THE LEFTOVERS

Written by

Damon Lindelof & Tom Perrotta

Based on the book by Tom Perrotta

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We are in DARKNESS.

And from the silence beneath it, we begin to hear something. A MAN. GRUNTING. Fierce and PRIMITIVE. It sounds like --

SEX

SMASH UP ON THE MAN'S BACK as he moves against THE WOMAN beneath him -- SWEATY and INTENSE and PASSIONATE. PEEKS between the TWO BODIES -- LIPS CHEW ON AN EARLOBE - HER HANDS guiding his hips into her -- His breathing becomes RHYTHMIC -- He's getting CLOSE -- And she EXHALES --

THE WOMAN
Come... mmmmInside... It's okay...

He thrusts harder -- BREATHES LOUDER -- Thrusts -- Grunts -- ThrustGruntThrustGruntThrustGruntThrust --

THE WOMAN
...Come INSIDE.

And suddenly, he TREMBLES, CRYING OUT AS HE COMPLETES --

THE MAN
ahhhhhhhGOD NO!!!

SMASH TO BLACK.

WHITE LETTERS FADE UP. SUPER TITLE:

OCTOBER 14TH

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

WE ARE CLOSE ON A CRYING BABY.

He is strapped to the chest of A YOUNG MOTHER, thirtyish, phone to her ear, pushing her cart through a SUPERMARKET --

YOUNG MOTHER (INTO PHONE)
... It's still leaking -- What?
Yes I shut it off all the way...
(to the baby)
Shhh... Honey... Please...

ANOTHER AISLE

The Mother reaches up on her tip-toes to grab CEREAL -- The SCREAMING baby is eye to eye with ROWS OF LUCKY CHARMS --

YOUNG MOTHER
... It's a rainbow... see the rainbow? Isn't it pretty?

The Mother accidentally TIPS some boxes of Cheerios, which come TUMBLING DOWN -- She instinctively covers the baby's head, protecting him --

YOUNG MOTHER
Goddammit -- Shit!

THE FREEZER SECTION

The baby WAILS as his mother grabs handfuls of pre-packaged LUNCH MEAT, studies one, holds it up to an EMPLOYEE --

YOUNG MOTHER
Hey -- excuse me? ... Is this actual turkey?

THE CHECKOUT REGISTER

The Mother grabs an US WEEKLY, drops it onto the conveyor. The baby SCREECHING now as she digs through her purse, increasingly STRESSED, explaining to the CASHIER --

YOUNG MOTHER
... He gets like this when he doesn't sleep and when *he* doesn't sleep, *mommy* doesn't sleep. Heh -- Can you take a check? My license is in here somewhere...

EXT. SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

The baby HOWLS as The Woman pushes her cart up to a HATCHBACK, deftly unstraps the baby from his BJORN as she opens the passenger side door -- All of this with her cell held in the crook of her neck -- The baby WAILING --

YOUNG MOTHER (INTO PHONE)
... Can you get me in at 5:30? Yeah... but if I show up at six, you're gonna make me wait anyway... What? I can't... Goddammit!
(to the baby; losing it)
That's enough. Enough.

But the baby doesn't understand nor give a shit. He keeps CRYING. The Mother shakes her head, frowns as she carefully slides the baby into his CAR SEAT, snapping him in --

YOUNG MOTHER (INTO PHONE)
What? ... No, I was talking to my -- Forget it. Can y--? Shit. That's my other... Hold on a sec?

The Woman closes the car door, checks her Cell, clicks over, opens the trunk, tosses in her groceries --

YOUNG MOTHER
Hey -- I'm on the other... What? -- I don't...? Can't you just hit the reset thing?

Bags in, she SLAMS the trunk, walks over to the Driver's side door, opens it up, hops behind the wheel --

YOUNG MOTHER
You flip up the little plastic... flippy thing and there's a button, a red -- Yeah. That's it. Just push it with a pen on something. I'll be home in ten. Will you make some formula? -- Okay. Love you.

She hangs up. Drops her cell into the cup holder on the dash. And that's when she suddenly REALIZES --

It's quiet.

No... It's SILENT.

But the baby. The baby was crying SO LOUD. Why did he...?

The Woman's eyes instinctively flick to her REARVIEW MIRROR --

Wait. Hold on.

The car seat is EMPTY.

The Woman... THE MOTHER... PANICS -- Turns -- CONFUSED --

The chest harness remains CLICKED SHUT, lifeless, as it lays on the seatback. No... NO.

She THROWS open her door -- JUMPS OUT OF THE CAR -- RUNS to the other side -- did someone OPEN the door without her hearing it? Did someone fucking TAKE her b--?

LITTLE BOY
.... Daddy?

The Young Mother SPINS -- TWENTY YARDS away, a LITTLE BOY stands by a shopping cart that aimlessly rolls into the fender of a parked car -- like it was pushed by a GHOST.

LITTLE BOY
DADDY?!?

What the FUCK IS HAPPENING?!?

Then -- FROM THE MAIN ROAD -- THE SQUEAL OF TIRES as The Mother looks over just in time to see --

A BMW SMASHING HEAD-ON INTO ANOTHER CAR -- FULL SPEED!!! GLASS BREAKS -- AIRBAGS DEPLOY -- PEOPLE SCREAM AS --

LITTLE BOY
DADDY WHERE AAAAAARE YOU?!?!

CLOSE ON THE MOTHER -- Breath RAPIDLY QUICKENING -- HER EYES WET AS SHE STARTS TO TURN -- LOOKING ALL AROUND HER... Not knowing what just hit her... What just hit THEM ALL... but knowing... knowing somehow that it's REAL. It HAPPENED.

Her baby is gone.

And what is gone is not coming back.

And for reasons she does not quite understand, The Mother stops looking around. And instead --

She looks UP.

And we FOLLOW HER GAZE -- Drifting upwards as we leave her standing alone in the parking lot -- Gradually turning until we squint at the GLORIOUS BLUE SKY. PUSHING HIGHER AND HIGHER until we are consumed by a SHEER WHITE CLOUD --

And up dissolves two simple words:

T H E L E F T O V E R S

Silence. We FADE TO BLACK. A few beats. And then, a new TITLE FADES UP --

THREE YEARS LATER

Guitar hook. Punk. DRUMS THROB. And we SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF MAPLETON - DAWN

A MAN. Forties, but wearing them extremely well. He is handsome, but imperfectly so. The kind of face that's seen its share of fists smashing into it. His eyes are alternately good-humored or INTENSE and rarely in between.

This is KEVIN GARVEY.

He will be our hero. Sort of.

Kevin is RUNNING -- THE CLASH blasting through his earbuds -- And it's not a casual run -- this guy is ATHLETIC. Maybe the better word is COMPETITIVE.

He sees a WOMAN IN HER ROBE taking out the garbage. He waves at her, confident. She smiles, a little embarrassed... but waves back. Ladies like Kevin.

He rounds a CORNER, sees --

A MAN. Up on a SCAFFOLDING ALONGSIDE HIS HOUSE. He appears to be painting a GIANT MURAL OF A WOMAN'S FACE there. Weird. But not to Kevin, who chugs onto --

A QUIET SIDESTREET

And there, limping toward him, is a MANGY EMACIATED DOG.

Kevin STOPS. Takes out his earbuds. Sizes up the dog from twenty feet away. And at this distance?

He can't quite tell if its hurt, dangerous, or BOTH.

KEVIN
Hey, buddy... you okay?

The dog SNARLS... then whines. Kevin takes a few steps forward... unzipping his WAISTPACK --

KEVIN
You hungry? You eat peanut butter?

He removes a PROTEIN BAR. Unwraps it, gently puts it down --

The dog sizes him up -- Straddling the line between scared and SCARY -- But after a moment, it takes a tentative step towards him. Kevin smiles, reassuring --

KEVIN
It's okay. I won't --

BHAM! The dog's neck EXPLODES!

HOLY FUCK -- JESUS!!!

It drops to the ground -- GURGLING as it BLEEDS OUT --

Kevin -- SURPRISED -- TURNS TOWARDS THE SOUND OF THE SHOT -- BEHIND HIM -- Down the street -- FORTY YARDS AWAY --

A TALL MAN. Denim Jacket. MOUSTACHE. Baseball Hat pulled low over his eyes.

He lowers his HUNTING RIFLE, opens the door of the GREEN PICKUP TRUCK idling beside him as Kevin SHOUTS --

KEVIN
HEY!!!!

But the TALL MAN is already behind the wheel -- GUNNING THE IGNITION -- DRIVING OFF --

KEVIN
WHAT THE... FUCK!?!?

But the truck is gone. Kevin just stands there. Out of breath. ANGRY. CONFUSED. DISTURBED. And then --

He hears a WHIMPER. Kevin turns back towards the DOG... walks over to it.

The dog blinks. Slow RASPING breaths. There is a LOT OF BLOOD. Kevin doesn't think. Just DOES.

He kneels on the pavement beside the dog, presses his hands down on the WOUND in its neck, applying PRESSURE --

But its breath becomes more RAGGED. Slowing. Finally... Excruciatingly, its side no longer rises at all.

And the dog DIES.

Kevin removes his hands from the wound. And as he does -- he sees A BONE-SHAPED SILVER TAG hanging from the dog's collar, encrusted with dirt and grime. Kevin licks his fingertip and uncovers the WRITING engraved on the tag --

"Hello," it says. "My name is Dudley."

ON KEVIN. Affected. And after a moment, he gently places his arms around Dudley and lifts him up as we CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - HOUSE - DAY

A WOMAN.

Her eyes flicker open... and FOCUS. She is WAKING UP. Probably due to THE BUZZSAW SOUND OF SNORING beside her. We are TOO CLOSE on the woman to see the culprit.

She is probably forty. There is a lot going on behind her eyes... and a sense that she for some reason, she is willing to UNLEASH it.

This is LAURIE.

She sits up -- and we see she's in a SLEEPING BAG on the floor. Dressed in an odd nightgown that appears to have been sewn from an old WHITE SHEET. Laurie reaches to her side, fumbles for a pack of CIGARETTES, brings one to her lips.

CUT WIDE to find Laurie on the floor in a dim room. There are FIVE OTHER WOMEN in sleeping bags. All of them out cold, utterly oblivious to the UNGODLY SNORING coming from a HEAVYSET OLDER WOMAN, lying right next to Laurie.

Laurie reaches out and gives the old woman a hard shove in the back. The old woman groans... and mercifully STOPS.

Laurie SNAPS a match to life -- puts it to the end of her cigarette and takes a long, deep drag. She BLINKS --

A QUICK AND JARRING JUMPCUT -- THREE SECONDS LONG

TWO GIRLS. Maybe eleven years old. Wearing PRIVATE SCHOOL UNIFORMS; One girl is black. The other is white. And they are BRUTALLY FIGHTING. PULLING EACH OTHER'S HAIR. TEARS ROLLING DOWN THEIR FACES. The white girl SCREAMS --

Laurie blinks again.

What the fuck WAS that? A memory? Something ELSE? We do not know. But there will be MORE.

Now, Laurie slowly EXHALES, blows a SMOKE RING at the ceiling. LOOKING DOWN AT HER THROUGH THE HALO as we CUT TO:

THE SHOWER

Laurie stands naked in the SHOWER, shivering in the cold water. Lathers a bar of soap in her hands, runs them through her hair. She grits her teeth as we CUT TO:

THE BATHROOM

Laurie BRUSHES her teeth over a SINK. Staring forwards. But when we CIRCLE AROUND and drop over her shoulder, we SEE she's not looking at herself, but at a RECTANGLE OF FADED PAINT over the sink where the mirror used to be. Huh.

THE HALLWAY

Laurie exits the bathroom, wet-haired, now dressed in WHITE CLOTHING. She passes FOUR WOMEN in the hall, all patiently waiting their turn in the bathroom. They avoid eye contact.

Laurie walks by a POSTER taped on the wall -- CLOSE UP ON the burning red ember of a CIGARETTE TIP -- BLOCK LETTERS READ --

WE SMOKE

SO THEY REMEMBER

THE KITCHEN

Standing by the stove, Laurie ladles grayish slop from a large KETTLE of bubbling PORRIDGEY GRUEL as we CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - HOUSE

What was once a formal dining room now holds TWO LONG TABLES with BENCHES. EIGHTEEN PEOPLE... MEN AND WOMEN, all in WHITE, sit, eating their porridge. A few are SMOKING.

But no one fucking TALKS.

An OLDER MAN enters the dining room, hangs a CLIPBOARD on a nail in the wall, beneath a sign that reads, "OPERATIONS."

As soon as he leaves, everyone gets up and congregates around the clipboard like a group of High School Kids looking to see who got what part in the play --

ON LAURIE, furrowing her brow as she reads the LIST OF NAMES posted. Her eyes FLASH. Disappointment. Then ANGER.

INT. PATTI LEVIN'S "OFFICE" - HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

AN OLDER WOMAN with frizzy gray hair sits behind a desk piled high with paperwork. This is PATTI LEVIN. And whatever the hell is happening in this house? She's in CHARGE OF IT.

Behind her, a TELEVISION IS ON. No volume. CLOSED CAPTIONED: A PHALANX OF REPORTERS on the steps of the CAPITAL as a MAN exits a SEDAN, moves through, overwhelmed --

REPORTER (CLOSED CAPTIONED)
... We've only just been handed the Commission's 1400 page report, Chris -- It will take some time for us to wade through it all, but Dr. Denziger is expected to present his findings within the next hour...

Patti turns as the door abruptly OPENS and in comes Laurie. INTENSE, she crosses to a large mounted WHITE DRY-ERASE BOARD on the wall, grabs a MARKER -- And she WRITES --

"WHY AM I NOT ON THE LIST?"

Patti looks at her. Then, unhurriedly, picks up an IPAD sitting in front of her. Uses her FINGER to write on it, HOLDS IT UP for Laurie to see --

"People will get hurt."

Laurie frowns, turns to the WHITEBOARD. Writes --

"SO?"

And to make her point, Laurie UNDERLINES the word. Patti cocks her head. PLEASED. Writes on her iPad, holds it up --

"O.K. You're in."

Laurie NODS. Damn straight she's in. But what FOR?

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - MAPLETON HIGH - DAY

An impossibly GORGEOUS TEENAGER. Tall. DREAMY. His name is NICK. But he's not who we're here to see as we RACK FOCUS:

TO THE GIRL STARING AT HIM from three rows away. Sixteen and still more GIRL than woman. A couple years ago, we might have described her as "sweet." That is no longer true.

This is JILL.

