

REM

Written by

Kyle Killen

TEASER

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

A gentle slope. The city shimmers like a postcard below. Peaceful. Calm. SILENT. Perfect. Then-

SCREECHING TIRES. Suddenly a CAR COMES CRASHING THROUGH THE FRAME, a flipping blur of flying metal and BREAKING GLASS.

And then it's gone. Everything's still, just as we found it.

DR. LEE (V.O.)
So, tell me how it works.

ANGLE ON the wrecked car. CLOSE ON the eyes of MARK BRITTEN, unconscious, hanging upside down by his seatbelt. We can hear the WHEELS STILL SPINNING helplessly in the air.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
I don't know. I close my eyes. I
open them. Just like you.

Very slowly pull back from his eyes until we see other passengers in the car:

HIS WIFE (HANNAH BRITTEN) and a TEENAGE SON (REX BRITTEN) - more on them in a moment. They're also hanging from their seatbelts, bloody and unconscious.

DR. LEE (V.O.)
Let's just start at the beginning.

Suddenly, Britten's eyes flutter open. He looks around. As he takes in his wife and son hanging from their belts-

SMASH TO:

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

CLOSE ON Det. Mark Britten, 40ish, handsome, healed, but a weight to his stare. He'd rather not remember the beginning.

BRITTEN
No. Let's start at right now.

REVEAL DR. LEE, late 30's, Asian-American, a cerebral presence in a muted, calming, vaguely Zen environment.

He makes a note in his book then looks back at Britten.

DR. LEE
Very well. You're back to work?

BRITTEN
Yes.

EXT. LOWEN'S RESTAURANT/BAR - NIGHT

Britten, suit and tie, steps through barricades holding back a crowd.

As he does, DET. RICHARD VEGA, 30's, gregarious, the type of person who talks to strangers in elevators, steps over.

He's the only one who seems excited to be at a murder scene.

VEGA
Detective Britten! Over here.

DR. LEE (V.O.)
And they've got you working with a partner?

BRITTEN (V.O.)
New guy. Vega. They just want someone to hold my hand until they know I'm okay.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Lee leans on his fingers and looks at him.

DR. LEE
And are you okay?

BRITTEN
(long beat)
Yes.

EXT. LOWEN'S RESTAURANT/BAR - NIGHT

There's a cab with a shattered window, a DEAD DRIVER slumped behind the wheel.

Vega walks Britten through the scene like a tour guide with a slight case of nerves. He refers heavily to his notes.

VEGA
So... the driver picked up a fare downtown, registered this address with dispatch. Um, he's still got his wallet, and there's a twenty on the seat beside him, so I think not only was it not a robbery, it looks like the fare was actually paid. Then, either the rider or someone else puts a gun to the window, BOOM, BOOM, BOOM... leaves us this messy little mystery.

BRITTEN
Witnesses?

Vega nods proudly. He's on that. He motions to an OFFICER who brings over a WITNESS, knit cap, 30's, skinny, very polite.

VEGA

Okay, so I've interviewed about thirty. Basically everybody came out of the bar when it happened. But this guy lives in the apartment building above it, saw from his window.

WITNESS

After I heard the shots I looked out, saw a man in a cowboy hat run that way, up the block, and then turn into that alley.

VEGA

Thanks. I'll let you know if I have other questions.

The Officer leads the witness away. As he goes-

WITNESS

Happy to help.

Vega turns to Britten.

VEGA

Exact same report from the bar witnesses, just a little more chaos on the ground. Guy in a cowboy hat running away, but no one close and no one who claims to have seen the shooting.

BRITTEN

What do we know about the driver?

Back to his notes.

VEGA

Right. Driver. Married. No kids. Dispatcher says he wasn't the type to get in an argument. At this point nothing really suggests he should be dead except for the fact that he is.

Britten surveys the scene. Looks past the crowds at the barricades and notices the building across the street.

BRITTEN

Building looks like it's got a secured front door. Let's see if they've got a camera on it. Might have caught something we can use.

Vega smiles, stares at him a beat.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)

What?

VEGA

I just, um... want to thank you.

BRITTEN
For what?

VEGA
I got passed over for detective
three times before this assignment.
I'm pretty sure I only got the
boost because you requested me. I
just wanted you to know I, uh... I
won't disappoint you.

Britten's starts away.

BRITTEN
I didn't request anyone. If you got
promoted it's because they didn't
want to waste anyone else's time
baby-sitting me.

As Vega takes that in-

DR. LEE (V.O.)
And then what?

BRITTEN (V.O.)
I go home.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a modest but homey craftsman bungalow that looks a
million miles from murder investigations.

As Britten steps in, his wife, HANNAH, the woman from the
wreck, late 30's, stunning, warm, looks down from a ladder
where she's repainting a wall. She smiles.

HANNAH
Perfect. Just in time to help me
clean up.

He looks at the dropcloth, brushes, paint.

BRITTEN
Maybe it's time to just embrace the
mess.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Lee is making notes.

DR. LEE
Did she start redoing the house
after the accident?

BRITTEN
After the funeral.

DR. LEE
 (nodding)
 That's a common reaction. We all
 look for ways to start fresh. Has
 she gotten to your son's room?

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - REX'S ROOM

Britten opens the room. Typical teenage chaos with an odd
 sense of being frozen in amber. He stares at it.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
 No. I'm not sure she's even been in
 it yet.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Britten crawls into bed next to Hannah, who's asleep. He
 gives her a kiss on the cheek, lays back, closes his eyes.

CLOSE ON HIS EYES as we hear DR. STEPHANIE EVANS.

DR. EVANS (V.O.)
 And then?

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Britten opens his eyes.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
 I wake up.

He looks beside him. His wife isn't there. He looks down at
 his wrist. There's a GREEN rubber band around it.

DR. EVANS (V.O.)
 What's the purpose of the rubber
 bands?

BRITTEN (V.O.)
 Sometimes it gets confusing. They
 just help me keep things straight.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Britten pulls on his coat as he steps into the hall.

Then, just as he passes his SON'S DOOR, IT SUDDENLY OPENS and
 into the hall comes REX BRITTEN, the other passenger from the
 wreck, 15, tall, good looking, and only moderately awake.

Britten doesn't seem at all surprised to see him.

BRITTEN
Morning.

Rex simply emits a half awake GRUMBLE.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Britten and Rex eat cereal, watch Sportscenter. Not a lot of chatter, but Britten seems unsure how to change that.

A car outside HONKS. Rex jumps up, grabs a large TENNIS BAG, stuffs in an extra racquet.

REX
That's Aaron. I gotta go.

BRITTEN
What about the uh... the match.

Rex stops.

REX
What about it?

BRITTEN
Do you want me there?

Rex shrugs.

REX
Whatever you think.

He starts out.

BRITTEN
Wait.

Britten stands, walks over, hugs the boy. Rex more endures than reciprocates. Britten doesn't care. He just holds on.

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE - DAY

REVEAL DR. STEPHANIE EVANS, late 20's, attractive, with all the eagerness of someone new enough to her job to still love it. Her office is modern but not stark.

She takes no notes. Instead, she tends to smile and tilt her head as she listens, as if every answer is right.

DR. EVANS
And you said the tennis is new?

BRITTEN
Sort of. His mom was very good.
Played in college. She taught him.
He used to play until he discovered
football.

DR. EVANS
But he's decided to take it up
again. Since the funeral.

Britten nods.

DR. EVANS (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Great. What else?

INT. BAKER HOUSE - MORNING

Britten steps into a MURDER SCENE. Two bodies, TOM and IRENE BAKER are laid out, stabbed, blood everywhere.

Vega walks toward Britten, but then simply nods curtly and WALKS BY AS IF THEY BARELY KNOW EACH OTHER.

Instead we hear the voice of DET. ISAIAH FREEMAN ('BIRD')

BIRD (O.C.)
You see this coffee maker?

Britten turns to see BIRD, African-American, 50's, salt and pepper hair and an air of having seen it all, twice. He indicates a complicated coffee maker on the counter.

BIRD (CONT'D)
My ex always wanted one of these.
Told her she wanted a six hundred
dollar coffee maker she should not
have married a police.
(beat)
We eventually agreed on that.
(re: the scene)
Tell me what you see, I'll tell you
what you miss.

