

Dead Letters

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

A damp and gloomy Northwestern town.

We glide through the street past worn out people and buildings. It is an old and forgotten town, clearly showing its age with peeling paint and faded colors.

Townpeople muddle by with little interaction: a mother scolds her toddler, an elderly man reads a paper, and a child kicks a soccer ball against the side of a building.

Leaves scatter and shuffle across the cracked asphalt with a light moist wind. Black gum marks and cigarettes, years old, leave a stain on the pavement of the decrepit town.

Nearing the end of the quiet and sad street is a tiny white one room building with fraying shutters. A hand painted sign on the front reads: "POST OFFICE".

A tattered American flag waves slightly in the wind.

We drift through the door, through the empty room, and beneath the floorboards to reveal:

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - DAY

The room is small and dark. The walls are covered top to bottom with papers, almost completely covering the cement walls.

Rusty file cabinets crowd a thick wooden desk in the corner of the room. A swinging light bulb and desk lamp reveal a man hunched over the desk.

DAVID, late twenties with greasy long brown hair, mumbles to himself. His face is covered with streaks of white scars.

His ink stained hands move carefully across a letter in front of him.

DAVID

My dear Mrs. Walker. You shouldn't worry so.

David's fingers tenderly trace the envelope beside him on the desk. He mimics the handwriting in a near-perfect manner.

When he finishes copying the letter he reseals it in an envelope. He sits back in his chair and sighs with satisfaction.

DAVID

Mrs. Walker, you will receive your letter tomorrow.

David fidgets in his seat and tenderly rubs his right knee. He grunts softly in pain and takes a prescription bottle from his pocket. He pops one large pill into his mouth without water: a practiced skill.

David picks up another envelope from a small stack in the corner of his desk. He takes an ornate letter opener from his pocket and carefully opens the sealed envelope. He removes the paper inside and lays it out on the desk.

DAVID

Mr. Evans. I'm so happy you remembered your daughter's birthday. Sarah is nearly eight. The time flies so fast.

A sharp RING of a bell interrupts David's reading. He gets up and limps across the room, his right leg clearly disabled.

DAVID

Coming!

David pulls a string hanging from the ceiling and a staircase descends. He slowly climbs up.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David climbs up from a hole in the ground in a cluttered back-room. He grabs a wooden CANE leaning against a nearby wall and walks to the front desk.

MRS. FIELDMAN, a round prude woman, stands in front of the counter, clearly annoyed. She looks down her nose at him. He avoids her gaze.

DAVID

How are you today, Mrs. Fieldman?

MRS. FIELDMAN

I need a label for this.

She roughly pushes a package across the counter. David rings it up on the register.

DAVID
(monotonous)
Do you want any additional
insurance on this package?

MRS. FIELDMAN
No.

DAVID
Any tracking?

MRS. FIELDMAN
No.

DAVID
Is there anything in here that may
be hazardous, restricted, or
perishable?

MRS. FIELDMAN
Please get on with this, Mr. Arden.

DAVID
Is there anything in here that may
be hazardous, restricted, or
perishable?

MRS. FIELDMAN
No.

DAVID
Thank you. That with be 2.49.

Mrs. Fieldman glares at him and pays. She leaves as David places the package in a basket.

David looks at his watch and walks to the front door. He exits and a bell attached to the door DINGS.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

David locks the door behind him. The town appears worn down and dated with the overcast sky. It's the kind of small town where everyone gets too tired and old to leave, but everyone hates to stay. It's a monotonous routine of light rainfall and peeling paint.

A few scattered people litter the streets; no one pays much attention to David. Nevertheless, his eyes stay focused on the ground.

A man in a worn business suit passes in front of him.

DAVID (V.O.)
Mr. Falder. Heart disease.

David watches Mrs. Fieldman struggle to fit into the front seat of her badly parked SUV.

DAVID (V.O.)
Mrs. Fieldman. Dog bit neighbor.
The matter was settled out of court. Privately.

A small dog YIPS loudly from the SUV.

David hobbles across the street with his cane. He looks back at the post office with a protective glance.

He stops in front of a convenient store. A teenager runs past him through the front door, nearly knocking him over.

DAVID (V.O.)
Ethan Beckman. Grandmother calls him Ethie. Three C+'s and two D's.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE - DAY

David walks in and grabs a 'SOUP IN A CUP' from a nearby aisle. He heats it up in a microwave.

He watches the surrounding customers as he waits. No one makes eye contact with David. He quickly pays at the register and leaves with barely a glance from the cashier.

David walks to the main door and holds it open for a middle aged woman. MRS. FISCHER, with bright red lipstick and a softly wrinkled face. He smiles at her but she pays him no mind.

DAVID
You're welcome.

DAVID (V.O.)
Ms. -- Mrs. Fischer. Having an affair this month. Different than last month.

He exits.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Outside, David sits at a nearby bench beside a large blue USPS collection mailbox. He starts eating his soup as someone places their mail within the box.

David smiles to himself.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David pulls up to a small house at the end of a dark cul-de-sac in an old blue Ford.

He leaves the car with a small basket of envelopes in hand and walks up the front steps. Chimes on the front porch dangle as he walks by. He enters the house.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David walks in the front door and locks the chain before turning on the light.

The place is small yet clean. Dated second-hand furniture makes the space look dark and lonely.

He walks into the kitchen and finds a casserole dish with a note on the empty counter.

DAVID

Grandma.

David heats up a piece of the casserole in the microwave.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

David, startled, wakes up in a sweat in bed. His bare chest is lightly scarred like his face.

He immediately grabs his disabled right leg and swings it off the bed. He struggles to stand up.

A faint stream of moonlight shines through the blinds, making his deep white scars shine brightly. He walks to the window and closes the blinds, leaving him in darkness.

David limps back to bed and rubs his right leg. He takes a pill from a bottle on his nightstand.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David enters the post office: the bell rings.

He shuffles behind the counter with a stack of envelopes under his arm.

A bell on the door rings again; David looks up. A woman walks in wearing a post office uniform. CAROLINE, petite and comely with one too many hair ties on her wrist, smiles kindly at him.

DAVID
(stammering)
Caroline, early today?

CAROLINE
Up with the sun as always!

He pretends to be busy working behind the counter.

CAROLINE
What have you got for me today,
David?

He hands her a categorized tin of letters, barely making eye contact.

DAVID
Sorted and ready for delivery.

CAROLINE
And packages?

David looks towards a large bin of packages beside him.

DAVID
I'll bring 'em out for you.

CAROLINE
I got it.

DAVID
No, it's ok--

David goes to pick up the bin, but she reaches it first.

CAROLINE
A slow day then?

She starts to head towards the front door with a container under each arm.

CAROLINE
Lunch later?

DAVID
Um.

CAROLINE
I'll bring your cup soup?

DAVID
Sure. Um yea.

CAROLINE
I swear we should just get pizza
some days. I don't get how you can
eat that stuff every day.

Caroline gives him a friendly smile and leaves. Exasperated, he sits down.

A new stack of letters she left on the counter catch his attention. He grabs them and walks to the basement office.

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - DAY

David descends the steps into the pitch black space. He grabs for the string to the light.

The room lights up, catching the papers on the wall in an eerie glow as the bulb slowly swings from side to side.

David sits down at the desk and starts looking through the letters. He appears bored and doesn't open a single one.

One distinct LETTER catches his attention. It is in a bright red envelope and without a return address.

DAVID
(mumbling)
31 Wishere. Why don't I know where
that is?

David lightly traces the careful lettering on the front. He stares at the envelope.

He turns on the desk lamp and examines the seal on it. David opens a drawer in his desk to reveal a polished set of letter openers. He picks a plain un-engraved one with an extra sharp edge.

DAVID
Number 7.

He examines the blade in the light before cutting the envelope open at the seal. He cuts slowly and with great care.

David pulls the letter out with ease. It's thin and nearly translucent in the light.

It reads: "TO MY HUMBLE FRIEND"

DAVID
'To my humble friend'-- Who are you?

He reads further.

DAVID
'I write to you now to ease your fears. We will not be caught even though they may have eyes on us, always.'
(shrugs)
Another affair.

David drops the letter on the desk in disappointment. He takes an orange from his pocket and starts to peel it. He reads further.

DAVID
'...And we shall see each other soon.'
(beat)
Such a romantic.

David concentrates on his food more than the contents of the letter.

DAVID
'But never at the lake. It will not be safe.'
(beat)
'That is where I will ki--
(beat)
kill...him

David drops the orange; it bounces to the ground. His eyes widen in confusion. He wipes his hands messily on his pants, leaving a stain of pulp and juice.

He picks up the letter once more.

DAVID
'That is where I will kill him.'

The words jump off the page, fresh and neatly written.

DAVID
'As we discussed. Dawn on the 29th.
Dock 9.'

David pulls a handful of letters off the wall in front of him, revealing a calendar. His finger traces line by line the month of October. It stops on the 28th.

He goes back to reading the letter.

DAVID
'By the time you receive this it
should be done.'

David puts the letter down and stares in disbelief.

DAVID
(whispers)
'Sincerely, your humblest friend.'

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David laughs with Caroline. They have chairs pulled up to the counter and are eating. David appears very distracted.

DAVID
I can't believe you said that
though.

CAROLINE
I had to!

He goes back to eating his soup. He peaks at the red envelope in a stack of papers next to him.

CAROLINE
I guess you had to be there...

They eat in silence for a moment.

DAVID
We got some more mail without a
return address.

CAROLINE
Really? I wouldn't have picked it
up.

DAVID

Oh. No. I'm -- I'm not saying you did.

CAROLINE

Probably picked it up from the box in town.

DAVID

It was a red envelope.

She looks up from her food.

CAROLINE

Fine I'll play.

She gives David a playful smile and thinks to herself.

CAROLINE

Nope. Didn't pick it up... It's not really the season though.

DAVID

Huh?

CAROLINE

You must have noticed by now. After 7 years? Red envelopes only come around Christmas or Valentines.

DAVID

You're right.

CAROLINE

Oh and the glitter. That damn glitter leaks out then too!

(beat)

Better than tax season though.

David is distracted and thinks to himself. Caroline snaps her fingers in front of his face.

DAVID

Huh? Yes. Tax season.

CAROLINE

Anyway. It might of gotten stuck in the box. I'm sure it will get where it has to go.

DAVID

Have you ever wondered what is in some of the letters, Caroline?

CAROLINE

Sure, of course. But I doubt the people in this town are that interesting. I wouldn't want the jail time also.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

David lies restlessly in bed staring up at the ceiling. He checks the clock beside him. It flashes 4:30.

He grunts loudly in frustration and sits up in bed with a huff. He grabs the red letter from his nightstand and reads it again.

DAVID

Don't do it. Go back to bed. Go to sleep.

He sits for a moment in turmoil before jumping up and getting dressed.

INT. CAR - DAWN

David parks on the side of the road lined with tall old trees. The sky glows a light blue in the early morning.

He pulls a map out of his glove compartment and the red letter from his worn green jacket pocket.

He lays them out on the dashboard and his finger lightly taps the edge of a lake.

DAVID

(mumbles)

Dock 9.

David breathes deeply and exits the car.

EXT. ROAD - DAWN

David steps out of the car, pulling his cane behind him. He hobbles away from the car and down a nearby path into the woods.

After he walks a short while the woods opens up to a lake, serene and blanketed with mist.

EXT. LAKE - DAWN

David shuffles past a dock and eyes it suspiciously. He sits behind a stack of canoes and watches, placing his cane carefully on the ground beside him.

An orange morning haze starts to fill the sky.

A bird SHRIEKS and flies off next to David. He screams and tries to calm himself.

DAVID

Stupid. This is so stupid!

He starts to get up to leave when an OLD MAN catches his attention. Mid-sixties with gray short cropped hair, he walks down the dock sporting a beer-belly, flannel, and fishing pole.

The man sits on a chair at the end of the dock and starts fishing.

EXT. LAKE - DAWN (LATER)

David suddenly wakes up, wide-eyed, to a muffled sound.

He wipes a string of drool from his mouth and looks around.

The flannel-clad man is no longer fishing. David rubs his eyes and looks closer.

Another MAN, mid-thirties, tall, and with sandy hair, kneels on the dock. He is holding the older man under the water. David backs up in surprise and knocks over a set of canoes.

They CRASH.

The man in black immediately stands up and looks around. The old man in the water doesn't move.

David runs into the woods. He hobbles and grunts, his right leg painfully slowing him down.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

David runs out onto the road, he spots his car a little ways off.

INT. CAR - DAY

David gets into the car and locks the doors. He nervously searches his pockets for his keys. After an uncomfortably long amount of time he finds them and drives off.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

David stops his car sharply at a payphone on the edge of town.

With trembling fingers he pops a pill in his mouth before exiting the car.

David walks over to the payphone while looking around nervously at the empty surrounding street. He pounds three buttons.

A soft voice comes from the receiver.

PHONE

Randolph Police Station. Do you have an emergency?

DAVID

I have to report a crime -- a murder... I think... I might have seen someone killed.

CUT TO:

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David wakes up in the post office, his head resting on a stack of papers.

He looks around to see what woke him: the room is empty.

The bell on the door RINGS and Caroline walks in.

CAROLINE

Sleeping much?

DAVID

Very little in fact.