She is focused on Nick, ignoring the MORNING ANNOUNCEMENTS --

HIGH SCHOOL DORK (OVER P.A.)
... and The French Club's Carnival of Croissants will be outside the caf after lunch... Bone Appetite!
(papers shuffle)
... And uh, finally, the Denziger Commission Report was released this morning -- Uh... We'll be live-streaming the hearings in the auditorium all day and the Guidance Staff will be available for anyone who needs to, y'know, talk it out.

A THUMP OF THE MIC as it's handed over to an actual adult, VICE PRINCIPAL ISAACS. A calm, authoritative voice --

VICE PRINCIPAL ISAACS (OVER P.A.)
Thank you, Glen. Let's rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The HOMEROOM TEACHER sits at the front, absorbed in the SPORTS PAGE. None of the kids get up, nor recite the pledge.

VICE PRINCIPAL ISAACS (OVER P.A.)
... Indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.
(a beat; then)
And now, for those who want to... Let us pray for mercy and forgiveness... and the return of those who have left us.

And now, some of the kids DO get up. Or more accurately, KNEEL DOWN beside their desks. About HALF A DOZEN of them. Even the teacher actually puts down his paper.

And they PRAY.

No uniforms. No crucifixes, nuns or priests. This is PUBLIC SCHOOL. And it would appear that after a long separation of Church and State, they are finally BACK TOGETHER.

Nick turns, sees Jill looking at him. He GRINS, rolling his eyes, MOCKING the penitent. Puts a finger up to his temple, cocks the trigger that is his thumb... blows his brains out.

Jill seems surprised by the attention, but plays it off. Flash of MISCHIEF in her eye. She goes to work tying an imaginary piece of ROPE -- slides the IMAGINARY NOOSE over her head... and YANKS HARD -- SNAPPING HER NECK with intense pantomimed SUDDENNESS, eyes bulging and tongue LOLLING.

ON NICK. His grin wavers. A little SPOOKED.

ON JILL. Sees his reaction. She looks away, EMBARRASSED.

CLASS
... Amen.

CUT TO:

EXT. SERVICE STATION - DAY

A DOWNPOUR.

Sparse landscape -- maybe the Southwest? A BEAT-UP VAN is parked in front of one of the pumps of an abandoned GAS STATION. Inside --

A GOOD-LOOKING KID. Early twenties. Mussed hair. He takes a bite of a SNICKERS BAR, washes it down with a Mountain Dew. There is something very RELAXED about him... he seems stoned, but isn't. We like him instantly.

This is TOM.

BZZZZZ. His cellphone VIBRATES across the DASH. Tom picks it up, looks at the WORD on his TEXT DISPLAY -- "Incoming."

Now, he looks up through the WINDSHIELD as ANOTHER CAR pulls into the station. STOPS thirty yards away. FLASHES ITS BRIGHTS. Tom FLICKS the KNOB, FLASHES BACK. And then --

The passenger door of the other car opens and out hops a MAN. Tom leans over and opens the door as the guy hops in, SOAKED. Late fifties. Despite the weather, he wears SUNGLASSES and a baseball hat. His name is WITTEN and he seems very PUT OUT --

WITTEN
Jesus... How many more cars am I going to have to get in and out of?

TOM
This is it, Congressman. Uh... Is it cool if I call you that?

WITTEN
I don't give a shit what you call me. Just drive, kid.

Tom isn't bothered by this asshole... almost as if he's dealt with this many, many times --

TOM
You have something for me?

Witten shakes his head, unzips his jacket pocket. Pulls out a THICK ENVELOPE. Hands it to Tom, who takes a peek inside -- It's FILLED WITH HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

TOM
Cool. Thanks. Would you mind giving me your phone, please?

WITTEN
Why?

TOM
Because that's how it works.

Witten, PERTURBED, reaches into his inside pocket and extracts his BLACKBERRY. Tom takes it, slides off the casing, expertly pops the SIM CARD OUT --

TOM
I promise you'll get it back once you've talked to him.

"Him?" Who the fuck is HIM? Tom drops the cell into a plastic BAGGIE which he places in the glovebox, takes out a folded BLACK BANDANA --

TOM
You mind?
(off Witten's look)
It's a blindfold.

WITTEN
Are you fucking serious?

Tom just SMILES. No response necessary. And we CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DRIVING - LATER

THE WIPERS streak back and forth as Tom and the BLINDFOLDED WITTEN drive down a COUNTRY ROAD. Lou Reed ENDS... Tom ejects a cassette, FLIPS it over to the B-side. Hits PLAY.

WITTEN
Is that a cassette player?

TOM
Yeah... Old school.

WITTEN
Old school sounds like shit.

Tom smiles, amused by this guy. Drives on. A few beats.

WITTEN
How long have you worked for him?

TOM
Couple years.

WITTEN
You in college?

TOM
I was. Not anymore.

WITTEN
Why not?

A QUICK AND JARRING JUMPCUT -- THREE SECONDS LONG

We are looking at a SNOW-COVERED QUAD -- New England Campus -- all through a FROSTY WINDOWPANE -- And suddenly -- A BODY FALLS PAST IT -- Then ANOTHER, arms FLAILING as they DROP --

Tom blinks.

TOM
I didn't see the point.

WITTEN
Your folks must be so proud.

Tom shakes his head. Knows what's going on here. SIGHS --

TOM
Y'know, Mr. Witten... just because you're scared, that doesn't mean you have to be a dick.

WITTEN
Maybe I'm a dick because I'm being treated like a Sixty Minutes Reporter going to meet the Mya-Goddamn-Tollah.

Tom just drives. Calm. Then --

TOM
You're gonna forget you ever felt this way.

WITTEN
Felt... what way?

TOM
Burdened.

A BEAT. Yes. That's exactly right. Witten absorbs it.

WITTEN
You say that to everyone you drive?

TOM
Nope. Sometimes I say "Abandoned."

Witten shakes his head. Likes this kid. Now. Softly --

WITTEN
Wayne... he's the real deal?

WAYNE. Well THAT'S someone we can't wait to meet. As for Tom? His smile returns. Absolutely confident --

TOM
He's as real as it gets.

Huh. All right then. And as they drive on, we CUT TO:

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

CLOSE ON A TV. *The graphic: "DENZIGER COMMISSION PRESENTS FINDINGS." In the HOT SEAT -- DR. RICHARD DENZIGER -- before a row of SENATORS, reading from a prepared statement --*

DENZIGER
... to quote Wittgenstein, "Whereof one cannot speak... thereof one must remain silent."
(puts down his statement)
Thank you.

WE PULL BACK to find ourselves in KEVIN'S BEDROOM. MESSY. Kevin enters, towel around his waist. Throws a DRY CLEANING bag on the bed as he ignores the TV and picks up the LAPTOP sitting in front of it Kevin pops it open, EXITING FRAME --

TEXAS SENATOR
Thank you, doctor. So we're clear. We convened a Council of Clerics, representatives of most world religions, who, as you know, were somewhat... conflicted about October 14th and were thus unable to reach any kind of consensus. Which in turn, led us to the "scientific community" for answers.

And while we are HOLDING ON THE SENATE HEARING on the television, there, on the edge of frame, we see Kevin's towel drop onto the floor. We also hear something... *else*?

TEXAS SENATOR
This document -- The findings of your commission -- after nearly twenty months of so-called "research" and God knows how many taxpayer dollars -- As to the instantaneous disappearance of 2% of the World's population... some 140 million souls... Your conclusion as to what happened to them... Why them... and where they've gone... is... and I'm just paraphrasing here...
(looks up)
"I don't know?"

We're still not clear what Kevin is up to, but his ELBOW occasionally moves into the edge of our frame. And he just turned up the VOLUME on whatever he's watching on the LAPTOP, which based on the dialogue (*"Mmmmm Give me that cock!"*) could only be INTERNET PORN.

Meanwhile, on the TV, Denziger takes a drink of water, responds to the Senators, somewhat FRUSTRATED --

DENZIGER,
Sir... I am a scientist and I was asked to look at data. At facts. I was asked to identify patterns that weren't immediately obvious and address related events -- like the Chef Anomaly or the Brandenburg Carousel that were... still are considered "miracles." But they are simply statistical hiccups that we can't explain. Because, sir, in my opinion, miracles do not exist.

We hear Kevin SIGH. The PORN cuts off abruptly as the LAPTOP CLOSES. We see him reach for the towel and pick it up.

TEXAS SENATOR (ON TV)
"Miracles do not exist?"

DENZIGER (ON TV)
Scientifically speaking? No, sir. They don't.

Kevin, bare-assed, cleans himself off with the towel as he crosses back through frame.

TEXAS SENATOR (ON TV)
Doctor, pardon my tone, but who are you, after all we've been through -- Who are you, sir, to tell the American people that? Millions... Millions of mothers, fathers, sons, daughters... disappeared. Gone. In an instant. If that's not a miracle, what in God's name do you call it?

Kevin crosses to the bed. Picks up the dry-cleaning --

IT'S A POLICE UNIFORM.

DEZINGER (ON TV)
I do not know. I don't. But if you're implying it was a miracle?
(then; flash of defiance)
I'm fairly certain, sir, that "God" sat this one out.

A HUSH FALLS OVER THE SENATE as Kevin RIPS OFF THE PLASTIC of the dry-cleaning bag, ready for WORK as we CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MAPLETON - DAY

A CAR pulls up in front of a nice SUBURBAN HOUSE. Parks. The door opens and out steps --

CHIEF OF POLICE KEVIN GARVEY. He wears the uniform well, like he was born to wear it. In many ways, he was.

Kevin strides up the front walk, removes his sunglasses. Clears his throat. And GLANCES ACROSS THE FRONT LAWN, where a BIRD FEEDER is flanked by several GARDEN GNOMES. But most oddly --

There is an enormous STAG. Twelve-point antlers. And not ceramic. It looks REAL. But it is so uncannily STILL it could only be STUFFED -- some kind of TAXIDERMY.

ON KEVIN. Huh. *Weird.* He mounts the steps to the PORCH, pushes the doorbell -- DING DONG!

He stands there for a moment. Waiting. Glances across the lawn again at that STAG. Just standing there like a Christmas decoration that has overstayed its welcome. And it kinda seems as if it's...

Looking at him?

The DOOR OPENS. Kevin turns to see an ASIAN WOMAN in her forties, concerned look on her face. Most people don't like cops showing up on their doorstep. Kevin knows this.

KEVIN
Hi there. Mrs. Tunney?

ASIAN WOMAN
... Yes?

KEVIN
Chief Kevin Garvey. How are you?

Mrs. Tunney reluctantly shakes his outstretched hand.

KEVIN
Sorry to show up in uniform... I was headed into work and I --

MRS. TUNNEY
-- Garvey?

KEVIN
Yes, ma'am.

MRS. TUNNEY
I thought you went crazy.

A QUICK AND JARRING JUMPCUT -- THREE SECONDS LONG

POINT OF VIEW -- RUNNING THROUGH A SUBURBAN BACKYARD -- DUCKING THROUGH A SWINGSET in pursuit of A NAKED MAN. WHITE HAIR, WRINKLED ASS, BUT QUICK -- AND NOW HOPPING A FENCE.

Kevin blinks. Then. An uncomfortable smile.

KEVIN
That was actually my dad.
(then)
The former chief.

MRS. TUNNEY
Oh.

Fascinating. More to come. But now? Down to BUSINESS.

KEVIN
Mrs. Tunney... I'm here because your dog -- Dudley? I... found him this morning and...
(lowers his eyes)
He's dead. I'm sorry.

Kevin reaches into his pocket. Takes out the DOG COLLAR. Extends it, sympathetically --

KEVIN
I have him in my trunk.

ON MRS. TUNNEY. She does not take the collar.

MRS. TUNNEY
So?

KEVIN
... Uh, I just thought you'd want --

MRS. TUNNEY
-- That dog's been gone for three years. Ran away and never came back. He was my husband's.
(then; measured)
He's not coming back, either.

ON KEVIN. He can do the math. Not sure what to say here --

KEVIN
I'm sorry for your loss.

MRS. TUNNEY
Is *that* what it is?

Kevin senses the same thing we do -- This woman does not want to be reminded of that day three years ago. Not at ALL. Nobody does. And that includes Kevin, who blankets said sentiment in professionally detached COOLNESS --

KEVIN
What would you like me to do with the body, Mrs. Tunney?

ASIAN WOMAN
I don't care.

And with that, she gently closes the door in his face.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MAPLETON - MOMENTS LATER

Kevin strides down the front walk, FRUSTRATED. He's got his cell out, DIALS, waits, THEN --

KEVIN (INTO PHONE)
... Dennis, it's me. You anywhere on that pickup truck? -- No, there were no plates. If there were plates I would've -- Dennis, just say, "Sorry, Chief. I do not, as of now, know shit."
(sighs; checks his watch)
I've got an hour before the meeting... I'm heading over to animal control to drop off this d--
(reacts; surprised)
-- No. They said noon -- What? *Who* changed it?
(shakes his head; ahh..)
-- Of course she did. I'm on my way... Stall them.
(hangs up; pissed)
Shit.

Kevin angrily pulls open his car door, about to hop in... but STOPS. Because there, across the lawn, by the bird feeder --

The Taxidermied Stag is GONE. Like it was never there.

HOLD ON KEVIN. ...What? The *hell*? And we SMASH TO:

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC FIELD - DAY

A FIELD HOCKEY SCRIMMAGE.

The Girls Varsity takes on the JV Squad -- Pleated skirts and KNEE HIGH SOCKS -- And there in the MIDST OF IT ALL --

JILL. Surprisingly ATHLETIC as she fights for the ball -- Her opponent a big blonde enforcer, HAILEY. Handling her stick with great dexterity, Jill wins the ball, but --

... Hailey CRACKS her in the shin with her stick. Cheap SHOT. Totally intentional. Jill SUCKS IN HER BREATH -- SHIT. That HURT. She goes to one knee, glaring at Hailey...

... Who GRINS through her mouthguard and trots off.

A FEW MINUTES LATER

THE BLUE TEAM makes a shot on goal -- DEFLECTED by the goalie, who smacks the ball to mid-field where --

Jill and Hailey converge on it at roughly the same time -- Hailey HIP-CHECKS Jill -- ROUGH -- ON JILL. Something SNAPS. No warning --

KRRRRRNCCCCHH! She SMASHES her elbow into Hailey's face -- BRUTALLY ON TARGET. Jesus.

Girls SHRIEK as Hailey CRUMBLES to the ground, moaning, hands over her NOSE as BLOOD pours out between her fingers. She looks up at Jill, CONFUSED AND ANGRY --

HAILEY
...Wudda fuhk, Jill?!?