Britten surveys the mess.

BRITTEN
Husband and wife victims?

Bird is playing with the coffee machine, but nods.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Multiple stab wounds. Some signs
that they put up a fight.

BIRD
Also some signs that they lost.

BRITTEN
No wallet or purse?

BIRD
Gone, along with one of the cars.
BMW.

BRITTEN
So what, just a home invasion that
turned messy?

Bird stares at the coffee maker.

BIRD
Why I've avoided success at all
costs. Work your whole life to get
some nice stuff just so someone can
kill you for it.

Britten looks around, notices pictures on the walls. Many
show a YOUNG GIRL with the couple. Bird picks up on this.

BIRD (CONT'D)
No sign of the little girl.
Checking with friends, family,
hoping someone tells us she wasn't
home.

INT. BAKER HOUSE - GIRL'S BEDROOM

Britten walks into a nexus of Twilight posters and the color
pink. Begins to poke around. Bird waits in the doorway.

Britten opens the closet, stops.

BRITTEN
You smell that?

BIRD
I've been nursing a cold since the
Carter administration.

Britten leans into the closet, kneels, pokes his head into
the corner. SNIFFS. When he comes out-

BRITTEN
Girl was here when it happened.

BIRD
How do you know?

BRITTEN
Because she hid in the closet and
pissed her pants. Either she ran
when the killer left or he-

BIRD
What I get for hoping.

Bird turns, shouts to the officers in the other room-

BIRD (CONT'D)
Boys! New deal!

As Bird starts to give orders, Britten looks back at the
closet. OFF his expression -

DR. EVANS (V.O.)
 And this has been happening since
 the accident?

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

Britten looks at her.

BRITTEN
 Yes.

DR. EVANS
 Fascinating.
 (reigning it in)
 Not to be insensitive, it's just...
 our brain's main function is to
 protect us. Sometimes that means
 sensing danger or feeling pain. And
 sometimes it actually means
 deceiving ourselves.
 (to explain)
 The loss of a loved one is one of
 the most emotionally crippling
 things we face. We come up with all
 sorts of ways to get through it.
 Like your son taking up his
 mother's sport to maintain some
 sense of connection with her. But
 your brain... it's created an
 entire reality where you haven't
 actually lost your wife at all.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Dr. Lee is in the middle of a similar thought.

DR. LEE
 An elaborate and ongoing dream in
 which you haven't lost your son,
 relieving you of the obligation of
 dealing with his death. I'm not
 sure I've ever seen a coping
 mechanism quite like it.

Britten looks at him. A beat.

BRITTEN
 How do you know it's a dream?

DR. LEE
 I'm sorry?

BRITTEN
 How do you know that the world
 where my wife died and my son lived
 is my dream? Maybe that's reality,
 and this world, where my wife lived
 and my son died, is the dream.

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

Dr. Evans looks genuinely surprised.

DR. EVANS
Wait. You mean you can't tell them
apart?

Britten shakes his head. She's practically giddy.

DR. EVANS (CONT'D)
Incredible.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Lee looks incredulous.

DR. LEE
So you're saying you're not
confident whether you're asleep or
awake at this very moment?

Britten looks at the rubber band on his arm. It's BLUE.

BRITTEN
Everything feels just as real in
one world as it does in the other.
I never look down and discover I'm
naked, or late for a test. Never
suddenly start to fly. Whether I'm
with my wife or my son, everything
is completely normal. Then I close
my eyes, open them, and the other
one is waiting.

A long beat. Dr. Lee makes a note.

DR. LEE
Well, I can assure you, Detective
Britten, this is not a dream.

Britten can't help but smile.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)
What?

BRITTEN
That's exactly what the other
psychiatrist said.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Britten and Vega are scanning through the security camera footage. As a cab rolls into frame-

BRITTEN
Whoa. Right there.

They let it play.

VEGA
Could hardly ask for a better angle.

A SKINNY MAN IN A COWBOY HAT opens the rear door, hands a twenty to the driver, then gets out.

He takes a step and then turns and FIRES THREE SHOTS through the window, killing the driver.

Then he looks DIRECTLY AT THE CAMERA, and TIPS HIS HAT before running away. Vega and Britten look at each other, surprised.

VEGA (CONT'D)
Wow. Part murder, part performance piece.

Britten rewinds, watches the shooting again, then the polite hat tip. The killer's hat is low, his sunglasses large.

BRITTEN
Disguise doesn't give us a lot to go on. Let's pull a still and put it out to all the local-

Suddenly an OFFICER anxiously sticks his head in.

OFFICER
Detectives? We've got another one.

BRITTEN
Another what?

OFFICER
Dead cabbie.

OFF Britten and Vega exchanging a look-

EXT. PEDESTRIAN SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Britten and Vega step through the large crowds to find a cab driven up on the curb and into a pole outside a bustling outdoor shopping mall, driver slumped behind the wheel.

As they take it in, an OFFICER steps up, gestures.

OFFICER
 Cab pulls up. Door opens. Three loud bangs. Everyone scatters, the driver manages to run up on the sidewalk until he smacks into this pole.

He turns back to the crowds of people.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
 Everyone reports seeing an overweight man, heavy beard, glasses, some kind of ball cap, walking away from the scene. Heads straight into the crowd and then... disappears.

Bird steps up.

BIRD
 No heros today boys, just a hundred something witnesses who can't wait to tell you their story. Over and over and over.

He tears some sheets out of his notebook, hands them to Britten with a smile.

BIRD (CONT'D)
 Still happy you came back?

As Bird goes Britten stares at him. It's weird, switching partners. Vega doesn't seem sorry to see Bird go.

VEGA
 (muttering)
 Burnout.

Off Britten's look-

VEGA (CONT'D)
 Sorry. Just... I work my ass off to get the same job he sleepwalks through.

BRITTEN
 Maybe he just knows where to spend his energy.

Britten turns back to the cab, follows a line of sight to the top of a pole across the way. On top- a camera.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 Wanna take a guess what we're going to see?

INT. PEDESTRIAN SHOPPING MALL - SECURITY OFFICE

Britten, Vega, and a MALL SECURITY OFFICER are gathered around the small bank of monitors. They focus on one as-

A cab pulls up. The door opens. AN OVERWEIGHT MAN IN A TRUCKER HAT starts to get out, and as he does, fires three shots through the backseat.

The cab lurches forward. As people panic, the overweight man looks right at the camera, DÖFFS HIS CAP, and then walks on.

Britten freezes the tape on the suspect, the face disguised behind the beard and coke bottle glasses, almost useless.

BRITTEN
I'll take this back to the lab, see
if they can enhance it.

VEGA
What should I do?

BRITTEN
Didn't Bird say something about a
hundred witnesses to interview?

OFF Vega's fading expression-

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE - DAY

Dr. Lee looks up from his notes.

DR. LEE
What does your wife say about your
condition?

BRITTEN
(beat)
We don't talk about it.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - FLASHBACK

Britten is talking while Hannah prepares dinner.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
At first I told her everything.
That he'd given up football and
gone back to tennis. About the girl
he was getting calls from.

Suddenly Hannah just bursts into tears.

BRITTEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But it's not the same for her. To
her he's not still alive, it's just
some dream I keep having. And
hearing about it isn't comforting,
it's... torture.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Britten looks at Lee.

BRITTEN
I actually wasn't looking to come back to work. She sort of forced my hand.

DR. LEE
She wanted you to get back to a routine?

BRITTEN
No. She wanted to break all our routines. She wanted to move. Like cross the country and start over. She says it's hard to live with that empty room upstairs. My best argument for staying was that the seniority and benefits I'd worked for wouldn't follow us.

DR. LEE
But you don't really care about those things? You just wanted to remain where you are.

BRITTEN
For me, the room upstairs isn't empty.

Lee notes this.

LEE
Detective, I'm going to be frank. For you to process what's happened, heal, and move on, it's imperative that you acknowledge what's real and what's fantasy. We can talk about your dreams, but we have to accept them as just that, dreams. Do you understand?

Britten eventually nods.