CAROLINE

A lot of out-of-towners today. I put them behind the counter.

She gestures to a box beside him.

DAVID

Thanks.

She leaves.

David looks through the letters, uninterested.

He pulls the red envelope from his jacket pocket and holds it, unblinking.

The bell on the door catches his attention again. A cop walks in. FINLEY, late-twenties with a straight jaw and brown hair. He wears his fitted uniform nicely.

FINLEY

Hey, David.

David straightens up at the sight of him. Finley leans on the counter in a friendly manner.

DAVID

Good morning, Officer Finley.

FINLEY

Is it still morning? Jesus.

David looks at his watch.

DAVID

Oh good afternoon! Must have lost track of time.

FINLEY

I get it.

Finley puts a package on the counter.

DAVID

How's the wife?

FINLEY

That's why I'm here. Her parent's anniversary... This was supposed to go out three days ago.

DAVID

Fast delivery then?

FINLEY

Yeah!

David puts the transaction in the register. Outside the store a small group of people start crowding around a cop car. Finley follows his gaze.

FINLEY
Crazy, isn't it?

DAVID
What?

FINLEY
You didn't hear?

David shakes his head.

FINLEY
A body showed up in the lake.

DAVID
Really? Do you, um, know who it
was?

FINLEY
We don't know. Can't identify him
yet.

DAVID
Him?

FINLEY
We think he was fishing and had a
heart attack. No foul play.

DAVID
What are you doing here then?

FINLEY
Sending this package or it will be
me floating downstream!

David looks at him skeptically.

FINLEY
State police came in. Apparently
three small-town officers aren't an
appropriate force to determine if
it was an accident or not.
(beat)
The station is a bit crowded right
now.

David puts the package in a pile in the back.

FINLEY
How much?

DAVID
It's on the house.

FINLEY
For an old friend?

Finley winks and walks towards the door. David follows behind him.

FINLEY
Time to deal with the masses.

Finley claps him on the back. David watches him leave from the doorway. After a couple yards, Finley turns questioningly to David.

FINLEY
When did you start walking without your cane?

David turns abruptly and hurries back into the post office. Behind the counter he throws boxes and furniture out of the way to look for the missing cane.

In a terrified fit of realization, he collapses on the floor.

DAVID
The Lake. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit.

David watches Finley from the window trying to calm the small crowd. His muffled voice drifts softly into the post office.

FINLEY
I assure you. Once we have more information we will make an official statement. There is no evidence of foul play. But until we can verify that, standard safety procedures are in effect.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David walks up his front steps and puts a key in the lock. The door opens, unlocked.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David timidly walks inside the dark house. He grabs an umbrella beside the door and holds it to his chest.

He switches lights on as he walks, tip-toeing as much as possible.

GRANDMOTHER

David?

David swings at the voice in the dark. A light turns on in the living room. An elderly woman sits in a chair, with soft eyes and a warm smile: GRANDMOTHER. She rubs her eyes as if she has just woken up.

GRANDMOTHER

Do you mean to stab me with that thing?

David drops the umbrella and sighs in relief.

DAVID

I thought you were someone else.

GRANDMOTHER

So you meant to stab someone else with it then?

David walks over and gives her a kiss on the cheek.

DAVID

It's nice to see you, grandma.

GRANDMOTHER

Oh don't give me that 'it's nice to see you' crap. If you're having a girl over, I should really teach you how to stab her properly.

David laughs and sits beside her.

DAVID

Did you unlock the door?

GRANDMOTHER

Yes. It's nearly Fort Knox in here with three locks. And after two days without a phone call I thought you might be dead.

DAVID
I'm not dead yet.

GRANDMOTHER
Then call next time!

DAVID
Sorry, grandma.

GRANDMOTHER
Did you get the casserole?

DAVID
Yes, it was delicious.

GRANDMOTHER
Better than that cup soup stuff. Do you know how much salt that has in it? I swear you'd starve without me.

David kisses her on the cheek again and smiles.

DAVID
I would starve. I know it.

GRANDMOTHER
As long as you agree. Lasagna next time?

DAVID
Yes please.

His grandmother looks at him skeptically.

GRANDMOTHER
What's wrong? You're acting so strange, it's not like you to call.

David fumbles nervously for the prescription bottle in his pocket and pops a pill.

GRANDMOTHER
And you know I don't like you taking those all the time.
(beat)
God, David. You look like you've seen a ghost.

David looks at her and dry swallows the pill. He is clearly agitated.

DAVID
I think I'm going crazy, really
beyond crazy.

His grandmother chuckles and puts a tender hand to his
shoulder.

GRANDMOTHER
Of course you are. But everyone
does at a certain age. Tell me
what's wrong.

David considers the request for a quiet moment.

DAVID
I...
(shakes his head)
I'm thinking of quitting my job.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David sits behind the counter. He looks through a stack of
new envelopes.

Caroline walks in, ringing the bell on the door.

CAROLINE
I was wrong about the season
thing...

DAVID
Huh?

CAROLINE
The red envelope. Another came.

DAVID
What? Where?

CAROLINE
Bottom of that pile you're looking
at.

David digs through the pile, at the bottom is a red
envelope. His own name is written on the front: 'DAVID
ARDEN'.

CAROLINE
Looks like you have a secret
admirer.

DAVID

What? Why?

CAROLINE

I know it's not the season. But,
you know -- the color.

David walks off towards the back of the post office with the letter in hand.

CAROLINE

Well. Bye then.

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - DAY

David descends the ladder, clicks on the light, and sits down at the desk. His fingers carefully trace his own name.

DAVID

This is impossible.

He tears it open, taking no care to cut the seal. He frantically begins reading.

DAVID

'My dear David.'

(beat)

'My dear humblest David. I know you opened something that did not belong to you. You came to the lake and you saw something you shouldn't have. Dock 9. Did you see me clearly? Did you see how I wrapped the fishing line around his neck before I put him in the water? Did you like that? I'm sure the fish did.'

(beat)

'You were at dock nine. You were swifter than I imagine, I suppose. But that does not dull the fact of your encroachment. I shall see you again, and soon, my dearest David. I hope we can be friends.'

David stands up and paces around the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

David sits in a chair with a single lamp beside him illuminating the room. He fingers the red envelope and re-reads the letter to himself.

He is clearly agitated. His fingers tremble towards a steaming cup of tea next to him.

A NOISE startles David and he drops the mug.

DAVID

Fuck!

He kneels on the ground, becoming alert and nervous of his surroundings. He crawls to the edge of the room and carefully peaks beyond the blinds out the window.

A nondescript black car is parked across the street from his house. The headlights go out when David sees it.

He jumps back from the window to hide behind the wall. He breathes heavily and grabs a fire iron dangling in front of his fireplace.

David holds it tightly to his chest, trying to control his hysteria.

DAVID

I should never have gone to the
lake. I shouldn't have opened mail.
I shouldn't of gone to work that
day.

David slowly walks to the front door, holding his weapon with dear life.

The doorbell rings; a soft SHUFFLING noise comes from outside.

DAVID

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME???

CHILDREN (O.S.)

Trick-or-Treat!

David gasps and drops the fire iron. It clangs loudly against the tile floor.

He opens the door; brightly dressed trick-or-treaters crowd his porch. A worried parent stares at him.

DAVID

I'm sorry, I didn't -- I didn't know.

The parent nervously looks at the fire iron on the floor. David meets her gaze.

DAVID

I'm sure I have something in the house I can give them. Just let me run to the kitchen.

The parent tries to shuffle the herd of kids away from the porch.

PARENT

No. It's okay.

DAVID

Please, let me do something.

David takes out his wallet and rummages through it. He tries to smile at the kids.

DAVID

So what are all of you for Halloween?

None of them answer. David drops single dollar bills into their bags with trembling hands.

PARENT

Say 'thank you', kids.

CHILDREN

Thank you!

David watches them walk away. He notices that the black car across the street is gone. He quickly closes and locks the door.

He breathes heavily, gasping for air, and crumples to the ground in front of the door. Sweat soaks his forehead as he desperately grabs for the fire iron.

The phone rings; David is startled. He hesitates, but crawls over and picks the phone up.

DAVID

(trying to control his voice)
Hello?

And echoing breathing comes through the receiver. David's face drops and he immediately hangs up.

DAVID
(mumbling hysterically)
I didn't see anything.

He pulls his pill bottle from his pocket and takes two with trembling fingers. David's eyes roll erratically as he blinks past the sweat on his face.

INT. CAR - DAY

David drives up to an abandoned cabin at the edge of a lake surrounded by tall trees. It is heavily overgrown.

He pulls a red envelope out of his pocket and reads the address on the front.

DAVID
31 Wishere.

He gets out of the car.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

David walks up to the front porch. The stairs creak with each step and its dark wood appears rotten after years of abandonment.

He walks slowly and with great care as he peaks in through a dusty window. He brushes the glass with his sleeve; it looks empty inside with only bits of broken furniture.

After walking around the house, he pushes through a jammed door. Sunlight catches disturbed dust floating around the room.

INT. CABIN - DAY

David carefully steps across the withered floorboards and debris.

He pulls a letter opener from his back pocket and holds it out in front of him before he turns a corner.

No one is there.

CUT TO:

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David talks to Caroline. She sits across the counter from him.

CAROLINE

All I'm saying is that it's weird.
The crazies don't normally come out
here till the summer season.

DAVID

You think it was murder?

CAROLINE

Of course not! But I'm sure a lot
of people would kill for that kind
of excitement for once in this
town.

David shifts uncomfortably in his chair and looks through a stack of mail.

CAROLINE

I still have my bets on it being a
heart attack though, maybe a
stroke. Face-first into the lake
(she puffs her cheeks up)
probably fell right in.

DAVID

Is that what other people think
too?

CAROLINE

I don't think there's anything else
based on what we've heard.
(she nudges him playfully)
Speaking of, have you heard
anything from Officer Finley? You
guys are close, right?

DAVID

No, we don't talk much anymore. If
anyone dangerous was in town though
I supposed they'd have to tell
everyone.

CAROLINE

Or maybe they are waiting for
another murder...
(she smiles)
This whole town is bait and we
don't even know it!

DAVID

I thought you said you think it was
a heart attack?

She shrugs and leans on the counter, disappointed.

CAROLINE

Sure, it was, definitely. But
that's not exciting at all!

Caroline looks at her watch and stands up.

CAROLINE

10:30 am. Gotta empty the box. Be
right back.

She leaves the building and David watches her cross the
street towards the blue USPS collection mailbox.

The PHONE on the counter in front of David rings. He picks
it up.

DAVID

Hello. United States Post Office,
Randolph, Washington. Our closing
time today is 4:00 pm. We will
re-open tomorrow at 9:00 am.
Packages that do not fit in your
mailbox can be brought down to the
office or placed in your nearest--

VOICE (O.S.)

David?

David straightens up in his seat.

DAVID

Yes.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Arden?

DAVID

What can I help you with?

A soft chuckling is heard from the receiver.

VOICE (O.S.)

I'm so happy you picked up.

DAVID

Who is this? Were you outside my
house last night?

Silence.

DAVID
What do you want from me?

VOICE (O.S.)
I found your cane near the lake.
You don't seem to be missing it
though.

DAVID
The police are tracking this call.

Chuckling again.

VOICE (O.S.)
No they aren't.

David nervously looks around the room and outside.

DAVID
Why are you watching me?

VOICE (O.S.)
Why are you reading everyone's
mail?

David notices Caroline crossing the street back to the
post-office.

VOICE (O.S.)
It seems you might need to go.

DAVID
Leave me alone or I will go to the
police!

VOICE (O.S.)
This is fun. Would you like to
know my name, David?

DAVID
No.

VOICE (O.S.)
Are you so worried that what you
saw was real. Or would it be worse
if it didn't really happen? Is this
all some huge psychological break?

DAVID
Of course not.

David's fingers fumble through his pocket for a pill.

VOICE (O.S.)
Maybe it's all those pills. Maybe
you really wanted that man dead.
Maybe I did you a huge fucking
favor.

The door opens and Caroline walks in smiling.

VOICE (O.S.)
Do you really think you would want
to do that?

CAROLINE
David?

The call cuts off: a loud dial tone hums.

CAROLINE
Are you okay?

David shakes his head and Caroline drops a small stack of
letters on the counter.

DAVID
Huh, what?

CAROLINE
It's a shame, right?

She lightly taps a letter on top of the stack.

CAROLINE
Mrs. Gervais' daughter never writes
back. Every month like clockwork
she sends a letter to her without
reply.

David jumps up from his seat and puts his coat on,
distracted.

DAVID
You read her mail?

Caroline laughs.

CAROLINE
Geez. Of course not, David. I've
just talked to her before. I'm not
about to go to jail for this job.

David stares at her anxiously and walks towards the door.

DAVID
Can you lock up for me?

CAROLINE
What? But-

DAVID
Please?

David turns and leaves.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David gets out of his car outside of the police station. The parking lot is full and overflowing onto the Main Street.

He hobbles to the door, getting strange looks from various unknown officers.

INT. POLICE OFFICE - DAY

David walks into the station, looking around at the cops bustling about the room. A secretary glares at him from her desk in the front.

David limps further into the station towards Finley.

SECRETARY
You can't go back there. Can I help you?

