, Phil.

SAVIANO
So why do you need to verify anything? Who talked to you?

ROBBY
No one talked to us.

SAVIANO
They got lots of people to drag my name through the mud. Whispers, smears, lies, that's how they do it.

SACHA
If we could just speak with someone else in your group.

SAVIANO
This stuff isn't exactly easy to talk about. Most of these guys have never told anyone, let alone a reporter from the Boston Globe.

ROBBY
Sacha's a pretty good listener.

SAVIANO
And nobody wants to go through that if it's just gonna be a big yank. I mean, I gave you all this before and no one did nothing.

ROBBY
You didn't give it to me before. And we've got a new editor now, he's never worked at the Globe, he's very serious about this. We all are.
(then)
Phil, if there's a story here, I promise you, I'm gonna tell it.

Off Phil, considering...

**INT. CAFE FRANCESCA - DAY**

A small, bohemian cafe, mostly men. JOE CROWLEY, 42, heavy, boyish face, sits alone WATCHING the door. NERVOUS as shit.

The door opens. Sacha walks in, pauses, looking around...

JOE CROWLEY
Ms. Pfeiffer?

SACHA
Joe?

JOE CROWLEY
Yeah. That's me. Uh, hi.

He stands, almost knocking over his glass of soda.

JOE CROWLEY (CONT'D)
Shoot. Uh...Please sit. Is this table okay?

SACHA
Sure. I hope I'm not late, Phil told me two.

JOE CROWLEY
Yeah, I got here early. About an hour. And a half.

He laughs nervously as Sacha sits.

PATRICK MCSORLEY (PRELAP)
You're not gonna use my name, right?

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE, CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME**

Mike and Garabedian sit with 25 year old PATRICK MCSORLEY. McSorley is good looking but ragged. Not nervous like Joe. Instead, he's got a high pitched voice and an ADDICT'S ITCH.

MIKE
Not if you don't want me to.

GARABEDIAN
And you can stop this interview any time you want, Patrick.

PATRICK MCSORLEY
Uh, okay. So where do you want me to start?

MIKE
Where did you live when it happened?

PATRICK MCSORLEY
In the projects, over in Hyde Park.

MIKE
Across from the Stop & Shop?

PATRICK MCSORLEY
Yeah, right, that's it. Anyways, I was twelve and, see, my dad, he committed suicide.

MIKE
Jeez.

PATRICK MCSORLEY
Yeah, right? I mean, my old man was a real asshole, but still. And my mom, you know, she wasn't exactly stable to begin with.

GARABEDIAN
She was schizophrenic.

Patrick nervously itches at his arm as we PRELAP --

JOE CROWLEY (PRELAP)
...my mother was a mess, my older sister's schizophrenic...

**INT. CAFE FRANCESCA - DAY**

Joe talks very fast. He takes a big gulp of water.

JOE CROWLEY
...and I was in elementary school at St. Ambrose...

SACHA
In Dorchester?

JOE CROWLEY
Yeah, and there was this nun, Sister Barbara, she had this group for kids from troubled families, she worked with this street priest, Paul Shanley. Sister Barbara knew about my family issues, she sent me to the group, to Shanley -- he was the one who raped me.

Joe stops as the WAITER arrives with lunch. Bad timing.

WAITER
Uhm... who had the roast beef?

JOE CROWLEY
Do you mind if we get it to go?

Off Sacha, nodding --

PATRICK MCSORLEY (PRELAP)
Priests, they were next to God...

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE, CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME TIME**

Mike sits with McSorley and Garabedian.

PATRICK MCSORLEY
And my sister, when she saw Geoghan in the Dunkin' Donuts, she told him about my old man killing himself and, well, he rushed right over.

Patrick itches at his arm again.

PATRICK MCSORLEY (CONT'D)
He offered to take me to get ice cream. And he's a priest and I like ice cream, I mean, what kid doesn't?

Patrick is struggling a bit.

PATRICK MCSORLEY (CONT'D)
Then, you know, we're riding home... and then he starts patting my leg. He's driving and he's patting my leg and then... and then...his hand slides up towards my crotch. And he, uh, he...put his hand on my dick.
(He catches his breath)
I froze up. I didn't know what to think. I was fucking petrified.

McSorley stares down at his hands. Quiet. Trembling.

PATRICK MCSORLEY (CONT'D)
I never even touched my freakin' ice cream, it melted down my arm.

He itches his arm. This time, Mike notes the HEROIN TRACKS.

JOE CROWLEY (PRELAP)
Shanley lived on Beacon Street.

**EXT. RINGGOLD PARK - DAY**

Crowley and Sacha sit on a secluded bench, sandwiches on their laps. Crowley's a little less nervous.

JOE CROWLEY
I'd never seen an apartment in Back Bay, I was from Dorchester. So I get there and I'm nervous and Shanley opens the door. And he says "What's the matter, didn't you expect me to be so handsome?"

Sacha takes this in.

JOE CROWLEY (CONT'D)
The weirdest thing was he had one of these mobiles, like over a baby's crib, but on it were different words. Homosexual, transsexual, Bi-sexual. He made it seem so normal.

Joe takes a breath.

SACHA
You hadn't had sex before?

JOE CROWLEY
No. And being gay just made it more confusing. To be introduced to sex like that and then to be attracted to men...

He shrugs.

SACHA
Did you ever try to tell anyone?

JOE CROWLEY
I kept it to myself for a long time. I thought I was the only one. But it wouldn't have made a difference. When I was fifteen my mother found my journal.
(MORE)

JOE CROWLEY (CONT'D)
I'd written all about what happened and, well, she called Cardinal Medeiros.
(then)
He didn't move Shanley for another five years.

SACHA
Your mother didn't try to hire a lawyer?

JOE CROWLEY
Against the church? Oh my God, never. I actually went to a lawyer a few years ago. He told me he could get me a small settlement but it didn't seem worth it.

SACHA
Who was the lawyer?

JOE CROWLEY
Oh...I forget his name but he repped the Porter victims. Very macho guy.

SACHA
Eric MacLeish?

JOE CROWLEY
Yeah, that's it. You know him? He's very macho, right?

Sacha nods, her mind racing...

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - NIGHT**

Mike and Sacha download Robby.

SACHA
I called Saviano after talking with Joe, he said MacLeish settled cases with a bunch of priests.

MIKE
MacLeish didn't mention that when you guys talked to him.

ROBBY
No.

SACHA
I'm gonna check it out at the courthouse tomorrow.

MIKE
If Crowley's story is real then Shanley is our fourth priest.

ROBBY
Yeah. And Phil's lining up other victims for Sacha to talk to.

This lands. Sacha and Mike are both floored and troubled.

SACHA
I gotta say, it's brutal listening to them relive this. It's so raw for Joe even now, he seemed so fragile, lost.

MIKE
McSorley too. It's like Saviano said, the church is such a big part of their life. They got nowhere to turn.

SACHA
It's gotta be devastating.

They sit there, a bit devastated themselves.

ROBBY
Okay. Everybody go home. We'll hit it again tomorrow.

**INT. CRAPPY DINER, EAST BOSTON - NIGHT**

Mike sits alone in a crappy dinner, sips a beer. He stares off, bleary-eyed, ragged. A beat, then --

WOMAN
Mike.

Mike looks up. Blinks up at MARGARET, pretty, 30s.

MIKE
Hey. Thanks for coming.

Mike stands, gives her a peck.

MARGARET
You could've come to the house.

MIKE
Yeah, I know. I just didn't want it to be weird.

And now it is. They sit. An awkward beat.

MIKE (CONT'D)
You look good.

MARGARET
You look like shit. You sleeping?

MIKE
Not a lot.

MARGARET
How's the story coming?

MIKE
It's coming. Yeah... it's coming.
(changing the subject)
How about you?

MARGARET
I started working on this piece on the Boston Parks commission.

MIKE
Oh yeah, what's going on?

MARGARET
They're being pressed by the city on some zoning issues, the commissioner is digging his heels in.

The conversation is easy, this is where these two connect.

MIKE
Sounds cool. I've got a guy in City Hall who might be able to help.

Mike's phone lights up on the table. He checks the number.

MARGARET
That'd be good. Yeah, I've been talking to someone but I...

She trails off. He's clearly stopped listening.

MIKE
I'm sorry. 858, is that California?

Margaret knows this drill, she doesn't like it.

MARGARET
Yeah, I think it is.

Mike stares at the phone. Shit.

MARGARET (CONT'D)
Go ahead.

MIKE
Nah, it's okay.

It's obviously not okay.

MARGARET
Mike. Just answer it.

MIKE
It's just, I've been trying to reach...
(picking up)
Mike Rezendes.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
Mr. Rezendes? This is Richard Sipe. I hope I'm not calling too late?

Mike reacts. Fuck.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
No, no... Can you hold on Richard?
(cups phone, to Margaret)
I'm sorry, hon, I gotta, can you just give me two minutes?

Margaret looks at him. This is where these two don't connect.

MARGARET
Sure, Mike.

MIKE
Thanks. Thanks, Mags.

Mike pulls out his pad.

MIKE (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Yeah, sorry, Richard. Phil Saviano gave me your name, I was wondering if I could ask you a few questions.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
Of course.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Great. You started studying the issue of clergy sex abuse in Baltimore when you worked at one of the church's treatment centers...
(off the pad)
...the Seton Psychiatric Institute?

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
Yes, that's right. I was hired in 1967, just after my psychotherapy fellowship. Of course, it soon became clear that the problem wasn't just a few bad apples. This was a recognizable psychiatric phenomenon.

Mike starts scribbling, sucked back in, so engrossed that he doesn't even notice as Margaret GETS UP and LEAVES...

**INT. GLOBE, HALLWAY - LATER**

Robby and Mike walk down the hall. Mike debriefs him, a little manic, not unaffected by what he's picked up.

MIKE
They all target the same kinda kid. Low income family, absentee father, starved for attention. And get this, guys like Geoghan target boys because boys are more ashamed...

ROBBY
And less likely to talk.

MIKE
Exactly. These priests are predators, Robby. Sipe says he saw dozens of them at Seton in the 60s.

ROBBY
Why hasn't he gone public?

MIKE
He has. But the church made a huge effort to discredit him. Smear campaigns, public statements by prominent bishops, they've done everything but defrock him.

ROBBY
Sounds familiar.

MIKE
It's just like their stance on Garabedian.

ROBBY
And Saviano, if we believe him.

MIKE
Sipe backed up everything Saviano told us, he feels legit to me.

They push though the door and walk into --

**INT. GLOBE, BASEMENT - CONTINUOUS**

A dank basement, low fluorescents and rows of old books on cheap tin bookshelves. Robby and Mike react to the smell.

MIKE
Jeez, what the hell is that smell?

MATTY
There's a dead rat in the corner.

Mike and Robby find Matty standing over a HUGE STACK OF BOOKS he's pulled from a shelf. He thumbs through one of them.

MATTY (CONT'D)
It's a glamorous job.

Mike shakes his head. Robby reaches for one of the books.

ROBBY
These are the Directories?

MATTY
Yeah.
(to Mike)
The Archdiocese puts them out every year. It's every priest in Boston.

ROBBY
Matty thought they'd help us track down the priests Saviano mentioned.

MIKE
These are official?

MATTY
Yeah.

Mike grabs a directory. Robby flips through, SQUINTING.

ROBBY
Can we turn on some more lights?

MATTY
I couldn't find the switch, you want my glasses?

MIKE
Is this what they mean when they say we're a dying breed?

ROBBY
Just you wait...