LEE (CONT'D)
Let's talk about your partners. Why do you think they're different between your dream and reality?

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten and Vega interview a witness. Vega smiles broadly as Britten makes notes.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
I don't know. I never worked with a partner before the accident.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten and Bird are looking over bloody crime scene photos, pointing out various items, making notes.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
They told me they wanted me with someone for while and... I don't know, I got one in one world and the other in the other.

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

Dr. Evans is nodding adamantly.

DR. EVANS
But you said that they don't like each other, this Bird and Vega?

BRITTEN
Vega's just new. Still thinks we fix things. Bird knows better.

DR. EVANS
It makes perfect sense. Your brain doesn't want you to know which world is real and which isn't. It would defeat the purpose of the coping mechanism. If you had the same partner, you might invent details about them in your dream that were disproved in reality and you'd suddenly know which was which. This way, you're free to create a story for each of them, and their animosity helps keep them from crossing paths and forcing you to reconcile what you've imagined with the truth. It's the same reason you've given yourself different therapists.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Dr. Lee closes his notebook.

DR. LEE
It's these little details and differences we should focus on.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten and Vega step out of the interview room, call their next witness in. As they wait Britten looks across the department at BIRD, NOSE IN A BOOK AT HIS DESK, oblivious.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
Why?

CUT TO:

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - AFTERNOON

Britten and Bird stand outside of a house. There's a CAR in the street surrounded by OFFICERS and TECHS.

DR. LEE (V.O.)
Because dreams aren't meant to be sustained. When we pull at the threads they tend to fall apart.

As Britten watches, VEGA GETS INTO A CAR DOWN THE BLOCK.

DR. LEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Your partners are threads. And once we start to pull on them, I think we can help you see the truth.

Vega shoots Britten a brief glimpse from the car, then drives away. Britten stares after him.

The sound of Bird KNOCKING on the house's door snaps Britten back to the task at hand. An UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSEWIFE opens the door.

BIRD
Ma'am. Detectives Freeman and Britten. We're working the Baker homicides down the street.
(beat)
We're told you noted this car in the area yesterday?

He indicates the car crawling with officers and techs.

HOUSEWIFE
Yes. We're all pretty close on the street. You kind of have a sense of what people drive. It just didn't look like it... fit.

BRITTEN
Did you see anyone in or around the car?

HOUSEWIFE
No. Is it involved in the case?

BIRD
It's a stolen vehicle. It's possible the suspect used it to get into the area and then left it.

BRITTEN
When did you notice the vehicle?

HOUSEWIFE
(thinking)
I guess... around five.

This raises eyebrows.

BRITTEN
Are you sure?

HOUSEWIFE
Yes. My husband had just texted me he was on his way home. I could check the text for the exact time if you want.

BIRD
Why don't you do that.

As she disappears the detectives eye one another, thinking.

BRITTEN
The father made a call from inside the house at 5:30.

BIRD
Mom's car was confirmed home by 6.

BRITTEN
And time of death was around 9. So that means we've got the suspect in the area for almost four hours with both of his victims home before he actually strikes.
(beat)
When did the girl get dropped off?

Bird's already thinking the same thing.

BIRD
Close to 8:45.

Everything clicks in a way Britten was hoping it wouldn't.

BRITTEN
If he just wanted to rob a couple of rich people he had all the time in the world. He didn't want money.
(looking at Bird)
He was after the girl all along.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten and Bird address other officers as papers are passed.

BRITTEN

This wasn't random. He knew who he was after, and he waited for her, which means he had to have come into contact with her before the night of the murders. These are all the registered sex offenders whose homes or work might have put them in contact with our missing girl. There's a lot here so we're going to divide them up for the first sweep. If you get someone you can't immediately eliminate, let Bird or myself know and we'll get into them personally.

Everyone breaks up, begins to head out. Bird starts to go, looks back to see Britten standing, staring at his watch.

BIRD

You coming?

Britten hesitates. Then-

BRITTEN

I've got something I've got to do.

BIRD

Now?

Britten thinks about that. Wavers. Then-

BRITTEN

Just take the first couple. I only need an hour or two.

BIRD

For what?

As Britten starts to go -

BRITTEN

I told someone I'd be somewhere.

Bird, annoyed and confused, watches him leave.

EXT. TENNIS COURTS - DAY

Britten sits in the bleachers. It's not a packed house, but there's a fair number of people for a tennis match.

On the court Rex tosses up a ball and whips a blistering serve right past his opponent. Britten smiles, CLAPS.

Suddenly, Rex's COACH (TARA) slides in next to Britten.

TARA
After two years playing football I
didn't expect him to end up in the
final.

Britten looks over at her. 30's, long, slender, like someone
who not only plays a sport for a living, but does it well.
She extends her hand.

TARA (CONT'D)
Tara. I'm the coach.

BRITTEN
(shakes her hand)
Right.

As Rex wins another point-

TARA
He's exceptionally talented.

Britten CLAPS, keeps his eyes on Rex.

BRITTEN
He had a very good teacher.

TARA
(genuine)
I'm so sorry. She was an amazing
person.

Britten looks at her, nods.

TARA (CONT'D)
You know, we used to play doubles
together. She could have played
professionally.

BRITTEN
You think so?

TARA
I did, and she was always better
than me. I think the grind just
didn't appeal to her.

BRITTEN
But it appealed to you?

TARA
Thought it would be more winning
Wimbledon and less qualifying in
New Jersey.

Britten smiles. A beat.

BRITTEN
I'm not sure what he's doing out
there to be honest.
(MORE)

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
I know it's been hard on him, but he doesn't really tell me much. His mom was the one he talked to.

TARA
We've talked about it a little.

BRITTEN
(surprised, a little hurt)
Really?

TARA
(easing the blow)
Sometimes it's just easier for boys to talk to a woman about that kind of stuff.

BRITTEN
I've tried. I just... my job makes it hard to be around. And the work is like learning another language. At some point I think I forgot how to have conversations that weren't evidence, suspect, motive.
(beat)
What... what's he say?

TARA
Nothing you don't know. He misses her a lot. This helps him miss her a little less.

Rex wins another point. They both CLAP.

TARA (CONT'D)
Match point. If he wins this easily after a long layoff I may never get him to practice.

Rex throws the ball up and absolutely HAMMERS it over the net. The other player doesn't even move. Game, set, match.

Britten, Tara, and the other spectators CLAP and CHEER. But REX JUST STANDS THERE, staring over the net. Then-

He simply falls to his knees and begins CRYING. Not victory tears. Kid who's lost his mom tears.

Britten and Tara rush to him. But as they get close, it's TARA THAT REX GRABS FOR. He wraps himself around her and CRIES into her shoulder.

Britten stands watching, helpless.

INT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

Britten, Rex, and Tara sit at a table in the largely deserted bar area. Each has a soda, some picked at fries between them.

Rex is recovered, but the conversation is mostly two way with Britten spectating.

TARA
No way. I watch total garbage TV
and I don't even watch that.

REX
Come on. It's about models.

TARA
I think that holds a different
appeal for a 15 year old boy than
it does for me.

Rex smiles, which Britten sort of marvels at. Tara seems to notice Britten on the outside looking in.

TARA (CONT'D)
What about you, Mark? You have a
favorite show?

BRITTEN
(trying)
Um... I don't know. I like that one
with the deranged chef.

REX
(surprised)
Really? I always thought mom
recorded that.

BRITTEN
Nope. That's mine.
(beat)
Why? You like it?

REX
(shrugs)
It's okay.
(long beat)
Did you see the one where he made
that guy eat the-

Suddenly, Britten's cell RINGS. Rex stops mid sentence.

BRITTEN
I'm sorry. I just-

REX
(flat)
It's fine.

BRITTEN
(answering)
Britten.

BIRD
(filter)
Bird. We found the Bakers' car.
Waverly Long Term Parking lot by
the airport.

(MORE)

BIRD (CONT'D)
 We may have just missed him. How
 quick can you get here?

BRITTEN
 Um...

He looks at Rex who can already read his mind.

REX
 You have to go.

Britten dies a little at his son's words. Then-

BRITTEN
 (into phone)
 I've gotta get Rex home and I'll be
 right there.