DAVID
(distracted)
I have to talk to someone.
(beat)
The man at the lake was murdered.

He walks past the desk and officers turn to watch him.

SECRETARY
Sir!

Finley notices David and walks towards him. He pulls him to the side of the room.

FINLEY
You really shouldn't be here right now, buddy.

DAVID

The man at the lake was murdered. I
need to talk to you now.

Finley gives him a confused and incredulous look. A
detective approaches them. DETECTIVE LEWIS, mid-forties and
balding with a loose suit.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

(to Finley)

Is this him?

FINLEY

He has information for us.

David looks confused.

DAVID

I can help.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You're David Arden?

DAVID

Yes.

David pulls a red envelope from his pocket.

DAVID

I received a letter from the person
who killed that man at the lake.
Can't you get prints off it or
something?

Detective Lewis walks away to talk into his radio. He calls
back to Finley over his shoulder.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Put him in room C!

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David sits handcuffed to a chair alone in an interrogation
room. He looks annoyed.

PULL BACK. Two men in suits watch him through a one-way
mirror.

OFFICER SMITH

He wouldn't have come here if he'd
done it.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

This might all just be some game to him. We don't know.

The Detective holds the red envelope out in front of him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

We couldn't get a search warrant before. But he brought in all the specifics for the murder. And with his own prints too! Now tell me how he knows all this if he's not involved?

The two men walk out of the room.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The Detective and the officer enter.

DAVID

Why am I here? I brought you the killer.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Yes. You did.

David stares at him questioningly.

DAVID

You can't mean--

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Why did you come here? To confess?

DAVID

I came here to see Officer Finley. To show him the evidence.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You mean the letter? We know you wrote that, David. We just need you to cooperate now.

David fidgets in his chair and tugs against the handcuffs.

DAVID

You've gotten this all wrong.

Finley walks into the interrogation room. He seems flustered.

FINLEY
This isn't right!

DETECTIVE LEWIS
This isn't under your jurisdiction.

FINLEY
It's my fucking town.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
He brought in some pretty damning
evidence.

FINLEY
I was about to bring him in when he
showed up! He's not who you are
looking for.

DAVID
What?

Finley motions to Detective Lewis and Officer Smith to leave
the room with him. David sees them through the door
fighting.

Finley comes back in, the red envelope in hand.

DAVID
Why were you coming to bring me in?

FINLEY
I was coming to talk to you.

DAVID
Why? I haven't done anything.

FINLEY
Where did you get this information,
David? I need to know so I can help
you.

DAVID
It was sent to me.

FINLEY
It has specifics we didn't release
to the public.

DAVID
I got it in the fucking mail!

Finley, frustrated, walks away from the table and paces the
room.

DAVID
Can I at least be uncuffed?

He dangles the chains around his wrist.

FINLEY
It was Horrison, David.

DAVID
What?

FINLEY
It was James Horrison that was
killed.

David becomes flustered.

DAVID
That's--

FINLEY
He's dead and that's why I was
coming to pick you up.

DAVID
I didn't-- I wouldn't.

FINLEY
I wouldn't blame you if you did. I
would understand that.

DAVID
I DIDN'T KILL HIM!

The Detective and Officer Smith come back into the room.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
You've had your time, Officer.
(turns to David)
Where were you yesterday between 4
and 7 AM?

DAVID
At home.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
No witnesses then?

DAVID
No.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Are you sure you weren't at the lake? Taking a morning walk...

(he looks towards David's leg)

A run, maybe, to keep the cholesterol down?

Officer Smith and Detective Lewis share a chuckle.

DAVID

There was another letter.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What other letter?

DAVID

You don't believe me anyway, do you?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You're saying that a murderer is sending you letters about his crime. About a person that you want dead?

DAVID

I didn't want that man dead.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

No court would ever believe that.

DAVID

I opened a letter I wasn't supposed to.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

That's illegal.

DAVID

So is murder...

DETECTIVE LEWIS

And that's why we're here.

DAVID

...it wasn't properly addressed; it couldn't go through the system.

David turns to Finley, desperate.

DAVID

I wouldn't have recognized him.

FINLEY
It's only been eight years.

DAVID
The second letter is in my car in
the parking lot. The glove
compartment.

FINLEY
What's in the letter, David?

DAVID
He started threatening me.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
James Horrison you mean?

DAVID
NO!

FINLEY
Then who?

DAVID
I don't know...

Finley leaves the room.

David turns to the Detective.

DAVID
I came here to tell you where the
letter was supposed to go. The
address is on the letter you took.
31 Wishere!

DETECTIVE LEWIS
And what am I supposed to do with
this?

DAVID
LOOK INTO IT! There has to be
something.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
I'm not about to let you send me on
a wild goose chase!

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY (LATER)

Finley comes back in the room holding the second red envelope.

FINLEY
It says what he told us.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
That doesn't prove anything. But it does say you saw the murder. It says you were there.

DAVID
I... I wasn't. He must've thought--

FINLEY
I'm on your side here, David. You have to tell me what happened.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
This is a big load of crap.

Finley goes to David's side and uncuffs him.

FINLEY
You're free to go.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
(screaming)
What are you doing, Officer?

DAVID
I thought--

FINLEY
You better leave now.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Oh he's not going anywhere!

FINLEY
We have nothing to keep him here and you know that.

Finley pushes David toward the door.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
You're not his fucking lawyer! And you have no right to compromise my investigation!

FINLEY
He brought us a lead.

DAVID
But--

Finley closes the door in his face.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David leaves the police station angrily. He pushes his greasy mop of hair away from his eyes.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David gets out of his car and walks towards the post office.

Passerbys give him suspicious glances. He unlocks the door and walks inside.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY (LATER)

David sits behind the counter doing paperwork.

Caroline walks in.

David is clearly bothered and distant.

CAROLINE
Is everything okay?

DAVID
What do you mean?

CAROLINE
People are talking...

DAVID
That's their business, not mine.

She places a 'cup soup' on the counter and walks out, dejected.

David locks the door after her and puts up the 'CLOSED' sign. He pops a pill.

He walks to the back of the post office.

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - DAY

David descends the steps into the basement and sits at the desk.

He looks up to see a red envelope pinned to the wall in front of him. He tears it down and its contents spill onto the desk. A dozen POLAROIDs of blood and body parts.

A woman's face stares back at him. A screaming face. He turns the picture over. A small note is written on the back.

DAVID

'You shouldn't have gone to the police. That ruins our little game.'

(beat)

'They will find her soon.'

David starts desperately looking through the photographs again and finds one smeared with blood. She is clearly dead in the picture.

David falls to the ground and throws up.

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - DAY (LATER)

David is curled up in the corner of the basement. He is surrounded by papers.

DAVID

There has to be something here that can help me.

He flips over a nearby rusty file cabinet, strewing its contents on the floor. His hands tremble through a pile of letters.

DAVID

Nothing! There's nothing here. What was the point of it all then?

He crawls back to the corner again and rocks himself slowly while cradling his legs to his chest.

His cell phone rings and he nervously throws it across the room.

It vibrates in small circles in the corner. When it stops, David sighs in relief.

The phone rings again and this time David cautiously approaches it. The caller ID on the screen says 'FINLEY'.

David answers the phone.

DAVID
He-- hello?

FINLEY (O.S.)
David! Where are you?

David looks around the small basement; the stacks of letters and incriminating paraphernalia surround him.

DAVID
Nowhere... it doesn't matter.

David hears faint creaking footsteps above him in the post office; he becomes frantic.

DAVID
(whispers)
Listen, please just listen to me carefully.

David peaks through a small slit in the door to the room upstairs. A pair of feet stands dangerously close to him and walk around the place.

He stumbles back from the staircase and into the corner. He cups the receiver with his hand to further lower his volume.

DAVID
I think I'm in danger. Someone is coming to get me... I know they are.

FINLEY (O.S.)
I don't know what you are talking about. But, where are you? I can help.

DAVID
I don't think you can.

FINLEY (O.S.)
NO! YOU LISTEN TO ME...

Finley's voice echoes loudly through the floorboards.

FINLEY (O.S.)
If you are in some trouble--

DAVID
Where are you?

FINLEY (O.S.)

What?

DAVID

Where are you right now?

FINLEY (O.S.)

I'm in the post office. I came to talk to you. If you're in some trouble I can help.

David smiles to himself, relaxing again.

DAVID

I'm okay. For right now I'm okay.

David closes the phone and tiptoes back to the staircase.

FINLEY (O.S.)

FUCK!

From upstairs it sounds like Finley loudly hits something.

David watches the pair of feet angrily shuffle around the office before Finley leaves.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

David limps in the quiet modern building; it is raining heavily outside. He wipes his feet and shakes the water from his hair. He gets a judgmental look from the librarian.

DAVID

Good afternoon.

He walks further into the library, trying to avoid the people staring at him. He hides in the bathroom.

INT. LIBRARY BATHROOM - DAY

David walks into the bathroom and looks at himself in the mirror. He appears disheveled and soaked. He tries to push his messy dripping hair out of his face to little avail.

He dries his coat in the hand dryer until a SOUND catches his attention. He turns off the machine.

DAVID

Hello?

No one answers. David leans on the floor to look for feet in a stall: there are none. He slowly starts opening stall after empty stall.

DAVID
Is anybody here?

One stall remains at the end. David kicks it open with his bad leg and reels back in pain.

A BALD MAN in his forties reading a newspapers jumps off the toilet.

BALD MAN
WHAT THE SHIT ARE YOU DOING, PRICK?

DAVID
I'm sorry, I'm so sorry.

BALD MAN
GET OUT OF HERE! WHAT'S YOUR
PROBLEM?

DAVID
I didn't mean-- I thought you were
someone else...

David limps out of the room quickly.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

David waits in line at the front counter; he tries to fix his messy hair again. He is clearly distressed and rubs his leg to relieve the pain.

David notices a young girl watching him.

GIRL
(whispers)
Is that him?

Her mother pulls her away. He is hurt and confused by the action.

David steps forward in line; the librarian appears displeased when she sees him.

DAVID
Nice to see you again.

LIBRARIAN
What can I help you with, Sir?

DAVID
Where could I find newspapers from
the past ten years?

The librarian frowns and leads him away.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY (LATER)

The Librarian wheels a trolley full of boxes of newspapers to the table and walks away. David opens them and dust flies everywhere.

He sits down and searches through them, placing one by one on the table.

The Bald Man walks by where David is sitting and growls at him.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY [MONTAGE]

David flips between newspapers.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

David stops on a newspaper headline about a murder.

CLOSE UP: 'MR. JACOB BYRON MURDERED'

An image of the cabin fills the screen. Police officers string caution tape across the porch.

David scans the article further. The words: 'STRANGLED' AND 'CABIN' fill the screen.

David stares at a smiling photograph of the man with his family.

DAVID
(mumbles)
'Survived by his wife and ten year
old son.'

A woman sitting at a nearby table looks at him, annoyed.

DAVID
Sorry.

David flips through the next couple newspapers in the box.

The man at the table opposite him coughs loudly and leaves.

David packs up the boxes, places the newspaper in his pocket, and hurriedly walks out of the library.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

David pulls up to a picturesque white house at the end of a small street. A black car is parked in the driveway.

EXT. FINLEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David knocks loudly on the door of the house. It is still raining heavily.

Finley answers in casual clothing, surprised to see David there.

DAVID

Hi.

MRS. FINLEY (O.S.)

Who's there, honey?

Officer Finley seems in shock.

DAVID

Finley?

FINLEY

It's David, um, Arden.

MRS. FINLEY, late twenties with clicking heels and a prude disposition, comes to the door.

MRS. FINLEY

It's so nice to see you, David.

Two young children hide shyly behind her apron.

MRS. FINLEY

I'm sorry, we were just about to sit down for dinner.

Mrs. Finley walks back to the kitchen with the children. Finley tries to smile warmly at David and blocks the entrance with his body.

DAVID

You wanted to help me?

Finley seems hesitant.

FINLEY

I really don't know how much I can do right now with everything going on.

DAVID

If you want to help, I need you to find this woman for me.

David takes out a large folded photograph from his pocket. It is the picture that was in the newspaper from the library. David points to the woman smiling and standing with her family.

DAVID

Her name's Diana Byron. Her husband was murdered 6 years ago.

Finley shakes his head and shrugs.

DAVID

The letter I got was sent to her home. Where the murder happened.

Finley looks closer at the picture.

FINLEY

This didn't happen in town.

DAVID

One town over. She went off the grid four years ago.

FINLEY

I don't know how I can help you if you aren't telling me everything.

DAVID

I just need an address, anything to find her.

MRS. FINLEY (O.S.)

Honey?

FINLEY

I can't make any promises.

DAVID

But you'll try?

FINLEY

I have to go.

DAVID
Please.

 FINLEY
Fine.

 DAVID
Thank you.

Finley nods and closes the door in David's face. David folds the picture back up, places it in his pocket, and hurriedly limps towards his car in the rain.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

David pops a pill into his mouth and tenderly rubs his right knee before walking out the post office.

Everyone on the street eyes him suspiciously.

David enters the convenient store.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE - DAY

Several customers avoid David's path. He picks up a sandwich and walks to the counter.

 DAVID
Something different for once,
right?

The clerk eyes him suspiciously and doesn't answer.

 DAVID
I hope it's good.