But Jill stares down at her without apology, as if she were a THOUSAND MILES AWAY.

HAILEY
WUD DA FUH#!?!?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

Jill sits across the desk from her COACH, a short fireplug of a woman who shakes her head in DISAPPOINTMENT --

COACH
You broke her nose, Jill. I heard it from the sidelines.

Jill says nothing. Coach SIGHS --

COACH
You're one of our best players, but I can't tolerate this behavior. Hailey is your teammate. What were you thinking?

The Coach waits for a response, but doesn't get one. Jill's eyes are wet -- She's angry and embarrassed and guilty -- but she's HOLDING IT ALL BACK. The Coach is CONCERNED --

COACH
Jill... I'm sure things have been hard since your mother --

JILL
-- I'm fine.

COACH
Are you?

ON JILL. She blinks. No. She probably ISN'T. The Coach tries to remain as sympathetic as possible...

COACH
I'm sorry, but if I'm gonna put you back on that field, I need your word this won't happen again.
(a beat)
Do I have your word, Jill?

Jill takes a moment. Then, completely GENUINE --

JILL
Yeah. Okay.

The Coach smiles, assuaged. Good talk. However...

JILL
As long as that cunt stays away from me.

The Coach's smile DROPS. SHOCKED as we are. And we CUT TO:

INT. CITY HALL - DAY

KEVIN. Briskly moving down a hallway, buttoning his TOP BUTTON and looking very, very ANGRY as he reaches --

DENNIS LUCKEY. Young cop. More handsome than he is smart --

DENNIS
Hey... uh, I told her you were late because of a family emergency.

KEVIN
She knows why I'm late.

Kevin blows through the DOUBLE DOORS into --

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS - CONTINUOUS

-- THE MIDST OF A PLANNING MEETING. THIRTY PEOPLE -- CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS, FIRE MARSHALL -- PowerPoint of A PARADE ROUTE projected onto a SCREEN -- The title emblazoned above it reads "HEROES DAY." And all of this is presided over by --

LUCY
... That's gonna cut the parade in half. It's a damn side-street... we can close it for three hours.

LUCY WARBURTON. Forty. Damaged. Sexy. Black. Bright. And the MAYOR. She frowns, concerned, as Kevin enters --

LUCY
Everything okay, Chief?

But she's NOT concerned. And Kevin knows she's not.

KEVIN
Your office told me noon.

LUCY
Did they?

KEVIN
They did.

LUCY
Well. At least that gave you time to deal with your emergency.

ON KEVIN. Hooo boy. Doesn't fight. For NOW. Moves to his chair amongst a group of COPS who nod respectfully as he sits. Once he does, Kevin just quietly eyes Lucy, like Quint in Jaws, waiting to say what's on his mind.

LUCY
Okay, provided we sort out the closures -- Parade should end about eleven at the park. Then we'll unveil the statue... which, I'm told, is terrifying --
(to Council Member)
We have to do that tomorrow?

COUNCIL MEMBER
Hector's been working on it for a year. It'll be kinda weird to just leave the sheet on it.

LUCY
(sighs; fine)
Okay, we *quickly* unveil the statue, Girl Scouts read the names, I say a few words, introduce Nora Durst --

FIRE CHIEF
-- What's she gonna say?

LUCY
She lost her entire family, Doug. She'll say whatever the fuck she wants to.

The Fire Chief's eyes drop. ASHAMED. Lucy claps her hands --

LUCY
And there we have it. Our very first Heroes Day. Any questions?

OLDER COP
What makes them "Heroes?" My brother-in-law disappeared and he was kind've a dipshit.

LUCY
They're heroes because no one's gonna come to a parade on "We Don't Know What The Fuck Happened Day."
(let's go over it again)
The D.S.D. proclaimed a Federal Holiday of Remembrance and that's what they're calling our departed because that's how we want to remember them. Everyone loves a Hero. So we're all gonna have a nice walk through town, we'll talk about who we lost, have a good cry and then we'll move on. It's time. We're ready.
(convincing herself)
Everybody's ready to feel better.

A quick survey of the faces in the room seems to indicate that there is some truth to that. Except for --

KEVIN
Not everybody.
(then)
Not The Remnant.

The entire temperature of the room drops the moment he says that WORD. And whatever it *means*? He's got their ATTENTION.

KEVIN
The whole town in one place at one time... we're inviting them to come. And when they do?
(to Lucy; pointed)
People are gonna get hurt.

ON THE FACES OF THE PEANUT GALLERY. *Shit.* Gauntlet thrown.

LUCY
At last. The Chief speaks.

KEVIN
I would've said something sooner, but I was too riveted.

Lucy narrows her eyes. Okay. Let's GO --

LUCY
The G.R. isn't a threat. If they want to stage a non-violent protest, that's their right.

KEVIN
You were at Homecoming... they walked right onto the field.

LUCY
And then they walked right off. No harm done.

KEVIN
They're trying to... provoke us.

LUCY
Then don't get provoked.

Okay. She's getting under his skin now. And this is clearly a subject about which he is INTENSELY PASSIONATE --

KEVIN
I think you need to open your eyes and take a good look at what's happening to this town. A year ago, the Guilty Remnant didn't exist. Now? They've bought up an entire cul-de-sac. More houses means more members. They're recruiting. And for what? Well shit, Lucy, we don't *know*.
(ramping up)
Where'd they come from? Why are they *here*? We don't even know who they are.

Heads NOD. Most in the room AGREE. But Lucy fires back --

LUCY
We know who they *were*.

ON KEVIN. We don't know why yet, but that was PERSONAL.

KEVIN
They're coming, Lucy.

LUCY
You want me to call it off?

KEVIN
Yeah. I want you to call it off.

A beat. Then --

LUCY
No.

Kevin blinks. He is MAD. But he must. Keep. It. IN.

But he's beat. And he knows it. So he picks up his hat, tucks it under his arm. But there's one MORE THING --

KEVIN
You're wrong. This town isn't ready to feel better.
(intense)
It's ready to fucking explode.

And with that, Kevin strides out -- HOLDING ON HIS FACE AS HE DOES, we can't help but feel he's ready to explode TOO as we SMASH TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

LAURIE. Sitting in a folding chair.

Next to her is GLADYS, the heavyset older woman who was SNORING this morning. There are TWENTY OTHER PEOPLE in folding chairs arranged in a circle... all spaced in same-sex pairs and dressed ALL IN WHITE.

It's pretty weird.

PATTI LEVIN works her way around the circle, handing a MANILA FOLDER to each pair.

Laurie removes the RUBBER BAND around her folder, opens it up as Gladys looks over her shoulder.

Inside the folder; PAPERS. Tax returns. School Transcripts. Mortgage applications. Paper-Clipped to the top is a PHOTOGRAPH of a SMILING YOUNG WOMAN. Freckled. RED HAIR.

Gladys takes the PAD hanging around her neck, scribbles on it, shows it to Laurie --

"She's pretty."

Laurie NODS, turns back to the photo. The sweet, smiling face of the REDHEAD. And we CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

A LIT JOINT arcs toward a pair of POUTY LIPS. They belong to a preternaturally good-looking SEVENTEEN YEAR-OLD GIRL. Confidence oozes out of her.

This is AIMEE.

AIMEE
... Christ, girl... I didn't know you were y'know, even capable of saying "cunt."

REVEAL Jill, still in Her dirty field hockey gear.

JILL
I say it all the time.

AIMEE
To *who*?

JILL
... Cunts?

Aimee LAUGHS, exhaling smoke. Jill takes a tiny hit -- she isn't trying to get high as much as fit in.

AIMEE
So... what? They kicked you off the team?

JILL
Nah, I got off with a warning. But if my "attitude" doesn't change, Coach is gonna call my dad.

AIMEE
Your attitude does kinda suck.

JILL
Really?

And now we see it. Vulnerability. A desire to be LIKED. Especially by this more beautiful and more mature girl.

AIMEE
Nah. But you are all intense and melancholy and shit sometimes. You need to get, like… out of your own head, y'know?
(takes a deep hit)
That's why you have to come to Dorfman's tonight.

JILL
Agh, I'm sick of parties.

AIMEE
But it's gonna be effing epic.
(exhales)
And Nick's gonna be there.

Jill can't suppress a small embarrassed GRIN. Amy SMILES --

AIMEE
Awwww, yeah! NICK!!!!

Jill LAUGHS... as does Aimee -- They're CLOSE. At least in High School Terms. MEEP MEEP! A CAR HORN, as --

A WHITE PRIUS pulls up beside them. The passenger window slides down, revealing a pair of handsome, IDENTICAL TWINS with matching BLOND DREADLOCKS, Rastafarian Winkelvosses.

This is SCOTT and ADAM FROST.

Scott smiles from the passenger seat. He's the chatty one --

SCOTT
Yo, ladies. Wanna get stoned and play some ping pong?

Aimee holds up the joint. Playfully dismissive --

AIMEE
We're already stoned.

SCOTT
Oh. Okay. Then we can skip right to the ping pong.

AIMEE
And by "ping-pong" you mean...?

SCOTT
Uh... it's like tennis. But easier. With a little white ball.

AIMEE
Thanks. We're gonna pass.

SCOTT
Right on.
(smiles; good natured)
As you were.

But before they drive off, Adam leans over from behind the wheel. Throughout this, his eyes have never left Jill --

ADAM
You going to Dorfman's party?

AIMEE
Hell yeah we are. It's gonna be effing epic.

Adam seems amused by the designation... And unlike most men, is impervious to Aimee's charms. He smiles at Jill --

ADAM
Cool. See you there.

Adam's soulful gaze lingers on Jill just long enough for us to GET IT. And then... he drops the Prius into drive and silently zips off. Aimee turns to Jill, SMIRKS --

AIMEE
Ooh, girl! Someone wants to show you his little white balls!

Aimee cracks herself up. Jill BLUSHES as we CUT TO:

EXT. DIRT ROAD/RANCH GATE - DAY

A GUARDHOUSE beside a large GATE. Beyond it, a SNAKING DIRT ROAD leads into acres of RANCH. A crunch of GRAVEL --

THE BEAT-UP VAN pulls up to the gate. TOM rolls down his window -- We see the still blindfolded WITTEN beside him in the Passenger Seat as A MAN IN A FLANNEL SHIRT and AVIATOR SHADES exits the GUARDHOUSE. Steps up to the car.

TOM
Hey, Pete.

PETE
Tom. Anybody try to follow you?

TOM
Nope. I took the long way up.

Tom reaches over, pops open the glove. Takes out the envelope and the baggie with the Blackberry. Hands them both to Pete, who checks the LARGE WAD OF CASH --

TOM
I didn't count it, so feel free to take whatever you need.

PETE
Yacht's not gonna pay for itself.

Tom GRINS. This is their shtick. Pete glances at Witten -- Satisfied. Takes a WALKIE TALKIE from his belt, keys it --

PETE (INTO WALKIE)
Two coming in.

A moment later -- VRRRRRRRRRM -- The GATE slowly opens as Tom waves, pops the van into gear and drives on through.

ON PETE, watching him go -- And as he puts his walkie back on his belt, we drop down to see the HANDLE OF A GUN sticking out of the back of his waistband as we CUT TO:

INT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Tom and Witten head down a LONG HALLWAY at the end of which stands a smartly dressed OLDER WOMAN. She smiles --

OLDER WOMAN
Congressman. We're so happy to have you here. How was your trip?

WITTEN
... Fine. Thanks.

OLDER WOMAN
So sorry about all the ridiculous security measures... but you can never be too safe. I'm sure you're used to it.

WITTEN
Sure, of course.

Now, like a masseuse greeting a client into the spa, The woman gently puts her hand on the small of Witten's back --

OLDER WOMAN
Wayne's very excited to meet you.
Go on in.

And with that, she OPENS the door. Hard to get a sense of the ROOM, but there are PILES AND PILES AND PILES of books stacked everywhere. Beyond which, is a DESK. And at that desk, WAY ACROSS THE ROOM --

IS A MAN. Muscular. Middle-Aged. Black. In a bathrobe... and we're not entirely sure if he's wearing anything under it. His face is serene, radiating undeniable POWER.

This is WAYNE.

There are some... actually MANY, who call him "HOLY WAYNE." This nickname may sound silly, but it is nonetheless fitting for reasons that will become increasingly clear.

Witten steps in... somewhat tentatively as Wayne rises to meet him, SMILING.

ON TOM. A fleeting moment of EYE CONTACT with Wayne as the Older Woman gently closes the door and we CUT TO:

EXT. RANCH GROUNDS - DAY

Tom walks through the (expansive) GROUNDS OF THE RANCH... Could be the California Desert. Or Texas? The rain has lifted. The sun SEENES as Tom arrives at --

A LARGE OLYMPIC SIZED POOL

Music plays while SIX BIKINI-CLAD ASIAN GIRLS splash around and lounge in the sun. The girls are just old enough to make us feel either wildly uncomfortable or like complete perverts... which is pretty much the POINT.

Tom nods to a couple of FLANNEL SHIRTED GUARDS (one of whom reads THE ECONOMIST in the LIFEGUARD CHAIR) as he scans the area around the pool, finally finds who he's looking for --

As YOUNG as she is beautiful, she lays on a TOWEL beside the pool, LARGE SUNGLASSES cover her face. An Asian LOLITA.

Her name is CHRISTINE.

Unsure if she's sleeping, Tom gently places a PAPER BAG beside her. Starts to move away --

CHRISTINE
... That what I think it is?

Tom stops. Smiles.

TOM
Yup.

She sits up, pushing the sunglasses to the top of her head as she excitedly grabs the bag, reaching in -- Pulls out five or six GUMMI WORMS. Smiles at Tom, delighted --

CHRISTINE
You are the best.

TOM
Ask and ye shall receive.

She crams the worms into her mouth at once, CHEWING --

CHRISTINE
mmmmmSo tell me who got sent home.
I *know* you watched it.

TOM
But *why* do I watch it?

Christine bats her eyelashes, plays up her girlishness --

CHRISTINE
Because you *laoooooooove* me.

And as much as Tom wants to play it cool (and perhaps he HAS TO because that Guy in the lifeguard chair is looking RIGHT AT HIM) it's clear that he is indeed SMITTEN with this girl.

TOM
Kaitlin got booted.

CHRISTINE
No way!

TOM
Yeah. Brian took her out on this hot air balloon and he was telling her how he felt this amazing connection...

CHRISTINE
(chewing her worms)
... Oh that lying shit. He get her into the fantasy suite?

TOM
What woman can resist a hot tub and like, four hundred candles?