As he hangs up-

TARA
 I can take him if you want.

REX
 Yeah. I'll get a ride with Tara.

It's clearly not about convenience, it's what Rex wants.

BRITTEN
 Uh. Yeah. Okay. I'll, um, I'll see
 you in a bit then.

Rex just nods. Britten doesn't know what else to do. He heads
 for the door, disappointed with how that went.

He almost gets there when Rex jogs up behind him.

REX
 Dad?

Britten turns. A beat as Rex seems unsure what to say.

REX (CONT'D)
 Um... I'm glad you came today.

BRITTEN
 Me too.

A beat. REX HUGS HIM. The look on Britten's face says the
 gesture means everything to him. They break. A long beat.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 Your idea or Tara's?

Rex smiles. His dad's not stupid.

REX
 She's good at this kind of stuff.

BRITTEN
 (smiles)
 I won't be late. Promise.

As Rex goes, Britten catches Tara's eye. He mouths 'thanks'. She smiles, nods.

EXT. WAVERLY LONG TERM PARKING LOT - NIGHT

It's drizzling. Bird is standing under an umbrella by a BMW as TECHS crawl around it taking pictures.

Britten reaches him, looks inside the car, dried blood all over the seats. Bird motions to the passenger side, points out blood on the ground.

BIRD
 When they got here they said that was still fresh.

He hands Britten some photos of the same scene, but from earlier, when the daylight was just fading. He points to the blood trail.

BIRD (CONT'D)
 Drizzle makes it hard to say, but they think we missed him by less than 45 minutes.

Britten looks around. They're at the edge of a large and intermittently populated parking lot.

BRITTEN
 I don't suppose anyone saw anything.

BIRD
 Nope. And no cameras. But the stolen car we found in the neighborhood was taken less than a mile from here.

BRITTEN
 So he drives his car to this lot, walks off and steals one to get to the girl's house. Kills her parents, abducts her, and then comes back here and ditches the family BMW for his vehicle.
 (walking along the car)
 If you're going to move a kidnapping victim from one car to another, you probably don't park far away.

He looks at the number on the parking space that the BMW is in. **589**. He looks at the space right next to it. **590**.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 So we need someone who can tell us
 about the car parked in space 590
 for the last day and a half. Let's
 pull the plates on all these cars,
 see if anyone remembers it.

Bird nods. Britten eyes the photos again. Notices something.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 We should also try to figure out
 who was in this space directly
 behind 590. 611.

BIRD
 Why?

Britten shows him the photo.

BRITTEN
 It's got a dry spot that the rain
 hadn't covered about the same size
 as the one in 590. So they probably
 left around the same time. If
 anyone's going to have seen
 anything or remember what was in
 space 590 it's probably whoever was
 in 611.

(re: blood on the ground)
 We find any of the girl's blood in
 the house?

BIRD
 Just the parents.

BRITTEN
 Well, if this was fresh it
 certainly didn't belong to them. So
 either she's somehow gotten our
 killer bleeding-

They share a look.

BIRD
 Or we don't have a lot of time.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

Britten works the phones. Photos of license plates surround
 him as well as a drawing on his wall with the space 589, 590,
 and 611, right behind 590, all circled.

BRITTEN
 Right. I'm calling about a car you
 left parked at the Waverly Long
 Term Parking Lot. Yes.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

We see him crossing license plates off a list.

We see his eyes glazing over as he struggles to stay awake.

We see him sipping a cup of coffee.

Bird steps over.

BIRD
Anything?

BRITTEN
(shakes his head)
You?

BIRD
Nope. Apparently people don't
memorize all the nearby cars when
they park.

Britten looks at his watch.

BRITTEN
Dammit. It's almost two. I told him
I wouldn't do this.

As Britten starts to gather his things-

BIRD
Your boy. How's he... handling
things?

BRITTEN
(shrugs)
I don't know. I can read you better
than him. But then I've probably
spent more time in the department
than at home over the last fifteen
years.

BIRD
Birthdays, anniversaries,
graduations. You name it, I've
missed it. Used to feel bad about
but... what we see, people stabbed
to death, kids taken... it's toxic
waste. Work in it, you end up
radioactive. So for every thing
I've missed, there're ten I ruined
because I came home with dead
people on my mind. Job's not just
about catching bad guys. It's about
making sure the people you love
don't see just how ugly it really
is out there.

(beat)
Sometimes staying at your desk
doesn't mean you're neglecting
anyone. It just means you don't
want them to see what's on it.

Bird pats the bloody crime scene photos, walks off.

INT. BRITTEN'S CAR - LATE NIGHT

Britten drives, Bird's words ringing in his ears. The hand on the wheel has a GREEN rubber band around the wrist.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S CAR - MORNING

Britten's hand on the wheel, but now with a BLUE rubber band.

He fights the morning traffic as he heads for the station.

As he sits at a light, a YELLOW CAB pulls up beside him. He looks over as the light changes.

Britten starts his turn into the station, then notices the cab pulling to a stop right in front. He pauses mid turn.

A BLONDE WOMAN IN A BLACK DRESS AND WIDE HAT gets out. She puts her purse on the roof, appears to dig for her wallet.

Britten is about to dismiss it when BOOM, BOOM, BOOM, the woman fires a gun from inside her purse right through the roof of the cab and into the driver.

As people SCREAM and start to run, the woman looks up at the station and TIPS HER HAT.

Britten jams on the accelerator and TEARS OUT, barreling over the sidewalk towards the cab.

The Woman bolts. As Britten dodges pedestrians, the woman races into an alleyway between the station and the large office building next door.

When Britten's way is blocked, he abandons the car and leaps out only to find OFFICERS sprinting towards him, guns drawn.

OFFICER

FREEZE!

Britten slows up, reaches into his pocket.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

DON'T!

Britten stops, slowly draws his badge, keeps his tone even.

BRITTEN

Detective Britten. I'm just getting my badge.

The officer holds his bead as Britten produces his badge. A beat, then, satisfied, they take off towards the alley.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - MORNING

Britten and the officer run down the deserted alley. They stop, unsure which way to pursue.

Britten spots a side entrance to the office building.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Business people move about through the lobby, oblivious to the scene outside. As Britten eyes them-

OFFICER
Detective!

Britten turns to see the Officer standing next to a trashcan in an alcove. Hanging out is a bit of BLACK FABRIC.

Britten walks over to the can, pulls the lid off. Inside is the black dress, hat, and a long blonde wig.

Britten looks up, making eye contact with various people moving in and out of the lobby. The suspect could be anyone.

OFFICER (CONT'D)
What are we looking for?

Britten looks back at the disguise in the trash.

BRITTEN
I wish I knew.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - MORNING

Britten and Vega are looking at the madhouse of police and spectators surrounding the murder scene outside the station.

VEGA

Should I take statements again?

BRITTEN

(shakes his head)

They saw what I saw: someone in disguise who got away with murder. The tapes, the witnesses, he likes that we have everything and still end up with nothing. Makes him feel smarter than us. Invisible.

(a thought)

Where would you go if you were invisible?

VEGA

I'm going to take the 5th on that.

Britten stares into the crowd.

BRITTEN

I bet you wouldn't be able to resist admiring your own handiwork.

He turns, walking toward the department. Vega follows.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)

Once he ditches the disguise, he could stand in that crowd all day and we'd never know it.

(beat)

We pull the security tapes from all three scenes, but let them run through the hours after the murder. Maybe we get a face that pops up in all three crowds.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten and Vega sit at a monitor when a TECH approaches, holding a plastic bag with a single RED HAIR in it.

TECH

Looks like your suspect left something behind this time.

Britten takes the bag, eyes it.

TECH (CONT'D)

Pulled it out of the wig you found in the trash. We'll run the DNA, but the database is small.

(MORE)

TECH (CONT'D)
 Unless he's been in serious trouble
 before we probably won't get a hit.

VEGA
 Hey, we know we're looking for a
 red head. That's something, right?

BRITTEN
 Thanks.

Britten hands back the bag. Vega turns to the monitor.

VEGA
 First up, 611 Waverly.
 (starting the tape)
 Okay, carrot top. Where are you?

The address hits Britten like a brick.

