

The Seriatim Suicides

by
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FADE IN:

INT. CATHEDRAL - NIGHT

The soft lighting throughout the nave of the cathedral is calming; quite a detachment from the assiduous city it is located in. The towering spires appear to touch heaven itself and the numerous chandeliers hanging overhead shine down like angels overseeing the world below them. The humming from the organ pipes echo throughout the scarcely occupied room.

Scarcely dispersed among the countless pews leading up to the alter, PARISHIONERS stare forward at the empty alter ahead of them; some with their hands folded in prayer, others cycling through the prayers of the rosary.

A PRAYING MAN rests upright on the kneeler of the third pew from the front with his hands clasped together. His eyes are closed tightly behind his horn-rimmed glasses as he softly prays.

PRAYING MAN

I ask You, Lord, please imbibe thy
pain and thy suffering and with
Your strength and intrepidity
become the remedy of the affliction
within me and thwart...

Suddenly, the door of the cathedral slams shut and reverberates off of the marble walls. The MAN turns his body to see the source of the loud bang.

BEAT

After staring for a moment, the MAN turns his body, returning to his original position on the kneeler.

BEAT

Then, he closes his eyes and continues his prayer.

PRAYING MAN (CONT'D)

Become the remedy of the affliction
within me and thwart all guileful
deviltries intending malevolence.
O God, grant me the strength to
surmount the...

Again, something interrupts the MAN'S prayer. He turns on his knees investigating the source of the inaudible disruption.

BEAT

The MAN stares back at the pews behind him, blinking his eyes repeatedly as he glances left and right for a possible origin of the muted interruption.

BEAT

Unable to pinpoint the noise's provenance, once again, the PRAYING MAN turns back on his knees and faces forward. He closes his eyes and returns to prayer.

PRAYING MAN (CONT'D)
Grant me the strength to surmount
the pernicious forces...

Just then, an ear-splitting scream erupts throughout the cathedral. The MAN springs to his feet and turns, examining the nave for the screaming individual.

BEAT

On edge, the PRAYING MAN jerks his head left and right. He then realizes the church is empty and he is all alone.

BEAT

In disarray, the MAN becomes leery of the deserted nave of the cathedral, unsure what he should do.

MIKE MCDONALD (V.O.)
Where the hell is she?

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Staring at the clock hanging on the wall, MIKE MCDONALD impatiently watches as the hands tick around its center. MCDONALD looks very much like he did back in Virginia; his short brown hair is neatly kept, but the five o'clock shadow on his face has grown thicker in consistency with his daughter's age.

Standing by the kitchen counter, sipping on a cup of hot coffee, his wife LISA MCDONALD looks at him with disapproval in her eyes.

LISA MCDONALD
Mike, she's seventeen. Seventeen
year-old girls stay out late.

MIKE MCDONALD
Not eleven-o'clock-late.

LISA MCDONALD
Yes, eleven-o'clock-late.

BEAT

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
If you're so nervous, why don't you
call her on her cell phone?

MCDONALD looks down at the cell phone in his hand.

MIKE MCDONALD
I did, but she won't answer.

LISA MCDONALD
(under her breath)
Yeah, no kidding.

Suddenly, the small black phone begins to buzz violently in his hand. MCDONALD'S focus moves from his wife to the vibrating plastic device clenched tightly in his fist.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Who's that?

MCDONALD stares at the illuminated display on the front of the phone, hoping it will read Hannah.

MIKE MCDONALD
It's the station.

LISA MCDONALD
I thought you were off-duty.

MIKE MCDONALD
Yeah, me too.

MCDONALD flips open the phone and brings it to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
McDonald.

MCDONALD listens to the voice on the other line.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Okay. Yeah, I know where it is.
I'll be there in ten.

He flips the phone shut and drops it to his pocket. He begins to roll down the sleeves of his Oxford shirt, buttoning them at the wrists.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Duty calls.

LISA MCDONALD
So much for a night off.

MIKE MCDONALD
(sarcastically)
What's that?

MCDONALD grabs his suit jacket hanging on the back of a chair and swings it over his shoulders. He pulls the right side of the jacket over the holster attached to his belt. MCDONALD makes his way towards the door of the apartment.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I wanna know the *minute* she walks through this door!

LISA MCDONALD
I'll have her call you herself!

MCDONALD opens the door and walks out, slamming it shut behind him. With it...

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - TEN MINUTES LATER

The front entrance of the apartment complex is enclosed by yellow "crime scene" tape. Standing inside the boundaries just outside the front door, an NYPD OFFICER lifts up the yellow tape to allow a CSI AGENT carrying a briefcase of investigation tools to enter underneath. A crowd of ONLOOKERS has gathered around the outside of the tape, surveying the OFFICERS making their way to and from the crime scene inside.

About fifty-or-so feet down the sidewalk from the complex's entrance, DETECTIVE TOMMY MATHESON watches a black coupe make its way towards him. MATHESON scans through a few items on his phone, then returns it to the inside pocket of his unbuttoned suit jacket. The car pulls up to the curb and stops right in front of him.

The driver's door opens up and out steps MCDONALD, holding the sides of his suit coat close to his body. He shuts the door and makes his way around the front of his car towards his partner.

TOMMY MATHESON
A little late for a man your age to still be awake!

MCDONALD chuckles at TOMMY'S dickheaded remark.

MIKE MCDONALD

Screw you, Tommy. I'm forty-two,
but I could still kick your scrawny
little ass.

TOMMY MATHESON

If your pacemaker holds up.

MCDONALD finally reaches his partner who turns and joins him
in making his way towards the crime scene inside up ahead.

MIKE MCDONALD

What's goin' on?

TOMMY MATHESON

Sandra Palmer. Female. Thirty-
three years-old.

MIKE MCDONALD

Married?

TOMMY MATHESON

Divorced.

MIKE MCDONALD

Kids?

TOMMY MATHESON

Two, but they live with their
father.

MIKE MCDONALD

Caught a break there.

MCDONALD and MATHESON reach the crowd of ONLOOKERS and shimmy
their way through the gathering.

TOMMY MATHESON

That's the truth. I am so done
dealing with crying kids.

MCDONALD rests his hand on a MAN'S back standing next to the
yellow tape.

MIKE MCDONALD

Wait till they're seventeen.

Feeling the detective's hand on his back, the PRAYING MAN
from earlier turns around and steps aside to allow MCDONALD
and MATHESON through to the crime scene inside. MATHESON
lifts up the tape, allowing him and MCDONALD to pass under.

The MAN adjusts his glasses as he watches them continue towards the front door of the complex.

MIKE MCDONALD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
So, what's the story?

TOMMY MATHESON (O.C.)
Moved out of her husband's house a year ago and has lived here ever since.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD and MATHESON enter through the front door and begin ascending the stairs to the second floor.

MIKE MCDONALD
Who's your source? Roommate?

TOMMY MATHESON
Landlady. Same person who called it in.

The two men reach the second floor and turn in the direction of the crime scene.

MIKE MCDONALD
Any suspects?

MATHESON smirks at MCDONALD'S question.

TOMMY MATHESON
Not at the moment.

MCDONALD looks at his partner, confused.

MIKE MCDONALD
What about the landlady?

TOMMY smiles at MCDONALD, expecting he wouldn't understand...yet.

TOMMY MATHESON
She's eighty-three, Mike.

MATHESON points to an open door leading to one of the apartments and MCDONALD heads in.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX, SANDRA PALMER'S APARTMENT -
CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stands in the small hallway of the apartment, glancing around the room at the handful of NYPD OFFICERS and FORENSIC AGENTS investigating the tenement. Then, he spots what the NYPD likes to refer to as the "main attraction."

In front of a dining chair sitting next to a wall splattered with blood, SANDRA PALMER, a young brown-haired woman in a gorgeous blue dress, lies face down on the ground. Next to her left leg, a silver handgun lies unmoved in front of the chair. The CSI AGENT from earlier takes samples of a puddle of blood that has formed around her head like the moat of a castle.

MCDONALD stares at the woman's lifeless body on the floor.

TOMMY MATHESON
Not the cleanest crime scene.

MIKE MCDONALD
Not the messiest either. No suspects, right?

TOMMY looks at MCDONALD, somewhat stupefied.

TOMMY MATHESON
How'd you know?

MIKE MCDONALD
We're lookin' at'er!

TOMMY stares at the corpse on the floor.

TOMMY MATHESON
The vic?!

MIKE MCDONALD
And the shooter.

MATHESON can't believe what MCDONALD is proposing.

TOMMY MATHESON
She killed herself?

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
How do you know?

MIKE MCDONALD
Blood all over the wall. Gun next to the body.

(MORE)

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
And I bet if you take a look in her
mouth, there'll be burn marks from
the barrel.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON
What about the dress? She looks
awfully dressed up just to kill
herself.

MIKE MCDONALD
That's how it works.

TOMMY looks at MCDONALD, intrigued.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
On average, more men commit suicide
than women. More women *threaten*
it, but more men commit.

TOMMY stares down at the woman's body as he listens closely
to MCDONALD'S explanation.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
When a man commits suicide, he'll
grab a gun, point it at his head,
and pull the trigger. Short,
quick, and painless; *if* he does it
right.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
When a woman commits suicide,
she'll go out to a bar, have a few
drinks, and enjoy a quiet evening
alone. She'll come back home, take
a long hot bath, and put on her
favorite dress so she can look good
just one last time. That's why a
lot of people think Marilyn Monroe
was murdered.

TOMMY MATHESON
'Cus she was at home all night?

MIKE MCDONALD
'Cus she was naked.

TOMMY still looks unsure about MCDONALD'S theory. He glances
over at the open window by the fire escape running along the
outside of the building.

TOMMY MATHESON

What about the window?

MCDONALD glances over at the window. Through the open bottom-half, the cool city night air flows into the apartment.

MIKE MCDONALD

Draft made it comfortable. Easier for her to do it.

TOMMY stares at the window for a moment, obviously not completely sold on the idea of a suicide. He turns to MCDONALD.

TOMMY MATHESON

I don't know, Mike. I mean, there's not even a note.

MIKE MCDONALD

Notes are an urban legend; a myth. Most suicides are like murders: Just a body and a weapon.

MATHESON takes a second to digest the information MCDONALD has just enlightened him with.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Have you talked to the landlady?

TOMMY MATHESON

I figured you'd want to.

TOMMY stares at MCDONALD, confident his assumption would be correct.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX, LANDLADY'S APARTMENT - A LITTLE LATER

The LANDLADY is a short old woman with curly gray hair. Her bifocals look like two magnifying glasses connected at the bridge of her nose. She stares up at MCDONALD and MATHESON standing outside of her door.

LANDLADY

How many of you are gonna ask me questions tonight? I told you, I didn't see nothin'.

TOMMY MATHESON

We understand that ma'am, but you're the one who called it in.

LANDLADY

So that's what I get for doin' my
civic duty? I'm a law-abidin',
taxpayin' citizen...

MIKE MCDONALD

And you're the owner of an
apartment building that just had
one of its renter's kill herself.

The LANDLADY looks at MIKE suspiciously about his statement.

LANDLADY

You think she killed herself?

BEAT

LANDLADY (CONT'D)

Why would you say that? There
wasn't any note.

MIKE MCDONALD

It's just a theory right now, Mrs.
Dursky. That's why we're asking
you for your help. So, if you'd
please just answer the rest of our
questions, we'll be outta here as
soon as possible so you can get
back to work.

MRS. DURSKY stares up at MCDONALD, patiently waiting for him
to proceed with the questioning.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Okay, so tell me, again, exactly
what happened.

LANDLADY

Like I said, I was in my apartment
going over the month's rental dues
when I heard some loud banging.

TOMMY MATHESON

Like a gunshot?

MCDONALD watches suspiciously as the LANDLADY nods in
response to TOMMY'S question.

MIKE MCDONALD

And that's when you went into the
room?

LANDLADY

Right, I figured it was my job to see what was going on; after all, these are my apartments and Ms. Palmer is...was my tenant.

MCDONALD takes note of MRS. DURSKY'S explanation, then looks back at her.

MIKE MCDONALD

When you went to check out Ms. Palmer's apartment, was there any sign that anyone else had been there?

LANDLADY

No.

MIKE MCDONALD

Nobody in the hallway?

LANDLADY

Just the Kwan's, two doors down.

MCDONALD turns back to MATHESON.

MIKE MCDONALD

D'you talk to them?

TOMMY MATHESON

No, I'll stop by before we leave though.

LANDLADY

I don't know if that's gonna work.

MATHESON and MCDONALD both focus back on MRS. DURSKY.

MIKE MCDONALD

What do you mean?

LANDLADY

The Kwan's are immigrants from Korea. They moved here about a month ago while they were waiting to get their citizenship.

MIKE MCDONALD

I don't see the problem.

LANDLADY

The *problem* is they don't speak English.

MCDONALD grins at the unfortunate revelation.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

MCDONALD and TOMMY make their way down the second floor hallway towards the stairs.

TOMMY MATHESON

So what do you think we should do from here?

MIKE MCDONALD

Not much we can do. Its a suicide; open and closed.

TOMMY MATHESON

That simple?

MIKE MCDONALD

That simple. It's a tough world, Tom, you gotta *somewhat* understand what's goin' through their mind when they do it. No matter how hard you try, it seems like the rest of the world's a step ahead of you.

TOMMY looks over at MIKE, looking somewhat concerned.

TOMMY MATHESON

You okay, Mike?

MCDONALD looks at the rookie cop, realizing his thoughts have become much more perceptible lately.

MIKE MCDONALD

Yeah, I'm fine.

MCDONALD looks down at his watch, now understanding just how late the night has gotten.

TOMMY MATHESON

Don't worry, she's fine. She's a teenager.

MIKE MCDONALD

That's what I keep tellin' myself.

Just then, MCDONALD'S phone starts to ring.

TOMMY MATHESON
Speak of the devil.

TOMMY watches MCDONALD bring the cell phone from the clip on his belt up to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD
Yeah.

MCDONALD waits for the person on the other line speak.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'm on my way. Make sure she's up.

MCDONALD closes his phone and returns it to its clip. He looks at TOMMY, about to explain himself, when...

TOMMY MATHESON
Go home. I'll finish up here.

MIKE MCDONALD
Thanks Tommy.

MCDONALD turns and descends the stairs to the first floor.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD quickly makes his way out the front entrance and towards the edge of the crowd of ONLOOKERS. He lifts up the caution tape as he makes his way through, when he's suddenly stopped by a hand on his shoulder.

PRAYING MAN
Detective!

MCDONALD turns to see the MAN staring at him.

PRAYING MAN/DANNY BLAKE
Danny Blake, New York Post. Could I get a quick minute with you to...

MIKE MCDONALD
Take it up with the station.

MCDONALD continues towards his car parked down the road.

DANNY BLAKE
But, Detective!

BLAKE'S attempt is a lost one, however, as MCDONALD completely ignores his calls.

BEAT

DANNY frowns as he watches MCDONALD disappear towards his car.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

Sitting in one of the tall chairs at the kitchen counter, HANNAH rests her head on her hand as she stares down at the ground. HANNAH has grown quite a bit in the last nine years. Nearly eighteen years-old now, she has developed into a beautiful teenage girl.

Standing on the opposite side of the counter, staring at her silent daughter, LISA waits patiently for her husband to return home.

Then, the front door of the apartment opens. LISA and HANNAH both turn to see MIKE make his way inside. As he enters, he spots his quiet daughter at the counter and gently closes the door behind him.

BEAT

MCDONALD makes his way over to the kitchen counter, still staring at HANNAH.

MIKE MCDONALD

What time did you get home?

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad...

MIKE MCDONALD

What time did you get home?

HANNAH knows she disobeyed.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Hannah, when are you gonna learn that you can't be out that late at night?

HANNAH MCDONALD

I'm eighteen years-old, dad!

MIKE MCDONALD

Seventeen! We're not in Virginia anymore, Hannah. This is New York; it's different here.

(MORE)

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I mean, what in the world do you
have to do at 12:30 at night?

As if on cue, the toilet in the bathroom down the hall
flushes. MCDONALD looks over at LISA as he listens to the
water flowing through the pipes in the walls.

BEAT

LISA looks over at her husband, unsure how he's going to
react to the answer to his question.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Who the hell is that?

Then, the bathroom door opens and footsteps approach the
kitchen. MCDONALD stares at the corner of the wall blocking
his view of the hallway as he waits for the "flusher" to make
their appearance.

From around the corner, SEAN OLIVER brushes off his tee shirt
and clears his throat as he makes his way down the hallway.
His short brown hair is, at most, an inch longer than the
stubble on his face. As he appears from around the corner,
he catches MCDONALD staring at him from the opposite side of
the kitchen counter.

SEAN OLIVER

Woah.

MCDONALD can't believe he's finally dealing with a father's
worst nightmare.

MIKE MCDONALD

You've gotta be shitting me.

HANNAH stands up from the counter and grabs SEAN'S hand. She
looks directly into her father's eyes.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad, this is Sean. My boyf...

MIKE MCDONALD

I know...what he is.

The kitchen falls silent once again.

BEAT

MCDONALD looks directly into the young-man's eyes hoping his
exhaustion hasn't dissipated any of his intimidation.

BEAT

A cocky smile makes its way onto SEAN'S face as he makes his way around the counter towards MCDONALD, having no idea what he's getting himself into.

SEAN OLIVER

Look, let's try this again.

SEAN extends his hand to shake with the intimidating father in front of him. LISA stares at the cocky young man standing by her husband, fearing she may have to step in.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

Sean Oliver.

MCDONALD stares at SEAN, not buying into his 'reintroduction.'

MIKE MCDONALD

How old are you, Sean?

SEAN, realizing he's not going to get a handshake in return, lowers his hand back down to his side.

SEAN OLIVER

Twenty-one, sir.

HANNAH looks at her father staring back at her, never doubting he would disagree with the age difference.

MIKE MCDONALD

Twenty-one. That's illegal, you know that, right?

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad!

MCDONALD returns his focus to SEAN.

