

Damon's Inquiry

by

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FADE IN:

INT. GLOVER KITCHEN - NIGHT

A family of four sits around the dinner table: ELIAS, the father, a tall balding man in his fifties with a huge muscular frame and a huge belly to boot; EMILY, a slender short suburbanite mother with graying hair; GREGORY, mid-twenties, built like a cage fighter; and DAMON, college-aged, much smaller than Gregory in height and frame, but still clearly possessing a strong body.

They eat quietly.

DAMON

(to Elias)

Hey, Dad, did you know the universe could be only one of an infinite number of-

ELIAS

What?

DAMON

The universe, it-

ELIAS

This just popped in your head while eating your mother's casserole?

DAMON

What this, I haven't finished. Scientists say there could be multiple universes.

GREGORY

Movies. You're getting this from movies.

DAMON

I'm not, it's a real theory.

ELIAS

They got any proof?

DAMON

Well, not yet, but-

GREGORY

Ah, ya blew it, Damon.

EMILY

Damon, it's all right, honey.

GREGORY
Dad needs proof, Damon.

DAMON
It would explain-

ELIAS
No proof, no explanation.

DAMON
But like they say, if you eliminate every impossible option, whatever is left must be the truth.

Elias smirks at Gregory, Gregory smiles and shrugs.

ELIAS
Not "they" say, guy that wrote Sherlock Holmes said it. Did he say there were alternative universes?

DAMON
I don't know.

ELIAS
Case closed.

EMILY
Time for my gentlemen to eat, now.

Damon looks briefly around and returns to slowly eating his meal.

DAMON (V.O.)
Every conversation with my dad went the same way, but it was comforting in its reliability. Simply let it be said that rock is not always rock, and sand is not always sand.

INT. PADDY'S JOINT BAR - NIGHT

"ACE" D'ONOFRIO is a 33 year-old man, occupying his barstool like a pro. It's a lower-class joint. The BARTENDER moseys on over to him.

BARTENDER
Ace...what'll ya have?

ACE
Um...Long Island.

BARTENDER
Can I check?

ACE
Yeah...

He pulls out his wallet, flashes the cash.

BARTENDER
Don't take it wrong, Ace. Grapevine
says you got fired again...

ACE
Yeah. Shit never changes.

INT. BAR BATHROOM

Ace enters to take a piss.

He realizes the stall next to the urinal is making sounds.
Two-guys-fucking sounds. One of them orgasms.

ALAN (O.S.)
(amused)
Did you enjoy listening?

Both men in the stall break out into hysterical laughter.

INT. PADDY'S JOINT BAR. NIGHT

Ace is back at his stool.

ALAN and Gregory exit the bathroom and go to their booth.

Gregory sees that Ace glances at him. Gregory smiles.

Ace grimaces.

The bartender is wary to put a finger on the situation.

ACE
Fucking hell...

BARTENDER
(sliding Ace's drink over)
Ace, I really don't think...

ACE
I didn't ask for the show.

BARTENDER
Ace...

ACE
 (just below the boiling
 point)
 I come here to get away.
 (turns to Gregory and
 Alan)
 You fuckers got a problem?

GREGORY
 Not at all my friend. Cheers.

BARTENDER
 (to Gregory and Alan)
 Look, you guys, you're disturbing
 my customers.

ALAN
 Sir, we apologize, it will never
 happen again.

GREGORY
 (under his breath)
 'til we get home.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE BAR - NIGHT

Gregory and Alan walk out the door of the bar and head
 towards their car.

ALAN
 Hey, can I run back in and piss
 real quick?

Gregory plants a kiss on Alan's lips.

GREGORY
 (cheerfully)
 Hey, sure!

As Alan approaches the door, Ace stumbles out the front,
 knocking him down so hard Alan's head bounces off the
 concrete and he falls unconscious.

ACE
 Fuck outta my way.

GREGORY
 (shocked, angry)
 Alan! Jesus, what was that?!?!

ACE
 (drunk and angry)
 Fuck off.

Ace stumbles onwards.

Gregory rises, walks towards Ace.

GREGORY
(under breath)
Gonna fuck you up, asshole.

Ace stops walking and turns around.

Gregory goes into conditioned fighter mode and attacks.

Gregory's attacks are intelligent and strong but futile, barely making Ace budge. Ace grabs Gregory by neck, lifting him six inches off the ground.

ACE
Why're you fuckers laughing at me
for anyway?

GREGORY
Thought we were laughing with you,
but at this point, fuck you anyway.