BRITTEN
 What did you say?

VEGA
 What?

BRITTEN
 611 Waverly?

FLASH TO:

WE SEE the parking space, 611 written at the bottom.

VEGA (V.O.)
 The restaurant where the cabbie got
 killed. That's the address.

BACK TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT

Britten is struggling to process this.

BRITTEN
 Did I know that?

VEGA
 It's been on the paperwork. Why?

BRITTEN
 There's... a Waverly Parking Lot by
 the airport.

VEGA
 What that's have to do with this?

Britten's not sure.

BRITTEN
 Play the tape.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Dr. Lee takes a moment then-

DR. LEE

I'd say it's entirely reasonable, even expected that these sorts of details would begin to cross over.

He closes his notes, looks at Britten.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)

Sleep not only recharges us, but during the REM cycles it's where we actually process and store the day's information. Normally this all goes unseen or vaguely remembered as random dreams, but because you've constructed an entire reality out of your sleep, this processing is simply going to become folded in, meaning the things you're wrestling with in real life are likely to manifest themselves in your dream.

BRITTEN

But I knew about the Waverly parking lot and space 611 before I knew the address of the first cab murder. How could I have dreamed it before I knew it?

DR. LEE

You didn't. You said yourself it was on the paperwork.

FLASH TO:

WE SEE the address on the side of the building. 611

DR. LEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

You were at the location. Even if you didn't consciously note it, your brain did, and apparently it found it important enough to put the details-

FLASH TO:

WE SEE the Waverly Long Term Parking Lot sign.

DR. LEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Waverly and 611-

TIGHT ON the 611 in the parking space.

DR. LEE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
- into your dream via this
imaginary parking lot.

BACK TO:

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Britten isn't so sure.

BRITTEN
Or I really saw it first in the
parking lot and the dream I'm in
now is repeating it to tell me that
it's important over there for some
reason.

Dr. Lee takes a beat.

DR. LEE
Detective Britten, as I've said,
there's no therapeutic value in
allowing you to pretend that your
realities are interchangeable.
There is no kidnapped child. There
is no car in a parking lot. And...
sadly, but crucially, there is no
world in which your son has
survived the accident.

BRITTEN
What makes you so sure?

DR. LEE
That this is reality? Well, for
starters I know I'm real. I know I
talked to my wife twenty minutes
before you came in. I know what I
ate for breakfast. I know where I'm
going this evening.

BRITTEN
I could just be inventing all those
details as part of my dream.

DR. LEE
Then let's try looking at it from
the perspective of causality. Which
murder happened first?

BRITTEN
Well... the cab driver.

DR. LEE
So you begin a case in reality, and
then suddenly you're working a case
in your dream.

(MORE)

DR. LEE (CONT'D)

As one story unfolds the other twists and turns in response as you process the days' events and sometimes as you key on a detail it calls specific attention to itself in your imagination. The consequence of returning to work in your condition is that in addition to trying to keep your son alive, you're using your dreams to try to solve your cases.

BRITTEN

But-

DR. LEE

We should also examine the type of case you're working in your dream. A missing child. The very issue you're struggling to come to terms with. So your subconscious turns it into a case you have to solve.

(beat)

I understand the pain you feel Detective. But once you accept that this is reality, you'll release your son from your dreams, and you can begin the crucial process of mourning him and ending that pain.

A beat.

BRITTEN

So as soon as I accept that he's dead, he'll stop showing up?

DR. LEE

I believe that's very likely.

Britten absorbs that thought.

INT. HIGH END RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Britten and Hannah, well-dressed, sit among others equally so, trying to be a couple instead of grieving parents.

BRITTEN

You already applied?

HANNAH

What? You think I'm too old?

BRITTEN

I'm sure you can still do keg stands with the best of them. I just... what about your work?

HANNAH

I quit.

Britten senses she's trying to draw him into something. He resists.

BRITTEN
I see.
(beat)
Where are these schools at?

HANNAH
One's in the city. One's in Oregon.

BRITTEN
Oregon.

HANNAH
It's a really great program.

BRITTEN
I thought we talked about this.

HANNAH
Then let's see if I get in before
we talk about it again.

This isn't how he wants the night to go. A long beat. He tries to shift gears.

BRITTEN
You... you remember that time we
were at that restaurant like this
in New York and you pretended to be
a food critic? Got us that amazing
table, huge meal, all for free.

HANNAH
What made you think of that?

BRITTEN
I don't know. Maybe I was thinking
about how persuasive you can be.

HANNAH
(smiling)
I must have been. Who believes a 23
year old who orders fries with her
lobster is a critic?

Britten LAUGHS. But Hannah's smile is muted. Long beat.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
You know they say there's a point
in every relationship where you
stop talking about what you're
doing and only talk about what you
did.

She sees this suck the life out of him.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. I don't know what's
wrong with me.
(MORE)

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I mean, we can say it's time. Say we need to get dressed, go out like normal people again, have a good time, but... I wonder if there's ever a point where having a good time isn't going to feel wrong.

She looks down.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

I guess saying it out loud doesn't really help the cause.

BRITTEN

It's okay. I know what you mean.

A beat.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)

How's the house coming?

HANNAH

Just one room to go.

He nods. They both know which one that is. As he thinks on it his words just slip out.

BRITTEN

I saw him play a match the other day.

She looks confused, slightly troubled.

HANNAH

Who?

He catches himself.

BRITTEN

My new partner- his son, he's on the tennis team. He invited me out.

HANNAH

Oh.

Britten can't help it. He smiles with pride.

BRITTEN

He was amazing. Twenty five aces in the final. Reminded me of you.

HANNAH

Me?

BRITTEN

Yeah. Just the way he crushed the ball. The way he poured himself into it. It... was almost like I was watching you.

She's sees right though him, knows he's talking about Rex. She puts down her napkin, stands.

HANNAH
Dammit, Mark.

She walks away.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

Hannah's on the bed, looking down. He approaches from behind, puts his hands on her shoulders, apologetic.

MARK
I'm sorry.

She looks back at him.

HANNAH
You can't do that to me.

MARK
(nodding, soft)
I know.

A beat and then they kiss. It's gentle, careful, like they're not sure they're ready for all this. As they continue-

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

We see paint cans and brushes stacked in the corner, the wall behind them hidden under a perfect new coat of paint.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

Britten and Hannah move under the sheets, cautious and considered.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - HALLWAY

We stare at Rex's closed door.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

We see the couple moving faster, faster.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - REX'S ROOM

The teenage chaos. Clothes on the floor, untouched.

A couple of trophies on a shelf. A picture of the whole family, Rex between Hannah and Britten.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

The after: Britten spoons Hannah from behind. She begins to play with the BLUE rubber band on his wrist.

Long SILENCE. Then-

HANNAH
I... think that we should get pregnant.

She can sense his reaction. Jumping ahead of it-

HANNAH (CONT'D)
I know it's fast. And you can say whatever you want about working through issues and all of that, but this is not about replacing him. I just know that I'm going to want another one and I don't want and be a hundred when he's in high school. So...

Britten sits on this, unsure what to say.

BRITTEN
How do you know it would be a boy?

HANNAH
What?

BRITTEN
You said when 'he's in high school.'

HANNAH
Oh.
(beat)
I don't.

Neither seems sure what to say next. She turns to him.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
 What do you think?

BRITTEN
 I'm not sure I know what to think.

She accepts that. A beat.

HANNAH
 How's it going with the
 psychiatrist?

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM - LATER

The couple sleeps beside one another in the darkness.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
 He's trying to get me to understand
 some things.

CLOSE ON Britten as he lays in the darkness, eyes closed.

HANNAH (V.O.)
 Is it helping?

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Britten opens his eyes. Rex is standing over him.

REX
 Dad?

BRITTEN (V.O.)
 (post-lap)
 I'm not sure I want it to.

END OF ACT III

ACT IV

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

Dr. Evans seems more incensed than we've seen her.

DR. EVANS
That's ridiculous. Trying to force you into some revelation is not his job. The coping mechanism is there for a reason, to let you deal with this when you're ready.

BRITTEN
But he's right. Things seem to start there and get repeated here. I had the cab driver case, and then suddenly I had this one.