CHRISTINE
I could. Because I'm not a whore.

TOM
You shouldn't talk about Kaitlin that way. She said her heart was broken and then she cried for almost twelve seconds.

Christine CRACKS UP -- genuine girlish LAUGHTER -- SNORTING -- Pieces of gummi worm spraying all over Tom, LAUGHING TOO --

TOM
Jesus! Try eating one at a time!

CHRISTINE
(overcome by giggles)
I CAN'T!!!

Tom's CELL RINGS. Still LAUGHING, he pulls it out of his pocket and CHECKS THE DISPLAY -- CLOSE ON HIS FACE. A call he does not want to take.

CHRISTINE
You need to answer that?

Tom SNAPS out of it. Pockets the phone. He SMILES --

TOM
No, ma'am. I do not.

And as Christine smiles BACK, we CUT TO:

INT. KEVIN'S CAR - STREETS OF MAPLETON - DUSK

Kevin sits behind the wheel, phone pressed to his ear. His uniform is unbuttoned. He looks out his window at something.

RECORDED MESSAGE
... Hi. This is Tom Garvey.
Please leave a message. God bless.

BEEEEEP. Kevin hesitates, not sure whether to talk. Then --

KEVIN (INTO PHONE)
Hey, Tommy... it's dad.
(then)
Just wanted to hear your voice.

He hangs up. Drops the phone into the console, next to A CAN OF BEER in the cup holder. Kevin picks it up, takes a long gulp, never averting his eyes from whatever he's looking at. Which just so happens to be --

A CHURCH

Across the street. And it is HOPPING. Lots of people. Well dressed men and women -- FAMILIES -- milling around outside.

ON KEVIN. Looking a little... empty? HE BURPS. Drops the beer back into the console, turns the IGNITION as we CUT TO:

INT. GARVEY HOUSE - DUSK

Kevin unlocks the front door, steps inside with a handful of mail. Drops it into an (overflowing) tray on an end-table.

IN THE KITCHEN

LIGHTNING QUICK CUTS -- Kevin VIGOROUSLY MASHES GROUND BEEF with his hands -- CUTS VEGETABLES WITH A SHARP KNIFE -- POURS A BOTTLE OF KETCHUP onto the BEEF -- SLIDES A CASSEROLE DISH WITH THE MEATLOAF INTO THE OVEN -- TURNS A TIMER -- DING!

ON THE STAIRWELL

Weary, Kevin heads up the stairs... and then he STOPS.

There are FAMILY PHOTOS lining the wall up the stairwell. Right now, Kevin is LOOKING AT ONE. Then, without warning --

Kevin SLAMS HIS ELBOW INTO THE FRAME -- GLASS BREAKS.

And without further ado, he continues up the stairs, giving us a look at the PHOTO WITHIN.

A POSED FAMILY PORTRAIT. KEVIN SMILES, hands on the shoulders of TOM and JILL... A couple years younger than they are now, but if we hadn't figured it out already, this pretty much confirms they're his KIDS. But more importantly --

There is a WOMAN standing next to Kevin... But the SHATTERWEB OF GLASS where Kevin's elbow hit (or perhaps, was AIMED) happens to be RIGHT OVER HER FACE, obscuring her identity.

HOLD ON THAT photo. A family frozen in a better time... the ICE cracking around them. And we CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM - GARVEY HOUSE - EVENING

Kevin sits at the dinner table, takes a forkful of MEATLOAF. Pours a can of beer into a TALL GLASS as --

AIMEE (O.S.)
Thanks so much for letting me crash your dinner, Mr. Garvey...
(MORE)

AIMEE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It's awesome that you guys do this whole like, "family" thing every night.

Reveal AIMEE, sitting next to him at the table. JILL sits across from her. Eyes low, picking at her food, distracted.

KEVIN
You hear that, Jill? Aimee thinks it's awesome.

Jill looks up at Aimee -- "Thanks for that."

KEVIN
How was hockey practice?

JILL
(a beat; shrugs)
Same old, same old.

Kevin gives her a good look. Instincts tell him otherwise --

KEVIN
... What?

JILL
What?

KEVIN
Something you want to tell me?

Jill just looks at him. Evenly.

JILL
This meatloaf is fucking spectacular.

Kevin ALMOST reacts angrily... but quickly decides that's exactly what she <u>wants</u> him to do. Instead, he SMILES --

KEVIN
That is the nicest thing anyone's ever said about my cooking.

Aimee grins, charmed by Kevin. Jill is not.

AIMEE
So, Mr. Garvey, are you like, keeping the peace and stuff at the whole parade thing tomorrow?

KEVIN
You're not going are you?

AIMEE
Prob'ly not. It sounds depressing.

Now it's JILL'S instinct that kicks in --

JILL
Do you not *want* us to go?

KEVIN
I'd rather you didn't.

JILL
Why not?

KEVIN
I'd just rather you didn't.

JILL
I'd *rather* you tell me why not.

KEVIN
Do *you* even *want* to go, or are you just busting my balls?

Aimee lets out an surprised SNORT. Jill is faux aghast --

JILL
"Busting your balls?"

KEVIN
All bets were off when you said "fucking meatloaf," honey.

ON JILL. Touché. Kevin looks right at her --

KEVIN
Please. Don't come. I'd really appreciate it.

As Jill considers this, Aimee sees her opportunity --

AIMEE
Actually, Mr. Garvey, Jill and I have been discussing her attitude lately and we both think, y'know, she's under a lot of stress and maybe she needs to come out tonight and have a good time.

Kevin turns to Aimee. Likes her more than he TRUSTS her --

KEVIN
Where is this good time happening?

AIMEE
Some guy's house. Jay Dorfman.

KEVIN
"Dorfman?"

AIMEE
I know, *right*? Anyway, it's a small get together thing, his parents will totally be there. And it's like, *way* across town, so maybe Jill can borrow your car?

Kevin turns back to Jill. Looks at her. Thinks. Then --

KEVIN
No drinking.

JILL
I don't drink.

She looks at him like he should already KNOW that.

KEVIN
All right then. Have fun.

Jill nods, VICTORIOUS, puts down her fork and gets up --

JILL
C'mon, Aimee.

KEVIN
(calls after her)
Text me this Dorfman's phone number. And if it's a party, you better hope no one calls the cops.

JILL
Yeah, yeah...

But she's gone. Aimee SMILES, hopping up to follow Jill, puts her hand on Kevin's shoulder as she goes --

AIMEE
You're rad, Mr. Garvey.

And, so, Kevin is ALONE. He kills his beer. Puts the empty glass down. Wipes his mouth with his napkin. And now --

His eyes fall upon an EMPTY CHAIR across the table -- A MEMORY of the person who once occupied it. And we CUT TO:

EXT. LOVELY LITTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

A lovely little suburban HOUSE. TILTING DOWN we find--

LAURIE and GLADYS on the sidewalk. Gladys COUGHS as she lights a cigarette. Laurie's already got one. They're just standing there in front of the house.

WATCHING it.

Finally, the FRONT DOOR OPENS, and a smiling YOUNG COUPLE steps out -- he's in a suit, she's in a pretty dress. Both of them STOP COLD when they see --

The TWO WOMEN IN WHITE standing at the edge of the lawn, gazing at them with blank expressions, SMOKING.

And now we recognize the Young Woman. She's the PRETTY REDHEAD from the PHOTO IN THE FILE. The HANDSOME BOYFRIEND touches her reassuringly on the arm.

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
It's okay. Just ignore them.

Clearly, being WATCHED by these people is not as abnormal an event as we might think. The Redhead nods -- but she's DISTURBED as her boyfriend walks her to the CAR in the driveway, gallantly opens the passenger door, helps her in.

He gets behind the wheel -- backs down the driveway. And as the CAR passes by Laurie, she and the REDHEAD meet eyes -- a searching, unsettling glance as we CUT TO:

INT. RANCH HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

A DOG-EARED COPY OF CAMUS' THE STRANGER. Being read by --

Tom. Sitting on a couch in the FOYER of the RANCH HOUSE. Waiting. A SOUND. He looks up at --

THE STAIRWELL. WITTEN is being escorted down by the Older Woman, her hand on the small of his back. There is a lightness in his step... a sort of dazed SMILE on his face. Tom puts down his book, rises to meet them --

TOM
How'd it go?

This is a rhetorical question... Because Witten looks like a NEW MAN. His previous intensity... sadness... fear... all GONE. In its wake, pure, soulful HAPPINESS. Witten approaches Tom. Affectionately puts his hand on his shoulder. SMILES in a way we didn't think he was CAPABLE --

WITTEN
I am no longer burdened.

Tom's NODS. Whatever happened in that room between Witten and Holy Wayne? Tom GETS it.

TOM
All gone?

WITTEN
(calm smile)
All gone.

TOM
Awesome. Ready to go home?

But before Witten can answer, another guy -- DOUG -- arrives in the Foyer --

OLDER WOMAN
Actually, Tom, we're going to have Doug drive the Congressman back.
(a dry smile)
Wayne would like to talk to you.

ON TOM. WORRIED. This is definitely OUT of the ordinary.

TOM
... Me?

OLDER WOMAN
Yes, Tom. You.

WITTEN
Thanks, kid. Sorry for being such a prick.

Witten SMILES as he walks over to Doug, who holds the front door open for him, throwing a look at Tom that seems to say -- "You're in TROUBLE, man." The door closes. Tom is STRESSED. Turns to the Older Woman --

TOM
... Is everything okay?

OLDER WOMAN
Why don't you stay here tonight? Get yourself some dinner. There's a bed for you at the bunkhouse. He'll come to you.

TOM
But we haven't talked in forever. Do you know what it's abo--?

OLDER WOMAN
-- Tom?
(measured)
He'll come to you.

She smiles. Tom SHITS. Can't help but feel something is seriously WRONG as we SMASH TO:

INT. THE MOST EFFING EPIC PARTY EVER - NIGHT

A THRONG OF SWEATY TEENAGERS.

GRINDING INTO EACH OTHER with youthful abandon -- THE JAY Z DRIVING THEM INTO A HEDONISTIC FRENZY AS THEY DANCE -- NOT JUST RICH WHITE KIDS but BLACK KIDS AND LATINO KIDS AND GAY KIDS -- There is only LOVE HERE -- And it is ALIVE.

JILL watches the BACCHANALIA from across the DANCE FLOOR... which, by day, is just a regular LIVING ROOM in a suburban home. Something needs to be said here and it is THIS --

Kids are crazy. And they are always pushing the boundaries set by previous generations. But THIS party is a level of YOUTHFUL ABANDON that we are not quite used to. It's almost as if the world ended and DRINKING and DRUGGING and DANCING and FUCKING is all that is left. And let's face it --

The world DID end.

... Didn't it?

Jill's gaze wanders over to a young couple making out on the couch. She's YANKING HIS BELT OFF, undoing his fly as he pushes her skirt up -- Pulling her onto his lap --

Christ, they're DOING IT RIGHT HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PARTY. AND NO ONE GIVES A SHIT.

Jill STARES at them -- curious, disgusted, turned-on -- as a HAND reaches from the sweaty dancers and PULLS HER IN --

It's AIMEE, SMILING EAR TO EAR as she moves through the PULSATING BODIES, cupping her hands around her mouth --

AIMEE
Who wants to play?!?

Several enthusiastic GUYS respond, Aimee GRABS them too, pulling them along like the pied piper as she SHOUTS --

AIMEE
C'MON, BITCHES!!! WHO WANTS TO PLAAAAAAAAAAAY!?!?

INT. PANTRY - DORFMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

THE SPINNER FROM AN OLD GAME OF TWISTER as a finger THWACKS the needle and we watch it SPIN AND SPIN and STOP --

ON A CUTE LONG-HAIRED GUY. TWENTY KIDS sit around in various states of fucked-uppedness as the MUSIC PULSES THROUGH THE WALL, all of them crammed into a LARGE WALK-IN PANTRY surrounded by BOXES OF MAC AND CHEESE and CANS OF BEANS.

The GIRL who just spun crawls across the floor to the guy and KISSES HIM. The guy is INTO IT. The crowd responds enthusiastically -- MAX, a skinny teenager, shouts --

MAX
I say they GET A ROOM!

All the furor of the British Parliament as kids CHIME IN --

OTHER KIDS
Yeah! Room! VOTE! VOTE! VOTE!!!

One by one, hands go UP -- the majority RULES as the couple eagerly leaves the pantry to go do GOD KNOWS WHAT as the Spinner gets passed to --

JILL. She smiles, THYING to act like she feels cool and comfortable and PART OF THIS as she SPINS. And there must be a God because when the needle stops, it's POINTING RIGHT AT --

NICK. The impossibly gorgeous guy she was staring at in school. He smiles (politely) as the crowd OOHS... Jill pretending this wasn't exactly the outcome she wanted as she awkwardly moves across the circle.

She closes her eyes and KISSES him with everything she's got... Nick isn't rude about it, but he doesn't exactly reciprocate. The Peanut Gallery seems BORED. Aimee, however, has got her friend's BACK --

AIMEE
Get a room, you guys! VOTE!

Aimee throws up her hand... but she's pretty much the ONLY ONE. Nick breaks from the kiss, smiles awkwardly --

NICK
Sorry...

JILL
No worries.

Coupling denied by the mob, both return to the circle. BRUTAL. But now it's Nick's turn to spin and LO AND BEHOLD --

He lands on AIMEE. He moves across the circle... and it is just pure animal CHEMISTRY as he lays an OPEN MOUTHED KISS on Aimee, who does nothing to discourage him. And before long --

She's flat on the floor, legs wrapped around Nick's thighs. THEY'RE DEVOURING EACH OTHER as the other players HOOT --

KIDS
OHMYGOD -- HOLY SHIT!!! -- GET A ROOM... GET A ROOM... GET A ROOM!!!

No vote needed as everyone CHANTS -- UNANIMOUS But for JILL. The crowd CHEERS as Nick picks Amy up in his arms, carrying her out of the pantry as she locks eyes with Jill, innocently mouths *"Sorry."* Jill shrugs, "No big deal."

But of course, it IS. And we CUT TO:

INT/EXT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

THE PRETTY REDHEAD and her HANDSOME BOYFRIEND.

They're sitting at a candlelit table in a cozy, romantic restaurant. He's talking, she nods and smiles (though distractedly) as he does so. We can't HEAR them, though --

Because we're looking at them THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOW of the restaurant. And now --

The Redhead suddenly becomes aware that something is WRONG. She turns. AND LOOKS RIGHT AT US. Her face FALLS as The Boyfriend follows her GAZE THROUGH THE WINDOW TO REVEAL --

LAURIE and GLADYS. Their backs to us. Smoking. WATCHING.

