

Markers

"The Talk Host"

Story by

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MARKERS

"PILOT"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. A HIGHWAY -- DAY

MUSIC PLAYS OVER THE OPENING TEASER

Cars driving down a two lane highway on a beautiful day. Kids, in the car, stop and stare at something in the distance that is on the road. As the car gets closer, the object is a cross on the side of the road.

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODED AREA NEAR THE HIGHWAY -- AFTERNOON

Trees bristle in the wind. A different roadside memorial, seen in the distance, is being soaked by rain. This memorial is a T-shirt draped over a cross. The T-shirt has the word, "Daddy" written on the chest. A narrator, GABRIEL, speaks.

GABRIEL (V.O.)
Roadsides everywhere are filled
by plots of land where souls
departed this mortal coil.

CUT TO:

EXT. A MEMORIAL ON THE HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

A roadside cross with a wreath of flowers and a name, that cannot be read, that is illuminated by a full moon.

GABRIEL (V.O.)
Memorials tended to by those
left behind.

DISSOLVE
TO:

The cross has changed to a framed photograph of a child on a stand. Sunlight shines on a teddy bear that is braced up against the stand.

GABRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And memorials long since forgotten.

DISSOLVE
TO:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An old tattered cross that looks like no one has visited it for a very long time.

GABRIEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)
These are the lives touched by
what was, what might have been
and what will never be...

DISSOLVE
TO:

The memorial changes again and is now an American flag inside of a wooden heart that is surrounded by flowers.

GABRIEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
And it is these markers that
serve as grim reminders to every
passerby that fate does not
discriminate.

SUPER over the entire screen: "MARKERS"

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. A HOUSE -- NIGHT -- ESTABLISHING

SUPER: "1974"

A boarding house.

CUT TO:

A light is turned on in a second story window. Loud 70's disco music is turned on. The silhouette is seen as the woman dances past the window.

CUT TO:

INT. A BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

JANET BLAZE, a very attractive woman in her mid twenties, is wearing a sexy low cut disco dress. A TENANT pounds on the wall and shouts at her.

TENANT (O.S.)

Hey, you want to turn the fucking music down.

She laughs, continues dancing around the room as she puts on makeup, and turns the music even louder. There is a knock on the door. She walks over to the door and opens it. A JOHN dressed in a leisure suit stands there and nods approvingly. He enters her apartment.

JANET

Today is my birthday, I usually don't work on my birthday, but for you, I made an exception.

She closes the door.

LATER

Janet is having sex with the John on her bed. She is a moving up and down wildly. As he orgasms, she looks over at a wad of cash that is on top of her chest of drawers and smiles.

LATER

He is gone. Janet is getting dressed. She grabs the cash and exits the room.

DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. A HOUSE -- NIGHT

The same house is vacant and is in a dilapidated condition.

SUPER: "2013"

A hearse parks in front of the house. On the hearse is a business logo that reads: "Ghost Tours." A TOUR GUIDE is in the middle of telling 6 TOUR GUESTS a story about this particular haunted house.

TOUR GUIDE

... the house, as you can see, has been vacant for a number of years. The last couple that lived there, a decade ago, said that lights would turn on and off and they swore they could see a woman dancing in that room.

She points to the second story room where Janet was putting on makeup. TOUR GUEST 1, a woman, holds up a ghost meter and points it at the house. The lights begin to flicker on the meter.

TOUR GUEST 1

Look, my meter is going crazy.

TOUR GUEST 2

Sounds like a personal problem.

Everyone looks at it.

TOUR GUIDE

It is believed to be the spirit of Janet Blaze a prostitute who died under tragic and suspicious circumstances in 1974.

TOUR GUEST 1's HUSBAND sneaks up on Tour Guest 1 and scares her. She jumps.

TOUR GUEST 1

(to her husband)

You're such an asshole!

He and some of the other guests laugh.

TOUR GUEST 2

I just saw somebody walk past that window.

TOUR GUEST 2'S WIFE

It's your imagination.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOUR GUEST 1
 (to the Tour Guide)
 What happened to her?

The Tour Guide starts to tell them the story.

TOUR GUIDE
 In 1974 Janet Blaze celebrated
 her twenty-seventh birthday,
 little did she know it would be
 her last one...

CUT TO:

INT. A BEDROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Janet, still dressed in her 70's disco dress, turns on a radio and starts dancing to 70's music. She is in a trance-like state and oblivious to anything going on around her. An older, distinguished looking man, GABRIEL, appears in the room and watches her for a moment. She does not notice him. Gabriel walks over to the radio and turns it off. Janet stops dancing, comes out of her trance and acknowledges his presence.

JANET
 Who are you?

The room is in bad repair and her dress has turned into rags. She looks around the room and at her clothing.

JANET (CONT'D)
 What happened to my room? My clothes?

GABRIEL
 My name is Gabriel. And this hasn't
 been your room for a very long time.

JANET
 What are you talking about, of course
 this is my room. I've been living
 since I...

GABRIEL
 ... died. Janet, you've been dead
 for almost 40 years.

She looks at him as if he is crazy.

JANET
 That's ridiculous, just last night I
 went out and was dancing with my
 friends, to celebrate my birthday.
 If I died, don't you think I'd
 remember it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GABRIEL

You're a tormented soul; a ghost
stuck in limbo, unaware that you are
no longer a part of the living world
or your surroundings and oblivious
as to how you ended up this way.

She looks at herself in the mirror.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I've come here to give you an
opportunity that will help you move
on.

Janet looks at him.

CUT TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY -- SUNSET

Radio Talk Host, MIKE STONE, a man in his mid forties, is
driving in his car on the highway. The sun is setting.
Mike is speaking to someone on his cell phone and only
half paying attention to the road.

MIKE

... hey, I'm number one in my
time slot and I want what's due
me. I'm prepared to give them
an early renegotiation discount,
which I don't really need to
fucking do, but if they want to
wait for my contract to expire...

A sandy colored dog that is the same color as the grass
approaches the road at the curve as Mike's car is
simultaneously coming around the curve. The sound of the
dog's body grinding under his car, as well as a high
pitched squeal of a dog is heard as he hits the brakes.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Shit, I think I hit something...

Michael stops the car gets out and runs over to what he
has hit.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

He stares at what he hit that is lying in the road.

CUT TO:

INT. A MEETING ROOM -- NIGHT

Janet enters a room with a six other people who are from a variety of ages, races, wear clothing from all different eras. One of those people is ANTHONY LOCERNA, a good looking man in his early 30's, dressed in 1920's attire. The people are seated at a conference table. Gabriel enters the room and stands at the head of the table.

GABRIEL

I know that each of you is feeling extremely disoriented, and probably wondering what's happened.

(short pause)

I'm here to explain and assist you.

ANTHONY

Assist us to do what?

Gabriel walks around the room as the people listen intently.

GABRIEL

Each of you left the world of the living prematurely, without achieving the goals you set for yourselves prior to being born.

PARTICIPANT 1 asks a question.

PARTICIPANT 1

How can a person set goals before they're born?

