

PATHOLOGY

by

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INT. FLUORESCENT LIT ROOM - NIGHT

CAMCORDER VIDEO on a TV screen.

Two people in the middle of a conversation. At first we see only their mouths, which move strangely, not really talking, just opening and closing along with the words.

Like hand puppets.

SALLY
It's possible.

HARRY
Get outta here!

SALLY
Why? Most women at one time or another have faked it.

HARRY
Well they haven't faked it with me.

SALLY
How do you know?

HARRY
Because I know.

The video cuts to a wider view. HARRY and SALLY are CADAVERS. They are propped up on opposite ends of a sliding table in what appears to be a morgue. SALLY'S eyes stare nowhere, but at least she has them. Two wiggling fingers are sticking out of HARRY'S empty sockets, and a thumb has begun to poke out of his mouth. They are being worked by unseen puppeteers. It's a hell of a thing.

SALLY
Oh, right, that's right, I forgot, you're a man.

HARRY
You don't think that I could tell the difference?

SALLY
No.

HARRY
Get outta here.

SALLY
Ooo... Oh... Ooo...

HARRY

Are you OK?

A crude, impromptu attempt has been made to set the scene. There are plates of food set up on the table, plastic silverware and a bottle of wine. Blue hospital bibs are tucked in under their blue necks.

SALLY

Oh... Oh... Oh... Oh God... Oh yeah
right there Oh! Oh... Yes Yes Yes
Yes Yes Yes... Oh... Oh... Yes Yes
Yes.... Oh... Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes
Yes... Oh... Oh... Oh... Oh God
Oh... Oh... Huh...

SALLY finishes. HARRY's head plops forward into his plate. He comes up with spaghetti hanging from the thumb in his mouth. We hear "ahhh"s and "ohhh"s and "oh shit!"s and laughter off-screen.

The video cuts away to a new "puppet" - an old woman, recently deceased. She is not hand-articulated like the others; they just BOB HER UP AND DOWN.

OLD WOMAN

I'll have what she's having.

CUT TO:

INT. JAKE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A group of late 20-somethings - young, beautiful, and thoroughly stoned REVELERS are sprawled around an upscale apartment, watching it all on a FLATSCREEN in the center of the room: *

JAKE GALLO. A pure, charismatic devil.

JULIETTE BATH. Drop-dead cute goth girl. Licorice hair, poison apple lips. Would look at home at any funeral.

CATHERINE IVY. Eurotrash-hot; A serious brain with lesbo undertones.

GRIFFIN CAVENAUGH. Jake's brooding sidekick. Tongue ring, issues.

CHIP BENTWOOD. Preppy, yet psychotic. Band-Aid on his neck. *

Any one of them could be a Calvin Klein model.

The group breaks into a roar, laughing till they cry - rolling around on the floor, doing nitrous hits, empty cannisters clinking and piling up on the floor like machine gun shells.

JAKE pours red wine into JULIETTE'S mouth like blood from a chalice.

CUT TO:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

A FLASH OF A BONE SAW. THE SHRIEK OF A HIGH PITCHED DRILL brings us into...

ROLL CREDITS:

MONTAGE: macro close-ups of medical instruments: scalpels, rib shears, brain-sectioning knife, thick hypodermic needle, bone cutting forceps, skull breaker, dissecting tenaculum, iris scissors, distractors, impactors, bone probe, trocars, vein strippers, and a variety of drills.

Then: speed ramping of REAL operations - heart surgery, appendix surgery, brain surgery, amputation... all culminating at extreme speed and heightened music, until finally a body bag is ZIPPED.

CREDITS END.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CORNELL CAFE, ITHACA, NY - MORNING

An attractive couple sit across from each other over barely touched breakfasts. TED GRAY - 26, steel eyes - sips coffee; GWEN MONTGOMERY reminds us of a younger Gwyneth Paltrow, golden hair, all class - stunning... warm smile covering for wet eyes.

GWEN

It's just another month, right?

TED

(smiles)

You watch: we're going to be so buried in work it'll seem like nothing. You'll be sleeping with me in Philadelphia before you know it.

GWEN
Sure, with you and all of those
dead bodies.

TED smiles: *quite an image.*

GWEN
(prying, hoping)
Funny, I always thought you'd end
up in pediatrics. You're amazing
with children, you know.

TED's eyes flicker across her face, curious.

TED
(wiseass)
Actually - gynecology was my dream,
but... the positions were over-
staffed...

GWEN
(laughing)
Ted, I'm serious - there are so
many *living* people you can help.

TED
Figuring out how people die *will*
help them.

GWEN nods, almost buying it. TED checks his watch.

TED (CONT.)
(teasing)
Alright, I hate goodbyes - let's
make out so I can catch my plane.

TED stands and embraces GWEN - they kiss. GWEN releases,
confident, strong.

GWEN
Dr. Gray - on your way.

TED
Yes, counsellor.

CUT TO:

EXT. PHILADELPHIA

The city is BOOMING - LOUD sounds blending into a flood of
industrial music.

An aerial shot, dangerously close to buildings and apartments, erratically eats up the Philly landscape, finally settling down into...

EXT DREXEL UNIVERSITY - MORNING

Students converge on the medical institution, walking by the famous Dragon Statue at the entrance of the university. Fall leaves swirl in the wind.

A quiet confidence sets TED GRAY apart. He stops to regard the university entrance, letting a sense of promise wash over him as the wind moves through his hair... then continues on.

INT DREXEL UNIVERSITY, GROSS ANATOMY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

TED approaches a group of young residents underway in a mock autopsy. BEN STRAVINSKY, 26, pale, eel-thin - to call BEN quirky would be a massive understatement - steps away from the group to meet him.

BEN points a finger at TED, guessing -

BEN STRAVINSKY
Ted Gray?

TED smiles.

TED
Ben Stravinsky?

BEN STRAVINSKY
(bingo)
Ha! I am Ben Stravinsky. Professor Morris said you'd be starting today.

TED
I take it you're showing me around.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Ted Gray, I am all over it.

INT. DREXEL, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

BEN STRAVINSKY
Hm, so you were in, like, Zimbabwe.

TED
Nigeria. Volunteering at a hospital in Lagos for a couple of credits.

BEN STRAVINSKY
 Right, right. Wow. Well, anyone
 Dr. Morris approves showing up a
 week late for his residency must
 have godlike cred.

TED shrugs, not exactly denying it. BEN laughs self-
 consciously as...

They pass an open LAB. A distinctive group of RESIDENTS
 catches TED'S eye. We've seen them before: they are the
 REVELERS from SCENE 1, examining a female cadaver.

JAKE stands out from the rest, relaxing against a supply
 cabinet, nonchalantly spinning a SMALL SAW in one hand... but
 TED'S eyes lock in on JULIETTE, narcotically beautiful in her
 half scrub, half jeans attire.

BEN notices TED looking.

BEN STRAVINSKY
 Certain people around here couldn't
 possibly be any more, um, annoying.

TED
 I beg your pardon?

BEN STRAVINSKY
 Oh, never mind, you'll see. These
 ones think they run the place.

JAKE notices BEN in the doorway and waves his hand limply:
shoo fly. GRIFFIN adds a deadpan THROAT-SLASHING MOTION. *

BEN - BEAT RED - pulls TED along as the group chuckles
 derisively behind them. TED steals a last look at JULIETTE.

BEN STRAVINSKY (CONT'D)
 (changing the subject)
 So, you got a girlfriend?

They exit glass doors into the sun, to reveal...

EXT PHILADELPHIA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY

The HOSPITAL and COUNTY MORGUE sit adjacent to DREXEL
 UNIVERSITY'S Medical Department.

The dual structure separated only by a black cross seems to
 loom over its surroundings; even taller buildings seem drawn
 in by their energy. The great gothic cathedrals must've once
 felt like this, casting their black shadows over medieval
 villages shrouded in superstition.

BEN STRAVINSKY

(pointing)

Memorial Hospital... County Morgue.
The real banana. Kick the bucket
anywhere within city limits you end
up there - and as residents we get
full access. The most hands on
program in the US...

*

TED

That's why I'm here.

*

*

He leads the way toward a large brick structure - BRONSON
HALL.

CUT TO:

INT. BRONSON LECTURE HALL - MOMENTS LATER

PROFESSOR MORRIS, 56, immaculately groomed, pontificates to a
large group of human sponges as a SLIDE SHOW accompanies,
projecting glistening pink and cherry ANATOMICAL LANDSCAPES
before the DARK AUDITORIUM.

BEN and TED find seats and listen in.

DR. MORRIS

As pathologists you will learn the
nature of disease and its causes,
processes, development, and
consequences... but far more than
that. The pathologist is offered a
window to God, if you will. 50
trillion cells cooperating to form
tissue, then veins and capillaries,
then organs and complex systems -
all working together in delirious
and utterly implausible harmony. It
is only by the deepest
understanding of the body's
perfection that we may determine
the flaws that mar it.

DR. MORRIS stretches a pregnant pause to admire his
profundity - then continues -

DR. MORRIS

It may be said that Pathology is a
study in everything human - save
for the soul, of course.

(MORE)

DR. MORRIS (cont'd)
But it is in that particular branch
of Pathology known as *forensics*
that we delve into what it means to
be... inhuman.

The slides switch to far more grim subject matter: police
CRIME SCENE PHOTOS of murders, suicides... puffed, swollen
faces; discolored limbs and torsos; mouths distorted in
soundless screams; the students shift uncomfortably in their
seats.

DR. MORRIS
You will see the perversion and
corruption of the flesh by all
means unnatural... by violence...
by toxin... by madness... and work
backwards - *always back toward that*
original pristine design - to
determine the offending cause of
death.

The shocking images flicker across TED'S face.

INT DOCTOR MORRIS' OFFICE - LATER

A door plaque reads:

DR. QUENTIN MORRIS, DEAN OF STUDENTS

BEN STRAVINSKY and TED stand in the corridor. Just as BEN
STRAVINSKY knocks, DR. MORRIS opens the door to greet them.
There is something about him that puts you off; he stands too
close.

DR. MORRIS
Ted Gray.

TED
Dr. Morris.

