

THE PRINCE OF MOTOR CITY

"My Boy"

by  
Jessica Goldberg

Story by  
Jessica Goldberg  
Hamish Linklater

BRANCATO/SALKE PRODUCTIONS  
ABC STUDIOS

Network Final  
March 26, 2008

©2008, ABC Studios. All rights reserved. This material is the exclusive property of ABC Studios and is intended solely for the use of its personnel. Distribution to unauthorized persons or reproduction, in whole or in part, without the written consent of ABC Studios is strictly prohibited.

THE PRINCE OF MOTOR CITY

IN BLACK

VOICE (O.S.)  
So there's this prince...

FADE IN

INT. HARVARD CLASSROOM - NIGHT

PAN OVER the shining faces of eager co-eds listening rapt--  
the boys want to be him, the girls want to bed him.

VOICE (O.S.)  
He slays the dragon, gets to the  
castle, it's overgrown with these  
monstrous thorns-

The VOICE belongs to the man at the front of the room: BILLY  
HAMILTON 30, handsome, charismatic, our hero. Or anti-hero.

BILLY  
- so he hacks through, ya' know:  
torn up, bloody, gets inside the  
castle and of course there's a  
witch--so he slays her too. Then he  
has to climb like a million stairs,  
he's completely exhausted, but  
somehow, somehow, he makes it to  
the bed chamber and there, finally,  
is the princess. She's exquisite,  
preserved in a glass box. He lifts  
the lid and tenderly, he kisses her  
and...

He looks out over the classroom, you could hear a pin drop.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
It's gross. Cuz she's dead.

The students LAUGH.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
No really, she's dead. What did  
you expect?

EXT. HAMILTON MOTOR PLANT, DETROIT - AT THE SAME TIME

The tires of a beat up '89 Hamilton Sedan CRUNCH to a stop in  
front of the large wrought iron gates of the Hamilton Plant.  
The classic **H** on the car's grill nearly kisses the **H** crested  
on the gate.

There are TWO MEN in the car. The DRIVER reaches out and presses the intercom button. Through the intercom we hear:

INTERCOM  
Who's there?

DRIVER  
Your mother.

The intercom CHUCKLES and THE GATES GRIND OPEN.

EXT. HAMILTON MOTOR PLANT, DETROIT - CONTINUOUS

The Sedan drives through the 1.5 Miles of Plant--an INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE: past Corporate, past the Glass Factory and the Stamp Factory, to the Old East Foundry where they build the **H HEAVY**, Hamilton Motors' most popular truck. In VOICE OVER we hear more of Billy's lecture...

BILLY (V.O.)  
*Why do we need these fairy tales  
...the castle under the spell...*

INT. OLD EAST FOUNDRY - MOMENTS LATER

CLIP... CLOP... CLIP... CLOP...

A sound ECHOES through the cavernous factory. The MASSIVE ASSEMBLY line lies still, half built trucks hang ominously in the GHOSTLY NEON DARK.

BILLY (V.O.)  
*...The dragons, the monsters around  
every corner...*

We fall into step with the two men from the car: JOSH KORMAN 30, immediately likeable, straight shooter, a Union negotiator with blue collar roots; and REGGIE 30, the windshield wiper guy, works on the line. CLIP...CLOP...

REGGIE  
Dang! those hard soled shoes make a lotta' noise.

Josh LAUGHS; it ECHOES.

REGGIE (CONT'D)  
It's right up here, the other Union reps should be there already-

Josh stops dead, IN FRONT OF HIM...

YELLOW POLICE TAPE cordons off a MASSIVE FIRE SINGED HOLE in the factory wall. Reggie CROSSES HIMSELF ...

BILLY (V.O.)  
*...Why do we need these stories  
 where the dead can rise and live  
 again...?*

Three rumpled UNION REPS stand with a SECURITY GUARD to the side of the HOLE. Reggie shakes hands with the Security Guard.

REGGIE  
 This is Josh Korman, lawyer for  
 Local 27.

SECURITY GUARD  
 Nice to meet you man. You're gonna  
 have a liability field day.

JOSH  
 Thanks for getting us in. Company's  
 been less than eager to give us  
 access to the site.

UNION REP 1  
 Any word on what's going on? Who's  
 taking over now?

JOSH  
 Whoever it is better have size  
 gargantuan feet, cuz the old boss'  
 shoes are gonna be hard to fill.

The men chuckle, *then there's a low crackle and the whisper of a sound, a song-* they all turn-

JOSH (CONT'D)  
 What's that?

They listen harder, it's a radio, Elvis singing: *MY BOY*.

Josh starts to walk down the line. Reggie, the Union Reps, and the Security Guard watch after him.

Josh approaches a half built truck, leans into it-

IN THE TRUCK

The radio is on, Josh recognizes the song, furrows his brow.

JOSH (CONT'D)  
 That's weird.

Josh turns off the radio, the factory goes SILENT. Josh pulls himself out of the truck looks at Reggie, shrugs, "I don't know"?

JOSH'S POV of the FIRE SINGED HOLE: the police tape FLUTTERS, as if the HOLE in the wall were EXHALING...

BILLY (V.O.)

*Because we're afraid, afraid that  
when we die there'll be nothing, a  
big black hole of nothing.*

ON JOSH, he shivers.

INT. CLASSROOM - SAME

Billy continues his lecture, behind him on the blackboard the class title: "Atheism, Theism, Existentialism".

BILLY

Well the flat fact is: dead **is**  
dead. There are no princes,  
princesses, magic kisses.  
No turning back time. There is  
only this life, and what you choose  
to do with it -

The BELL rings!

BILLY (CONT'D)

Okay, I won't be here next class,  
but I am leaving you in the capable  
hands of Ms. Thayer, your TA-

ON the very attractive MS. THAYER, TA, she grins.

STUDENT

You taking a vacation Mr. Hamilton?

BILLY

No. My father's funeral.

The dispersing class goes a little QUIET as Billy packs up for the day. He pulls out his cell phone, turns it on, 27 MISSED CALLS, it RINGS instantly; he answers it, we hear Elvis' smooth voice through the phone singing: *MY BOY!*

BILLY (CONT'D)

(whispers into the phone)  
Listen, I don't know who you are,  
but stop messing with me.

BEHIND HIM the students and Ms. Thayer look concerned.

EXT. HAMILTON ESTATE, GROSSE POINTE MICHIGAN - SAME

A modern gothic castle. All stone and shadows. A TV REPORTER stands in front of the Gate.

TV REPORTER

I'm standing in front of the Hamilton Estate where the company's inner circle is meeting right now, potentially to determine who will succeed William Hamilton III, often referred to as the John Wayne of the auto industry.

INT. HAMILTON ESTATE, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WE PULL AWAY to reveal we are now watching the report on a TV. The report continues as we PAN OVER a room flooded with floral arrangements. The full moon shines through the large picture windows, its light glints off the framed portraits of the generations of Hamilton men that line the walls. A handful of mourners litter the room.

REPORTER (V.O.)

Three days ago Mr. Hamilton was giving his traditional Labor Day address at the Old East Foundry when a boiler exploded killing him and two auto workers. Hamilton Motors, the little 4th of Detroit's Big Three, a privately held company, employs over 50,000 workers making it vital to the economic survival of the city. Hamilton built its fortune on the promise of "American cars, built with American parts, by American workers."

IN FRONT OF THE TV we find PAUL RILEY 50's, CFO for the company, the Hamilton family fixer, rough hewn, rubs his tired eyes. A hand shuts off the TV.

CHARLIE (O.S.)

How you holding up, Paul? You look tired.

Paul turns to find CHARLIE HAMILTON 40's, Billy's Uncle, classically handsome, the younger brother who has worked without complaint in his big brother's shadow for years.

PAUL RILEY

Trouble sleeping since... Bad dreams.

CHARLIE

Oh yeah? Like what?

Paul looks at Charlie, considers, then decides to tell him-

PAUL RILEY

Like I'm driving late at night and suddenly the road is gone.