Gregory sinks his thumbs into Ace's eyes.

Ace's face registers his exploding rage. He shakes his head free of Gregory's hands and blindl but forcefully shoves Gregory into the brick wall storefront.

Gregory's head hits the wall with incredible force and breaks through the bricks.

Ace's body erupts into an energetic, explosive force of violence against Gregory's body.

Ace stops. Everything is silent. He looks. Nobody is around. Ace looks at the mutilated Gregory and the unconscious Alan.

ACE
You shoulda left me alone.

He stumbles away.

EXT. CITY RIVERBANK - NIGHT

Ace wraps his bloody clothes around a heavy rock and heaves the rock into the river. He wades in and washes the blood off his skin in the moonlight.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Ace pulls clothes out of trash bags in the trunk of his car.

EXT. CITY FOUNTAIN - SUNRISE

Ace sits at the bench watching the fountain as the sunrise refracts through it. He is stationary as one who has been there for hours would be.

A jogger passes by. Ace looks and sees people starting to get up and around for the upcoming day.

Ace gets up and leaves.

EXT. GLOVER FRONT YARD - DAY

DETECTIVE JOHN DEREK, a towering but tired-looking man with a sympathetic nature, gets out of his unmarked police vehicle and surveys the scene.

The Glovers live in a modest two-story white house in a small rural town outside of the city. It has a plentiful front lawn and a porch in front with chairs for sitting on and watching the stars from. The nearest house is over a block away.

Another detective, SCHILLER, appears at his side, smoking a cigarette.

SCHILLER

Do you want me to tell'em?

DEREK

(sighing)

Here, give me that cigarette...I'll do it.

He takes the cigarette from Schiller and puffs it.

SCHILLER

What are you going to say?

DEREK

They'll want answers. So I'll have to bullshit somewhat.

Schiller flips through the forensic report.

SCHILLER

Not a car accident?

DEREK

No. Hands.

SCHILLER

Get the fuck outta here. Nobody
can do that with their bare hands.

(handing report back)

They don't need to know these
details.

DEREK

But they'll want to.

Derek reaches inside the car for a pop can and puts out the
cigarette in it. He beckons Schiller. They move forward to
the front door of the suburban house. They ring the bell.
Elias Glover answers the door. He registers surprise.

ELIAS

Yes, officers? What's the problem?

DEREK

Mr. Glover...we need to talk to you
about your son-

ELIAS

Damon?

DEREK

No, Gregory...

ELIAS

(surprised)

Gregory?

DEREK

May we come inside?

ELIAS

Come in...this, ah...well, here,
come into the house...

INT. GLOVER BASEMENT - DAY

Damon stands in casual clothes, in the basement of the house,
looking at a punching bag hanging in front of him.

He steps forward, carefully touching it with his fists; then
in a sudden burst, he nails it with a left jab and a right
hook. His punches are sure and quick, though he is not
heavily built.

We see on a shelf a picture of him and his brother, Gregory,
posing with their fists cocked.

FLASHBACK

We see Damon and Gregory, two years ago, wearing kempo gloves and headgear, sparring.

DAMON
Come on you big queer!

GREGORY
This faggot is going to crack your skull, motherfucker!

Damon rushes forward, feinting with a punch only to lash out with a side kick.

Gregory scoops the kick, punches Damon in the head, and uses the leg to bring Damon down on his belly. Damon yelps in laughter.

Gregory whaps Damon with a playful punch to the back of the head.

DAMON
You're filth! Your technique is hollow!

GREGORY
Nobody's bashing my ass, buddy. You're poor practice though. Rednecks come bigger and smarter than you.

Gregory releases Damon, stands up.

DAMON
Smarter? Oh, you cunt...I hope Alan bites it off tonight!

GREGORY
Only if I'm lucky.

BACK TO PRESENT

Damon hugs the punching bag, alone, his eyes wet.

DAMON (V.O.)
I was able to cry. I had always known who Gregory was.

INT. GLOVER LIVING ROOM - DAY

Elias sits on his couch, looking at Detective Derek and the officer sitting across from him. Elias' expression remains stoic.

ELIAS

Alan survived?

DEREK

Yes...the attacker knocked him out. He didn't see anything. But he told us enough for us to think that this mighta been a hate-motivated attack.

ELIAS

Hate? How could it possibly be a hate-crime?

DEREK

(regretting his misstep)
He stated...that he was your son's partner for the past two years. His family has confirmed this. There are pictures in the apartment.

ELIAS

Perhaps you misunderstood...you said Alan was confused...