Customers sneak out the door while David pays.

 CLERK
Look what you've done!

David angrily meets the man's glare and leaves with his food.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

David walks past a group of whispering women who become silent when they see him.

His face hardens and fists clench, crushing his sandwich. He angrily crosses the street.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David walks up the ladder from the basement. An unusual shadow blocks his ascent.

He looks up and sees Caroline. She is smiling and tapping her foot playfully.

CAROLINE

So what is it you are always doing down there?

DAVID

Just work.

She offers him her hand and helps him the rest of the way up.

CAROLINE

You don't have to say that. I get it, David.

DAVID

Get what?

He closes the latch behind him on the floor and struggles to stand.

CAROLINE

You shouldn't be hiding away in here forever.

DAVID

It's not much different than normal.

Caroline takes his hand.

CAROLINE

I don't believe a single word people are saying.

DAVID

I appreciate that.

CAROLINE

So you should do something about it! I know if everyone was saying I murdered someone I wouldn't be hiding in a basement.

David chuckles nervously and pulls his sweaty hand away from hers.

DAVID
It's not so easy.

CAROLINE
Of course it is! And you owe me for
defending you in front of everyone
in this stinking town.
(she nudges him playfully)
You know what time of year it is.

DAVID
Awe, I don't think I should...I
haven't been to the town fair in
years.

CAROLINE
It sounds like you're overdue then.

DAVID
I wish it were that easy.

CAROLINE
You're hiding away and being all
suspicious. If I'm defending your
behavior I at least need you to act
less murder-ey.
(beat)
It's not the new rumors keeping you
away.

Her eyes narrow then soften.

CAROLINE
I wish I could have known you
before the accident. I wonder what
you were like.

David looks to the ground, hiding the scars on his face.

DAVID
I think you would of liked the old
me. Plenty of people did.

CAROLINE
I agree. But I like you now anyways
so I don't see the point.
(beat)
So you'll come with me on Friday
then?

DAVID
I'll try.

CAROLINE

You will.

She gives him another warm smile and stacks a pile of envelopes on the counter.

CAROLINE

No secret admirer letters for you today.

She winks.

CAROLINE

But another from Mrs. Gervais. If you were actually the murderer I'd send you straight to California to her daughter's house.

(beat)

It's not fair for an elderly woman to have to beg for a simple letter.

David tenderly picks up the envelope on the top of the stack and traces the lettering with his fingers.

DAVID

It *is* a shame.

Caroline nods.

CAROLINE

I'll see you tomorrow okay?

David smiles, and softly lets the letter fall from his hands.

DAVID

I'll see you tomorrow, Caroline.

She leaves.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David pulls up to his house and gets out of the car. He climbs the front steps, painfully moving his stiff leg as he goes.

He puts his key in the door and walks in.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David closes the door behind him and stretches. He pops a pill into his mouth.

He takes the small pile of 'murder' polaroids from his jacket pocket and places them on a nearby table. He spreads them out and looks at them in disgust.

There is a loud and sudden KNOCK on the door. David ducks and remains silent.

Another KNOCK.

A shadow of a face looks through the small glass window in the door.

FINLEY (O.S.)

DAVID?

David sighs in relief.

FINLEY (O.S.)

I have to talk with you.

David walks to the door and opens it a crack to look outside. Finley and Detective Lewis are on the porch.

FINLEY

Can we talk with you, David?

DAVID

Umm... sure.

A silent moment passes.

FINLEY

Inside, please?

David looks at the table with the polaroids.

DAVID

Yes. Yes of course.

David closes the door and fusses with the chain lock.

DAVID

Just one second.

David runs to clear the photographs off the table. He hurriedly pushes them into a drawer.

FINLEY

David?

DAVID

Coming!

David rushes back to the door and opens it.

DAVID

Come in Officers.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Detective.

DAVID

Right. Detective.

David calmly walks into the kitchen.

DAVID

Can I get you something? I was just about to make some coffee for myself.

Finley and Lewis look around the living room.

FINLEY

Coffee sounds good.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

David starts fixing up a pot of coffee. He turns to find the Detective standing right behind him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Didn't scare you did I?

DAVID

No. Of course not.

David picks up two mugs of coffee and leaves the room with the Detective at his heels.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

David walks in with the coffee. Finley is looking at picture in a frame.

DAVID

Here you go.

David hands him a mug.

FINLEY

Thanks.

He looks back to the picture.

FINLEY

I didn't think you still had that picture.

The Detective riffles through a nearby drawer. David notices.

DAVID

Hey.

The Detective stops and sits down on the couch.

DAVID

You need a warrant for that!

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Should we need a warrant for something?

FINLEY

Detective!

Detective Lewis stands up and gets in David's face.

DAVID

I don't know should I?

Finley steps between them.

DAVID

Shouldn't you be out there doing your job and catching the real killer?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I think I'm looking right at him.

DAVID

Wrong direction.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

So which direction should I be looking in?

DAVID

31 Wishere. That cabin the letter was sent to.

The Detective laughs and walks away.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
The abandoned house? You've already
wasted our time there.

DAVID
You didn't look close enough.

FINLEY
What are you talking about, David?

DAVID
Jacob Byron.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
He's the killer?

DAVID
No-

FINLEY
No. He's dead.

DAVID
Killed 6 years ago in that cabin.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Are you giving us a confession?

DAVID
I'm trying to do your job for you.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
So who killed him?

DAVID
I don't know.

FINLEY
If you know anything you aren't
telling us--

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Don't delude him Officer Finley.
That's not why we came here and you
know it.

The two cops trade a look.

DAVID
What?

FINLEY

We found a woman in the park.

DAVID

(stammers)

Is she okay?

The Detective gets in his face.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

If you consider being in 18
separate pieces healthy.

DAVID

Why are you telling me this?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Because we think you did it. We
know you did it.

FINLEY

Detective!

DETECTIVE LEWIS

And we're gonna prove it before you
do it again.

FINLEY

Stop!

DETECTIVE LEWIS

We almost have enough to bring you
in for good and then it's all over.
You see?

DAVID

I told you who did it!

The Detective laughs and walks towards the front door.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You're gonna slip up. Everyone
knows what you are now and it's
only a matter of time.

David goes to take the prescription bottle out of his
pocket. Detective Lewis swipes it out of his hands and
smirks.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What's this for?

DAVID

Pain.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Oh right. I heard about that accident. Scrambled up your brain a bit did it? You're leg too as far as I'm concerned.

(beat)

You're not authorized to carry this heavy prescription around anymore.

David looks to Finley, confused.

FINLEY

I meant to--

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You didn't tell him yet?

(smiles)

Your doctor called the precinct. Apparently he thinks your refill should've been canceled a long time ago. It was a courtesy call to us I suppose. Giving us a heads up about your psychological 'situation'.

(beat)

Emotionally unstable individuals should not be dependent on such medication.

DAVID

My doctor wouldn't--

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Hey buddy, I didn't ask for him to do it.

The Detective shakes the nearly empty bottle in David's face and tosses it to him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Enjoy while you can.

The Detective walks out the front door; Finley and David follow.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

Detective Lewis gets in the cop car and waits.

David stops Finley on the porch.

DAVID
What's happening?

FINLEY
You have to be careful what you're getting yourself into here. I don't know what's happening and I don't want to imagine you're any part of this.

DAVID
I'm not. I promise.

Finley starts to walk to the car again.

DAVID
Finley?

FINLEY
WHAT?

He spins wildly.

DAVID
Have you learned anything about the woman I asked you about? Diana Byron.

Finley shakes his head in disgust.

FINLEY
Of course not. I can't risk that right now. I can't be on your side in this, David.

Finley gets in the car and drives away.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David locks his car and walks up to the post office.

A 'WANTED' sign has been taped to the front door with his picture.

He stares at it angrily and takes the prescription bottle from his pocket. Three pills remains. He chews one while staring at his photograph on the door.

David tears it down angrily.

MRS. GERVAIS
That's him! You did it!

A metal cane smacks David in the side of the head, sending him falling to the ground.

MRS. GERVAIS, 80s and wearing a floral nightgown covered in a winter coat, stands a few feet away.

She hits him again with her cane. David tries to cover his head from the blows.

A small crowd forms.

MRS. GERVAIS
You've done something too her.
Haven't you, pervert?

A police officer runs out of the crowd and sees the scene.

OFFICER DIAZ
What's going on here?

MRS. GERVAIS
This man kidnapped my daughter. I
got a letter from her. But it's not
from her.
(points at David)
It's from him. He's been reading my
mail, and now he's kidnapped her.

She tries to hit him again, but the officer grabs her cane.

OFFICER SMITH
It's okay. I'll deal with this.

He takes out his cuffs.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

David is roughly pushed into a chair. He is handcuffed.

Detective Lewis walks in the room and smiles.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
I didn't think I'd see you so soon
again, David.

OFFICER DIAZ
Mrs. Gervais is making a formal
complaint.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Is there any truth to what she was
saying?

OFFICER DIAZ
We got in touch with her daughter
in California, she's fine.

Officer Finley walks in the room carrying an evidence bag
with a typed letter inside.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
(motioning to the letter)
And this?

OFFICER DIAZ
She didn't write that. She doesn't
know who did. But we can't place it
on Arden.

FINLEY
You think he's been reading mail
and sending letters to senile old
women?

DETECTIVE LEWIS
There is no evidence that she is
senile.

DAVID
You have no right to keep me here.

FINLEY
Her daughter says otherwise. Her
doctor too. She was diagnosed with
Alzheimer's 7 years ago.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
That doesn't make this letter go
away. Someone read her mail and
sent this.

FINLEY
As far as I'm concerned Mr. Arden
could place charges against her for
the physical attack.

Finley glares at the Detective and Officer Diaz.

FINLEY

Let him go.

Officer Diaz unlocks David's cuffs. They lead him outside of the interrogation room.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David walks slowly through the room; his leg drags noisily against the floor. Ever officer watches him go. Mrs. Gervais eyes him suspiciously from her chair in the corner.

Detective Lewis walks up to Officer Smith.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I want him followed.

Detective Lewis comes up to Finley and puts a hand on his shoulder.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Be careful around him, Officer.
Know what side you're on in this.
He may be more dangerous than we
know.

FINLEY

(angrily)

You're so certain?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I know his type. I've put plenty of
them in jail and I plan to do the
same so normal innocent people
don't get hurt. They don't deserve
it.

FINLEY

I know him, not his 'type'.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

He's a recluse, strange, alone.

FINLEY

He wasn't always.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Dammit I read the file, Officer. I
know everything that happened. If a
car crash twisted his brain that's
fine with me... And don't think I'm
unsympathetic to the fact that

(MORE)

DETECTIVE LEWIS (cont'd)
 James Horrison's drinking was to blame for Arden's leg and the death of his parents. But Horrison is the one dead right now and that's what we have to focus on.

(beat)

I pity the boy, but that doesn't mean he can go around killin' people.

FINLEY

But--

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Don't give me that crap. I know what you're about to spin. James Horrison already paid for that accident with 2 years in jail. He was sober when he died.

A timid officer approaches the Detective with a radio in hand.

OFFICER BRADLEY

Sir?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What is it?

OFFICER BRADLEY

We lost him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Lost him where?

OFFICER BRADLEY

He didn't go home like we thought. He turned on the highway and left town. We lost him.

The Detective glares at Finley.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Do innocent men run?

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAWN

David watches a run-down apartment building. It looks like another storm is coming in, with the dark early morning overcast sky.

He checks his pocket and pulls out an empty prescription bottle. He throws it into a nearby trashcan as he walks up to the building.

INT. APARTMENT WALKWAY - DAWN

David knocks on the door of an apartment.

A middle aged woman timidly opens the door.

DIANA BYRON

Yes?

DAVID

Mrs. Byron?

DIANA BYRON

Yes.

DAVID

Diana Byron?

DIANA BYRON

Yes. What is this about?

DAVID

Could I speak with you a minute?

DIANA BYRON

About what?

DAVID

Your husband.

She opens the door further and leads David in.

INT. APARTMENT - DAWN

The place is small, cramped, and dusty with sheets hanging over the windows.

She latches 3 locks on the door.

DIANA BYRON

How did you find me?

DAVID

I called every moving company in the county.

DIANA BYRON
The case is closed.

DAVID
I know you might think that.

DIANA BYRON
Would you like some coffee?

DAVID
Sure.

She walks out of the room.

David takes a newspaper clipping out of his pocket. The front has a picture of the Byron family in front of their cabin.

Diana Byron walks back in the room and sits on the couch opposite David. She fidgets.

DAVID
I recently was at your old house.
The cabin.

DIANA BYRON
That's a long drive from here.

DAVID
All night... I live a town over
from your old place.

DIANA BYRON
Sheridan?

DAVID
Randolph.

DIANA BYRON
Right.

DAVID
Was it hard to move out? Even after
you knew the killer was caught...

Her expression twists to anger and fear.

DIANA BYRON
My husband died there. Could you
stay?

DAVID

No, no of course not. I didn't mean
to offend you.

A teenage boy comes from a back room and looks up from his
phone suspiciously at David.

TEENAGER

Mom--

DIANA BYRON

GO BACK TO YOUR ROOM!

He leaves.

DAVID

I'm sorry, did I come at a bad
time?