MIKE
(smiles, flips through)
1973, Geoghan... St. Paul's in Hingham. So we can see where any priest was in any given year.

MATTY
(flips through another)
Exactly. I got him here at... huh.

ROBBY
What?

MATTY
1980, the year he was pulled from JP. It says he's on sick leave.

Mike looks over his shoulder.

MIKE
It actually says sick leave? They kept a record of that?

MATTY
Guess so.

Robby starts rifling through the directories.

ROBBY
Where's '91?

Robby finds the 1991 Directory and opens it. He searches...

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Burns... Burns... Robert Burns..

Robby stops.

MIKE
Sick leave?

ROBBY
The year he was pulled out of Charlestown.

He shows Mike. We see the designation. SICK LEAVE.

MATTY
It's an official designation.

They stare at each other, INCREDULOUS. Suddenly, ALL THE LIGHTS IN THE ROOM flash on. They react, a bit SPOOKED.

KURKJIAN
What's this, a poker game?

Kurkjian walks in. They stare at him, cat with the canary.

ROBBY
Hey, Steve. You need something?

Kurkjian gives the three of them a look. Gets it.

KURKJIAN
Nope. Carry on, gentlemen.

Steve heads down an aisle. Robby turns to Matty and Mike.

ROBBY
Let's get these upstairs.

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - LATER**

Robby, Mike and Matty sit around with the directories.

ROBBY
How about Shanley?

MATTY
He's one of Saviano's?

MIKE
Yeah. The victim Sacha spoke to said he was moved in '79.

Matty grabs 1979, flips through. Pauses, reacts.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Sick leave?

MATTY
No. "Emergency response."

ROBBY
They got a name for everything, these guys.

MIKE
Except rape.

Robby's office phone rings, he moves for it.

ROBBY
Matty, I want you to track all the priests Saviano gave us. If it's like this for all of them...

MATTY
Yeah, I got it.

**INT. GLOBE, ROBBY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Robby walks in, grabs the phone.

ROBBY (INTO THE PHONE)
It's Robby.

**INT. SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE, RECORDS ROOM - DAY**

Sacha makes notes on a pad, a couple of files to one side.

SACHA (INTO THE PHONE)
Hey, I'm at the courthouse.

**INTERCUT THE TWO SCENES**

SACHA (CONT'D)
We gotta talk to MacLeish again. Something doesn't sync. Hold on.

In the records room, a COURT CLERK comes over.

COURT CLERK
That's it, Sacha. Those are the only docket numbers for MacLeish.

ROBBY (INTO THE PHONE)
Sacha?

Sacha frowns, looks down at her pad. And repeats herself.

SACHA (INTO THE PHONE)
Yeah, we definitely gotta talk to MacLeish again.

**INT. GLOBE, MARTY'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Marty sits at his computer. Working. He hears a knock, turns and is somewhat surprised to find Gilman there.

GILMAN
Hey Marty, sorry to barge in, do you have a minute?

Marty looks put off, but he gestures to a chair.

MARTY
Certainly.

GILMAN
(sitting)
I heard Spotlight's officially on the church story?

MARTY
That's right.

GILMAN
Look, Marty, circulation is the one bright spot in our P&L. That lawsuit alone could alienate half our subscribers. We need to proceed with caution. And maybe make a bit of an effort on the PR front.

MARTY
Is that why I was invited to the Catholic Charities Gala?

GILMAN
It's a good cause. And yes, showing your face it might help send... the right message.

Marty eyes him, reaches for a piece of paper. He reads --

MARTY
"We should dwell on the virtues of men and institutions rather than upon their faults and limitations."

GILMAN
What the hell is that?

MARTY
A quote from Charles Taylor. It's on a plaque in the lobby. I wrote it down when I read it because I found it anathema to what this paper should stand for.

GILMAN
The Taylors don't own the paper anymore. The New York Times does.

MARTY
Good to know.
(then)
By the way, how did you hear Spotlight was on the Church story?

GILMAN
Actually, a board member mentioned it to me.

MARTY
And uh, how'd the board member know?

GILMAN
Welcome to Boston, Marty. Enjoy the gala.

**INT. GREENBERG TRAURIG CONF ROOM, ONE INTL PLACE - MORNING**

Robby and Sacha have been waiting for a while. A beat and finally, MacLeish rolls in.

ERIC MACLEISH
Sorry, I got stuck in a deposition.

ROBBY
No problem. Thanks for seeing us again.

ERIC MACLEISH
Something else I can help you with?

SACHA
Mr. MacLeish, are you familiar with a priest named Paul Shanley?

MacLeish looks at her.

ERIC MACLEISH
Yeah. I am.

SACHA
You've settled cases against Father Shanley?

ERIC MACLEISH
I can't discuss that with you.

ROBBY
What about Father Ronald Paquin? Father Daniel Mahan?

SACHA
We understand you've settled several cases against each of them.

ERIC MACLEISH
The settlements were confidential, I could be disbarred for even acknowledging their existence.

Robby just looks at him. That's a yes.

ERIC MACLEISH (CONT'D)
Look, I told you last time, this is what was best for my clients.
(and then)
The church promised to take the priests out of circulation.

SACHA
Why aren't there any records?

MacLeish blinks. Another moment of hesitation here...

SACHA (CONT'D)
I was just down at the courthouse, why aren't there any records of these settlements?

MacLeish pauses. Then --

ERIC MACLEISH
We dealt directly with the church. We'd write up a demand letter and we'd send it to the chancery.

SACHA
You never filed anything in court?

ERIC MACLEISH
It was a private mediation.

So that's a no. Jesus. Sacha and Robby react.

ROBBY
Church pay a premium for that service?

ERIC MACLEISH
(unashamed)
They paid the going rate.

SACHA
And this is just you and the archdiocese's lawyers in a room?

ERIC MACLEISH
Priest always had a lawyer, too. There were one or two defense attorneys the church liked.

ROBBY
You remember their names?

ERIC MACLEISH
(stonewalling him)
No. No I don't.

**INT. GLOBE, MARTY'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Marty and Ben sit with the whole gang.

MARTY
So uh, this was all under the table?

SACHA
There's no paper trail at all. The victim has to sign a confidentiality agreement to get the settlement.

MIKE
Lawyer takes his third, the church washes its hands and the victim gets screwed all over again. Shitbirds are running a freakin' racket.

BEN
MacLeish isn't wrong, they have a duty to their clients.

MIKE
Maybe at first but how many victims do you represent...

SACHA
And profit from.

MIKE
And profit from before you say "Something bigger and badder is happening here and I'm the only one who has all the information."

Robby frowns, chewing on something.

BEN
Well, ethically it is a bit more complicated...

MIKE
Not for Garabedian.

MATTY
So he's not a crank?

MIKE
Oh, I didn't say that.

BEN
But MacLeish confirmed all of Saviano's priests.

ROBBY
Yeah. Between MacLeish and Sipe, we think Saviano's solid, Ben.
(to Marty)
Which means we're looking at seven or eight priests, maybe all of them with some kind of cover up. If we can nail even five of 'em...

MARTY
Sounds like you got something. Keep me up to date. Thanks everybody.

They all start to get up and leave.

BEN
Do you know who the lawyer is that represented the priests?

SACHA
No. MacLeish didn't give us a name.

Robby holds his tongue. Mike and Sacha trade a look.

**INT. ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM - NIGHT**

A swank Gala in full swing. Robby walks along the edge of the party. Looking for someone. A beat, then he spots...

Tim O'Neill. Glad-handing some suits. Robby watches him, pensive, considers approaching him when...

MARTY
Robby.

Robby turns. There's Marty. A little less rumpled. Holding a glass of wine and hiding out beside a pillar.

ROBBY
Marty. Wouldn't think this would be your thing.

MARTY
It's not, that's why I'm standing over here.
(then)
Dick asked me to come.

ROBBY
(smiles)
Did he now?

MARTY
And you?

ROBBY
My friend Ray Flanagan sits on the board. We went to BC High together.

MARTY
That's the school across the street from the Globe?

ROBBY
My alma mater. Fancy crowd, huh?

Robby nods to Cardinal Law in the crowd. A PRETTY BLONDE, 29, and a GOOD LOOKING YOUNG MAN, 40s, trail behind.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
The woman is Donna Morrissey. New spokeswoman for the Archdiocese. The guy behind her is Jack Dunn, does PR work for BC, Catholic Charities, the Archdiocese...

Law makes a beeline for PETER CONLEY, a large, very wealthy looking man. Law reaches out, warmly shakes Conley's hand.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
And the handshake is Pete Conley. Self made Prince of the city, sits on a dozen different boards, a real Irish swell.

They watch for a moment. Then --

ROBBY (CONT'D)
How was your sit down, by the way?

MARTY
Uh, he gave me a copy of The Catechism.

Robby raises an eyebrow.

ROBBY
If it makes you feel any better, he called down the wrath of God on us when we were investigating Porter.

MARTY
Uh, really? How did that play out?

ROBBY
A week later our editor broke his leg skiing.

Marty blinks.

MARTY
Good to know.

Robby smiles as a WAITER comes by with a tray.

WAITER
Shrimp toast?

The men inspect it... then each take one.

**INT. ARMENIAN DINER - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON a greasy TUNA MELT. HANDS reach for it... REVEAL Garabedian and Mike having dinner. Mike's going over notes.

MIKE
So Peter Canshun filed a criminal complaint before he came to you?

GARABEDIAN
Yeah, but Geoghan got probation and the judge sealed the case records after friends of the church stepped in. The Church has a lot of friends.

MIKE
Like Eric MacLeish?

Garabedian sees he understands. Garabedian's impressed.

GARABEDIAN
Exactly. He's a big part of the problem. Off the record.

MIKE
Of course.

Garabedian pops a french fry in his mouth.

GARABEDIAN
You work hard, Mr. Rezendes. I can see that. Do you have kids?

MIKE
No.

GARABEDIAN
And your wife doesn't mind you working all the time?

Mike bristles at the personal questions, covers.

MIKE
Yeah, she does.

GARABEDIAN
See. That's why I never got married. I'm too busy, what I do is too important.

MIKE
Well, that's why I'm here.

Garabedian senses Mike is working him. He darkens.

GARABEDIAN
Where were you five years ago? How about ten?
(then)
Your new Editor, he's a Jew right?

MIKE
Uh, that's right.

GARABEDIAN
He comes in, suddenly everybody is interested in the Church. You know why? Because it takes an outsider. Like me. I'm Armenian. How many Armenians do you know?

MIKE
Steve Kurkjian, works at the Globe.

GARABEDIAN
That's two! You should get a prize or something. What are you, Italian?

MIKE
Portuguese.

GARABEDIAN
From where?

MIKE
East Boston.

GARABEDIAN
You don't sound like it.

Mike doesn't say anything. Garabedian shakes his head.

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
This city, Yankees, Irish, making the rest of us feel like we don't belong. They're no better than us. Look how they treat their children.
(wiping his mouth)
Mark my words, Mr. Rezendes, if it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a village to abuse one.

Garabedian eats. Mike ponders. Oddly moved.

**INT. ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM - NIGHT**

Tim O'Neill stands by the bar. Talking to a YOUNG COUPLE.

TIM
Please tell your father that I said hello and that I expect to see him next weekend. No excuses.

The couple smiles, the man shaking Tim's hand. As they exit, Robby sidles up next to Tim, calls to the Bartender.

ROBBY
Two Macallans. Neat.

TIM
Gotta score on the game?

ROBBY
Sox lost 4-1.

TIM
Why do I even ask?

The bartender sets down two glasses. Robby hands one to Tim.

TIM (CONT'D)
Slainte.