SEAN OLIVER

With all due respect, sir, Hannah's old enough to decide who she wants to date.

MIKE MCDONALD

With all due respect, Sean, I would save the parenting advice for when you have one of your own. With someone other than my daughter!

LISA realizes that's her cue and she walks over to SEAN.

LISA MCDONALD

Okay! Hannah, honey, why don't you walk Sean out. It's late and you've got school tomorrow.

HANNAH reaches over to the tall chair next to her and grabs a red helmet sitting on the seat. MCDONALD watches as she takes the helmet and carries it over to her boyfriend.

MIKE MCDONALD

He rides a motorcycle! Of course he does!

HANNAH and SEAN quickly head toward the door.

SEAN OLIVER

It was nice to meet you!

MIKE MCDONALD

Hey, come back anytime, Sean!

HANNAH opens the door and nudges SEAN out into the hallway. She follows after him and slams the door shut behind them.

LISA looks at MIKE as he stares at the door.

LISA MCDONALD

You handled that well.

MCDONALD blows off his wife's statement and makes his way over to the family room.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The window overlooking the road in front of the apartment complex is covered by a pair plush drapes.

MIKE MCDONALD

Whatever. That kid was an asshole.

MIKE pulls open the drapes and peaks out the window.

LISA MCDONALD (O.C.)

He was an asshole?

MCDONALD surveys HANNAH and SEAN emerge from the apartment complex and make their way towards his speed-bike parked on the curb.

LISA MCDONALD (O.C.) (CONT'D)
You treated Hannah like she was a
little girl.

MIKE turns around to face his wife.

MIKE MCDONALD
She is a little girl!

MIKE turns to look back out the window at his daughter and
her boyfriend.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Nine years ago, I almost lost the
one thing that mattered most to me.

SEAN hops onto his motorcycle, gives HANNAH a quick kiss, and
speeds off down the road. HANNAH watches SEAN disappear into
the night, then turns and makes her way back towards the
apartment.

BEAT

MIKE turns to face his wife.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'm not about to let it happen
again.

LISA MCDONALD
He's just her boyfriend, Mike.
He's not taking her away from
anyone.

MCDONALD contemplates his wife's statement.

BEAT

Then, the silence is broken as the front door opens and
HANNAH makes her way inside. She closes the door and heads
towards her bedroom, giving her father a frustrated glance on
the way.

MCDONALD looks over at LISA as HANNAH'S bedroom door slams
shut down the hallway.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Mike, she's your daughter. Don't
do anything to jeopardize that.

MCDONALD stares at his wife for a moment, realizing he may
have been a bit harsh earlier.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, HANNAH'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sitting on her bed, HANNAH stares down at the carpet covering her bedroom floor. The silence in the room is broken, when three knocks resonate from the door.

HANNAH looks up, without saying anything, and waits as the door slowly opens and her father peeks through.

MCDONALD looks at his melancholy daughter sitting on her bed in silence. HANNAH glances at her dad, momentarily, then returns her focus back down to the ground.

MCDONALD realizes this isn't going to be easy. He steps out from behind the door and makes his way over to the bed. He sits down next to his daughter, considering how he should start his explanation.

BEAT

Then, MCDONALD figures out what he wants to say.

MIKE MCDONALD

Do you remember when grandpa died?

HANNAH continues to stare down at the ground, silent.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

When the hospital called and said he had had a heart attack...I froze.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I mean, here I am, four-hundred miles away, my dad's dying...and there's nothing I can do about it.

HANNAH looks sincerely into her father's eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

That's the way I feel with you, honey.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad, I'm not dying.

MIKE MCDONALD

I know you're not dying, Hannah, that's not what I mean.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

What I mean is: You're eighteen.
You're graduating in three months
and God only knows what you're
doing after high school. Hannah, I
knew I was gonna lose you sometime;
I knew you were gonna grow up; I
just didn't know it would be this
soon.

HANNAH listens intently to her father's explanation.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Look, I'm sorry...about earlier. I
just...I just want the best for
you. I worry because I care,
Hannah.

The room falls silent, once again.

BEAT

Then, MIKE pats his daughter's leg and stands up. He walks
back towards the door and opens it up to exit the room, when
he is suddenly halted.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad?

MCDONALD peeks back around the door to look at his daughter
sitting on her bed.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Don't worry.

MIKE smiles, glad to hear HANNAH'S words of encouragement.
He slowly steps back into the hallway and gently closes the
door to the bedroom.

HANNAH continues to sit in silence on her bed as the recent
conversation with her father continuously repeats in her
mind.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, "BULLPEN" - DAY

The OFFICERS hustle around the station; answering phones,
carrying files, processing CRIMINALS, the 'heart' of
headquarters can be found here in the "bullpen."

Following MCDONALD as he makes his way towards his office, TOMMY scans over some files in the manila folder lying open in his hands. The two officers walk quickly, dodging their fellow LAWMEN on their way.

TOMMY MATHESON
The coroner released his autopsy report.

MIKE MCDONALD
Oh yeah? How's it look?

TOMMY MATHESON
Well...

MIKE MCDONALD
Showin' a little bit of hesitance there, Tommy. Is there something I should be aware of?

MCDONALD turns to the door leading to his office and he opens it up, leading TOMMY inside.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, MCDONALD'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

As MIKE walks over to his desk, TOMMY pulls the door closed behind him, still reading over the report in the folder.

TOMMY MATHESON
Something doesn't add up.

TOMMY closes the folder and tosses it onto the desk in front of MIKE. He spins the folder around and flips it open to read the report inside.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
It says the cause of death was clearly a gunshot wound to the head.

MIKE MCDONALD
Burn marks in the mouth, just like I said.

TOMMY MATHESON
But.

MCDONALD looks up at TOMMY.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
Her hands were clean.

A curious scowl comes over MCDONALD'S face.

MIKE MCDONALD
What do you mean, "clean?"

TOMMY MATHESON
I mean, the gun was fired with the
barrel in her mouth, but she wasn't
touching it.

MCDONALD isn't sure if he should believe the young detective
in front of him.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
When a gun fires, the trigger pull
jerks back, then suddenly snaps
forward sparking the ignition that
fires the bullet.

MIKE MCDONALD
I know how a gun works, Tommy.

TOMMY didn't realize how redundant he was sounding; speaking
to an armed detective.

TOMMY MATHESON
When the pull pops forward, the
explosion releases a little bit of
dust that falls onto the area of
the hand just underneath of it.

MIKE MCDONALD
Gun residue.

TOMMY waits for his explanation to sink in with MCDONALD.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
You're tellin' me her hands didn't
have any gun residue on'em?

TOMMY MATHESON
Not a trace.

MIKE MCDONALD
How can she fire a gun without
holding it?

Suddenly, the door leading to MCDONALD'S office flings open
and leaning on the handle is a young, black FEMALE OFFICER,
her badge shining brightly on the front of her belt.

FEMALE OFFICER
Detective McDonald?

MCDONALD looks over at the OFFICER in his doorway.

FEMALE OFFICER (CONT'D)

There's a Hampton Adams here to see you.

MCDONALD looks at the OFFICER, confused.

MIKE MCDONALD

Who?

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Sitting at the single table in the dimly lit interrogation room, DANNY BLAKE stares down at his intertwined fingers. He waits in silence for the detective he was promised when he spoke with the receptionist at the front desk.

BEAT

The large one-way mirror displays an exact replication of DANNY and the table in front of it.

Just then, the door behind DANNY opens up. He turns his head to see MCDONALD making his way in from the hallway running outside of the room. Without looking directly at BLAKE, MIKE closes the door behind him and stops for a moment, glancing down at the ground below him.

MIKE MCDONALD

Danny Blake?

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Or Hampton Adams; which one do you prefer?

DANNY/HAMPTON realizes his cover has been blown.

DANNY BLAKE/HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm sorry.

MCDONALD starts to make his way around to the opposite side of the table.

MIKE MCDONALD

Lying to a police officer isn't always the best way to gain his trust.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm know, detective. I just thought...

MIKE MCDONALD

You don't work for the New York Post either, do you?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS

No, sir.

MIKE MCDONALD

Next time you wanna lie to a cop, make sure you use the name of someone who actually works there. The only Daniel Blake in a twenty-mile radius is a doctor, not a journalist.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Listen, I'm sorry about lying, but if I could please just explain my...

MIKE MCDONALD

Actually, Mr. Adams, explanations don't seem to be your strong point.

HAMPTON ADAMS

It's about your murder case.

The words catch MCDONALD off-guard.

MIKE MCDONALD

I'm not currently on a murder case.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Are you sure?

As if it were a carrot being held in front of a horse, the question suddenly peaks MCDONALD'S attention.

MIKE MCDONALD

There's nearly three-thousand homicides in New York City each year, how do I know...

HAMPTON ADAMS

The dead girl in her apartment, detective!

The sudden anger in HAMPTON'S interruption catches MCDONALD off-guard. He realizes he needs to stop beating around the bush.

MIKE MCDONALD
Mr. Adams, the case you're referring to is not a homicide case. It was a suicide.

The room falls silent, but only for a moment.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Do you believe in God, detective?

The question catches MCDONALD somewhat off-guard.

MIKE MCDONALD
I'm sorry?

HAMPTON ADAMS
It's a simple question: Do you believe in God? Do you believe there is some Higher Power; some Ultimate Plan?

MCDONALD stares deeply into HAMPTON'S eyes.

BEAT

HAMPTON realizes a simple question is not going to get an answer from the intransigent officer.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Detective, we can't go much farther unless you answer the question.

The events play over in MCDONALD'S mind as if they were caught on camera.

MIKE MCDONALD
Nine-years ago, I worked back in Virginia on this case with these missing kids.

HAMPTON listens intently to the officer's narration.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Over the course of four months, this guy took three kids; almost four.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

He would find children whose fathers weren't a part of their lives and steal them from the family they *did* have. He would take them to his house and lock them up in these cages in his basement, like dogs. He'd give'em one meal a day and make'em sleep on these rusted cots.

Even now the story is difficult for MCDONALD to recount.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Anyway, one day, the guy just...screwed up. He went to this grocery store and tried to take a little girl from the child drop-off. The clerk went and called her manager and we found out who the guy was; where he lived.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

When we got to his house, we found these sandwiches that he had given the kids, sitting on plates in their cages. Inside, on the peanut butter, he sprinkled rat poisoning.

HAMPTON isn't sure if he wants to hear the rest of the story.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

When we saw that none of the kids had been harmed, I knew there was something or *Someone* that had been watching over them. Someone with some type of control.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

For the three minutes it took me to drive from his house to my wife's apartment, I believed there was a God. I believed there was someone looking down over all of us and watching out for us. But when I got home and I saw my nine year-old daughter sitting on that guy's lap and when he brought a gun to her head...!

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
...I lost all faith.

The interrogation room is dead silent. HAMPTON recalls every detail of MCDONALD'S story in his head, in complete understanding of where his lack of faith is coming from.

BEAT

MCDONALD tilts his head down and stares at the ground in silence.

HAMPTON ADAMS
There's a purpose behind
everything, detect...

MIKE MCDONALD
I'm not here to listen to your
sermon, Mr. Adams!

MCDONALD'S fury beams from his pupils directly into HAMPTON'S eyes. The intimidating stare down is chillingly quiet.

BEAT

MCDONALD, still staring directly at HAMPTON, cools down and continues.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Unless you have something relevant
to our case, you're wasting my
time.

HAMPTON contemplates how he's going to explain his theory to the menacing detective standing at the opposite end of the table.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I don't think you're dealing with
suicides.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I think it's murder.

MCDONALD tries to consider the idea ADAMS is putting in his head.

MIKE MCDONALD
A woman is found dead in her
apartment.

(MORE)

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Face down, gun next to her body,
lying in front of a chair sitting
next to a blood-covered wall. No
struggle. No suspect.

HAMPTON ADAMS
No residue.

MCDONALD looks at HAMPTON, curious.

MIKE MCDONALD
How'd you know that?

HAMPTON stares at MCDONALD, knowing he's not going to like
his explanation.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Last night, I went to my church to
pray. When I was there, I heard
this...woman...screaming.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I think it was your victim.

MCDONALD'S skepticism is obvious.

MIKE MCDONALD
What are you talking about? She
was in her apartment.

HAMPTON exhales loudly, preparing himself for the reaction he
knows he's going to get.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I believe God is trying to tell me
about these "suicides." He wants
me to stop them. That's how I knew
about the residue. Her hands were
clean, weren't they.

MCDONALD attempts to understand what HAMPTON has just
proposed, but it is a lost cause.

MIKE MCDONALD
You're kidding me, right?

HAMPTON ADAMS
I know it sounds crazy to a non-
believer...

MIKE MCDONALD
No, it sounds crazy to everybody!

HAMPTON knew the detective would be difficult with him.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Detective, please just hear me out.
If you let me explain, then it will
all make sense.

MCDONALD waits for HAMPTON to explain, knowing he's just
wasting his time.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
When was the incident reported?

MIKE MCDONALD
The station got the call around ten
o'clock.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I heard the screams around ten
till.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
There were no witnesses.

MIKE MCDONALD
Correct.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Any signs of another person in the
apartment besides the woman?

MIKE MCDONALD
None.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Escape routes?

MCDONALD thinks for a moment, exhaling as the cool breezy
atmosphere of the apartment comes back to him.

MIKE MCDONALD
There was an open window...by the
fire escape.

HAMPTON ADAMS
And you didn't even *consider*
murder?

MIKE MCDONALD
Mr. Adams, I'm the detective here,
not you. I'm the one with the
badge. I'm the one with the gun.

HAMPTON ADAMS
But *I'm* the one with your
information.

MCDONALD considers HAMPTON'S point.

MIKE MCDONALD
Get back to her hands.

HAMPTON looks a little unsure about the request.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Excuse me?

MIKE MCDONALD
Her hands; how did you know that
her hands were clean?

HAMPTON ADAMS
I told you, God is tell...

MIKE MCDONALD
How was she not touching the gun?!

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS
I didn't say she wasn't touching
it, detective.

MCDONALD glares at HAMPTON, not enjoying his psychological
games.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Bring your gun here.

MIKE MCDONALD
Are you kidding?

HAMPTON ADAMS
Put the safety on; unload it; do
whatever you want, just bring it
here.

MCDONALD, hesitantly, takes out the handgun in his holster
and flicks on the safety. Slowly he reaches the gun out in
front of HAMPTON.

Very carefully, HAMPTON places his hands on the grip of the
gun. He fixes it and points the barrel straight at his face,
as if he were planning on ending his own life right here in
this room.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Give me your hands.

MCDONALD, still a little unsure about the situation, but feeling better about having his own hands on the gun, slowly lifts his hands up to HAMPTON.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Hold the gun *and* my hands. Put your hands on top of mine.

MCDONALD carefully slips the palms of his hands over the tops of HAMPTON'S, keeping the gun pointed straight at his face. MCDONALD stares at the gun in both of their hands, hoping this won't get him fired.

BEAT

Then, he sees exactly why HAMPTON suggested the demonstration.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Her hands didn't have residue, because they were blocked by someone else's.

MCDONALD glances up into HAMPTON'S eyes, staring deep into their piercing sincerity.

BEAT

Carefully, HAMPTON lets go of the gun and MCDONALD returns it to his holster. He stares at the 'prophet' sitting at the other end of the table.

BEAT

Then, MIKE formulates a question his celestial informant should know the answer to; if that truly is what he is.

MIKE MCDONALD

Why suicide?

HAMPTON looks at the detective, confused.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm sorry?

MIKE MCDONALD

If what you say is true and we really are dealing with a murderer, why is he making it look like a suicide?

Somehow, the question brings a grin to HAMPTON'S face.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Amos 9:2.

MCDONALD looks at HAMPTON, befuddled.

MIKE MCDONALD

What?

HAMPTON ADAMS

"Though they dig down to the depths
of the grave, from there my hand
will take them. Though they climb
up to the heavens, from there I
will bring them down."

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

The church looks at suicide as
defilement of the body; the temple.

The stern gaze between the men adds to the uncompromising
atmosphere of the interrogation room.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

It's the ultimate sin.

MCDONALD continues staring at HAMPTON, somehow starting to
believe his theory.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, OBSERVATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The door of the room on the other side of the one-way mirror
opens and MCDONALD makes his way inside. The small
caliginous space is dimly lit by the light shining in from
the interrogation room on the other side of the mirror.

Standing in front of the mirror, TOMMY stares into the
interrogation room, observing HAMPTON'S behavior even while
he is alone. MCDONALD makes his way over to MATHESON and
stands next to him, observing the man in front of them.

TOMMY MATHESON

Sounds like *someone's* suggesting
foul play.

MCDONALD doesn't say anything; just staring at the man
sitting quietly in the interrogation room.

BEAT

TOMMY turns to MCDONALD.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
What do you think?

MIKE MCDONALD
Call me crazy, but I'm a little
skeptical when it comes to takin'
orders from Someone I can't see.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON
A few months ago, there was this
old factory just down the road from
here. It was this abandoned shoe
plant that went under in the
fifties.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
One day, this old man was walking
home from the store and as he
passed by the plant, he stopped.
He turned and stared at the
deserted building; just stood
there.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
He said, "Someone" had told him to
"go inside." He never knew who,
just..."Someone."

MCDONALD turns to look at TOMMY, curious about where his
story is going.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
When he went in, he found a little
girl in a white dress just standing
in the middle of one of the rooms.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
He grabbed the little girl's hand
and led her out of the warehouse.

MCDONALD returns his focus to HAMPTON, patiently waiting in
the interrogation room for his return.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

When they got out to the sidewalk, they started hearing this loud banging; like thunder. The old man turned and the next thing he knew, the warehouse started to shake. Bricks started to fall, then windows, then walls, until, suddenly, the whole building collapsed to the ground.

TOMMY stares at HAMPTON for a moment, allowing some time for the message of his anecdote to sink in to MCDONALD'S head.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

I'm not telling you to believe in anything, Mike.

MCDONALD continues to observe the man on the opposite side of the mirror.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

But sometimes, when we can't see whatever it is that's telling us something.