DIANA BYRON

No, of course not. I should've
expected this sooner or later.

DAVID

Why?

She shakes her head.

DAVID

I'm sorry Mrs. Byron, but I think
that the person who the police
caught didn't murder your husband.

DIANA BYRON

Why would you tell me this?

DAVID

I know this must be hard, but I got
a letter that was sent to your old
house. A letter from the killer. Do
you know why he would have done
that?

Diana Byron looks at him, confused.

She takes a large steak knife tucked under her sleeve and
places it on the table between them.

CUT TO:

INT. APARTMENT - DAY (LATER)

David and Diana Byron sit together on the couch. They each nurse mugs of coffee as she looks through David's newspaper clippings.

DIANA BYRON

I didn't mean to frighten you. I shouldn't of assumed you were him.

(beat)

You look the type...

DAVID

I still don't understand why you never went to the police.

DIANA BYRON

They don't listen to you. Why would they look into a case that is closed?

DAVID

They should listen...

(beat)

But I still don't understand why after all this time you still think he would come and hurt you two.

She stifles a desperate laugh.

DIANA BYRON

The murder happened 6 years ago. But I don't think that was enough for him. Once we moved out here the letters started, then the phone calls. It's like some fucking game to him. He can't get enough.

DAVID

How long did he do this?

DIANA BYRON

He stopped 3 months ago. Must've found something else. Someone else.

DAVID

He's killed two people in the last week.

DIANA BYRON

Dear God.

DAVID
And he'll kill more, as long as he
won't get caught.

DIANA BYRON
What if he gets bored again?

DAVID
I don't think phone calls and
letters will satisfy him much
anymore.

DIANA BYRON
And you?

DAVID
I have to go back.

She hands him a stack of letters.

DIANA BYRON
Maybe you can show these to
someone. Five years of confessions.

He tucks it into his jacket pocket and stands up.

DAVID
It could help. Thank you.

David right legs trembles and he rubs his knee in pain.

DIANA BYRON
(she motions to his leg)
Did he do that to you?

DAVID
No. He hasn't hurt me, yet.

DIANA BYRON
Then you can still get out!

David walks to the front door.

DAVID
Do you want to know his name?

DIANA BYRON
Never.

He opens the door and steps out onto a terrace.

INT. APARTMENT WALKWAY - DAY

A light rain sprinkles his face.

DAVID

If I stay here he'll get bored or
angry.

DIANA BYRON

Be careful around him.

She smiles softly to him and closes the door.

David looks out into the littered parking lot of the
apartment building. He grimaces in pain and rubs his knee.

David limps down the walkway and down a set of stairs.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

David's blue Ford drives down a sparse highway.

A cop car turns its lights on without sirens and follows
after he passes.

INT. CAR - DAY

David pulls his car into a strip mall. He rubs his knee and
checks his pockets and glove compartment desperately. He is
sweating intensely and clearly agitated.

DAVID

Fuck!

David pounds the steering wheel. His leg stomps the ground,
causing him even more pain.

He tries to control his breathing before he gets out.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

David walks towards a gun store.

He looks around the near-empty parking lot and inside.

INT. GUN STORE - DAY

David walks in, his hands in his pockets.

A car parks directly outside the door. Detective Lewis gets out of the car and waves at David, he leans against his car and watches.

STORE OWNER

What can I do for you today?

DAVID

Just some basic protection.
Something to keep in a lock box
under the bed.

The owner looks at him skeptically.

STORE OWNER

What are you looking for?

DAVID

Something easy to use. Preferably
small.

The front door of the store opens behind him and a cop walks in. David watches him browse the store.

DAVID

And something I can walk away with
today.

STORE OWNER

I generally can't do that. We have
to run background checks on people
who buy from us.

DAVID

I understand.

David takes a crumpled sheet of paper from his pocket and tries to flatten it on the glass counter top.

DAVID

Eight years ago I almost got a gun.
I got the certification for
pre-clearance.

He takes his ID out of his pocket and hands it to the owner.

STORE OWNER

This looks all in order!

The store owner opens the glass case and pulls a handgun out.

STORE OWNER
Not much for hunting. But small and
straight-shooting for beginners...
Unless you want something else?

DAVID
No this seems perfect.

STORE OWNER
And you'll be needing bullets too?

DAVID
The smallest pack you have.

STORE OWNER
Of course.

The store owner wraps up the purchase. David pays and leaves with a thankful nod.

EXT. STRIP MALL - DAY

David sees the Detective leaning against a car in the parking lot.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Had to come a few towns over to buy
something did ya?

DAVID
It was on the way.

David walks past the Detective, but is grabbed his collar and slammed against the side of the building.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Is that how you're gonna kill the
next one?
(beat)
Experimenting with different ways
each time? Playing the field a bit
till you find something right?

David smirks and pushes the Detective away from him.

DAVID
I saw you following me. It actually
makes me feel safer, 'ya know. With
the real murderer out there.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Is this the side all those other
people see?

(beat)

The killer?

David just stares him down.

The Detective glares at him and backs up a few feet.

David angrily shuffles back to his car, slams the door, and
drives away.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David comes in the door. The phone in the kitchen is
RINGING.

He hurriedly locks the door behind him and goes to the
kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

David picks up the phone.

DAVID

Hello?

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

David! I've been trying to reach
you for over an hour.

DAVID

I just got home.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

A friend of yours was trying to get
a hold of you.

DAVID

Who? Finley?

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

No, someone else, he dropped off
your cane. He said you left it
somewhere.

David straightens up and listens intently.

DAVID

Who was it?

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

I don't know, David. A doctor, a young handsome man.

David starts pacing the room.

DAVID

Get out of the house, Grandma. Call the cops and get out of the house.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)

David?

DAVID

I'll be right over.

David hangs up the phone and pulls the gun out of his pocket. He checks that it is loaded.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Finley is working at his desk, pouring over paperwork and files. Cops bustle about the room..

Detective Lewis comes in the front door, notices him, and walks over.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

He's back on the grid.

FINLEY

You found David?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Yes, Mr. Arden's back in town.

Detective Lewis pulls up a chair to Finley's desk and unbuttons his jacket.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You have to be straight with me here, Officer. I know he's your friend.

Finley starts to argue.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Or use to be... it doesn't matter. I need to know everything I can

(MORE)

DETECTIVE LEWIS (cont'd)
about that man. And you need to
tell me something that I can use.

FINLEY
(shakes his head)
You read the file. There's not much
more to it, is there? I know no one
agrees with me, but I just can't
imagine him doing any of this. It's
not him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
He just bought a gun.
(beat)
Tell me something, anything.

FINLEY
He wasn't like how he is now...
before the accident.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
The accident James Horrison caused?

FINLEY
Yes.

Finley rummages through a file in front of him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
I've already read his file.

FINLEY
But you haven't seen the pictures.

Finley pulls out a sealed stack of photographs and hands
them to the Detective. He stares at a picture of a totaled
car.

FINLEY
The car was totaled. His parents
died instantly. We couldn't even
confirm who was driving based on
the state of the bodies.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
And David Arden?

FINLEY
He somehow managed to pull himself
from the burning car. He had to
drag himself through the broken
window or he wouldn've died.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

The scars...

FINLEY

Yeah. He almost lost the leg too.
He was in a coma for two whole
months after. And Horrison gets 2
years for drinking and driving, it
doesn't seem right.

Finley takes the photographs back from the Detective.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

You're right, it's not fair. But if
David Arden is in any way involved
with what's happening that's not
right either.

Officer Bradley runs across the room towards Finley with a
phone in hand.

OFFICER BRADLEY

Officer, you need to hear this.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

David parks his car on the grass in front of his
grandmother's house.

She waves worriedly from the porch as he walks up to her,
gun in hand.

DAVID

Is he still here?

GRANDMOTHER

Who? The doctor? No, of course not.

(beat)

What's going on, David? You're
worrying me.

David hurries past her, across the porch, and into the
house.

INT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

David holds the gun out in front of him as he walks from
room to room.

He checks in the closets and the basement.

EXT. GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE - DAY

David walks back out onto the porch. He puts the gun in his back pocket.

DAVID
He's not here.

GRANDMOTHER (O.S.)
When did you get a gun?

His face stiffens.

DAVID
I had to.

His grandmother holds his cane out to him.

GRANDMOTHER
Your doctor dropped this off.

DAVID
Who?

David looks at it, unmoving.

GRANDMOTHER
You didn't tell me you were seeing
a doctor.
(beat)
For eight whole years, David? How
could you keep something like that
from me?

DAVID
He's not my doctor. I don't know
him at all.

David grabs the cane and breaks it over his good leg.

DAVID
I don't know why he is doing any of
this.

A police car pulls up in the driveway.

GRANDMOTHER
You told me to call the police.

Finley steps out of the car and walks towards the house.
David meets him halfway.

FINLEY

She told me to come. That there was some emergency.

DAVID

He came here, Finley.

FINLEY

Who?

DAVID

Whoever the guy is that's framing me for these murders!

FINLEY

Okay, David. Just calm down, tell me what happened.

DAVID

This is all your fault! You and that idiotic Detective!

David grabs his knee in pain and wipes sweat from his forehead.

DAVID

You need to tell me who called you at the precinct. The one who canceled my prescription. What was the man's name? Who was the 'doctor'?

FINLEY

I can't tell you that. Do you need to go to the hospital, you don't look well.

DAVID

But wouldn't it make sense that I would know my own fucking doctor's name? Shouldn't I know?

David grabs Finley aggressively by the collar.

DAVID

You're just like the rest of them! You don't believe me!

FINLEY

I didn't say that!

DAVID

You think I hurt those people,
don't you? You and everyone else in
this damn town!

FINLEY

Can you calm down?

DAVID

That 'doctor' you talked to,
complete bullshit. Whoever is
pulling your strings, threatening
me, and stopping me from getting my
meds isn't anyone I know.

(wipes spit from his mouth)

But I'd bet my life on the fact
that he's trying to kill me.

FINLEY

How do you know it's not your
doctor doing what's right here.

DAVID

My real doctor will barely talk to
me. Won't tell me anything. I don't
know if he's being threatened or
what, but I'm the one that comes
out of this looking bat-shit crazy.

David throws Finley back and angrily limps to his car.

Finley sees the gun hanging from David's back pocket.

FINLEY

David!

David grabs a tied up stack of letters from inside the car
and tosses it to Finley.

FINLEY

What's this?

DAVID

Five years of evidence. Courtesy of
Diana Byron.

David gets in the car, slams the door, and drives off.

Finley watches him drive away, awestruck. He walks up the
front porch and to David's grandmother.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

David hides behind a bush, watching a window of the police station. The faint white scars on his face shine in the moonlight.

He crawls to a small window of the basement and looks into a dark empty room.

David puts a crowbar to the frame of the old window. He kicks the crowbar until the frame releases from the building.

DAVID
Small-town police.

David carefully lowers himself in.

INT. POLICE STATION BASEMENT CLOSET - NIGHT

David falls into a mop bucket, his right leg twists painfully and he crumples to the floor.

The sound of footsteps approach. David hides in the corner behind the door, trying to control his groaning.

OFFICER BRADLEY (O.S.)
I swore I heard something.

OFFICER SMITH (O.S.)
Check the records room.

David hears them fussing with a key.

OFFICER BRADLEY (O.S.)
This old station couldn't keep
anyone in better than it can keep
rodents out.

OFFICER SMITH (O.S.)
Nothing then?

OFFICER BRADLEY (O.S.)
Nope.

They leave.

David quietly leaves the cleaning closet.

INT. POLICE STATION BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

David checks the dimly lit hallway: it is empty. He goes to the one other door in basement and tries the handle: it is locked.

David grabs the crowbar and tries to pry the door open: the wood splinters noisily but doesn't crack completely.

He checks his pockets and pulls out a letter opener. It shimmers even in the dim light. He uses it in the lock on the door; it opens after a short period of time.

INT. POLICE STATION BASEMENT RECORDS ROOM - NIGHT

David opens up file cabinets, carefully flipping through hundreds of papers and reports.

He finds a large cabinet labeled "CALL LOGS". Inside he sorts through them to find a recent date. Looking through the logs, David finds the one he is looking for. He taps a bold name: 'Dr. ALAN SANFORD.'

DAVID
(mumbles)
Dr. Alan Sanford.

David takes the paper, puts it in his pocket, and leaves.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David sits at a laptop in his dark living room.

He searches the name 'Alan Sanford' in 'Randolph, Washington.'

A picture of a tall blond man wearing a lab coat appears. David stares at his picture, surrounded by information about his medical practice at a nearby hospital.

David's breath escapes him for a moment. He stares wildly at the face on the page. The cocky smile and intelligent eyes.

DAVID
(whispers)
I found you.

EXT. TOWN FAIR - DUSK

David wanders through crowds of people busily enjoying themselves at the fair. The sky is a dark blue as the sun sets. Strings of lights line the walk and children run around with painted faces.

David tries to ignore fearful glances.

Caroline stands in front of a booth. David walks up behind her and puts his hand on the small of her back. She jumps and turns to him.

He steps away, timidly, and puts his hand in his pocket.

DAVID

I, um, got you that soda.

He hands her the drink with a soft sad smile. She returns the smile and takes the drink.

CAROLINE

Thanks.

David turns to the booth in front of them.

DAVID

Win anything?