They shake hands.

DR. MORRIS
In you come.

They enter. DR. MORRIS half-sits on the front of his desk
while BEN and TED stand.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Ben Stravinsky?

BEN STRAVINSKY
(too eager)
Yes sir?

DR. MORRIS
If you could hunt down Jake Gallo,
I'd like to see him in my office
chop chop.

BEN looks as though he's been kicked in the gut.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Yes sir.

EXIT BEN STRAVINSKY, miserably.

DR. MORRIS looks TED over just a beat past comfortable.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Well. A true pleasure. I've heard
so much. And how was Africa?

TED
A hell of a challenge... and quite
humbling. We are very privileged.

DR. MORRIS
Indeed.
(beat)
I spoke with your... *ahem*, future
father-in-law this morning. He's
quite proud of you, you know.

TED is somewhat uneasy with this, but accepts it as
graciously as he can.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
And Gwendolyn? Have you seen her
since you've been back?

TED
Only briefly.

DR. MORRIS
A pity. Of course it's been ages
since I've laid eyes on the girl.
She was barely out of braces.

TED chuckles uncomfortably.

DR. MORRIS
You are indeed privileged, Mr.
Gray. And evidently, quite
talented.

The door opens. JAKE GALLO enters, regards DR. MORRIS and TED with a look that is at once bored, amused, and supremely confident. He leans back easily against a mahogany bookcase and says nothing.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
(pleased to see him)
Dr. Gallo.

JAKE
Dr. Morris.

DR. MORRIS
I'd like you to meet Dr. Gray.

JAKE
Hello, Dr. Gray.

They shake hands, making solid eye contact.

DR. MORRIS
Ted comes to us top of his class
from Harvard. Eighteen weeks at
Bellevue in New York City...

JAKE
(sarcastically)
Patient?

TED smirks.

DR. MORRIS
... ahem, before being accepted
into the UNICEF program to work in
Lagos, where he's been for the past
4 months.

JAKE
A bleeding heart. I just saw one
of those this morning.

DR. MORRIS
(to Ted)
Jake Gallo is our young star in
residence.

JAKE can't exactly disagree.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Single-handedly solved the Horton
Family murders. If it wasn't for a
little student internship, the FBI
would probably still be fingering
around.

TED
(sarcastic)
Damn.

JAKE smiles.

DR. MORRIS
I expect you two will get along
quite well.

JAKE
We will?

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's a fantastic loft apartment with big windows, brick
pillars, exposed pipes and a skyline view. Unopened boxes
are stacked across the hardwood floor. TED lies on the bed,
shirtless, hair wet, cradling a cell phone next to his ear.

TED
I know, I miss you too. Philly,
huh? Hm. I don't know. Big.
Cold. But at least I can drink the
water here.

He fingers the folded lid of a box by the bed.

TED (CONT'D)
So I met Quentin Morris today.
Yeah, I think he still has a crush
on you. Or me. Hard to be sure.

TED sits up, opens the box, pulls out a picture of GWEN.
She's stunning.

TED (CONT'D)
Of course I'm excited. The
hospital is beautiful. Everything
is beautiful. You're beautiful.
(smiles, listens)
Not as bad as I miss- Uh huh.
Hey, I have to be up in four hours.
You're corrupting me.

*

He sets the picture on the window sill.

TED (CONT'D)

Yes. No. Yes. I love you too.
Bye.

TED clicks off, tosses the phone onto the bed. It rings. He picks up.

TED (CONT'D)

Hi. Me too. Love you, baby. OK.
Bye.

He clicks off. Takes a look around the quiet room. Traffic noise filters up from the street. RING. RING. *

TED *

Yeesssss. *

No response. *

TED *

Gwen. Hello. (taps phone) Hello. *
Uh, ok doll, gotta go. *

Nothing. He clicks off, hesitates. *

He stands, takes hold of the bedsheet and whips it back off the bed -

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

DR. LANDAU pulls back a plastic shroud to reveal the cold blue body of a 45 year old MALE, lying on an examination table.

DR. LANDAU: a senior pathologist, 70s, close-cropped white hair, small in stature and quite eccentric.

A small group of residents gather round: TED, BEN STRAVINSKY, JAKE, GRIFFIN, JULIETTE and CATHERINE IVY, several others.

Closest to the head, TED'S eyes lock onto the CADAVER with a keen intensity. JULIETTE'S expression is blank... but we see her finger move to lightly touch the cold toes. JAKE, as always, radiates a slightly amused detachment.

DR. LANDAU

I'd like you to meet my friend
Carl.

CATHERINE
 (along with a few of the
 others)
 Hello Carl.

DR. LANDAU
 Carl's not being rude, students,
 it's just that he's feeling a bit
 under the weather today.

The DEAD MAN'S face is twisted into a grotesquely comic
 expression. TED gazes into the cancelled eyes.

DR. LANDAU (CONT'D)
 In fact, he hasn't felt himself in
 quite some time. Several weeks
 back Carl began to experience
 frequent nausea, discomfort while
 urinating, dizziness...

*

GRIFFIN
 He's describing my weekend.

The group has a laugh, except for BEN STRAVINSKY, who is
 unamused.

DR. LANDAU
 No doubt. The symptoms increased
 in severity...

Curiously, TED notices the DEAD MAN'S eyes begin to FLUTTER.

DR. LANDAU (CONT'D)
 ... until he decided it was time to
 pay us a visit. At first we
 assumed Carl was suffering from a
 bladder infection, but when his
 bloodwork came back we discovered
 the most curious thing...

The DEAD MAN'S foot TWITCHES. JULIETTE jerks her hand away.
 JAKE'S eyebrows raise. DR. LANDAU has yet to notice.

BEN STRAVINSKY
 (eyes widening)
 Doctor... ?

All at once the BODY begins to THRASH about wildly on the
 table. A stiff, flailing arm hits a cart, sending surgical
 instruments clattering across the floor. The entire group,
 including DR. LANDAU, jumps back in shock - all but TED.

DR. LANDAU
Don't be alarmed!

As calmly and matter-of-factly as if he were making a peanut butter sandwich, TED picks up a scalpel, waits for an opportune moment, and then, when the DEAD MAN'S head pops up in front of him, brings the shiny blade up with a swift, sure motion and slips it into the back of the DEAD MAN'S neck.

Like flipping a switch, all the life goes out of the BODY; It goes limp as a rag doll. The arms fall. The head hits the table with an ugly THUMP. The room is still.

BEN STRAVINSKY
You...

Everyone turns to look at him.

BEN STRAVINSKY (CONT'D)
You killed him!

The group busts out laughing. BEN STRAVINSKY goes bright red.

DR. LANDAU
(quite amused)
Dr. Gray has quite nicely severed the pyramidal track, disconnecting Carl's nerves from his brain...

A single drop of blood rolls off the blade of the scalpel and onto the DEAD MAN'S forehead. TED looks up, makes brief eye contact with JULIETTE.

DR. LANDAU
... which had momentarily forgotten it was dead.

JAKE'S eyes meet GRIFFIN'S from across the room.

DR. LANDAU
(pleased)
An undeniably entertaining - if somewhat unnecessary - display of skill. Thank you, young man.

TED shrugs. A bubbly foam oozes from the side of the DEAD MAN'S mouth.

DR. LANDAU (CONT'D)
Now then. Where was I?

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN CORRIDOR, PHILADELPHIA MEMORIAL - DUSK

Through floor-to-ceiling windows at the hospital entrance we see the sun set over Drexel University. BEN STRAVINSKY catches up to TED in the hall.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Ted Gray. Hey, Ted.

TED turns around.

TED
Ben Stravinsky.

BEN STRAVINSKY
A couple of us are going to a reading downtown tonight. Care to, uh, join us?

TED
Thanks. You know... I'm still trying to get settled in.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Of course. So, wow, that was over-the-top, uh, cool today.

TED catches sight of JAKE and JULIETTE across the hall. They are just leaving for the night, already in their street clothes: dark overcoats, wool sweaters - class. CHIP hails them and approaches JAKE. He cups his hand to JAKE'S ear and WHISPERS something.

TED
What did you say?

BEN makes a motion like TED'S flick of the knife.

TED (CONT'D)
Ah. Just a pinched nerve.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Of course, of course. You just... pop! Wow.

TED'S eyes are back across the hall. JAKE strokes JULIETTE'S neck as he listens, and begins to smile. They nod agreement.

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A glass cracks in the sink. TED is rinsing dishes.

He lifts the broken, spider-webbed glass from the water, shakes his head, and then - with a sudden flash of anger, SMASHES it hard against the wall in his fist.

Blood streams down his arm in dark ropes. He stares at it blankly, then tests the wound with his good hand, opening and closing the flap of flesh with his fingertip.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM - NIGHT

TED rests his head against the white tile in a steaming hot shower.

A blood-soaked towel wrapped tight around his hand has begun to sag. Dark blood runs down his leg, down the drain.

TED shuts off the water and steps out. He catches sight of himself in the bathroom mirror - there is blood streaked across his face.

CU: He grabs a clean, dry towel and brings it up over his face -

JAKE (O.C.)
He was pretty simple to figure out
once we had a look inside.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PHILADELPHIA MEMORIAL, AUTOPSY ROOM - MORNING

CU: a plastic shroud is pulled down to reveal the face of a chubby 11-year old BOY, bleach-white and quite dead.

DR. MORRIS
I'm not sure I agree.

The RESIDENTS are scattered in groups throughout the large room. Cadavers at various stages of autopsy lie on slabs under burning white light. DR. MORRIS, JAKE, JULIETTE and GRIFFIN are gathered around the BOY'S table. The RESIDENTS' scrubs are stained with blood. *

TED and BEN STRAVINSKY are nearby, sitting at a counter lined with microscopes.

DR. MORRIS pulls the shroud back over the BOY'S face.

JAKE
Doctors, this is a simple case of
kidney failure.

JULIETTE
 (confirming)
 Blood in the urine, general
 swelling...

TED stands up from the microscope.

TED
 Excuse me - if I may interject.

JAKE regards TED with minor irritation.

DR. MORRIS
 Dr. Gray?