GABRIEL

Every person is inhabited by a spirit, and each spirit chooses the conditions that will help them learn prior to being born. Unfortunately, your learning experiences were interrupted by unexpected events and unforeseen circumstances.

PARTICIPANT 2 calls out.

PARTICIPANT 2

What kind of unforeseen circumstances?

Gabriel ignores the question and continues.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GABRIEL

A spirit can't move on if there are serious unresolved issues at the time a person dies.

PARTICIPANT 3

No one can resolve every issue before they die.

GABRIEL

And they're not expected to, however, some issues make it impossible for a spirit to leave earth. There are people on earth, who are days away from dying and you'll need to help them resolve their issues, so they won't end up the way each of you did.

ANTHONY

I don't know about this...

GABRIEL

Then you'll spend eternity stuck in time, unable to move forward or backward in the places where we first met.

ANTHONY

Not much of a choice, is it?

GABRIEL

This is not a punishment, it's an opportunity.

ANTHONY

When I was alive taking care of me was my full time job; I ain't no social worker.

There is muttering in the room.

GABRIEL

By helping these strangers, you'll help yourselves.

He stares at Janet and then at Anthony.

DISSOLVE
TO:

EXT. A ROADSIDE MEMORIAL -- DAY

A marker sign on a two lane highway. Janet and Anthony appear across the road from it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET

Where are we?

ANTHONY

I don't know.

(pause)

Look.

An OLDER WOMAN, not seen clearly, places flowers at the base of a roadside cross. Gabriel appears next to them. She cleans away debris near the memorial.

JANET

(to Gabriel)

Is that who we're supposed to help?

GABRIEL

No.

ANTHONY

Then who?

A car driving past the memorial slows down. Gabriel points to Mike Stone as he turns his head to look at the woman who stands at the memorial. He gives her a dirty look and speeds down the road.

GABRIEL

His name is Mike Stone. Something happened here, at this spot, seven months ago that is leading to the kind of torment that will prevent him from ever leaving earth.

Gabriel starts to walk away. He stops and turns back towards her.

ANTHONY

What if we can't help him make it right?

GABRIEL

It's not your job to make it right for him. It's your job to give him the opportunity to make it right for himself.

ANTHONY

How?

GABRIEL

That's up to you to decide.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET

So what are the rules here?

GABRIEL

There is only one rule you need to follow. Help those you are intended to help find peace in life or they will not find it in death.

Gabriel walks into a mist and disappears. The wind begins to swirl and forms a portal that centers in the middle of woods near the memorial. A flash of bright light appears as Anthony and Janet walk into it and disappear.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARKING LOT OF A RADIO STATION -- DAY

Mike pulls his car into a parking space. He gets out of the car and walks into the radio station.

CUT TO:

INT. A RADIO STATION STUDIO -- NIGHT

A radio station studio. A sign on the desk says, "NO SMOKING," it is next to an ashtray that is filled with cigarette butts and ashes.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

... ten percent chance of rain and our current temperature is seventy-three degrees. And now back to the Mike Stone show.

The "On The Air" light flashes in the studio. Mike Stone is seated at a chair behind a microphone and in front of a computer monitor. There is a PRODUCER sitting behind a glass wall in a room adjacent to the room where Mike is doing his show. Janet and Anthony appear in the studio, but are invisible to everyone there. They watch Mike as he does his radio program.

MIKE

Welcome back to Stone Cold Truth, the Mike Stone show.

He lights, puffs and places a cigarette into the ashtray.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Today we're talking about roadside memorial markers, grim reminders of traffic fatalities. Crosses, Teddy bears, pictures...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There are numerous framed tabloid magazine covers, photographs and newspaper headlines on the wall behind Mike. One photograph has a picture of Stone and the caption under it reads: "Satan is alive and well in America." Another of the framed pieces is in the center of all the other photos, it reads: "The Coldest Man In America" is hanging from the wall. A photograph of Stone shouting into a microphone is under the headline.

MIKE (CONT'D)

What's the point? I pass one of them on my way to work and it pisses me off.

He holds up a piece of paper and reads from it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

The department of transportation reported that there were 42,800 traffic fatalities last year. Estimates show that between ten and twenty percent of those accidents resulted in memorials being erected. That's eight thousand memorials! Folks, it's a road, not a cemetery.

A coffee mug seated on the table has the words, "Stone Cold" engraved on it.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'd love for someone to call in tonight and attempt to explain to me why this isn't a ridiculous waste of time and energy.

Names and topics are listed on the computer screen that is in front of Mike as he talks to LOUIS, a caller.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Let's hear what you have to say, America. What do you think about roadside memorials, Louis?

He pushes a button on his board. He takes a puff of the cigarette and places it back into the ashtray.

LOUIS (O.S.)

Mike, I don't see why you're making such a big deal? So, you drive past them and don't look.

The station manager, PAUL, enters the production booth and listens to the show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Maybe going through life with your head up your ass, but what's made me very successful is keeping my eyes open and calling things the way I see them.

LOUIS (O.S.)

What's your problem?

Mike glances into the booth and sees Paul looking at him and listening to the show.

MIKE

My problem is ignorant people like you who want us to look the other way because you don't have the balls to say, "Keep your crap off my roads." My taxes pay for those roads, Louis, and that includes cleaning up crap that doesn't belong there.

LOUIS (O.S.)

It's not hurting you...

MIKE

How the hell do you know what's hurting me? And whether or not it "hurts" me or not is not the issue.

He puts his cigarette out in the ashtray. His hand hits the button and speaks to another caller, JOE.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You're up, Joe.

JOE (O.S.)

I think they're good because they remind you to drive safe.

MIKE

Joe, when you get on the road in the morning do you ever think, "Hey, today is a great day for me to get in an accident?"

JOE (O.S.)

No. But those memorials do remind me to drive slower.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

You ever see those signs on the road with numbers on them with the word "limit" under the numbers? That's called a "speed limit" sign.

He hangs up on Joe by pressing a button on the board.

MIKE (CONT'D)

If you want to grab Joe's line, call me at 1-800-PISS OFF, for those of you who are illiterate that's 1-800 747 7633.

His hand hits the button and speaks to another caller, MARION. She has a very tender voice and it is obvious she is nervous.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Go Marion.

MARION (O.S.)

Mike, my son, Jonathan, was killed in a traffic accident and I maintain a memorial on the spot of the highway where he was killed. It gives me great peace of mind to go there because I can still feel his presence.

(emotionally)

Every time we pass it his little sister says, "Mommy, that's Jonathan's cross."

There is a brief pause of silence. His producer looks on from the other side of the glass production booth. Mike looks into the booth at the producer and then at Paul. Anthony and Janet also look on and wait for his reply.

MIKE

Marion, I'm sorry about your son. I've lost family members and I know that it can be very traumatic...

His tone of voice changes from sympathetic to going on the attack.

MIKE (CONT'D)

But I never felt the need to prop up a coffin in front of the entrance of the hospital where they died.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

For all we know your son could have caused the accident...

MARION (O.S.)

My son was hit by a car as he attempted to cross the street.