TOMMY turns to face MCDONALD.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

That's the time when we should listen the most.

MCDONALD'S focus never changes, he just continues to stare at the quiet man sitting alone in the interrogation room. He contemplates his options, realizing there's only one really worth considering.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The door behind HAMPTON opens and he turns to see MCDONALD making his way back into the room. After closing the door behind him, MIKE makes his way over to HAMPTON and sets a small black pager down on the table in front of him.

HAMPTON stares at the plastic communication device, seeming surprised, and picks it up to examine.

HAMPTON ADAMS

They still make these?

MIKE MCDONALD

No. That's one of the reasons we still use them.

HAMPTON turns the pager over in his hands, analyzing it.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

There are two numbers stored in there: My partner's and mine. I want you to page me the next time you hear something.

HAMPTON looks up from the pager in his hands to MCDONALD staring back at him.

HAMPTON ADAMS

But what if I'm too late?

MIKE MCDONALD

Then we'll *all* be too late.

As MCDONALD turns to exit the room he passes by HAMPTON as he thinks about the tremendous pressure that's now been put on his shoulders. Then, just before MCDONALD leaves, HAMPTON turns in his chair.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Detective!

MCDONALD stops in the open doorway, the busy station moves behind him like a popular expressway.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

I never got your name.

MIKE MCDONALD

Mike McDonald.

HAMPTON nods at DETECTIVE MCDONALD'S statement.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Thank you...Mike.

MCDONALD stands silently in the doorway for a few moments, then he points to the pager in HAMPTON'S hands.

MIKE MCDONALD

Let me know.

HAMPTON glances down at the pager then back up to see MCDONALD exit the room, closing the door behind him.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, BATHROOM - LATE EVENING

LISA stands at the medicine cabinet hidden behind the hinged mirror hanging on the wall over the sink. She scans the various bottles of medication; pills and liquids, all focusing on different illnesses.

BEAT

LISA spots her medicine of choice and reaches for the orange pill bottle. She takes the bottle and pulls the mirror back to its original "storage" position, suddenly revealing MIKE standing behind her. LISA jumps in response to seeing her husband's reflection.

LISA holds a hand to her chest and closes her eyes, attempting to calm herself down.

LISA MCDONALD
Mike, you scared the hell outta me.

MCDONALD glances down at the pills in his wife's hand.

MIKE MCDONALD
What are those for?

LISA looks down at the pill bottle.

LISA MCDONALD
Nothing, I just have a little bit
of a headache.

MIKE MCDONALD
Lisa, you gotta stop doing that.
It's not good for you.

LISA MCDONALD
I'm a nurse, Mike, I know what I'm
doing. Besides, it's just pain
medicine. If it makes my headache
go away...

LISA slips by her husband and opens up the pill bottle. MCDONALD, realizing he's more than likely getting nowhere with his complaining, turns and chases after his wife.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD follows two-steps behind LISA as they make their way down the hallway.

MIKE MCDONALD
So, you know that suicide case
Tommy and I were assigned?

LISA MCDONALD
Yeah, what about it?

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

LISA makes her way over to the sink. Grabbing a glass on the way, she fills it with water from the tap. MCDONALD steps up to the counter opposite his wife.

MIKE MCDONALD
It's lookin' like it wasn't
suicide.

LISA looks at MIKE, ready to pop the pill into her mouth.

LISA MCDONALD
What is it, then?

LISA stares at her husband as she difficultly swallows the pill, realizing what he's silently suggesting.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Murder?!

MCDONALD nods.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
How? I thought you didn't have any
suspects?

MIKE MCDONALD
We don't.

LISA looks confused.

LISA MCDONALD
Then how can you say it was murder?

MCDONALD exhales, knowing the reality of the situation is just too radical to expect anyone else to ever believe it.

MIKE MCDONALD
It's a long story.

Just then, three knocks resonate from the front door. MCDONALD glances over at it, then back at his wife.

LISA stares at MIKE, both of them well aware of who is standing on the other side.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX, MCDONALD'S FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

SEAN OLIVER waits patiently for the door of his girlfriend's apartment to open. His freshly dry-cleaned button-down shirt is covered by a vintage-looking brown jacket. He mends his neatly groomed hair with his fingertips, hoping the person who answers the door won't be...

The door opens and MCDONALD'S stomach turns at the sight of the twenty-one year-old standing in front of him.

BEAT

The silence between the two men is awkward, seeming like it will never end.

MIKE MCDONALD
Can I help you?

SEAN chuckles at the man's petty question.

SEAN OLIVER
I'm here to pick up Hannah.

MCDONALD scrunches his eyebrows.

MIKE MCDONALD
You guys goin' somewhere?

SEAN OLIVER
Dinner. You're welcome to come if you'd like.

MCDONALD catches on to OLIVER'S sarcasm.

MIKE MCDONALD
Oh don't worry, I'll be close by.

SEAN OLIVER
I'll save you a seat.

MIKE MCDONALD
That's okay, I'll just have yours.

Just then, LISA appears behind her husband and pulls the door open wider. Completely aware of the testosterone fueled dispute she's just interrupted, she looks directly at SEAN.

LISA MCDONALD

Hi, Sean.

SEAN OLIVER

Hello, Mrs. McDonald.

MIKE MCDONALD

(under his breath)

Prick.

LISA nudges her husband without breaking eye contact with the young man in front of them.

LISA MCDONALD

Hannah's getting ready. C'mon in,
she'll just be a minute.

LISA opens the door wider to allow SEAN to make his entrance. MCDONALD watches as the cocky kid makes his way into their home. Behind SEAN'S back, LISA turns to her husband and inaudibly warns him, raising her eyebrows.

LISA turns to make her way back to the kitchen and MCDONALD pushes the door closed.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD makes his way over from the front door, glaring at SEAN as he reaches the opposite side of the kitchen counter.

BEAT

Again, the silence is unbelievably awkward. LISA glances over at her husband, still in direct eye contact with their daughter's boyfriend, as if he were the son of Satan.

BEAT

Sitting at one of the tall chairs at the counter, SEAN stares down at the ground, not wanting to add fuel to the fire already burning in MCDONALD'S eyes.

BEAT

Then, LISA can't take the silence anymore.

LISA MCDONALD

What is she doing in there?

LISA, relieved having found a way to escape the uneasiness of the kitchen, makes her way down the hall towards her daughter's bedroom.

BEAT

SEAN tilts his head up to look at MCDONALD, realizing he needs to stand his ground if this relationship is going to work.

SEAN OLIVER
You know, we're...

MIKE MCDONALD
I don't like you.

Easier said than done. SEAN stares at MCDONALD, realizing he just needs to shut his mouth and listen.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I know your kind. You're cocky, arrogant, and egotistical. You think everyone owes you something and "enough" doesn't exist.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
But, for some reason, my daughter likes you. And if there's one thing you should know about me it's that I would do *anything* for my daughter.

SEAN was not expecting to see this side of the man standing before him.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Where are you guys going?

SEAN OLIVER
It's a sandwich shop on fourth.

MIKE MCDONALD
Walking?

SEAN turns over his empty hands.

SEAN OLIVER
No helmet.

MIKE MCDONALD

Be back by ten. They say this city
doesn't sleep...that's why it's so
dangerous.

Just then, footfalls become louder as they approach the
kitchen. From down the hall, HANNAH and LISA appear from
around the wall. HANNAH makes her way over to her boyfriend
sitting at the counter.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Are you ready?

SEAN OLIVER

Yeah.

SEAN stands up from the counter and the couple make their way
towards the front door.

LISA MCDONALD

Have fun.

HANNAH MCDONALD

We will.

MIKE MCDONALD

Not too much.

SEAN opens the door for HANNAH who glances back at her
father, rolling her eyes. They continue forward, exiting the
apartment and closing the door behind them.

BEAT

For a moment, MIKE and LISA stand in silence. MIKE continues
to stare at the front door.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

You think this will last?

LISA knew he was going to say something like that.

LISA MCDONALD

Mike.

LISA turns and makes her way over to the cabinets to begin
cooking their dinner.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - A LITTLE LATER

HAMPTON makes his way through the dark city, his shoulders held high and his hands in his pockets. The street lights lining the sidewalk offer some relief to the shadowy city. As he continues alone, staring down at the ground below him, a few other WALKERS pass by in the opposite direction, paying him no attention.

Then, a door to a two-story apartment opens up and out step two YOUNG KIDS. HAMPTON stops and watches as their MOTHER walks them out the front door and out to an awaiting taxi idling by the curb.

For some reason, HAMPTON can't seem to break eye contact with the three heading towards the yellow cab.

CUT TO:

INT. ANGELO'S SANDWICH STATION - CONTINUOUS

Standing in the long line of awaiting CUSTOMERS, SEAN and HANNAH patiently stand next to each other. SEAN glances down at HANNAH focusing down at the cell phone in her hands.

SEAN OLIVER

Who's that?

HANNAH glances up at SEAN, taking a momentary pause in her text message.

HANNAH MCDONALD

My dad. He wanted to know where we were going.

SEAN smiles, shaking his head.

SEAN OLIVER

He's kind of controlling, don't you think?

HANNAH MCDONALD

He's just...

HANNAH realizes she needs to explain.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Back when we lived in Virginia, he was assigned to this case about these missing kids. Ever since then, he's always been kind of...overprotective with a lot of things.

SEAN stares at HANNAH, seeing that she's somewhat embarrassed by her father's behavior. He rests his hands on her arms.

SEAN OLIVER

Hey.

HANNAH looks up into SEAN'S caring eyes.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

You're something special, Hannah.
You can't blame him for not wanting
to let you go.

HANNAH gazes into SEAN'S eyes, unable to hold back her smile.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MIKE'S cell phone, sitting still on the kitchen counter, suddenly erupts in vibrations, spinning in place. MCDONALD walks over and picks up the phone, reading the text from his daughter.

MIKE looks over at his wife standing at the stove and holds up his phone for her to see.

MIKE MCDONALD

Angelo's.

LISA turns to her husband, holding up the displayed text message. MCDONALD turns the phone back around and closes it shut, placing it back down on the countertop.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Cheap-ass.

LISA MCDONALD

Mike, you can't hate him forever.

MIKE MCDONALD

He's making it pretty easy.

LISA MCDONALD

He's a good guy, Mike. He cares
about Hannah and she really likes
him. The least you could do is be
nice to him...for her?

MCDONALD looks down at the counter, realizing his wife has a point.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

The MOTHER slams back door of the cab shut and watches as it pulls away with her two kids in the back. She waves at them as it gradually disappears down the road.

HAMPTON continues watching as she makes her way back up the stairs to the stoop. She opens the door and disappears back into her home.

BEAT

HAMPTON looks down at the ground, hoping nothing is wrong and slowly begins walking. Taking each step carefully, he slowly approaches the front of the apartment. The stairs leading up to the front door, now directly to his left, he is unable to continue and stops dead in his tracks.

BEAT

Slowly, HAMPTON turns his head to the front door of the apartment to his left, staring at it nervously.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANGELO'S SANDWICH STATION - CONTINUOUS

SEAN and HANNAH walk over to a round two-person table and take a seat across from each other. SEAN watches HANNAH as she begins unwrapping the sandwich sitting on her tray. He smiles at her, admiring her attentiveness to the sandwich in her hand.

HANNAH glances up at her boyfriend, staring back at her with a large grin.

HANNAH MCDONALD

What?

SEAN OLIVER

Nothing. You're just so adorable.

HANNAH smiles.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Thanks.

SEAN starts unwrapping his own sandwich as HANNAH finishes pulling off the paper.

SEAN OLIVER

So, why'd you guys move here? I mean, what made you come to New York?

HANNAH MCDONALD

My mom didn't like Virginia. The town we lived in was small and when my dad had a case, she would always be worried about it following him home.

SEAN OLIVER

Sounds like they're both pretty paranoid.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Yeah...a little. I guess it's gotten a little worse lately, with graduation and all. You're still coming, right?

SEAN OLIVER

As long as your dad'll be there.

HANNAH laughs at SEAN'S sarcastic comment.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Yes, he'll be there.

SEAN OLIVER

Good, I can sit by him, then. He'll be thrilled.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Now sitting on the couch, MCDONALD patiently waits for LISA to finish preparing their dinner. Unable to get his daughter's date off his mind, he looks over at her.

MIKE MCDONALD

I bet he's talking about me right now.

LISA MCDONALD

Mike, stop it! He's not like that.

MIKE MCDONALD

Lisa, I'm a cop. I get paid to find the untrustworthy in this world. I don't like this kid.

LISA MCDONALD

Well, quite frankly, it doesn't matter if you like him, Mike. Hannah's the one dating him, not you.

MIKE MCDONALD

Yeah, lucky for him.

MIKE stares straight ahead for a moment, hoping something can make him stop thinking about his daughter's date.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Is he gonna be at her graduation?

LISA finishes serving a plate of food and turns, making her way towards her husband.

LISA MCDONALD

I've been meaning to talk to you about that.

MIKE watches as she makes her way over. She hands him his plate and takes a seat next to him on the couch.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I don't know if I'm gonna be able to go.

MCDONALD looks at her, hoping she's joking.

MIKE MCDONALD

Lisa, it's her high school graduation!

LISA MCDONALD

I know, Mike, but the hospital's been short on staff lately and they're not hiring until summer.

MIKE MCDONALD

Can't you call off or something, just for one night?

LISA MCDONALD

I'm trying...but if I have to go in, I have to go in. You, of all people, should know how that works.

MIKE massages the bridge of his nose between his eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD

I know. I do.

Then, he opens his eyes and looks at his wife sincerely.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, honey.

LISA forces a hapless smile at her husband.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - CONTINUOUS

Completely silent, HAMPTON stares down at the sidewalk next to the stairs. His eyebrows are scrunched and his gaze is as solid as stone.

Suddenly, a loud car horn echoes as it passes behind him, snapping him out of his trance. He turns to see the car speeding off down the road, then back around to stairs in front of him. He looks over at the address sign attached to the outside of the building, remembering the numbers.

Then, he turns and slowly begins making his way back down the road.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I ask You, Lord, please imbibe thy
pain...

CUT TO:

EXT. ANGELO'S SANDWICH STATION - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH laughs hysterically. SEAN smiles at his adorable girlfriend, her laughter fueling his comedic fire.

SEAN OLIVER
Look, I'm not saying he would enjoy
it, it's just that a motorcycle can
really change someone's outlook on
life.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Well, I don't think you'd ever
catch my dad on a motorcycle,
especially with you.

HANNAH chuckles, taking a small bite of her sandwich. SEAN looks down at the table like something's bothering him, then he tilts his head back up to look at HANNAH.

SEAN OLIVER

Look...I'm sorry, if I come off as kind of an asshole around your dad.

HANNAH stares at SEAN as he continues.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

It's just...I don't want to...I wanna stick up for you, even if that means to your dad.

HANNAH smiles, admiring SEAN'S sincerity.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Sean, you don't. My dad tries to protect me any way he can. Trust me, deep down, he's glad you stick up for me. He wants someone that will do that for me.

BEAT

SEAN OLIVER

I would do anything for you.

HANNAH can't hold back the smile on her face, staring deeply into SEAN'S eyes. Just then, HAMPTON ADAMS quickly walks by, down the sidewalk running next to them. HANNAH glances up at the quickly walking man, murmuring something, then back at SEAN.

HANNAH MCDONALD

If it means anything, my mom really likes you.

SEAN smiles, flattered.

SEAN OLIVER

Your mom's sweet.

BEAT

HANNAH MCDONALD

I don't think she's coming to my graduation.

SEAN OLIVER

What? Why?

HANNAH MCDONALD

Well, she doesn't think I know, but the hospital's had a lot of nurses quit recently and they're kind of short-staffed.

SEAN can't believe what he's hearing. He gently rests his hand on top of HANNAH'S.

SEAN OLIVER
I'm sorry, baby.

HANNAH looks at SEAN, forcing a slight smile.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)
Hey, don't worry about it. It's gonna be a great night. Nothing will be able to ruin it.

SEAN' optimism brings a bigger, happier smile to HANNAH'S face.

HANNAH MCDONALD
You're right. It just sucks, you know, not having your mom...

HANNAH glances up, once again, as HAMPTON ADAMS quickly passes by, still frantically murmuring. HANNAH waits until he's behind her, then looks back at SEAN, curious.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Did you see that guy?

SEAN puts down his sandwich, chewing his most recent bite.

SEAN OLIVER
See what?

HANNAH MCDONALD
That guy...he just...he, like, flew by here twice.

SEAN looks around confused.

SEAN OLIVER
Just now?

HANNAH MCDONALD
Yeah.

SEAN chuckles, remembering something, causing HANNAH to look at him confused.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What?

SEAN OLIVER
Nothing, it's just, my friends, they warned me about this.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Warned you?

SEAN OLIVER

Yeah, about dating the daughter of a cop.

HANNAH isn't sure whether to take this as a compliment.

HANNAH MCDONALD

What about it?

SEAN OLIVER

Nothing gets by you guys. You don't miss anything, like what you said with your mom: she doesn't know you know, but you do.

SEAN smiles.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

You're just like your dad.

HANNAH, realizing he isn't being an asshole, smiles.

HANNAH MCDONALD

I wish he was here to hear you say that. Well, that means you have no reason to try and go behind my back and...

HANNAH'S focus turns, once more, to HAMPTON passing by them in the opposite direction. She darts her eyes back to SEAN.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)

See! Did you see him?!

SEAN turns in his chair, hoping he'll at least catch a glimpse of the pacing man's back as he walks in the opposite direction.

HAMPTON continues frantically down the sidewalk.

HAMPTON ADAMS

...grant me the strength to surmount the pernicious...

Suddenly, a WOMAN screeches in horror. HAMPTON spins to see if she's standing close by.

HANNAH sees HAMPTON suddenly pull a 360 and stare in terror down the sidewalk. Very concerned, she watches him pull out a beeper in his pocket and begin messaging someone.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Interrupting its motionlessness, MCDONALD'S cell phone begins to violently vibrate, spinning around on the countertop. As footsteps approach the counter, the phone almost spins around completely before MCDONALD picks it up and flips it open.