CHARLIE

That's not hard to interpret, you were his right hand. I was his brother and I didn't spend as much time with him as you.

Paul shakes this off.

PAUL RILEY

I'm just worried about the company. When are we reading the will?

CHARLIE

Jesus Paul, Bill's body isn't even in the ground.

PAUL RILEY

If this transition isn't seamless and swift the Board's gonna panic.

VOICE (O.S.)

Do I look like I'm panicking.

The men turn, surprised to find CORA NEEL 40's, Diana Ross sexy and Condi Rice ruthless, a member of Hamilton's Board.

CHARLIE

Cora, you shouldn't be here.

CORA NEEL

I'm just paying my respects, same as you. Where is the grieving widow anyway?

CHARLIE

I'm going to check on her. When I come down you should be gone.

Charlie leaves the room.

CORA NEEL

So Paul, do you think Bill left the company to you?

ON PAUL, poker faced.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

GERTRUDE HAMILTON late 40's, Billy's mother, sits on her well made bed, the blouse to her St John skirt suit has come undone. She is a ravishing beauty, even in a veil of tears. There is a KNOCK at the door-

GERTRUDE

Come in.

Charlie stands in the door. He takes her in.

CHARLIE

I just wanted to make sure you were okay.

GERTRUDE

Yes. No. I'm not okay at all. This is agony. I just needed to be alone for a moment.

CHARLIE

Would you like me to leave?

GERTRUDE

No, no- stay. Please.

Gertrude looks at him.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

God, I can't remember the last time you and I were alone in a room together.

CHARLIE

It's been a very long time.

Gertrude looks out the window, Charlie's eyes stay on her.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Any word from Billy?

GERTRUDE

Oh yes, he'll be here.

CHARLIE

He should be here now, you need him.

GERTRUDE

He hasn't been home for seven years, what difference does three days make?

She smiles bravely, with more courage than she has.

EXT. HARVARD YARD - AT THE SAME TIME

Ms. Thayer watches Billy unlock his bicycle. She's in love.

MS. THAYER

When's your flight?

BILLY

Tomorrow. I've gone to the airport everyday since I got the call, but I can't seem to get on a plane.

MS. THAYER

Not that I want to see you leave, but how hard could it be to go home?

BILLY

I know, right? When I left home for good my Dad swore that someday I'd come crawling back, and it's just impossible to let him finally win.

MS. THAYER

But how can he win? He's dead.

BILLY

Yeah, that's what I keep trying to tell myself.

Just then Billy's CELL PHONE RINGS! He checks it-

ON BILLY'S PHONE, the CALLER ID reads: POP!

BACK ON BILLY, chilled. Ms. Thayer touches his arm.

BILLY (CONT'D)

We'll talk when I get back.

He rides off, dropping his RINGING cell in a TRASH CAN.

INT. OLD EAST FOUNDRY - SAME

Josh and the Reps are in conversation, looking at the hole.

To the side the Reggie tries to light a cigarette, but every time he strikes a match it *quickly blows out*.

UNION REP 2

Talk to your friend Billy? How'd he take it?

JOSH

How'd you expect? He was in shock.

REGGIE  
 Dammit! Anyone got a lighter? That  
 was my last match-

UNION REP 1  
 Shouldn't smoke in here.

REGGIE  
 Oh, who's gonna fire me? The dead guy?

SECURITY GUARD  
 Here, I got one-

He holds out a BIC, thumbs it, the flame shoots up and...

*The lights in the factory GO BLACK!* Only the flame  
 illuminates the mens' freaked faces.

REGGIE  
 Did I do that?

Then, A PULSATING ORANGE LIGHT illuminates the dark-

JOSH  
 What's going on?

Josh looks around, he finds the car, the same truck in which  
 the radio turned on earlier, its hazard lights are flashing.

REGGIE  
 It's that same truck.

Josh starts to walk carefully through the darkness toward the  
 truck but then, behind him, to his left, another truck's  
 HAZARDS start FLASHING. Then, to his right, another. Then  
 another, then another, until Josh is standing in a sea of  
 FLASHING ORANGE LIGHTS.

BEHIND HIM a radio clicks on in another of the half built  
 trucks--Elvis' voice: haunted, country, operatic, sings **MY BOY.**

WE CUT BACK TO Josh's apprehensive face illuminated in the  
 FLASHING ORANGE LIGHT-

JOSH  
 What the f-

ELVIS SWELLS, DEAFENS...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

Upbeat music, like Detroit's own White Stripes, or Marshall Mathers, or Iggy Pop - As we see shots of the city-

- 1) Steam lifting off the city; The skyline encircled by the People Mover Elevated Train.
- 2) GM Renaissance Center looms; in the lobby the sexiest, souped up new sports car models are on display.
- 3) Comerica Park, next to Lions Stadium.

Over these images WE HEAR...

PAUL RILEY (V.O.)

Detroit's waiting folks. I know we're all still reeling from the tragedy, Bill was a great man, but the city needs us to put away our hankies and get down to business.

INT. HAMILTON MOTORS BOARD ROOM - SAME

Paul Riley holds forth to the assembled board-

PAUL RILEY

Members of the board, Hamilton Motors today is like Betty Saccavachis in 9th grade, she's got issues.

LAUGHTER, pan the faces of the board, Charlie Hamilton, Gertrude (in black), and Cora Neel among them. As Paul continues we...

INT. HAMILTON MOTORS OLD EAST FOUNDRY - SAME

Big, strong men work the line; women with attitude right there along with them--White, Black, Latino.

PAUL RILEY (V.O.)

There are gonna be lawsuits as a result of the accident, the contract with the Union is coming up, and of course we all know sales could be better.

Muscles, engines, tires, eyes behind safety goggles...

PAUL RILEY (CONT'D)  
 In spite of all that, also like  
 Betty, Hamilton is still a hot  
 little number and everyone wants a  
 piece.

At the end of the line a hot WOMAN in a plunging tank top  
 screws a shiny letter **H** onto a truck's grill.

INT. BOARD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Paul pulls an envelope from his briefcase-

PAUL RILEY  
 So without further ado let's see  
 what Bill wanted, who he left his  
 shares and title to.

INT. DETROIT AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

ON BEAT UP CONVERSE, walking, shoelaces untied--

MEG (O.S.)  
 Billy! Billy!

PAN UP, it's Billy approaching the tram on the arrival level,  
 he looks around perplexed.

MEG (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Down here!

ON THE DEPARTURE LEVEL below, MEG RILEY 20's, beautiful, red-  
 haired and vibrant, is waving up at him. He looks around,  
 there's no way to get down to her level; She pulls out her  
 cell-phone, points to it-

MEG (CONT'D)  
 Call me.

ON BILLY, he smiles, she looks adorable, her red hair  
 toppling out of a messy bun. He shouts down to her-

BILLY  
 I lost my phone.

She points. He looks-- A PAY PHONE.

MEG  
 It's 313-

BILLY  
 No, no, I remember.

He goes to the pay phone, searches his pockets, no change.

He gestures to Meg, no change. She gestures, one sec-  
reaches into her pocket-

MEG

Catch!

ON A QUARTER as it goes flying through the air, light glints  
off it. Billy catches it.

AT THE PAY PHONE, Billy dials.

ON THE GROUND FLOOR, Meg answers.

MEG (CONT'D)

Hi, oh my God is it really you?

She smiles up at him.

BILLY

I think so. Wow, it's been a long  
time.

MEG

I'm so sorry about your Dad, it's  
crazy.

BILLY

I know, thanks. Where you headed?

MEG

Chicago, sales conference.

BILLY

Oh, cause I was gonna say you  
look...

MEG

What?

BILLY

Different.

MEG

Different?

BILLY

Mature.

MEG

Old? Like an old lady?

BILLY

No, no, you know, business-y.

MEG

Well you look like you're still wearing the same shoes you wore the day you walked out on me.

BILLY

Wait, who walked out on who? And these are not the same shoes.

MEG

Are they the same brand?

BILLY

They're not the same pair.

MEG

I think your train's coming.

Billy looks, the TRAM is approaching.