They clink and drink.

TIM (CONT'D)
You see Ray yet?

ROBBY
I did. Divorce becomes him.

Tim smiles.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
I had an interesting conversation with Eric MacLeish yesterday. Turns out he's been settling abuse cases with the Archdiocese for years. No records, just Eric and the Archdiocese's lawyer, Wilson Rodgers, with cash and a handshake.

TIM
Okay.

ROBBY
But there was always another lawyer at the table. A defense lawyer for the priest. I know you said you repped Burns as a favor, I'm assuming that was a one off?

Tim doesn't say anything. Robby reads him... and if he had a hunch Tim was the guy, it's now confirmed. Robby DARKENS.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
How many priests have you represented, Timmy?

TIM
You know I can't answer that, Robby. It's unethical.

ROBBY
Is that all it is?

Tim stares Robby down. He drinks.

TIM
So this is the Robby Robinson I've always heard about but never met.

ROBBY
Listen to me, Timmy. You want to be on the right side of this.

TIM
Maybe I am.

BOSTON MUCK (O.C.)
Tim.

A thick BOSTON MUCK joins, reaches for Tim's hand.

TIM
John, good to see you.

Tim turns to the muck. Robby's left nursing his drink...

**INT. ROBBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Robby slips in the door, walks over to the bar. Pours himself another strong drink. Barbara walks in.

BARBARA
That good, huh?

Robby glances over. He looks haggard.

ROBBY
I hate those things.

BARBARA
Never bothered you before.

ROBBY
(sharp)
Well they do now.

Barbara watches Robby collapse into his chair.

BARBARA
You talk to Tim?

ROBBY
Yeah. I did.

BARBARA
And?

He just looks at her. A little lost. As he takes a big swallow of his drink, PRELAP --

SACHA (PRELAP)
"Sick leave, 'absent on leave,'
'unassigned,' 'emergency response.'

**INT. GLOBE, ROBBY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Matty and Sacha download Robby in his office. Through the glass, we see Mike working at his computer in Spotlight.

SACHA
The directories use those terms interchangeably.

ROBBY
For all of Saviano's priests?

MATTY
Yeah. And Mike was right, these guys switch parishes more frequently than other priests. I mean, when I was a kid, the church would move a priest after seven or eight years but these guys are never at a parish longer than two or three.

SACHA
It's the same for Geoghan, Burns and Saviano's priests. It's a pretty clear pattern.

As Robby considers this, Mike pops in --

MIKE
Guys, I've got Sipe.

They get up, walk into --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

The team gathers round as Mike reaches for his phone.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Richard, I'm gonna put you on speaker so my colleagues can hear.

Mike hits a button and places the receiver in the cradle.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Richard. Go ahead.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Hello, everyone. Nice to meet you.

ROBBY
Nice to meet you, Richard. This is Robby. I know you've talked with Mike but we're still trying to get our arms around all of this.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Yes, I've been studying the issue for thirty years and I could say the same. But I think if you want to understand the crisis, you need to start with the celibacy requirement. After all, that was my first major finding -- only 50% of the clergy are actually practicing celibacy.

The team share a look. Can that be true?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE) (CONT'D)
Now, most of them are having sex with other adults. But this creates a culture of secrecy, a system that tolerates, even protects pedophiles.

SACHA
So you believe the church is aware of the extent of this 'crisis.'

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Absolutely. Tom Doyle, the Secretary Canonist for the Papal Nuncio penned a report in '85. He warned pedophile priests were a billion dollar liability.

ROBBY
Who saw this document? Anyone in the Catholic hierarchy?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Doyle tried to introduce the report at the National Council of Catholic Bishops. In fact, your Cardinal Law was an early fan but he withdrew his support at the last minute and they shelved it.

MIKE
So Richard, how big is this problem?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
My estimates suggest six percent act out sexually with minors.

ROBBY
Six percent? Six percent of what?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Six percent of all priests.

Holy shit. Robby turns to the team.

ROBBY
How many priests are in Boston?

MATTY
About fifteen hundred.

ROBBY
What's six percent of fifteen...

Sacha already has her calculator out.

SACHA
Ninety.

ROBBY
Ninety?

MATTY
Is that possible?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
From a metric standpoint, that would be in line with my findings.

Robby considers, his gaze falling on the directories.

ROBBY
Richard, could we call you back?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
No problem.

ROBBY
(hanging up)
Matty... the directories... could we work backwards?

MATTY
Backwards? What do you mean?

ROBBY
You've been looking up questionable priests, using the directories to verify that they might have been bad news. What if we do it the other way around?

MIKE
(following)
Use patterns in the directories to identify bad priests?

SACHA
Sure. We'd search for sick leave, for priests that we're moved from parish to parish frequently...

MATTY
It'd take a load of time.

ROBBY
How long?

MATTY
On my own? Three weeks.

ROBBY
Okay. We're all on this. I want it done in one, we start now.

The team immediately digs in and we **CUT TO** --

**CLOSE ON** a ruler across a directory. We see the name of a priest, his parish and a designation: Unassigned. **CUT TO --**

**CLOSE ON** an excel spreadsheet. The priest's name in one column, the designation in a second, a date in a third...

**PULL BACK** to find Matty hunched over the computer, Mike and Sacha on either side. It's dark. Sacha's phone rings.

SACHA (INTO PHONE)
Hello? Hi hon. God, what time is it?

She looks up. They all do. And notice day has become night.

MIKE
My head's gonna explode.

MATTY
Freakin' tedious, huh?

SACHA (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Yeah, I'm leaving now.

Sacha hangs up, starts packing her things.

ROBBY
Take one for the road.

SACHA
(grabs a directory, exits)
Thanks. Bye guys.

MIKE
This week is gonna suck.

ROBBY
Oh yeah.

As they get back to work, we **CUT TO** --

**CLOSE ON** a hand turning a page, a finger picking out a name... FATHER MAHAN... SICK LEAVE...

**INT. SACHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

**REVEAL** Sacha at HER KITCHEN TABLE entering a name in an excel sheet on her laptop. As Hans kisses her good night, CUT TO --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

**CLOSE ON** the excel sheet, now longer. Another name, Paquin, is typed in and we...

**REVEAL** Mike inputting data. Matty and Sacha stand, hanging a list of problematic priests and parishes on the wall. CUT TO--

**INT. ROBBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

**CLOSE ON** a directory, a scotch glass on the open page. **PULL BACK** to find Robby in his DEN, reaching for the scotch, LOST.

Barbara walks past, sees him staring off, considers going to him, thinks better of it. Off Barbara, worried, we CUT TO --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - NIGHT**

**CLOSE ON** the excel spreadsheet. Much bigger. But in the priest column we see an odd name... FFFFFFFFFFaer.

**REVEAL** Mike, head on laptop. He snaps awake, grabs coffee.

**INT. MATTY CARROLL'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

**CLOSE ON** a directory, a ruler paused and a finger pointing to an address. The finger taps the address and we --

**REVEAL** Matty, at his KITCHEN TABLE, staring at the it. He blinks, PALE, then scribbles on a pad and leaves the house.

**EXT. MATTY CARROLL'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS**

Matty heads across the lawn and down the sidewalk. He rounds the corner, picking up his pace, checking house numbers.

Finally he stops at A CLASSIC, TWO STORY VICTORIAN HOUSE.

MATTY
No way. No fucking way.

He looks around. As we wonder what he's discovered, we --

**INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

Mike eats pizza from a Santarpio's box and drinks a beer in his shitty little studio. He talks to Sipe on speakerphone.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
...again, it's a sexually active system. Everyone has a double life, so when they find a pedophile in their midst, he's just another priest with a secret.
(MORE)

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE) (CONT'D)
They all have an interest in covering for one another.

MIKE
Jeez.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Yeah. You spend too much time on this, you'll start drinking.

MIKE
I'm ahead of you on that.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
(chuckles)
Good. Mike, I'm curious, do you ever go to mass?

MIKE
I mean, I went as a kid, I kinda liked it, actually. But I used to fight with my old man all the time about the church. He was a bit rigid.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
I've heard that before.

MIKE
Our last big fight before I moved out was about the infallibility of the Pope. I was fifteen.

Mike goes to the fridge, pulls out another beer.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Probably why I became a reporter.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
If you can't prove it, it's not true?

MIKE
Something like that.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
So not big on faith.

MIKE
Not big on my old man, that's for sure.

We hear Sipe laugh over the phone.

MIKE (CONT'D)
What about you? Do you still go to mass?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
No. I still consider myself a Catholic, but I'm no longer a friend of the institution. There's a line you don't cross in the church.

MIKE
That's why they've gone after you?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
They will go to great lengths to maintain the system, to silence anyone trying to shine a light on the problem. I imagine that includes you and your colleagues at the...

Suddenly, he hears a KNOCK on the door. Mike jumps, not expecting a late night visitor.

MIKE
Um, Richard, can I call you back?

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
Any time, Mike.

Mike gets up, approaches the door. A bit tense.

MIKE
Who is it?

ROBBY (O.C.)
The Archbishop of Canterbury.

Mike relaxes, opens the door. Robby walks in with a bottle.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Am I interrupting?

MIKE
I was on the phone with Sipe. How'd you find me?

ROBBY
I know a guy. How about a breather?

Robby holds out the bottle. JAMESON'S.

MIKE
A breather sounds good.

Mike grabs two glasses, checks to make sure they're clean.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Want some pizza? Santarpio's.

ROBBY
You ever get tired of that place?

MIKE
You ever get tired of Fenway?

Robby smiles. Touché. He starts to open the JAMESON'S.

ROBBY
So this the new clubhouse?

MIKE
Something like that.

ROBBY
How's Margaret doing?

MIKE
I don't know, really. I've been kinda tied up with this.

ROBBY
You know, a good dinner can save a marriage.

MIKE
Yeah, tried that, didn't go so well.

Mike pours to drinks. Hands one to Robby.

ROBBY
Sometimes you gotta put your life first, Mike.

MIKE
That why you're here drinking with me?

ROBBY
Barbara said that if I kept talking about this story she was gonna throw me outta the house.

They clink and drink.

MIKE
So you want to call Sipe back now?

ROBBY
Yeah. You got a speaker phone on that thing?

MIKE
Sure do.

Mike dials. Robby reaches over and grabs a piece of pizza.

ROBBY
What the hell...

**INT. MATTY CARROLL'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING**

Matty's wife Elaine enters, drowsy. Matty is at the table with coffee. Elaine stops at the refrigerator. A note is taped to the door with XEROXED PHOTOS OF SIX PRIESTS.

"***Kids. Stay away from the house at 193 Leonard Street. And stay away from these men.***"

MATTY
There's one of those treatment houses on Leonard Street.

ELAINE
There are kids all over this neighborhood. Should we say something to the neighbors?

Matty considers this. Good question.

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

CLOSE ON a LAPTOP SCREEN. We're scrolling through the EXCEL SPREADSHEET. Dozens of problematic priests.

SACHA
That's it.

REVEAL Mike, Sacha and Matty huddled around the laptop. Matty PRINTS the SPREADSHEET and Mike closes a directory.

MIKE
Robby?

Robby looks up from his desk. He walks over to join them.

ROBBY
How many?

MATTY
Eighty-seven.

MIKE
It's in line with what Sipe said.
Right in line.

Matty hands the PRINTOUT to Robby. A beat. He walks into --

**INT. GLOBE, ROBBY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Robby shuts his door, picks up his phone and dials. We see the team watching through the glass.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Walter Robinson for Tim O'Neill.
Tell him it's important.