MIKE

I don't know the facts about your son's accident. People die every day. I also don't burden other people with my personal issues, and don't need to mark the exact spot where somebody that I loved died to keep some delusion going that their "spirit" is in the same place where they took their last breath!

MARION (O.S.)

I don't feel like I'm burdening anyone with...

MIKE

Of course you don't. And that's the problem. Inconsiderate bitches like you are completely clueless of anyone else's feelings.

The producer in the other room grimaces. Paul exits the room.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Do us all a favor, Marion, and if you want to mourn the loss of your son do it at the cemetery like everyone else!

His hand hits a button.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Ok, George impress me with your brilliance...

GEORGE

Hey Mike, your feelings about the roadside memorials wouldn't have anything to do with your accident last year, would it?

There is a long period of silence. The producer looks at Mike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Hey George, why don't you go
fuck yourself...

Anthony laughs.

JANET

This guy is in serious need of
an ass kicking.

ANTHONY

I kind of like him, he says what's
on his mind.

JANET

I think he's an asshole.

ANTHONY

People used to say the same thing
about me.

Mike continues doing the show, but cannot be heard.
Gabriel appears to them.

GABRIEL

Mike Stone will go home tonight
and kill himself with a single
gun shot to the head. He will
be doomed to wander the earth as
each of you did, if you are unable
to change his fate.

JANET

Then I better see about buying
us some time.

Janet walks away, and Anthony stands there watching Mike
who is very animated and obviously angry.

ANTHONY

(to Gabriel)

It's easy to fall into a trap of
being what other people expect
you to be.

DISSOLVE
TO:

FLASHBACK - A School (1910)

Anthony, age 18, is seated in a classroom. A TEACHER is
giving back graded tests.

TEACHER

These are your midterm exams.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She hands Anthony a test and there is a large red "F" on it. The teacher gives Anthony a long hard look and continues giving out the tests. Anthony looks at it, gets up, walks over to the garbage pail and throws it away. He continues to walk towards the door.

TEACHER (CONT'D)
Where do you think you're going,
Mr. Locerna?

ANTHONY
This is bullshit, and none of
this stuff even matters in the
real world.

STUDENT 1 whispers to STUDENT 2.

STUDENT 1
Who cares if he leaves? One
less asshole, wasting time.

Anthony overhears the comment, looks at Student 1 and exits. The teacher calls out to him.

TEACHER
Mr. Locerna, MR. LOCERNA!

CUT TO:

INT. THE SCHOOL HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Anthony walks down the hallway and out the door of the school.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

INT. A RADIO STATION STUDIO -- LATER

The show is over and Mike is gathering papers and placing them in his briefcase. His Producer enters the room.

PRODUCER
Paul told me to tell you that he
needs to see you before you leave.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE -- MOMENTS LATER

Mike opens the door to Paul's office. Paul is seated at his desk and Janet is also sitting in the office. She is dressed in a business suit and looks very professional.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL

Mike.

MIKE

Look, if this is about telling
that caller to go fuck himself...

Mike's attention is immediately diverted to Janet.

PAUL

Mike this is Janet Blaze...

Mike extends his hand and shakes her hand.

PAUL (CONT'D)

... she's from corporate.

When Mike hears this he abruptly releases her hand.

JANET

Mr. Stone, I'm the type of person
who doesn't pull punches.
Corporate is extremely concerned
about the direction that your
show has been moving since your
accident.

MIKE

Here it comes.

JANET

Excuse me?

MIKE

Look Judy... I've been doing
talk radio long before you got
your first ass puckering orgasm,
little girl...

PAUL

Mike! Ms. "Blaze" is here to...

MIKE

... tell me what to do. I've
heard it all before. If I
listened to corporate ass clowns
who thought they knew better
than me, I'd be bagging groceries
for a living.

Janet removes a folder of papers and places it on the
desk in front of Mike.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JANET

Your ratings have been steadily declining and sponsors don't want to be associated with a misogynist know it all with a chip on his shoulders whose show has become three hours of verbal abuse.

MIKE

People tune in to hear me rip callers new asses.

JANET

Not a woman who calls in to share an experience about losing her son. You couldn't win a popularity contest if it were you against an Al Qaeda terrorist.

MIKE

I have a contract.

JANET

Which doesn't protect you from telling callers to go fuck themselves.

PAUL

It's been a rough six months.

JANET

I'm an executive, not a babysitter.

(to Mike)

No one gives a damn about your personal demons. You could go home and kill yourself tonight, and within two days, you'll be forgotten...

CUT TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY -- NIGHT

Mike is driving home from work and talking to himself.

MIKE

Who the hell does she think she was talking to... ...I'm the best thing that ever happened to that station.

It is dark. He passes the memorial in the road that he saw the woman erecting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

His headlights illuminate the cross.

MIKE (CONT'D)
Enough with this fucking thing!

He passes it and does a U-turn. He gets out of his car, walks over to the cross, pulls it out of the ground, breaks it into pieces and throws the pieces into the woods. He gets back into his car and drives away.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S APARTMENT -- LATER

Mike is sitting in the office at his apartment. He opens his desk drawer and removes a gun and places it on the desk next to a bottle of booze and a vial of pills. He sits there for a moment staring at them. He hears Janet's voice.

JANET (V.O.)
... You could go home and kill yourself tonight, and within two days, you'll be forgotten...

He puts the gun away, takes a pill and chases it down with a swig from the bottle of booze.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mike is lying in bed, twisting and turning. He cries out in his sleep.

MIKE
Noooo!

ANGELA, a beautiful woman in her mid thirties, lies next to him, wakes up and shakes him.

ANGELA
Mike, wake up, you're having a nightmare.

Mike opens his eyes and sits up in bed.

MIKE
It's not a nightmare. Every night I relive killing that fucking dog.

Mike gets up, grabs his cigarettes and walks out onto the terrace that is outside of his bedroom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Angela follows him.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE TERRACE -- CONTINUOUS

Mike leans over the terrace and takes a deep breath. The moon illuminates the terrace. Mike lights up a cigarette and sits down in a chair. It is very quiet and the only thing that can be heard are the crickets. Angela sits down next to him.

ANGELA

I'm really worried about you. Since the accident, you aren't sleeping, you're chain smoking, drinking, taking anti-depressants like they were candy and the smallest thing sets you off...

MIKE

Something's gotta kill me so I figure I'd give them all a shot and see which one works the fastest.

ANGELA

I'm serious.

MIKE

What do you want from me, Angela?

He makes eye contact with her and she looks away.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I can't close my eyes without seeing the look on its face.

DISSOLVE
TO:

FLASHBACK - THE ACCIDENT (seven months earlier)

Mike has just hit the dog. He gets out of his car and runs over to it. It's breathing is labored and interspersed with crying. He picks it up and moves it to the side of the road. Mike runs over to his trunk, pulls out a blanket and covers it. His hands shake as he reaches out to stroke its head.

MIKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I'll never forget how it sounded...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(long pause)

And then it looked right into my eyes and died.

He looks down at it and it looks into his eyes. The dog takes its final breath and dies.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO SCENE

Angela and Mike are still on the terrace.