He stares down at the screen, reading the message in front of him.

MIKE MCDONALD

Shit!

He slams his phone shut and rushes over to the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANGELO'S SANDWICH STATION - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH continues staring at HAMPTON standing, emotionally shaken, down the sidewalk. SEAN turns in his chair to see the man she's looking at, curious about his strange behavior.

SEAN OLIVER

Hey, buddy!

HAMPTON snaps out of his trance and looks blankly over at SEAN.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

You okay?!

Suddenly, HAMPTON bolts down the sidewalk, grabbing the attention of some of the other DINERS as well. HANNAH follows the man, standing up in her chair as he passes by her. She stares at him as he continues sprinting, disappearing off into the distance.

BEAT

Then, faintly off in the distance behind SEAN, sirens wail. HANNAH, hearing the dull cry of the sirens, slowly turns around to see flashing red and blue lights illuminating the city as squad cars barrel down the road towards them. SEAN turns to see the cars speeding towards them as well.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

What the hell is going on?

HANNAH follows the cars, turning her body as they pass by, noticing one of the cars in particular.

HANNAH MCDONALD

That's my dad.

SEAN turns to HANNAH.

SEAN OLIVER

What?

HANNAH MCDONALD

C'mon!

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

HANNAH and SEAN rush down the sidewalk, sprinting in the same direction as HAMPTON and the police cars. Paying no attention to the suspicious ONLOOKERS around them, they continue their pursuit.

They turn the corner to see a handful of cars obscurely parked in front of an apartment. HANNAH slows down, spotting her father's car parked near the curb.

MCDONALD steps out of the driver's side and begins making his way towards the apartment.

HANNAH spots her father and rushes towards him, closely followed by SEAN.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Dad!

MCDONALD continues walking, unaware of his approaching daughter.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Dad!

MIKE turns to the sound of his daughter's voice to see her rushing down the sidewalk towards him. Spotting SEAN behind her, MCDONALD points to him sternly.

MIKE MCDONALD

Sean, if you ever want to see my daughter again, you'll take her home right now!

SEAN nods at MCDONALD'S command and grabs HANNAH by the wrist, slowing her to a stop. She watches as her father continues towards the apartment, apparently not wanting her to be around whatever it is he's about to see.

SEAN OLIVER

C'mon.

CUT TO:

EXT. STUDIO APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD makes his way towards the front door of the apartment, spotting TOMMY coming from the other direction.

MIKE MCDONALD

Did Hampton call you?

TOMMY MATHESON

Hampton?! No!

MIKE MCDONALD

He didn't send you anything?!

TOMMY MATHESON

No, I heard it on the walkie!

TOMMY and MCDONALD meet up and make their way towards the front door of the apartment.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Is he here?

MIKE MCDONALD

Yeah, he's down with the chief.

TOMMY nods as they step up to the door. He reaches for the knob, about to turn it, and looks over at MIKE.

TOMMY MATHESON

Ready?

MCDONALD stares at TOMMY, silent. Slowly, they both pull out their guns and flashlights. TOMMY carefully takes the handle and begins to turn it slowly.

CUT TO:

INT. STUDIO APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

The front door of the apartment opens up and TOMMY and MIKE cautiously make their way inside.

They shine their flashlights up and immediately gasp at the sight ahead of them.

A rope tied to the upstairs bannister is stretched tightly. From a noose tied at the bottom of the rope, the MOTHER from earlier swings slightly back and forth, her feet dangling a few feet above the ground.

TOMMY and MIKE stare at the lifeless woman's body, paralyzed.

TOMMY MATHESON

Holy shit.

CUT TO:

EXT. STUDIO APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

MCDONALD and TOMMY slowly make their way out the front door. The OFFICERS standing down by the sidewalk look up at them concerned by the shocked look on the two detective's faces.

BEAT

Standing over by one of the squad cars next to the CHIEF OF POLICE, HAMPTON stares up at MCDONALD. They both make eye contact and MCDONALD slowly begins descending the stairs. TOMMY steps forward to address the other OFFICERS.

TOMMY MATHESON

Alright, listen up! I want only forensics inside! Everyone who steps through this door must have gloves and shoe covers on at all times!

MCDONALD reaches the ground, still focused on HAMPTON watching him as he slowly makes his way over.

TOMMY MATHESON (O.C.) (CONT'D)

I need two units in contact with the family, find everyone else who's living in this house and get them to the station! Those of you without specific jobs are to keep an eye on the premises; no one without a badge goes in!

MCDONALD finally reaches HAMPTON, staring him directly in the eyes.

BEAT

HAMPTON doesn't want to ask the question on his mind, but he has to know the truth.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I was right, wasn't I?

MCDONALD doesn't know what to say to the prophesier in front of him.

MIKE MCDONALD
Would you be opposed to staying at the station tonight?

Feeling as though he can't refuse, HAMPTON shakes his head.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
There's some overnight rooms on the fourth floor. When you get there, tell them I sent you and ask to be taken to them. I'll meet with you tomorrow. Try and get some sleep.

HAMPTON nods and an OFFICER standing next to him takes him to a squad car a few feet away. MCDONALD looks over at the CHIEF, now standing alone. The faint commotion of the OFFICERS behind them barely overshadows the silence between the two men.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
We were too late.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE
You know, one thing I've always hated about this job is that nine times out of ten, we're being called to something that's already happened. Rarely are we ever there in time to stop something.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
Catch this guy, Mike. Catch him before he does it again.

MCDONALD watches the CHIEF turn and vanish into the mass of OFFICERS outside of the apartment. Then, TOMMY approaches from behind.

TOMMY MATHESON
What's your plan?

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD

There's more going on here, Tommy.
I need some questions answered.

TOMMY stares at MCDONALD, knowing the exact questions he's referring to.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

Sitting alone in the interrogation room, HAMPTON scratches the nail of his index finger on the slick metal surface of the table in the center of the room.

Just then, the door leading out to the hallway opens up and in walks MCDONALD, a manila folder clenched in his hand. He stares at HAMPTON, receiving the same in return, as he makes his way over to the opposite side of the table. MIKE pulls out the chair and takes a seat, staring at the silent man in front of him.

BEAT

The silence is tense. Then...

MIKE MCDONALD

How'd you sleep?

HAMPTON ADAMS

Better than out there, I guess.

MCDONALD nods his head slightly as he glances down at the manila folder sitting on the table. He looks back up at HAMPTON.

MIKE MCDONALD

Hampton, why do you think God chose you to have this..."gift?"

HAMPTON ADAMS

Well, I don't really know if I'd refer to it as a "gift," Detective...

MIKE MCDONALD

Why did God give you this ability?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS

Detective McDonald, do you think I'm lying? Do you think I'm making this all up?

MIKE MCDONALD

We've found two dead mothers in a matter of two months. Both are apparent suicides and they've only got one thing in common.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

You.

HAMPTON can't believe what the detective just inferred. Stunned, he shakes his head, blinking his eyes in hopes of "waking up" from the unfathomable conjecture.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Detective, are you suggesting that I...

MIKE MCDONALD

Mr. Adams, I'm not suggesting anything. I just state the facts.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Two dead women; two staged suicides; one man putting them together.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Now, unless you can give me a reason as to why you think God gave you this gift, what else am I supposed to believe?

MCDONALD stares starkly into HAMPTON'S eyes, hoping his intimidation is doing its job. HAMPTON gazes back at him, realizing he must come clean with his story.

HAMPTON ADAMS

When I was a kid, my mother would always tell me to go to church. I was always very sick, as a boy, but every Sunday, she'd take me to mass. We'd go to confession and then we'd stay and pray.

MCDONALD stares at HAMPTON, listening intently to the man's explanation.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I was eight when my mother died.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
They found her in our upstairs bathroom, lying in the tub full of bloody water. She had slit her wrists.

MCDONALD is dumbfounded by HAMPTON'S brutal childhood anecdote.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
When Child Services came and picked me up, they took me to my aunt's house. She was a nice woman, young, like my mother; but for some reason, she refused to take me to church.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I begged and pleaded and prayed that she would take me, but she never did. She said, it just wasn't something she believed in.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
When I moved out, I went back to church for the first time in ten years. It was exactly how I had remembered it. And that's when I found out why my aunt didn't believe in the church.

MCDONALD stares at HAMPTON, waiting for the "why?"

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
A week before her death, she had confessed to the priest that she was having suicidal thoughts. He told her not to worry and to find strength in the word of God, but it never happened.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

It's quite simple why God gave me this ability, detective. He wants me to protect these kids; kids losing their mothers way to early.

MCDONALD stares at HAMPTON, unconvinced.

MIKE MCDONALD

I don't buy it.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm sorry?

MIKE MCDONALD

You're story, it's bullshit.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Detective, I'm not...

MIKE MCDONALD

What kind of God allows this to happen to a kid in the first place, huh?

HAMPTON ADAMS

It's part of a learning process, detective...

MIKE MCDONALD

You tell me what type of fucking lesson an eight-year-old kid is supposed to learn from his mother killing herself.

HAMPTON is speechless.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I live my life by the law, Mr. Adams. Call me an atheist, but I don't put my trust into somebody that would let something like that happen to a little kid.

MCDONALD stands up from the table, taking the manila folder with him. He turns to exit the room when he is suddenly stopped.

HAMPTON ADAMS

What about your daughter?

MCDONALD stares at the door in front of him, paralyzed.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
That kidnapper who held the gun to
her head, did you learn anything
from that?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Sometimes, God does things we don't
understand. They happen for a
reason, regardless if we know what
that reason is.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
There's someone out there
committing these murders,
detective. Maybe the reason I'm
here is not just to catch *him*, but
to prove it to *you*.

MCDONALD stands motionless at the door for a moment, wishing
he could fire back something in response to HAMPTON'S theory.

BEAT

HAMPTON watches the detective in silence.

MIKE MCDONALD
Keep your pager on you.

MCDONALD reaches for the door and opens it up. He exits the
room and slams the door shut behind him. HAMPTON sits
quietly at the table in the interrogation room, staring down
at his hands resting on it. Then, he turns his head to face
the one-way mirror to his left. He stares directly at the
mirror, as if he can see right through it.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, OBSERVATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Standing on the other side of the one-way mirror, TOMMY
stares at the dead silent HAMPTON sitting at the table in the
interrogation room. As if in an intense stare-down, TOMMY
locks eyes with the expressionless man, desperately trying to
see into the man's mind.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Holding two plates of food in her hands, LISA makes her way over to her awaiting husband sitting at the table. She walks up and places the plates down, one in front of her husband.

LISA MCDONALD
How was work?

LISA walks over to side opposite MCDONALD, and takes a seat across from him. MCDONALD stares down at the plate of steaming food in front of him.

BEAT

Taking a small bite of vegetables, LISA looks at her husband, concerned.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Mike, are you okay?

MCDONALD continues to stare down at his dinner.

MIKE MCDONALD
Do you believe in God?

LISA wasn't expecting the question.

LISA MCDONALD
Well, sure...of course I do. Why?

MIKE MCDONALD
This guy, Hampton Adams...he's our source for finding these suicides...

LISA MCDONALD
I thought you said they were murders.

MIKE MCDONALD
Yeah...they are. Anyway, he says that God is telling him where the next one is going to happen.

LISA MCDONALD
That's pretty helpful.

MIKE doesn't know what to say in response, still unable to fully comprehend the idea of God speaking to HAMPTON.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Mike, just because you don't completely understand something, doesn't mean it doesn't exist. Look at it from the perspective of a police officer. If it helps you catch this guy, who cares if it's true or not?

MCDONALD looks up at his wife, finally seeing her point. They share a brief moment of silence, staring deeply into one another's eyes. LISA smiles, unable to hold back her happiness.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I love you.

MIKE MCDONALD

I love you too, Lisa.

LISA turns down to the plate of food sitting in front of her and begins cutting through one of her carrots.

LISA MCDONALD

You know, you really scared Hannah, that night at the apartment. She didn't know what was going on.

MIKE MCDONALD

Did Sean bring her back like I told him to?

LISA MCDONALD

Yes, he did.

LISA glances up at her husband as he begins cutting at his own vegetables. A small smile makes its way onto her face.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Is that a little hint of acceptance in your eye? You're not starting to like Mr. Oliver, are you?

MIKE MCDONALD

Don't push it, Lisa. I can stand him now, but the minute he screws up is the minute I...

Just then, MCDONALD'S cell phone begins to spin around as it vibrates on the tabletop, next to his plate. He grabs it and looks down at the illuminated display: Hampton - 6272 Oakdale.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Shit.

MCDONALD jumps up from the table and rushes over to the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. CATHEDRAL - A LITTLE LATER

MCDONALD'S car comes to a halt next to the curb in front of the large cathedral. He steps out and walks around the front of his vehicle. Staring up at the church, MIKE stops at the base of the steps leading up to the large front doors.

BEAT

MCDONALD continues to stare in silence at the enormous structure before him.

HAMPTON ADAMS (O.C.)

Pretty big, isn't it?

MCDONALD turns to see HAMPTON approaching from the down the sidewalk to his left. His hands in his pockets, HAMPTON slowly makes his way up to the confused detective.

MIKE MCDONALD

What the hell is this, some kind of conversion technique?

HAMPTON ADAMS

No, just...a meeting.

MIKE MCDONALD

A meeting?

HAMPTON finally reaches MCDONALD and stops next to him. They both stare up at the humongous building in front of them.

HAMPTON ADAMS

You might wanna turn your cell phone off...out of respect.

MCDONALD turns to look at HAMPTON.

CUT TO:

INT. CATHEDRAL - MOMENTS LATER

HAMPTON and MCDONALD slowly make their way down the main aisle towards the front of the nave. MCDONALD glances around at all of the beautiful artistry.

HAMPTON ADAMS

This church, is the oldest and biggest cathedral in the city. It was built when the pilgrims first settled here. They wanted a local church where they all could worship, and since they were all of the same religion...

MIKE MCDONALD

Catholic.

HAMPTON ADAMS

That's right. The fact was, the church was the one thing they all had in common. If they disagreed on any legislatures or plans of action, they could always come here for clear guidance.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

It's a universal bond, detective. Something no one has been able to break for centuries.

HAMPTON and MCDONALD reach the end of the aisle. They stand at the forefront of the altar, adorned with beautiful drapes and religious ornaments. The cross, standing tall at the back of the raised altar, reaches high into the sky. MCDONALD stares at the sacred setting before him, unsure how to respond.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Sometimes, that which we understand the most is what keeps us from discovering what's really going on.

MCDONALD turns to HAMPTON, confused.

MIKE MCDONALD

What do you mean?

HAMPTON ADAMS

I mean, the shield that we pull over our eyes, sometimes keeps us from seeing the real people in front of us.

MCDONALD contemplates HAMPTON'S theory for a moment.

MIKE MCDONALD

Are saying the person doing this is
someone I know?

HAMPTON ADAMS

Judas betrayed Jesus, detective.
Those who we put our trust in the
most, are sometimes the one's we
should be most afraid of.

MCDONALD considers all the people HAMPTON could be referring
to.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

I'm not asking you to believe what
I believe, detective. I'm asking
you to believe that *this* is how
we're going to catch this guy.

MCDONALD turns and looks at HAMPTON, starting to see the
sincerity behind his perseverance.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

It's not a matter of faith. It's a
matter of justice.

MCDONALD continues staring at HAMPTON, for one final moment,
then turns back to the altar in front of him; his gaze,
unbreakable.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

The door to the apartment opens up and in walks MCDONALD. He
enters, closing the door behind him, and makes his way
towards the kitchen counter.

TOMMY MATHESON (O.C.)

Hey, Mike.

Still making his way towards the counter, MCDONALD glances up
to see TOMMY standing behind it with LISA, both of them
staring back at him. A grin has stretched its way across
TOMMY'S face.

MIKE MCDONALD

Tommy? What the hell are you doin'
here?

TOMMY MATHESON

I tried calling, but your cell was off. I stopped by to make sure everything was okay.

MIKE MCDONALD

I was...I met Hampton at the church on Oakdale.

TOMMY didn't expect that to be the explanation he would be getting.

TOMMY MATHESON

Church? What were you doin' there?

MIKE MCDONALD

He paged me. Wanted to talk about the case.

TOMMY MATHESON

"Talk about the case?" C'mon, Mike, we're partners; we're supposed to share that kind of information.

MCDONALD starts catching onto TOMMY'S suspicions.

MIKE MCDONALD

You think I'm hiding something from you, Tommy?

TOMMY looks over at LISA and smiles, hoping to relieve her from the awkwardness of the discussion between him and her husband. He turns back to MCDONALD and slowly makes his way towards him, his voice getting softer with each step.

TOMMY MATHESON

Mike, listen, this guy's story or whatever the hell you wanna call it, it's bullshit. God's not tellin' him where these murders are gonna happen; you know that and I know that...

MIKE MCDONALD

I don't know that.

TOMMY MATHESON

You *know* that, Mike!

MIKE MCDONALD

I *don't* know that, Tommy! Since the first day of this investigation he's been the only source of information we've had for these murders.

TOMMY MATHESON

He's telling us where to find the body's, Mike, not where to find the killer!

MIKE looks over at LISA, still standing by the counter staring at them both. Then, realizing this is none of her business, LISA turns and exits the kitchen, leaving MIKE and TOMMY to themselves and their heated discussion.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Look, maybe I'm wrong; maybe I don't know what I'm talking about. But what I *do* know is that psycho holy rollers like that are the ones we should be worried about; not the people they say are doing it.

MIKE stares at TOMMY, remembering what HAMPTON said earlier at the church.

MIKE MCDONALD

What happened to the Tommy who told me to believe in him, huh? "Sometimes, when we can't see the thing that's telling us something, that's when we should listen the most," that's what you said, right? Why the change of heart?

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Tonight, at the church, Hampton told me to be careful about the ones I trust. That they're the ones I should be watching the most.

TOMMY stares at MCDONALD, unable to believe his cynicism.