(wanting to change the subject)

Do you know who did this?

Derek flashes a photo of Ace.

DEREK

Witnesses report that your son and Alan McPherson were seen speaking somewhat confrontationally to this man inside the Paddy's Joint Bar last night. He left the establishment before they did, and possibly waited to surprise them when they left.

(scratches his chin)

There is a slight problem, however...

(waits for a prompt, gets none, continues)

The manner of your son's death is rather unusual. It's going to be hard to pin it on anybody, at least until the coroner has a better idea of how it was done...

ELIAS

How do you think it was done?

Derek and the officer look at each other, considering.

DEREK

Well, the autopsy is still pending, but initial investigation seems to suggest he was slammed into a wall, where he, uh, suffered some rib damage. He was incapacitated after that. Then the attacker...mutilated him with his bare hands.

ELIAS

That ain't right...Gregory competed at heavyweight, weighed two-forty-five, solid as a rock. This just doesn't fit. First you tell me he's...

(pauses, covers his mouth)
...that he was thrown like a rag doll.

DEREK

Sir, we have fingerprint identification, his driver's license, dental records...it was your son. We-

ELIAS

(covering eyes)
Jesus H. Christ...

DEREK

There are a lot of details we have to look into sir. We can provide you with more details later...but can you help us?

(holds out a picture of
Ace)
Do you recognize this man???

ELIAS

I've never seen the miserable bastard before. What are you going to do about this?

DEREK

Please be strong, sir. We'll do our best.

LATER

Elias stands in the doorway, watching the police leave. Behind him, coming from the basement stairs, Damon appears.

DAMON

Dad, what's up? What did the police want?

ELIAS

I have to call your mother.
It's...complicated. I'll tell you later.

DAMON

(resigned)
Um, alright.

He shifts weight, as Elias, lost in thought, slowly closes the door.

DAMON (CONT'D)

Talk to you later then...

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The remaining members of the Glover family are involved in the rituals before a meal.

Emily quietly tends a pot of soup on the oven. Damon is setting the table.

Elias walks in with a drink in hand. His tight expression shows he still possesses knowledge that he has not divulged.

DAMON (V.O.)

Looking back, it is amazing to think of my father, and how he carried the news of my brother's death with him for at least four hours. I try to look in his mind sometimes, to figure out why he does such things. Minds like his get straight to the point. In those four hours, my father had been through miles of thought, all in a straight line.

Elias goes to the a cabinet in order to refill his drink. He then moves to the fridge to get ice. In doing so, he drops an ice cube on the linoleum floor.

He closes the fridge, then leans up against it and looks at his wife.

EMILY

Are you going to call Hank back tonight? He won't be in town much longer.

(MORE)

EMILY (CONT'D)

He said he was taking the guns you two got last week for appraisal.

ELIAS

Appraisal?

EMILY

Yep.

ELIAS

Jesus Christ, why the hell is he doing that? I already told him what the guns were worth!

EMILY

I don't know, dear, I don't get into these things. And you can look forward to thirty more years of marriage to me without me getting into them.

ELIAS

Hank had better have them back by Saturday, there's a gun show to go to. I was going to do some trading. Can't bargain on a gun that I don't have in my hands.

EMILY

Yes, dear. Just remember I don't work to pay for your guns. You said there'd be a profit soon.

ELIAS

I haven't touched a penny that I didn't put in that account.

EMILY

(smiles)

I know dear. Just warning you.

Damon has finished the table, and is sitting in his place, pondering a fork.

ELIAS

Well?

DAMON

Tomorrow.

ELIAS

Are you going to get an A?

DAMON

Of course.

Elias shifts away from the fridge, takes a step and slips on the ice cube. His heavy frame and stiff legs result in him hitting the floor hard and awkwardly. He lets out a loud yell.

EMILY

Elias!

DAMON

Dad!

Elias' yell diminishes, but turns into a loud, clumsy moan of despair.

ELIAS

Oh, Lord!

Damon stands up and moves over to his father, offering him a hand, as does Emily.

Elias does not reach out, but rather stubbornly forces himself to sit up. He is unable to launch himself up like a young man, but gets to his knees. He looks down at the floor.

DAMON (V.O.)

It was kneeling in that position-

Elias moves his mouth, but we do not hear the words.

DAMON (V.O.)

-that my father told us of
Gregory's death.

Emily staggers and falls to Elias, clutching him. She lets out a yelp of heartbreak and anguish.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. DAY

Ace sits across a table from Derek and Schiller.

DEREK

Lemme guess.