ANGELA

You can't change what happened that night. If you don't find a way to let it go, you're going to go crazy.

MIKE

No shit.

Mike gets up and paces.

MIKE (CONT'D)

It's not like I've never killed anything before. My father was a hunter. He would take me out into the woods and we'd shoot deer and ducks, but this was different. It looked directly into my eyes, like it knew I was responsible for killing it.

ANGELA

It was an accident.

MIKE

I was talking on my cell phone, by the time I realized what was happening it was under my car and there was nothing I could do.

ANGELA

I know it had to be terrible but you have to put it behind you. Maybe you're having nightmares because the only emotion you've ever expressed about it is anger.

MIKE

Why does the whole world feel the need to psychoanalyze me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGELA

Because everyone wants to help.

MIKE

But it's not helping, it's just pissing me off.

She gets up and looks into his eyes.

ANGELA

I've been with you for four years and I've never seen you cry.

He looks back at her and starts laughing.

MIKE

You're kidding me right?

ANGELA

It's part of the grieving process.

MIKE

Why the hell would I be grieving? It wasn't my dog. And like you said, it wasn't my fault.

ANGELA

How are your sessions with Dr. Sloane going?

MIKE

If they were going well I wouldn't be up in the middle of the night having ridiculous conversations with you about why I don't cry.

She is obviously annoyed with his tone of voice but doesn't say anything.

MIKE (CONT'D)

If it weren't for the fact that he prescribes some kick ass drugs he'd be totally fucking useless.

ANGELA

Maybe you should see a different therapist.

MIKE

They're all the same, an hour of "Well, Mike, what do you think it means to you?" And, "Tell me about your childhood..." I write him a check, he writes me a prescription.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He gets up and leans over the terrace.

MIKE (CONT'D)

When I was a kid my father was dying of cancer. He was in the hospital and I went to visit him with my mother. The man could barely speak and I started to cry. He looked at me and grabbed me by the collar, with the little strength he had left, looked into my eyes and said, "Men don't cry."

(pause)

Those were his last words. I haven't cried since that day.

He flicks the cigarette butt off the terrace and turns towards her.

ANGELA

Everyone cries. It's human to cry.

MIKE

Then maybe I'm not human. A lot of people who know me would probably agree with that statement.

ANGELA

I'm not criticizing you. I'm only...

MIKE

You think it's human, I think it's bullshit, Ok?

(short pause)

I'm up at this unGodly hour because of that fucking cross that I see every day on my way to work.

ANGELA

I know, I heard your show today.

MIKE

And what's that supposed to mean?

ANGELA

Nothing, I don't want to get into a fight about it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Why, lately we fight about everything else?

She doesn't respond.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Well, tonight I solved the problem.

ANGELA

What do you mean?

MIKE

On my way home from work I got out of my car and threw the damned cross into the woods.

He stands there and looks at her waiting for her to respond so he can argue with her.

ANGELA

If tossing the cross in the woods solved the problem, then why did you have another nightmare?

He just stares at her, but doesn't answer.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

It's late, I'm going back to bed.

She goes back into the apartment. He just stands there.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. A HIGHWAY -- DAY

Mike is driving to work. Up ahead he sees that the cross he hurled into the woods is back in its place on the side of the road.

MIKE

Jesus Christ, it's back!

As he gets closer to it he is horrified as the cross begins to bleed. The blood pours out into the road in front of him. He closes his eyes and tries to turn away. He hears the sound of the dog crying, it turns into the sound of a woman scream. He opens his eyes as he is just about to crash his car into another car that is in front of him. He slams on his brakes and his car veers off the road and into the median. The WOMAN whose car he was about to hit pulls over and gets out of her car and runs over to him.

WOMAN

Are you alright?

Mike just sits behind the wheel staring at the marker.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I said, are you alright?

MIKE

Yeah.

WOMAN

What happened, I saw you behind me in my rearview mirror and thought you were going to hit me.

MIKE

I'm sorry, I... I don't know what came over me.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - (1910)

The school is in the b.g. as Anthony walks away from it. He walks down a dirt road and through a wooded area. He overhears men's voices in the woods. He walks in the direction of the voices and sees a VICTIM kneeling on the ground and pleading with two other MEN who stand over him holding a gun to his head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VICTIM

Please don't kill me. I won't
ever do it again, I swear it.

MAN 1 looks at MAN 2, then at the Victim.

MAN 1

You're right, you won't.

Man 1 fires a shot into the head of the victim, whose
body goes limp and falls to the ground. The two men exit
the area as Anthony watches them leave. He walks over to
the dead man and sees the bullet hole in the middle of
the man's head.

END FLASHBACK

CUT TO:

INT. A RADIO STATION STUDIO -- NIGHT

The "On the Air" sign turns off. Mike removes his
headphones and gets up from his chair. The program
director, PAUL, enters the room.

PAUL

Mike.

MIKE

Paul.

Paul picks up a lit cigarette butt out of the ashtray and
puts it out.

PAUL

You're big on other people obeying
laws. It would be nice if you
practiced what you preached.
Didn't you get the memo on the
fact that we are now a smoke
free environment?

MIKE

Where do you think I got the
flame to light my cigarettes?

Paul throws the entire ashtray into a garbage pail.

MIKE (CONT'D)

So what's the bad news?

PAUL

The home office has decided you
need some time off the air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

In other words I'm fired.

PAUL

I know your accident was traumatic...

MIKE

Oh, you're playing shrink now? Would you like to know about my fucking childhood?

Paul looks at him.

PAUL

Mike, I'm not talking to you as a boss, I'm talking to you as a friend.

MIKE

Friend? Don't flatter yourself, you've never been a friend. You're a back stabbing corporate prick.

Paul turns to leave.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I have a contract.

PAUL

And we'll honor it.

MIKE

Fine, you want to pay me to stay home. Works for me. Now why don't you run along and write some more memos, winter is coming and I'm sure the employees around here will need paper to start their fireplaces.

Mike lights a cigarette and leaves the studio. Paul looks at the producer behind the glass and shakes his head.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARKING LOT OF A RADIO STATION -- MOMENTS LATER

Mike exits the radio station and walks over to his car. Anthony walks over to him.

ANTHONY

Mike Stone?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike turns and looks at him as he opens the door to his car.

MIKE
(to himself)
Christ, what now?

Anthony walks over to him and extends his hand.

ANTHONY
I just wanted to say I really
like your show.

Mike extends his hand.

MIKE
Thanks. Well, I hope you got
your fill because today was my
last day on air.

ANTHONY
You're kidding me?

MIKE
I never kid when it affects my
paycheck.

Mike looks at his watch.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I gotta get going, thanks for
taking your time to come by...

ANTHONY
Sure, no problem.

Mike gets into his car. Anthony keeps talking.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
The show you did about the markers
on the road really hit a nerve
with me. And it took a lot of
guts to tell that woman who lost
her son that she had no business
putting up that cross on the
road.

Mike closes the door, turns on his car and rolls down his window.