INSIDE: The Boyfriend looks PISSED. Mouths a word that is most probably "Fuck" as he stands, throws his napkin on the table, CROSSES THE RESTAURANT and STORMS OUT THE DOOR --

EXT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
... Are you following us?

But Laurie and Gladys just give him a BLANK LOOK. Smoking.

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
What is wrong with you people?
(no response)
Oh, great. Just stand there and smoke your... damn cigarettes.

The Boyfriend starts to feel a little silly, berating these silent women. He takes a deep breath and SHIFTS GEARS --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
Listen, I don't -- Your timing is really just... not good, okay? I don't know why you do this whole... "stalking" thing? But my fiancee's been going through some stuff and you people? Are not helping.
(lowers his voice)
So I'm asking you -- as a favor -- to be human beings and leave us alone. Can you just... haunt somebody else tonight? Could you do that? Please?

Laurie and Gladys look at each other for a moment. Then --

Laurie WALKS AWAY. Gladys follows. The Boyfriend is kinda surprised his plea actually worked. Raises his hand, waves --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
... Thank you!

The Boyfriend turns, offers the Redhead inside a THUMBS UP... but she is not at all at ease as we CUT BACK TO:

INT. PANTRY - PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

The game of Get-A-Room limps to its conclusion, with only FIVE CONTESTANTS remaining -- Sadly, JILL is among them.

She SPINS and lands on MAX. The two of them, resigned to their fate, meet at the middle of the circle. Their kiss is listless, no heat. A BOY raises his hand to half-mast --

BOY
(bored)
Get a room.

The other two throw up their hands. Why not? Everybody just wants the damn game to be over. And we CUT TO:

INT. LITTLE GIRL'S BEDROOM - PARTY HOUSE - LATER

A LITTLE GIRL'S BEDROOM -- TINY BED, pink pastel wallpaper with a UNICORN PATTERN. Jill and Max enter. He's already pulling his T-shirt over his head --

JILL
You can keep your clothes on.

MAX
I honor the rules, Garvey. You do whatever you want.

Spiteful, but willingly, she strips down to her underwear as Max looks around --

MAX
This must've been Dorfman's little sister's room. Guess they're keeping it in case she comes back.

JILL
She's not coming back.
(then)
None of them are.

MAX
How you doing... y'know... with your mom and all?

JILL
I'm doing fantastic, Max. Thanks for asking.

Max sits down on the edge of the bed. He's a sweet kid actually... just trying to be friendly --

MAX
Sorry.

Max smiles, lays down on the little bed. He slides toward the wall and pats the mattress in a gesture of invitation.

MAX
C'mon. I'll be respectful.

Jill thinks it over. But after a moment, she crosses the room and lies down beside him. It's intimate, but not sexual at all. They both look up at the ceiling --

MAX
So Nick and Aimee, huh? Doesn't she know you wanna like, have his babies?

JILL
Max?

MAX
Yeah?

JILL
Please stop talking.

Max nods. But there doesn't seem to be anything else to discuss. So they lie there, two lonely teenagers in their underwear. Finally --

MAX
You mind if I jerk off?

Jill lets out a soft SIGH --

JILL
Be my guest.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

AL GREEN on the car radio as the Redhead and her Boyfriend drive down a quiet suburban street. He puts his hand on hers as he SINGS ALONG, the kind of voice where people tell him he's great at Karaoke --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
.... Let's... let's stay too - gether... Lovin' you whether... whether... Times are good or bad, happy or sad...

The Redhead smiles, charmed (or *wants* to be) -- It's been a rough night, but it seems like everything's going to be OKAY. As they turn onto their block, the HEADLIGHTS ILLUMINATE --

LAURIE AND GLADYS. Sitting on the curb. Smoking.

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
What the *fuck*!

The car pulls into the driveway. But before it even comes to a complete stop, the Redhead throws open her door, HOPS OUT --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
Honey... wait --

EXT. LOVELY LITTLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Laurie and Gladys stand up as the Redhead rushes toward them, teeth gritted in RAGE...

Laurie closes her eyes. Knows what's coming -- KRRRACK! -- the Redhead SLAPS HER ACROSS THE FACE -- HARD.

Jesus. Laurie winces in pain... but stands her ground. The Redhead loses it -- APPALLED AT WHAT SHE'S DONE, ANGRY THAT SHE'S BEEN PROVOKED INTO DOING IT --

PRETTY REDHEAD
This was a... special night. My night. And you *ruined* it. Why?

But Laurie says nothing. The Redhead is CRYING now, wiping her tears away, angry and embarrassed --

PRETTY REDHEAD
I don't understand what you *want*!

The Handsome Boyfriend finally gets to her, wraps his arm around her, comforting --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
C'mon, honey. It's okay. Let's just go insi--

PRETTY REDHEAD
-- They won't go away! Why won't they go away?

She's full-on SOBBING now as The Boyfriend shakes his head, leading her back to the housed -- GLARES at Laurie --

HANDSOME BOYFRIEND
You should be ashamed of yourself.

ON LAURIE, eyes brimming with tears. Maybe because she got hit so hard, or maybe because... she *is* ashamed of herself.

Gladys points to her mouth. Laurie brings her hand up to touch her SWOLLEN LIP... sees the BLOOD ON HER FINGERS as the Redhead and her Boyfriend disappear into their lovely little house, the DOOR SLAMMING BEHIND THEM as we SMASH TO:

INT. LITTLE GIRL'S BEDROOM - PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

MAX, out cold, Jill wide awake beside him. She gets up and pulls on her clothes. Exits the Little Girl's BEDROOM into --

THE HALLWAY

Music still playing downstairs. Jill passes another bedroom, door AJAR -- MOANS -- She can't help but peek --

INSIDE THE BEDROOM

Nick's face is buried between Aimee's legs. Her eyes closed as she writhes in pleasure, hands TUGGING on his thick hair.

Jill quickly moves out of view. Embarrassed... then PISSED.

EXT. PARTY HOUSE - NIGHT

Jill exits the front door. Walks past a GUY passed out on the lawn. Naked from the waist down. Donald Duck Style.

Jill walks DOWN THE STREET, heads for her car, passing by other houses. On ONE OF THE PORCHES --

Several WOMEN IN BURKAS quietly sit. We hear the sound of ARABIC PRAYER from within the house. Jill raises her hand in an awkward wave to the women. They do not wave back.

SCOTT (O.S.)
... They are so gone, dude.

Jill's turns towards the voice, ACROSS THE STREET where --

SCOTT FROST is on his hands and knees, looking under the white Prius as ADAM searches the BUSHES. Scott sees Jill --

SCOTT
Hey. You have a flashlight?

JILL
... What?

SCOTT
I was getting out of the car and I saw this baby shoe and I leaned over to pick it up but...
(nods to Adam)
He was tossing me the car keys and I didn't know so they kinda... sailed into nowhere.

ADAM
At least we got a baby shoe.

These guys are probably idiots, but Jill likes them anyway --

JILL
I think my dad has some flares or something.

SCOTT
Yeah? Rad.

Jill fishes out her keys, walks over towards her car, POPS OPEN THE TRUNK --

JILL
Party's over, by the way. Everybody's wasted or hooking u--

-- Jill STOPS. Because there are no flares in the trunk.

There is only a DEAD DOG partially wrapped in a tarp.

Kevin obviously forgot about poor Dudley.

ON JILL. Peering down at it. CONFUSED. Processing it. And not at all as grossed out as we might expect. In fact... she is oddly AFFECTED. The twins appear beside her --

SCOTT
There's a dead dog in your trunk.

JILL
... Yeah.

ADAM
Is he yours?

JILL
No.

They stand there for a long moment, pondering Dudley. And as we linger on Jill, we finally see what she's been hiding --

How very, very SAD she is. She leans in, tucks the dog's stray paw under the tarp. And then. Softly --

JILL
We need to bury him.

EXT. FIELD - MAPLETON - NIGHT

A beautiful nocturnal VISTA... Three small FIGURES in a MASSIVE MEADOW, lit by the HEADLIGHTS of the CAR beside them.

The Frost Twins are DIGGING A HOLE using GARBAGE CAN LIDS. Jill sits on the hood, thinking, holding the COLLAR.

SCOTT
"Dudley's" kind've a shit name. That's like, denying him his basic right to be a dog.

Adam glances at poor Dudley, resting there on top of the plastic beside the hole.

ADAM
Why do you think your dad shot him?

JILL
My dad didn't shoot him.

ADAM
Then why was he in the trunk?

JILL
(shrugs; but)
He wouldn't shoot a dog.

SCOTT
Unless Dudley there's one of the ones that went nuts on the 14th.
(nods off in the distance)
Heard there's a whole pack that lives out in the woods behind the State Hospital.

JILL
That's urban legend bullshit. I know lots of people with dogs. None of them ran away.

SCOTT
Not *all* of them did. Just the ones that witnessed it. Y'know, who were actually *there* when someone...
(makes a gesture -- *poof!*)
Dogs are just animals, man -- They're not like us... trying to reason it all out and make sense of shit that makes *no* sense. They see something like that and they snap. All bets are off right there. No more fetching sticks. No more licking their own balls. They just go... *primal*, man.
(a beat; softly)
Same things gonna happen to us. It's just taking longer.

ON JILL. Can't argue with that. Disturbingly, it feels RIGHT. Adam looks up at her. Quietly --

ADAM
We're ready for him.

Jill slides off the hood. Picks up the tarp. Kneels, gently placing it in the shallow grave. She doesn't know why, but this is EMOTIONAL.

SCOTT
Should we, like... say something?

ON JILL. Wants to... but can't. Adam sees this. Steps up --

ADAM
Goodbye, Dudley.
(then)
I hope it's easier now.

Jill looks down into the hole. MOVED as she softly says --

JILL
We're sorry you got stuck with us.

The twins look up at her. Good words. And as they pick up their shovels and begin to fill in the hole, we CUT TO:

INT. BUNK ROOM/RANCH HOUSE - NIGHT

TOM. Out cold. SLEEPING. Hair tousled. He's kinda cute.

VOICE (O.S.)
Tom.

A voice. Soft. But CONFIDENT. Tom doesn't move.

VOICE (O.S.)
Tom. Get up, man.

Tom's eyes OPEN with a START. He lifts his head -- groggy, blinking in confusion as he realizes --

There's a MAN sitting on the edge of his bed.

TOM
... Wayne?

It is indeed WAYNE. Dressed in jeans and a white T-Shirt... but mostly obscured in the dark. Regardless, he exudes CALM. Confidence. POWER.

WAYNE
We need to talk about Christine.

UH OH. Tom sits up. Guess we're just diving right in. Plays it as nonchalant as he can --

TOM
Oh... okay. She's... uh, one of the girls who lives here, right?

WAYNE
(grins; tsk tsk)
Aw, look at you. "One of the girls who lives here?" You bring her candy and chat her ass up every time you do a drop-off, man.

Busted. Tom BACKPEDALS. Shit.

TOM
Wayne... I didn't... We're just friends. I swear, I would never --

WAYNE
-- She's important. *Very* important. And I need you to protect her.

Tom stops. Huh? Wasn't expecting that. At ALL.

TOM
From... what?

WAYNE
Some bad shit's coming. And there's no away around it. 'Til then, you keep her close, you keep her safe...
(then; pointed)
And you keep your fucking hands off her. Understand?

It wasn't a threat. Just a request. Okay. Maybe it was.

TOM
Yeah.

WAYNE
Good.

Now Wayne moves forwards. And we see he's TROUBLED. As if he doesn't want to burden Tom with this knowledge.

WAYNE
Back in the day -- You remember how I used to open up those meetings? What I'd warm up the crowd with before we got to all the good shit?

Tom thinks for a moment. Then, he nods, REMEMBERING --

TOM
You talked about the dream. The dream about your son.

ON WAYNE. A flicker of sadness behind the confident smile.

WAYNE
That's right, Tom -- You heard it a hundred times... probl'y more.
(hesitates; then)
But I always left part of it out.

ON TOM. UH OH. And to be clear about this -- Everything that comes from Wayne's mouth is ABSOLUTELY AUTHENTIC. He's totally CONVINCING. We believe every word --

WAYNE
"We're gone, daddy," he said, "And everybody's gonna walk around for awhile like things haven't changed forever. It's just easier that way. Easier for them to pretend. But then, dad?"
(a beat)
"Then they're all gonna need to wake up. Then they'll all know."

Tom is RAPT, hanging on every word.

TOM
Know... what?

WAYNE
Shit, Tom -- I got no idea. I didn't ask him. That's the problem with dreams -- You just do what you do, man. What I did ask him is when. When were we gonna start waking up? And he looked at me... real sure, and he said --
(softly)
"Therefore watch, and remember... that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn everyone night and day with tears."

TOM
... Three years.

WAYNE
(nods)
Three years.

TOM
That's... now.

Wayne nods. Indeed it is. He moves forward on the bed. Closer. Somewhere between intimate and intimidating --

WAYNE
Grace Period's over, Tom.
(then)
Time to get to work.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. KEVIN'S CAR - NIGHT

KEVIN. Behind the wheel of his car. Driving. It's DARK. The radio is on -- a LATINO TALK SHOW... entirely in Spanish.

Which, as far as we know, Kevin doesn't speak.

However, he drives on, looking somewhat distracted and intense at the same time. BMMMP!

The car POPS UP as if Kevin just ran over a SPEED BUMP... BMMMP! Again. BMMMMP! Kevin all but hits the ROOF as he presses on the BRAKES -- Brings the car to a jarring STOP.

He puts it in PARK. Turns off the RADIO. Opens the door. Gets out. And finds himself --

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE GODDAMN DESERT

Kevin's car is parked atop a SAND DUNE. There is no road anywhere in sight. There is NOTHING anywhere in sight. Just ROLLING HILLS OF SAND and the uncannily MASSIVE FULL MOON.

ON KEVIN. He turns. CONFUSED. LOST. And then he spots --

A HUNDRED YARDS AWAY. WAY OUT THERE.

An animal... massive ANTLERS... backlit by the moon. There appears to be a MAN standing beside it -- he is NAKED. As is the WOMAN who is riding on the animal's back.

The naked man is SHOUTING something to Kevin. Incredibly hard to make out. Over and over and over. Whatever he's saying, it seems to be very IMPORTANT.

Kevin is CONFUSED. Moves towards him, SHOUTS BACK --

KEVIN
WHAT?!? I CAN'T HEAR YOU!

THE NAKED MAN (FAINTLY)
... Usted es el profeta! El gamo ha elegido! Usted es el profeta!