GRIFFIN
 (under his breath, pissed)
 "If I may interject."

*
 *
 *

TED
 Considering the boy's medical
 history I believe he died during a
 state of hypoxia - an asthma
 attack.

JAKE
 (quite unimpressed)
 Fresh out of the medical books.
 Forgive me, but that seems like
 more of a hypochondrial-conclusion
 than an answer for the deceased.

GRIFFIN smirks, chuckles. TED ignores him, grabs the charts
 and walks over to the BOY.

*

TED
 Daniel was an 11 year old boy,
 overweight. Here, in his last
 report with Doctor Rosenberg,
 Daniel stated that he was being
 ridiculed at school because of his
 weight - the weight that he started
 gaining when he began taking the
 steroid Pediapred to treat an acute
 asthma condition. You'll notice
 there is no trace of the steroid in
 his blood or bladder.

JULIETTE studies her chart, brow furrowed. DR. MORRIS smiles -
 a pleasure to hear a student other than JAKE break it down so
 impressively?

*
 *
 *

GRIFFIN
 (w/ contempt)
What a joke.

*
*
*

TED turns to him, icy, in-your-face.

*

 TED
Is there a problem?

*
*

DR. MORRIS joins the rest of the class in the stare-down.
GRIFFIN is burning, but swallows it; says nothing.

*
*

 DR. MORRIS
 (to TED)
Please continue.

*
*
*

TED pulls back the shroud and looks intently at the BOY'S
face as he continues.

 TED
Daniel stopped taking the steroid.
In his mind, the abuse he suffered
from his peers for being fat was
worse than the asthma. Finally,
during the field trip to the zoo...

*

 DR. MORRIS
Yes, yes.

 TED
... where he was exposed to a
variety of allergens, he died from
a severe attack.
 (glancing at Jake)
One can't disregard psychology in
forming a diagnosis.

 JAKE
Looks like you've cut yourself, Dr.
Gray.

TED'S bandaged hand has begun to seep. Irrationally guilty,
he pulls it behind his back.

 BEN STRAVINSKY
 (looking at the chart)
Wow, Ted, no question about it:
acute asthma...

JAKE and GRIFFIN give BEN STRAVINSKY a look you might give a
puking animal.

*
*

CUT TO:

*

INT. DREXEL, HALLWAY - LATER

TED heads to his next class, alone. He spots JULIETTE down a crowded corridor, talking on a cellphone, and slows down to watch her...

Distracted, he doesn't notice GRIFFIN, who is waiting around the corner for him. TED stops short, startled.

GRIFFIN

Yeah. There *is* a problem.

GRIFFIN SUCKER PUNCHES TED in side of the head; TED'S books hit the floor.

TED lunges for GRIFFIN to football tackle him but the temple shot has loosened him up; GRIFFIN intercepts him with a knee to the gut that knocks the wind out of him.

TED is DOWN. GRIFFIN gives him another KICK for good measure as JAKE comes around the corner. JAKE seems genuinely surprised.

JAKE

Griffin.

He motions: *what the fuck is this?*

GRIFFIN

(dry)

We were going over a diagnosis.

JAKE shakes his head, amused.

JAKE

Not sure you got enough hugs as a child.

They head down in JULIETTE'S direction. The incident has gone mostly unnoticed.

TED slumps against the wall, watching them go.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - NEXT MORNING

A staff member pushes a gurney with a fresh body on it into the path room. A group of residents move in.

At another station, BEN STRAVINSKY is self-importantly instructing a young INTERN.

Organs are lined up on the table - brain, heart, lungs, kidneys, liver, bladder, spleen, pancreas, etc.

BEN STRAVINSKY

We call this the, uh, fruit stand.

He plops a liver on a grocer's scale. The INTERN gulps thickly.

Meanwhile TED, using a ruler-marked scalpel, opens the body of a thick-browed, middle-aged gentleman using a Y-shaped incision from shoulders to mid-chest and down to the pubic region. He grabs a pair of sheers to complete the cut.

JULIETTE, working with him, moves into TED'S position with a menacing-looking ribsaw, cutting the cartilages that join the ribs to the breastbone. JULIETTE'S arms flex during the struggle, but she cuts through.

Two tables down, JAKE is preparing to open the skull of a young black male using a special vibrating saw that cuts bone but not soft tissue. He makes two saw cuts to the skull vault - one in front and one in back - then removes the top of the skull. Due to *livor mortis* there is very little blood.

He glances over at TED and pauses, as if considering. TED and JULIETTE are side by side at the table.

JAKE refocuses on the job at hand. He begins to very carefully cut the brain free of its attachments from inside the skull - the meticulous removal of a clam from his shell.

JAKE

(loud enough to get
everyone's attention)

Why are we here?

TED and JULIETTE look up. Across the room, BEN STRAVINSKY pauses, pancreas in hand.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(still not raising his
eyes from the work)

All of us. In here instead of out
there. Why?

TED glances at JULIETTE, who has gone back to the work.

JAKE (CONT'D)

We're here because we prefer the
company.

(nodding at the body)

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)
This kind of company. Dead
company. Am I right?

GRIFFIN
Witness.

JAKE
(looking up)
When I think about... them... you
know, out there... in their rooms,
on the streets... utilizing the
public transportation...

JULIETTE can't help but smile.

JAKE (CONT'D)
... sucking up air, downloading
pornography, ordering their lives
out of catalogs, shitting out
processed food, watching reality
shows, cashing welfare checks,
opining, bitching, moaning, voting
and consuming and copulating and
multiplying...

BEN STRAVINSKY elbows his partner to get back to work. JAKE
removes the brain from the skull with a sound like splitting
a melon and holds it in one hand.

JAKE (CONT'D)
It makes me sick. What we need,
brothers and sisters, are less of
them, and more -
(he gestures toward the
body on the table)
- of these.

The CALVIN KLEINS, scattered around the room, cheer and
catcall.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Don't you agree, Dr. Gray?

TED
(amused)
I can see your point.

Brain still in one hand, JAKE opens his arms as if to say:
isn't life simple?

TED (CONT'D)
... but I'm not sure I agree.

JAKE
 (shaking his head in mock
 disappointment)
 Nobody's perfect.

TED
 Not even you, Dr. Gallo.

JAKE smiles, drops the brain onto a silver tray.

A ripping sound steals TED'S attention momentarily. Working on the same cadaver as TED and JULIETTE, GRIFFIN removes the rib cage with a set of retractors and sets them on a table.

When TED looks back toward JAKE, he's back to work, preparing to slice up the brain.

Across the room a small commotion breaks out.

RESIDENT
 Whoa! Bleeder!

A fountain of blood arches from a cadaver and splashes everywhere as several RESIDENTS back away and another tries to block the flow with a gauze pad and a clamp. *

MATCH CUT TO:

INT HALLWAY, HOSPITAL - LATER

TED puts his lips to a water fountain and drinks.

JAKE (O.S.)
 That stuff'll kill you.

JAKE has come up behind him in the hall. TED wipes his mouth with his bandaged hand.

TED
 We all have to go sometime.

JAKE
 In that case, why not come and join
 us? We're heading to the 13
 Stones... libation...
 conversation... an invitation...

TED
 Ben already invited me out with
 some of our other colleagues.

JAKE
 Stravinsky?

We see - over TED'S shoulder - that BEN STRAVINSKY and another freaky INTERN are standing in a doorway ten feet away, overhearing everything. JAKE goes into a spot-on imitation, taking sadistic pleasure in holding eye contact with BEN as he mimics him.

JAKE
Ha, Wow. Can't picture a more, um,
stimulating evening.
(apes jacking off, then
switches back to JAKE)
Seriously, are you kidding?

TED tries not to give in to a smile at JAKE'S impression. Instead he turns, following JAKE'S eyes to where BEN, red-faced and humiliated, pushes past the other INTERN and disappears down the hall.

TED
(to JAKE)
You're an asshole.

JAKE
Let's go.

CUT TO:

INT. THE THIRTEEN STONES - NIGHT

JAKE, TED, JULIETTE and CATHERINE IVY enter the bar together. GRIFFIN and CHIP are already there, beer mugs in hand, at the dart boards. CHIP hails JAKE. *

CHIP
The doctor is in!

GRIFFIN tosses a dart, which lodges lazily in the band-aid on CHIP'S neck. *

CHIP (CONT'D)
You motherfucker!

He goes after him; CATHERINE rolls her eyes. They've seen this act before. *

JAKE orders shots and pitchers. CATHERINE looks TED over. JULIETTE smiles at TED. TED smiles back. Feeling neglected, CATHERINE grabs a lime slice off of the bar and eats it, rind and all.

JAKE grabs the pitchers and nods to the girls to grab the shots. They move to a large round table. JAKE flips off GRIFFIN and CHIP. They come over. JAKE pours the beer. *

JAKE
You know everyone, right?

TED
I think so...
(he turns to Chip)
Chip?

CHIP nods.

GRIFFIN
(smirking)
Griffin Cavanaugh - we've met.

*
*

TED takes it in stride.

*

CATHERINE
I'm Catherine and you're Ted.

She kisses Ted on the cheek.

TED
(to Jake and Juliette)
I'm Ted and you're Jake and
Juliette.

JAKE
Fuck you, let's drink.

Everyone grabs a shot and a beer.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(raising mug)
To the dead!

The others chime in, "The dead!" They clank mugs, down shots and guzzle their beers. TED is done first. JAKE pours more in TED'S glass.

JAKE (CONT'D)
The dead... the dead...

He looks up at TED.

JAKE (CONT'D)
... the Ted...

CATHERINE
So lets play tell the truth.
Question: if you could kill anyone
and get away with it, who would you
kill? Griff, you first.

GRIFFIN
 (his mood visibly
 darkening)
 Hmm.

 JULIETTE
 Easy question, come on Griff.

GRIFFIN gives her a hard look.

 CATHERINE
 Griff is gruff. Alright Chip, what
 about you?

 CHIP
 The Kennedys. Oh - wait, they're
 already dead. OK, Jamie Kennedy.

*

 CATHERINE
 Solid. Uninspired, but solid. Ok,
 Griffin, you've had enough time.