MIKE
That's not what most people think.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

Most people don't want to hear the truth. That's why I like your show, you tell it like it is. I figure, you want to avoid the truth, go rent a Disney movie.

MIKE

You said that what I said, hit a nerve, why?

ANTHONY

About ten years ago, I was on my way to work and there was an accident. I walked away from it, the other driver didn't.

Mike turns off his car and listens.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

A few months after the accident they put up a cross. I'd pass it every day on my way to work and no matter how I tried to ignore it, I couldn't. It made my guilt about what happened even worse, and I started to get more and more pissed.

MIKE

So what did you do?

ANTHONY

Would you like to go somewhere and let me buy you a beer?

Mike thinks for a moment.

MIKE

I usually don't go out with listeners...

ANTHONY

C'mon, Bobby's Tavern is a few blocks over, how about if I meet you there?

Mike doesn't respond right away.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Look, I know people in the media can't be too careful, but if I wanted to hurt you, I'd have already done it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Ok.

Mike pulls his car out of the space and drives out of the lot. Janet appears next to Anthony.

JANET

You guys speak the same language.

MIKE

Yeah, bullshit, it's universal.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BAR -- LATER

Mike and Anthony are seated at the bar and in the middle of a conversation.

ANTHONY

No matter how hard I tried, I couldn't get this guy's face out of my head. Especially his eyes, there is something about the eyes of a dead man.

Mike sits there listening.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

The whole fucking world was telling me what to do...

(short pause)

I couldn't sleep and lost twenty pounds from the stress of feeling guilty. I even had thoughts of killing myself. And every day it got worse, driving past that fucking memorial; I'd see his face. I got so pissed that one day, I got out of my car and stomped the shit out of it.

Mike listens as he sips his beer.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

And the bastards put it back up the next day. It pissed me off even more, and I think I was on the verge of completely losing my shit.

MIKE

So what stopped you from losing it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY
Confrontation.

MIKE
What kind of confrontation?

ANTHONY
The accident was clearly the other guy's fault, he had a .28 blood alcohol limit. The only thing that saved me is I was in a hummer, he wasn't.

MIKE
Who did you confront?

ANTHONY
The person who took care of the marker, his sister.

MIKE
What happened?

ANTHONY
Since I knew how fast she replaced it after I tore it out of the ground last time, I did the same thing and then I waited.

Anthony takes a sip of his beer.

MIKE
How long before she showed up?

ANTHONY
The next day. And I was waiting. I said the same thing you said on your show, it was a highway and not a cemetery. I told her that her brother was drunk and crossed the median, and that I didn't need to be reminded of what happened that night.

MIKE
What did she say?

ANTHONY
Believe it or not, she understood. She even apologized and said she didn't mean to hurt me and was sorry that her brother put me in that position by choosing to drink and drive that night.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
And your nightmares?

ANTHONY
Went away that night, and I've
never been haunted by them again.

Mike finishes his beer.

MIKE
Thanks...

Mike gets up, shakes his hand and leaves the bar. Janet
shows up and sits next to Anthony at the bar.

JANET
I'm impressed, you were very
convincing.

ANTHONY
When I was alive I looked into
enough dead men's eyes. Most
people would have been freaked
out by it, for me it was a part
of the business I was in.

JANET
What were you, an undertaker?

ANTHONY
No, a magician...

Anthony laughs, takes a long pause as she awaits an answer.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)
(pause)
For the right amount of money I
made people disappear.

DISSOLVE
TO:

FLASHBACK (the woods, 1910)

18 year old Anthony kneels over the body and stares into
the dead man's open eyes.

ANTHONY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The first time I ever saw a guy
killed was by two guys in the
woods. I remember thinking how
easy it was for the guy who pulled
the trigger to take the most
important thing from the guy he
killed, his life.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Anthony ruffles through the dead man's pockets, pulls out the man's wallet and takes his money.

ANTHONY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

It was all about power and there is no greater power over somebody than taking their life away from them. And I wanted that kind of power and control.

Anthony shoves the money into his pocket and runs away.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO SCENE

They are still seated at the bar.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, when you kill people for a living you end up spending your life looking over your shoulder, and the one time you don't, you're dead because somebody wants power over you.

Anthony takes a sip of his drink.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

At least booze hasn't changed... How about you, what were you when you were alive?

JANET

I was whatever men wanted me to be.

CUT TO:

EXT. A HIGHWAY -- DAY

Mike is seated in his car across from where the memorial was located. An attractive WOMAN with sandy brown hair, in her late twenties is carrying a cross and a balloon. She mounts the cross into the ground and ties the balloon to it. The balloon has the word, "Peace" on it. Mike gets out of his car, crosses the road and approaches her. Before Mike can speak she speaks to him. Her back is to him as she speaks.

WOMAN

Beautiful day today, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Who the hell are you. And what do you think you're doing?

She gets up and turns towards him. She looks him directly in the eyes.

WOMAN

Rebuilding my memorial.

MIKE

Why?

WOMAN

Because it's important.

MIKE

Don't you have anything better to do with your time?

WOMAN

You're the one who keeps destroying my memorial, aren't you?

MIKE

There is no room on the roads for that trash.

WOMAN

And who determines that it's trash, you? This...

She picks up a piece of trash that is lying on the ground.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

... is trash.

She places her hand on the memorial.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

This is is not.

MIKE

To me there is no difference.

WOMAN

And how do you define trash?

MIKE

Something that has no value.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

Well, this has value to me, and I'd appreciate it if you left it alone.

MIKE

It doesn't belong here!

WOMAN

I know who you are and what happened here.

MIKE

I don't know what you're talking about.

WOMAN

You don't need to feel guilty, Mr. Stone.

She gets closer to him and he backs up.

MIKE

I don't feel guilty about anything. You're the one who should feel guilty for letting your dog run around without a leash. This was all your fault!

WOMAN

No one is blaming you for what happened.

MIKE

You're damned right; it wasn't my fault.

WOMAN

Are you trying to convince me or yourself?

Walking backwards and shouting at her.

MIKE

Screw you. You want to waste your time with this stupid thing, be my guest.

He turns his back and on her and starts to walk to his car.

WOMAN

Perhaps if you leave it alone your nightmares will end.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns to say something and she just stands there looking at him. He gets into his car and drives away.

CUT TO:

INT. ANTHONY'S PARENT'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

18 year old Anthony is having dinner with his parents. They are passing food to one another and it is pretty quiet.

ANTHONY'S FATHER

I hear they found a body in those woods near your school.

ANTHONY

Yeah, I heard something about it.

His father looks at ANTHONY'S MOTHER.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Anybody know who it was?

ANTHONY'S FATHER

I was going to ask you the same thing.

ANTHONY

Why would I know?

ANTHONY'S FATHER

Because I found this in the garbage.

Anthony's father throws the blood stained wallet on the table. Anthony picks it up.

ANTHONY

Ok, look, I was coming home from school and I saw this guy lying on the ground... He was dead.

ANTHONY'S FATHER

So you picked his pocket and didn't tell anyone?

ANTHONY

It's not like anybody coulda done anything to help him.