TOMMY MATHESON

What, you think *I'm* the one you should be skeptical of? You're shittin' me, Mike. You're really gonna listen to this God-fearing wack-job?!

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Listen, I may be a rookie
detective, but I *know* people in
this city. If you give this guy an
inch, he'll take a mile and the
moment you let your guard down is
the moment he's gonna strike.

TOMMY shakes his head.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Don't do something you'll regret
later on.

TOMMY and MCDONALD share one final silent stare-down, then
TOMMY steps around him and walks out the door. As the door
closes shut behind him, MCDONALD stands alone in the kitchen,
contemplating all of the information that's been discussed in
the recent evening.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER

Through the front door of the apartment complex, TOMMY walks
out and makes his descent down the stairs to the sidewalk.
His feet hit the cement and he turns to make his way down the
walkway when, suddenly...

HAMPTON ADAMS (O.C.)

I know what's going on.

TOMMY turns to see HAMPTON standing alone alongside of the
apartment complex. He stares straight forward across the
street, making no eye contact with TOMMY whatsoever.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

I know every answer to every
question.

TOMMY stares at HAMPTON, unsure how to respond.

BEAT

Then, the silence between them is broken...

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Have a good night, detective.

Then, HAMPTON turns and slowly makes his way down the
sidewalk in the other direction.

TOMMY watches as the man's dark silhouette slowly becomes more and more faint with each step.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Spotlights beam up into the cloudy night sky, rhythmically rotating back and forth. The GRADUATES make their way through the crowded parking lot to the front doors, their silk gowns draping over them.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD and HANNAH sit inside of the idling car next to the curb outside the front door of the civic center. MCDONALD watches a few more GRADUATES make their way into the building, then he turns to his daughter, looking somewhat depressed. He considers what to say to break the silence.

MIKE MCDONALD

Big night, tonight.

HANNAH doesn't respond.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Are you excited?

HANNAH MCDONALD

Mmhmm.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD

Hannah, your mom tried the best she could to get off work.

Silence. MIKE stares at his daughter, unsure what to say, wishing something would just come to him. Just then, that wish is granted with the ringing of his cell phone.

MCDONALD reaches into the inside pocket of his suit jacket and pulls out his cell phone. He takes a quick look at the display, then glances over at his daughter, still obviously depressed. He flips open the phone and brings it to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Hey.

LISA MCDONALD (O.S.)
How's she doin'?

MCDONALD looks over at HANNAH, still staring straight ahead at her fellow excited GRADUATES. He turns back and looks in the same direction.

MIKE MCDONALD
Okay.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LISA, in her teal scrubs, stands next to the hospital phone hanging on the wall. Hoping she can offer some type of remedy to her daughter's discouraged mood, she exhales and turns, leaning up against the wall.

LISA MCDONALD
Let me talk to her.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD turns to HANNAH and holds out the phone to her.

MIKE MCDONALD
Mom's on the phone.

HANNAH glances over at the cell phone in her father's hand, takes it, and brings it to her ear.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LISA, the phone still pressed to her ear, smiles slightly at the sound of her daughter's voice.

LISA MCDONALD
Hey, sweetie. Congratulations!

There is no response on the other end.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Look, Hannah, I'm sorry. You know
I would be there if I could.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH exhales; her mother's *explanations* won't bring her there.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Yeah.

LISA MCDONALD (O.S.)
It's your high school graduation,
Hannah.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LISA watches a NURSE pass her by as she makes her way down the hall.

LISA MCDONALD
Don't let this ruin your big night.

BEAT

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I love you.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH realizes there's no hope in her mother making it to her graduation.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Love you too.

She brings the phone down from her ear and...

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The other line clicks off. LISA forces a grin and gently sets the phone down on the receiver. She stares at it for a moment, completely silent.

DOCTOR (O.C.)

Lisa?

LISA turns to see the DOCTOR standing behind her. The DOCTOR takes a quick look around the empty hallway, then turns back to her.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Look, we're kind of dead here. Why don't you take the rest of the night off?

LISA MCDONALD

Doctor...

DOCTOR

It's her graduation, Lisa. You can't miss that.

LISA doesn't know what to say to the smiling DOCTOR.

LISA MCDONALD

Th-thank you, sir.

The DOCTOR nods, beaming from ear to ear.

DOCTOR

Go.

LISA turns and starts making her way down the hallway towards the locker room.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MIKE watches a few more GRADUATES make their way in through the doors. As a group of them clears, he spots SEAN making his way down the sidewalk towards the entrance.

MIKE MCDONALD

Sean's here.

HANNAH looks up to see SEAN walking towards them. She turns to her dad, leans over, and kisses him on the cheek.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Bye, dad.

HANNAH shifts back and opens up the passenger door. She steps out, closing it behind her, and waits as SEAN finally reaches her. They share a quick kiss and make their way into the building.

MCDONALD watches as his daughter and her boyfriend disappear among the mass of people inside. Then, after one final brief moment, he turns back to the wheel and pops the shifter into "Drive." The cell phone sits stagnant in the cup holder as MCDONALD pulls away from the curb.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - A LITTLE LATER

The door to the apartment opens up and in walks LISA. Closing it behind her as she enters, LISA tosses her keys on the counter and sets her purse down. She makes her way down the hall, beginning to slip out of her scrubs, as she disappears around the corner into her bedroom.

BEAT

The rest of the apartment is completely silent.

BEAT

The empty rooms bring a sense of forebodingness as the tension builds.

BEAT

The presentimental atmosphere continues to grow.

BEAT

Then, the silence is broken when three knocks resonate from the front door. LISA reappears from inside the bedroom, now wearing a gorgeous dress. She finishes putting in her second earring as she makes her way towards the door. Finally reaching it, she grabs the handle and swings it open to reveal TOMMY MATHESON standing out in the hall.

TOMMY smiles, eyeing LISA up and down.

TOMMY MATHESON

Wow, *somebody's* got some important plans.

LISA smiles and opens the door wider allowing TOMMY to enter.

LISA MCDONALD
It's Hannah's graduation.

TOMMY, examining the visible area of the apartment, turns back to LISA, now remembering the significance of the night.

TOMMY MATHESON
That's tonight, isn't it? I'm
sorry, I better get going.

LISA turns from the door, closing it, and walks over to TOMMY.

LISA MCDONALD
No! No, really, it's okay! I just
got back from work and I'm tryin'
to make it over there before she
walks.

LISA looks down at the manila folder in TOMMY'S hand.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What's that?

TOMMY glances down at the folder.

TOMMY MATHESON
Oh, this? I...did some research
for Mike. I was gonna give it to
him tonight, but I forgot about
Hannah's graduation.

LISA MCDONALD
Well, I'll see him there, I can
give it to him.

TOMMY MATHESON
Nah, I'll give it to him at the
station tomorrow.

LISA MCDONALD
You sure?

TOMMY starts heading towards the door.

TOMMY MATHESON
Yeah, it's no big deal. Look, I
better get going; don't want you to
be late for the ceremony.

TOMMY opens the door and steps out into the hallway. LISA watches as he exits, taking the door in her hand.

LISA MCDONALD

Tommy?

TOMMY stops in the middle of the hallway and turns back to LISA.

LISA MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Is Mike in danger?

TOMMY stares at LISA for a moment, thinking.

TOMMY MATHESON

Mike's fine. You just take care of yourself, okay?

LISA smiles, nodding.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Have a good night, Lisa.

LISA watches as TOMMY turns and makes his way down the hallway. Still carrying the manila folder in his hand, he reaches the door to the stairwell and pushes it open. LISA watches him disappear around the corner and then she recedes back into the apartment, gently closing the door.

She looks over at the window overlooking the street below.

BEAT

Curious, she makes her way over to it and gingerly slides open the curtains. LISA peeks down over the sidewalk to watch TOMMY make his exit out of the complex, but to her bewilderment, she sees no one; the sidewalk is deserted.

BEAT

Suddenly, three more knocks resonate from the front door and LISA quickly spins around. She stares at the door, suspicious, and cautiously makes her way towards it. She slowly steps up to the door and grabs the handle. Suddenly, she swings the door open to find an empty hallway on the other side.

BEAT

LISA stares out into the hallway, confused.

LISA MCDONALD

Tommy?

There is no response.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

LISA steps out into the hallway and makes her way down towards the stairwell where TOMMY just exited. She steps up to the window of the door and looks in, but it is empty.

BEAT

Unsure about the perturbing situation, LISA turns and makes her way back to her apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

LISA walks through the doorway, turning to make sure the hallway is still empty, and lightly closes it. She stands staring at the door for a moment, a little rattled. Then she turns to make her way back to the bedroom when, suddenly, she is grabbed by a DARK FIGURE. Her scream is suddenly interrupted by...

CUT TO:

INT. CIVIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Ear-shattering cheering reverberates off the cement walls as the graduation ceremony continues. MCDONALD, sitting in the mass of ATTENDEES, watches the group of GRADUATES cheer on their fellow classmates. He glances over at SEAN, staring at the stage straight ahead.

The ANNOUNCER watches as one of the GRADUATES finishes crossing the stage, then he turns to see HANNAH waiting at the end. He leans down to the microphone.

ANNOUNCER
Hannah McDonald!

The mass of GRADUATES erupts in a roar. SEAN jumps out of his seat yelling for his girlfriend. MCDONALD stands up from his chair as well, elatedly clapping for his daughter and her accomplishment. The smile stretching across his face is captivating as he proudly watches his daughter cross the stage.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The parking lot is jam-packed. The attendees have obviously all made their way into the building, but the collection of cars clearly shows how many people are inside.

PAN TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Parked a fairly reasonable distance from the building's entrance, MCDONALD'S car sits quiet, the inside completely silent. Still resting in the cup holder, his cell phone suddenly springs to life in a violent vibration. The display glows brightly amidst the dimly lit interior of the car, notifying that a new message has just been received. The screen reads: New Message - Hampton.

CUT TO:

INT. CIVIC CENTER - A LITTLE LATER

The cheering has died down somewhat as the graduation ceremony comes to a close. The ANNOUNCER leans down to the microphone once again.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to
you the Washington-Jefferson
graduating class of 2009!

The GRADUATES leap out of their chairs and launch their caps up in the air. MCDONALD and the rest of the ATTENDEES clap as they look over the young GRADUATES.

CUT TO:

EXT. CIVIC CENTER - A LITTLE LATER

The ceremony has ended and the crowd of PEOPLE pours out of the front doors as they make their way to their cars. MCDONALD, SEAN, and HANNAH exit out the front doors all sharing huge smiles. HANNAH, holding SEAN'S hand, turns to her father as they continue towards the parking lot.

HANNAH MCDONALD

Sean and I are gonna go to a couple
after-parties, okay? I'll be home
a little later.

MCDONALD smiles, understanding that tonight is his daughter's night.

MIKE MCDONALD
Have fun, sweetie. Hey.

MCDONALD gently takes his daughter by the shoulders and stares deeply down into her eyes. HANNAH looks up at him, mesmerized by his candor.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Congratulations. I'm so proud of you.

HANNAH smiles, unable to hold it back.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Thanks, dad.

MCDONALD can only smile in response.

MIKE MCDONALD
Go on.

He watches HANNAH and SEAN run off and disappear among the dispersing CROWD. Then, he turns and continues towards his car, only a few rows away.

PAN TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MIKE finally reaches the driver's door and opens it up. He slides in and brings his key to the ignition. Then, he glances down at the illuminated cell phone resting in the cup holder next to him.

BEAT

Leery, he lowers his eyebrows and reaches for the phone. He flips it open and reads the main display. The trepidation settles in as he stares at the screen, expressionless.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - A FEW MINUTES LATER

The front of the apartment complex is surrounded by squad cars; their lights color-coding every inch of the street. MCDONALD slowly pulls up to the curb and stops near one of the parked police cars.

Standing by the door of it, with his hands in his pockets, the CHIEF OF POLICE watches as the car comes to a halt, realizing the difficulty of what's coming.

MCDONALD stares at the lusterless man standing in front of his car, giving him the same in response. Popping the shifter into "Park," MCDONALD sits still for a moment, hoping he's only anticipating the heartache and not actually in store for it.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

The driver's door opens up and MCDONALD slowly steps out. He watches the CHIEF silently make his way over, staring deep into his eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD

Tell me it was a different apartment. Please, tell me it was different apartment.

The CHIEF waits for a moment, only able to think of one thing to say to the detective.

CHIEF OF POLICE

I'm sorry, Mike.

The heartache gets the best of MCDONALD and he drops his head, tears beginning to well up in his eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD

No. No no no, please, please tell me...

CHIEF OF POLICE

We were too late.

Unable to hold in his misery, MCDONALD steps forward and the CHIEF gathers him in his arms. Tears stream down MIKE'S face, buried on the CHIEF'S shoulder. The agony begins to settle in on the CHIEF as his eyes start to glisten with tears. He sniffs deeply, desperately trying to hold back his sorrow.

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)

We'll get'im, Mike. We'll get'im.

The CHIEF holds MCDONALD close, trying to offer as much comfort as he can to the grieving detective.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

Next to one of the stagnant police cruisers, HAMPTON ADAMS stares at MCDONALD and the CHIEF grieving, impassive. He tries to comprehend the breakdown of the seemingly stolid detective, but then his focus is redirected towards the apartment complex.

Standing over by the front doors of the complex, TOMMY observes the melancholy scene between his partner and the CHIEF. Seeming somewhat disassociated from the rest of the world around him, TOMMY can't seem to turn away from the lugubrious sight of his distraught friend.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - LATE MORNING

The gloomy sky overhead looks as if it is about to drown the earth below it with rain. Dressed in a crisp black suit and tie, MCDONALD stares blankly down at his wife's casket sitting above the six-foot hole in the ground. Next to him, HANNAH weeps at the sight of the long wooden coffin. A PRIEST standing on the opposite side of the grave, reads a passage from the Bible to allow the deceased woman to pass in peace. The moment is anything but emotionless, however, MCDONALD seems unable to convey his sadness as he continues to stare emptily at his wife's gravesite.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Rain soaks every inch of the city and thunder booms in the sky. With a suitcase in-hand, MCDONALD exits through the front door of the apartment complex. Behind him, carrying a suitcase as well, HANNAH exits, still grief-stricken from their recent loss.

MCDONALD and his daughter make their way down the steps towards SEAN, standing next to his car with the trunk open. SEAN takes both bags and places them in the trunk of his car. He closes the hatch and turns to his girlfriend.

HANNAH stares down at the ground, wishing it didn't have to come to this.

BEAT

MCDONALD looks at his daughter, unsure what to say to her.

MIKE MCDONALD

I'm so sorry, Hannah.

Thunder rumbles in the clouds overhead as HANNAH'S tears get the best of her. She steps forward and is enfolded by her father's arms. He holds her close to his chest, knowing the little comfort he can offer now will do nothing to console his daughter's grief.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I can't keep putting you in danger like this. I'm not taking anymore chances.

HANNAH laments in her father's chest. The embrace between them grows tighter and MCDONALD closes his eyes, struggling to hold back the tears building up behind them.

BEAT

MIKE takes a deep breath and opens his eyes to look at SEAN, still standing next to the car, staring back at them in sorrow. MIKE nods and slowly pulls away from his daughter. Thunder rolls overhead once more as SEAN steps forward and gently rests his hands on HANNAH'S shoulders.

SEAN OLIVER

C'mon, your dad's gonna take care of everything.

SEAN slowly leads HANNAH over to the passenger's side of the car and opens the door, allowing her to enter.

MCDONALD watches his daughter climb into the vehicle. His eyes close as the door slams shut, fully understanding the reality of the decision he's made.

SEAN jogs around the front of the car and reaches for the handle of the driver's door. Moments from lifting it, SEAN stops and looks over at MCDONALD, now looking back at him.

SEAN OLIVER (CONT'D)

I'm sorry, Mike.

MCDONALD admires SEAN'S sincerity, but the despondency in his heart is too overpowering.

MIKE MCDONALD

Take care of her for me.

SEAN nods, standing still for a moment, and then pulls open the door and slides in.

MCDONALD watches the door slam shut and the car slowly pull away. The rain drips streaks down his face like tears falling from Heaven itself.

FADE TO BLACK.

During the silence, the heartfelt despair settles in and the forlornness becomes all-too-familiar.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Although "a beautiful day" would be an overstatement, the sky has cleared up somewhat. The streets have quickly dried and the clouds still looming around from the days' recent thunderstorms have given way to spots of sunlight shining through their cracks.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, "BULLPEN" - CONTINUOUS

The fluorescent lights hanging from the ceiling are off, the only light in the station is offered by the limited amount of sunlight making its way through the windows. The OFFICERS sitting at their desk talk among themselves quietly, unable to do any work without power.

Making their way through the "bullpen," TOMMY and the CHIEF glance around the dark room.

CHIEF OF POLICE

These blackouts have been a real pain in the ass lately.

TOMMY MATHESON

Is the electrician coming out soon?

CHIEF OF POLICE

Supposed to. We called him two hours ago and he said he'd be here by one.

TOMMY glances down at the watch on his wrist.

TOMMY MATHESON

So much for being on time.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Yeah.

Just then, the generator kicks back up and, one by one, the lights begin to illuminate the area. The voices of the OFFICERS around the room grow louder, as if the lights brought back the life that they lost in the darkness.

After taking a few glances around the now illuminated bullpen, TOMMY looks over at one of the offices at the far end of the room: MCDONALD'S. In the dropbox hanging on the wall next to his door, a manila folder sits untouched.

TOMMY MATHESON

How's he doin'?

The CHIEF glances over at MCDONALD'S office, letting out a sigh.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Back when he worked in Virginia, he was on a kidnapping case.

TOMMY MATHESON

Yeah, I remember. That's how he got Lead here.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Anyway, the one thing he was always worried about was bringing home the job. Always tried to keep his business life and his family life separate from each other.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)

If you learn anything from me, Tommy, make it this: No matter how hard you try; no matter what measures you take to make sure your "work" stays at "work," it'll catch you. Some psycho follows you home, kidnaps your kid...murders your wife.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)

In this line of work there is no separation between the job and life. The job *is* your life and it hunts you down when you least expect it. Everything blends together and it's only a matter of time until you're not the one doing the chasing.