 JAKE
 Come on.

 GRIFFIN
 (to Juliette)
 I don't know. You, maybe?

 JULIETTE
 Oh. I'm sorry, did you want to fuck
 me that bad, Griff?

 GRIFFIN
 Yeah, yeah, go to hell.

 JULIETTE
 Alright.

 JAKE
 (to Griffin)
 Believe me, Dr. Cavanaugh, you're
 not missing much.

The group laughs. JULIETTE sighs, bored.

 JULIETTE
 (to Catherine)
 You tell.

 CATHERINE
 Oh, you know, the President...

JAKE
I didn't know you were so
political, Catherine.

CATHERINE
I'm not, it's so Jodie Foster will
love me.

JAKE
That's reasonable.

CATHERINE
(to Juliette)
And you, my love?

JULIETTE
Same as Griff I guess.

CATHERINE
Bitch, if you ever tried to do
yourself I'd fucking kill you
first. Alright, Jake.

JAKE
I'm interested in what Dr. Gray has
to say.

Everyone turns their focus toward TED. TED says nothing,
just drinks it in.

JULIETTE
Well?

CATHERINE
Come on, Teddy.

TED
Do you want the truth? Or just
something clever?

JULIETTE
The truth.

JAKE
Something clever.

TED
(relaxed)
The truth is you're all full of
shit.

Groans. Jeers. JAKE quiets the group down with a gesture.

JAKE
 (eating it up)
 No, please... elaborate.

TED
 I mean, who needs a motive? Nobody
 needs a reason to kill. Just
 today, Jake, you took apart a 16
 year old boy who was shot in the
 stomach because someone wanted his
 fucking ipod. What kind of a
 reason is that?

*

JAKE and CHIP, CATHERINE and JULIETTE exchange wry looks.

TED (CONT'D)
 We're animals. It's our nature to
 kill. Basic. Simple. You
 should've figured that out by now.
 Of course, we're socialized...
 civilized... so we just talk about
 it over a beer. We don't actually
 do it. But if we could really get
 away with it? Kill anyone? Anyone
 at all?

TED makes them wait.

TED (CONT'D)
 We'd kill anyone. Anyone at all.

JAKE'S CREW love this and celebrates with libations. But
 somehow, TED can't seem to determine if they're laughing with
 him, or at him.

JAKE
 (with humor)
 Well, Gray, you've trumped us all.
 Good show. A man after my own
 heart. Griff, let's go get some
 more poison.

GRIFFIN reluctantly follows JAKE to the bar.

*

JULIETTE
 (to Ted)
 I wonder.

TED
 What?

JULIETTE
 I wonder about you.

CATHERINE gets up and rubs JULIETTE'S shoulders.

CATHERINE
Stop flirting with Teddy. We have
to go soon.

JULIETTE pulls CATHERINE'S hands down to her breasts and
squeezes them with her.

JULIETTE
That should hold you for awhile.
Now go sit down and play with the
boys.

CATHERINE walks over to CHIP and sits on his lap. TED and
JULIETTE stare at one another.

TED
So, uh, where are you from?

JULIETTE starts laughing.

JULIETTE
Where I am from? Let's get past
that.

TED
(shrugs)
OK.

JAKE and GRIFFIN return with the drinks.

JAKE
(checking his watch)
Drink up. We leave in 10 minutes
sharp.

The REVELERS quickly grab their beers and chug.

TED
Where are we going?

JAKE
(holding out his hands to
encompass the SIX)
We. Not -
(pointing at Ted)
- we. You can take a cab.

TED
Whatever.

JAKE
Don't be hurt. Have another beer.

TED
I will.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE THIRTEEN STONES - NIGHT

JAKE and the others are getting into their cars and heading out. We hear mutterings at a distance but can't make out what they're saying. TED tries to listen in.

GRIFFIN peels out in a black Lexus SUV, almost mowing him down. JAKE spots TED and walks over to him. He claps a hand on his shoulder. *

JAKE
Ted. This is the part where you
keep your nose out. For now, OK?
We'll see you tomorrow.

TED
Thanks for the drinks.

JAKE pulls out a credit card from his back pocket and flips it to TED.

JAKE
No, thank you. We used your card.

JAKE heads to the car. TED takes out his wallet. Yup, that was his card. He shakes his head and tries not to show anger.

JAKE drives over to TED in a massive Escalade. The window rolls down. JULIETTE is riding shotgun.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Dr. Gray, what the hell are you
doing tomorrow night?

TED
Not a thing.

JAKE
Perfect. I'll show you around the
city. I know all of the best
spots. On me this time. Alright?

TED
Why not?

JAKE laughs heartily. The Escalade peels out and speeds down the street.

TED looks around for a taxi. Finding none, he pulls up the lapels of his coat in the chill night air, and starts walking.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

TED tosses and turns. The noise of the city filters up through a part open window. As the CAMERA pushes in we can see that TED is struggling with a nightmare - he SNAPS UP-

*
*

MATCH CUT TO:

*

INT. JAKE'S ESCALADE - NIGHT

TED is screaming his head off. He and JAKE blast down a rain slicked street, JAKE at the wheel, death metal cranked up on the stereo, laughing and whooping hysterically. Buildings and streetlights flash by, a blur.

EXT PHILADELPHIA DOWNTOWN STREET - NIGHT

JAKE and TED stumble down the sidewalk, obviously drunk off their asses. TED is attempting to put a call through on his cell.

TED

Hello? Hello? Shit, dead.

JAKE

Come on, come on, I want you to see something.

TED

(still preoccupied with
his cell phone)

... let's open it up...

TED attempts to pry open his phone as they walk down a small alleyway to a screen door graffitied in spray paint.

TED (CONT'D)

What the fuck.

JAKE

Shh.

He raps on the door. A BLACK PIMP, 40, overweight, in a wife-beater, comes to the door, backlit by a pale green bulb. He looks them over.

BLACK PIMP
How many?

JAKE
How many do you see?

BLACK PIMP
One-fiddy.

JAKE
(mocking him subtly)
Fiddy.

BLACK PIMP
One-fiddy.

JAKE
Look. Bro. Eighty bucks. Or we
walk and talk.

The PIMP sneers, but lets them in anyway. JAKE pulls out the cash and pushes it into the PIMP'S fist.

INT. TENEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

JAKE leads TED down the hall.

JAKE
Nervous?

TED
(sobering up)
No, but my dick is staying in my
pants.

JAKE has a laugh at this.

They continue down the hall to a red door. JAKE opens the door and they enter.

INT. TENEMENT ROOM - NIGHT

JAKE closes the door. A single bulb lights the filthy room. The walls are decorated with fold-out posters from teen magazines - Britney, J. Lo, etc.

Sitting on the edge of a bunk bed is an OLD BLACK WOMAN, maybe 65 or 70, heavy-set - she looks like MOMS MABLEY.

She is wearing a dingy Girl Scouts of America uniform and smiling vacantly at the boys.

TED'S jaw drops. At the same time, he has to suppress the urge to burst out laughing.

TED
Oh, shit. Is this for real?

JAKE
(to the woman)
Hey, sexy.

GRANDMA seems to blush.

TED
This is fucked up, man.

JAKE
Yeah, you think? Just an illustration, Dr. Gray. Of why I hate the living.

TED
Alright, point taken. Now let's get the hell out of here.

JAKE
(wryly)
You sure? I mean, we're already paid up.

TED
Hilarious, now come on.

JAKE
If you say so.

JAKE grabs the GRANNIE'S foot like he is shaking hands with it.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Thank you.

They EXIT.

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING

The sun rises over the Hospital. Doctors, students and visitors come and go, and the DRAGON STATUE looms over all.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - MORNING

TED is running down the hallway. He reaches BEN STRAVINSKY, who is waiting for him; the two continue together.

BEN STRAVINSKY
Ha, there he is. Dr. Morris is waiting...

TED
Great...

BEN STRAVINSKY
We got a case in to work on, a real case... wow, you smell like a liquor cabinet...

TED
It's the formaldehyde...

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - MORNING

The residents are circled around a covered body. DR. MORRIS at point. TED slides into place. GRIFFIN stare him down - *jealous?*

*
*

DR. MORRIS
... Sergeant Manuel is heading up the investigation and I'll be the chief pathologist on the case. I want you all to work closely with me on this subject. It's not a high profile case. However, I want to run this autopsy and forensic investigation as if it counts.
(turns to CHIP)
Dr. Bentwood, will you do the honors?

CHIP pulls back the sheet. TED'S eyes go wide. Lying on the table is HARPER JOHNSON... THE BLACK PIMP from the night before, still in his wife-beater. The group takes a collective breath: MORRIS neglected to mention the major exit-hole out of the front of HARPER'S forehead; and the stab wounds are more like axe-gashes.

In unison, the REVELERS put pens to their paper and begin scribbling. Pale as a sheet, TED looks at JAKE. JAKE regards him blankly, poker-faced.

DR. MORRIS grabs a chart off of the tray and has a sip of coffee.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Harper Johnson, 40. Convicted
murderer, recently paroled. The
body is that of a slightly
overweight, well nourished adult
African-American male measuring 72
inches and weighing approximately
289 pounds.

TED'S heart is pounding. DR. MORRIS' words begin to echo in
his head as he tries to hold his shit together.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
The subject was found... hm... just
down the street at Lewis and 4th.
Face down. Gunshot wound to the
base of the skull... Upon flipping
the subject over, EMT's found
abdominal and lower thoracic stab
wounds. A yellow coloration was
also found around the lips.
(beat)
Dr. Gray?

TED is taken by surprise.

TED
(automatically)
He was murdered.

DR. MORRIS
A brilliant deduction. Of this
there is no doubt.

A smattering of laughter.

TED
I have to...

He starts to back away, looking ill.

JAKE
Forget to use the little boys'
room, Dr. Gray?

DR. MORRIS
By all means. Off you go.

TED nods to DR. MORRIS, ducks out of the room.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Now then. Ben Stravinsky?