A beat, then we hear --

TIM (OVER THE PHONE)
Hi Robby. Everything OK?

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Could it be ninety?

TIM (OVER THE PHONE)
What?

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Could it be ninety priests?

TIM (OVER THE PHONE)
Jesus, Robby.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Just answer the question, Tim.

Silence.

TIM (OVER THE PHONE)
You gotta stop this, Robby.

Click. Robby DARKENS. A beat, then Matty pops in...

MATTY
Robby, you got a minute?

Robby beckons him in.

MATTY (CONT'D)
I, uh, got one of those treatment centers a block from my house. I mean...we got neighbors with kids. I feel like we should tell 'em.

ROBBY
(beat)
We'll tell 'em soon.

Matty nods. Exits. Off Robby --

**INT. PARKING GARAGE, ONE INTERNATIONAL PLACE - NIGHT**

Eric MacLeish is talking on his cell.

ERIC MACLEISH (INTO PHONE)
No, I'll handle him in the morning.
It won't be a problem.

He hangs up and gets into his MERCEDES 500 SLK.

**INT. MACLEISH'S MERCEDES (PARKED) - CONTINUOUS**

MacLeish tosses his briefcase in back and starts to puts the key in the ignition... when the passenger door OPENS.

MacLeish, FRIGHTENED, turns... as Robby gets in the car.

MACLEISH
Jesus. Scared the hell out of me.

ROBBY
I've got 87 priests, I need to know
which you've settled cases against.

MACLEISH
Get out of my car.

Robby doesn't move. He's angrier than we've seen.

ROBBY
How many priests did you settle?

MACLEISH
You know I can't tell you...

ROBBY
You're gonna give me their names.
And the names of their victims.

MACLEISH
No way.

A beat. Robby controls himself, turns calm. Professional.

ROBBY
There are two stories here, Eric. A story about clergy and a story about the lawyers who spent the last ten years quietly turning their sex scandals into a cottage industry. Ten years without telling a soul about the dozens of priests who were balling little boys.
(then)
Which story do you want us to write?

Off MacLeish, WAVERING...

**INT. GLOBE, MARTY'S OFFICE - DAY**

CLOSE ON the EXCEL PRINTOUT. The list of Priests. Many of them MARKED UP, with VICTIM'S NAMES written in the margins.

ROBBY
MacLeish settled cases with forty-six priests.

REVEAL Marty and Ben across the table from Robby and the rest of the Spotlight team. Marty pages through the printout.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
And we have corroboration on the eight we got from Saviano, Sacha's spoken to the victims, a lotta them are willing to go on the record.

BEN
Jesus. It's a fucking epidemic.

ROBBY
They all fit the pattern, frequent moves from parish to parish, in and out of treatment centers...

MARTY
Where are we on Law?

ROBBY
Mike's still trying to empty Garabedian's pockets.

Marty considers this. Then he turns to Robby.

MARTY
I keep thinking about our discussion on Porter the other night.

ROBBY
What about it?

MARTY
You said Law called down the wrath of God when we reported on that.

BEN
That's Law being Law.

MARTY
Okay, uh, but I looked at the clips, Porter wasn't even in the Boston Archdiocese. He was in Fall River. Why such an extreme reaction?

Robby realizes.

ROBBY
He knew there were others. The way he reacted, Law had to know.

MARTY
That's the bigger story.

BEN
Bigger than fifty priests?

MARTY
Yes, if it came from the top down.

ROBBY
The numbers clearly indicate --

MARTY
But that's all they are, indicators. They don't tell the full story.

MIKE
Due respect, we run a story about fifty pedophile priests in Boston --

MARTY
We'll get into the same cat fight you got into on Porter, which made a lot of noise and changed things not one bit.
(then)
The numbers are not enough. Show me the Church manipulated the system so these priests wouldn't face charges. Show me the Church put these priests back into parishes with children, time and time again.
(MORE)

MARTY (CONT'D)
Show me this was systemic, it was institutional and that it came from the top down.

**INT. GLOBE, OUTSIDE MARTY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Ben and Robby walk through the bullpen towards Ben's office, the team at their heels. Mike is pissed.

MIKE
Fifty priests is a great story.

BEN
In my office.

They roll into --

**INT. GLOBE, BEN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Matty shuts the door behind them.

MIKE
He read the Porter clips and now he's nervous.

BEN
He should be fucking nervous. If Law attacked us for going after Porter, can you imagine how he'll use his bully pulpit now that we're coming after him?

MIKE
We're talking about fifty priests. Not one. Not eight. Fifty!

BEN
Yeah, and if we're not set up here, Law's gonna have a thousand priests telling their congregations not to buy the Globe. Right now, a story like this could tank the paper.

MIKE
Come on, we're playing scared.

BEN
Keep your dick in your pants, we're playing smart.

ROBBY
He's right, Mike.

Mike turns, surprised.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
We gotta nail the system, we gotta take Law down in such a way that he can't get back up again.

BEN
Agreed. So let's stop bitching about it and get to work.

**EXT. DOUBLE-DECKER HOUSE, SOUTHIE - DAY**

Robby and Sacha knock on the door of a DOUBLE-DECKER in Southie. A MIDDLE AGED MAN answers. He lets them inside.

OLDER WOMAN (PRELAP)
The Monsignor took us to the Bishop.

**INT. RUNDOWN HOUSE, DORCHESTER - DAY**

Matty sits with an OLDER WOMAN.

OLDER WOMAN
He told us nothing like this had ever happened before. He asked us not to press charges.

MIDDLE AGED MAN (PRELAP)
The Bishop came over the house.

**INT. APARTMENT, JAMAICA PLAIN - DAY**

Robby and Sacha sit with a middle aged man.

MIDDLE AGED MAN
He brought the local assemblyman.

SACHA
What did your mother do?

MIDDLE AGED MAN
Are you kidding me? She made tea and put out cookies.

Sacha blinks. We PRELAP --

MIKE (PRELAP)
...and Richard when exactly did you treat Geoghan in Baltimore?

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - EARLY EVENING**

Mike leans over his phone, reviewing his notes.

SIPE (ON SPEAKERPHONE)
I didn't treat him personally, I thought I mentioned that in our first conversation, Mike.

MIKE
(writing)
Yeah, yeah, that's right, sorry. Do you know who did treat him?

SIPE
Not off hand, I think that was the summer of 1967, I'll have to check my records. Of course, everyone knew he had a problem.

As Mike writes this down, we hear --

SACHA
We've got stories on Saviano's eight and ten of MacLeish's priests.

Find Robby and Sacha adding to a list on the wall, 18 PRIESTS with 3x5 cards, details of victim's stories. PRELAP --

DROUSSARD (PRELAP)
It wasn't just the church.

**INT. DROUSSARD HOUSE, JAMAICA PLAIN - DAY**

Matty sits with MARYETTA DROUSSARD, 57. A mess.

DROUSSARD
My friends, the other parishioners, they said it would cause a scandal.

She starts to cry. Matty waits, pained as we PRELAP --

YOUNG COP (PRELAP)
Sure, the chief knew, we all did. Geoghan was a bad guy...

**INT. COFFEE SHOP, HINGHAM - NIGHT**

Robby sits with the YOUNG COP from the opener. Now 40s.

YOUNG COP
But no one wanted to cuff a priest. And I was just a rookie so...

SACHA
What about the prosecutor?

YOUNG COP
Burke? He'd recommend that they leave it in God's hands.
(then)
I still remember those two priests driving away that night, but Cap told me to forget it so I forgot it.

As that LANDS on Robby and Sacha --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

Matty's at his desk. He gets up, checks a box on the wall. We see NOW 30 PRIESTS with 3x5 cards next. Matty looks at it.

MATTY
This is sick.

He stands there staring as Robby and Sacha enter.

MATTY (CONT'D)
How's it going guys?

ROBBY
Depends how you look at it. Where's Mike?

MATTY
Springfield. For the hearing. He called in, said nobody was there.

ROBBY
The Herald didn't show up?

MATTY
Nope. Nobody.

Sacha sits at her desk, Robby turns towards his office when --

MATTY (CONT'D)
Hey, Robby, you ever hear of a Father Talbot?

Robby turns. Matty shows him an excel priest printout.

ROBBY
There was a Father Talbot at BC High when I was there.

MATTY
That's the one.

Matty hands him the printout. Robby reads it and reacts. It's like a kick in the stomach.

ROBBY
Jesus. This his victim?

MATTY
Yeah, he just passed, the address is for the wife.

ROBBY
I'll take this.

**INT. COURTROOM, HAMDEN SUPERIOR COURT, SPRINGFIELD, MA - DAY**

Mike watching the Globe's lawyer, JON ALBANO, 50s, white beard and moustache, present to JUDGE CONSTANCE SWEENEY, 40s.

ALBANO (O.C.)
Your honor, the Globe believes this is a matter of public interest.

Mike FIGHTS TEDIUM. The courtroom's empty, Garabedian at one desk, WILSON ROGERS, 60s, the Church's lawyer, at another.

ALBANO (CONT'D)
There's nothing personal in these documents, they concern how the Cardinal is handling --

JUDGE SWEENEY
Say the Archdiocese.

ALBANO
Er, excuse me?

JUDGE SWEENEY
You don't get to tag the Cardinal with everything, Mr. Albano. Say the Archdiocese.

He looks down at his brief, flustered.

WILSON ROGERS
Your honor, the Globe is not a party to this case. They simply want to sell papers. If Mr. Garabedian had not been trying his case in the press and smearing the Cardinal's good name, we wouldn't even be here.

Garabedian shakes his head, angrily muttering under his breath. Mike sits up, catching it.

ALBANO
I represent the Globe, your honor, not Mr. Garabedian, and regardless of his tactics, the Archdiocese...

Off Mike, watching Garabedian...

**EXT. HAMDEN SUPERIOR COURT, SPRINGFIELD, MA - LATER**

Garabedian stands on the courthouse steps. Simmering.

MIKE
Nice guy, that Wilson Rogers.

Mike walks up with two cups of coffee. He holds one out.

GARABEDIAN
He's an idiot. A smug idiot. And they're terrible lawyers.

MIKE
(pushing him)
He seems pretty competent.

GARABEDIAN
What, cause he dresses nice? I'm telling you, he's an awful lawyer.

MIKE
Oh yeah?

GARABEDIAN
You don't know the half of it. If you did you wouldn't be impressed.

MIKE
So what's the half of it?

Garabedian looks at him, wrestling with something.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Mitch? Tell me the half of it.

GARABEDIAN
Off the record.

MIKE
Okay. Off the record.

GARABEDIAN
About three years ago, I get a call. This ex-Priest. Arthur Benzevich.
(MORE)

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
He tells me when he was at Blessed Sacrement back in ‘62 he saw Geoghan taking little boys up to the Rectory bedroom. Benzevich says he told the Bishop, but the Bishop told him to shut it. Threatened to reassign him to South America.

MIKE
Jeez.

GARABEDIAN
Yeah, anyway, fast forward 30 years, Benzevich reads that Geoghan’s been charged with molesting hundreds of boys. Benzevich feels guilty.

MIKE
So Benzevich calls you.

GARABEDIAN
I got a priest telling his superiors about Geoghan in 1962? That’s a witness. So I ask him to come by the office to sit for a deposition and he agrees. But the day of the depo, when he shows up... he’s with a lawyer.

MIKE
Wilson Rogers.

GARABEDIAN
That’s the one. Suddenly, my friend Benzevich has a foggy memory. He isn’t so sure Geoghan took boys up to his bedroom. And he sure as heck didn’t tell his superiors.

MIKE
So what’d you do?