BILLY

It's okay, there'll be another.

MEG

Well my plane's boarding so...

They look at each other from this distance for a moment, not sure how to say good bye. Meg fights a pang, old love.

BILLY

Good. You look good Meg.

He hangs up, smiling to himself, as he jumps on his train.

INT. BOARD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Cora's mouth hangs open-

CORA NEEL

Billy?!? Is this is a joke? Was William deranged?

Everyone starts to speak at once, baffled. Paul tries to hide his rage and confusion.

GERTRUDE

No, I'm sorry Cora, but that is way out of line-

CHARLIE

Alright everyone-

CORA NEEL

Of course he passed over you Charlie, he never held your eco-friendly business acumen in very high esteem.

CHARLIE

You don't know anything about my relationship with my brother, so enough Cora.

CORA NEEL

Bill didn't invite me onto this board to keep quiet.

PAUL RILEY

Yeah, why the hell did he invite you onto this board?

The question hangs in the air, Cora brushes it off-

CORA NEEL

Unless I'm wrong, didn't Bill disown his son 7 years ago? The kid chose physiology over cars-

GERTRUDE

Philosophy.

CORA NEEL

Philosophy, physiology, phys-ed, he didn't want to work here then, now he makes him the boss? It's absurd. The board has to be allowed to do its job and choose the next CEO, ASAP.

PAUL RILEY

One thing I know, no information about this mess can leak til we have a plan. Nothing draws vultures faster than a headless body.

Gertrude gasps, Charlie comes to the rescue.

CHARLIE

Paul! Everyone! Billy gets in today, we'll see what he wants to do. When do we meet again?

CORA

I say the day after tomorrow. That's 48 hours to get your ducks in a row.

INT. ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie and Paul step into the glass elevator, 42 stories above the city.

ON THE DOORS, about to close, when Gertrude steps in, Cora about to follow suit- Gertrude looks at her-

GERTRUDE  
Take the next one.

The DOORS CLOSE- the elevator begins its descent.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)  
You'll help me talk to him Charlie?  
He always looked up to you.

CHARLIE  
I'll try, but he hasn't exactly  
been interested in listening to any  
of us in a long time.

PAUL RILEY  
I should talk to him.

GERTRUDE  
Fine, we'll all talk to him.  
Tomorrow night, we'll have dinner.

The elevator DINGS open, and Gertrude strides out, Charlie and Paul both linger a little too long on her ass in her tight leather pants.

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Paul's secretary hands him his mail.

SECRETARY  
Your wife's in there.

Paul takes a deep breath, continues into his office, and closes the door behind him.

DOROTHY RILEY (DOTTY), 40's, Burberry clad, tightly put together and ready to burst with anticipation, sits on his desk.

DOTTY  
What happened? Was it you?

PAUL RILEY  
It was Billy.

Dotty's face falls into granite.

DOTTY  
After everything you've done?

Paul shrugs.

DOTTY (CONT'D)  
But Billy doesn't know thing one-

PAUL RILEY  
We're all having dinner tomorrow,  
to see what he wants to do.

DOTTY  
So it's not over...?

PAUL RILEY  
Dotty, let it rest, we have  
everything we could ever want.

DOTTY  
You just think that because you  
grew up poor.

Dotty presses Paul's intercom button:

DOTTY (CONT'D)  
Get my daughter on the phone.

Paul slumps behind his desk, rifles through the mail, stops  
on a letter-

ON THE LETTER, addressed to him, typed, like on an **old  
typewriter**. Paul fingers it nervously.

SECRETARY'S VOICE  
(through the intercom)  
Ms. Riley's on the line.

Dotty gestures and Paul picks up the phone. He smiles.

PAUL RILEY  
Hi, muffin-top. Your mom wants to  
ask you something.

Dotty takes the phone annoyed.

INT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Meg is buckling her seat belt, she talks into the phone.

MEG  
Mommy, tell Daddy that name isn't  
cute.  
(she listens)  
(MORE)

MEG (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I just bumped into him. Can  
I bring Leo to the dinner?

LEO (O.S.)  
Bring me to what dinner?

Meg turns to the stud in a suit sitting next to her, LEO MOORE 32, African-American. Meg smiles, places her hand on Leo's thigh.

MEG  
Can I call you back?

INT. PAUL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

While Dotty argues on the phone, Paul opens the letter under his desk, removes a sheet of paper -

ON THE LETTER, typed:

*"BLOOD WILL HAVE BLOOD"*

Paul shudders. He unlocks a drawer, places the letter surreptitiously into the drawer where AN IDENTICALLY ADDRESSED ENVELOPE, same **vintage typescript**, sits.

INT. AIRPORT, BAGGAGE CAROUSEL - CONTINUOUS

Billy reaches for his bag, as he does... A HAND pulls his bag off the carousel. Billy turns.

JOSH  
Hey buddy.

Billy smiles, the men hug.

BILLY  
Oh my god, it's so good to see you,  
what are you doing here?

JOSH  
I sent Jeeves home. Thought I'd  
give you a ride.

EXT. DETROIT, HIGHWAY - DUSK

The sky glows apocalyptic pink and orange. The highway is flanked on both sides by brightly colored houses in ruin, trees grow up through them, vines cover them: *like a city under a spell waiting to be broken.*

INT. JOSH'S HAMILTON SEDAN - SAME

ON BILLY staring out the window, a smile on his face.

JOSH  
The city's really gone downhill,  
hasn't it?

BILLY  
It's even more beautiful than I  
remember it.

Billy sticks his head out the window.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
(shouts to the city)  
I'VE MISSED YOU, BABY!

Billy gets back in the car, amped.

JOSH  
Then why'd you stay away so long?

BILLY  
Dad poisoned the place for me.

JOSH  
So now that he's gone, will you  
stay?

BILLY  
Nah, I'm just here for the funeral,  
I've got classes next week.

BILLY'S POV: Josh turns off at the exit for Hamilton Motors-

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Why are we getting off here?

JOSH  
Actually there's something I want  
to show you.

EXT. FACTORY, OLD EAST FOUNDRY - LATER

There's a crackle of nervous energy in the air as Billy and Josh approach the entrance to the East Foundry; They're met by Reggie and the Security Guard.

REGGIE  
Mr. Hamilton, we're all so sorry.  
Your father was a great man.

BILLY  
Thanks. So Josh says my old man's  
favorite song kept coming on the  
radio last night?

REGGIE

Yeah man, it was spooky.

JOSH

We thought you should check it out.

BILLY

Okay, let's check it out Shaggy.

The Security Guard swipes his card key. The HEAVY INDUSTRIAL METAL SLIDING DOORS slowly GRIND apart- then abruptly SHRIEK to a stop leaving about an 18 inch gap between them.

BILLY (CONT'D)

That's ominous.

REGGIE

Damn thing's ancient- whole place should be leveled, no offense.

The Security Guard re-swipes his card, and the guys grunt and kick to open the unbudging doors. Then, decisively, Billy begins wiggling through the gap.

BILLY

Let me try from inside.

JOSH

Hey, maybe one of us-

BILLY

You're all too fat. Too much cheese and Stroh's.

They all look at their guts. It's true. He's skinny and he's in.

INT. FACTORY - CONTINUOUS

Billy looks around the dark factory trying to get his bearings, he calls out through the door-

BILLY

Where's the light?

Suddenly the door CRASHES SHUT closing the others out! Billy pulls on the door desperately. It won't budge.

BILLY (SHOUTING) (CONT'D)

HA HA! Very funny...

He listens. It's silent. *Then*, from deep in the factory, a RADIO CRACKLES ON--Elvis singing *My Boy*. Billy turns to the sound, his face pale.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 (whispers)  
 Hysterical.

Swallowing a world of fear Billy gropes toward the music.

INT. ASSEMBLY LINE - CONTINUOUS

Billy moves through the ominous assembly line with its half built trucks, his eyes slowly adjusting to the dark, the song grows LOUDER and LOUDER as he approaches...

THE FIRE SINGED HOLE. The police tape flutters.