ANTHONY'S MOTHER

Your father and I think you need to go to the police.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTHONY

Why?

ANTHONY'S FATHER

Because it's the right thing to do.

ANTHONY

You been telling me to do the "right thing," for my whole life and where has it gotten you?

ANTHONY'S FATHER

Who do you think you're talking to?

ANTHONY'S MOTHER

Anthony, please.

ANTHONY

I'm done.

Anthony gets up from the table and starts to leave. His father gets up and attempts to physically stop him.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Get out of my way.

ANTHONY'S FATHER

You'll do as you're told.

ANTHONY

Fuck you.

His father attempts to slap Anthony across the face.

ANTHONY'S MOTHER

Anthony!

Anthony blocks the slap and throws him across the room. Anthony exits.

CUT TO:

INT. A RESTAURANT -- DAY

Mike and Angela are seated at the dinner table. They are in the middle of a conversation.

MIKE

She's a crazy bitch.

ANGELA

How could she know that you were having nightmares?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Who the hell knows? Have you told anyone?

ANGELA

No. Maybe you thought you heard her say something about the nightmares?

MIKE

Oh, so now I'm incapable of knowing what people say to me? That's what I do for a living!

ANGELA

You were upset, you'd just been fired... Maybe you were lost in your thoughts...

MIKE

You think I made her up?

ANGELA

Since the accident you've been under a lot of stress.

MIKE

In other words you think I'm fucking crazy.

People at other tables look at them.

ANGELA

Please keep your voice down.

Mike ignores her request.

MIKE

Look, I've been paying a guy with degrees all over his wall two hundred and fifty bucks an hour and he has no clue what the hell is going on in my head so I'd appreciate it if you'd keep your opinions about my mental health to yourself.

There is silence between them as Mike pounds his fist on the table and yells at her.

MIKE (CONT'D)

All of a sudden the whole fucking world thinks I'm crazy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shoves his food aside. The MANAGER comes over to the table.

MANAGER
Is everything alright?

ANGELA
(to the manager)
Yes, I'm sorry, we'll keep our voices down.

Angela speaks softly. The Manager looks at Mike and leaves.

MIKE
Answer the question, do you think I'm crazy?

ANGELA
I didn't say you were cra...

MIKE
I killed a dog... They do it every day at the dog pound and I'm sure the guy who does it sleeps like a baby.

ANGELA
Mike...

MIKE
Maybe I should just get a job working for animal control.

ANGELA
Are you trying to pick an argument with me?

Mike shouts at her.

MIKE
Exactly, it's all about you. Or maybe you don't exist either and I'm talking to myself.

She gets up from the table, grabs her purse and shouts back at him.

ANGELA
I've tried to be supportive, but every day you get more and more bitter. And I'm the target of all your rage. The nightmares, temper tantrums, delusions. I can't deal with it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Who's asking you to deal with
it? You don't like it here,
there is the door.

She gets up and exits the restaurant. He becomes enraged
and tips the table over.

CUT TO:

EXT. A MEMORIAL ON THE HIGHWAY -- DAY

Mike waits in the wooded area near the memorial. The
woman shows up and he watches her as she leaves flowers
near it. She walks down the road and enters a clearing.
Mike follows her.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FRONT OF THE WOMAN'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

He watches as she enters a house that is located in the
middle of the woods. He stands there for a moment, puffing
on a cigarette, putting it out and tossing the butt into
a bush. He walks up to the front door and rings the bell
of the house. No one answers and he tries the front door
and it just opens. He walks into the house.

MIKE

Hello?

CUT TO:

INT. THE HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Mike walks deeper into the house. The house is filled
with framed artwork and is eclectically decorated.

MIKE

Is anyone here?

There is a door that is half open. He hears the sound of
a rocking chair squeaking inside of a room. He opens the
door.

CUT TO:

INT. A ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The woman, wearing a sun dress, is seated in a rocking
chair holding a glass of iced tea. Her eyes are closed
as she slowly rocks back and forth. The shades are drawn
and it is fairly dark in the room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

Welcome to my home.

(opening her eyes)

I knew you'd find your way here
sooner or later.

MIKE

How could you know that?

WOMAN

They said that you were taking a
leave of absence from your show.

MIKE

You listen to my show?

WOMAN

Every day.

She smiles and gets up from the chair and pours herself a
glass of iced tea from a pitcher that is on a serving
platter.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Would you like some iced tea?

MIKE

Ok.

She pours him a glass and hands it to him.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Thanks. I came here to find out
how you knew I have been having
nightmares?

WOMAN

No, you came here to see if I
could help you stop having
nightmares.

MIKE

Are you always so direct?

WOMAN

Life is too short to tap dance
around the truth. Besides, I've
never been much of a tap dancer.
I've always preferred the tango,
it's far more direct.

She walks to the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Come, let's enjoy this beautiful day.

She walks out of the room and he follows her. As he follows her through the house he removes a pack of cigarettes from his pocket. She looks at him.

MIKE

You mind?

WOMAN

Actually I do.

He reluctantly puts away the cigarettes as she opens a door leading to her back porch and they walk out there.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BACK PORCH OF THE HOUSE -- LATER

Mike and the woman are seated on the back porch talking. They are in the middle of a conversation.

WOMAN

... it is a very serene place. At dusk I enjoy going for long walks through the woods. They inspire me. I've been known to get lost in thought on my walks.

MIKE

Do you live here all alone?

WOMAN

Yes.

MIKE

Why?

WOMAN

Why not?

MIKE

I'm just surprised. You're too young and attractive to live like a monk.

WOMAN

I don't know, the monks I've known have always been party animals.

He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Oh my God, I better call the newspapers, I got Mike Stone to smile.

MIKE

Yes, and that's a feat not easily accomplished. Especially lately.

WOMAN

And that's a shame, you have a very nice smile.

She closes her eyes, throws her head back, places her legs on the chair and basks in the sunlight.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Is there any nicer feeling than the sun warming your face?

MIKE

I can think of one or two things.

He looks at her and he checks out her body. She opens her eyes.

WOMAN

I bet you can.

(short pause)

So, is the man we hear every day on the radio the real Mike Stone?

MIKE

If you're asking if I believe what I say to my listeners the answer is a resounding "yes."

He finishes his iced tea.

WOMAN

Would you like some more tea?

MIKE

No thanks. Aside from putting crosses on the highway, what is it that you do?

WOMAN

I do a lot of things.

MIKE

I mean for a living.

WOMAN

I'm an artist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Really? You any good?

WOMAN

To quote Shakespeare, "Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye." See for yourself.

She gets up from the chair and he follows her back into the house.

CUT TO:

INT. A ROOM IN HER HOME -- CONTINUOUS

She enters a room that is filled with paintings. Mike walks over and looks at them.

MIKE

I like this one.

He points to a specific painting that he sees. It is not seen by the audience.

WOMAN

Interesting that you chose this one.

MIKE

Why?

WOMAN

Do you believe in precognition?

MIKE

Knowing things before they happen?

WOMAN

Correct.

MIKE

I believe what I can see, hear, touch, taste and smell. Beyond that there isn't much I believe in.