DR. EVANS
You knew you were coming back to work. You could have dreamed up a case in anticipation as your mind had already begun to focus on what you'd be up against. Notice that the cab driver murders didn't become an ongoing SERIES of murders until AFTER you were faced with an ongoing situation where a child was missing.

Britten shakes his head.

BRITTEN
I can't even keep this straight.

DR. EVANS
You don't need to. At this point, that's not where I think our focus should lie.

BRITTEN
That's exactly what Dr. Lee would expect you to say. He'd tell me that the only reason you're agreeing with me is because you ARE me, just my imagination trying to hold onto the idea that this dream could be real.

Dr. Evans takes a beat.

DR. EVANS
Okay.

She goes to her computer. Types something in, hits print. As pages start to come out of her printer, she grabs a small stack and brings them over, hands them to Britten.

DR. EVANS (CONT'D)
Here.

He looks at the pages. Before he can ask-

DR. EVANS (CONT'D)
Turn to any page. Just pick one.

He hesitates, then flips through. He stops on the third page.

DR. EVANS (CONT'D)
Now. Pick a spot somewhere about
half way down and start reading.
Out loud.

BRITTEN
What-

DR. EVANS
Read.

He looks at the page. Begins.

BRITTEN
(reading)
The House of Representatives shall
be composed of Members chosen every
second Year by the People of the
several States, and the Electors in
each State shall have the
Qualifications requisite for -
(breaks)
What the hell are we doing?

She looks at him.

DR. EVANS
Have you memorized the entire
constitution?

BRITTEN
(baffled)
No.

DR. EVANS
Then if this is a dream, if your
son has really died instead of your
wife and you're just making all
this up, explain to me how you
turned to a random page and were
able to read it back, word for
word.

Britten is dumbstruck.

BRITTEN
I... I don't know.

DR. EVANS
Tell Dr. Lee that Dr. Evans says
it's not as simple as he made it
sound.

The more he thinks about it, the more bothered he becomes.

BRITTEN
Why would you do that?

DR. EVANS
What do you mean? I just thought if
I could counter balance the-

BRITTEN
You just said we shouldn't be
trying to force any sort of...
realization and then, I mean, how
could I possibly have done that
unless-

Britten's phone rings.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Britten.

BIRD
(filter)
We got a suspect.

BRITTEN
On my way.

He hangs up. Stands.

DR. EVANS
Detective Britten, please-

BRITTEN
Just... don't say anything else.

OFF her look as he walks out -

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - EVENING

Bird meets Britten at the door. As they walk down the hallway-

BIRD
Vega picked him up.

BRITTEN
Vega?

BIRD
Yeah, you know him, young guy,
ready to commit a murder and solve
it just to get a promotion. This
just might be his ticket.
(looks at a sheet)
Registered sex offender with two
priors, works at the car wash.
Records show the family was there
eleven times in the last six
months. Found his prints in the
recovered car.

BRITTEN
You just said he worked at the car wash.

BIRD
Also quite a child porn collection on his computer-

BRITTEN
Still-

BIRD
AND pictures of various kids from the neighborhood taken in parks, on the street, at the car wash.
(beat)
Want to guess who one of the stars of that show is?

He hands Britten photos of the missing girl.

BIRD (CONT'D)
He's got no alibi for the night of the murders or for the period of time when the car would have been left at the parking lot. DA says she's probably got enough to indict.

BRITTEN
We find his car?

BIRD
Doesn't have one. Rides the bus. There's a stop two blocks from where the first car was stolen. Figure he takes the family BMW back to the parking lot and steals another one we're not looking for. For all we know that car and the girl are at the bottom of a lake.

They arrive at the interrogation room.

BIRD (CONT'D)
If she is still alive, the only way we're going to find her is to get him to tell us where, so let's keep him heading in that direction.

Britten nods, stops just before they go in.

BRITTEN
Does he have red hair?

BIRD
(thrown)
Red hair? No. Why?

Britten isn't even sure himself.

BRITTEN
I don't know.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - INTERROGATION ROOM

Bird and Britten enter to find Vega with the SUSPECT (TAYLOR), 40's diminutive, creepy, and genuinely frightened.

Vega steps over to them.

VEGA
(sotto)
I think with just a little more time, Detectives-

BIRD
We've got it, thanks.

Vega grudgingly steps aside. Bird takes a seat. Britten seems caught looking at Vega, then back at the suspect's hair.

BIRD (CONT'D)
Mr. Taylor. Detective Freeman. This is Detective Britten. I'm going to be frank, and this is going to be fast. You are in a significant mess. The pornographic material by itself was already a violation of your parole. We also have your prints in the victims' car, as well as your own private photos of the missing girl. It's a double murder with or without her, so you're not saving yourself from anything by hiding her. At this point, her location is the ONLY, and I repeat, ONLY thing you can use to help yourself. We find her alive, maybe the rest of your life gets a little longer. So let's talk about where you went after you left the BMW at the Waverly parking lot.

TAYLOR
(exasperated, terrified)
Please. I already told the officer I don't know what you're talking about.

Britten takes a seat next to Bird. They both sound sympathetic.

BRITTEN
She was bleeding. Was she hard to control? Was she fighting you?

BIRD
You needed to go someplace private, right? Some place you could be alone? Did you drive out of the city? Where did you go?

Taylor starts to CRY.

TAYLOR
I told you. I was at home.

VEGA
Watching TV by yourself is not an
alibi.

Taylor just puts his head down, CRYING. Vega makes a dismissive gesture. Britten finds himself staring at the top of the guys head. At his thinning BROWN hair.

FLASH TO:

WE SEE the ziplock bag with the single red hair from the other case.

BACK TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - INTERROGATION ROOM

Britten can't shake a sense of unease. A beat.

BRITTEN
What were you watching?

Taylor looks up.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Monday night, when the murders
occurred, what were you watching?

Taylor reigns in his tears, thinks.

TAYLOR
I don't... uh, the football game?

Britten looks at the reports on the desk.

BRITTEN
9 pm. That would have been about
the third quarter. You remember the
third quarter?

TAYLOR
I... maybe. Why?

BIRD
Detective Britten-

BRITTEN
Who was winning?

TAYLOR
The... the Steelers. They'd just
scored.

VEGA
Which you could have learned
watching Sportscenter.

BRITTEN
You remember anything the
commentators said? Anything
specific?

Bird stands.

BIRD
Detective. Outside.

Britten isn't going anywhere.

TAYLOR
I don't know. Like what?

BRITTEN
You tell me.

TAYLOR
I... something about, the defense?
(remembering)
About the defense being so banged
up, and one of the commentators
said they were missing so many
people they'd asked him to play.
Something like that.
(beat)
Is that right?

BRITTEN
I don't know. I wasn't watching.

He gets up, walks out, Bird and Vega angrily following.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - HALLWAY

As soon as the door closes Vega explodes.

VEGA
What the hell are you doing?

BRITTEN
He has an alibi.

VEGA
It's football! He could have heard
about the game anywhere.

BRITTEN
I didn't ask about the game, I
asked about the commentary.

(MORE)

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 He'd have needed to have watched the game or to have seen a tape to memorize commentary, and since he didn't think he had an alibi to begin with I doubt he watched the game on tape to create one.

Vega wants to say something but thinks better of it.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 Just get us a copy of the broadcast, officer. If he's lying we hammer him, but I don't think he is. He was home when that girl was taken.

Vega stalks off. Bird looks at Britten evenly.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
 This isn't about finishing our homework. It's about finding the girl. If he's not the guy, it doesn't help us.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - TAPE ROOM

Britten and Bird playback a tape of Monday Night Football.

JON GRUDEN
 (on monitor)
 They've got so many people injured
 I think I'm in their dime package.

Bird looks at Britten, stops the tape. SILENCE.

BIRD
 Why'd you ask if he had red hair?

BRITTEN
 I'm honestly not sure.

BIRD
 Well, not sure, you just tanked our only suspect and most of our good leads, so what do we do now?

BRITTEN
 It's got something to do with the Waverly lot.

BIRD
 What makes you say that?

BRITTEN
 I've been seeing it in my sleep.