JAKE watches TED go.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

TED bangs the door open, brushes by an intern, avoiding eye contact, and locks himself in a stall. He sits on the toilet, heart pounding like a jackhammer in his chest.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - LATER

It's about 5 hours later. Everyone is exhausted. DR. MORRIS is talking with an INVESTIGATOR. TED and the rest of the young pathologists are there.

The INVESTIGATOR exits. GRIFFIN enters with some samples.

GRIFFIN

All negative.

DR. MORRIS rubs his forehead. This is the first time we've seen him stressed out.

DR. MORRIS

We have four versions right now.
Let's start to narrow this down.
Who wants to present a case first?

GRIFFIN

Simple Simon. The subject was
stabbed first, a minor struggle,
then shot in the back of the head.
Cause of death - gunshot wound to
the brain.

*

CATHERINE

The lack of blood from the head and
gradations of color from the
thoracic cavity to the neck would
tell us otherwise. He would have
lost too much blood to live by the
time he was shot in the head. I
think it was a mark. Like a gang
sign. They probably watched him
die, then shot him. Exsanguination
via stab wounds.

DR. MORRIS

What about the photos?

JULIETTE

They're irrelevant. The subject was obviously moved. The only blood at the site was dry, coagulated.

DR. MORRIS

Do we all agree?

The pathologists nod yes - all but TED. BEN STRAVINSKY notices this.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

As do I. Now let's discuss this trauma to the left side of the head.

He indicates a dark bruise over the man's temple.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

... we find an inflamed area of the meninges...

CATHERINE

A domino effect from the trauma of the gunshot wound.

TED

(chuckling)

I don't think so...

The room turns to him. All at once, TED seems himself again.

TED (CONT'D)

You wouldn't see that kind of inflammation after a fatal wound like this. The subject was obviously hit in the head on the left side with a bat, kick... or one hell of a hard punch. There is a left epidural hematoma with contre-coup injury to the right temporal lobe from the shifting of the skull. This could have happened in the initial confrontation.

He flashes eye contact with JAKE.

TED (CONT'D)

I'm more concerned about this discoloration.

He indicates the yellowed lips.

GRIFFIN

The blood tested negative.

TED

A solution of potassium cyanide would leave no trace in the blood or the organ tissue samples detectable by standard testing.

DR. MORRIS

Hm.

TED

Besides, the stains on Harper's clothes are 70% plasma. Most of the blood began coagulation before exsanguination. Whether he was moved or not, the majority of blood remains in the body. We should run a post-mortem chem-7 on his major organs to evaluate his potassium levels.

BEN STRAVINSKY

You really think he was poisoned?

TED

Six to seven hours before cuts were made on his body. The gunshot followed shortly after. There was actually gunpowder in the stab wounds... didn't anyone else notice?

JAKE

(carefully)

I... agree with Ted.

GRIFFIN looks at JAKE as if he just passed over him in the gym line.

*
*

JAKE

Signs of livor mortis, algor mortis, and rigor mortis seem to proceed the external wounds. It's possible that the poison could have been injected directly into the heart via the left axilla and subscapular regions or the lungs via the intercostal spaces, enabling the killer to use less of a solution...

*

(MORE)

JAKE (cont'd)
this would allow it to go
undetected, while still getting the
job done.

DR. MORRIS looks back and forth between them.

DR. MORRIS
(to TED)
You're proposing that this man was
poisoned with potassium cyanide.
(to JAKE)
That the killer waited 7 hours,
then shot him in the head.
(to TED)
Before stabbing him... eighteen
times.

The group is silent.

TED
I realize it's implausible.

DR. MORRIS
Highly.
(beat)
Nonetheless, we'll explore it.
I'll order a chem-7 and we will
reconvene. Gentlemen. Ladies.

He EXITS. The group begins to filter out of the room.

JAKE
(in a whisper to Ted)
Meet me here tonight, 9pm sharp.

JAKE quickly snatches *something* off of the metal tray.

BEN STRAVINSKY
You have the gift, Ted.

TED barely hears him. JAKE throws a KIDNEY at the back of
BEN'S head. BEN turns around with the BONE PROBE, white-
knuckled, and gives JAKE a violent glare.

JAKE
Whaddaya- gonna bone probe me?

JAKE exits.

CUT TO:

EXT PHILADELPHIA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - EVENING

The sun sets through the thick clouds. A deep red streak on the horizon.

CUT TO:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - EVENING

TED is looking over some of the medical instruments on the table absently, not really seeing them. He picks up a bone probe and taps it against his head. The clock reads 9:37. TED puts down the probe and EXITS the room.

INT HALLWAY, HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

TED walks down the empty corridor. Suddenly JAKE pops out of an adjacent hall, surprising the hell out of him.

JAKE

Come on.

TED

You're late.

JAKE laughs and leads TED down the hall.

INT HOSPITAL, STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

JAKE and TED head down the old metal staircase.

INT HOSPITAL, BASEMENT HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

JAKE leads TED through a maze of corridors into the bowels of the hospital.

JAKE

This wing is over a hundred years old. It's empty now, obsolete. They'll probably tear it out and rebuild it someday.

They continue to twist and turn and finally enter...

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

... a large square concrete room, dimly lit by bare fluorescent fixtures, an iron drain in the floor. The architecture looks almost gothic. Shadowy medical equipment is scattered around the perimeter. One wall is lined with SLIDING CABINETS that once held cadavers.

In the center of the room sits a long table. A BODY, partially covered by a white sheet, lies there. The face is visible in the half light: HARPER JOHNSON.

JAKE jumps up and down on the hard concrete floor several times and slams the side of his fist into the wall. The halls reverberate.

JAKE
Solid, huh?

TED says nothing.

JAKE (CONT'D)
So. Impress me.

TED
You killed him.

JAKE
Maybe. The point is, how?

TED
What is this, a game?

JAKE
Exactly. It's a game.

TED
I don't believe this.

JAKE
Alright, alright, get over it will you?

TED
Get over it?

JAKE
(bored)
There are 1.5 million people in this city... trust me, this asshole won't be missed.

TED
Oh, really.

JAKE
You can't say he didn't have it coming.

TED is speechless.

TED

Uhh...

JAKE

Right?

TED

He was... not exactly a boy scout.
Is that what you want me to say?

JAKE

Not a boy scout? He was
irredeemable filth. Good Lord.
That was his grandmother by the
way. The Brownie.
(he lets this sink in)
But really, who needs a reason?
"We're animals. It's our nature to
kill."
(beat, loving it)
Remember?

TED shakes his head, unwilling to accept it.

TED

Why show me this?

JAKE

I don't know. I thought the
intellectual challenge might
interest you. Was I wrong?

TED

Oh, no, I find this extremely
fucking interesting.

JAKE

Good. So what's your theory?

TED

I stated my case.

JAKE

(incredulous)
Potassium cyanide? Come on...

TED

(ignoring this)
What are you, some kind of serial
killer or something?

JAKE laughs and shakes his head in disappointment.

JAKE
Look, Ted, obviously... I misjudged
you.

TED
(drops his head)
I don't... know what to-

JAKE
Maybe you should just run along
home before the others get here.

TED'S head pops back up.

TED
The others?

JAKE
No, seriously, man. You should get
the hell out of here.

TED notices that JAKE'S hand is in his front pocket at a
strange angle. A GUN?

TED backs away to the door and runs.

CUT TO:

EXT HOSPITAL, BACK ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

TED lurks in the shadows. In the distance he can see several
figures walking through the parking lot: CATHERINE, CHIP,
GRIFFIN - and JULIETTE. They walk closely past him. *

JULIETTE is the last to follow. She senses TED'S eyes on
her, turns and picks him out of the dark. They LOCK EYES for
a moment, saying nothing. She turns away and heads in the
back entrance.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED is pacing back and forth, a bottle of Jack Daniels in his
hand. He sits down at the edge of the bed and stares at the
clock: 4 am. Finally, he slams the bottle down, picks up the
phone and dials.

INT JAKE'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

We make out only vague details of the dark apartment. JAKE
answers his cell phone.

JAKE

Yes?

TED

How do you know I won't tell?

JAKE

(long pause)

Because there so happens to exist distinct physical evidence putting you at the crime scene at the time of death... I know, because I placed it there... and if I was of a mind to, I could prove with mathematical certainty and beyond reasonable doubt that you were the one that did it.

TED is silent.

JAKE (CONT'D)

But none of that really matters if you're the boy I think you are. You won't tell because that would mean the game was over... and you never got to play.

He clicks off.

CUT TO:

INT DREXEL UNIVERSITY, GROSS ANATOMY ROOM - MORNING

The young pathologists are split off in groups. TED, BEN STRAVINSKY and a few others are together. TED is distracted by JAKE and the OTHERS, who are laughing it up a few tables down. He can't take his eyes off them.

DR. MORRIS

Dr. Gray?

He has come up behind TED, startling him.

TED

Sir?

DR. MORRIS

I'm not sure if you heard, but we got the results back on our black male. Negative.

TED

Yes, I heard. Sorry about that.

DR. MORRIS
Don't be ridiculous. We all err
from time to time. It was an
interesting theory.

TED
Yes sir.

DR. MORRIS
Interesting.
(he studies him)
Hm. Well, carry on.

*

DR. MORRIS exits, and TED'S eyes are back on JAKE.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE THIRTEEN STONES - DUSK

JAKE takes a side alley to the entrance of the bar. TED emerges from a doorway; he's been waiting there for him. He catches up to JAKE and grabs him roughly by the collar of his coat. JAKE shoves him away.

JAKE
What do you want, Teddy?

TED says nothing for a moment, just stares him down, eyes burning, catching his breath. And then:

TED
It wasn't potassium cyanide,
because there was no ragid
stippling of the red blood cells.
It was hypo-osmolar... nitric acid.
You brought him a bottle, a gift.
You shared a drink with him. Only
you didn't drink. You mixed
ethanol and nitric acid with the
alcohol, probably a flavored vodka
to cover the bitter taste. Using a
needle would have been dangerous.
You cut him up him while he was
alive but unconscious - no
struggle. Then you put him in your
car, drove him to 4th Avenue and
shot him in the back of the head.

JAKE
Mother fucker.
(beat)
You are good.

TED
Can I ask you something, Jake?