GARABEDIAN
Nothing. There was nothing to do. I go back to work, I forget about it until, a year ago, one of my former assistants, terrible employee, she finds an old article in the paper. “*Former priest says he warned church officials about Geoghan*.”

MIKE
(stunned)
Benzevich went to the press.

GARABEDIAN
Local paper, Patriot Ledger, nobody saw it. But now --

MIKE
You got Benzevich on record.

GARABEDIAN
And I got a good reason to talk to him again. But when I file a motion to depose Benzevich a second time, Wilson Rogers, that smug asshole, he files a motion opposing my motion. And that's when I have him!

MIKE
Have him, how?

GARABEDIAN
Rogers opposed my motion. So I gotta make an argument as to why I should be allowed to depose Mr. Benzevich again. And now I'm allowed to attach exhibits. So I go through the famous sealed documents that I've gotten in discovery and I pull out all the most damning ones.

MIKE
And you attach them to your motion?

GARABEDIAN
14 documents that prove everything. About the church, about the bishops, about Cardinal Law...

MIKE
And it's all public.

GARABEDIAN
Now you're paying attention, Mr. Rezendes. This motion to oppose Rogers' motion that opposed my motion to depose Benzevich is, in fact, public.

MIKE
(head spinning)
So I can just walk into the courthouse and get them?

GARABEDIAN
No. You can't. Because the documents are not there.

Mike is measured.

MIKE
You just told me they were public, Mitch.

GARABEDIAN
(leans in, whispering)
They are, but this is Boston. And the Church doesn't want them to be found, so they are not there.

Holy shit. Mike pales.

ALBANO (O.C.)
Mitch, Sweeney's ready to start.

MIKE
You think the Church had them removed?

Mitch collects his things, turns to Mike. With clarity.

GARABEDIAN
Yes, Mr. Rezendes. I am not crazy and I am not paranoid, I am experienced. Check the docket, you'll see. They control everything.

Mitch exits. Mike watches him go, UNNERVED. Is Mitch right? And was that just the mother of all tips?

**INT. SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE, RECORDS ROOM - DAY**

A mousy looking clerk carries a BINDER up to a small window. He places the binder in the window in front of... Mike.

Who's been standing there. Waiting. Mike takes the binder.

CLERK
We're closing in like ten minutes...

MIKE
Yeah. Thanks.

Mike sits on the bench. He opens the binder, finds a file.

CLOSE ON THE FILE: Motion 9817.5 to depose Arthur Benzevich. Filed by Mitchell Garabedian. And a list of 14 exhibits.

Mike, excited, opens the file, finds the motion and a FOLDER, EXHIBITS A - N. Mike opens it. It's empty. HOLY SHIT.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Shouldn't there be documents here?

The Clerk inspects the file. He reads the description.

CLERK
Yeah. There should be.

Mike reacts. Garabedian was right. Jesus.

**EXT. BROOKLINE HOUSE - EARLY EVENING**

A lovely, suburban home. Robby is in his car across the street, reading through some documents. Suddenly a CAR pulls into the driveway. A WOMAN and her THREE CHILDREN get out.

Robby starts to get out of his car when.... his cell RINGS.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Robby.

**EXT. SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE - SAME TIME**

Mike is walking down the stairs of the courthouse.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Garabedian gave me a tip, some of the sealed documents are public. They're part of a motion he filed.

**INTERCUT THE TWO SCENES**

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
So we can get them?

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
I tried. They're not in the docket, someone pulled them. Garabedian thinks it was the church, but either way, if Albano files a motion, Sweeney will order Mitch to refile.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
And you think these documents...

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
He said they were huge, Robby.

This LANDS. Robby checks his watch.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
I'll call Albano now.

Robby hangs up. He watches the house for a beat, considering his options. Then he starts the car and pulls out.

**EXT. GLOBE, PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Marty gets out of his car and walks toward the building. It's a beautiful September morning.

**INT. GLOBE, NEWSROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Marty walks into the building and heads toward his office. Most of the newsroom is empty. He slows his stride when SOMETHING on one of the televisions catches his attention.

He walks to a TV, joins a A YOUNG REPORTER already watching.

YOUNG REPORTER
Mr. Baron.

MARTY
Morning. What happened?

YOUNG REPORTER
They're saying it's a prop plane but that's not the tail of a prop plane.

We glimpse the TV. The World Trade Center. On fire. Marty hurries to the front desk. LINDA at reception greets him.

LINDA
Morning, Marty.

MARTY
Get every reporter we have in. Now.

LINDA
Everyone?

But Marty's turned. He beelines for the corner office.

**EXT. STATE STREET T-STOP, BOSTON - DAY**

Mike walks out of the STATE STREET T STOP. He cell rings.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Hey Robby. What's up? I'm heading the courthouse to meet Albano.

Mike slows to a stop.

MIKE (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
When? Out of Logan?

He turns around, heads back toward the T. As he descends into the T, we DRIFT BACK UP to the BEAUTIFUL SEPTEMBER SKY.

**INT. GLOBE, NEWSROOM - SAME**

CLOSE ON a TV. Cardinal Law addressing a large group of reporters, citizens in front of the Cathedral.

CARDINAL LAW
*You pray for the injured, and those who survived. You pray, too, for the nation, that our response might reflect our best ideals...*

REVEAL a group watching TV in the corner of the bullpen. Ben is front and center. Robby, Matty and Sacha off to the side.

CARDINAL LAW (ON TV) (CONT'D)
*...and God's teaching as it is found in Christianity and Islam as well.*

BEN
Not bad. Who's there?

FEMALE EDITOR
Paulson.

Ben starts to move, an editor at his side.

BEN
I want to talk to him when he's back. Where's Raphel on the Massport piece?

FEMALE EDITOR
He's calling it in, they're opening the airport tomorrow. 5am.

BEN
(to Robby)
Rezendes make it to Miami?

ROBBY
They just opened Providence, he's gonna catch a flight there.

BEN
Drohan needs help, we're all hands on deck, I need to pull in the rest of your team, everything else stops. Everything, Robby.

ROBBY
Understood.

Ben heads off. Robby looks to Matty and Sacha, then back up at Cardinal Law on the TV.

MATTY
This has gotta be the one story that could take us off our story.

ROBBY
Yeah, how 'bout that.

Off Robby, FRUSTRATED...

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

Garabedian works at his desk. The phone rings, he picks up.

GARABEDIAN
Law offices of Mitchell Garabedian.

**INT. PROVIDENCE AIRPORT, PROVIDENCE, RI - DAY**

Mike walks quickly through the concourse with his duffle bag.

MIKE
Mitch, it's Mike, I've been trying to reach you...

**INTERCUT THE SCENES**

GARABEDIAN
I'm the only one here, Mr. Rezendes. I don't have time to talk to you.

MIKE
Just tell me, did you refile those documents yet?

GARABEDIAN
No, I did not. I just got Sweeney's order, these things take time.

MIKE
Great, that's great, Mitch, if you could hold off on refiling...

MITCH
Hold off?

MIKE
I have to head down to Florida and look into the flight school where Atta and his team --

GARABEDIAN
What does that have to do with me?

MIKE
Look, once you refile there's gonna be a record, a public record --

GARABEDIAN
I received a judicial order. The church is watching me very closely.

MIKE
Right, but Mitch --

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
One misstep and they will go right to the bar association.

MIKE
Mitch, listen, everything's upside down, I just need a few weeks.

GARABEDIAN
I can't make you any promises. Call me when you are back from Florida.

Garabedian hangs up.

MIKE
Mitch! Shit.

Mike notices they are closing the gate.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Hey, hold it. Hold it.

**INT. DOYLE'S PUB, JAMAICA PLAIN - NIGHT**

A relatively empty bar. ON A TV, we see CNN coverage of the THIRD DAY OF US BOMBING IN AFGHANISTAN. Phil Saviano sits in a booth across from Robby and Sacha. Phil's on the edge.

SAVIANO
I get it, no one wants to read about kids getting molested by priests, especially now. People need the church, they need to know there's order in the world. Terrorists and dirty bombs and anthrax, it's scary shit. Well, guess what? I needed the church too. I still do.

ROBBY
Phil, listen to me. We were taken off this story by our editors for reasons that are pretty evident. It's just gonna be a few more...

SAVIANO
You asked a lot of people to open up their hearts to you and to relive some very painful experiences...

ROBBY
And very soon we're going to...

Saviano SLAMS the table.

SAVIANO
It's October! You're doing the same thing you guys did last time, you're dropping us!

ROBBY
Phil, listen to me --

SAVIANO
I'm tired of listening, I'm tired of waiting, if you don't print this I'm gonna tell everybody how the Globe set us up again. I'm sure the Herald would like to hear that story.

SACHA
Phil, can I say something?
(off Phil's look)
We're not going away.

Robby looks over, a little surprised. Sacha is emotional.

SACHA (CONT'D)
I have talked to dozens of survivors, I've sat with them, in their homes, met their families. I could never forget them. We are going to tell this story and we're going to tell it right. We just need a few more weeks, that's all we're asking. Please.

Sacha connects with him. Phil's emotions overcome him and he breaks down crying. As Sacha takes his hand...

**INT. HOLIDAY INN, LOBBY, MIAMI, FL - DAY**

A beautiful Florida morning, palm trees through glass doors... of the RUNDOWN LOBBY. With a puny breakfast spread.

Mike loads danish onto a plate.

**INT. HOLIDAY INN, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Mike pads down the hall. A phone RINGS. He recognizes it, starts hustling for his door, reaching for his key when--

MIKE
Shit.

His plate of danish falls on the floor. Mike doesn't have time, he pushes into --

**INT. HOLIDAY INN, HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Duffel open, clothes everywhere. He reaches for his cell.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Mike Rezendes.

**INT. ROBBY'S CAR (MOVING) - SAME TIME**

Robby drives.

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Enjoying your vacation?

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Not at all. What's up?

**INTERCUT THE SCENES**

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Mitch Garabedian just called me.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Mitch? Why'd he call you?

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Probably because he knew you'd yell at him. He refiled the docs.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
(panicking)
What? That little chicken shit, those docs are public, Robby, we gotta get them before anybody...

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
I know, I just talked to Marty.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
We're back?

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
Courthouse doors open at ten.

Mike starts throwing clothes into his suitcase.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Got it, I'll get on the first-- Can somebody book me a--

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
You've got a flight at noon.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Ah, that's freakin' great, that's, man that's freakin' great. Wanna meet me at the courthouse?

ROBBY (INTO PHONE)
No, I've got something I have to take care of.

Robby snaps his phone shut as he parks the car in front of --

**EXT. BROOKLINE HOUSE - DAY**

The SUBURBAN HOUSE we saw Robby at before 9/11. Robby gets out of the car, walks past the AUTUMN LEAVES, knocks on the door. The WOMAN we saw earlier with three children answers.

ROBBY
Mrs. Lyons.

MRS. LYONS
Yes?

ROBBY
I'm Walter Robinson from the Boston Globe. I was a few years ahead of your husband at BC High, we're doing a story about one of his teachers. Do you have a minute?

Off Mrs. Lyons, her expression darkening --

**EXT. BC HIGH, DORCHESTER - DAY**

The BC HIGH SIGN. Teenagers play football in the foreground.

JACK DUNN (V.O.)
We understand the nature of the allegations, Robby...

**INT. BC HIGH, PRINCIPAL KEMEZA'S OFFICE - DAY**

Robby and Sacha sit with PRINCIPAL BILL KEMEZA, 50s, and the mucks we saw at the Gala, Jack Dunn and Peter Conley.