Preparing to shout again, Kevin lifts his hands toward his mouth. As he does so, he notices...

A LARGE HOLE TORN THROUGH HIS RIGHT PALM, surrounded by a halo of ragged flesh and dried blood. HE GASPS IN PAIN AND SHOCK AND SURPRISE AS --

INT. KEVIN'S BEDROOM - GARVEY HOUSE - MORNING

Kevin rolls out of bed -- hits the floor with a THUD.

Disoriented... Shirtless... SWEATY, he gets up from the ground, SQUINTS at the SUNLIGHT coming through the window...

He's NAKED. Sees his PAJAMA BOTTOMS and T-SHIRT neatly folded on top of the dresser. HUH? Checks his hand... Of course, it is perfectly intact. His cell RINGS. Disoriented, he grabs it from the nightstand, answers it --

KEVIN
... Yeah?

DENNIS (OVER PHONE)
...Chief? Where are you? Parade starts in ten minutes... The mayor's losing her shit --

PANIC. Kevin picks up his ALARM CLOCK -- the display is dead. He checks the CORD. Somehow, it has been UNPLUGGED.

DENNIS (OVER PHONE)
-- Are you close by? Should I --

But Kevin HANGS UP. Shit. Exits frame as we CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Kevin moves down the hallway, pulling on his DRESS UNIFORM, holding his shoes in his hand -- HESITATES --

In front of a doorway. Through it -- a TEENAGE GIRLS ROOM. The bed is MADE... and the room is EMPTY. Kevin FROWNS --

KEVIN
Goddammit, Jill.

INT. STAIRCASE - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Buttoning his SHIRT with one hand, Kevin hurries down the stairs, cell pressed to his ear, PISSED as we hear --

JILL'S RECORDED VOICE
Hey. Text me or talk at the beep.

BEEEEEEEEEEP.

KEVIN (INTO PHONE)
Where are you and where the hell is my car? Unless you are dead you have exactly ten minutes to call me back. Ten. Minutes.

Kevin hangs up, reaches the bottom of the steps, walks through the hall and --

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Stops dead in his tracks. He BLINKS. Not quite sure what he's LOOKING AT. Profoundly CONFUSED. And now, we CUT WIDE TO SEE:

THE KITCHEN IS TOTALLY TRASHED.

Several CUPBOARDS ARE OPEN -- FOOD SCATTERED all over the floor along with BROKEN GLASS from the BACK DOOR, which hangs on ONE HINGE, as if smashed by a BATTERING RAM...

ALONG THE WALL -- BIZARRE SCRATCHES and GOUGES in the wallpaper as if something SHARP SCRAPED UP AGAINST IT -- Something significantly TALLER THAN KEVIN. Now, something else catches his eye as he moves around the center island in the kitchen to get a better look. And there. On the FLOOR --

Is a large pile of black brown PELLETS. Kevin crinkles his nose... It can't be... But it is...

Animal shit. Very. Large. ANIMAL. SHIT.

KEVIN
What... the fuck?

And as fascinating as it may be to ponder what all of this MEANS (or doesn't), for now, we must CUT TO:

EXT. PARADE STAGING AREA - PARKING LOT - INTERCUT

A PARKING LOT. The staging area for the PARADE. A HIGH-SCHOOL MARCHING BAND in full regalia futzes around with BRASS INSTRUMENTS -- WARMING UP --

A PIMPLY KID twirls his sticks, goes to work on the SNARE DRUM hanging from the harness over his chest -- **bumBUMdaddatabumbumBUM** -- STACATTO RHYTHM DRIVING US INTO --

INT. GARAGE - HOUSE - INTERCUT

LAURIE and DOZENS OF HER WHITE-CLAD COLLEAGUES standing in the garage. The men are SHIRTLESS. The women in BRAS.

And they are wrapping what looks like FOAM INSULATION around each other's TORSOS -- SECURING IT with DUCT TAPE.

Most, especially Laurie, look NERVOUS (they are) as if something very BAD was about to happen (it is) while the DRUM POUNDS a steady march towards WAR. And as they pull OVER-SIZED WHITE FROCKS over their makeshift PADDING, CUT BACK TO:

EXT. PARADE STAGING AREA - PARKING LOT

The drummer clumsily drops a STICK -- It clatters onto the pavement as BICYCLE WHEELS ROLL PAST, TILTING UP TO --

KEVIN. Riding a MOUNTAIN BIKE through the crowd -- Members of the ROTARY CLUB and the AMERICAN LEGION adjusting their hats and vests -- Past AN IDLING RED FIRE ENGINE--

Kevin skids to a stop, hops off. He pulls his DRESS UNIFORM JACKET off the handlebars, puts it on as he walks through the crowd. DENNIS spots him, jogs over --

DENNIS
Hey Chief, you okay? What happ--?

KEVIN
-- Jill took my car and didn't come home last night.

DENNIS
Jesus... Should we send a couple of cars around after the ceremony? Are you worried?

KEVIN
Dennis, I am always fucking worried.

They've now reached the vanguard of the parade -- a CHERRY RED CONVERTIBLE. Lucy talks to an AIDE with a clipboard beside it, turns as Kevin approaches, NODS --

LUCY
Chief Garvey.

KEVIN
Madame Mayor.

LUCY
Where have you been?

KEVIN
Securing the parade route.

LUCY
(bullshit)
Uh huh. See anything interesting?

KEVIN
Just lots of people.
(then)
Ready to feel better.

Lucy shakes her head. This guy.

LUCY
They need this. We all do.

KEVIN
Let's talk again in a couple hours. See if you still feel that way.

LUCY
(ahhhhh)
... Because the G.R. is coming.

KEVIN
They most definitely are.

LUCY
Then do your job, Kevin...
(measured)
And maintain the fucking peace.

ON KEVIN. A beat. Then, he nods. Tips his cap --

KEVIN
Yes, ma'am.

And with that, he turns around and walks off. Dennis stands there awkwardly for a moment, then follows. HOLD ON LUCY. Maybe a little worried. But won't show it. Turns to her Aide FRUSTRATED --

LUCY
Where are the goddamn Girl Scouts?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARADE - STREETS OF MAPLETON - DAY

CLOSE ON A BANNER THAT READS:

HEROES DAY: MAPLETON REMEMBERS!

TILTING DOWN to find it stretched across CEDAR LANE, Mapleton's major thoroughfare. THE FIRE TRUCKS roll over the threshold as the PARADE BEGINS.

SLOW MOTION. THE BAND plays. THE FIREMEN wave from their truck. A PACK OF GIRL SCOUTS marches proudly. A CLOWN rides a UNICYCLE. A bunch of OLD LADIES walk manicured POODLES. LUCY sits on the seatback of the convertible. Her smile is subdued. Almost SAD. And in the midst of it all --

KEVIN. Walking with a dozen or so POLICE OFFICERS. The brim of his hat is pulled low over his eyes doing everything he can to avoid having to look at --

THE PACKS OF PEOPLE LINING THE SIDEWALKS.

Alone and in groups, some of them sitting on lawn chairs. A number of spectators hold up LARGE PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOVED ONES who disappeared exactly three years ago to this day.

Among them, we may recognize THE HANDSOME BOYFRIEND and THE REDHEAD. He has his arm around her shoulders. There is a FAR OFF look in her eyes, as if she was someplace else.

As we linger on their faces... we begin to feel the GRAVITY of that fateful event. How everything ORBITS around it.

HOLDING ON KEVIN as he marches forwards, leading his officers in a parade that he simply does not BELIEVE IN as we CUT TO:

EXT. GREENWAY PARK - MORNING - LATER

The High School band plays "MY SHARONA," a highlight of their limited repertoire. The musicians are gathered in a grassy field, off to the side of a MAKESHIFT STAGE -- Empty except for a row of folding chairs and a PODIUM.

The parade has reached its terminus in Greenway Park, a well-maintained oasis of SUBURBAN GLORY. A SUBSTANTIAL CROWD, PRETTY MUCH ALL OF MAPLETON, mingles on the grass.

Weaving through them, working his way to the stage, is KEVIN. His eyes are ALERT now -- He SCANS THE CROWD, ALL BUSINESS -- Keys the RADIO on his shoulder --

KEVIN (INTO WALKIE)
Luke... Maggie, you in position?

The walkie CRACKLES -- Cops' VOICES on the other end --

LUKE (OVER WALKIE)
Yeah -- We're all clear on the west. Over.

MAGGIE (OVER WALKIE)
No sign of them over here. Maybe they're not coming, Ch--

KEVIN (INTO WALKIE)
-- They're coming. Look sharp.

Kevin CLICKS OFF, continues toward the stage, taking in the faces around him.

The MOOD is odd -- Some people are clearly here to MOURN, others are DRINKING beers from a cooler... almost like they're TAILGATING. And we FIND --

REV. JAMISON
It wasn't the Rapture, people!
They were no better than we were!
I have proof. Free of charge!

-- REVEREND MATT JAMISON. Well... he USED to be a reverend. Intense and perhaps UNHINGED, he holds a sheaf of PHOTOCOPIED NEWSLETTERS, handing them out to people in the CROWD, moving past Kevin who FROWNS --

KEVIN
You have to do this today, Matt?

REV. JAMISON
Especially today, Officer.

Kevin looks at the Newsletter -- PHOTO of a classy-looking OLDER WOMAN. The headline below -- "SHE BEAT HER CHILDREN!"

KEVIN
(distracted)
... Chief.

REV. JAMISON
Right. Chief. Sorry.
(leans in; privately)
Hey, next time you see your dad,
you tell him Reverend Jamison says
there's no such thing as sin, okay?
You tell him he's off the hook.

ON KEVIN. He does not want to be having this conversation. Not now. Not ever. As he MOVES OFF --

KEVIN
I'll be sure and do that, Matt.

A GRUNGY YOUNG HIPPIE plays a drum, five others swaying around him, barefoot, passing a JOINT. They all have BULL'S-EYES painted on their foreheads.

One of them looks right at Kevin, GRINS, takes a drag off the joint, EXHALES right towards him as he GRINS.

Kevin's eyes FLASH, a sense of TEMPER about to become UNCORKED. He moves towards the BAREFOOT PEOPLE, instinctively reaching for the BATON at his hip...

And then he SEES something. No... someONE. TWENTY YARDS AWAY. It's --

JILL. Standing in the crowd. Same clothes from last night.

Kevin's face moves from ANGRY to WORRIED to CONFUSED and back to ANGRY as he makes his way to her, brushing ROUGHLY through the packed crowd --

KEVIN
Jill.

She TURNS. Shit. Instantly GUILTY.

KEVIN
-- Where the hell were you?

JILL
At a friend's... Hey!

Kevin has taken her by the crook of her elbow, starts to "escort" her out of the crowd --

KEVIN
I told you not to come here.

-- You're leaving. Right now.

-- I don't give a shit what you want...

-- God, that is so tempting...

JILL
-- Ow, dad... What're you --?

-- No -- I want to be here!

-- So, what're you... "arresting" me?

-- Why was there a dead dog in your trunk?!?

Kevin STOPS. Winces. Clearly, he forgot all about Dudley.

KEVIN
Shit.

Jill pulls her arm away. Equal parts DEFIANT and HURT --

JILL
I buried him.

ON KEVIN. SURPRISED by that.

KEVIN
You didn't have to do that.

JILL
I wanted to.

Kevin shakes his head, wanting to connect to his daughter, not knowing HOW and then --

-- A WHINE OF MICROPHONE FEEDBACK. The crowd HUSHES. ON THE STAGE, TOWN COUNCIL MEMBERS and LOCAL LUMINARIES are finding their seats behind the podium. The ceremony's about to begin. Jill nods to the stage --

JILL
Guess you'd better do your thing.

For reasons we do not yet understand, Kevin knows he can't make her leave. And so, he walks off to the stage. HOLD ON JILL, watching him go, CONFLICTED, we CUT TO:

EXT. STAGE - GREENWAY PARK - A FEW MINUTES LATER

LUCY stands at the podium. In her element. She looks out at the LARGE CROWD gathered in front of her... feeding off their power and EMOTION as she leans into the MIC --

LUCY
Good morning, everyone.
(pauses; then; sincere)
It is... *really* good to see all of you here today.

FIND KEVIN. Sitting beside the other dignitaries in a folding chair on the stage. He's clearly DISTRACTED -- Scanning the area on the periphery of the CROWD. Waiting.

LUCY
So many of our loved ones... our friends... our neighbors... were lost three years ago. It's hard to know how to talk about them without feeling... well, we don't really know *how* to feel. Because we still wonder what happened. We still wonder where they went. And why.
(a beat; emotional)
... But wherever they are, we hope they know how much we love them, and how deeply they are missed.

Okay. We now understand how this woman became the MAYOR.

LUCY
We honor them now with this remembrance -- Mapleton's own October 14th Memorial, designed by local sculptor, Hector Espinoza... Hector, would you please...?

Kevin looks right next to him, beside the edge of the stage where a TARP covers a LARGE OBJECT -- FIFTEEN FEET TALL.

HECTOR, a potbellied fiftyish hipster, tugs a rope. The tarp slides off, revealing...

A STATUE. A woman -- A MOTHER -- her arms outstretched as the SWADDLED INFANT she was holding FLOATS UP TO THE SKY. At least that was the intention. In reality, it looks more like the baby is FALLING and the mother won't be able to catch it.

There's a smattering of polite applause as the crowd contemplates the UNINTENTIONALLY DISTURBING MEMORIAL.

LUCY
Thank you, Hector... Outstanding.

ON KEVIN. He locks eyes with the WOMAN OF STONE just a few feet away. Somehow understanding her pain. And we CUT TO:

EXT. STAGE - GREENWAY PARK - LATER

A SOLO VIOLINIST plays as a GROUP OF GIRL SCOUTS take turns, each one reading the names of the DISAPPEARED --

GIRL SCOUT #1
Joyce Wong...

Kevin sits in his folding chair with the other mucky mucks. He just wants this to be OVER.

GIRL SCOUT #2
Patrick Richard Younger.

GIRL SCOUT #3
Gerald Marcus... Zimmeran. Zimmerman. Sorry...

The violinist abruptly STOPS as the Girl Scouts have reached the end of their list. No applause. It's dead QUIET. The mood has turned SOMBER as Lucy rises, reclaims the PODIUM.

LUCY
Thank you, Troop 23, for that beautiful remembrance.
(goes to her notes)
Every one of us has been touched by the events of October 14th, but no one more than our honored speaker... We're all so lucky to have her here with us. Please help me welcome... Nora Durst.