JAKE
Anything, Teddy.

TED
The other night... that was a gun
in your pocket.

JAKE
(chuckles)
This is a dangerous city, Dr. Gray.

TED is silent.

JAKE (CONT'D)
(slowly and deliberately)
Listen. If you want to play, you
have to bring something to the
table. Comprendo?

TED
Fuck you.

JAKE smiles and walks away...

JAKE
(turns around)
Don't suppose you want to come in
for a drink?

TED
Not tonight.

JAKE shrugs and heads into the bar, leaving TED alone on the
sidewalk, glaring.

CUT TO:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

An autopsy filmed at 4 frames per second. Scalpels flash,
flesh is cut, organs removed, the chest sewed up - the whole
thing is compressed into a few seconds - not quite a feast
for the eyes... more like a snack.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT DREXEL UNIVERSITY - DAY

TED sits out in the quad near the Dragon Statue. He is
reading.

He abruptly closes the book as JULIETTE, looking darkly gorgeous as usual, sits down next to him. Aside from shutting the book, he doesn't acknowledge her.

They sit in silence, then finally...

JULIETTE
Jake told you about the game,
didn't he?

TED says nothing.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
That's alright, you can say it.

TED says nothing.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
He thinks you're great, you know.

TED says nothing.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
He's the one who brought me in.

TED slowly turns his head toward her.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
Well, are you in?

TED
I don't know.

JULIETTE
You know what you have to do?

TED
(bitterly)
I get the idea.

JULIETTE wets her lips. She studies him.

JULIETTE
I hope you're in.

She hands him a small, folded piece of paper.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
This is an interesting case.

She gets up and leaves. TED unfolds the paper. On one side it says:

J. - 555-2487

He flips it. On the other side:

ICU #234

TED looks up to find JULIETTE - but she's gone.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU - LATER

Outside ROOM 234. A COP stands by the door. A young NURSE leaves the room, almost running into TED, who is standing in the corridor in SCRUBS - she's shaken up. TED watches her go, taking it in, makes brief eye contact with the COP, then enters.

*
*
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*

INT. HOSPITAL, ROOM 234 - CONTINUOUS

A DOCTOR (40's) and NURSE (50, Hispanic) stand at the foot of a bed. The PATIENT is hidden by a dividing curtain, obscurely silhouetted, WRITHING... the SOUND from his lips is like a snake being burned in acid.

*
*
*

The DOCTOR glances over his chart IMPATIENTLY, then drops it in a plastic holder by the bed.

*

DOCTOR

It's always me ends up with these motherfuckers. Waste of an ICU.

*
*

He notices TED.

*

DOCTOR (CONT.)

(shakes his head)

Motherfucker blows away his wife and two kids, execution style. One of the kid's little friends comes by.

*
*
*
*

SOUND: *ding dong...*

*

CUT TO:

*

EXT. FRONT PORCH, RUN DOWN NEIGHBORHOOD

*

A LITTLE GIRL, 8, stands at the door, momentarily slack jawed and frozen. MOTHERFUCKER - WHITE, 40s - stands over her - we don't see his face. He is SOAKED IN BLOOD from the waist down.

*
*
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*

DOCTOR (V.O.)
He cuts her up.

MOTHERFUCKER grabs the GIRL by the shoulders with both hands
and YANKS her off her feet, into the house, letting the
door...

SOUND: *SLAM*

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, ROOM 234 - CONTINUOUS

DOCTOR (CONT.)
Shot himself in the throat, then
two more in the stomach and still
couldn't get it done. Now he's on
our plate.

(looks back to the NURSE)
He won't live out the week. Double
his morphine; I'll check back in a
few days.

The DOC barely glances at TED as he leaves. TED approaches
the bed and has a LOOK as the NURSE goes about her business.
We don't see the MOTHERFUCKER'S FACE yet, but his arms are
STRAPPED painfully tight to the frame.

TED
He's strapped in.

NURSE
(heavy accent)
Lot of pain. He try to pull out his
wires.

The NURSE goes to the side of the BED to adjust the MORPHINE
DRIP. The ragged, incoherent sound from the MAN'S lips is
agonizing.

NURSE
He see devil soon I think.

CUT TO:

INT. BUS - LATER

TED sits on a packed bus gazing out the window. His own
reflection stares back at him, superimposed over street
lights, street traffic, neon and glowing storefronts: HI FI
EXPLOSION. ALL-NITE LIQUOR. PHARMACY. GIRLS GIRLS GIRLS.

WOMAN (O.C.)

Oh my God!

An OLD WOMAN collapses in the middle of the aisle, holding her chest. TED doesn't move.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Stop the bus! We need a doctor.
Someone call 911!

MAN

Is there a doctor on the bus?

TED watches blankly as the WOMAN goes limp. HE DOES NOTHING. The shrill sound of voices turns to white noise in his head. OC, a cell phone rings, cutting it off.

CUT TO:

INT. THE THIRTEEN STONES - NIGHT

JAKE answers his phone, cupping a hand over his ear to hear better. The others are visible in the background, drinking up.

TED (O.S.)

Was this your idea?

*

JAKE ducks into a quiet corner.

JAKE

Teddy? Is that you?

TED

The freak in IC, quadruple
homicide...

*

*

JAKE

Not exactly sure what's on your
mind, bro, but... does it matter?

*

*

BEAT... and then the line goes dead.

*

JAKE (CONT'D)

Teddy...?

*

He clicks off with the faintest trace of a smile.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MANHATTAN RESTAURANT PATIO - DAY

We are outside a busy eatery at lunch time, in tree-dappled sun. The CAMERA picks out a BLOND and moves in. Soft sweater, slacks. We only see her from behind; she's on her cell phone.

GWEN

Hey bear. I knew it was you.

She turns toward us.

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

TED'S apartment, which had been a mess, is now immaculately clean. Boxes unpacked, dishes stacked, books arranged alphabetically on shelves. We don't see TED at first. He doesn't speak. Silence stretches out on the line.

GWEN (O.C.)

Teddy?

CU of TED. The phone is cradled between his ear and shoulder. The light is dim. From this view it is difficult to determine time of day, or even what room he's in. The camera slowly pushes in from above eye level. It seems to take some effort for him to speak.

TED

Hey baby.

GWEN (O.C.)

Are you alright?

A long beat.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL, ICU (OUTSIDE ROOM 234) - TIME INDETERMINATE

*

[The following flashback will play out in silence, with NO MUSIC, to the VOICEOVER of TED and GWEN'S conversation.]

The COP is talking up one of the late nighters at the NURSES' STATION, down the corridor - he has his mace cannister out, showing her the proper technique. TED steps quietly into frame and opens the door to ROOM 234.

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*

INT HOSPITAL, ICU, ROOM 234 - TIME INDETERMINATE

*

TED enters, carrying a small doctor's bag. He checks the corridor before entering and locks the door behind him. He is wearing white latex gloves.

TED (V.O.)
I'm great. I'm good. I got your message.

GWEN (V.O.)
You sounded like someone else.

TED rounds the dividing curtain and we see the MOTHERFUCKER'S FACE clearly for the first time - he looks like HELL. BALD, CADAVEROUS... bathed in sweat... exhausted from pain and struggling against the straps. He seems to look right through TED, glass-eyed.

*
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*

TED unzips his bag and produces a stethoscope. He is calm, efficient.

*

GWEN (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Anyway. Do you miss me?

TED (V.O.)
Of course. How's the workload coming?

TED slips the stethoscope GENTLY under the MAN'S bedclothes and has a listen; goes back into his bag and lays out several items on the edge of the bed. He removes a syringe from a plastic case, taps it twice and squirts a few drops into a cotton ball.

*
*

GWEN (V.O.)
Well, that's one of the things I wanted to talk to you about. It looks like next weekend...

TED (V.O.)
We're fucked?

The MAN'S eyes flicker over the items on the bed.

*

GWEN (V.O.)
I'm sorry.

TED (V.O.)
I understand.

GWEN (V.O.)

Don't be rational, I'm going to start crying in the middle of the street.

TED (V.O.)

Baby, to be honest I half expected it.

Finally the MOTHERFUCKER'S eyes come up to meet TED'S... It's as if he understands what is about to happen; he attempts to struggle but there's no strength in it. MOTHERFUCKER can only manage an awful, rasping hiss - TED JAMS his WALLET into the MAN'S mouth, muffling it.

*
*
*
*
*

TED hesitates for a beat - *did anyone hear that?*

*

TED - with one hand - presses the stethoscope to the MAN'S chest, using the pressure to hold him down into the bed. He takes up the syringe with his other hand, and - watching the vital signs on the monitors - cleanly INSERTS THE NEEDLE INTO MOTHERFUCKER'S INNER EAR and depresses the plunger.

*
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*

The HISS trails off to a soft release of breath - the coiled tension in the MAN'S body seems to melt away - his eyes close.

*
*
*

TED removes the syringe and replaces it in its case. And then, gingerly, slips the leather WALLET out from between the MAN'S teeth... it comes easily. He pockets it.

*
*
*

GWEN (V.O.)

At least there's Thanksgiving.

TED (V.O.)

Absolutely.

GWEN (V.O.)

My parents are still expecting us to stay with them and do the whole Hamptons fall thing.

TED (V.O.)

Of course.

TED looks at his watch, waits ten seconds. With two fingers he holds open one of the MAN'S eyes while shining a penlight into his pupils. When he lets go, the eye stays open. Satisfied, he quickly repacks his bag - all but an eyedropper resting on a gauze pad at the edge of the bed.

*
*

GWEN (V.O.)
Are you sure it's alright? It's
not too late if you'd rather not.

TED (V.O.)
It's too late.

A last glance at his watch. Carefully, TED holds the eye
dropper to the MAN'S mouth, pushes down lightly on his chin
to part his lips, and lets a single drop of clear liquid fall
onto his tongue. *

GWEN (V.O.)
How so?

TED (V.O.)
No, look - your parents are great,
it's beautiful there. Besides,
we'll have the backhouse to
ourselves, right?

GWEN (V.O.)
That's true.

TED (V.O.)
Then it's settled.