BILLY'S POV: A half built Hamilton Heavy sits in front of the hole, the silhouette of a MAN in the driver's seat. Billy tries to keep his shit together.

BILLY  
 Okay... I see you... ha, ha...

The silhouette is still. Elvis CROONS....

Slowly, Billy approaches the car, straining to see, he can't make out the figure through the dusty windows. Billy takes a DEEP BREATH and wipes the dust off the driver's side window; he looks in...

A CRASH TEST DUMMY.

Billy exhales with relief, giggles.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 Dummy.

He turns the radio off, takes a step back-

*SQUISH* ... Billy, stops, looks around, he takes another step-  
*SQUISH* ... and another... *SQUISH*....

Billy looks down:

GOD'S EYE POV: Billy stands in a widening pool of oozing dark, thick liquid.

He stoops to touch it. He holds up his fingers close to his face - they're *BLOOD red!*

Billy takes the fuck off out of there, *slips, splashes* into the viscous pool, scrambles out, through the assembly line, he careens into machinery, trips over truck parts...

He tears toward the entrance which suddenly, miraculously bangs open! Josh and the GUYS burst in.

GUYS

What was it? What happened?

Billy, whiter than paper, stares at his hand, which he now realizes is soaked in black oil! Billy shakes his head, totally confused, his heart pounding:

BILLY

Nothing... nothing...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The biggest garage you've ever seen. In the dim light we can just barely make out about 20 of the most beautiful antique and custom built cars. We find 15 YEAR OLD BILLY, groping his way through the dark-

YOUNG BILLY

Dad? Dad? Are you in here?

YOUNG BILLY'S POV: of a particularly unique custom built 70's muscle car, the dim figure of a man in the driver's seat, his back to us-

YOUNG BILLY (CONT'D)

(scared)

Dad, it's me Billy, is that you?

Billy is about to take a step closer when -

INT. KORMAN HOUSE - THE NEXT MORNING

BILLY'S EYES pop open, wide, freaked, dis-oriented.

BILLY'S POV: a simple metal cross, Jesus' crucified body hangs, twisted in agony... next to it, a clown and a puppy dog and various other tcha-tchki's--all warm and cozy, the house Billy never had.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Hamilton? Are you alright?

WE PULL BACK to reveal Billy, still grubby and oil stained, lying on a corduroy couch. Josh, a little the worse for wear, and his father, MARTY, stand above him.

BILLY

How did I get here?

MARTY

From the looks of it, not soberly.  
Coffee?

INT. JOSH'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Early morning light pours into the kitchen. The guys sit around the table drinking coffee.

MARTY

Real sorry about your Dad.

BILLY

Thanks.

MARTY

I don't envy Josh here for having had to negotiate with him, they didn't call him "The Iron Fist" for nothing, but he was an extraordinary man.

BILLY

No, you're an extraordinary man, Marty. Look what you turned out here-

He pats Josh on the back-

BILLY (CONT'D)

Worked your ass off so that Josh could go to the best private high school with the likes of me, then off to college to become a big ass Union Lawyer, take down my family.

Josh LAUGHS.

JOSH

I don't want to take down your family, I just want to make sure we get what we're due.

At that moment a PHONE RINGS. Billy jumps. Josh goes off to answer it.

MARTY

Don't be so hard on your father's memory. There's things about him you don't know.

BILLY

All due respect, Marty, there's things about him you don't know.

JOSH

It's your mom, and she's pissed.

INT. CHICAGO, GRAND HYATT - SAME

As we travel down the fancy carpeted hallway...

MEG (O.S.)

I grew up in these cars--started in a car seat, moved up to the driver's seat-

We pass a sign the reads: "CLOSING THE DEAL" with Meg Riley.

INT. CONVENTION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Fancy new Hamilton cars are on display; Meg stands at a podium in front of the sexy new Hamilton PDQ sports car.

MEG

Had my first road trip, first date,  
first kiss, first time...well, I  
won't go into details, however, I  
can just tell you Hamiltons have  
always had very accommodating back  
seats.

LAUGHTER, CAR SALES MEN in suits watch her, mouths ajar,  
among them Leo, both appreciative and slightly jealous.

MEG (CONT'D)

And hopefully someday I'll be  
strapping my own little bundle of  
joy in the back seat. Now, that's  
just my Hamilton story, you have to  
find your own. See they got it  
wrong in that movie when they say  
"always be closing", what we should  
always be doing is opening: opening  
doors, relationships, our hearts,  
always be opening.

Meg smiles, it's genuine, the room is in love. APPLAUSE.

INT. CONVENTION ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Meg is surrounded by admirers, Leo finds her, kisses her.

MEG

How was I?

LEO

Beautiful. I feel so open.

Meg turns on her PDA which immediately buzzes. She mutes it.

MEG

Ugh, my mom's left like 9 messages,  
you'd think this dinner was like  
the Last Supper or something.

LEO

Look, if you have to go to the  
Hamilton's I'm fine with it...  
unless I shouldn't be?

MEG

There's nothing between me and Billy anymore, plus I told my mom it's impossible, all the flights are booked.

There's a subtle commotion in the showroom as the assembled dealers are drawn to the window.

MEG (CONT'D)

Tonight I will be eating deep dish delivered to our room, by swift and discreet wait staff, with you.

LEO

I love it when you're wrong. Turn around-

Meg turns and sees the crowd at the window looking up as a helicopter descends into the parking lot. A wind blown Burberry clad woman opens the door of the chopper.

MEG

Mother....!

EXT. HAMILTON ESTATE, FRONT DOOR - LATER

ON BILLY, frozen at his front door. Finally, he reaches his hand out to open the door and... *it creaks open on its own.* Billy looks around freaked, before stepping into...

INT. HAMILTON ESTATE, FOYER - CONTINUOUS

The massive foyer. It's quiet. Suddenly he is greeted by a jovial BUTLER and two SERVANTS who help him with his things--

BUTLER

Mr. Hamilton, welcome home, we're so sorry about your father.

BILLY

Wow Tom, you've gone gray.

BUTLER

We all age. Except your mother of course, she only ages in reverse.

BILLY

Where is she?

BUTLER

Swimming.

INT. HAMILTON ESTATE, INDOOR LAP POOL - MOMENTS LATER

Billy walks through the damp, steamy pool room; At the edge of the pool he watches his mother for a moment as she swims its length. Finally Gertrude notices her son.

BILLY

Sorry mom.

Gertrude pulls herself out of the pool, she looks spectacular. She towels off-

GERTRUDE

I won't lie, I'm really hurt. I gave you a few days to process, I didn't insist you come straight home, but then you're here and you don't want to see me?

BILLY

Josh hijacked me at the airport-

GERTRUDE

Don't blame Josh.

BILLY

No, I'm not blaming Josh, look it hasn't been easy getting here, but I'm here now. I'm here for you. How are you mom?

Gertrude nods, quiet, then...

GERTRUDE

It's impossible to comprehend, I kissed him goodbye in the morning and... it was forever.

Billy nods, reaches his arms out-

BILLY

Come here.

She comes into his arms, cries against his chest. Then, she pulls away, collects herself.

GERTRUDE

Welcome home baby.  
(she takes him in)  
You look handsome, but your hair's a little too long.

Billy LAUGHS. Gertrude takes his hand, leads him up the spiral staircase.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)  
So, do you have plans with Josh  
tonight?

BILLY  
Tonight is yours.

GERTRUDE  
Good because I've invited Charlie  
and Paul to dinner.

BILLY  
Okay, I can't wait to see Uncle  
Charlie, but why Paul?

The staircase leads into the STUDY.

IN THE STUDY

GERTRUDE  
Billy sit down.

Billy looks at his mother, notices how serious her face is,  
he sits.

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)  
We need to discuss what you intend  
to do with your inheritance.

BILLY  
Okay, sure, what did I inherit? The  
golf clubs?

Gertrude looks at him, then, softly:

GERTRUDE  
Everything.

BILLY  
Everything?

GERTRUDE  
The company, the titles, the  
shares. Everything.

ON BILLY, floored.