WOMAN

Well, then you may not believe it but just about every painting here is a vision I received just before something happened in my life. This is the first painting I ever did after experiencing a precognition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

Did it come true?

WOMAN

Yes, I titled it, "Dedication."

MIKE

Why?

WOMAN

The woman seated at the desk is my mother. She always dabbled as a writer but was never published. You see the children in the corner?

MIKE

Yes.

WOMAN

She wrote incredible children's stories. And right after I painted this she sold her first children's story and has written nine books since then.

Mike smiles and hums the theme music for the Twilight Zone.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You can make fun if you like, but almost every painting in this room involves a feeling I received that led to me painting it and the event came true.

MIKE

Great, can you paint me some winning lottery tickets for this weekend?

WOMAN

Sorry, it doesn't work that way.

MIKE

Never does. I once dated a woman who claimed to be psychic and she had caller ID, she never saw the humor in that.

She laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

Basically before I paint something
I get a thought and it won't
leave me until it's on the
canvass. It's like your
nightmares in reverse.

His smile changes to a more serious look as he continues
looking at her paintings.

MIKE

I don't know about anything
related to some future event but
I can say that these are pretty
good, just from an artistic
standpoint. But I'm no art
expert.

WOMAN

Experts are just people with a
lot of opinions on pedestals.
The only difference is that
they've led people to believe
that their opinion is more
important than anyone else.

MIKE

Funny, I didn't think you had a
cynical bone in your body.

WOMAN

Cynicism is just honesty that
isn't popular.

There is a painting, sitting on an easel, that is covered
with a black sheet.

MIKE

Why is this one covered?

WOMAN

It's the next to last painting I
did.

MIKE

May I see it.

WOMAN

Go ahead.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She watches as Mike removes the sheet and steps back. It is a painting of the dog that he killed. Mike stares at it and looks into the eyes.

MATCHED
DISSOLVE
TO:

FLASHBACK - The Accident

Mike kneeling in front of the dog. He stares into its eyes as it stops breathing. They are the same eyes as the portrait of the dog.

BACK TO SCENE

He turns away from the portrait and looks at her.

MIKE

Why didn't you warn me what it was that was under that sheet?

WOMAN

Because it's time for you to face what happened that night.

MIKE

I've been facing it for almost seven months.

WOMAN

No, you've been reacting to it you haven't faced anything... yet.

He looks at the painting.

MIKE

What was his name?

WOMAN

Her name was Stephanie.

There is a period of silence before Mike speaks.

MIKE

I'm really sorry about what happened that day. But no matter how badly I feel it doesn't change anything. Your memorial is killing me. Every time I pass it I relive what happened that day. Don't you understand?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

I understand very well.

She places the black sheet back over the painting.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I've always believed that nightmares exist to teach us something.

MIKE

Yeah, they've taught me I don't want to spend the rest of my life sleeping on rubber sheets.

WOMAN

Mike, if I took down my memorial because of its impact on you it would be like treating a symptom of a disease. Unfortunately diseases have many symptoms and to cure them you must treat all of the symptoms or they will eventually consume you.

MIKE

This isn't a disease.

WOMAN

Isn't it? You've pushed away everyone in your life, you've been suspended from work...

MIKE

How do you know....

WOMAN

... and you're turning to every other destructive way of dealing with what happened instead of facing it. That is the reason why you're having nightmares.

MIKE

So what the hell am I supposed to do?

WOMAN

The cross is there as part of the healing process.

MIKE

I'm sick of hearing about the "healing process."

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (CONT'D)

It isn't healing me, it's making
my life hell.

WOMAN

Please, come with me.

MIKE

Where?

WOMAN

To the memorial. If you still
feel this way I will remove it.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. THE ROAD LEADING BACK TO THE MEMORIAL -- LATER

They are walking through the woods that leads to the memorial.

WOMAN

Tell me what happened that night.

MIKE

I don't want to talk about it.

Mike stops and looks into her eyes.

WOMAN

Please, I'm not here to judge you, I just want to know what happened... through your eyes.

MIKE

I was driving to the station and my agent called to talk to me about the new contract he was negotiating with the station.

DISSOLVE
TO:

FLASHBACK - THE HIGHWAY THE NIGHT OF THE ACCIDENT

Mike is driving along the highway and speaking on his cell phone.

MIKE

Hold on.

Mike is looking for a pen in his glove compartment.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Got it...

His car comes out from around a bend in the road. A woman, in the distance, is walking out of the woods and into the road. Mike pulls a pen out of the glove compartment at the exact moment that he feels something hit his car.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I was looking for a pen so I could jot something down that he was telling me as I approached this curve in the road.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Suddenly I felt and heard
 something under my car.

There is a loud thud and then the sound of his car running over something. He hangs up the phone, stops the car and looks in his rearview mirror. He sees a body in the road. It is a woman. He gets out of his car, runs over to it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Oh my God.

He runs over to his trunk, grabs a blanket and places it over the body.

MIKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 It wasn't a dog, it was a woman...

The woman's face cannot be seen. She is breathing heavily which is interspersed with crying as she struggles to breathe. A car stops and the driver gets out. Mike calls out to the driver.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 Call 9-1-1.
 (to the woman)
 It's going to be alright.

WOMAN (V.O.)
 Then what happened?

MIKE (V.O.)
 I tried to wipe the blood from
 her face.

WOMAN (V.O.)
 What did she look like?

MIKE (V.O.)
 I... I don't remember. I just
 remember the sound of her last
 breath.

He holds her hand and strokes her face as she takes her final breath. Mike is covered with her blood.

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO SCENE

DISSOLVE
 TO:

Mike and the woman have stopped walking. They both stand in front of the memorial.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike grabs onto a tree branch as his knees become weak from his revelation. She doesn't say anything.

MIKE (CONT'D)
All these months I've been lying
to myself.

He looks at her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
I don't understand any of this.
Why didn't someone tell me I
killed a woman?

WOMAN
Your mind wasn't ready to accept
what happened that night. It
was protecting you from something
you weren't ready to handle.

MIKE
It all happened so fast. There
was nothing I could do.

He stares off into space for a moment. Then he looks at her.

MIKE (CONT'D)
And even now that I know what
I've done, I still can't see her
face. Who was she?

WOMAN
A woman, daughter, friend.
Someone who lived every day with
great appreciation for each and
every experience that life
offered.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE MEMORIAL ON THE HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

They approach the memorial. As they move towards it he stares at the cross which glistens in the sunlight.

MIKE
We've spent the day together and
I never even asked you your name.

A car drives by pretty quickly and distracts Mike who, instinctively looks in the direction of the passing car.

WOMAN
My name is Stephanie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Mike hears her, but doesn't look at her.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 The memorial isn't here for me,
 Mike, it's here for you.
 (short pause)
 I created it to help you heal.

As he starts to turn around she vanishes.

WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I never blamed you for what
 happened, now it's time you
 forgave yourself.

He looks around and she is nowhere to be found. There is a framed photograph that sits atop the flowers at the base of the cross. His hand shakes as he picks it up. He drops the photograph to the ground and begins to run back towards the house.