Working quickly, TED wraps the dropper in the gauze pad,
binds it with an elastic band, drops it into the bag; zips it
up, takes a last look around the room, unlocks the door and
EXITS. *

INT HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - SAME TIME *

The COP returns to his spot as a STAIRWELL door down the
corridor CLICKS SHUT. He doesn't think much of it - but
behind him, in ICU 234, comes a STEADY TONE - FLATLINE. *

CUT TO:

EXT. MANHATTAN RESTAURANT PATIO - DAY

GWEN
Well, then, I can't wait. I'll
call you tomorrow. I love you.

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

The CAMERA pulls back slowly. We see that TED is sitting on the floor in the half-dark - brooding, lost in thought. The receiver is on the floor next to him.

TED
I love you too, sweetheart.

TED lets the handset drop to his side, depressing the cradle with two fingers to sever the call. Dial tone sounds as TED gazes out the open window into the night.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT HOSPITAL, BASEMENT LEVEL - NIGHT

Subterranean corridors. Empty rooms. Florescent lights pulsing and flickering. The low, steady hum of ventilation.

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

TED stands alone by the table at the center of the room, where a BODY lies, covered by a white shroud. His forehead is lightly beaded with perspiration. The overhead light illuminates only the area where he stands, hollowing his eyes in shadow, skull-like... the rest of the room falls off to ink black dark.

Attached to the table is an aimable light fixture, mounted on a chrome, jointed arm... switched off.

TED has just checked his watch when JAKE emerges from the shadows into the light, followed by the others.

They gather round, encircling him, all dressed in black. No one says a word; it is as solemn as a ritual. JAKE stops at the head of the table, looks around at each of the others, and finally looks TED straight in the eye.

With the flourish of a carnival conjurer JAKE whips away the shroud. The body on the table is the MOTHERFUCKER from ICU 234. His right eye is still open.

*
*

JAKE
... that sheet. On which she
embroidered fantails once... spread
it so as to cover her face.

JAKE is reciting lines from a poem - "The Emperor of Ice Cream" by Wallace Stevens:

JAKE (CONT'D)

If her horny feet protrude, they
come To show how cold she is, and
dumb. Let the lamp affix its beam -

He switches on the table fixture and blasts white light into
MOTHERFUCKER'S face. *

JAKE (CONT'D)

The only emperor is the emperor of
ice-cream.

CHIP comes up behind CATHERINE, buries his head in the nape
of her neck and begins to run his hands over her breasts, her
belly. GRIFFIN drops a leather medical bag on the table, *
pulls out a CRANK PIPE, lights up and takes a hit. He passes
it around and soon it ends up in TED'S hands. TED bloody
well needs it at this point. He takes a hit, then another.

The REVELERS begin to dance around the body with serpentine
grace. GRIFFIN produces a scalpel and inserts the blade into
MOTHERFUCKER'S stomach. The group lets out a collective gasp *
of ecstasy at the first sight of blood.

JAKE swings the overhead light back and forth, spot-lighting
a different face each time. The light moves faster and
faster and faster. JULIETTE grabs TED and starts sucking on
his lower lip... they hungrily attack each other.

The others move in and begin to CUT AND SHEAR AWAY at the
body with various gleaming instruments. JULIETTE dips her
index and middle finger into the corpse and bloodies her
fingers. She paints TED'S face. JAKE laughs; TED laughs
too, but it is almost a scream. The room becomes a roaring
blur...

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NEXT MORNING

A phone is ringing. Pale sun streams through the windows.
TED is half-naked, lying in bed. He slowly comes to. Was it
all a dream? The answering machine picks up.

GWEN (O.C.)

Just calling to check up on you.
You sounded fairly weird the other
day.

TED notices a pair of eyeballs in a ziplock bag by the phone.
He makes eye contact with them.

JAKE (O.C.)
I know exactly what you're
thinking.

CUT TO:

INT. RESIDENTS' LOCKER ROOM, MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY

JAKE has come up behind TED and is speaking softly, conspiratorially, in his ear. TED continues changing, staring straight ahead, as JAKE speaks.

JAKE
You think you feel guilty. But
it's not that. There's no such
thing as guilt, there's just fear
of getting caught. It's the first
day after, so the fear is still
fresh. Your brain is all sick and
twisted up. You're paranoid.
Everyone knows. You fucked up,
you're going to lose everything.
You want to throw up but there's
nothing in your stomach. You won't
be able to sleep tonight; you'll
hit the bottle, watch TV... look
for news that they're on to you.
There won't be any. Tomorrow
morning you wake up and it's the
same world, nothing has changed.
The fear starts to creep away.
After a few days you realize that
no one knows shit, that the whole
bloody thing, this event that to
you seemed so cataclysmic, has
slipped quietly beneath the notice
of the world. And then you'll be a
new man.

TED turns to him.

TED
That's not what I was thinking.

*

MUSIC: through the reverberation of the locker room a RHYTHM
begins to emerge... the POUNDING, RELENTLESS BEAT OF DRUMS...

*

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL, MONTAGE - DAY

TED runs through the maze of hallways and corridors at
breakneck speed, like a man possessed.

His face is bathed in sweat, eyes desperate. He SLAMS INTO PEOPLE and keeps going, never looking back.

The AFRICAN DRUMS continue to pound, deafening - it's as though he is RUNNING THROUGH THE JUNGLE to escape an unseen pursuer.

Finally, he bangs open a lab door and sees the face he's looking for: JULIETTE. She's alone in the room except for an OPEN DEAD MAN on an EXAMINATION TABLE.

TED pants with exhaustion, face cruel, eyes swimming with helplessness. JULIETTE meets his gaze, unblinking.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TED'S CAR - NIGHT

TED and JULIETTE are driving through the outskirts of the city. They stare ahead down the road, blankly, highway lights flickering in their eyes. Neither says a word.

JULIETTE breaks the silence.

JULIETTE
I knew you had it in you.

TED
(defensively)
Had what in me?

JULIETTE says nothing.

TED (CONT'D)
He was going to die anyway.

*

JULIETTE
We're all going to die anyway.

*

TED
Fuck you.

*

Silence. Headlights rake across their eyes.

*

JULIETTE
Take this exit.

*

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

TED and JULIETTE are watching a secluded house from across the road. The house is mostly dark, but for a light in the kitchen and the FLICKER BLUE OF A TELEVISION in the large front windows.

Inside, a FAT BASTARD reclines on a leather sofa, beer in hand, vegetating.

TED

Who is he?

Beat.

JULIETTE

He was sort of a great man once.
You'd never know it now. He worked
his way from nothing. At one point
he owned seven stores. He sold
sewing machines and refrigerators.
Married his high school sweetheart.
Started a family.

TED is looking at her like she's LOSING IT.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)

It didn't last, though. She left
him... took away the kids. He lost
the business, pissed away most of
his money...

TED

(taking the bait)

Why did she leave?

JULIETTE

The high school sweetheart?

TED

Yeah.

JULIETTE

(matter of fact)

Oh, I forgot to mention - he likes
little girls. In the worst way. You
just wouldn't believe what he does
to them.

TED

Juliette...

JULIETTE

He should've gone to jail, but you know how it goes... it's easier for everyone to say nothing... to pretend it never happened... now look at him... watching that TV, night after night...

TED puts a hand on her shoulder, turns her toward him.

TED

How do you know all this?

She looks him plainly in the eye.

JULIETTE

You never forget your first fuck.

TED

Why... are you telling me this?

JULIETTE'S eyes come into the light, sparkling wet. We've never seen her this vulnerable.

JULIETTE

Because he's my father, and I want you...

She touches TED'S face.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)

... to help me.

(beat))

I haven't seen him for fourteen years.

TED is silent, trying to grasp what she's telling him.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)

And now it's my turn. For the game.

TED just stares into her eyes, speechless.

LONG FADE TO
BLACK:

INT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

The FAT BASTARD gazes grimly into the TV light, ZONED OUT.

The DOORBELL BUZZER snaps him alert. He lifts himself from the leather sofa with some effort and makes his way to the door.

EXT. FRONT DOOR, COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT

FAT BASTARD swings open the door, squinting in the porchlight. We don't see who's there.

FAT BASTARD
Well, I'll be damned... must be my
lucky day.

MATCH JUMP CUT
TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

A BRUTAL SLAM OF AUDIO... in a jarring MATCH JUMP CUT the CAMERA PUNCHES IN on FAT BASTARD'S FACE - only now it's FROZEN, GROTESQUE: DEAD.

The CAMERA pulls back to reveal that we are now looking STRAIGHT DOWN on FAT BASTARD'S COLD, Gray BODY... draped from the chest down with a sheet SOAKED CRIMSON RED, post autopsy, on the slab in the OLD MORGUE... and surrounded by the seven RESIDENTS. The white light blasts down.

JAKE
(to Juliette)
He doesn't look like your type.

JULIETTE
No?

JAKE
Clearly, this isn't the usual lost
cause from the terminal ward. Oh,
he might've had a few issues with
alcohol and tobacco...

GRIFFIN
Don't we all?

*

JAKE
... but for the most part he
appears to have been in strapping
good health for a man of his age.
That is, until you came along.

JULIETTE just shrugs.

CATHERINE
 (to Juliette)
 Could you be any more hot right
 now?

JULIETTE gives her a demure wink.

JAKE
 (suspicious)
 I wonder what came over you.

JAKE'S eyes probe her; TED cuts in.

TED
 Well I, for one, have no clue how
 you did it.

JAKE glances quickly at TED.

CATHERINE
 (looking over clipboard)
 It's as if you dropped his lungs
 off the side of a building.

JAKE
 Yet the rest of the organs are
 pristine. *

CHIP
 Donor material.

GRIFFIN
 No signs of asphyxia.

JAKE sticks a pen-light down FAT BASTARD'S throat.

JAKE
 He didn't asphyxiate.

GRIFFIN
 How can you be sure? *

JAKE grabs GRIFFIN by the lower teeth and chin and sticks the
 pen-light down his throat. *

JAKE
 Because I know what asphyxiation
 looks like, dummy, and it don't
 turn your lungs to Jell-O.