From the crowd, A WOMAN steps up to the stage. Elegant. Strong. Focused. She will become very important later.

This is NORA.

Quiet, respectful APPLAUSE as Nora approaches the podium. She looks out at the crowd. NERVOUS. Hand shaking, she takes out a small stack of INDEX CARDS, puts them on the podium. And begins to READ --

NORA
The best day of my life happened a few months before October 14th. But I didn't know it. It just seemed like... a nice day, you know, all four of us at the beach. My husband, my six year-old son, and my four year-old daughter. Their names were...
(catches herself)
... Are Doug, Jeremy, and Erin.
(a beat; continues)
The kids built a sand castle. Doug and I, we just sat on a blanket and watched them work. And it was just... perfect. It felt like... I wasn't worthy of that moment.
(then; softly)
Like I didn't deserve anything that... good.

ON KEVIN. Up until that moment, a part of him was still distracted But now? He's LISTENING. We ALL are.

NORA
This one Saturday... the winter before that, we all got hit with the stomach flu. The whole family... we were all feverish and throwing up and I couldn't even get out of bed. The kids were lying there with us and I could feel the heat coming off their bodies and I remember thinking this is it -- I was gonna die. Maybe it was the flu screwing up my brain, but I really believed it. And I said to Doug... I said, *Honey, I think I'm gonna die*, and he just nodded and said, *Okay*.
(a beat; shakes her head)
The next day, we were all better. It was like it never even happened.

ON KEVIN. His eyes are wet. He is not aware of it. Nora looks up from her index cards. Doesn't need them anymore.

NORA
I'm not greedy. I'm not asking for that perfect day at the beach. Just give me that horrible Saturday, all four of us sick and miserable. But alive and together. I just want them back, my husband... and my children.
(beat; softly)
That would be heaven to me.

Silence. Everyone is focused on Nora as she collects her cards. And for a fleeting second -- Her eyes find Kevin's. They lock onto each other. But then --

MURMURS from the crowd. Something is HAPPENING. Kevin looks away from Nora, the moment BROKEN as His RADIO CRACKLES --

DENNIS (OVER WALKIE)
Chief..? Shit. Sorry, we... We didn't have anyone in the trees...
(panicked)
They're here.

Kevin RISES to his feet -- And he already knows what he will see EMERGING FROM THE TREES ON THE EDGE OF THE CROWD --

A LARGE GROUP OF PEOPLE. FIFTY OF THEM. All dressed in WHITE. Although we have clearly spent some time with them, we have not beem formally introduced --

This is THE GUILTY REMNANT.

At first they look disorganized, but as they move, they arrange themselves into a HORIZONTAL LINE. -- Men and women, young and old -- Their faces void of emotion.

All at once, TWENTY of them raise WHITE POSTERBOARDS. Each one has a single letter painted on it. Together, they SPELL:

"STOP WASTING YOUR BREATH."

Someone in the crowd audibly GASPS.

Kevin's INSTINCTS kick in -- he's already moving, hopping off the front of the STAGE --

-- THE CROWD stands there in dumb, surprised SHOCK. The pure ARROGANCE of the Remnant's presence, let alone the MESSAGE they hold in their hands is nothing short of BLASPHEMOUS.

-- THE FACES OF THE GUILTY REMNANT -- UNEMOTIONAL, even VACANT. Except for --

LAURIE. She holds aloft her letter "P." And she looks NERVOUS in the crosshairs of what is increasingly mounting ANGER as someone shouts --

VOICE FROM THE CROWD
HOW DARE YOU?!?

Now, the floodgates open -- MORE voices join in --

CROWD
-- Go home! -- Fuckers! --

CROWD
-- You don't belong here! --

ON KEVIN, pushing through the CROWD, keys his radio --

KEVIN (INTO WALKIE)
... All units on foot -- North edge of the park. MOVE.

JILL
... Dad?

Kevin sees a confused JILL -- perhaps starting to second guess her decision to come. He barks at her --

KEVIN
Go home. Now.

He SLIDES his baton out of the loop as he PUSHES THROUGH the CROWD, now SHIFTING like a wave towards the REMNANT --

All of whom hold their ground. Letters held high. Faces serene. Just WAITING. The CROWD is getting louder, A FUSE JUST WAITING TO BE LIT --

CROWD
FREAKS!!!! THIS IS OUR PARK!!! --

CROWD
-- WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!? -- FUCK YOU!!!

ON THE STAGE -- LUCY stands, realizing too late she may have made a horrible mistake as --

TIME SLOWS DOWN

ON LAURIE. Standing shoulder to shoulder with the other members of the REMNANT when suddenly --

Something WHISTLES by her ear -- LARGE -- SHINY -- Then --

WHAM! A BEER CAN SMASHES INTO THE FACE of the guy standing next to her! He crumples to the ground -- BLOOD ALREADY STAINING THE FRONT OF HIS WHITE SHIRT as --

THE CROWD BURSTS FORWARD -- SWALLOWING the ENTIRE REMNANT -- KEVIN reaches them at exactly the same moment -- DENNIS and FOUR OTHER COPS CONVERGING there too -- HE SHOUTS --

KEVIN
CONTROL AND CONTAIN!!!!! CONTROL AND CONTAIN!

AND JESUS -- We're inside a TORNADO OF PEOPLE right now -- FISTS AND FEET FLYING EVERYWHERE -- ALL FOCUSED ON ANYONE UNFORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE DRESSED IN WHITE --

But The Guilty Remnant does not fight back. Like Freedom Riders, they just stand there and accept the VIOLENCE now RAINING DOWN ON THEM FROM ALL SIDES as we FIND --

LAURIE -- HER SIGN RIPPED FROM HER HANDS BY A PUDGY BALD GUY WEARING A T-SHIRT WITH A LITTLE GIRL'S FACE ON IT -- LAURIE HITS THE GROUND, CURLING INTO THE FETAL POSITION as the Guy starts KICKING HER --

PUDGY BALD GUY
BITCH!!! YOU BIT@H!!!

THWACK! -- A BATON SMASHES INTO THE BALD GUY'S UPPER BACK -- THUD! HE DROPS TO THE GROUND, OUT COLD RIGHT NEXT TO LAURIE. She gazes up at her RESCUER --

KEVIN. He doesn't even register her as he MOVES through the fray, SWINGING HIS CLUB, PULLING OUTRAGED TOWNSFOLK OFF OF THE REMNANT -- HIS OTHER OFFICERS DOING THE SAME --

Kevin HATES these fuckers. Doesn't trust them. Holds them responsible for the INSANITY around him. That said?

He still chooses to PROTECT them.

MORE COPS showing up now -- at least a DOZEN REINFORCEMENTS -- Kevin CALLS OUT TO THEM --

KEVIN
GET THEM OUT OF HERE -- BACK THROUGH THE TREES -- GET THEM OUT!

HANDHELD AND CHAOTIC HERE IN THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE -- But the COPS understand -- PULLING THE MEMBERS OF THE G.R. UP -- GUIDING THEM BACK TOWARDS THE TREES -- FORMING A LINE BETWEEN THE REMNANT AND THE ENRAGED CROWD -- AND WE HOLD ON KEVIN -- His eyes BURNING -- HOLDING THE SURGING CROWD AT BAY --

KEVIN
GODDAMMIT GET THE FUCK BACK!!!

SMASH TO:

EXT. GREENWAY PARK - DUSK

Silence. AN OVERHEAD SHOT OF THE PARK, now basked in the calming ORANGE GLOW of the setting sun.

It is devoid of people. Abandoned. Peaceful.

But it is also TRASHED. Patches of GRASS have been torn up everywhere, revealing the DARK DIRT underneath. And now --

Now, a series of IMAGES from the park. Over which, we hear TWO VOICES; A MAN and A WOMAN. They are ARGUING.

WOMAN (O.S.)
... There's a pattern... A design.
We just don't see it yet.

THE STAGE. Now more of a RAMP. OVERTURNED and half-collapsed FOLDING CHAIRS. The PODIUM lies on its side.

MAN (O.S.)
Are you...? Draw me a line between a convicted rapist and a five-month old fetus. One couldn't be guiltier and the other hasn't even been born, but both are departures on the 15th. What's the "pattern?"

HECTOR'S STATUE. The WOMAN and the ASCENDING BABY. A PILE OF REVEREND JAMISON'S NEWSLETTERS SCATTERED AT THE BASE.

WOMAN (O.S.)
You've got the question wrong. We shouldn't be asking, "Why them?"

A RIPPED PIECE OF POSTERBOARD. The dark letter "P." It's spattered in dried, brown BLOOD.

WOMAN (O.S.)
We should be asking, "Why not us?"

INT. CARPE DIEM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON A NEWS BROADCAST -- CNN or the like -- a BANNER BELOW says, "THE SUDDEN DEPARTURE: THREE YEARS LATER." We now see the owners of the voices, TWO PUNDITS, a BLONDE WOMAN and a MAN IN DARK HORNRIMMED GLASSES, shouting at each other from the safety of their satellite remotes --

HORNRIMMED PUNDIT (ON TV)
Oh, please... don't make this about what we have or haven't done as if there's some... rule book --

PULLING BACK FROM THE TELEVISION to find ourselves watching it from a BAR. A hand brings a BUDWEISER out of frame --

BLONDE PUNDIT (ON TV)
-- *There is a rule book.*

HORNRIMMED PUNDIT (ON TV)
The bible? We're having a secular conversation and you want to talk about... "God's will?"

BLONDE PUNDIT (ON TV)
If it's not God's will, then whose is it?

HORNRIMMED PUNDIT (ON TV)
No one's. This was arbitrary. Meaningless. And anyone who says otherwise is probably starting their own cult.

The beer bottle returns to the bar, half EMPTY. TILTING UP to find the man watching (and drinking) is none other than --

KEVIN
Christ, Mike. Turn that shit down.

Now in CIVILIAN ATTIRE (and with a BUTTERFLY BANDAGE covering the STITCHES over his left eye), Kevin sits at the bar of THE CARPE DIEM -- Mapleton's local watering hole. If you're looking for upscale, there's a BENNIGAN'S down the street.

MIKE THE BARTENDER (moustache, Jets jersey, nuff said) reaches up, turns down the volume on the TV.

MIKE THE BARTENDER
Copy that, Chief.

ON THE TV: Publicity stills of THE POPE; JENNIFER LOPEZ; PRINCE HARRY; OTHER RANDOM CELEBS. Mike shakes his head --

MIKE THE BARTENDER
I get the Pope... but Gary Fucking Busey? How does he make the cut?

KEVIN
Ours is not to reason why, Mike.

Kevin takes a healthy swig from his beer. Looks down the bar at a WOMAN with a TOM COLLINS in front of her. She looks vaguely FAMILIAR. And LONELY. Catches his gaze as if she's been waiting for it. She SMILES --

YOUNG WOMAN
What happened to your eye?

KEVIN
A woman hit me with her shoe.

YOUNG WOMAN
(laughs)
C'mon. Really.

Kevin KILLS his beer. Wipes his mouth.

KEVIN
Really.
(to Mike)
One more, please.

MIKE THE BARTENDER
... You sure, Chief?

KEVIN
I am. Thanks for your concern.

ON THE TV: *THE GRAPHIC SAYS -- "THREE YEARS LATER: ORDER FROM CHAOS" IMAGERY OF CROWDS GATHERED OUTSIDE THE VATICAN; RIOTS IN THE STREETS OF CAIRO.*

YOUNG WOMAN
Where were you?

KEVIN
... Sorry?

YOUNG WOMAN
(nods to the TV)
When it happened. Where were you?

ON KEVIN. He BLINKS.

A QUICK AND JARRING JUMPCUT -- THREE SECONDS LONG

A MAN'S BACK AS HE MOVES AGAINST THE WOMAN BENEATH HIM -- SALIVA FLECKED LIPS parting to CHEW ON AN EARLOBE -- HER HANDS WRAPPED AROUND HIS WAIST, PRESSING HIM INTO HER --

Yes. We have seen this imagery BEFORE. But this time, we see MORE. Their FACES. The woman is a striking, dark-haired Latina. We have not seen her before. But the MAN?

Is most definitely KEVIN.

Kevin blinks.

And blinks again. Banishing the MEMORY. Offers the Young Woman a nonchalant shrug --

KEVIN
I was at my house. Cleaning out the gutters.

A LIE. The Young Woman nods, maybe a little disappointed --

YOUNG WOMAN
Oh.

And only because he feels he needs to reciprocate --

KEVIN
Where were you?

She looks at him now. Clearly, she wanted him to ask or she wouldn't have asked herself. But now she wishes she hadn't. After a moment. Quietly --

YOUNG WOMAN
In a parking lot.
(beat)
At the supermarket.

And it CLICKS. She looks TEN YEARS OLDER -- and colored her hair, cut it short. But Jesus, it's HER. The YOUNG MOTHER.

Kevin senses there's more to her story. And he doesn't want to get anywhere NEAR it. Lifts his beer, awkward smile --

KEVIN
Hey. We're still here.

The Young Woman lifts her Tom Collins, smiles back --

YOUNG WOMAN
We sure are.

Kevin takes a healthy swig from his beer -- and that is precisely when, out of the corner of his eye, he SPOTS someone moving for the FRONT DOOR ACROSS THE ROOM --

SHit, IT'S THE PICKUP DRIVER. The TALL MAN who shot Dudley.

KEVIN
... Hey!

But the Tall Man is already out the front door. Gone. Kevin stumbles to his feet (drunker than we, or HE, realized), moves across the bar and out the front door--

EXT. CARPE DIEM - CONTINUOUS

OUTSIDE. ACROSS THE STREET, The Tall Man is already in his PICKUP, starting her up as KEVIN STRIDES TOWARDS HIM --

KEVIN
Hey! You. Get out of that truck!

But the Tall Man either doesn't hear him or IGNORES him, dropping the truck into gear as Kevin POINTS right at him --

KEVIN
STOP -- Police. You're under arrest... Don't you MOVE!

The truck starts to drive off, but Kevin is RUNNING now. Drunk or not, he's FAST -- reaches around to his lower back for his CARRY PIECE (a cop's off-duty weapon), YELLS --

KEVIN
STOP THAT TRUCK, SHITFUCKER! I SAW YOU! I SAW WHAT YOU DID! YOU CAN'T KILL OUR FUCKING DOGS!!!

-- Kevin's PISTOL fumbles from his fingers as he takes it out of the holster -- It CHATTERS across the BLACKTOP -- SHIT -- He STOPS running -- The PICKUP PULLING AWAY FROM HIM -- No way he can catch it as He SHOUTS OUT IN FRUSTRATION --

KEVIN
YOU CAN'T KILL OUR DOGS!!!