BILLY  
What?

GERTRUDE  
He wanted you to have it.

BILLY  
Unbelievable.

GERTRUDE  
Why is it so unbelievable?

BILLY  
Because seven years ago he said  
enough was enough, and if I didn't  
join the business he never wanted  
to see me again.

GERTRUDE  
He couldn't take being rejected.

BILLY  
Well I took it to heart.

GERTRUDE  
I know he could be cold as a father-

BILLY  
Mom, he was a stone to me, we  
barely spoke.

Gertrude looks at her son, distraught.

GERTRUDE  
Not when you were a boy. Then at  
least you had cars. You used to  
spend every weekend out in that  
garage building them together.

BILLY  
Doesn't mean we spoke. The only  
words we said to each other were  
throttle, axle, wrench-

GERTRUDE  
At least it was something, but then  
one day even that ended. What  
happened? I never saw you under the  
hood of a car again and you shut  
him out.

Billy looks at the floor, then back at his mom-

BILLY  
I guess it was just teenage  
rebellion.

GERTRUDE  
That wasn't teenage rebellion.

A heavy beat.

BILLY

Look I'm just here for the funeral,  
then I'm going back to Boston.

GERTRUDE

What about the company? The board  
has to know by tomorrow what we  
plan to do.

BILLY

Let Paul run the company, he was  
Dad's friggin' shadow, no one will  
even notice the difference. Or sell  
the damn thing, what do I care?

Gertrude, nods, enough for now.

GERTRUDE

Alright. I just want you to do  
what's best for you.

She smiles, goes to a desk drawer, removes an envelope-

GERTRUDE (CONT'D)

Here, he left you this too, part of  
the inheritance.

Billy takes the envelope.

BILLY

What is it?

Gertrude shrugs, she doesn't know, she reaches out a gentle  
hand to her son's face, then she leaves the room; Billy looks  
at the envelope, then angrily, he tosses the envelope into  
the waste paper basket.

ON THE WASTE PAPER BASKET, the envelope sits in it.

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - EARLY EVENING

WE PAN through this busy upscale restaurant, to find a  
striking HOSTESS clad in black, with a JAGGED SCAR along her  
cheek, leading a tall handsome MAN through to a corner table  
where Cora Neel and some members of Hamilton's Board wait.

Cora stands, smiles graciously -

CORA NEEL

Herr Merkel, thank you so much for  
coming.

HERR MERKEL

Call me Hans, bitte, call me Hans.

CORA NEEL

Hans.

She turns back to the table-

CORA NEEL (CONT'D)

Hans meet some of my friends from  
Hamilton's Board. This is Hans  
Merkel of Volkswagon.

The striking Hostess lingers by the table -

INT. BILLY'S BATHROOM - LATER

Billy turns on the tub, a jet stream of water shoots out.  
Billy moves to the mirror, checks his tired, troubled face,  
shakes his head at his image -

BILLY

Why won't you let me go?

ON BILLY'S FACE, his eyes, WE MOVE IN ON THEM until they  
become...

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The EYES of his younger self. We find the 15 year old Billy  
where we left him, staring at the dim figure of a man who  
seems to be shaking, angry.

YOUNG BILLY

Dad, are you okay?

Young Billy steps closer, and sees the man is not alone in  
the car: in the passenger seat Billy sees a strange woman who  
looks *weirdly like his mother*. The woman sees Billy too.

Billy's father turns, he looks caught for a second, then his  
face goes black. Dad gets out of the car, slams the door,  
inside the woman starts SHOUTING.

In Dad's hand is a *silver pistol*. Dad shoves the pistol down  
the back of his pants, balls his fists, and advances on  
Billy.

YOUNG BILLY (CONT'D)

Dad! I didn't see anything! Dad,  
what are you doing?

BILLY'S POV: his Dad coming at him like a terrible hurricane.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

BACK ON Billy's eyes, he shakes his head, trying to erase the terrible memory.

The room starts to fill with steam, Billy pulls off his clothes, his muscles are sore. He turns off the water and lowers himself into the steaming hot tub.

DRIP... DRIP... DRIP...

Billy closes his eyes, relaxing into the water. He starts to WHISTLE, ELVIS' *MY BOY*.

LONG SHOT of the steamy bathroom, *do we see something in the steam? A figure?*

BACK ON BILLY, whistling, eyes closed, peaceful.

Then, gradually, Billy notices he isn't whistling the tune alone. *It's a duet.*

Billy stops whistling. His partner continues for two short notes... Billy's eyes dart open--

SILENCE.

Billy looks around the room, *it's empty.* Quiet.

Then, Billy looks down in front of him, he GASPS! Floating in the water is *the envelope his father left him.* Billy picks the soggy envelope out of the water, examines it for a moment before opening it...

**A KEY** slides out; Billy stares at it.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. REGGIE'S HOUSE - DAY

Labor Day BBQ--families litter the lawn of Reggie's modest home on 7 Mile: Burgers sizzle on the Grill, a football flies through the air, Kanye raps from the stereo.

Marty holds a plate in one hand, a beer in the other, Josh helps load his dad's plate from the bbq buffet.

MARTY

I can't have that... I can't have that either, blood pressure... I don't like how that looks.

JOSH

Why did I bring you?

MARTY

Slaw looks good. I'll just do slaw.

Out of nowhere Reggie practically tackles Josh.

REGGIE

Josh, man, so glad you're here. So rumor is your boy Billy's taking over.

JOSH

I'm hearing the same things.

REGGIE

You know my sister, right?

Reggie's sister ROZ, 25, direct and beautiful, appears -

ROZ

Hey Josh, nice to see you.

Josh blushes, he has a mad crush.

JOSH

You too, hi, how are you?

ROZ

Good. You look good, you get a haircut?

JOSH

Yeah, no, not recently, but--

REGGIE

Are you two flirting?

ROZ  
I don't know, are we?

JOSH  
I'm flirting if you're flirting.

ROZ  
Well, I'm flirting if I still have  
a job next week.

JOSH  
What?

ROZ  
(calls out)  
DJ, over here.

DJ approaches, the Striking Hostess with *the scar* on her face  
from the restaurant.

ROZ (CONT'D)  
DJ hosts over at The Grill. Tell  
Josh what you heard.

DJ  
Some members of Hamilton's Board  
meeting with Volkswagon, planning  
to sell the Company overseas.

ON JOSH as he takes this in.

REGGIE  
So I guess you better have a talk  
with Billy. Unless you want my  
sister moving out of town to look  
for another job.

Josh looks around, he now realizes he is surrounded by men  
and women, families looking at him, anxiety on their faces.

JOSH  
I'll talk to him. They can't sell.

Marty puts a hand on his son's shoulder.

MARTY  
That's my boy.  
(then, to the people)  
You won't let us down, will you son?

Everybody smiles up at Josh, in spite of the pressure, Josh  
smiles back.

INT. CHARLIE'S HAMILTON HYBRID SUV - DAY

Charlie drives, Billy shotgun.

BILLY

So, where we going Uncle Charlie?

CHARLIE

Thought you could come with me on a little ride before dinner. Family obligations.

(then)

It's good to have you home, kid. Wish it could have been different circumstances.

BILLY

There are four things I've missed: You, Josh, Detroit, and the fourth I can't say.

CHARLIE

What's her name? Oh, not your mother?!

BILLY

You kidding? Mom visits like every other month, I can't get away from her.

CHARLIE

This is it.

Charlie pulls over in front of...

EXT. DEARBORN, HOUSE - DAY

Billy and Charlie get out in front of a small run down house. Charlie goes to the door, presses the doorbell.

The door opens, a WOMAN appears, her face puffy with grief-

WOMAN

Hello?

INT. DEARBORN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The WOMAN 30's sits on the couch, her son, a SMALL BOY 10, with EERILY LARGE EYES sits next to her. The boy's eyes seem to burrow into Billy. Billy looks away from the boy.

CHARLIE

I just want you to know that we are so sorry for the loss of your husband in the accident, and if there is anything the company can do, we will do it. It's our fault, and we're gonna make it right.