EXT. THE HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

He arrives at the house and runs into it.

INT. THE HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

He runs through the house.

MIKE
 Stephanie? Stephanie!

He enters the room with all of her paintings. He walks over to the painting of the dog that was covered and removes the black sheet and is shocked at what he sees. It is not the dog, it is a self portrait of Stephanie.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 It was you.

The eyes are exactly the same. He closes his eyes and remembers exactly what happened that night.

DISSOLVE
 TO:

FLASHBACK - THE NIGHT OF THE ACCIDENT

Mike is driving his car. Stephanie is walking down the road and approaching the highway. Mike is on the phone as he comes around the bend in the road. Stephanie steps onto the road and is stunned as the car is about to hit her. Mike, looking in his glove compartment, feels and hears the sound of her body being knocked down and run over. He runs to her as she lies in the road.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She cannot speak. She looks at him, terrified. She begins to go into shock.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Oh my God.

He lifts her out of the road. She lets out a moan of pain as he moves her. He runs over to his trunk and gets a blanket to cover her. Another car stops behind them. Mike calls out to the other driver.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Call 9-1-1.

(to the woman)

It's going to be alright. I'm here.

He holds her hand as tears stream down her face. She begins to go into shock and her breathing is more and more labored.

MIKE (CONT'D)

Please, God, don't let her die.

As she is about to take her final death she looks into his eyes and dies.

DISSOLVE
TO:

END FLASHBACK

BACK TO SCENE

Mike bows his head appearing to fight back tears. A voice from behind him breaks his train of thought. It is Stephanie's mother. She's an older woman, approximately seventy who is dressed nicely. She is the woman he initially saw tending to the memorial.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Excuse me? Can I help you, sir?

He turns towards her.

MIKE

I... uh. No. I knew Stephanie. I was just admiring her work.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

She was very good. Who are you?

He looks into her eyes and pauses for a moment before answering.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE

My name is Mike Stone.

She looks at him. He looks into her eyes.

MIKE (CONT'D)

I'm the man who killed your daughter.

She sits down, tears filling her eyes.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Do you have children, Mr. Stone?

MIKE

No.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Stephanie was my only child. The night they called me and told me she was killed I prayed that God would bring her back and take me instead.

MIKE

I...

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

My daughter and I were the best of friends. She was everything a mother could want in a daughter and more.

She stares at the paintings in the room.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

The one thing she wasn't, was a victim. I raised her to take responsibility for her own life. As I understand it, what happened between the two of you on that terrible night was no one's fault.

MIKE

She died in my arms, looking into my eyes. And even though she never said a word to me when she died I can tell you that she was a very special lady.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Thank you.

There is silence between them as her mother stares at the portrait of her daughter. Mike turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Mr. Stone?

He turns back to her.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

My daughter's gift as an artist
was only half of her gift.

MIKE

I don't understand.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Had you ever met my daughter
prior to the accident?

MIKE

No.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Well, she must have known
something about you.

MIKE

Why?

The mother gets up and removes a painting and hands it to him.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER

Because she finished this a few
hours before she died. When I
was going through her personal
effects there was a note on it
that said, "Give this to Mike
Stone."

She hands him the painting. He looks at it and is shocked by what he sees.

STEPHANIE'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

She titled it, "Forgiveness."

The painting is of a man standing on a road and placing a flower at a roadside memorial. A tear falls from his cheek and he feels it. More tears fall and he wipes his eyes. Janet, Anthony and Stephanie appear in the room.

CUT TO:

EXT. A MEMORIAL ON THE HIGHWAY -- CONTINUOUS

They are all standing in front of the memorial.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STEPHANIE

(to Janet and Anthony)

Thank you for leading him to me.

JANET

You're welcome.

STEPHANIE

I think he's going to be all right now.

ANTHONY

Why would you care? He killed you.

STEPHANIE

And it was destroying not only his life, but it would have prevented him from leaving earth. I couldn't allow that to happen.

Gabriel appears and walks over to them. A light appears over the memorial.

STEPHANIE (CONT'D)

(to Gabriel)

I can move on now.

GABRIEL

Yes, you can.

Stephanie smiles and walks into the light of the memorial and disappears.

ANTHONY

(to Gabriel)

I still don't get it, she remained here so "he" could find peace? Why would she even care?

GABRIEL

Because she wasn't the type to ignore someone else's pain. We're all connected and her concern for him made it impossible for her to move on. Who we are in life isn't be changed by death.

Janet and Anthony just look at each other.

CUT TO:

INT. A RADIO STATION STUDIO -- NIGHT

Bumper MUSIC PLAYS. It is the first ten seconds of the chorus of the song "STONE COLD CRAZY" by Queen. The sign that says, "ON THE AIR" is lit up. Mike sits in his chair. On the other side of the glass are his producer and Paul.

MIKE

Welcome to the Stone Cold Truth,
the Mike Stone show.

There is a brief moment of dead air time as Mike stares at the microphone before speaks. The producer looks at Paul who does not take his eyes off of Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

A couple of months ago I was asked by management to take some time off and sort some things out in my personal life. Tonight I'd like to take a few moments to talk to you about where I've been and what I've been doing.

The ashtray, by the no smoking sign, is empty.

MIKE (CONT'D)

As many of you know, approximately a year ago I was involved in a fatal car accident...

He continues speaking but cannot be heard. In addition to Paul and the producer being in the production booth, Angela is also there watching him as he does the show.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

... I took some time to get to know something about the woman who I hit with my car.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WOMAN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Stephanie's mother is seated at her desk listening to Mike's show on her radio.

MIKE (O.S.)

Her name was Stephanie. She was a daughter, friend and an amazing artist.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Her mother smiles. She looks up and the portrait of Stephanie is mounted on her wall.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE ROADSIDE MEMORIAL -- DAY

Mike's monologue is heard as he pulls his car near the memorial.

MIKE (O.S.)
 ... from getting to know about
 Stephanie I learned some very
 important things that I'd like
 to share with all of you.

He removes the wreath of flowers that are dead and replaces it with a wreath of fresh flowers.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 I learned that there is more to
 life than only trusting what
 your senses tell you exists...

He cleans away some garbage that has been tossed onto the road and sits at the base of the memorial.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ... I learned that there are
 many ways to express emotions
 and none of them are right or
 wrong. What is right is the
 things that help you cope with
 your own personal pain and get
 you through hard times.

Angela gets out of the car and walks over to where Mike is standing. She stands next to him.

MIKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 And the most important thing
 that I learned is that sometimes
 the hardest person to forgive is
 yourself.

CUT TO:

INT. A RADIO STATION STUDIO -- DAY

The painting that Stephanie painted for Mike is hanging on the wall. It has replaced all of the framed newspaper clippings. Janet and Anthony stand there watching him do his show.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIKE
Thanks for listening.

A light appears and Janet and Anthony walk into it.

MIKE (CONT'D)
It's good to be back.

Mike is seated at the microphone as the "On the Air" lights are turned off.

CLOSING CREDITS and MUSIC PLAY

FADE OUT:

THE END