END OF ACT IV

ACT V

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

Britten wakes up alone. He looks at his wrist. He's wearing the BLUE rubber band, but there's no sign of his wife. He's immediately troubled.

BRITTEN

Hannah?

Nothing.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE

He walks into the living room. It's repainted, but the paint cans are gone. He grabs his phone, dials.

HANNAH

(voicemail recording)

Hi, this is Hannah. Leave a message.

As he walks through the house-

BRITTEN

Um, it's me. I'm just wondering where you are. I feel... I'm not sure what's going on and it would just really help me out if I could hear your voice.

He hangs up. Then-

BRITTEN (CONT'D)

Hannah! HANNAH!

SILENCE.

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - REX'S ROOM

Britten steps in. It's just as it always is on this side, an untouched mess, no one here.

BRITTEN

REX!

But this is clearly not the room of the living Rex. He takes a seat on the bed.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)

No. She can't be gone. I'm... this is... I'm imagining this.

He SLAPS himself.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Wake up!

Again. HARDER.

 BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Wake UP!

He spots a multi-tool on his sons desk. He grabs it, flips out the knife.

A beat, then he presses the knife into his palm until it draws blood. He GASPS at the pain as he opens a wound.

 BRITTEN (CONT'D)
Come on!

Then-

 HANNAH
Mark?

He turns. There she is. In the doorway. Almost too quickly.

 HANNAH (CONT'D)
What are you doing in here?

She notices the blood.

 HANNAH (CONT'D)
Oh my God, what happened?

He drops the knife, goes to her, throws his arms around her, his hand bleeding all over her back.

 BRITTEN
You're still here! Thank God.

 HANNAH
Mark, what's going on?

 BRITTEN
(emotional)
I don't know. I don't know. I'm so confused. I just... I was calling you. How did you not hear me calling if now you're... I thought I was losing you.

She pulls back, looks him in the eyes. Softly-

 HANNAH
I'm still here, Mark. I'm not going anywhere.

He seems buoyed by this, collects himself. He nods.

 HANNAH (CONT'D)
Let's look at that hand.

EXT. LOWEN'S RESTAURANT/BAR - AFTERNOON

Britten and Vega stand outside the restaurant where the first cab driver murder took place, Britten's hand bandaged. He still looks a little frayed.

VEGA
You sure you're okay?

BRITTEN
Can you just let me think?

VEGA
Can you at least tell me what we're looking for? Maybe I can help.

BRITTEN
I'm not sure.

VEGA
Then... why are we here?

Dismissive-

BRITTEN
I had a dream about it.
(to himself)
Or I'm having a dream about it.

VEGA
What?

BRITTEN
Nothing. Will you just-

VEGA
We've still got partial face matches from the tapes to look over. There're witnesses to interview from the scene outside the station. There's-

Britten looks up at the side of the building. The big numerals 611 stare back at him.

BRITTEN
Shh!

Britten focuses on the numbers, waiting for them to tell him something. Then he notices-

The windows of the apartment building just above them. He squints at the windows, then down the street. A thought.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
The witness.

VEGA
What?

BRITTEN
The witness from the 611 building.
He said the killer ran up the
street, around that corner and into
the alley.

VEGA
(exasperated)
All the witnesses said that. That's
what the security tape shows.
That's what happened.

Britten looks back at the numbers.

BRITTEN
Did anyone actually go to the guy's
apartment? Look out his window?

VEGA
Why? I just told you. Everyone had
the same story.

BRITTEN
Because if you're looking out of
that building, there's no way you
can see around that corner. From
the ground you could have seen the
killer go up that alley. But from
up there there's no way you know
that unless-

VEGA
(Holy shit)
You happened to be the one who
actually did it.

Britten looks at Vega.

BRITTEN
He likes to feel smart? Invisible?
What's going to make you feel more
invisible than actually talking to
the detectives trying to catch you?

They both stare up at the windows of the apartment building.

INT. 611 WAVERLY APARTMENT BUILDING - 5TH FLOOR

Vega and Britten exit a bank of elevators. As they move into
a hall a HASID in full dress passes them, gets in an elevator
going down.

Britten stops. A thought. He turns as the elevator doors
start to close.

The HASID glances back ever so slightly. His eyes meet
Britten's. The two of them lock on one another. Even in the
garb, Britten sees it. It's the WITNESS.

As the doors close, the Hasid cracks a tiny smile.

Britten rushes for the elevator, but it's too late. He flies into the stairwell. Vega, confused, tries to keep up.

EXT. 611 WAVERLY APARTMENT BUILDING

Britten hits the street, spots the Hasid bolting up the block. Britten breaks into a dead sprint, not willing to miss his man a second time.

Britten makes up ground. The Hasid seems to be slowing when-
Suddenly, the Hasid stops, turns, gun drawn. Britten freezes, his own weapon still in its holster. Then in a FLASH-

TWO SHOTS. The Hasid goes down. Britten turns to see Vega a hundred feet behind, gun drawn.

They move in on the downed body. On the ground the hat and hair have gone slightly askew revealing not only that it is indeed the witness, but his red hair underneath.

EXT. 611 WAVERLY APARTMENT BUILDING - LATER

Britten and Vega are now surrounded by other officers, the coroner, onlookers.

As the body is loaded into the rear of an ambulance-

Britten just stares at the address on the outside of the building. **611 Waverly.**

CUT TO:

EXT. WAVERLY LONG TERM PARKING LOT

Britten stands staring at space 611, case file in his hand.

Bird stands behind him, sipping coffee.

BIRD

Britten, you've been staring at the pavement for the last hour. I think it's told you what it knows.

Britten shakes his head, in his own little world.

BRITTEN

This has to be it.

BIRD

The blood trail led right to the car in 590. Why does it matter what was parked in 611? Don't you think if they'd have seen anything, like, say, a bleeding little girl being forced out of one car and into another, we'd have heard from them?

Britten thinks about that. He opens the file, looks at the photos of the scene again. The back to back dry spots in space 590 and 611.

And then it hits him.

BRITTEN
Oh my God. 611. That's what it was trying to tell me. It was in 611.

He drops everything else, holds the picture close.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
We had it backwards.

Bird steps over.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
There was no car in 590.

BIRD
But the blood trail-

Britten points to the photo.

BRITTEN
These two cars didn't leave at about the same time. They left at EXACTLY the same time.

He points to a little thread of dry pavement between the dry spaces where the cars were parked.

BRITTEN (CONT'D)
See that little strip of dry pavement. That means there was something above it. Something connecting whatever was in these two spaces.

BIRD
(getting it)
A tow hitch.

BRITTEN
It wasn't a car in 590. It was a camper or something else he could stick her in. The car was in 611.

OFF Bird-

INT. BRITTEN'S CAR

Britten and Bird are driving. Bird is on the phone.

BIRD
Yeah. Yeah. Send it over.
(hanging up)

BIRD (CONT'D)
 Four camper hits in the same area
 we canvassed for sex offenders.
 Three of them are sitting in their
 driveways. One's not. Neighbor says
 it's been gone since Monday.

BRITTEN
 Day of the murders.

BIRD
 Says the guy talks about a lake up
 in the foothills. Vega's sending us
 a description of the area, the
 camper, and the guy's ID.

Bird taps at his laptop. Suddenly he freezes.

BIRD (CONT'D)
 What the hell?

BRITTEN
 What?

Bird turns the screen to Britten. It's an ID PHOTO from a
 driver's license. The MAN in the photo has RED HAIR.

BIRD
 You want to explain to me how you
 knew he was going to be a red head?

OFF Britten's look -

EXT. CAMPGROUND - AFTERNOON

Britten and Bird spot a camper attached to a truck parked by
 an idyllic looking little lake. They move toward it
 carefully, guns drawn.

INT. CAMPER

Britten swings the door open, darts in, gun out. But it's
 quiet. And then he hears something MUFFLED.

He opens the closet sized bathroom, finds an YOUNG GIRL,
 bound and gagged inside.

He quickly pulls her out, begins to release her. As soon as
 the gag comes down, she simply starts to CRY. Britten takes
 her in his arms when-

The door to the camper opens.

MAN (O.C.)
 We'll have a good fire tonight. I
 got us-

As the man steps in and notices Bird and Britten he freezes.