JACK DUNN
I'm just not sure what you want from Principal Kemeza.

ROBBY
Well, Talbot taught history and economics from 1972 to 1980. He coached soccer and hockey.

JACK DUNN
That was long before Principal Kemeza took over.

ROBBY
He knows how this place works. We want to know how it's possible that the faculty, the Principal, the President... how no one knew what was going on at the time.

JACK DUNN
I graduated in 1979 and I had no idea about any of this, so if you're suggesting that Brother Gibbons and Brother Callahan --

ROBBY
Gibbons and Callahan ran this place like the goddamn navy, you really don't think they knew?

PETER CONLEY
It's a big school, Robby, you know that. You're talking about seven alleged victims over eight years.

ROBBY
Seven we know about, Pete.

JACK DUNN
This is ridiculous.

PRESIDENT KAMEZA
Jack --

JACK DUNN
It's a witch hunt.

PRESIDENT KAMEZA
Jack. If I had been President back then, I would have known.

Conley looks at him, sharp.

PETER CONLEY
Bill, I don't think you should --

PRESIDENT KAMEZA
Come on, why do you think they sent him up to Cheverus? You know they wanted to get him out of town.

JACK DUNN
(to Robby, direct)
This is off the record. This conversation never happened.

ROBBY
Of course not.

Robby shakes his head and rises. A beat, then he turns back.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
I went to see one of Talbot's victims in Brookline yesterday. The guy was one of the better ones, he had a wife, kids, good job. Never told anyone. His wife learned about it in his suicide note.
(beat, to Jack)
He graduated in '79 too, Jack. For the record.

Robby slams out. Off Sacha, watching him.

**INT. BC HIGH, HALLWAY - DAY**

Robby and Sacha walk down the hall. We hear kids in the classrooms. Robby looks UPSET.

SACHA
Why was Pete Conley there?

ROBBY
Good question.

Sacha glances over at Robby, reads him.

SACHA
You alright?

ROBBY
Not really.

As he pushes out the high school doors, we --

**EXT. SUFFOLK COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY**

Mike walks down the COURTHOUSE STEPS, starting to look through Garabedian's refiled EXHIBITS.

He gets about halfway down and PAUSES. READING. In the middle of the steps, engrossed.

Suddenly he slams the binder shut and runs down the steps, screaming at a cab, which screeches to a halt. Mike jumps in.

MIKE (V.O.)
Robby, I got the docs, it's incredible, you're never gonna believe what's in here.

The cab pulls out and into traffic.

MIKE (V.O)
There's a letter to Law from this woman Margaret Gallant, she lived in JP in the early 80's when Geoghan was there... listen to this...
(Reading)
"*Our family is rooted in the Church, our desire is to protect the holy orders even in the midst of our agony over the seven boys in our family who have been violated.*"
Seven, Robby. There's more...

**EXT. BOSTON - DAY**

The cab winds its way through Boston... past TRINITY CHURCH in COPLEY SQUARE... past ragged TRIPLE-DECKERS in ROXBURY...

MIKE (V.O.)
"*It was suggested we keep silent, but Father Geoghan's actions... We did not question the Authority of the Church two years ago, but since he is still in his parish...*" She sent it to Law and Law did shit! You gotta see the handwriting, pure Palmer method, money down she went to Catholic school...

Margaret Gallant's words hang over the city...

**EXT. DORCHESTER - DAY**

The cab is stuck in a TRAFFIC CIRCLE. We can see the Globe building down the road about a mile...

MIKE (V.O.)
Here's another one to Law, same year, from an auxiliary bishop.

**EXT. BOSTON GLOBE - LATER**

The cab pulls up. Mike jumps out, throws cash at the driver.

MIKE (V.O.)
*"A word on the recent assignment of Father John Geoghan as an associate at Saint Julia's in Weston. Father Geoghan has a history of homosexual involvement with young boys."*

**INT. GLOBE, LOBBY - DAY**

The GUARD we saw earlier. Mike races in, HOPS the turnstile and heads up the stairs.

MIKE (V.O.)
*"I understand his recent departure from Saint Brendan's may be related to this problem."* This is from the inside! They knew. They all knew.

**INT. GLOBE, BULLPEN - DAY**

Mike races down the hall, jostling a couple of reporters on the way. Kurkjian, at his desk, clocks this.

MIKE (V.O.)
*"I am concerned about further scandal, I wonder if Father Geoghan should not be reduced to weekend work while receiving therapy."*

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

The whole team sits around as Mike finishes reading.

MIKE
*"Sincerely yours in our Lord, Most Reverend John M. D'Arcy, Auxiliary Bishop of Boston. December 7, 1984."*

MATTY
An auxiliary bishop wrote that? Are you kidding me?

We see the letters and two envelopes, both addressed to Cardinal Law. The team is reeling.

SACHA
It's incredible. He broke ranks. When did Mrs. Gallant write her letter?

MIKE
She first wrote to Medeiros in 1982 and then she wrote to Law in ‘84.

MATTY
And he freakin’ ignored her. How do you ignore that letter?!

Mike nods, turns to Robby.

MIKE
We’ve got him. You can’t read those letters and think anything else.

ROBBY
Yeah. This is good work.

MIKE
I’m good to write it up?

ROBBY
No, not yet.

MIKE
Why not? We got it.

ROBBY
This is Law covering for one priest. There’s another 90 out there.

MIKE
Sure and we can print that story when we get it. These documents are public, Robby. Anyone one can get them now.

ROBBY
I know that, Mike.

MIKE
If we don’t run to press, the Herald or somebody else is gonna find these letters and butcher the story.

ROBBY
So we write a cover piece, we keep our eye on the Herald.

MIKE
A cover piece? What’s that gonna do?

ROBBY
If they run a story, we’re ready.

MIKE
(anger building)
You’re gonna lose this fucking story, we can not hesitate again --

ROBBY
I'm not hesitating, but I am not gonna rush to press when there's a bigger story to --

MIKE
Dammit, Robby, I've been trailing this guy for two months and he finally...

ROBBY
This isn't about you, Mike! This is about the story.

MIKE
(losing it)
I know exactly what this is about and I'm telling you, Robby, I'm not gonna let somebody else come in and fuck this up! I am going to nail these scumbags, that's what they deserve, we need to print this and show people that no one can get away with it! Not a priest or a Bishop or the fricking Pope! No one! No one!

Robby, Sacha, and Matty are still. Mike looks around the room, out of breath, adrenaline draining. Robby is pissed.

ROBBY
Are you finished?

MIKE
Yeah. I am.

Mike storms out.

**INT. SACHA'S HOUSEE - NIGHT**

Sacha and Hans are eating. Sacha is lost in thought.

HANS
Anybody home?

SACHA
Oh. Sorry. I was just...

HANS
Yeah, I know.

The doorbell RINGS. Hans gives her a look. Expecting someone? Sacha's not. Hans gets up, checks the peephole...

He opens the door. It's Mike. With a brown paper bag.

MIKE
I found some good Belgian beer.

**EXT. SACHA'S HOUSE, BACK PORCH - LATER**

Sacha walks onto the porch with two beers, hands one to Mike.

MIKE
Thanks for letting me crash dinner.

SACHA
I wasn't the best date anyway.

Mike gets it, the case.

MIKE
Kinda lost my shit today.

SACHA
It's a tough story, Mike.

MIKE
Yeah.
(beat)
You ever think of going back?

SACHA
To the church? No. I go for my grandmother, but it's not for me. How about you?

Mike considers this.

MIKE
You grow up with something, it's hard to completely shut the door. I guess there was a part of me that thought, one day, maybe...
(then)
But when I read those letters today, it was like something cracked. Something I didn't know was there.

Mike stares out. Emotional.

SACHA
It's a shitty feeling.

MIKE
Yeah. Gonna be a shitty feeling for a lot of people. Pisses me off.
(then)
(MORE)

MIKE (CONT'D)
I get what Robby's trying to do, I just... this is our job. We need to make this right.

SACHA
We will.

Off Mike, we --

**INT. FAIRMONT HOTEL, OAK ROOM - NIGHT**

The posh bar of one of Boston's oldest hotels. Robby is at the bar, a scotch in front of him.

PETER CONLEY
Looks like a long day.

Peter Conley walks up. Nods to the barman.

PETER CONLEY (CONT'D)
Sorry to make it longer.
(to the barkeep)
Same.

ROBBY
Anyone ever say no to a drink with you, Pete?

PETER CONLEY
Sure. Trick is to keep asking.

The drink arrives.

PETER CONLEY (CONT'D)
Health.

They drink.

ROBBY
You here for the Cardinal?

PETER CONLEY
I wouldn't pretend to speak for the Cardinal. I leave that to Donna Morrissey.

Robby smiles. Pete is smooth.

PETER CONLEY (CONT'D)
This guy Baron, you like him?

ROBBY
He's growing on me.

PETER CONLEY
I'm not sure he's so good for the paper.

ROBBY
No?

PETER CONLEY
Globe's not what it used to be. You run a story like this, you will lose subscribers. You remember the calls after Porter?

ROBBY
That's what the switchboard's for.

PETER CONLEY
You've had a good career, Robby. Hell, a great one. You want to end it as the guy who brought down the Globe?
(then)
We take care of our own. It's what we do. Baron's not one of us.

Robby looks at Conley. A long beat. He shakes his head.

ROBBY
This is how it happens, a guy leans on a guy and suddenly the whole fucking town looks the other way.

PETER CONLEY
Goodnight, Robby.

Conley leaves. Yeah, that's exactly how it happens. Off Robby, BROODING --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - DAY**

The whole team sits working. Robby's phone RINGS, he answers.

ROBBY
Robby. What? No shit.

The team looks towards Robby's office.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
When? Okay. Thanks.

Robby hangs up.

MIKE
What's up?

ROBBY
Sweeney ruled for us. She ruled to unseal the documents.

MIKE
No shit.

The group sits stunned. PRELAP --

ALBANO (PRELAP)
The church already filed an appeal.

**INT. GLOBE, CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER**

Marty, Ben, Albano, and Drohan (the Metro Editor we met earlier) sit with Robby and the rest of the Spotlight team.

ALBANO
But the trial court's ruling is generally upheld in these matters.

MARTY
So, uh, when would we get the docs?

ALBANO
Probably takes Cohn two weeks to rule, then there'll be a redaction process... I'd say you're looking at mid-January? Right around the start of the Geoghan trial.

MARTY
Okay. Thanks, John and nice work.

Albano exits.

BEN
Marty, this is a major first amendment victory. Metro should run something --

DROHAN
Something? A Catholic judge rules against the church, that should be on the front page.

ROBBY
We run this big, the Herald's gonna be on it.

DROHAN
They should be, this is big news.

ROBBY
We gotta bury this.

DROHAN
I disagree. We'll find a way to get the docs a few days before everyone else, who cares if they're on the story?

ROBBY
I do.

DROHAN
Why? Enlighten me.

ROBBY
I'd rather not.

BEN
Alright, alright. Marty?

Marty considers, reads Robby.

MARTY
Tom, get the story ready. I'll get back to you on placement.

Marching orders. Drohan exits, not happy.

BEN
What's going on?

Mike just looks at Robby. Robby comes clean.

ROBBY
Some of the sealed documents are already public.

MARTY
Uh, excuse me?

Robby looks to Mike. Go ahead.

MIKE
Garabedian slipped them into a public motion, a parishioner and a Bishop writing Law about Geoghan in the eighties.

MARTY
And these letters prove that Law...?

Mike doesn't say anything. Marty looks to Robby.

ROBBY
Yeah. They nail him.