The woman looks at him, thankful.

WOMAN

I'm sorry for your loss too.

CHARLIE

Thank you.

WOMAN

Your brother was a great man, he kept us all working. Do you know who's taking over from him?

Billy looks at the floor-

CHARLIE

Whoever it is, our family doesn't shirk its responsibilities. You'll be taken care of.

Billy looks up to find the boy's BIG EERIE EYES on him.

EXT. HAMILTON ESTATE, COURTYARD - A LITTLE LATER

Billy hops out of Charlie's SUV. Charlie follows.

BILLY

Why'd you take me there?

CHARLIE

Because your mother said you might be thinking of selling, and I wanted you to see what's at stake.

BILLY

I don't know what I'm going to do but if making house calls like that is what comes with the job I don't want it.

CHARLIE

But Billy that's what's special about Hamilton: the workers, the company, the family, we're all one.

(MORE)

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Yeah it's heavy, carrying a city on your shoulders, but your father knew you could do it, I know you can do it. And more than that I think you should.

BILLY

And I think you got the wrong man.

Just then the front door opens and Gertrude, Paul, Dotty, and Meg come out to greet them.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Meg? What are you doing here?

Meg shrugs, blushes slightly-

MEG

Oh, my mom, uhm, invited me.

BILLY

Huh. You don't say.

INT. DINING ROOM - LATER

Everyone is seated around the table, halfway through the game hen. A large gilt framed mirror on one wall. Dotty chatters-

DOTTY

How was your flight?

BILLY

Fine.

He turns to Meg.

BILLY (CONT'D)

How was yours?

MEG

Oh great.

(explains)

I bumped into Billy at the airport.

DOTTY

Oh, with Leo?

MEG

No, he was in the bathroom.

BILLY

Who's Leo?

DOTTY  
He works for the Company, with  
Paul.

Paul nods.

MEG  
And he's my boyfriend.

BILLY  
Oh really? Is it serious?

DOTTY  
No.

MEG  
Yes, actually, it is.

DOTTY  
But it's very new.

BILLY  
How long?

MEG  
A year, next month.

BILLY  
Wow.

DOTTY  
Well it's not like they're engaged.

Everyone looks at Meg.

MEG  
No, we're not.

BILLY  
Oh, that's too bad

They look at each other. To Billy's right a VOICE ASKS-

VOICE (O.S.)  
Could you fill my glass?

Billy does, places the glass to his right without looking.  
Out of the awkward pause Paul gets down to business:

PAUL RILEY  
Can we cut the BS? Look, we're all  
in shock from this tragic accident,  
but Billy, tomorrow we have to tell  
the Board what the plan is.

DOTTY

It must be a very difficult decision, especially at a time when the company needs someone who understands fiscal responsibility.

CHARLIE

You mean someone who'll cut 20,000, jobs without blinking?

DOTTY

Better that than solar cars, and windmill trucks-

PAUL RILEY

Dotty I can be my own advocate.

GERTRUDE

I don't see why anything has to change. Bill had us on the right track-

CHARLIE

Actually, it wasn't sustainable -

The same VOICE ASKS Billy-

VOICE (O.S.)

Are you going to finish that?

Billy passes his game hen to his right without looking.

DOTTY

I know it must've been hard Charlie, being the little brother, the one that never got the girl-

PAUL RILEY

Dotty-

Billy *slams* his hand down on the table-

BILLY

Enough! Shut up! This is a mess! This is a nepotistic, dysfunctional...You know what? You just made my choice really easy-

They all look at him expectant-

BILLY (CONT'D)

I can't choose any of you. I won't.  
Let the Board decide what to do  
with it. Let them vote on who it  
should be.

CHARLIE

What?... you want to cede your  
power to the board?

BILLY

And to the victor goes the spoils.

VOICE (O.S.)

Pass the salt.

BILLY

Jesus-

Billy slams down the salt shaker to his right and sees for the first time: his wine glass, his plate, *set before an empty seat!*

Billy looks around the table and something catches his eye in the mirror: seated to his right in the reflection-

*Billy's Father!*

*The ghost's face is hard. And, before Billy can breath - the ghost vanishes.*

Billy BOLTS back from his chair sending it toppling over, his face ashen. Everyone watches him, concerned.

GERTRUDE

Billy? Are you okay?

BILLY

What? Excuse me, I need some air.

Billy leaves the room. Dorothy glares at Meg-

MEG

Excuse me.

And Meg follows after him.

EXT. HAMILTON ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

Rain pours down, a CRACK OF LIGHTENING brightens the sky. Meg girds herself and takes off through it.

INT. HAMILTON ESTATE, GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

We recognize the garage from the flashbacks, with its beautiful antique and custom built cars. We find Billy sitting in the driver's seat of the familiar, custom built '70s muscle car. The passenger door opens, Meg peeks in.

MEG

Hey freak show, can I join you?

BILLY

I don't know what's going on with me, I think I might be going crazy.

MEG

This is pretty intense, Billy.

Billy nods. Meg gets in, takes in the car: all crazy gadgets and gizmos.

MEG (CONT'D)

What is this?

BILLY

This was our favorite. Dad and I practically built this thing from the rims up. Unfortunately we weren't really talking by the time I was old enough to drive.

Billy nods, runs his hands over the steering wheel, it's religious.

BILLY (CONT'D)

God, I have always wanted to take her for a spin.

And with that, Billy reaches into his pocket and pulls out...

*THE KEY*, we recognize it, it's the one his father left him!

Billy puts the key into the ignition, turns it, the car REVS to life. The car SCREECHES out of the garage...

EXT. HAMILTON - CONTINUOUS

VERRRRRROOOOOOOOMMMMM! Billy's car speeds along the road.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Meg grips the dash, she SHRIEKS with delight.

ON BILLY concentrating, watching the speedometer, the needle rises.

EXT. DOWNTOWN DETROIT - CONTINUOUS

The car speeds down the empty city street, it SCREECHES into a TRIPLE DONUT, coming to a perfect stop in front of the entrance to a shiny new Loft Building--Meg's abode.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Meg BREATHLESS, EXHILARATED

BILLY

How dya' like that door to door  
service?

MEG

Wow, was that like a mother fucking  
donut?

BILLY

No, that was a mother fucking  
cruller.

He looks at her, smiles, she looks at him, and then, the nervous energy, the danger, the fact that they never quite got over each other, they start to...

KISS. It's intense, passionate. Meg pulls away -

MEG

Every day for the last seven years  
I work at forgetting you.

BILLY

Me too, guess we suck at  
forgetting.

MEG

I can't do this, look I'm in a  
serious relationship with someone  
who respects me, someone who  
doesn't want to change me.

BILLY

I didn't want to change you, I just  
wanted you to leave Detroit, not  
sell cars, and not go to church  
every Sunday. I mean, I can't  
believe you finally moved out of  
your parents' house.

This stings Meg.

MEG

Yeah Billy, I grew up. You should  
give it a try.

She starts to get out of the car-

BILLY

Meg!

She SLAMS the door, and as she does the GLOVE COMPARTMENT  
POPS OPEN.

ON BILLY, he sees something in the glove. Slowly Billy  
reaches his hand in, he pulls out...

*A SHINY silver pistol, it's the same gun Billy's father was  
carrying in the flashback!*

ON BILLY, staring with horror and awe at the gun in his hand.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. DINER - MORNING

The place is full of workers enjoying hearty breakfasts before the 9 AM shift. Billy enters, wiping sleep from his eyes. Josh sits at the counter, with his Dad--

JOSH

Hey, thanks for coming.

BILLY

Sure, what's up? Hey Marty.  
Whatcha' eatin there?

MARTY

Aw, egg white omelet, god damn cholesterol.

Billy takes a seat, orders a coffee.

JOSH

So what are you gonna do at the big meeting today?

BILLY

What do you mean: what am I gonna do?

JOSH

I got some information, some members of the board met with Volkswagon, they want to sell Hamilton to the Germans, move our jobs overseas.