CAROLINE

I never win these things!

They walk away from the booth and through the crowds.

DAVID

Much luck with other games?

CAROLINE

Not at carnivals.

David spots a group of state police nearby, he walks the other way with Caroline.

CAROLINE

Is it hard to be here?

DAVID

Huh?

CAROLINE

You know what people are thinking when they look at you.

He tries to laugh.

DAVID

I get the same looks when postage goes up. It's not new to me.

CAROLINE

You can't be serious!

DAVID

Or the scars... people get the same looks on their faces.

She turns to him, forcing him to stop.

CAROLINE

What scars?

DAVID

Very funny...

Caroline traces a deep white scar on his cheek with a finger.

CAROLINE

Battle wounds.

DAVID

I think the car won.

CAROLINE

You aren't in some junk yard! I'd say you came out luckier than you think.

David notices Detective Lewis watching him from a few feet away. The Detective waves.

David grabs Caroline by the hand and pulls her in the opposite direction.

CAROLINE

Where are we going?

David pulls her behind him through the crowd. He stops suddenly at a noise.

He turns to see a group of people laughing. David drops Caroline's hand and slowly walks toward them, pushing past the crowd.

CAROLINE

David?

At the center of the crowd is tall blond man. David reaches out and touches his shoulder. The man turns. ALAN SANFORD, has sharp eyes and sandy hair; he is nearly suave. His eyes narrow on David and he smiles.

ALAN SANFORD
Hello, David.

Sanford offers out his hand. David timidly takes it, never breaking eye contact.

DAVID
You're-

ALAN SANFORD
Dr. Alan Sanford.

Alan Sanford turns to the small group of people he was talking to.

ALAN SANFORD
Excuse me for a moment.

Sanford wraps his arm around David's shoulders and leads him away. David pushes him back.

ALAN SANFORD
What's wrong, Mr. Arden?

DAVID
Are you crazy?

ALAN SANFORD
We don't have to talk here...

DAVID
YOU THINK I WANT TO BE ALONE WITH
YOU?

ALAN SANFORD
No need to scream.

People around them start to watch. Caroline comes up behind David and tries to pull him away.

DAVID
AFTER EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE!

CAROLINE
What's happening?

David swats her away without taking his eyes away from Sanford's.

ALAN SANFORD
Tisk Tisk Tisk.

Sanford walks slowly towards David, closing the distance.

ALAN SANFORD
You don't want to hit a woman do
you?

DAVID
After what you did to that girl?

David reaches slowly into his back pocket; his fingers curl
around a letter opener.

ALAN SANFORD
I don't know what you mean, David.
Just calm down.

DAVID
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

CAROLINE
David!

David lets go of the letter opener and attacks Sanford,
pushing him to the ground.

In an instant, Detective Lewis is in the scuffle and pulls
David away.

The Detective pins him down while trying to restrain him.
David screams with his face in the dirt.

DAVID
Murderer!

David breaks free of the Detective's grasp and charges at
Sanford again. He pulls him to the ground and punches him
repeatedly.

More police officers come to the scene and pull David away.
A large crowd surrounds them.

The Detective helps Alan Sanford back to his feet. Sanford
stares down at David, handcuffed and held to the ground. His
eyes are shining with delight and excitement. A small smile
escapes his lips.

ALAN SANFORD
I don't know what got into him.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

David sits handcuffed to a desk, Sanford watches him from the other side of the room.

The Doctor lightly touches his cut lip. Detective Lewis walks over to him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I don't think you know what you are doing.

Sanford looks away from David and smiles.

ALAN SANFORD

I feel perfectly safe, I assure you.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

He's a dangerous person; you saw that.

ALAN SANFORD

I saw someone who is angry, not violent.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Maybe not today.

ALAN SANFORD

But maybe tomorrow, or a week from now. I know.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I'm trying to prevent more people from getting hurt here. And I don't know all the information.

Sanford looks to David again. Finley is by his side and talking to him calmly.

ALAN SANFORD

I shouldn't be saying this.

(beat)

It's confidential... but if it is in his best interest. And the interest of the town.

Sanford takes a ledger from his pocket and hands it to the Detective.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What's this?

ALAN SANFORD

Past appointments and
prescriptions.

(beat)

David Arden has been seeing me for
the past 8 years. Once a week.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

For what?

ALAN SANFORD

That's private... But I can say he
suffered pretty severe emotional
trauma from an accident. He's still
working through it.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I've heard about that... But why
didn't you come forward when the
murders first started happening?

ALAN SANFORD

I at no point thought he was a
danger to society.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Until tonight or since the first
murder?

ALAN SANFORD

I still do not believe he is
capable of this.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

When was the last time you saw him?

ALAN SANFORD

He chose to end my services about
two months ago. I can't force him
to get help. But once a patient
always a patient to me.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

But you kept up his medication?
Until a couple days ago...

ALAN SANFORD

I understand how my involvement may
seem personally motivated for his
sake. But I'm here now to offer my

(MORE)

ALAN SANFORD (cont'd)
services in whatever way might help
everyone the most.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
You could start by pressing
charges!

Sanford thinks about it for a moment; he takes a step closer
to Detective Lewis.

ALAN SANFORD
I can't, won't. David has been off
for a few months now, restraining
him now won't help him any. I can't
bring myself to believe he is a
part of all this, even though it
may be against my better judgment.

The Detective shakes Sanford's hands.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Thank you for your help, Doctor.

ALAN SANFORD
My pleasure.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
You probably want to put something
on that lip.

Sanford puts a finger to the cut again and watches a drop of
blood form on the tip. He smiles and looks back at the
Detective.

ALAN SANFORD
Got some ice?

Detective Lewis walks off. Sanford walks over to David,
sitting alone and handcuffed to the desk. He taps his
fingers along the table.

ALAN SANFORD
I take no pleasure in seeing you
like this, David.

DAVID
What did you tell him?

ALAN SANFORD
Who? The Detective? I'm so enjoying
how this is playing out.

DAVID
Who the fuck are you?

Sanford takes a seat on the desk. He appears hurt by the comment.

ALAN SANFORD
Your doctor, David. Don't you remember?

DAVID
What game are you playing at?

ALAN SANFORD
Exactly, it's like a game. Isn't it though?
(beat)
You shouldn't have said those things about me in public. That's private, between friends.

Detective Lewis comes out of the back room with ice.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Doctor?

ALAN SANFORD
Coming!

Alan Sanford walks over to the Detective. He calls over his shoulder back to David.

ALAN SANFORD
I do hope we can work this out, David. We'll see each other soon.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT (LATER)

Officer Finley unlocks David handcuffs.

FINLEY
You should be careful you know.

David glares at him.

FINLEY
I'm serious. This isn't a joke and this is all spiraling out of control. You're not yourself at all.

DAVID

You really think this is funny to me? You think I don't know the seriousness of the situation?

Finley doesn't know what to say.

DAVID

Can I go?

FINLEY

I didn't know you were having problems... and seeing a doctor.

David's face hardens with rage, his face covered in sweat.

DAVID

CAN I GO?

Finley nods, sadly.

David angrily leaves the station, his leg dragging noisily against the floor. Every police officer in the room watches him go.

Detective Lewis walks up to Officer Smith.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I want him followed, well this time.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - NIGHT

David walks in and locks the door behind him.

He sits, exasperated, in a chair. He is sweating and breathing heavily. David rubs his knee in pain.

He looks in a drawer next to him and shuffles paperwork around.

DAVID

Where'd they go?

David gets to his knees and pulls the drawer out, spilling its contents on the floor.

The polaroids of the murdered woman are missing.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David parks his car and walks towards the post office.

There are multiple police cars parked along the road. One officer stands by the door.

The officer looks at David smugly.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David walks in, police officers watch him quietly stroll across the room and behind the counter.

Detective Lewis ascends the stairs from the basement office. He smiles at David.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Quite a mess you've gotten yourself into.

Finley comes up the stairs behind the Detective.

FINLEY

David. Why?

Detective Lewis forcefully grabs David and cuffs his hands behind his back. He spins David around to face him.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Are you not going to say anything?

DAVID

I didn't--

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Of course you did. Reading other peoples' mail is a federal offense. But that wasn't enough for you was it? After eight years you just had to go over the edge.

Detective Lewis forces David to look down the hole in the floor into the office.

Three police officers are cataloging everything in his file cabinets.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

It's disgusting. It really is.

David's face stiffens against the oncoming storm. He turns to the Detective.

DAVID
How did you know?

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David, still handcuff, is brought through the police station.

Caroline is sitting at a desk talking to an officer. When she sees David, she avoids eye contact.

David's face twists in anger and confusion.

They lead him to the interrogation room.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

The Detective forces David to sit down at the table.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
I think this is more serious than
you imagine, Mr. Arden.

DAVID
I understand the situation.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
We might not have you for the
murders yet, but this is pretty
damn close.

David glares at him, his face stiff and unmoving, with a new sense of power.

DAVID
So, will I be getting a fine?
Opening someone else's mail has a
maximum sentence of five years in
prison.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
There are thousands of letters.
Years of felony charges.

DAVID
With all that evidence it is pretty
damning.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
That's exactly what I'd like to
think.

DAVID

Each letter, eight years of it all.
Give or take a year or so. You'll
have to count it all up though.

David shakes his cuffs in the air; a small smile curls at his lips.

DAVID

It feels better than I thought it
would to get caught.

Detective Lewis take a folder off the table and flips through the files.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

Tell me everything then. About the
letters, the murders.

The Detective lays out some papers in front of David. Photos of a car accident, an article about David, and a picture of him in a coma at a hospital. Detective Lewis taps a large photo of David, a High School portrait, smiling next to an article about the accident.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

So where'd that person go?

DAVID

Are you the 'good cop' now? Without
Finley here?

(beat)

What do you want me to say? He's
dead. You've got your first murder
victim right there. And James
Horrison is dead, look how easy
this all was. Less paperwork for
you.

David smiles again.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What is this? Some power
trip...this car accident of yours
twisted you so bad...

A loud shattering BOOM shakes the office.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

What the fuck?

Detective Lewis runs out of the office, the papers fall to the floor.

OFFICER SMITH
It's outside.

David follows, stepping on his photograph on the ground. He limps behind the Detective and through the open door of the interrogation room.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David watches a dozen police officers run out the front door. He follows.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David limps out the front door. He sees officers and civilians running down Main Street towards the post office. It is on fire and smoke is barreling out.

David hobbles as fast as he can towards it, still handcuffed.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David pushes through a crowd surrounding the post office. He seems in shock: his confidence from before completely shattered. Flames cover the building.

David nearly makes it to the front door when Finley grabs him. A burning figure stumbles out the front door and falls to the ground. Paramedics surround him.

David screams and pulls against Finley's hold, still trying to get in the building.

FINLEY
(echoing)
It's over!

David fights and squirms, spit and ash mixing in the air.

More police come to pull him back. The crowd watches the scene in horror.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY (LATER)

David sits in the back of a truck watching the scene. Firefighters are putting out the last wisps of red flame where the building once stood.

The crowd has mostly left.

A hand tries to put a blanket around David's shoulders.
David pushes it away.

FINLEY
Calm down! It's just me.

David stands up abruptly.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
Sit back down!

FINLEY
Detective?

DETECTIVE LEWIS
We found our number one suspect at
the scene of the crime. I don't
have to tell you how to do good
police work do I?

FINLEY
He's clearly in shock.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
(to David)
SIT DOWN!

FINLEY
You know as well as I we can't
bring him back in again!

DETECTIVE LEWIS
There were men in there going
through his dirty trash! Dead men.

FINLEY
And we gave our number one suspect
a perfect alibi at the station,
Detective.
(to David)
You're free to go.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
You're saying that because he was
in your station during the
explosion that everything else can
just be forgotten?

FINLEY
We have no evidence! Every letter
was still in that building,
Detective.

Finley motions to Officer Bradley to come over.

FINLEY
Officer! Unlock those cuffs.

Finley glares at David.

FINLEY
Leave.

The officer unlocks the handcuffs.

David walks away towards the remains of the post office. The Detective and Finley fight loudly in the background.

David's feet crunch on the mess of glass, brick, and soot. He looks sadly at a black hole in the floor where his basement office used to be.

INT. BASEMENT OFFICE - NIGHT

David sits in the cold dark basement room. He is huddled over his desk.

A pile of freshly sealed red envelopes lay in front of him.

He starts tearing the letters open. Pictures spill out: pictures of murder and mutilation.

David gasps in disgust but opens more letters. Familiar dead faces scatter his desk.

DAVID
Mrs. Fieldman. Ethan Beckman. Diana
Byron. Finley, Grandma -- Caroline.

One last red envelope sits untouched.

David reaches for it but jumps back at the sight of his hands covered in blood.

DAVID
No. No. No. No.

David hysterically wipes his hands on his clothes. His chair falls to the floor. The floor is covered in hundreds of more photographs.

David crawls, leaving bloody hand prints as he goes.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
The game isn't over, David. Don't
leave.

David reaches for the rope to pull down the descending staircase: it isn't there. He pounds on the ceiling in desperation.

He puts his back to the wall and looks around the empty room. The lights flicker and dim.

A letter opener sitting on his desk catches his eye. David runs for it.