He grabs for a knife on the counter, but Bird's gun is up.

BIRD
Don't even think about it.

A beat, and then the MAN bolts.

Bird is out the door after him, but Britten doesn't move. He just sits there, holding the girl. Outside we hear-

TWO SHOTS.

A long beat as the girl just CRIES into Britten's shoulder-

DR. LEE (V.O.)
I think the red hair settles it in
just the way we've been looking
for.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Dr. Lee looks like a man with all the answers. Britten doesn't seem particularly threatened.

DR. LEE
There's no evidence suggesting the suspect in your kidnapping case would have red hair. The only reason he did is because it's a reflection of the REALITY in which your actual suspect in the cab driver murders, which came first, had red hair. If this were a dream, you'd have come up with the red hair clue before it occurred in reality. Which would make you psychic.

BRITTEN
(unfazed)
So the red hair proves this is reality. And reading the constitution proves the other's reality. So we're back where we started.

DR. LEE
Remembering a portion of the constitution proves nothing. I could put you under hypnosis and drag out a litany of facts and tidbits from your subconscious that you'd be stunned to find hiding there.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Britten works with a MUCH YOUNGER REX, cutting and gluing.

DR. LEE (V.O.)

Perhaps you helped your son with a project at some point and very specific portions of the constitution found their way into your memory. In the trancelike state of your dreams, you simply dredged them up to help deceive yourself.

ANGLE ON the project at hand. A Constitutional diorama.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Britten smiles.

BRITTEN

By that logic I could just as easily have come across a red hair in the kidnapping case and never consciously noticed it.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

Britten looks down at his suit jacket, the one he's been wearing the whole time. He stares at the sleeve. He reaches down and picks off a single red hair. Stares at it.

CUT TO:

INT. BAKER HOUSE - GIRL'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

As Britten reaches into the closet to smell the carpet his sleeve contacts the hanging clothes, picking up the red hair.

BRITTEN (V.O.)

Maybe I picked it up during the investigation and the only way to bring it to my attention was to make it a detail of my dreams.

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Britten looks happy with himself.

BRITTEN

The dreams in which I have to come see you.

Dr. Lee nods. Okay.

DR. LEE
 You've created a mental Mobius strip. Your mind is free to go back and fill in any hole if you let it. So if you're unwilling to commit yourself to making meaningful progress, I'm not sure why you're here.

BRITTEN
 I'm here, because they told me I had to come.

Dr. Lee takes a beat. Then -

DR. LEE
 Your Blood Alcohol Level was elevated the night of the accident, wasn't it?

This suddenly sucks the wind out of Britten's sails.

BRITTEN
 I don't drink.

DR. LEE
 That's what you said in the report, but it was elevated, was it not?

Britten is silent.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)
 Perhaps your condition comes not so much from a benevolent desire to keep your son alive, but an intense need to try to shield yourself from your own responsibility for his death.

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

Dr. Evans looks concerned.

DR. EVANS
 It does raise a host of questions.

BRITTEN
 I'm telling you. I never drink. And if I did, my wife would never have let me get behind the wheel.

DR. EVANS
 And you don't remember anything about the night leading up to the accident?

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Britten waking up, bloody, hanging from his seatbelt.

BRITTEN (V.O.)

No.

EXT. HILLSIDE - LATER

Britten is taken in one ambulance as his wife and son, still unconscious are put into another.

CUT TO:

INT. DR. EVANS' OFFICE

She's thinking.

DR. EVANS

Maybe this is all your way of trying to remember.

(to explain)

Just as you seem to work out your cases in your dreams, I wonder if the entire construction of those dreams is meant to try to draw your attention to something bigger. Maybe that your wife survived in one and your son in the other, or the fact that you have different partners is actually all a way of getting you to think about that night. Clues, so to speak, as to what actually happened.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Vega is doing paperwork at his desk.

BRITTEN

What are you still doing here?

VEGA

You see all this stuff? Guy had like a hundred different costumes in that apartment, was still showing up to teach 8th grade math everyday. Nobody suspected a thing.

BRITTEN

It's one in the morning. Don't you have someone waiting for you?

VEGA
 I don't care if I got the promotion
 just to hold your hand. I'm gonna
 prove I deserve it. My wife
 understands.

A beat.

BRITTEN
 Vega. Trust me. Go home.

Britten turns to leave, but Vega doesn't move. Britten
 shrugs. As Britten starts to walk-

VEGA
 You were joking right?

BRITTEN
 (stopping)
 What?

VEGA
 About going back to that crime
 scene because of a dream. That's
 not why we went, right? Cause, you
 know, weird stuff like that, it's
 sort of what they told me to look
 out for.

OFF Britten's expression-

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMPGROUND

Police everywhere, ambulance, reporters. Bird steps next to
 Britten. They see the GIRL with officers.

BIRD
 She says he kept talking about
 marrying her. That the Lord had
 brought them together.
 (long beat)
 So, the red hair. The obsession
 with that parking space. They're
 going to ask how you put all that
 together.

BRITTEN
 Right.
 (a beat)
 Can we call it a hunch for now?

Bird looks at him.

BIRD
 I've been a cop for thirty years.
 Only seen hunches on TV. But for
 now... okay, we go with hunch.

We see the Girl being led into an ambulance.

BRITTEN
What happens to her?

BIRD
She goes to an aunt or something.
I'm not sure she even understands
what's happened yet.

As they watch the ambulance doors close behind the girl-

BIRD (CONT'D)
Remember when you used to think
solved and fixed meant the same
thing?

CUT TO:

INT. DR. LEE'S OFFICE

Dr. Lee leans forward.

DR. LEE
Detective, turning yourself in
circles like this, over and over,
it will catch up with you. This
fantasy is far from a benign coping
mechanism. When your brain should
be resting, recharging, you're
using it to hold up a detailed and
complicated alternate reality. A
reality that only gets more
complicated the longer it exists.
That is unsustainable, Detective
Britten. I'm afraid that the longer
you continue, the more you
jeopardize your already tenuous
grasp on reality. It is, quite
simply, a road to madness.

A long beat as this weighs on Britten. Then-

BRITTEN
The thing is doctor -

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Britten and HANNAH are in black, surrounded by mourners.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
- yes, I still see both my wife and
my son.

Hannah leans on him SOBBING as a casket is lowered into the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Britten and REX are in black, surrounded by mourners.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
But I've also watched each of them
lowered into the ground.

REX WEEPS as the casket descends.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - REX'S ROOM

Britten assists Hannah, clearing out the last of Rex's stuff. She looks at him, leans down, opens a paint can.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
And when you see a loved one being
buried, the one thought you have
over and over and over again, is
that you would give ANYTHING to
change it.

Suddenly, her 'move past it' exterior cracks and she finally begins to CRY. As he pulls her into his arms-

CUT TO:

EXT. TENNIS COURTS

Britten sits alone in the stands watching Rex practicing relentlessly with his coach TARA.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
So if you're telling me that the
price of being able to see them, to
feel them, to have them, is my
sanity-

After crushing a forehand that sends Tara sprawling, Rex looks up at his father, smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT

Britten and Rex have dinner in the bar, watching football highlights on the screen.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
Then let me assure you I will
happily pay it.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Britten and Hannah eat. She's still raw, emotional.

BRITTEN (V.O.)
I'll come here as long as they make
me, but trust me-

She puts her hand on his. They look in one another's eyes.

BRITTEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I have no desire to ever make
progress.

CUT TO:

INT. BRITTEN'S HOUSE - MARK'S BEDROOM

Britten and his wife lay in bed together, only a sliver of
light sneaking through the window. A LONG SILENCE. Then -

HANNAH
Will you see him tonight?

Britten looks over at her. He's not sure what she wants to
hear. He simply opts for the truth.

BRITTEN
Yes.

She takes that in. He prepares himself for the
recriminations. Instead, she kisses him on the cheek.

Softly-

HANNAH
Tell him that I love him.

As she turns away Britten fights the lump in his throat.

BRITTEN
I will.

Britten closes his eyes.

We push in very close on his closed eyelids. A long beat.
Then-

He opens them.

END OF SHOW