BILLY

Well, if that's what they want to do, I'm gonna let them decide. My family's been making unilateral decisions for the last 100 years, its time for a more democratic approach.

JOSH

Do we get a vote? The people who actually make the cars?

Billy, annoyed, reaches for his wallet-

BILLY

That's what I'm gonna' do, I'll see you later.

Josh calls across the restaurant to a table of workers-

JOSH  
Hey Bob? What are you going to DO?

BOB  
What?

JOSH  
Next week, y'know? If they sell  
Hamilton Motors overseas?

Billy stops, annoyed. Bob looks at Josh, thinks, then:

BOB  
I don't know, kill myself.

Josh calls across the bar to a family with two snotty nosed  
kids -

JOSH  
Hey Tony, what will you do if they  
sell Hamilton Motors?

Tony looks at his wife-

TONY  
I don't know, what did Bob say?

JOSH  
Kill himself.

TONY  
Yeah, that sounds right, kill myself-

WIFE  
Not in front of the kids.

Josh calls on SAM, a guy like all the rest.

JOSH  
How about you Sam?

SAM  
I don't know what everybody thinks  
is so funny. I'm not gonna kill  
myself, but I have no idea what I'm  
gonna do if I can't build cars. I  
have no idea.

BILLY  
You know what? I don't need this.

Billy starts to go-

JOSH

I know you Billy. You love Detroit, you love cars, and I don't know what your Dad did to poison it all for you, but if you want to get back at him, then take back what you love. Take it back, otherwise he wins.

Billy throws his money on the counter and storms out. Josh shakes his head furious, Marty follows after Billy...

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

MARTY

Hey Billy! Wait up!

Billy approaches his car (his Dad's car), stops, turns-

BILLY

What?

MARTY

Listen, there's something I think you should know, reason Josh went to that fancy private school with you, I didn't send him there. That was your Dad.

BILLY

What?

MARTY

Bunch of us from Down River and 8 Mile who had been working at the plant for generations, he paid for our kids to go there, so that they could "follow their dreams" or what not. Your Dad made us promise not to tell, he didn't want people to think he was soft.

Billy doesn't know how to respond, Marty looks at him-

MARTY (CONT'D)

Please, uhm, Josh doesn't know, he thinks I... I wouldn't want to disappoint him.

BILLY

I gotta go.

Troubled, Billy starts to get into the car-

MARTY

There was a lot of good in that man, a lot of good.

Billy drives off leaving Marty watching after him.

INT. HAMILTON MOTORS BOARD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Charlie, Paul, Gertrude, Cora Neel sit with the assembled board.

CORA NEEL

Will Billy be joining us?

GERTRUDE

I don't think so. Um, Billy has instructed me to inform everyone that he wishes to vest the Board with the power of his shares. He wants you to decide how Hamilton moves forward.

The board shifts. Cora smiles wider than wide.

CORA NEEL

Well in that case, there's someone I'd like everyone to meet.

Cora goes to the door and ushers in *Herr Merkel*.

INT. BILLY'S DAD'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Billy takes off out of the parking lot and we follow him as he drives along:

BILLY'S POV OUT THE WINDOW: Woodward Avenue, Detroit yearning: In VOICE OVER we hear Herr Merkel-

HERR MERKEL (V.O.)

There will be closings, tears will be shed, jobs will be eliminated...

Workers wait to enter a factory. Shoppers wait for stores to open. Students wait for busses. A city waits, *spell bound*.

ON BILLY, as he struggles with himself.

HERR MERKEL (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Manufacturing will be done where it's economically and logically feasible to manufacture.

Billy pulls up to a red light. It's too much, the city's weight. He rubs his eyes.

In the car to his left, a mom, with three screaming kids in back struggles to get her engine to turn over. It SPUTTERS, near dead. The light turns green. Cars HONK. The mom mouths prayers to her engine. Billy drives off, leaving the mom behind.

Then we see his car pull over and park. Billy gets out and walks through the traffic to the mother.

BILLY  
What happened?

MOTHER  
I think it's dead.

BILLY  
Pop the hood.

Billy rolls his sleeves, takes a breath, and lifts the hood. He lays his hands on the engine like a surgeon handling a heart. And just as soon as he's in, he's out.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Try it.

She does, the engine TURNS. Billy closes the hood, his hands once again covered in motor oil, Billy looks at them.

MOTHER  
Thanks, you saved me.

The mother looks into Billy's eyes, then she waves, and the woman drives out of sight.

INT. BOARD ROOM - LITTLE LATER

Herr Merkel wraps up his spiel-

HERR MERKEL  
But there will be a future for the  
Hamilton Brand-

Just then, the door opens and Billy steps in, his sleeves rolled up, his hands still oily from fixing the car; everyone looks at him-

BILLY  
Excuse me, sorry I'm late-

The Board looks perturbed; Gertrude watches her boy.

HERR MERKEL

Uhm, yes as I was saying: there will be a future, and you will all reap those fruits, juicy fruits, for many generations to come.

The BOARD looks pleased.

CORA NEEL

Should we put it to a vote?

BILLY

No.

CORA NEEL

Oh, Billy. Did you want to say something?

BILLY

No, I'm just not sure I want you to vote now.

CORA NEEL

I thought you wanted us to do our job?

BILLY

I'm just concerned you might not do the right thing.

CORA NEEL

Oh? And what is the right thing?

BILLY

That's what *I'm* here to *tell* you.

The board is stunned. He holds up an oil stained hand.

BILLY (CONT'D)

You know what this is? I left home a long time ago thinking I could just wash my hands of it. But I can't, cause this is my blood. It's the blood of my family, the blood of this city. And it's not for sale. So I'm taking the power back, and I'm giving it to Charlie. Charlie, you wanna build cars in Detroit?

CHARLIE

I do.

BILLY

Done. You're running the show.

Billy looks at the assembled board, they are awestruck.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
That's the right thing, and that's  
what we're doing.

Gertrude smiles at her son, Paul tries to keep his face from falling. Charlie looks like he ate a cake.

INT. HAMILTON MOTORS BOARD ROOM - LATER

Charlie shakes hands with board members as they file out of the room. Billy approaches Charlie.

BILLY  
So Uncle Charlie, you happy?

CHARLIE  
The only thing that would have made me happier is if you'd taken the throne yourself.

Gertrude comes up to Billy, beaming-

GERTRUDE  
I'm so proud of you.

BILLY  
Well, don't get used it. As soon as the funeral's over, I'm on the next plane home.

She nods, takes his hand, they leave.

Paul and Charlie are left alone in the room.

PAUL RILEY  
Congratulations. Now all you have to do is figure out how to spend less on employee benefits per car than we spend on steel.

CHARLIE  
I can't even have this moment?

PAUL RILEY  
(jokingly)  
No. Not unless you've got some magic recipe for busting a union.

Charlie presses his palm down on *his* conference table.

CHARLIE  
Well... if that's what it takes....

PAUL looks at Charlie, surprised.

EXT. ELMWOOD CEMETERY - DAY

Sunlight glints through the trees as golden and orange leaves float through the brisk fall air. We find Billy with Gertrude on his arm, grave side. Billy turns, looks behind him awed at the sight of THOUSANDS OF MOURNERS, the men and women of Detroit, come out to pay their respects. Billy looks across from him where...

The Rileys (Meg with Leo), Josh and Marty, Cora Neel stand. Billy watches as mourner after mourner approaches his father's grave, they bring balloons, flowers, pictures. It's like the pile of grief in front of Buckingham Palace for Princess Diana. Finally, it's Billy's turn. Billy shovels dirt onto his fathers' grave.

The funeral is breaking up now, Paul lingers grave side, he SNIFFLES, reaches into his pocket for a tissue, his face clouds with confusion--*where did this come from?* It's an envelope with *the familiar type script*; he opens it, pulls out the letter, it reads:

*"SLEEP NO MORE".*

VOICE (O.S.)

This isn't over Paul.

Paul stuffs the letter into his pocket, turns-

CORA NEEL

It should have been you, you know that, don't you?