But the Truck is GONE. Kevin stands there in the middle of the street, watching the taillights recede. Alone. Hammered. WHAT. A. GODDAMN. DAY HE'S HAVING. He tilts his head back, a GUTTURAL WAIL --

KEVIN
AGGGGGGGGGGGGHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Kevin bends over, hands on his knees -- BREATHING HEAVY -- victim of the running and the PRIMAL SCREAM he just let out. Takes a moment to regain his breath. And then --

He turns back. Walks over to his GUN, lying there on the pavement. Bends down to pick it up. And when he looks up --

TWO MEN DRESSED IN WHITE are standing across the street. Smoking cigarettes. Just...

Watching.

PUSHING IN ON KEVIN -- We can almost *see* the needle in his eyes move from yellow into the RED as we SMASH TO:

EXT. CUL-DE-SAC - NIGHT

An UPSCALE SUBURBAN DEVELOPMENT. Eight BIG HOUSES, all well-maintained but for the fact they have DIRT YARDS instead of lawns. Each driveway has a LARGE WHITE VAN parked in it.

KEVIN'S CAR pulls into the CUL-DE-SAC -- RUNS UP ONTO THE CURB as he PARKS (no, he should not be driving) and GETS OUT.

Kevin SIZES up all the houses... ultimately strides up the walkway to the one in the MIDDLE. RINGS the doorbell. TUCKS in his shirt as he waits. Finally, the DOOR OPENS --

A man in WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES with a BLACK EYE looks at Kevin, sort of SURPRISED. He is dressed in white.

KEVIN
I know you don't talk, but I need to see Laurie Garvey. Could you please point to the house she's in.

Now we see other people in WHITE (many are INJURED) in the living room beyond, clearly alarmed by Kevin's presence. Kevin takes a step forward, into Wire-Rimmed's SPACE --

KEVIN
I'm not sure if you remember me, but I'm one of the assholes who saved your... pointless *life* today. How about you return the favor?
(measured)
Laurie. Garvey. Just point.

Wire-Rimmed hears the IMPLICIT THREAT in Kevin's voice... And he *has* had a rough day too. As he raises his arm, POINTING to another HOUSE across the Cul-de-sac, we SMASH TO:

EXT. GUILTY REMNANT HOUSE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

MOVING BEHIND KEVIN as he strides across the street -- UP THE WALKWAY to the other house --

The DOOR opens before he even gets there -- Out steps A BEEFY GUY, a good six inches taller and fifty pounds heavier than Kevin. He stands in front of the door, blocking Kevin's way --

But then, without do much as slowing his pace -- **KRRRRUNCH!** -- Kevin HEAD-BUTTS Beefy! DROPS IN A HEAP -- Kevin steps over him, into the house as he CALLS OUT --

KEVIN
Laurie? You in here? Laur--?

INT. GUILTY REMNANT HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Kevin steps into the Foyer... stops in his tracks.

Because Laurie is standing right there on the stairs.

She looks SURPRISED to see him... maybe embarrassed... maybe something ELSE.

KEVIN
Hi.

Laurie says nothing.

KEVIN
How're you doing? ...You okay?

There's something... *tender* in Kevin's expression. Laurie remains silent. We can tell this is NOT EASY FOR HER.

And now PATTI LEVIN appears, stepping out of her office on the first floor. She glares at Kevin, stabs her finger at the door, the signal clear -- *"GET OUT."*

Kevin ignores her, keeps his focus on Laurie. INTENSE now --

KEVIN
Laurie... it's time to come home.

ON LAURIE. Still, she says nothing. Just LOOKS at him. Patti, meanwhile, has been writing furiously on her iPad. She holds it up for Kevin to see:

YOU ARE NOT WELCOME HERE, OFFICER.

Now, she drags her finger underneath the word "OFFICER," UNDERLINING it for emphasis. Kevin wants to grab the iPad and SMASH IT OVER HER HEAD --

KEVIN
Oh, *thank you* for underlining that... because yeah, I *know* I'm a cop... Not Officer -- Chief... but I'm off duty and I am... Jesus Christ, I'm just --
(deep breath; then)
-- I am *trying* to talk to my wife.

And there it is. Laurie is Kevin's WIFE... Jill and Tom's MOTHER. She didn't disappear three years ago...

She's been right in front of us the whole time.

KEVIN
Laurie. Forget me. Everything I... This isn't about me or... us.
(a beat)
But Jill needs her mom.
(heartbreakingly sincere)
Please. Come home.

He takes a step forward... puts out his hand --

But Laurie takes a step back up the stairs. A RETREAT.

Kevin FLINCHES. Ouch. But the rejection isn't the worst part as Laurie's eyes widen in ALARM, looking just past Kevin as --

WHHOMPH!!!! BEEFY'S FIST ROCKETS INTO HIS KIDNEY!

Kevin DOUBLES OVER as Beefy, blood running from the GASH in his forehead, grabs Kevin by the HAIR and quite literally DRAGS HIM BACK THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR AND --

EXT. GUILTY REMNANT HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

OUTSIDE. Kevin SUCKING IN AIR -- Trying to get his breath as Beefy PULLS him down the walkway, into the STREET --

THWUNNNNG!! Unceremoniously TOSSES him into the side of his CAR, Kevin SLUMPING TO THE GROUND -- WHEEZING.

Beefy looks down at him. There is no mistaking the words behind his eyes -- *"Do not come back here."* Now, he WALKS back the way he came.

ON KEVIN. Pulls himself UP. Getting his breath back... Eyes WATERING. Looks back towards the house.

Laurie stands there on the front stoop. Patti Levin protectively in front of her.

ON LAURIE. Doing everything she can not to FEEL.

ON KEVIN. Hating her for that.

But he is a STRONG man. Someone who can pick himself up. Someone who can MOVE ON. Always has been. And so --

Kevin COUGHS -- SPITS ON THE GROUND... Pulls open his car door. Gets in.

AND DRIVES OFF.

WE HOLD ON LAURIE. Watching him go. Patti turns to her. NODS approvingly as if to say, *"Well done."* Then --

HEADLIGHTS. And now, both women turn back towards the street... is Kevin coming back?

NO. It's a TAXI.

It pulls into the Cul-de-sac. Comes to a stop. The back door opens up. And out steps --

THE REDHEAD FROM THE ITALIAN RESTAURANT.

The one Laurie and Gladys spent all of last night WATCHING. And she has been crying. A LOT.

The cabbie pops the trunk, hands her a rolling SUITCASE. She pays him. Takes the long walk up to the house where Patti and Laurie stand on the porch. A beat.

PRETTY REDHEAD
I was hoping I could stay here.
(then)
Maybe... just for a couple nights?

Patti actually allows herself a small smile. As WARM as we've ever seen her. And why shouldn't she be?

She's RECRUITING. And now, she SURPRISES US by speaking in a friendly, southern-accented VOICE --

PATTI
You can stay here for as long as you want, sweetheart. I'm Patti. What's your name?

PRETTY REDHEAD
Meg.

Patti reaches out, gently placing a hand on MEG's elbow.

PATTI
Hi, Meg.
(gestures to Laurie)
This is Laurie. She'll be taking care of you while you're here.

Meg turns to Laurie -- the very same woman she SLAPPED across the face less than 24 hours ago. A little guilty. A little embarrassed. And very VULNERABLE.

Laurie smiles, letting her know that's all okay. And as they stand there...

MUSIC FADES UP. Something soulful and angry and sad and weird. We're almost home now. And we CUT TO:

INT. GARVEY HOUSE - STAIRWELL - NIGHT

JILL. In a pair of PJ bottoms, walking up the stairs with a bowl of CEREAL. She pauses --

There on the wall, the FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH. Kevin. Jill. Tom. SHATTERED GLASS.

Jill takes it in. CONFUSED as to how it broke. Then...

She reaches out, takes down the frame. Sits on the steps. Puts down her bowl of cereal.

And starts to delicately remove the SHARDS obscuring her mother's face. LAURIE's face. And as the MUSIC continues, we CUT TO:

EXT. POOL - WAYNE'S RANCH - NIGHT

TOM. Moonlight reflects across the placid water of the POOL he was flirting with Christine at earlier. Now, he is ALONE.

He stands at the edge of the pool. Pulls off his T-Shirt. JESUS -- There is large SCAR on his back. There is a story behind it, but it will be awhile before we hear it.

Now, Tom yanks off his jeans. Then his boxers. Drops them on top of the T-shirt and --

DIVES into the pool, naked. But we hold on the PILE OF CLOTHES as something LIGHTS UP in the jeans pocket -- Tom's CELL, partially sticking out. We see the top of a MAN'S FACE on the display. A single word identifying the caller --

"DAD."

The MUSIC RISES, LOUDER NOW, along with the sounds of a CAR ENGINE being PUSHED TOO HARD as we CUT ONE FINAL TIME TO:

INT. KEVIN'S CAR - DRIVING - NIGHT

KEVIN.

The music we have been listening to has been coming from his CAR STEREO. It is very, very LOUD. He drives, phone pressed to his ear. Just listening to it RING. Kevin SINGS ALONG to the music, inserting his OWN lyrics to the melody --

KEVIN
... Answer your phone, Tommy,
Godammitt, answer your ph --

KEVIN SLAMS ON THE BRAKES.

The phone TUMBLES out of his hand -- down by the pedals. But he doesn't care.

Kevin blinks. Then SQUINTS... not quite believing his eyes. We follow his finger down to the stereo as -- CLICK -- the MUSIC STOPS. Drifting back up we finally see --

THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD

Standing in the middle of the street. FORTY YARDS in front of him.

THE STAG.

Maybe it's a trick of perspective... But the animal seems IMPROBABLY LARGE, crowned with an ELABORATE RACK OF ANTLERS. And he's just standing there. Staring at Kevin.

ON KEVIN. Transfixed. He reaches for the door handle without really thinking... opens it, steps into --

THE STREET

God. Lit solely by the STREETLIGHTS and the MOON, The Stag is just breathtakingly MAJESTIC.

Kevin looks at it. It looks at Kevin.

He moves out from behind the safety of his open door, to the front of the car. Raises his hands, letting the animal know he's not a threat. And then...

THE STAG BEGINS TO WALK TOWARDS HIM. Hooves making little to no noise as it moves over the pavement. The closer it gets, the BIGGER it gets until finally, it STOPS.

Just five feet away from him. Almost close enough to TOUCH.

Kevin should be scared. He's TRAPPED between the stag and the car. But for some reason (other than being DRUNK), he's oddly calm... as if he believes, INSANE as it may sound... that this thing is HERE for him. And so, he softly ASKS --

KEVIN
Were you in my kitchen last night?

Of course, it says nothing in response. It's just a deer.

... Right?

And then... The stag looks up... ALARMED...

A HOWL. Kevin turns -- It came from behind him. Another HOWL. THE SOUND OF MOVEMENT. Something COMING. And then?

THE DOGS APPEAR.

A PACK -- HOLY CHRIST -- THERE MUST BE TWENTY OF THEM -- RUNNING UP THE STREET FULL TILT!

The Stag TURNS TAIL -- RUNS AWAY, hooves thundering as it flees the frenzied dogs.

KEVIN can't make it back to the driver's side door -- Instinctively, he SCRAMBLES onto the hood of his car -- all the way UP TO THE ROOF as --

THE DOG PACK JAMS PAST IN A FLURRY OF FUR AND TEETH -- COMPLETELY PRIMITIVE -- THIS IS A HUNT.

BREATHING HARD, KEVIN WATCHES FROM ATOP HIS CAR -- The STAG has a good lead... it's going to get away... but... Oh shit --

ANOTHER PACK -- HALF A DOZEN MORE DOGS -- DARTS OUT FROM BETWEEN TWO HOUSES -- JESUS -- THEY BROADSIDE THE STAG --

And it never has a chance -- ITS LEGS GO OUT FROM UNDER IT -- THE DOGS SWARMING -- GOING IN FOR THE KILL -- AND NOW --

THE OTHER PACK CATCHES UP. And Thank God we're watching all this from down the street because it's fucking VICIOUS --

ON KEVIN -- IN SHOCK -- as he watches them FEED. His moment of transcendent beauty reduced to pure carnal SAVAGERY in the space of THIRTY SECONDS...

... And he doesn't notice the PICKUP TRUCK until it pulls up beside him.

Kevin turns, SURPRISED. The Tall Man is looking at him through the rolled-down window of the Pickup. His baseball hat is pulled low over his eyes, a pinch of CHEWING TOBACCO protrudes the skin below his lip. His name is DEAN, though we don't know that yet. His voice is laconic, but resonant --

DEAN
They're not our dogs.

KEVIN
... What?

DEAN
You said they were our dogs.
They're not.
(measured)
Not anymore.

And with that, Dean hops out of the truck, walks around the back. Kevin looks down the street, where the SNARLING DOGS continue to devour the Stag. He furrows his brow, turns back to Dean, DAZED --

KEVIN
Am I... awake?

DEAN
You are now, Chief.

The Tall Man reaches under a tarp in the flatbed, removes a RIFLE. Turns to Kevin --

DEAN
You got a gun?

ON KEVIN. A beat. Then, he NODS.

KEVIN
... Yeah.

DEAN
Then what the fuck you waiting for?

And with that, Dean pulls the bolt on his rifle, CHAMBERS A ROUND -- Moving with purpose, but no particular urgency, HE STRIDES DOWN THE STREET, lifting the RIFLE TO HIS SHOULDER TO BEGIN HIS DARK BUSINESS -- **BLAM!**

Kevin FLINCHES -- **BLAM!** -- A DOG whines down the STREET --

HOLDING ON KEVIN NOW -- **BLAM!** -- SOMETHING COMING OVER HIS EYES -- **BLAM!** -- PUSHING HIS CONFUSION BACK -- **BLAM!** -- AN OPPORTUNITY, FINALLY, <u>TO TAKE SOME GODDAMN CONTROL</u>.

He reaches to his lower back. No fumbling this time. Snaps his PISTOL out, ALREADY STRIDING down the street with a brisk, frightening EFFICIENCY. Cool. And CALM.

<u>But there are also TEARS in his eyes</u>.

He does not know why. He does not care why. Perhaps because he has finally realized that the world has changed. It has changed forever. Perhaps he has finally realized what is gone is not coming back.

And so Kevin breaks into a RUN -- RAISING HIS PISTOL -- <u>POINTING IT RIGHT AT US AS HE PULLS THE TRIGGER AND WE</u> --

SMASH TO BLACK.