TOMMY stares at MCDONALD'S office, finally understanding the unfortunate paradox of enforcing the law.

TOMMY MATHESON
He's not leaving, though, is he?

As he stares at MCDONALD'S office door, the silence from the CHIEF seems to last forever.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, MCDONALD'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

MCDONALD, sitting in his desk chair, stares down at a picture of his wife and daughter sitting in the middle of his desk. Sitting in the chair on the opposite side of the desk, HAMPTON ADAMS stares at the detective in complete silence, contemplating what to say to the somber man.

HAMPTON ADAMS
You know...they say it's the times
of sadness when we need the church
the most.

MCDONALD continues to stare at the portrait. HAMPTON realizes his usual religious enlightenments are not what the detective needs to hear right now.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I'm sorry about your wife,
detective. I wish...there was
something I could do.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
If it's any consolation
whatsoever...I can assure you she's
in a better pla...

MIKE MCDONALD
Stop.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
She wasn't sad, Hampton. She
wasn't depressed. Lisa was just as
innocent as every other woman
that's been mixed up in this case.
She had no reason to die.

HAMPTON stares at MCDONALD intently.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, but your religion can't
justify what happened to her.

HAMPTON ADAMS
But it can justify what happened to
you.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Detective, events like this change
people. Whether they like it or
not, people are never the same when
they lose someone close to them.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
People always wonder "why did this
have to happen to me," when the
real question they should be asking
is, "what am I going to do about
it?"

MCDONALD stares at HAMPTON, unsure what to say in response.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Detective, there's something I've
been meaning to tell you for...

Just then, three quick knocks resonate from the office door
immediately followed by its opening to reveal TOMMY making
his way into the office.

TOMMY MATHESON
Hey, Mi...

At that moment, TOMMY notices HAMPTON sitting in the middle
of the room and, for some reason, he can't continue. He
stares at ADAMS half-turned in his chair looking back at him.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
You know what, never mind.

MIKE MCDONALD
Did you need something, Tom?

Almost completely out of the office, TOMMY stops and looks
back at MCDONALD. Then, he flashes a half-hearted smile as
he makes his way back into the office, closing the door
behind him.

TOMMY MATHESON

It's not important, don't worry
about it.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Everything's important at this
point, Tommy.

TOMMY glares down at HAMPTON, wishing he wasn't able to
restrain his own anger. MCDONALD turns his attention from
TOMMY'S face down to the manila folder in TOMMY'S hand.

MIKE MCDONALD

What's that?

TOMMY, seeming to have forgotten all about the folder, looks
down at it in his grasp. He looks back up at MCDONALD and
begins making his way towards his desk.

TOMMY MATHESON

It's just...some research I did for
the case. Thought you might be
interested in it.

TOMMY lays the manila folder down on MCDONALD'S desk and
takes a step back. As he passes by HAMPTON, the man slowly
stands up staring down at the folder.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm sure it's nothing we don't
already know.

Fed up with his arrogant murmurs, TOMMY suddenly turns to
HAMPTON with fury in his eyes.

TOMMY MATHESON

Why don't you let him make a
decision for himself?!

HAMPTON ADAMS

I *am* letting him make the
decisions...

TOMMY MATHESON

Is that before or after you preach
one of your God-fearing sermons,
you piece of shit?!

HAMPTON ADAMS

Why don't you tell Detective
McDonald, here, what you were doing
at his apartment that night?!

MCDONALD looks up from the folder directly at TOMMY, unsure whether or not to believe HAMPTON'S claim.

BEAT

TOMMY stares back at MIKE, speechless.

TOMMY MATHESON

Mike...

MIKE MCDONALD

You were at my house?

TOMMY is inarticulate, unable to even consider the words to explain.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Seems like quite a coincidence: the same night your wife is found dead is the same night your partner shows up at your front door.

TOMMY looks at HAMPTON, furious.

TOMMY MATHESON

Shut up.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I'm just looking at the facts, detective; it's nothing more than that.

TOMMY MATHESON

I said, shut up.

MIKE MCDONALD

What were you doing at my house, Tommy?

TOMMY looks at MIKE.

TOMMY MATHESON

I was bringing over that folder, that's all. I knocked on the door, Lisa answered and let me in. I told her I had this for you, but since you weren't there I'd just give it to you the next time I saw you.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Was that before or after you killed her?

TOMMY immediately turns to HAMPTON.

TOMMY MATHESON
You son of a bitch!

Suddenly, the lights shut down. The generator whistles at a low hum as faint voices resonate from the bullpen just outside MCDONALD'S office. With the drastic change in light in the room, all action between the three men has ceased.

Then, suddenly, the lights fire back up and the room illuminates the three men in the same positions they were before the blackout. TOMMY, still staring angrily at HAMPTON, turns to MCDONALD sympathetically.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)
Mike, you know I would never do anything to hurt Lisa.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Jealousy is the root of all evil.

TOMMY turns to HAMPTON.

TOMMY MATHESON
Jealousy?!

HAMPTON ADAMS
Your partner is Lead Detective of the NYPD and you're a second-year rookie cop fresh out of training. You look up to him. He's your idol. You would do *anything* to be in his position.

TOMMY MATHESON
You're one hell of a...

HAMPTON ADAMS
What time did you leave the apartment, detective? When did you say goodbye to Mrs. McDonald.

TOMMY MATHESON
I'm not answering your bullshit questions asshole!

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy!

TOMMY turns to MIKE, silent.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
What time did you leave?

TOMMY knows how his answer is going to make him look. He shakes his head.

TOMMY MATHESON
Nine-thirty.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Right time. Right place. Right
person!

TOMMY MATHESON
You're lucky you're he's in here
right now.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Oh yeah? Why? What would you do,
kill me?!

TOMMY MATHESON
I wouldn't think twice.

HAMPTON ADAMS
You *didn't* think twice!

Just then, the door to MCDONALD'S office opens up to reveal the CHIEF leaning in.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Hey, Mike, I was...

Suddenly the lights go down followed by a scuffling sound. With the brief low hum of the generator, the lights suddenly kick back on to reveal the CHIEF still standing in the doorway, MCDONALD still behind his desk, and TOMMY...holding HAMPTON by the arms with a gun pressed to his temple.

MCDONALD bolts up from his chair.

MIKE MCDONALD
Holy shit, Tom, what the hell are
you doing?!

TOMMY MATHESON
I'm done listening to this guy's
bullshit! He's lying, Mike, he
lied to you the first day you
met'im!

HAMPTON ADAMS
I'm not the only liar in this room,
detect...

TOMMY MATHESON
Shut up, shut up or I'll blow your
head right off!

CHIEF OF POLICE
Tommy, put the gun down, now!

TOMMY turns to the CHIEF.

TOMMY MATHESON
He's throwing our case, Chief!

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy, get a hold of yourself.
He's not throwing anything.

Then, he looks over at MCDONALD.

TOMMY MATHESON
Yes he is, Mike, he's twisting the
evidence around in his favor!

HAMPTON ADAMS
Twisting the evidence?!

TOMMY MATHESON
Shut up!

CHIEF OF POLICE
Tommy, put the gun down!

TOMMY looks at the CHIEF, panicked.

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy, don't do this! You're a
good cop, don't throw it away like
this!

TOMMY turns to MCDONALD, pressing the gun even harder against
HAMPTON'S skull, when, suddenly, the CHIEF unholsters his
gun, pointing it directly in between TOMMY'S eyes.

BEAT

TOMMY slowly turns in the CHIEF'S direction. The
determination on the CHIEF'S face is chilling, his hands not
even flinching as they point the weapon at the officer.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Put the gun down before something
very bad happens.

TOMMY stares at the CHIEF OF POLICE, knowing he has crossed
the line, but wishing he would have taken one more step.

MCDONALD stares at TOMMY, knowing his happy trigger finger may very well bring an end to this that no one wants to witness.

Then, slowly, TOMMY shuts his eyes, realizing his fault. He gradually lets go of HAMPTON; the relieved hostage steps forward, realizing how close he was to his own demise. Then, TOMMY turns to MCDONALD, wishing he could explain his actions.

TOMMY MATHESON

Mike...I'm sorry...

The CHIEF steps forward, taking TOMMY'S gun from his hand.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Your apology is worth shit here,
Tom.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)

Give me your badge. You're
suspended...indefinitely.

TOMMY stares down at the ground, his guilty conscience the only thing weighing on his mind. He reaches up to his belt, grasping the shiny silver police badge hooked onto it, and pulls it loose. He looks down at the badge in his hand, then up at HAMPTON.

TOMMY MATHESON

Badge is off, now.

HAMPTON doesn't say anything to the threatening officer. TOMMY turns and exits the office, handing his badge to the CHIEF as he passes by.

The CHIEF watches TOMMY leave, then he turns to MCDONALD.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Get this guy outta here, I don't
wanna see him at this precinct ever
again.

MIKE MCDONALD

Yes, sir.

The CHIEF, catching one last fury-filled glance at HAMPTON, turns and exits the office. MCDONALD stares at the doorway, still trying to comprehend the events that just took place. He glances down at the ground as his mind tries to grasp the inconceivable circumstances that have arose.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Um...look, you better get going.

HAMPTON looks at MCDONALD, concerned.

HAMPTON ADAMS
But what about...

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy's...just a hot head. He
would never do anything to hurt
you.

MIKE looks up at HAMPTON, still looking unconvinced.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
We'll keep an eye on him, don't
worry.

The two men share a moment of silence as they stare at one another. Then, MCDONALD steps out from behind his desk and leads HAMPTON towards the door. Just as HAMPTON is about to exit the office, he turns back to MCDONALD.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Detective.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
"Destroy those who tell lies;
bloodthirsty and deceitful men the
Lord abhors."

MIKE and HAMPTON share a moment of silence as they stare at one another, the passage settling into MCDONALD'S brain.

BEAT

Then, HAMPTON turns and begins making his way down the narrow aisle of the bullpen. MCDONALD watches HAMPTON slowly make his way through the gawking OFFICERS scattered about the pen. Then, he turns back to his desk where something catches his eye.

BEAT

MCDONALD slowly makes his way over to the front of his desk. He stops at the head of it and picks up the manila folder still resting on top. He flips open the front cover to reveal the front page: New York City Psychiatric Center. He begins scanning the documents containing long lists of the names of various patients.

After skimming the first page, he turns to the second; then the third; then, something catches MIKE'S eye. His eyebrows scrunch in curiosity as he stares down at a name of a patient highlighted on the long list: Loretta B. Adams.

Then, he moves over a couple of columns to see she had one child, Hampton J. Adams.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER - DAY

The building is tall and expansive, easily mistakable for a hotel. PATIENTS pass in and out the front doors with different DOCTORS and ATTENDANTS as they take the opportunity to enjoy the sun.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

An NYCPC ATTENDANT leads MCDONALD down a long hallway, passing by various patient rooms on the way. MCDONALD curiously glances around the area as they continue, his hands resting in his pockets.

NYCPC ATTENDANT

So, the reason we're considered a "psychiatric center" rather than just a "psych ward" is because, in actuality, we're made up of a bunch of *separate* wards specifying on a different psychiatric condition; kind of like the colleges at a university.

MIKE MCDONALD

Does each ward have its own doctor?

NYCPC ATTENDANT

Group of doctors, actually. When a patient is admitted, they undergo a series of psychiatric evaluations that ultimately determine what ward they will be assigned to. Then, they are paired up with a doctor specializing in their condition. Our patient-to-doctor ratio is somewhere around five-to-one.

MIKE MCDONALD

How many patients are here?

NYCPC ATTENDANT

Well, recently we've had somewhat of decline in admittance, but we're somewhere around a-thousand.

MIKE looks at the ATTENDANT stunned by the "decline in admittance" number. Then, he turns and curiously watches a GROUP OF PATIENTS pass by, following an ATTENDANT down the hallway as he reads from a small black Bible in his hands.

MIKE MCDONALD

So, I assume finding an individual patient would be a difficult task.

NYCPC ATTENDANT

A *current* patient?

MIKE MCDONALD

Former patient; probably somewhere around twenty years ago.

The ATTENDANT smiles at MCDONALD.

NYCPC ATTENDANT

Well, I, personally, wouldn't be able to help you with that information; I've only been working here for the past two years.

MIKE MCDONALD

Is there someone who could?

NYCPC ATTENDANT

HIPA.

MCDONALD stares at the ATTENDANT, confused.

MIKE MCDONALD

HIPA?

The ATTENDANT smiles, understanding MCDONALD'S bewilderment.

NYCPC ATTENDANT

Follow me.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

MCDONALD follows closely behind the ATTENDANT as he explains.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
HIPA, stands for Historical Index
of Psychiatric Admittees. We had
it installed in the early 70's due
to an increase in patient
admittance.

MIKE MCDONALD
So, it keeps track of all the
patients admitted to the center?

NYCPC ATTENDANT
And all of their records. At first
it was just like a sign in sheet:
patient comes in, their name goes
in the database. Now, it stores
all the information regarding that
patient: admittance date, disorder,
medicine, ward...

MIKE MCDONALD
Doctor?

The NYCPC ATTENDANT nods curiously at MCDONALD'S question.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
Yes...doctor too. Detective, I
have the feeling there's something
going on here.

MIKE MCDONALD
What makes you say that?

The ATTENDANT smiles.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
You're in a psych ward, thoughts
are kind of important to me.

MCDONALD looks over at the nosy ATTENDANT, staring back at
him waiting for an explanation.

MIKE MCDONALD
There was a patient here admitted
about twenty years ago that is
connected to a case we're
investigating now.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
That's quite a gap in time.

MIKE MCDONALD
She's *connected*, I didn't say she
did it.

The ATTENDANT nods, understanding his unnecessary jump-to-conclusion.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
What was her name?

MIKE MCDONALD
Loretta. Loretta Adams.

Then, the ATTENDANT stops and turns. He takes hold of MIKE'S arm and turns him as well.

BEAT

The two stare at one another in silent for a moment, MCDONALD not understanding the ATTENDANT'S behavior.

NYCPC ATTENDANT
Loretta Adams?

BEAT

NYCPC ATTENDANT (CONT'D)
Loretta Beatrice Adams?

MCDONALD stares at the ATTENDANT, silent. The pause between them is long and unnerving; the ATTENDANT knows something MCDONALD, apparently, does not.

NYCPC ATTENDANT (CONT'D)
You're here about her son...aren't you?

MCDONALD is speechless; he just stares at the ATTENDANT in silence, dumbfounded how he could ever know the reason behind his appearance.

BEAT

Suddenly, one of the FEMALE PATIENTS standing behind MCDONALD lets out an ear-splitting wail as she stares down at her shaking hands. MCDONALD, frightened, turns to see the WOMAN as she is quickly surrounded by a couple of other ATTENDANTS, taking hold of her by the wrists and leading her down the hall.

MCDONALD watches as the woman struggles with the two ATTENDANTS, then he looks back at the ATTENDANT still standing in front of him.

NYCPC ATTENDANT (CONT'D)
Look, I need to make a call. I'll let the doctor know you were here and you wanted to speak with him.

The ATTENDANT turns and starts making his way back down the corridor.

MIKE MCDONALD

Wait! What's his name?!

NYCPC ATTENDANT

Blake! Daniel Blake!

MCDONALD stares, scrunching his eyebrows; intrigued, as the ATTENDANT quickly retreats down the hall back to where they originally came from. Behind him, another GROUP OF PATIENTS passes by, following another ATTENDANT reading from a small black Bible in his hands.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, CHIEF'S OFFICE - LATER

Sitting behind his desk, the CHIEF finishes going over some paperwork that's been piling up throughout the day. His eyeglasses hang low on his nose and the desk lamp is on regardless of it being the late afternoon.

The silence of the office is broken with three knocks at the door. The CHIEF tilts his head up from the paperwork.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Yeah?

The door opens up and a FEMALE OFFICER steps into the office, halfway through the doorway.

FEMALE OFFICER

Sorry to bother you, sir, but Hampton Adams is here to see you.

CHIEF OF POLICE

I thought he left?

FEMALE OFFICER

He came back.

The CHIEF stares at the OFFICER for a moment, a little unsure about HAMPTON'S return. Then...

CHIEF OF POLICE

Okay, send'im in.

The FEMALE OFFICER steps back out of the office and allows HAMPTON to enter. She pulls the door closed behind him.

HAMPTON stares at the CHIEF as he makes his way towards his desk. CHIEF watches HAMPTON curiously.

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
Back so soon, Mr. Adams.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I was looking for Detective
McDonald.

CHIEF OF POLICE
He's out on a case. Is there
something I can help you with?

HAMPTON glares darkly into the CHIEF'S eyes. The CHIEF, not breaking eye contact, stares back at him as if it were a test of strength. Then, HAMPTON turns and starts eyeing some pictures hanging up on the walls. He stops at one of the CHIEF, his wife, and his two daughters.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Is this your family?

HAMPTON turns to the CHIEF, smiling. He doesn't receive the same in return; the CHIEF stares directly into HAMPTON'S eyes and answers stone cold.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Yeah. It is.

HAMPTON slowly makes his way down the line of pictures, all documenting different events in the CHIEF'S long life.

HAMPTON ADAMS
You've had quite the career.

The CHIEF carefully watches HAMPTON make his way down the pictures.

CHIEF OF POLICE
You could say that.

HAMPTON glances back at him.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Catch a lot of bad guys, did you?

The CHIEF doesn't know what to make of the comment.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Is there something you needed,
Hampton?

HAMPTON stops at a professional portrait of the CHIEF'S wife. Her hair is long and golden and her teeth are pearlescent white, glowing in the frame. HAMPTON smiles at the picture of the beautiful woman.

HAMPTON ADAMS
You've got a beautiful wife.

The CHIEF says nothing in response; he just stares at HAMPTON facing the portrait.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Sure is a shame: what happened to
Mike.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
It's hard losing someone so close
to you.