PAUL RILEY

*Cora, stop.*

CORA NEEL

Someday Paul, I'll tell you why Bill really put me on the Board.

Cora smiles and disappears into the crowd, leaving Paul.

GRAVE SIDE Billy stands alone, thoughtful; He watches the passing mourners, then suddenly, a figure among them turns to face Billy...

*His Father...* a malevolent gleam in the ghost's eye-

VOICE (O.S.)

Mr Hamilton?

*The ghost is gone.* Billy is jolted from his reverie, and sees the SMALL EERIE EYED BOY from Dearborn, MALCOLM; He stares up at Billy.

MALCOLM

It's sad when your Daddy dies. Mom  
says a hug can make things better.

The boy extends his arms up to Billy. Billy kneels down and hugs the boy. The boy whispers in his ear -

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

There are no accidents.

Billy stiffens-

BILLY

What? What did you say?

MOTHER

Malcolm! Leave Mr. Hamilton alone-

She grabs the boy's hand, pulls him away, Billy watches after them.

Then, Billy realizes the funeral party has gotten way ahead, his mother walks ahead next to Charlie and the Rileys.

Suddenly, a huge GUST of WIND blows, A GHOSTLY BREATH, it sends leaves swarming through the air. Everyone braces themselves - their coats, the balloons, pictures and flowers from the grave whirl around in the air; It's like the Wizard of Oz.

BILLY'S POV, his mother's hat goes floating off her head, dancing in the wind, skirting down the path. Charlie gallantly, and a little foolishly, chases Gertrude's hat through the graves, until he finally grabs it out of the sky, and as soon as he does, *the wind abruptly stops.*

Charlie brings the hat back to Gertrude, places it on her head. She smiles at him, her golden eyes shine up at him.

GERTRUDE

My hero.

Charlie reaches his hand out to brush a lock of hair from Gertrude's face, it's an incredibly intimate moment-as they stand there for a moment staring at each other.

Then Charlie's hand moves to the small of Gertrude's back and he guides her away through the graveyard.

BACK ON BILLY as suddenly fear, revulsion, suspicion, and jealousy rise up in the pit of his stomach.

END OF ACT FIVE

ACT SIX

INT. THE DETROIT CLUB - LATER

The DIN of chatter over tasteful trays of hors d'oeuvres and drinks. We find Billy at the bar watching his mother and Charlie surrounded by mourners. To Billy they look like a couple. He turns to the bartender.

BILLY

I'll have the scotch.

BARTENDER

Neat? Rocks?

BILLY

I didn't say a scotch, I said: *the* scotch.

BILLY'S POV: Charlie excuses himself from Gertrude and makes his way across the room. Charlie finds Cora, they engage in what looks like a very agreeable conversation.

ON BILLY, what is going on? Did I give the company to the wrong person?

MEG (O.S.)

Billy, how you holding up?

Billy turns to face Meg, he notices Leo standing behind her-

BILLY

Oh, is this...?

MEG

Leo, Leo Moore, Billy Hamilton.

LEO

Nice to meet you, I'm sorry about your Dad-

BILLY

Thank you, thank you, so you're Leo

(to Meg)

He's cute.

(to Leo)

You're cute.

LEO

Well thanks, so are you.

BILLY

So it doesn't bother you what a daddy's girl she is?

ON MEG blind sided. Humiliated.

LEO

Not really. A daddy's girl isn't  
half as bad as a momma's boy.

Billy chuckles softly, claps Leo on the shoulder like, "You got me there," and staggers off with the bottle in hand.

MEG

That was good.

LEO

Really?

MEG

You stood up for me. Defended my  
honor. That felt nice.

LEO

Any time, every day.

MEG

You know what you should do? You  
should marry me.

Leo LAUGHS, then searches Meg's eyes to seek if she's serious. She looks pretty fucking serious.

WE FIND BILLY tearing through the foyer, past his mother and Paul and we stay on them for a moment.

ON PAUL AND GERTRUDE watching after Billy.

GERTRUDE

What would have happened if the  
company was sold and it became  
publicly traded?

PAUL RILEY

We would have had to disclose where  
all the family shares are held.

GERTRUDE

So my sister...?

PAUL RILEY

I promise, Billy'll never find out.

Gertrude looks at him, thankful.

INT. DETROIT CLUB, AT THE COAT CHECK - CONTINUOUS

Billy finds Josh.

BILLY

Hey buddy, wanna get out of here?

JOSH

Oh no I want to stay, it's awesome being a union lawyer at a party full of management.

(then)

Billy, thank you, the guys, everyone thanks you. You did a great thing.

Billy looks at his friend, the severity of what he *might have done* hitting home.

BILLY

I hope so. With this family, you hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

Billy looks at Charlie, wondering if his uncle is the man he thought he was.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go.

And with that Billy pockets the scotch and they take off.

PULL BACK to reveal, Charlie at the bar watching after them. He picks up his drink, his cocktail napkin is stuck to the bottom of his glass, he peels it off, realizes it isn't a cocktail napkin at all but...

A LETTER! Same **vintage typescript**. Charlie looks around, and then angrily tears it open.

ON THE LETTER -- "HELL IS EMPTY AND ALL THE DEVILS ARE HERE".

EXT. DETROIT'S PEOPLE MOVER - LATER

The ELEVATED TRAIN moves through the sky circling downtown Detroit, it SCREECHES to a halt above the Detroit Club.

INT. PEOPLE MOVER - CONTINUOUS

The train is empty except for a DRUNKEN BUM in a corner, Billy and Josh fall into the car.

BILLY

Wow, you know, I have never been on the People Mover.

JOSH

Me either.

BILLY

Does anyone ride this thing?

From the corner the BUM pipes in-

BUM

I've been on it all day and you're  
the first people I've seen-

They LAUGH as the train starts up, sending Josh and Billy careening against the window-

JOSH

Whoa-

Billy stares out the window as the empty city passes outside: graffittied buildings with "for lease" signs, empty windows, empty streets --

BILLY

God, I was wrong. It is dead out there, a ghost town.

BUM

The city's not dead. She's a princess.

Billy turns to the Bum -

BILLY

What?

BUM

She's just sleeping.

Billy tries to see the Bum's face, but it's obscured by his large hood. Meanwhile Josh holds his stomach.

JOSH

Uhm, I think I'm gonna be sick, I have to get off of this thing-

Billy LAUGHS as the train stops at the next stop and Josh stumbles off; Billy makes to follow him but as soon as he arrives at the doors they SLAM SHUT! The train lurches forward. Through the window Billy can see Josh watching him from the platform.

Billy turns back to the car, something catches his eye out the opposite windows.

BILLY'S POV: Dim lights flickering in the empty windows of the empty buildings. Are there people in the buildings after all?

ON BILLY, he blinks, rubs his eyes, looks back out the train window; every window in every room in every building is suddenly occupied. The ghosts are watching him like he's the king of the parade. Some of them wave.

Behind Billy, the Bum starts to WHISTLE, then he starts to sing the words...

BUM  
 (singing)  
*Because you're all I have my boy,/  
 You are my life,*

*MY BOY* by Elvis Presley! Billy turns to the Bum, his face is still obscured by his huge hood-

BUM (CONT'D)  
*My pride, my joy, / And if I stay, I  
 stay because of you, / My boy-*

BILLY  
 Why are you singing that? How do  
 you know that song?

The Bum starts to move toward Billy, his face still obscured by the hood.

Trembling, Billy reaches into his jacket pocket, pulls out the *silver pistol*, aims it at the Bum-

BILLY (CONT'D)  
 Who are you?

The train LURCHES to a stop, Billy careens backwards, the Bum's hood falls off revealing an alcohol ravaged face-

BUM  
 You're crazy.

The bum gets off the train. The doors slam shut, Billy watches after the bum, exhales and enormous sigh of relief, he puts away his gun, turns from the doors and is standing nose to nose with...

*His father.* Billy feels the Ghost's cold breath on his face, the steel blue eyes pierce him, if there was time he'd cry, but then, the ghost's lips part to whisper ...

GHOST  
 I want revenge.

END OF PILOT