BEN
So you had hard proof that Cardinal Law was negligent and you didn't bother to tell us? That's the goddamn story, Robby.

Mike glances over at Sacha, keeps his mouth shut.

ROBBY
Law isn't the whole story.

MARTY
Uh, he isn't?

ROBBY
This predates Law, it's been going on for decades, priest after bad priest kept in circulation. We've talked to dozens of victims, they were all steered away from the courts, told to keep the quiet by the church, by the laity, by lawyers and teachers and cops. It's what you asked us for, it's the whole story. And we're close, Marty. Real close.

Marty considers. He looks to Ben who shrugs.

MARTY
You've got multiple sources on these stories?

ROBBY
On some of them. And we might be able to get someone from the other side of the aisle.

MARTY
You have someone inside the church?

ROBBY
A lawyer on that side.

Marty considers.

MARTY
There's a lot riding on this. If the Herald finds those letters...

ROBBY
I know. We've got a cover story ready to go.

Marty doesn't like his answer. It's tense. Ben turns to Mike.

BEN
How long to write up the letters?

MIKE
If I'm pushing? Two weeks.

Mike glances over at Robby, makes an effort.

MIKE (CONT'D)
But with everything this city went through in September, I assume we're not gonna publish this at Christmas.

Mike looks to Ben. Ben hesitates, deciding whether to pick up the baton. Then...

BEN
We could give Robby six weeks. Try to run the whole thing just after New Years. Make it a curtain raiser for the Geoghan Trial.

Marty considers. A beat, then turns to Ben --

MARTY
Tell Drohan to bury the verdict inside metro.
(then, to Robby)
You've got six weeks. Uh, and for future reference, if there's a major development in a story, I'd like to be informed.

ROBBY
Understood.

Marty exits. Ben turns to Robby.

BEN
Since when don't you tell me about a break?

ROBBY
I wasn't sure you'd back me on this, Ben.

Ben looks at him, refrains.

BEN
I got you six weeks. Use it.

Ben pushes out. Robby turns to Mike.

ROBBY
Thanks.

MIKE
Let's just get this.

**INVESTIGATION/WRITING MONTAGE**

We hear a lone voice, not off key but not pretty, starting into SILENT NIGHT. We see a SERIES OF SHOTS...

Mike in SPOTLIGHT, pecking out the story on his laptop.

A SHITTY FOYER IN SOUTHIE. A woman opens her front door. We see Sacha in the door. The woman lets her in.

Late fall, trees bare outside a TRIPLE-DECKER IN ROXBURY. A door opens, Robby shakes a midde aged man's hand, walks out.

Matty stands on CRAPPY CORNER IN DORCHESTER, writing something on a pad. It starts to rain. Matty keeps writing.

Robby in SPOTLIGHT, reading Mike's story, giving him notes. As we hear more voices join in Silent Night...

Matty in a RUNDOWN LIVING ROOM IN HINGHAM, talking to an older couple.

Robby in a MUCH NICER LIVING ROOM IN NEWTON, also talking to an older couple.

A man with his kids, putting up Christmas lights on a NICE HOUSE IN BROOKLINE. Sacha walks up, gets his attention.

In BEN'S OFFICE, Robby and Mike watch Ben read over the story. More voices, a ragged chorus now sing Silent Night.

Sacha sitting with Phil, Joe and another guy at a DINER, some Christmas decor. Sacha takes a bite, writes on a pad.

ANOTHER DINER. Robby sitting across from a priest. It starts snowing outside...

JUDGE'S CHAMBERS. Matty sitting with a judge in robes.

Mike in SPOTLIGHT. Rewriting the story, the snow coming down outside as the chorus to Silent Night swells and...

Sacha KNOCKS on a door of a ROW HOUSE IN ROXBURY.

Matty KNOCKS on a door of a DOUBLE-DECKER IN CAMBRIDGE.

Robby KNOCKS on a door of an OLD HOUSE BY THE CATHEDRAL. The music takes us into --

**EXT. GLOBE, NEWSROOM - LATE AFTERNOON**

A HOLIDAY GATHERING in full swing. Christmas decor, eggnog, beer, fruitcake. Reporters finish the chorus to Silent Night.

The glass offices are dark... save for Ben's. PUSH IN on Ben's office, a few editors huddled, reading.

DROHAN (PRELAP)
Jesus. This is gonna be... Jesus.

**INT. GLOBE, BEN'S OFFICE - SAME TIME**

Ben, Robby and Mike look on as Drohan and a SENIOR FEMALE EDITOR read through the story.

SENIOR FEMALE EDITOR
We get a response from Law?

ROBBY
Lake Street is stonewalling.

DROHAN
Yeah, we need something from Law but I think it's ready.

BEN
Get a quote from Lake Street.

MIKE
Will do.

BEN
(to Robby)
Where are we on your end?

ROBBY
I got stories on seventy priests, two sources on most of 'em.

BEN
You get confirmation from anyone on the other side?

ROBBY
No. Not yet.

BEN
You want to run that story it needs to be bulletproof. You got a card to play, now's the time to play it.

A beat. Off Robby --

**INT. TIM O'NEILL'S OFFICE, RECEPTION - LATE AFTERNOON**

Traditional law firm, dark wood, red leather. A receptionist sits typing. Robby rolls in.

RECEPTIONIST
Can I help you?

He blows right past her. She follows, alarmed.

**INT. TIM O'NEILL'S OFFICE - LATE AFTERNOON**

Tim sits reading over a file. He looks up, sees Robby, walking into his office. He closes the file and sits back.

TIM
Didn't see you on the books.

The receptionist appears in the door, concerned.

ROBBY
I'm out of time, Tim.

Tim waves off the receptionist. He motions for Robby to sit. But Robby pulls out a list. Puts it on the desk.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
We've got cover up stories on seventy-five priests. We think we're good on about thirty of them, we've got a plaintiff's attorney and victim interviews. But the boss isn't gonna run this unless I've got solid confirmation from your side.

Tim looks at Robby.

TIM
My side?

ROBBY
Time to choose, Tim.

TIM
You're out of line, Robby.

ROBBY
Come on, Timmy. This whole city is out of line. Lawyers, prosecutors, politicians, cops. The whole damn city looked the other way. Our city, Timmy. And we need to put an end to it. You and me. We can put an end to it.

Tim considers, torn. He looks through the list.

TIM
I gotta think about this, Robby.

ROBBY
I need an answer now. You need to do this, Tim.

TIM
Don't tell me what I need to do! Yeah, I defended these scumbags, but that's my job. You're the one who's supposed to keep us honest, where the fuck were you?

Robby is silent.

TIM (CONT'D)
Ninety priests, hundreds of victims and no one at the Globe ever had a clue? Years and years and no one in that newsroom ever thought to go after this story? You guys looked the other way along with the rest of us.

Robby reacts. Then takes the list and walks out.

**INT. HALLWAY, OUTSIDE TIM O'NEILL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Robby walks to the elevator, shaken and angry. He hits the button. A beat, then --

TIM (O.C.)
Gimme the list.

Robby turns, finds O'Neill. Robby hands it to him. Tim takes out a pen. He carefully looks over the first page...

He flips to the second page, checks the names, pen poised. He gets the bottom without circling a single name.

Then he flips back to the first page. He looks at Robby. And he circles THE ENTIRE first page. And then the second.

He holds out the list. Robby takes it, nothing more to say. Tim just turns and walks away.

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - NIGHT**

Mike works the phones. Sacha and Matty work alongside him.

MIKE
Yes.. ah huh. And...
(Mike fists pumps)
Great, Jack, thanks. I owe you.
(hangs up, to Matty)
Jack Dunn just left residence, he made some headway, Law wants to comment. Donna Morrisey's calling.

SACHA
What'd you offer them?

MIKE
Full page, unedited.

MATTY
Jesus. No wonder they went for it.

SACHA
We ever offer that before?

MIKE
Not that I know about, I think we--

The phone rings. Mike grabs it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Mike Rezendez?
(playing for Matty, Sacha)
Hi Donna, thanks for calling. So how do you want to handle this?
(then)
What? Are you kidding me? I just hung up with Jack and...

He listens, then he grabs a pad and starts writing furiously.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Okay. If that's how you feel about it. Uh huh. OK. Bye Donna.

Mike hangs up.

MATTY
You get a quote?

MIKE
Nope, but I might've gotten something better.

Mike runs out.

**INT. GLOBE, MARTY'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

CLOSE ON a RED PEN. Running through copy. REVEAL Ben and Robby standing over Marty. They trade a look.

MARTY
No adjectives.

Mike rolls in. He looks to Robby who shrugs. After a moment, Marty finishes the article.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Good work.
(to Mike)
Did we get a quote from Lake Street?

MIKE
Law turned down the interview.

BEN
When?

MIKE
Ten minutes ago. Donna Morrissey told me they didn't even want to know what the questions were.

ROBBY
Is that what she said?

MIKE
Yup.

Mike gives a slight smile. Robby looks to Marty.

ROBBY
There you go.

MARTY
(writing)
"The church had no interest in knowing what the Globe's questions would be."
(hands it to Mike)
Work it in somewhere above the fold. Good work, Mike.

Mike nods.

BEN
Those letters are gold, Mike.
(then, to Marty)
We need to talk about the phones.

ROBBY
Matty and Sacha will be in Sunday morning finishing Monday's folo, they'll be able to cover our phones.

Marty looks confused. Robby explains.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
We run the Spotlight tip line with the article in case people want to reach out with more information.

BEN
I'm more concerned about the phones upstairs.

MARTY
At reception?

BEN
We're gonna want extra staff to handle blow back.

MARTY
Uh, how bad do you think it'll be?

BEN
Switchboard had a helluva time when we ran Porter.

MIKE
It was tied up for weeks, we had folks calling in who couldn't get through, it was a problem.

ROBBY
Not to mention the letters and the picketers.

BEN
This is gonna be worse.

MARTY
Let's talk to security. And let's add people at the front desk.
(to Robby)
How's it coming on your end?

Robby pulls out O'Neill's list, puts it on Marty's desk.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Uh, this is...

ROBBY
Tim O'Neill. Repped the priests.

BEN
You got confirmation? On how many?

ROBBY
All of them.

BEN
Really?

MIKE
That's gonna be the nail.

Mike is impressed. But Robby shrugs.

MARTY
Something the matter?

ROBBY
When I was with Tim he asked me why we didn't catch it sooner. Why it took us so long.

BEN
So?

ROBBY
I didn't have an answer.

Mike watches Ben, who reacts.

BEN
The story needed Spotlight. No one reporter could have broken this...

ROBBY
Spotlight's been around since '72.
(then)
We all saw Law react to Porter. We had a lot of the pieces. We had Burns, we had Geoghan, Saviano --

BEN
Ah, cut the crap, Robby. We got dozens of reporters going at a hundred miles an hour, shit falls through the cracks. We got it now, that's what counts, we did our job.

ROBBY
Sure, once Marty showed up. But what if he hadn't?

It's a gut punch. Mike reels a bit, taking it in.

MARTY
Uh, can I say something?

Robby shrugs.

MARTY (CONT'D)
Sometimes it's easy to forget that we spend most of our time stumbling around in the dark. Suddenly the light's turned on, and there's fair share of blame to go around.
(then)
I can't speak to what happened before I arrived but your team has done some very good work. The kind of reporting that makes a paper like ours essential. But my guess? Tomorrow's story is just the beginning. Law's going to come at us with everything he has. And as hard as you've worked over the last six months, you'll have to work harder. So if you need to take a minute and contemplate your sins, fine. But I need everyone ready to go Monday morning.