The CHIEF'S focus remains fixated on HAMPTON, as if he's expecting a sudden movement from the soft-speaking man.

CHIEF OF POLICE
I wouldn't worry about'im. He'll
be alright.

HAMPTON drops his head, smiling, and turns back to the CHIEF.

HAMPTON ADAMS
You ever lost someone special?

The two men hold their gaze at each other; silence fills the office once more.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Not like that.

HAMPTON ADAMS
I guess you wouldn't know, then.

Then, the CHIEF remembers his old "hostage negotiation training" and tries to keep HAMPTON talking.

CHIEF OF POLICE
How 'bout you? You ever lose
anyone close?

HAMPTON turns back to the portrait in front of him, staring deeply into the woman's eyes as if looking at her in-person.

HAMPTON ADAMS
How old are your daughters?

The CHIEF looks a little uneasy about the question.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Six and eight.

HAMPTON smiles.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Eight years-old, is that right?
Wow.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Imagine if she walked upstairs one
night and found her mother lying in
the bathtub full of her own blood.

HAMPTON evilly makes his way to the front of the desk. The CHIEF stares at HAMPTON expressionless, noticing the maliciousness in his tone as he approaches.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Do you think she would..."pull
through?"

The two men stare deeply into each other's eyes as the office, once again, is overcome in silence.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
It takes a lot out of you: losing a
loved one. *Changes* you.

The intense stare between HAMPTON and the CHIEF lasts for a few more moments; the air so thick it could be cut with a knife.

BEAT

Then, HAMPTON slowly stands straight up from his leaning position on the CHIEF'S desk, still maintaining eye contact with the intimidating officer.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
If you speak to Mike, let him know
I stopped by. I'm afraid he might
be getting information from the
wrong sources.

The CHIEF watches as HAMPTON approaches the door of his office. Before he reaches it, however, HAMPTON turns to face the CHIEF still behind his desk.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Oh, and don't worry about Tommy. I
won't be filing a report or
anything.

The CHIEF nods suspiciously.

CHIEF OF POLICE
That's very kind of you.

HAMPTON steps up to the door and turns the knob. Swinging it
open, he takes one last look at the CHIEF.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Yeah. Wouldn't want anything bad
to happen to him.

HAMPTON stares at the CHIEF for a long quiet moment. Then,
eerily, a smile makes its way onto his face.

The CHIEF stares at HAMPTON, suspecting something bad is
coming. He watches as HAMPTON turns and exits the office,
leaving the door wide open behind him.

BEAT

The CHIEF stares at the open doorway, HAMPTON'S last
statement still lingering on his mind. He considers what to
do at this point; what to make of HAMPTON'S ominous
appearance, then he makes his decision. The CHIEF reaches
for the phone, picks it up, and begins dialing.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - EVENING

MCDONALD waits at a red light, his cell phone pressed to his
ear as he waits for the other end to pick up. He listens to
the silence when suddenly...

TOMMY MATHESON (O.S.)
Hi, you've reached Detective Tom
Matheson. I can't get to my phone
right now...

MCDONALD, frustrated, snaps his phone shut. He looks out the
window at the car next to him, to see a young MOTHER waiting
for the light to change as well. Her focus is up on the red
light before them both, paying no attention to MCDONALD in
his car next to her.

MIKE continues to stare at the MOTHER, then looks back to the backseat to see her LITTLE DAUGHTER asleep in a carseat on the passenger's side. After a moment of watching the slumbering child, he turns back to the woman at the wheel. He watches her wait patiently for the light to change, still paying him no attention; then, she turns and spots MIKE staring at her.

The two lock eyes; MIKE and the MOTHER stare at one another expressionless. Then, she allows her kindness to get the best of her and smiles at MCDONALD. He gives her the same in response and the light instantly turns to a green arrow. The MOTHER looks ahead and pulls away, making a left turn through the intersection. MIKE watches the car drive off down the road for a moment, but is interrupted by the ringing of his phone.

Without checking the caller id, MIKE flips open the phone and brings it to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD

Tommy?

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

Dad?

MCDONALD, still nervous it's not TOMMY on the other line, is relieved to hear his daughter's voice.

MIKE MCDONALD

Hannah. Sorry...I didn't check the id.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH stands by the phone on the wall. SEAN, in the family room in the background, gathers a few things by the couch.

HANNAH MCDONALD

No...it's okay. Sean and I were just stopping by the house to grab a few things and you weren't here so I thought I'd give you a call.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stares at the red light still hanging above.

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)
Dad, is something wrong?

MCDONALD closes his eyes and rubs them, finally realizing how much this case has taken its toll.

MIKE MCDONALD
No, sweetie...I've just
been...busy...with everything.

Then, the light turns green and the car begins to move.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH, the phone still pressed to her ear, looks a little upset about her father's drawn out response.

MIKE MCDONALD (O.S.)
How about you? Are you and Sean
doing okay?

HANNAH glances back at SEAN as he carries a few more items from another room into the family room.

HANNAH MCDONALD
We're...things are fine.

She turns back towards the kitchen.

HANNAH MCDONALD (CONT'D)
Look, dad, I've been meaning to
talk to you about something.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stares straight ahead as he waits for his daughter to elaborate.

MIKE MCDONALD
Hannah, listen, I'm doing
everything I can to find...

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH shakes her head as if she were looking directly at her father standing right before her.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Dad, stop. I'm sorry, but blaming
yourself isn't going to make the
pain go away.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MIKE continues down the road as he listens closely to his daughter's explanation.

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)
Mom never blamed you for what
happened back in Virginia. And I'm
not about to start with what
happened here.

BEAT

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Sometimes, things are just...out of
your control. Sometimes...they're
in someone *else's* hands.

MIKE doesn't know what to say in response; the tears begin to well up in his eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD
I'm sorry, Hannah.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH can sense her father's empathy.

HANNAH MCDONALD
Sorry is for when you do the wrong
thing, not when can't do the right
one.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD tries to hold back the emotions running through his head from his daughter's words of wisdom. He takes a brief pause to formulate his words and gather his composure.

MIKE MCDONALD

Listen, I'm doing everything I can to catch this guy. He's caused too many people too much pain. I'm not gonna take anymore heartbreak.

At that moment, it seems everything has fallen silent; the car; the conversation; the world. MCDONALD stares straight ahead, the phone still pressed to his ear, knowing what he needs to do.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HANNAH continues standing by the wall, staring into the kitchen; her father's words cementing into her brain. With the phone still pressed to her ear, she turns and watches SEAN continue transporting items into the family room, looking though as if something is bothering her; something heavy weighing on her mind.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MIKE continues driving in silence when, suddenly, a beeping on the other line pulsates from the earpiece. He brings down the phone to check the caller id: Unknown Number. Unsure of the mysterious caller, he brings the phone back to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD

Honey, I gotta go. Be careful, okay?

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

Okay.

MIKE presses a button and switches over to the other line.

MIKE MCDONALD

Hello?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (O.S.)

Detective McDonald? This is Dr. Blake.

MCDONALD flips up his wrist to check his watch.

MIKE MCDONALD

Wow, that was fast...

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (O.S.)

Listen, we don't have much time.
Can you meet me at my office in
thirty minutes?

MIKE MCDONALD

Maybe; where's it at?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER - LATER

The sun has started to set on the horizon, diminishing behind
the city's buildings.

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, DR. BLAKE'S OFFICE -
CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stands in BLAKE'S office eyeing all his collegiate
achievements displayed along the walls. The frames, like the
rest of the office, are spotless; not even a speck of dust in
the lush room.

The silence is broken when the door to the office opens and
in walks DR. BLAKE. MCDONALD turns to the forty-something
doctor as he makes his way into the office.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Detective McDonald.

DR. BLAKE steps up to MIKE, his hand extended.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)

Daniel Blake.

Then, something bothers MCDONALD; he looks down at the
ground, unable to get past the unexplainable familiarity of
DR. BLAKE. The two men shake hands and DR. BLAKE makes his
way over to his desk. About to sit down, BLAKE glances up
and notices MCDONALD'S look of concern.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)

Is something wrong, detective?

MIKE breaks out of his curious trance and looks up at DR. BLAKE.

MIKE MCDONALD
No...no, everything's fine. What
did you need to talk...

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Please, sit.

MCDONALD looks down at the chair sitting in front of BLAKE'S desk and takes a seat. DR. BLAKE stares at his desk for a moment, considering where to start his story. Then...

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
Twenty-two years ago, on the night
of February 11th, a woman climbed
into her bathtub and took a razor
blade to her wrist.

MIKE MCDONALD
Loretta Adams.

DR. BLAKE tilts his head up to MCDONALD and nods.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Correct. Exsanguination, cutting
one's wrist, is one of the most
common ways to commit suicide; or
in Loretta's case: *attempt* to
commit suicide.

MCDONALD looks at DR. BLAKE, confused.

MIKE MCDONALD
I'm sorry?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
The sole purpose of exsanguination
is to achieve complete hypovolemia,
or blood loss, by cutting the
radial or ulnar arteries. However,
what most people fail to realize is
how deep the arteries in the wrist
really are. Most often, the pain
is so excruciating that the person
is unable to cut far enough. This
results in them passing out and
usually just tissue scars and
tissue damage.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
Detective, Loretta Blake did not die on February 11th. She was taken to the hospital, stitched back together, and then admitted to this institution.

MIKE MCDONALD
No offense, Dr. Blake, but the real reason I'm...

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
I know why you're here, Detective McDonald.

MCDONALD stares at DR. BLAKE, speechless from the determination in his voice.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
The night Loretta tried to kill herself, it was her son that dialed 911 to save her life.

MIKE MCDONALD
He told me she'd died that night.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
That was what he was told.

MCDONALD stares at DR. BLAKE, not quite understanding what he means.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
Loretta was not fit to be a mother. She was a drug addict, she didn't have a job, and she was dodging child services on a daily basis because they were going to take Hampton away from her; and then, one night, she gave up.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
When the paramedics arrived at the scene, they found Loretta unconscious in the bathtub, the water, crimson with blood; and Hampton sitting on the floor next to it, smiling up at them.

DR. BLAKE mimics the next part of the story eerily.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
He brought a finger to his lips,
very slowly, and whispered: "Shhh.
She's sleeping."

A chill crawls down MCDONALD'S spine as he sits in silent
imagination of that moment in the bathroom.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
Hampton had only one friend in this
world; and when she was brought to
us, it was only a matter of time
until he began to have problems of
his own.

MIKE MCDONALD
"Problems?"

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
After his mother was taken away
from him, Hampton became very
isolated. Despite being in a
foster family with six other
children, he rarely left his room
to even spend time with them. Two
years later, he was also admitted
to this center...for Psychosis.

MCDONALD scrunches his eyebrows, obviously not completely
understanding of the condition.

MIKE MCDONALD
You mean he talked to himself?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Oh no, detective, he was talking to
someone; we just can't see them.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
One of the symptoms of Psychosis is
delusional behavior. The nature of
Hampton's behavior was what we
refer to as "secondary delusions;"
he believed he was living a
completely different life than he
really was.

MIKE MCDONALD
I don't get it.

DR. BLAKE tries to consider a way to explain.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Did Hampton tell you anything else
about his childhood?

MCDONALD tries to remember HAMPTON'S words.

MIKE MCDONALD
He said something about his aunt
not taking him to church.

DR. BLAKE shakes his head.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Loretta was an only child. Hampton
had no aunts.

MIKE MCDONALD
What about his dad?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
His father left before Hampton was
born. He was never a part of his
son's life.

MIKE MCDONALD
So, you're tellin' me he made all
of that up?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
In his eyes, no: he believes it to
be true. Secondary delusions are
often influenced by other factors
in his life. Because Hampton's
mother was taken from him, he
needed a *new* one; so, he made up
his aunt.

MIKE MCDONALD
And what about his infatuation with
religion?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
Here at the Center, we believe
religion and, more importantly,
faith is one of the most important
characteristics of a patient's
recovery. You may have noticed the
"patient faith walks" when you were
here earlier. Patients are
required to take a group "faith
walk" daily with one of our staff
members.

MIKE MCDONALD

You preach to them?!

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Not "preach," detective, *teach*. It is *crucial* to a patient's recovery that they understand that there is in fact hope in overcoming their condition; it's not the end of the world.

MIKE MCDONALD

And what if it is?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Well, then they'll at least be hopeful when the time comes.

MIKE MCDONALD

So, which one was it in Hampton's case?

DR. BLAKE stares into MCDONALD'S eyes, dead silent.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

When Hampton was first admitted, he showed only signs of the secondary delusions. But then, a few years into his stay, the delusions began to develop.

MIKE MCDONALD

"Develop?"

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Hampton began to not only have delusions about other people...but about himself.

MCDONALD can't believe what he's hearing.

MIKE MCDONALD

You mean to tell me he thought he was another person?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Not "thought," detective, *believed*. It's called Dissociative Fugue Disorder. Hampton would take on a completely different identity...and forget about the previous one entirely. One day he'd be this reserved, silent ghost;

(MORE)

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
the next, he'd be the most
outspoken person you'd ever met.

MIKE MCDONALD
I'm sorry, doctor, but if Hampton
showed all these symptoms of
different disorders, then why was
he released?

DR. BLAKE looks down at the ground, something heavy on his
shoulders.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
The releasing procedure here is one
I'm not fond of; at least, not in
Hampton's case.

MIKE MCDONALD
Why's that?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
When a patient is in consideration
for release, the Center's board
holds two interviews: one with the
doctor and one with the patient;
and for some reason, they weigh
more heavily on the second.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
The day of Hampton's interview, the
board asked him to come prepared to
defend himself in question of
whether or not he was
psychologically suitable for
release. When they interviewed
him, they reported that he had "had
a complete transformation of his
previous psychological state" and
was "deemed no longer cognitively
damaged."

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
Needless to say, they got the
"outspoken Hampton" that day.

MIKE MCDONALD
So, what did you tell them during
your interview?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

I told them that Hampton was far from being cured of any of the conditions he was suffering from and that his release was completely out of the question. Needless to say, they didn't listen to my opinion.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)

From that day forward, I made sure every one of my staff new about Hampton Adams. I knew this day would come; it was just a matter of how long.

MCDONALD tries to digest all of the information he's just been fed. The absurdity of the situation becomes more and more plausible with each of BLAKE'S explanations, but one question still rests in MIKE'S head.

MIKE MCDONALD

Explain to me how all of this fits into our investigation.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Your partner, Matheson, was in here a few weeks ago. He had come across Loretta Adams' name and learned that she was Hampton's mother. He informed me about the case; about Hampton's belief that God was telling him where these suicides were occurring.

BEAT

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)

Detective, I'm afraid the "faith" instilled in Hampton during his stay made much more of an impact than we had intended. His root hatred for suicide became unyielding. But that was only *half* of him.

MCDONALD can't help but notice DR. BLAKE'S apparent conjecture.

MIKE MCDONALD

Doctor, are you suggesting *Hampton* is committing these murders?

DR. DANIEL BLAKE
I'm not "suggesting" it, I'm
confirming it.

MCDONALD is speechless at how quickly the case has been turned upside down.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE (CONT'D)
He's killing these mothers without any recollection of doing so. Find him, detective. Find him before he does it again.

MCDONALD stares down at the ground in silence as DR. BLAKE'S ominous 'order' echoes in his mind. Then, after a moment, he stands up extending a hand towards the doctor.

MIKE MCDONALD
Dr. Blake, thank y...

The moment the two men's hands connect...

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT OF FIRST 'SUICIDE'

MCDONALD lifts up the caution tape as he makes his way through, when he's suddenly stopped by a hand on his shoulder.

PRAYING MAN
Detective!

MCDONALD turns to see the MAN staring at him.

PRAYING MAN/DANNY BLAKE
Danny Blake, New York Post.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY HAMPTON
EXPLAINS HIS THEORY

MCDONALD stands at the side of the table in the middle of the room, opposite HAMPTON.

MIKE MCDONALD
Next time you wanna lie to a cop,
make sure you use the name of
someone who actually works there.
(MORE)

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

The only Daniel Blake in a twenty-mile radius is a doctor, not a journalist.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK CITY PSYCHIATRIC CENTER, DR. BLAKE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stares at his and DR. BLAKE'S hands, finally understanding the familiarity in the doctor's introduction. DR. BLAKE looks at MCDONALD, confused.

DR. DANIEL BLAKE

Is something wrong, detective?

MCDONALD looks up from their hands to DR. BLAKE, silent.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD'S CAR - NIGHT

The vehicle speeds down the highway, seemingly just as determined as the driver behind the wheel.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD guides the speeding car down the sequentially lit road with his cell phone pressed to his ear. Without any rings, the answering machine kicks on.

TOMMY MATHESON (O.S.)

Hi, you've reached Detective Tom Matheson. I can't get to my phone right now, but please leave your...

MIKE MCDONALD

Shit!

MCDONALD snaps his phone shut and floors the gas. The car accelerates, whizzing past the others around it. MCDONALD gathers himself, bringing the vehicle to a more manageable speed when, suddenly, his phone starts ringing. Without hesitation, MCDONALD flips open the phone and brings it to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

This is McDonald!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
Mike, it's me!

MIKE MCDONALD
Chief! Where the hell's Tommy?!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
I-I don't know, I just tried him
and it went straight to voicemail.

MIKE MCDONALD
Son of a bitch!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
Mike, what the hell's going on?

MIKE MCDONALD
It's Hampton!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
What?!

MIKE MCDONALD
It's Hampton, he's our killer!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
How do you know?!

MIKE MCDONALD
I just *know*, okay?! I'm heading to
my apartment now, let me know if
you hear from Tommy!

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.)
You got it!

MCDONALD nearly snaps his phone shut when...

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Mike!

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Be careful.

Heeding the CHIEF'S warning, MCDONALD closes his phone and
speeds off down the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Standing in the driveway, staring at the home in front of him, the CHIEF gently closes his phone and takes out the gun from his holster. Then, he makes his way up to the front door.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

The CHIEF cautiously steps up to the door, his gun ready to be fired at a moment's notice, and tries the handle. He gently pushes on the door and it slowly swings open.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

The lights shining brightly inside the house are a stark contrast to the darkness of the night outside. After a moment of squinting to allow his eyes to adjust to the drastic change in brightness, the CHIEF carefully surveys the visible area before him.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Tommy?!