ACE

Didn't see a thing.

DEREK

Figured as much. Officers who brought you in were polite?

ACE

Sure.

DEREK

Lucky for them, right?

ACE

Dunno what the fuck you're talking about.

Derek slides a photo over to Ace. Ace looks. His eyes very quickly widen before he regains control.

DEREK

How do you feel about that?

ACE

Too bad for him. He get hit by a car?

DEREK

No.

ACE

Nobody could do that.

SCHILLER

Is that who you are? Nobody?

ACE

Pretty much. Is that all you got?

DEREK

For now.

ACE

Can I go?

INT. PADDY'S JOINT BAR - NIGHT

Bartender drops a lemon in Ace's drink.

BARTENDER

Ever mourned anybody, Ace?

ACE

I don't know what that question means.

BARTENDER

I had a cousin, he drowned last week. Been pretty hard on the family.

ACE
(playing along)
Oh, really?

BARTENDER
Stupid kid was a lifeguard. Girl
was committing suicide. She took
him with her.

ACE
Suicide...

BARTENDER
Like I said, damn shame.

ACE
(pretending)
Yeah, damn shame.

BARTENDER
Are you fucking with me?

ACE
(looking at bartender, not
assigning any emotion to
the act)
No...no, I'm not.

BARTENDER
Alright, sorry...It's hard telling
what the fuck you mean sometimes.

ACE
Why did your cousin let her kill
him?

BARTENDER
(offput again)
Well, like I said...he was trying
to rescue her.

ACE
Oh, yeah.

BARTENDER
What?

ACE
I don't understand...why somebody
does that.

BARTENDER
Honestly, I don't blame her. She
was drowning, panicking...they were
out too far.

ACE
I wasn't talking about her.

The bartender eyes Ace for any impropriety, sees none.

BARTENDER
So, uh...have the police contacted
you?

ACE
The police? Why?

BARTENDER
About that thing that went on here.

ACE
You think I did it?

BARTENDER
Actually, from what I heard, it
sounded like a polar bear did it.

At the end of the bar sits MAGNUS. He is an utterly immoral
and intense jester.

MAGNUS
Ah, but a polar bear DID do it!!!

The bartender and Ace look over at Magnus.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
One without a roar. A polar bear
hunched in the shadows!

He eyes the bartender.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
Watch him-
(points at Ace)
-or he'll maul you too!

BARTENDER
Yeah, okay pal.

ACE
(to Magnus)
What the fuck are you talking
about?

MAGNUS
Are you a HUMBLE man? You should
grow some balls, humble one, or
I'll make you my servant.

ACE
Fuck off.

MAGNUS
Name's Magnus.

ACE
Fuck off, Magnus. Who the hell are
you?

MAGNUS
Someone like you.

ACE
What the fuck are you talking
about?

MAGNUS
(sees bartender listening)
Actually I think we were in the
Army together.

The bartender walks away, now figuring he has a hold on the
situation.

ACE
(mutters)
I was never in the Army.

MAGNUS
How did you end up here???

ACE
Where?

MAGNUS
Why are you fucking with me?

ACE
Buddy, back the fuck off alright.
Not in the mood.

He lights a cigarette and throws the match at Magnus. It
lands in Magnus' open palm, which he closes.

MAGNUS
Fess up, Ace, what's your gig?

Ace turns to Magnus with a hot and pissed look.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
 Now watch it! Answering questions
 is the safer choice!

ACE
 Wrong guy, you don't know me.

MAGNUS
 (shouting)
 I think YOU don't know you!
 (over-the-top)
 How do you do? Do you KNOW how you
 do? Don't you know how you DID it?

He stands up from his bar stool. Ace doesn't budge.

MAGNUS (CONT'D)
 Some miscast dream must lie in your
 head for you to look so confused!
 Wake up! Wake up you stupid beast!

Magnus yells and lunges at Ace with a beer bottle. He quickly
 crashes it over Ace's head and gouges Ace in the neck with
 it. Ace crumples to the ground.

Bartender starts to react, but Magnus turns to him quickly
 and punches a section of the bar off. The bartender stands
 still.

ACE
 Fucker!

He coughs, chokes.

MAGNUS
 Oh, quit playing already. I've only
 ruined your shirt.

LATER

Ace wiping himself off with a towel, snorting back phlegm.
 Magnus sits relaxed against the bar, bemused.

The bartender is on the floor behind the bar, his head caved
 in.

ACE
 What the hell was that all about?

MAGNUS
 Gee, what do you think?