Off Mike, processing, troubled.

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - NIGHT**

Mike's on the phone. Sacha and Matty pack up, download Robby, who's still chewing on O'Neill's question.

MATTY
I put the last of the Shanley interviews on your desk.

SACHA
We'll have the Monday piece to you by noon. And I'll be in at nine tomorrow in case we get any calls.

MATTY
Me too. You need a ride?

SACHA
No. I'm having dinner with my grandmother, I wanna let her know.

ROBBY
Good idea.

Robby sees Mike hanging up the phone.

ROBBY (CONT'D)
Mike?

MIKE
Copy shipped. It's on the presses.

They all look at Mike, the moment upon them.

MATTY
I guess that's that. You know tomorrow is Epiphany Sunday?

SACHA
Seems appropriate.
(exiting)
I gotta go. Night guys.

MATTY
Night, Sacha. Good work, Mike. See you Monday.

Matty leaves. Mike puts on his coat, eyes still on the wall.

MIKE
There'd be a lot fewer names on this wall if we got this back in '92 when we were working Porter.

ROBBY
Or '82. Or '72.

Mike considers. Or rather doesn't want to.

MIKE
This story is gonna make a difference, Robby. It's gonna mean a lot to a lot of people. That's gotta count for something, right?

ROBBY
(restrained)
Yeah.

Off Robby, still STRUGGLING --

**INT. GARABEDIAN'S OFFICE = NIGHT**

Mitch sits, working late. A knock on the door. He looks up. It's Mike.

GARABEDIAN
You have an appointment?

MIKE
No, Mitch. I wanted you to see this.

Mike hands the paper to Mitch, he starts to read.

GARABEDIAN
Hmm.

Mitch keeps reading.

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
I see you used the letters.

MIKE
Yeah, we did. They make the story.

Garabedian sets it down.

GARABEDIAN
Thank you for bringing it by.

MIKE
That's it?

GARABEDIAN
I have work to do, Mr. Rezendes. I hope your story helps.

Mitch goes back to work. Same old Mitch.

MIKE
It will, Mitch.

Mike turns to leave, walks out into --

**INT. GARABEDIAN OFFICE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS.**

Mike walks back towards the elevator, something catches his eye. He pauses, peers into --

**INT. GARABEDIAN OFFICE, SMALL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

A MOTHER sits with TWO YOUNG CHILDREN, ten and eight, playing innocently. The mother, distraught, fingers ROSARY BEADS.

It's reminiscent of our open in Hingham.

GARABEDIAN
Both boys were abused.

In the HALLWAY, Garabedian's standing behind Mike.

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
In Jamaica Plain. Two weeks ago.

Mike reacts.

GARABEDIAN (CONT'D)
Keep doing your work, Mr. Rezendes.

Garabedian goes in. He sits, talks softly to the mother.

Mike just stands there. STARING into the room. His eyes drift to the two kids. He watches them. Gutted.

SIPE (PRELAP, OVER THE PHONE)
Richard Sipe.

**INT. MIKE'S CAR (PARKED) - NIGHT**

Mike sits in his car. Holding his phone. LOST.

MIKE
Hey, it's Mike.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
Did you finish?

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Yeah.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
I look forward to reading it.

Mike doesn't respond.

SIPE (CONT'D)
Mike? You there?

MIKE
You know, I tried to get the Globe to hire me for years. When I got the job, everything else just fell away. Paper was all I cared about. Cause I knew it was important work, work that could change things.

SIPE
It sounds like a calling.

Beat.

MIKE
How do you do it? How do you continue to believe in something, anything, when you...

Mike trails off.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
Faith. That's why I'm still Catholic, Mike. I need my faith.

MIKE
You never lost it? Knowing what you know.

SIPE
I haven't been able to walk into a church in years. That was my calling, Mike. That was my home. And I can't walk into one.
(then)
But the church is an institution of men, Mike. And even well meaning men will fail. Are you familiar with the passing?

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
The passing? No.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
I'd like to think the failings of the Church are passing. And my faith, well, my faith is in the eternal.
(then)
I try to separate the eternal from the passing.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Is that easy?

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
No. It's damn hard.

Mike smiles.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE) (CONT'D)
There's a poem that I like. R.S. Thomas. He was an Anglican priest. I think he got it.

MIKE (INTO PHONE)
Try me.

SIPE (OVER THE PHONE)
"I emerge from the mind's cave into the worse darkness outside..."

**BOSTON MONTAGE**

Sipe's voice takes us through a SERIES OF SHOTS...

ROBBY'S CAR parked across the bay. Robby sits behind the wheel, stares through the windshield at the sparkling Boston skyline, a worse darkness surrounding him.

SIPE (V.O.)
"...where things pass and the Lord is in none of them."

Stacks of GLOBE NEWSPAPERS coming off THE PRESSES. Men tying them up, tossing them into GREEN AND GOLD GLOBE TRUCKS.

SIPE (V.O.)
"Ah, what balance is needed..."

Sacha with her Grandmother in her GRANDMOTHER'S LIVING ROOM, tomorrow's Globe on the coffee table.

SIPE (V.O.)
"*...at the edges of such an abyss.*"

The GREEN AND GOLD GLOBE TRUCKS rolling out from the Globe.

SIPE (V.O.)
"*I am alone on the surface of a turning planet.*"

Matty with his wife and kids at the DINNER TABLE. The family eats. Matty just stares off. His wife looks at him, WORRIED.

SIPE (V.O.)
"*What to do but, like Michelangelo's Adam, put my hand out...*"

Men dropping stacks of papers at NEWSSTANDS. A kiosk owner reads the headline. **Church Allowed Abuse by Priest for Years**.

SIPE (V.O.)
"*...into unknown space...*"

Robby's wife Barbara sits in THE STUDY. She checks her watch then her phone. CONCERNED, she walks to the front door.

SIPE (V.O.)
"*...hoping for the reciprocating touch?*"

She opens the door, looks outside. Surprised, she walks out --

**EXT. ROBBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Robby's car is parked in the driveway. As Barbara walks to it, we see Robby behind the wheel, staring into space.

BARBARA
Robby?

Robby, red eyed, doesn't move. Barbara approaches, opens the door, he gets out. She hugs him.

**INT. GLOBE, GILMAN'S OFFICE - MORNING**

Marty walks in. Finds Gilman at the window. A copy of the Globe on the coffee table.

MARTY
Dick.

GILMAN
Morning, Marty.

Gilman doesn't turn around. Marty joins him at the window.

GILMAN (CONT'D)
It's a good article, Marty.

MARTY
Uh, thanks.

A beat. Gilman nods towards the front of the building. FROM HIS POV we see a few security guys. No protestors.

GILMAN
No protestors.

MARTY
Maybe they're still at church.

Dick just looks at Marty.

**INT. MIKE'S CAR (PARKED)/EXT. GLOBE, PARKING LOT - MORNING**

Mike sits in his car, the lone car in the empty Globe lot. He stares at the building. Emotional. Still a bit lost.

Suddenly, someone raps on the window. It's Robby. Mike lowers his window.

ROBBY
It's your day off.

MIKE
Yours too.
(then)
No tee time?

Robby smiles.

ROBBY
You wanna go in?

MIKE
I've been thinking about that.

ROBBY
Come on, phones should be ringing off the hook about now.

Mike gets out of his car. The two men are spent.

MIKE
Helluva story, huh?

ROBBY
Yeah.

The two men turn and approach the Globe.

**INT. GLOBE, NEWSROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Robby and Mike walk in. It's QUIET. Confused, Robby and Mike approach the front desk. LINDA, the receptionist, and four others sit by the phones. BORED.

MIKE
Morning, Linda. No calls?

LINDA
Easiest overtime I ever made. I sent two of mine down to Spotlight to help out Matty and Sacha.

Mike and Robby share a look. Help?

**INT. GLOBE, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS**

Robby and Mike enter from the stairwell. They walk down the corridor with a sense of purpose. As they do, we hear...

A MURMUR. Buzzing. And RINGING PHONES. Mike and Robby trade a look, pick up the pace. As they approach Spotlight, the murmur GROWS. We hear more phones... and VOICES...

Mike and Robby get to the door. We HOLD ON them for a second as they stand in the doorway, looking into --

**INT. GLOBE, SPOTLIGHT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Chaos. Sacha and Matty and a few INTERNS answering phones. Overwhelmed. An intern cups a phone, turns to Matty --

INTERN
I got another Shanley victim.

SACHA
I'll take it.

Sacha takes the call. Matty talks into a phone as he marks up the board... it has tons of new names and phone numbers.

MATT (INTO THE PHONE)
Uh huh, yeah. I know it's tough to talk about. Thanks for calling, OK. Bye.

SACHA (INTO THE PHONE)
This is Sacha Pfeiffer. Yes, thank you for calling. Who am I talking with?

Robby and Mike walk in as Matty hangs up, jots down a note.

MATTY
Hey, the phones have been ringing all morning. We've got a dozen new victims, all different priests.

MIKE
Holy shit.

MATTY
Holy shit is right.
(picks up a phone)
This is Matty Caroll. Yes, yes. Thanks very much for calling.
(cups phone, to the guys)
Are you guys gonna just stand there?

Robby looks at Mike. A phone rings. Mike grabs it.

MIKE (INTO THE PHONE)
This is Spotlight.

Robby reaches for a pad, a hand on Mike's shoulder. Mike looks up about to say something... but Robby heads to his office. Mike gets back to work, ringing phones take us to--

**NEWSPAPER MONTAGE**

A GLOBE TRUCK. A man throws a stack of papers off the truck.

**Jan 10, 2002.** ***A 'Grieving' Law Apologizes.***

CUT TO ANOTHER GLOBE TRUCK, another stack of papers.

**Feb 25, 2002.** ***MacLeish Files 550 Lawsuits by Alleged Victims.***

CUT TO SPOTLIGHT. The team keeps working. Time passes.

CUT TO A NEW YORK TIMES TRUCK. A man tosses a stack of Times.

**Mar 14, 2002.** ***Bishop Accused of Ignoring Abuse in NYC.***

CUT TO AN ARIZONA REPUBLIC NEWS TRUCK. A man tosses a stack.

**Aug 20, 2002.** ***Arizona Abuse Case Names Bishop, Monsignor.***

CUT TO A GLOBE TRUCK. A stack of papers.

**Dec 14, 2002.** ***Pope Accepts Law's resignation in Rome.***

CUT TO SPOTLIGHT. The team keeps working amidst BOXES OF FILES. Kurkjian and another reporter join in. Time passes.

CUT TO WARSAW, POLAND. A stack of papers, The Warsaw Voice.
**Mar 3, 2004.** ***Clergy sex abuse scandal overwhelms POLAND.***

CUT TO DUBLIN, IRELAND. A stack of papers, The Irish Times.

**Nov 9, 2006.** ***Priest sex abuse scandal hits Ireland.***

CUT TO SPOTLIGHT. The team keeps working. Now with FOUR MORE REPORTERS, the room filled with boxes. Time passes.

CUT TO AN AIRPORT. A stack of Business Insider Magazines.

**Jul 4, 2009.** ***105 Newspapers shuttered, 15,000 Jobs Lost.***

CUT TO ROME, ITALY. A stack of papers, La Repubblica.

**Feb 21, 2013.** ***Sex, Blackmail Behind Benedict XVI Resignation.***

CUT TO A NEW YORK TIMES TRUCK. A man tosses a stack of Times.

**May 20, 2013.** ***Church Whistle-Blowers Join Forces on Abuse.***

CUT TO SPOTLIGHT. The team keeps working. And we --

FADE OUT.