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD weaves the car quickly as he continues his hasty trip towards his apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The CHIEF carefully enters the room, keeping his eyes peeled to ensure no one is sneaking around him.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Tommy, you in here?!

The emptiness of the house has the CHIEF on edge, but even more than that is the silence of it.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

He gradually makes his way into the kitchen, another room seemingly void of all life except his own.

CHIEF OF POLICE

Tommy?!

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD hangs a corner, the tires screech as he takes it too quickly, and straightens back up on the road just outside his apartment.

CUT TO:

EXT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX - CONTINUOUS

The vehicle comes to a sudden stop next to the curb directly below the balconies. He jumps out of his car and rushes up to the front door of the complex.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The CHIEF steps back out of the bedroom he just finished checking and gradually makes his way to the other end of the hall.

CHIEF OF POLICE

C'mon, Tom, where the hell are you?

The CHIEF continues to make the slow trip towards the end of the hall, but he stops at the sight of the last door on the right cracked partially open with bright light shining out.

BEAT

The CHIEF stares at the slightly open door, unable to break the paralysis that has come over his body.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD slowly makes his way down the hallway towards his apartment's door. He quietly unsnaps the holster of his gun and pulls it out, ready for anything or anyone in his way.

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The CHIEF finally steps up to the door. He pauses for a moment, unsure if he wants to discover what's inside. He tries to keep his breathing steady, despite his heart racing in his chest.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stands just outside the door, gathering his composure to make his entrance. He closes his eyes, momentarily, ensuring he's making the right decision to enter. Then...

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The CHIEF gently nudges the door forward and steps into the bright office to find...

CUT TO:

INT. TOMMY MATHESON'S HOUSE, OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

...the room is completely empty. The CHIEF stares speechless at the sight before him: nothing but vast emptiness, despite the furniture and other household items, the room is completely empty.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT COMPLEX, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD, still standing outside his door, opens his eyes and presses his ear up to the front of it. He holds his breath, listening for anything inside.

BEAT

The silence makes him even more unsure than he already was. He reaches for the handle of the door when, suddenly, a door at the other end of the hallway opens up and out walks an OLD LADY in her nightgown. MCDONALD quickly puts his gun back into the holster, pulling his shirt over to conceal the weapon.

The OLD LADY turns to him, eyeing his odd behavior outside the door.

Not wanting to arise her suspicions, MCDONALD smiles at the OLD LADY and turns back to his door. Hesitantly, he turns the handle and makes his way inside.

The OLD LADY down the hall watches the man disappear into his apartment. She stares curiously as the door closes behind him and she is left alone in the silent hallway.

BEAT

Taking a glance left and right down the hall, she turns back to her room and walks back inside, gently closing the door behind her.

CUT TO:

INT. MCDONALD APARTMENT, FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

MCDONALD stands motionless at the door of his apartment, staring straight forward at the sight he feared most: sitting on the couch in his family room, with a gun pointed directly at his chest, HAMPTON smiles at MCDONALD menacingly.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Hi, Mike.

MCDONALD can't move; he stands paralyzed staring at the barrel of HAMPTON'S gun pointed directly at his chest.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Weren't expecting me?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

You should really tell your daughter to lock the door after she leaves. I walked right in.

MIKE MCDONALD

If you touched a hair on her head...

HAMPTON chuckles at MIKE'S attempt at intimidating him.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Cut the tough-cop bullshit, Mike;
I'm the one with the gun, here.
Speaking of guns, why don't you
take yours down and toss it over;
don't want you to go all 'save-the-
day' on me.

MCDONALD stares at the gun-wielding murderer sitting on his couch. HAMPTON flicks up his eyebrows, physically telling MCDONALD, "come on, drop the gun."

Slowly, MCDONALD takes his gun from the holster and places it, carefully, on the ground.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Kick it over.

MCDONALD, taking a long glance at HAMPTON, slides the gun over with his right foot. He watches the black weapon scoot across the floor and stop just in front of the couch. It spins in place for a moment, then HAMPTON bends forward and picks it up.

With a gun in each hand, HAMPTON stands up from the couch and slowly steps towards the center of the room, still aiming *his* weapon directly at MCDONALD'S chest.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

So, you talked to Blake, did you?
What'd he say; that I'm delusional?
I'm a psycho?

MIKE MCDONALD

More or less.

HAMPTON ADAMS

I bet he told you about my mother,
didn't he; about her being admitted
to that God-forsaken place?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Did he tell you how she died?

MIKE MCDONALD

He told me how you *think* she died.

Somehow, HAMPTON finds a way to chuckle at that.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Oh no, Mike, I *know* how she died.
Would you like me to tell you?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

A year before I was released, she was deemed "suitable for un-monitored everyday life" and they let her go. When she asked where I was, the doctors told her that I had been in foster care and was living on my own when I had turned eighteen. You know where I *really* was though, don't you.

HAMPTON tries to smile, but it seems like the story bothers him still.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

For eighteen years - *EIGHTEEN YEARS!* - they kept me in there with her...and she never knew about it. Never even mentioned that her son had been admitted to the *SAME FUCKING INSTITUTION SHE WAS IN!*

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

But somehow...somehow she found out. She learned that her son had been a-thousand feet away from her and she had no idea. Do you wanna know what she did?

The evil smile creeps back onto HAMPTON'S face.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

She walked up to the upstairs bathroom and filled the tub full of water. She put on her most expensive dress, did her hair like she was going to a ball, and then she took every last pill she had in the medicine cabinet.

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Her heart rate began to slow, her vision started to blur, and then she climbed into the tub.

(MORE)

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
She laid down in the water,
submerged her head, and drowned
herself. But wait...do you wanna
know the best part?

HAMPTON steps forward as if he were about to share a secret.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I did the same thing to your wife.

MCDONALD can no longer hold back his fury. He lunges toward
HAMPTON, but the man aims the gun directly between his eyes.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Ah-ah-ah. Don't be foolish.

MCDONALD stops, realizing there is nothing he can do.

BEAT

Keeping the gun pointed at MCDONALD, HAMPTON takes a step
back towards the glass sliding door leading out to the
balcony. MCDONALD slowly makes his way over to the side of
the room, getting away from the front door.

MIKE MCDONALD
I know about your condition,
Hampton; your multiple identities.
You can plead insanity and not have
to go to jail.

HAMPTON ADAMS
And go back to *that* shit-hole
place; I think not!

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Sorry, Mike, there's only one
Hampton Adams in this world; and
he's pointing the gun at you right
now. That God-fearing, heaven-
praising guy you met in the
interrogation room...he died a long
time ago.

Just then, MCDONALD'S cell phone begins to ring. HAMPTON,
instinctively, turns his focus down to the detective's
reverberating pocket.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Who's that?

MIKE MCDONALD

I don't know.

MCDONALD reaches for his phone, when suddenly...

HAMPTON ADAMS

Hey! What the hell do you think
you're doing; I didn't say answer
it! Put your hand back up!

The phone vibrates a few more times. The two men stand in
silence listening to the loud rumbles from inside MCDONALD'S
pocket.

BEAT

Then, the vibrations stop. The apartment falls completely
silent and MCDONALD looks directly into HAMPTON'S eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD

What did you do to Tommy?

HAMPTON smiles at the sound of the name.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Tommy? I didn't *touch* Tommy.

MIKE MCDONALD

Bullshit! Where is he?!

HAMPTON looks down at the ground, unable to hold back his
pleasure in the situation.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Let's just say...he's not much of a
fighter.

Just then, a gun clicks into the loaded position over by the
front door of the apartment. HAMPTON turns his head,
dumbfounded.

Standing over by the door, TOMMY holds his cocked gun
steadily aimed at HAMPTON'S forehead.

TOMMY MATHESON

I figured *now* might be a good time
to start.

MCDONALD turns at the stunning sight by the door.

MIKE MCDONALD

Tommy, you're okay! I thought
he...

TOMMY MATHESON

He hasn't done shit to me. He's
all talk.

HAMPTON widens his eyes at the sound of TOMMY'S taunt.

HAMPTON ADAMS

You don't think I'm capable of
killing?

TOMMY MATHESON

I think you're nothing but another
psychotic asshole who watched one-
too-many cowboy movies growing up
as a kid.

BEAT

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Only *half* of you is a killer,
Hampton. The other's nothing but a
messed up pussy trying to make a
name for himself. Even if you *did*
believe in God, He knows the
devil's what's *really* inside you.

HAMPTON, again, begins to chuckle at the statement.

HAMPTON ADAMS

Don't you see? That's exactly it!
It's all good versus bad; God
versus the devil; cop versus
robber. You cops *need* me. You
need guys like me to keep this
world in turmoil so you can come
along and save the day.

HAMPTON turns to MCDONALD, staring deeply into his eyes.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

Your wife died for a good reason,
Mike.

TOMMY MATHESON

Shut your damn mouth!

HAMPTON ADAMS

She helped me prove that even the
police...

TOMMY MATHESON

Shut up!

HAMPTON ADAMS
...that even the police aren't
invincible.

TOMMY MATHESON
That's it!

HAMPTON spins his head to TOMMY.

HAMPTON ADAMS
Do it! Do what you came here to
do! You're no different than I am;
just another "psychotic asshole who
watched one-too-many cowboy movies
growing up!"

HAMPTON stares at TOMMY sadistically. The room is silent
once again.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
Do you wanna know the prayer I used
to say after each one?

BEAT

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)
I ask You, Lord, please imbibe thy
pain and thy suffering and with
Your strength and intrepidity
become the remedy of the affliction
within me and thwart all guileful
deviltries intending malevolence.

TOMMY tries to hold his trigger finger steady, resisting the
itch to pull back on the lever. MCDONALD glances over at the
anxious rookie standing by the door.

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy.

TOMMY pays no attention to his partner's concern, he just
continues to stare directly into HAMPTON'S eyes.

HAMPTON ADAMS
O God, grant me the strength to
surmount the pernicious forces
within me...

The gun in TOMMY'S hand begins to shake as his anxiety starts
to become unbearable.

MIKE MCDONALD
Tommy!

HAMPTON ADAMS

...and become the superior being
that I know I am.

TOMMY is seconds from pulling the trigger, his finger practically overpowering his mind telling him to resist the murderous urge. Just then, HAMPTON smiles.

HAMPTON ADAMS (CONT'D)

I can't wait to say it after I'm
finished here.

Suddenly, TOMMY begins to scream and the urge becomes too much.

MIKE MCDONALD

No!

Instantly, MCDONALD hurls himself forward and spearing his shoulder into HAMPTON'S stomach. TOMMY watches his partner drive the gun-wielding psycho back towards the balcony door. The two men smash through the glass and continue toward the balcony's railing.

TOMMY MATHESON

Mike!

MIKE continues pushing HAMPTON back. Just then, they smash into the railing and it gives way to the force of MCDONALD'S tackle, sending them both flailing over the edge. TOMMY stands motionless in the apartment watching MIKE and HAMPTON disappear over the edge of the balcony. The brief silence is abruptly interrupted by a loud sickening thud causing TOMMY to wince.

BEAT

His heart practically stops beating; all voluntary movements are entirely frozen.

BEAT

Unsure whether or not he wants to see the sickening sight at below the balcony, TOMMY weighs the options in his mind.

BEAT

Then, he slowly steps forward, gradually making his way towards the shattered door of the balcony. He reaches the frame of the door, still riddled with rigid glass hanging onto the edges. He steps through the open space of the door, unsure if he's prepared for the sight on the other side.

The roof of the vehicle parked along the curb has caved in under the weight of HAMPTON'S lifeless body crashing onto it from above...and hanging by one hand from the railing still barely attached to the balcony, MCDONALD stares up at his partner standing only inches away.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Mike!

TOMMY squats down, laying down his gun, and reaches for MCDONALD'S hand. They grab hold of one another tightly and, with all their might, cooperatively pull MIKE back up to the floor of the balcony. With one last bursting tug, TOMMY yanks MCDONALD back up to the base of the balcony and they both rest for a moment, catching their breath.

BEAT

TOMMY, leaning back on his hands, turns to MCDONALD lying on his side next to him.

TOMMY MATHESON (CONT'D)

Do you believe in God now?

MCDONALD stares at TOMMY, unable to imagine how he could *not* believe in God at this point, and smiles. TOMMY turns his head to look forward, realizing the madness that was HAMPTON ADAMS is finally over.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. POLICE STATION, "BULLPEN" - DAY

Making his way through the busy aiseways of the "bullpen," MCDONALD quickly walks towards a smiling TOMMY standing outside his office.

TOMMY MATHESON

Hey there old timer!

MCDONALD can't hold back his own pleasure in TOMMY'S demoralizing humor.

MIKE MCDONALD

Sometimes I wonder why I ever agreed to be your partner.

TOMMY MATHESON

Awe c'mon, I was just checkin' to make sure you didn't break your hip with that fall over the balcony.

MCDONALD chuckles at TOMMY'S joke. He finally reaches his partner and looks him sincerely in the eyes.

MIKE MCDONALD
Thanks, Tommy...for everything.

BEAT

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)
You kept me looking in the right direction, when I wanted to face the wrong.

TOMMY smiles, slapping MCDONALD on the shoulder.

TOMMY MATHESON
Anytime.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (O.C.)
You two dating yet or just casually seeing each other?!

TOMMY and MCDONALD both turn to see the CHIEF making his way towards them, chuckling at his own humor. Finally reaching them, he stops next to them both standing outside MCDONALD'S office door.

BEAT

Then, he looks at both of them genuinely.

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
Listen, I know this case was...demanding. It took a lot out of both of you. It took a lot *from* both of you.

BEAT

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
But you guys did a great job. We got the bad guy and the grass is a little greener for one day.

The CHIEF turns to MIKE, staring deeply into his eyes.

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
I know you're considering another career and it's way to soon for you to make any decision...but if you decide to stay...you're name'll still be on that office door.

(MORE)

CHIEF OF POLICE (CONT'D)
And as long as you still have that
badge; and that phone...I'll still
be calling.

MCDONALD is glad to have the CHIEF'S support.

MIKE MCDONALD
Thanks, Chief.

The CHIEF glances around at the usual chaos of the station.

CHIEF OF POLICE
Well, I better get back to work;
body crashes through the roof of a
cop car and you'd think the whole
world was burning to the ground.

TOMMY and MCDONALD both smile as they watch the CHIEF exit
into the mass of OFFICERS around the "bullpen."

TOMMY MATHESON
We still up for some lunch?

MIKE MCDONALD
Yeah, I just...need to make a stop
first.

TOMMY turns to MIKE and hesitantly nods, wondering what type
of "stop" his partner is referring to.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - A LITTLE LATER

The natural colors of the cemetery are unbelievably strong.
The greens of the leaves on the trees are a dark contrast to
the light blue sky gleaming brightly behind them. The breeze
blowing gently across the hills of the cemetery rush across
the grass and through MCDONALD'S clothes as he makes his way
up the hill from his car parked on the path behind him.

He makes his way up the long walk towards the headstone, now
only a few feet away. Finally reaching it, he stops and
reads the words engraved on the stone: Lisa Elizabeth
McDonald -- 1/24/68 - 6/11/09.

BEAT

The silence of the cemetery seems fitting to the emotionless
expression on MCDONALD'S face. No longer needing to vent
over his loss, no longer needing to comfort himself over his
loss, MCDONALD just stares down silently at his wife's
headstone in front of him.

BEAT

Then, the silence is broken with the ringing of his cell phone.

MCDONALD reaches into his pocket and pulls out the ringing phone. He takes the phone in his hand and reads the caller id: Hannah.

MIKE flips open his cell and brings it up to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD

Hey.

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

Hey.

MCDONALD can't help but notice his daughter's somber tone, almost as if she's on the verge of tears.

MIKE MCDONALD

Honey, what's wrong?

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

Sean and I had a fight.

MIKE MCDONALD

What about?

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

I don't know. We started arguing about stuff...*stupid* stuff and I just walked out.

MCDONALD wishes he was there to comfort his heartbroken daughter.

MIKE MCDONALD

I'm sorry sweetie.

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

Can I come home?

MIKE MCDONALD

Of course you can, Hannah. You don't have to ask.

BEAT

HANNAH MCDONALD (O.S.)

I love you.

MCDONALD loves the sound of his daughter's voice when she says that to him.

MIKE MCDONALD

I love you too, sweetie.

MIKE listens for the other end to click off, then he slowly brings the phone down from his ear, gently closing it shut. He stares at the front display screen for a moment, waiting for the Hannah to disappear.

BEAT

Then, he looks back at his wife's headstone in front of him.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

I told you they weren't right for each other.

MIKE smiles, knowing his wife would be doing the same thing if she were there with him at that same moment.

Then, he takes his phone and stares at it for a moment, wondering if the decision he's thinking is *really* the one he wants to make. MIKE weighs the options in his head, understanding the importance of the decision he's about to make.

Then, he takes his phone and gently places it on the top of the headstone in front of him. He takes a step back from the stagnant phone sitting in front of him and stares at it.

After a moment of silent staring, knowing this is what he wants to do, MCDONALD slightly nods, turns, and walks away, leaving the cell phone and his detective career behind him.

The cell phone continues to sit untouched on top of the headstone, just as silent as the rest of the cemetery. The wind continues to gently blow across the surface of the grass, yet remaining so soft as to not even disturb the stationary device atop the grave.

Then, suddenly, the silence is broken as the cell phone begins to ring. The front display screen flashes on and off as the ringing continues. After a moment of silent pause between rings, the phone continues, remaining untouched on topside of the headstone. After one more pause, the phone rings once more and then is picked up by someone standing in front of the headstone.

MCDONALD, holding the cell phone in his hand, flips it open and brings it to his ear.

MIKE MCDONALD (CONT'D)

Detective McDonald.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.

The story continues in...

BUMP IN THE NIGHT

The third and final chapter in the Mike McDonald series.