Hands come out of nowhere and grab David by his neck.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

David wakes up in a sweat. He is sitting on the couch holding his broken cane against his chest.

The television hums softly in the background.

David tries to catch his breath.

He gets up and walks to the door to check the locks. He looks out a small window at the quiet and dark street.

The phone rings. David picks it up.

DAVID

Yes?

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

David. It's nice to hear your voice.

DAVID

You shouldn't be calling here. They are tapping my phone.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

No they aren't. But I like that you are looking out for me.

DAVID

You killed two police officers today.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

We did David. And hopefully it will be three if the one in critical condition doesn't pull through.

(beat)

(MORE)

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.) (cont'd)
Are you crossing your fingers like
I am?

DAVID
You're sick.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
You helped me set the trap. I just
pushed the button.

DAVID
I didn't hurt those men.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
Tisk Tisk. Such a worrier. Do you
know what lengths I had to go
through to help you? I'm watching
your back, David. That bitch turned
you in. She was snooping where she
shouldn't have.

DAVID
You think you are really helping
me?

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
I'm setting you free, David.
(beat)
I'm your doctor; I'm your friend.

David hangs up the phone.

INT. ALAN SANFORD'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sanford listens to the dial tone.

ALAN SANFORD
Tisk Tisk.

His face twists in anger.

His fingers tighten and turn white on the receiver.

He forces himself to smile.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Finley walks along caution tape between trees. The area has a handful of police officers scouring the place.

Finley shows his badge to one of them and walks into the area blocked off by the caution tape.

He carefully circles a tree; the surrounding dirt is spotted with blood.

FINLEY

Has all this been completely photographed?

OFFICER BRADLEY

Everything has already been documented, sir.

Finley walks the surrounding area again. His foot trips in a small hole covered with leaves. He brushes away the debris and sees his shoe print deep in the mud. Beside it are two similar looking prints.

FINLEY

Was this documented?

OFFICER BRADLEY

Yes, of course. Those have been identified at Mr. Arden's prints.

Finley looks closer at the shoe prints. He brushes leaves away from the area and follows the marks a few feet.

FINLEY

(mumbles)

There's no drag marks.

(to officer)

Can we get someone to look at these?

OFFICER BRADLEY

We report directly to Detective Lewis, Sir. And not to be rude, but we already know who did this.

Finley glares at him.

FINLEY

No offense, Officer. But you missed something. I want copies of those prints on Detective Lewis's desk and mine within the hour. Sir.

Finley walks off.

Another police officer comes up to him.

OFFICER DIAZ
Officer Finley.

FINLEY
Yes?

OFFICER DIAZ
You have to get back to the station
right away. Detective Lewis'
orders.

FINLEY
What does he want now?

Finley trudges off.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Finley walks into the police station. Everyone looks up.

FINLEY
What is this about? You better have
found something from those letters
I gave you.

Detective Lewis walks up to him, smiling.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
It's not about the letters from the
widow. But we received something
that will put him away for good.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY (LATER)

Finley sits in front of a large board covered in pictures
and evidence. David's picture stares back at him.

A group of cops crowd around Finley.

FINLEY
We don't even know where we got the
package from.

DETECTIVE LEWIS
That's not the point. We have all
the evidence we need to bring him
in and convict him in court.

FINLEY

It just doesn't add up.

Finley walks up to the board. His hands lightly trace copies of polaroids of the woman's murder pinned up.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

David Arden's fingerprints were all over those photographs. He must have taken them before he cut her up and before he dropped her at the park.

FINLEY

And we haven't identified who she is yet?

DETECTIVE LEWIS

All that information will come in time. We have to focus on bringing him in now.

FINLEY

Fine.

Everyone walks off, leaving Finley standing alone.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

Detective Lewis pulls into a gas station.

David is filling up his car 20 feet in front of him. It is raining lightly.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

(into radio)

He's exactly where you said he was.
I'm bringing him in.

The Detective gets out of his car and walks towards David.

DAVID

What is it this time?

David puts the hose back in its slot.

DETECTIVE LEWIS

I'm bringing you in for good.

David starts to slowly step away.

DAVID
 There can't be proof for something
 I didn't do.

The Detective slams David up against the blue Ford.

DAVID
 You don't know what you are doing!

DETECTIVE
 I know exactly what I'm doing. I'm
 arresting a murderer before you can
 hurt anyone else.

David struggles and pushes the Detective away. David gets into his car and fumbles with his keys.

The Detective punches him through the open window and grabs the keys from his hand. He handcuffs David to the steering wheel.

DETECTIVE
 You aren't going anywhere.

The Detective walks towards his own car.

David sits mildly dazed in the front seat. He dabs his nose where a fresh stream of blood runs down his face. He struggles against the handcuff on his wrist.

DETECTIVE LEWIS (O.S.)
 (into radio)
 I'm gonna need some backup bringing
 the suspect in.

INT. CAR - DAY

David grips the steering wheel with all his strength and screams silently to himself.

He yells out the window to the Detective.

DAVID
 IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

DETECTIVE LEWIS (O.S.)
 (into radio)
 Yes. He's restrained, but--

David pulls again at the chain on his wrist.

DAVID
This isn't happening. It can't be
happening.

David notices the silence.

The passenger door opens and Alan Sanford sits down next to him. He shakes droplets of rain from his hair and smiles at David. David pulls violently at his wrist, cutting into the skin. He screams.

DAVID
DETECTIVE!

ALAN SANFORD
Calm down, David.

David looks out his rear window to see the Detective on the ground. His radio buzzes silently beside him.

DAVID
Did you hurt him?

ALAN SANFORD
Shouldn't you be thankful? He was
going to arrest you for murder.

DAVID
He was doing his job!

ALAN SANFORD
You can be so strange, David. And
everyone thinks that. It's not just
me.

DAVID
Why are you doing all this? You
think no one will notice?

ALAN SANFORD
I think no one is looking at me.

DAVID
Why?

ALAN SANFORD
This is all for you, don't think
it's for my benefit.

David looks at him skeptically and Sanford chuckles.

ALAN SANFORD
Only a little fun for me.

DAVID
You're sadistic.

ALAN SANFORD
And you're an accomplice.

David reaches for the glove compartment, but Sanford grabs his hand.

ALAN SANFORD
It's not there. You think I would feel safe walking around my town when you have a gun.

DAVID
What do you want from me?

ALAN SANFORD
I want you to stop shouting my name around. People may start to get suspicious.

DAVID
And I go down for murder?

Sanford laughs again.

ALAN SANFORD
I never meant it to turn out this way. I did you a favor if you don't remember.

DAVID
What favor?

ALAN SANFORD
I killed James Horrison. I thought that would make us friends.

DAVID
Just stay away from me!

ALAN SANFORD
You know I can't do that, David. Anyway I have a date tonight.

DAVID
What are you talking about?

ALAN SANFORD

Are you blind as well as a cripple?
Caroline would be so sad to know.
She tries so hard for you to see
her.

David lunges for him, but Sanford grabs him by his neck and thrusts him back against the seat. They stare at each other, inches away.

DAVID

Don't you dare touch her.

ALAN SANFORD

Don't tell me what to do.

Sanford lets David go and sits back, smirking.

ALAN SANFORD

The police will be here soon. I
thought you might want these.

He passes him the car keys.

DAVID

Why are you doing this?

Sanford smiles and gets out of the car.

ALAN SANFORD

Why are you going to follow me?

Sanford walks away and gets in a nearby black car. He drives off.

David fumbles with his keys, starts up the car, and follows.

INT. CAR - DAY

David follows the black car. He speeds along and purposefully slams into the bumper of it.

David tries to slow down, but the brakes won't work. He pulls against the bloody handcuffs cutting into his wrist.

DAVID

Dammit!

The black car speeds away as David tries to gain control of his car. It goes faster.

He pulls desperately away from the steering wheel, causing the car to swerve unsteadily.

David pulls a letter opener from his back pocket and tries to pick the lock. The car rushes past blurred trees as the black car disappears over the horizon.

David opens the glove compartment. A GUN tumbles out.

DAVID

Bastard!

David grabs the gun and shoots the chain of the handcuff.

He jumps from the moving car.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

David tumbles across the asphalt. His car crashes into another oncoming car.

David lays motionless on the ground. Faint screams bring him back to reality.

He painfully stands up and stumbles to the crash in a dazed state. His clothes are ripped and bloody.

The smoke from the two cars clouds his vision; he coughs up blood.

David falls against a car window. Small hands bang against the glass. His dazed eyes try to focus.

He smashes through the cracked glass and unlocks the door.

DAVID

It's okay...

David grabs two young children under six from the backseat and pulls them out of the car. He goes back to pull their mother from the front seat.

He drags her across the asphalt and next to her children. David's eyes lose focus and he falls to the ground, blood dripping from his teeth.

Cars start to pull over on the side of the road.

The woman wakes up and searches for her children. Her gaze freezes on David, awestruck.

WOMAN

Stay away from them.

DAVID
I'm - I'm just trying--

A crowd starts to gather around the crash.

David stumbles away from the woman, his head swimming and bloody.

WOMAN
STAY AWAY FROM US!

DAVID
I'm not going to hurt you...

David falls to the ground, his head hitting the glass-ridden asphalt. The crowd comes closer. His eyes flutter.

DAVID
(whispers)
I'm not-

David's eyes close.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

David's eyes open. A cold white room surrounds him and fluorescent lights hum.

A man walks up to him and tenderly holds him down.

FINLEY
Don't move. I'll get a nurse.

Finley walks out of the room. David shakes his head and looks at the room around him. He tries to get up, but notices his hands are strapped to the bed.

DAVID
HELP! HELP!

Finley comes rushing back into the room, a nurse at his heels.

FINLEY
It's okay, David. Calm down.

NURSE
Hold him down, Officer!

Finley hesitates at first but then holds David's squirming body still.

The nurse takes out a needle.

DAVID
Please. Please don't do this!

She puts the needle in his neck.

NURSE
This should calm him down.

David's body relaxes. His eyes search the room for Finley.

DAVID
He's going to hurt her.

FINLEY
Who is going to hurt who?

DAVID
Don't let it happen.

David tries to struggle against his restraints again.

FINLEY
NURSE!

DAVID
NO! He's going to hurt Caroline!

Finley looks at him, confused.

FINLEY
She's here David. She's scared, but
you can't hurt her.

DAVID
I wouldn't -- I need to see her.

Finley watches him with caution and apprehension. He walks
back to the door and waits.

FINLEY
You killed Detective Lewis.

DAVID
No...

FINLEY
You broke his neck.

David looks at Finley, teary eyed and desperate.

DAVID
I need to see she's alright.
(beat)
(MORE)

Don't let him near her.

Finley leaves the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY (LATER)

A nurse feeds David food from a tray.

Finley comes in and sits next to him. The nurse leaves.

FINLEY

She doesn't want to see you.

(beat)

But on my word she is here. She is safe.

David turns away and grits his teeth.

DAVID

He said he was going to hurt her.

FINLEY

You have a lot of people very angry. And I don't believe you anymore. Not one bit.

David turns and glares at him.

FINLEY

Do you hear me?

DAVID

I hear you very clearly.

FINLEY

When you are well enough you're going to be sent to a higher security medical facility.

DAVID

What? You don't think you can keep a cripple from escaping here?

FINLEY

I don't have a say.

DAVID

My breaks were cut.

FINLEY

What?

DAVID

He cut the breaks on my car.

A nurse knocks on the door and peaks her head in.

NURSE

You have a call Officer Finley.
Line 2.

Finley walks to the bedside table and picks up the phone.

FINLEY

Hello?

(beat)

Yes.

(a long pause)

I'm happy to hear that. Very.

(beat)

I'll see you soon then.

(beat)

Of course.

He puts the phone to his chest.

FINLEY

It seems your doctor is going to
testify in court. Against you.

(beat)

But he wants to speak with you
first.

David dangles the restraints on his arms. Finley takes them
off and hands David the phone.

David walks off to the far corner.

DAVID

You're trying to kill me.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

I'm trying to help you, David.

DAVID

You have an interesting way of
showing it.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

I'm hoping no one else was hurt
today.

DAVID

Only me.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

Just what I like to hear.

David puts the phone at his side.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

(muffled)

David?

(beat)

David? Are you still there?

David puts the phone back to his ear.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

Sometimes I worry that I might have made a mistake including you in this game.

DAVID

I think about that every day.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

(laughs)

Of course you do.

(beat)

David, do you ever wonder who I was sending that first letter to? Have you figured that part out yet?

DAVID

None of that matters anymore.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

It's *all* that matters.

David's face hardens.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

You are so close.

David turns to look at Finley on the other side of the room. He is looking out into the hallway.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

Bingo.

David drops the phone; its dial tone echoes across the linoleum floor.

David slowly walks across the room, grabbing a fire extinguisher as he goes.

Finley turns to him and David smashes him over the head.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

David leads Finley across the parking lot. David is dressed in his normal clothes again. A gun bulge in his pocket edges Finley forward.

FINLEY
You don't have to do this, David.

DAVID
Just keep walking.

FINLEY
I'm on your side.

DAVID
You've been against me this whole time. YOU'RE ON HIS SIDE!

FINLEY
I don't know who you're talking about.

DAVID
YOU'RE LYING AGAIN!

David pushes him into the front seat of a police car and walks to the passenger side.

INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

FINLEY
Stop pointing my own gun at me!

DAVID
You took mine, didn't you though?
DRIVE!

FINLEY
Where are we going?

DAVID
JUST GO!

Finley starts up the engine then turns it off.

DAVID
What are you doing?

FINLEY
I think you're making a huge
mistake.

David puts the gun to Finley's temple and unlocks the
safety.

DAVID
I'll let you know when I've made a
mistake. I'll let you know when
people stop fucking dying because
of your game.

Finley's hands tremble on the wheel.

DAVID
Now start the fucking car.

Finley starts the engine again.

DAVID
And don't be scared. We're going to
see your friend.

EXT. CABIN - DUSK

The police car pulls up in front of the abandoned cabin.

Finley and David step out.

FINLEY
Why are we here?

DAVID
I think you already know the
answer.

David pushes him to the front door. David is clearly in pain
with each step.

INT. CABIN - DUSK

David forces Finley out in front of him through the doorway.
They walk towards a single dim light coming from a back
room.

In the back room Alan Sanford sits in a large chair in front
of a television.

Familiar voices come from the screen.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
 (from television)
 What do you want me to read you
 today, David?

David circles the edge of the room with the gun to Finley's temple. The screen comes into view from behind the chair. The video playing shows David lying in a hospital bed.

Sanford sits next to him in a lab coat.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
 (from television)
 Chaucer? Blake? You know how Keats
 bores me so.

David's foot CREAKS on the wooden floor. The television pauses.

Sanford turns. He smiles at the sight of David. His smile fades when he looks at Finley.

ALAN SANFORD
 I was hoping you wouldn't bring
 company.

David pushes the gun harder against Finley's head.

DAVID
 What is that tape?

ALAN SANFORD
 It was silly of me to think you
 would remember our time together,
 David.

DAVID
 I know Finley helped you with all
 those murders.

ALAN SANFORD
 Is that why you brought him? I
 truly hoped you would just kill
 him.
 (beat)
 Though I admit I would enjoy seeing
 it happen.

FINLEY
 I don't know what's going on.

ALAN SANFORD
Of course you don't you stupid pig.
You're ruining our moment.

David's hand holding the gun drops to his side.

ALAN SANFORD
Don't do that.

DAVID
Where is that tape from?

ALAN SANFORD
You were so strong. We talked every
day for weeks after your accident.
But you don't remember. We were
great friends.

DAVID
I don't know you.

ALAN SANFORD
After all this you can't still
believe that. I've tried so hard to
remind you.

DAVID
I don't remember ever agreeing to
this.

FINLEY
What's happening here?

ALAN SANFORD
(to Finley)
Shut up!
(to David)
I know how much you hurt. And you
still do. But you are also so
strong. And powerful. I'm going to
help you see that.

David's sweaty hand trembles on the gun. He shifts it
between pointing it at Finley and Alan Sanford.

DAVID
Stay back. Both of you...

ALAN SANFORD
This was all supposed to be so much
clearer for you.

FINLEY

Is he--

David tears up and focuses on Finley.

DAVID

I never should have involved you--

Sanford lunges at David, knocking the gun from his hand. He pushes a needle into his neck.

David passes out.

INT. CABIN - NIGHT (LATER)

David wakes up tied to a chair. In the corner of the room Finley hangs, bloody and shirtless, by his hands from the ceiling. He has been beaten badly.

The television hums loudly in front of him with the same video as before.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

(from television)

"Farewell green fields and happy
groves,
Where flocks have took delight;
Where lambs have nibbled, silent
moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom."

DAVID

(whispers)

Finley.

Loud footsteps come up behind him.

ALAN SANFORD

I was reading William Blake to you
that day. You loved him.

David struggles as Sanford unties him.

DAVID

What did you give me?

David's head swims.

ALAN SANFORD
 Something necessary at the moment.

DAVID
 Where's my gun?

ALAN SANFORD
 (motions to Finley)
 I think that was his gun.
 (beat)
 You'll get it back when you know
 where to aim it.

Sanford jokingly cocks his fingers and winks in Finley's direction.

DAVID
 He wasn't part of this at all, was he?

Sanford's smile fades.

ALAN SANFORD
 Aren't you smart, David? You're coming along quite nicely now.

David tries to stand up, but falls back into the chair.

ALAN SANFORD
 Don't worry. It will wear off soon.

Sanford sits on the arm rest and turns David's head to the screen.

ALAN SANFORD
 Watch!

David looks at the screen. In the video David sees himself heavily bandaged and unconscious in a hospital bed. Alan Sanford is reading to him while wearing a white lab coat.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)
 (from television)
 "They look in every thoughtless
 nest,
 Where birds are covered warm;
 They visit caves of every beast,
 To keep them all from harm:
 If they see any weeping,
 That should have been sleeping
 They pour sleep on their head
 And sit down by their bed."

DAVID

I don't know what--

ALAN SANFORD

I stumbled across you in the hospital. In a coma, all mangled up, but still breathing...

(beat)

You were so strong. Pulling yourself from that accident, through glass and fire...

Sanford touches the white scars on David's face.

ALAN SANFORD

David Arden. People think so badly of you. Did you know that?

Sanford laughs and paces the room.

ALAN SANFORD

Of course you do! You read their mail.

(beat)

You know so many intimate details about everyone around you. I admire that power, that control.

DAVID

I didn't do it for that.

ALAN SANFORD

Then why?

DAVID

'Cause I wanted to stumble across a fucking psychotic killer in my free time.

(beat)

I needed more hobbies.

Sanford smirks.

ALAN SANFORD

I like to see you joking again. What has it been, 8 years, since you made a joke?

(beat)

But I like that you understand.

DAVID

Understand what?

ALAN SANFORD

Tisk Tisk. Understand that the letter was meant for you. 'My dearest humblest friend.'

(beat)

You didn't write or call after I sat by your side for weeks until you got better, until you woke up. I shared everything with you and you went off and forgot me.

(beat)

Of course I kept myself busy over the years. But now I can share it with you.

David tries to stand again, but falls to his knees. He cries in pain.

ALAN SANFORD

I'm sorry I told them to take away your pain medication. Once we've moved on and all this is over I'll get you more.

Sanford kneels beside David and holds his face in his hands.

ALAN SANFORD

You should've taken revenge on James Horrison years ago--and personally--I just needed to give you a little push in the end though. But now you're here, and everything will be alright!

Sanford puts a gun into his hand. He wraps David's fingers around the trigger.

ALAN SANFORD

Now you know exactly what you have to do, right?

Sanford forces David to point the gun at Finley and steps away.

Finley tries to open his black swollen eyelids.

FINLEY

David?

ALAN SANFORD

DO IT!

(beat)

I know you can. NOW!

Sanford claps wildly at the scene.

David turns the gun towards Sanford. His smile fades.

DAVID

No.

David shoots but nothing comes out. Sanford kicks him across the face and David reels backwards.

Sanford pulls David up by his hair, spits in his face, and drops him back to the floor.

ALAN SANFORD

You really disappoint me, David!
Every day it seems that I give you
another chance and every day you
like to fuck up.

Sanford stomps on David's right knee. There is a loud CRACK.
David screams.

ALAN SANFORD

Sometimes I think it was better
when you didn't talk back. When you
just laid there unconscious.

Sanford turns to Finley and prods his chest with his fingers.

ALAN SANFORD

And what do you think, Officer?

David starts to crawl out of the room.

ALAN SANFORD

Do you think David is being
unthankful?
(beat)
Do you think he is a fuck-up too?
And after all we have done for him!

Sanford turns to see that David is no longer there.

ALAN SANFORD

David?

Sanford searches around the cabin, peeking behind various doorways.

ALAN SANFORD

David if this is our new game I
think I'd like to be in on it.

(beat)
I think I at least deserve that.

David hides in a closet, watching Sanford no more than a few feet in front of him. He fumbles for a weapon. His fingers tense around something thin and shiny in his back pocket.

Sanford closes in on the closet.

Finley screams; Sanford turns.

David lunges out of the closet and stabs Sanford in chest with a letter opener. They fall to the floor and struggle.

Sanford pins David down. The doctor smiles and looks at the letter opener sticking out of his chest, a thin stream of blood on his lips.

ALAN SANFORD
You missed...

Alan punches David repetitively, bloodying his entire face.

ALAN SANFORD
You are going to regret this.

Sanford stands up, hovering over David squirming on the floor.

Sanford lightly touches the letter opener in his chest and screams in pain, spit and blood flying everywhere.

ALAN SANFORD
Look how you've gone and messed up everything.
(beat)
You've missed out on so much we could've done together.

David laughs on the ground as he coughs up blood.

ALAN SANFORD
And what's so funny?

DAVID
When I'm dead
(cough)
they're gonna know...
(cough)
they'll know I didn't kill
all...those...people.

David smiles through bloody teeth.

Alan Sanford lunges at David and lifts him by his collar, their bloody faces inches apart.

ALAN SANFORD

I won't let that happen!

Sanford fumbles for a gun in his back pocket.

David quickly pulls the letter opener from Sanford's chest and shoves it in his neck.

Blood sprays everywhere and Alan's fingers grasp for David's neck.

David pushes Sanford off him and onto the floor. David stares into Sanford's eyes as he works the letter opener deeper.

DAVID

I didn't miss.

Sanford eyes glass over as blood gurgles to his lips.

David wipes his bloody hands on his clothes and sits trembling in the dark empty cabin.

The humming of the television catches his attention, its sound and glow drifting into the room.

ALAN SANFORD (O.S.)

I hope you liked that, David. Blake has always been my favorite, and I thought you might appreciate it as well.

David limps into the back room, numbly following the voice. He sees the screen of the television. Alan Sanford stands tall and overpowering over David in the hospital bed.

ALAN SANFORD

(from television)

I know once you wake up we'll finally, truly, meet. I have so much more to teach you David Arden.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

David supports Finley outside of the cabin.

They walk slowly, and with great care, down the steps and towards the car.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

David and Finley sit in the hospital surrounded by police officers.

Finley does most of the talking. David is silent, still, and dazed by the environment.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David has stitches on his cheek and forehead. One of his eyes is blue and puffy.

Finley talks to the officers and is also heavily bandaged. He pats David on the back.

FINLEY

It was all as he said the entire time.

(beat)

I would've died without this man!

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

David walks out of the police station, slowly limping.

An officer runs after David and hands him his old wooden cane. It is badly taped up and flimsy. David accepts it and keeps walking.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

David walks down the center of Main Street. It is nearly empty at this time in the morning. A light rain falls from the overcast sky.

David approaches the rubble of the old post office at the end of the street. He moves like a battered ghost among the debris. His bandaged hand drifts across the one remaining brick pillar of the building.

CAROLINE (O.S.)

DAVID!

David turns to see Caroline running down the street from the direction of the police station. Her messy hair and oversized coat flap wildly as she comes.

DAVID
Caroline?

She stops in front of him.

CAROLINE
Finley told me everything...

She gently touches the new stitches on his face with her fingers.

DAVID
They said you were okay.

CAROLINE
And are you?

DAVID
What?

CAROLINE
Okay?

He lowers his face and doesn't say anything.

CAROLINE
David?

She hugs him without pause.

He stands frozen for a moment and then gives in. Right there and then, he hugs her back.

David crumples to the ground besides her. They rest against the one remaining pillar of the post office. He sobs as she cradles his head in her chest.

We watch for a moment and then slowly drift away from them, among the rubble and debris.

The post office morphs into a newly built building.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David, without stitches and nearly healed, paints a new sign for the post office.

He walks through a small crowd of people putting finishing touches on the outside of the building.

He smiles at the post office.

A figure comes up behind him and covers his eyes.

CAROLINE

You weren't supposed to see it done till it was really ALL completed.

DAVID

I just wanted a peak.

David pulls Caroline in front of him and kisses her.

DAVID

It's so much better than it was before.

They walk into the new building through the empty door frame.

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David's hands glide along the new wall of shining P.O. boxes.

Finley walks in to the post office and shakes David's hand.

FINLEY

It's looking great!

DAVID

I thought so myself.

CAROLINE

Any news about the charges.

FINLEY

I told you two not to worry about that...

He smiles at them both.

FINLEY

But I wouldn't worry about it. With Detective Lewis gone, no one can make a case without evidence or witnesses. People just want to forget about all this.

CAROLINE

That's good news then?

FINLEY

As long as you keep this man's eyes to himself!

Finley playfully prods David in the chest.

They all laugh.

Finley walks off to help two men lift and screw in the door for the building.

CAROLINE
It's 10:30 already! I'll be right
back. Gotta empty the box.

David hurries ahead of her.

DAVID
(smiling)
Please. Let me.

CAROLINE
I won't argue with that!

She hands him a key and a basket.

EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY

David limps out the front door, almost a skip in his step.

He watches a handful of people working on the finishing touches on the building. Caroline goes outside to help with screwing on the new door.

David crosses Main Street and towards the blue USPS collection mailbox.

Sunlight is just starting to break through the overcast sky.

David unlocks the box and starts placing letters and small packages in the basket. Something catches his eye when pulling out the last remaining letters.

He looks around to make sure if anyone can see what he does.

David watches Finley and Caroline across the street, and turns his attention back to the box.

There, waiting, is a single red envelope.

FADE TO BLACK.