GRIFFIN throws JAKE off of him, embarrassed. *

JAKE (CONT'D)
No, I was thinking more along the
lines of... frostbite.

TED
You're kidding.

JAKE
(like he's freezing)
Brrrrr.

CATHERINE
The epidermis is healthy, save for
a few patches of sun damage. Are
you suggesting that Juliette locked
him in a freezer? Because I don't
see it.

JAKE
Don't you?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY ESTATE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

TED, JULIETTE, and FAT BASTARD are smoking weed and drinking
canned beer.

JAKE (V.O.)
I see it all quite clearly.

FAT BASTARD
(to Juliette)
Well, this is some kind bud, baby.
This is really medical marijuana?
For free? Well, I'm in favor. I'm
in favor.

TED looks at JULIETTE.

JULIETTE
It's proven to naturally alleviate
pain.
(holding back emotion)
Why should anyone have to suffer?

FAT BASTARD
Ain't that the truth.
(nods toward TED)
This is your boyfriend, huh?

Something in TED'S smile seems to unnerve the man, but he let's it slide. FAT BASTARD turns his drunken attention squarely on JULIETTE.

FAT BASTARD
What is it you said you was again?

JULIETTE
I'm a general practitioner.

FAT BASTARD
And you can prescribe this shit for me, legal?

JULIETTE
Legal beagle.

FAT BASTARD
Well, where do I sign?

TED
(quick on the draw)
Let's do some whip-its first.

FAT BASTARD
No shit? You got a prescription for that too?

JULIETTE pulls several cannisters from her bag, as well as a larger generic ALUMINUM CAN with a long plastic nozzle.

JULIETTE
(stone-cold)
Who's first?

FAT BASTARD grabs at one of the cannisters.

FAT BASTARD
Thank you.

He HITS IT... his pupils dilate...

JULIETTE takes a cannister and is about to hit it when TED grabs it from her hand and gives it to FAT BASTARD - JULIETTE was looking to ease a little of her pain. FAT BASTARD HITS ANOTHER.

TED
Med school has it's perks, huh?

FAT BASTARD
(rolling)
You're alright, kid...

FAT BASTARD smiles at TED with his remaining three brain cells. JULIETTE gives him a long look.

She pulls a surgical glove from her bag, lays it on the table and then pops the cap of the generic aluminum can and hands it to FAT BASTARD, who gladly accepts - it's almost too easy.

FAT BASTARD knocks it back and HITS IT... JULIETTE shoves the can to his mouth and holds the valve open as TED quickly moves in and holds him down... FAT BASTARD panics, struggles...

JULIETTE pulls the can out and releases the remaining contents INTO THE SURGICAL GLOVE, blowing it up like a balloon. The ballooned-glove steams from the freezing gas agent and suddenly CRUMBLES INTO LITTLE ICE CHIPS.

FAT BASTARD lunges for JULIETTE, fog curling from his mouth... rage in his eyes... JULIETTE SMASHES FAT BASTARD SQUARE IN THE CHEST with the aluminum cannister...

... and we hear his frozen lungs SHATTER LIKE GLASS.

Overcome with emotion, JULIETTE falls on him and pounds the back of her fists into FAT BASTARD'S dead chest again and again... TED grabs her to comfort her; she's like a thrashing, feral cat - finally, she bites into TED'S neck, clothes shed... TED is nailing JULIETTE... JULIETTE is nailing TED. Their beautiful naked bodies slithering inches away from FAT BASTARD, whose blank eyes stare at them. TED sucks on JULIETTE'S top lip and pushes harder and harder with each thrust. They climax together as FAT BASTARD watches his last porno.

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FADE TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

GRIFFIN

Liquid nitrogen.

JAKE

A mixture of chlorofluorocarbons...
nitrogen and bit of freon, my boy.
He died of anoxia. It wasn't that
he couldn't breathe... he couldn't
produce oxygen. Clever.

(he glances at TED)
Too clever.

JULIETTE

You win.

The group lets out a cheer. CATHERINE, CHIP and GRIFFIN fall into a familiar chant: *JAKE... JAKE... JAKE...* *

JAKE

The more challenging mystery is how Ms. Bath forced this 240 pound man to ingest a cannister of minus 75 degree air all by herself.

CATHERINE

She's such a charming girl.

JAKE

That's true. She could probably convince almost anyone to do what she wanted them to...

His eyes flicker towards TED, then settle over the BODY.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You know, one could almost see a resemblance between the two of you...

(he touches Fat Bastard's face)

But maybe it's just the temperature.

JULIETTE

Cute.

EXT. TED'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The street is vacant as a cemetery. TED walks along the sidewalk toward his building, past dark alleys, IPOD headphones in his ears, lost in thought... So much so that he doesn't see anyone coming up behind him until the SCALPEL BLADE IS FROZEN INCHES IN FRONT OF HIS FACE, catching the light. *

TED stops COLD. For a second he sees his own eyes reflected back at him in the mirrored surface of the blade - then slowly turns...

JAKE is holding the SCALPEL in a clenched fist.

TED

(indicating the scalpel)

I guess it was only a matter of time.

JAKE laughs first, pocketing the scalpel with sleight-of-hand panache; then TED - then an uncomfortable silence.

JAKE
Question. Are you playing fair?

TED
Is there such a thing?

JAKE
No. But don't you want to know who
is the best? Aren't you a bit
curious?

TED says nothing.

JAKE
I am. That was pretty good last
night...

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

JAKE
Come on, you don't expect me to
believe our little Juliette came up
with that one on her own, do you?
I've seen her work.

TED
Maybe there's more to her than you
thought.

JAKE
I doubt it. But there may be more
to you.

TED
Me? I'm an open book.

JAKE can't help but throw his head back and laugh.

JAKE
Priceless. I'll catch you later,
Dr. Gray.
(starts to leave, then
stops and turns)
Oh... Teddy.

TED
Yeah?

JAKE

She didn't give you that whole routine about the father that raped her when she was but a wee lass...?

TED is silent. JAKE chuckles, shakes his head.

JAKE

What an imagination. Her father is alive and well... paid a visit just last month in fact. Chairman of an obscenely profitable global banking institution - a hell of a guy I might add.

JAKE slaps TED'S back just harder than good-naturedly and saunters off down the sidewalk. He hits a keychain button; down the street his Escalade chirps and blinks its' headlights. TED slow burns, watching him go.

He pulls out his cellphone and makes a call.

TED

Who was he?

JULIETTE (V.O.)

Anyone.

CLICK. TED slowly closes his phone and drops it into his pocket.

INT HOSPITAL, MONTAGE - DAY

[NOTE: the following is a continuous MONTAGE cut to the PAGAN MUSIC. Still photos, "animated" in the documentary style of *The Kid Stays In The Picture*, are interspersed with moving footage. Where there is dialog, the drums will dim - still present, but in the background. When the dialog ends, the music kicks back in full force.]

A CELTIC FIDDLE is layered in, playing sort of a PAGAN JIG.

JAKE, JULIETTE and the THREE OTHERS are doing their rendition of the *RIVERDANCE* in the hallway. BEN STRAVINSKY and other residents walk by and shake their heads. JAKE FLIPS OFF BEN. TED comes from the opposite direction and catches THE SIX in their act. JULIETTE and CATHERINE beckon TED to come and dance.

TED shakes his head, smirks; can't resist... pulls out a sick tap-step and dances his way over. The group hangs on one another, laughing and whooping it up.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. SLUM NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

JULIETTE is walking, slow motion, down a SKID ROW type of street. The homeless and addicted huddle next to dumpsters and sleep in cardboard boxes. She is dressed in a long black overcoat and holding an old fashioned leather medical bag.

CU: she blinks, looks to the left, to the right.

FLASH CUT: stills flash by almost too quick to register - saws, needles, blood, bone - accompanied by jarring sound design.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

JAKE cruises in the Escalade, looking for stragglers. Along the street, HOOKERS make eye contact, drawn to the headlights like moths to flame.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDORS - NIGHT

CHIP pushes a shrouded BODY on a rolling hospital gurney through labyrinthine corridors. The CAMERA flies along with him, low to the ground.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

HIGH ANGLE, PUSH IN: The FIVE RESIDENTS - minus JAKE - go to work on a series of bodies on the slab, opening them up, taking them apart - speed ramped to 6 f.p.s. The last corpse is a MALE BODY missing it's head. *

JAKE enters with an orange plastic bag labeled BIOHAZARD. In a series of JUMP-CUT STILLs, he goes into the bag and produces a HEAD, holding it up for display in mock triumph. The face is fully made-up with lipstick, eye shadow, false lashes. At first they don't think it's right, but at a closer look, it's a perfect fit! *

CUT TO:

INT. CREMATORIUM - NIGHT

GRIFFIN feeds bodies wrapped in white sheets into the incinerator, one after another.

*

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDORS - NIGHT

CHIP gets a rolling gurney up to speed and hops on, like a little kid riding a shopping cart at the supermarket.

CUT TO:

INT THE 13 STONES - NIGHT

GRIFFIN holds court. Cut from one to the next, facing him. The DRUMS dim to background.

JAKE

You fucked it to death.

GRIFF rolls his eyes.

CATHERINE

Suffocation.

GRIFFIN shakes his head: NO.

TED

Exsanguination.

*

JULIETTE

Strangulation.

CHIP

Machete to the heady.

*

The revelers cheer as the MUSIC rises. In JUMP-CUT STILLS, CHIP does a victory dance. The dancing blends into...

*

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

THE SIX do their ritualistic dance around the slab. It's a perfect blend; you can't imagine anyone of them not existing in this space together. JULIETTE and TED share a secret look.

*

CUT TO:

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

CATHERINE sits at a barstool next to REDNECK with a mesh cap. HE looks her over. She gestures to the BARTENDER, then towards the REDNECK'S mug of beer - she'll have the same.

FLASH CUT: a bone saw, blood, tissue, microscopic images of blood cells; the REDNECK'S pale, frozen face.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDORS - NIGHT

CHIP WIPES OUT on the rolling gurney, spilling himself and the blue body of an OBESE WOMAN across the hall.

CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - NIGHT

TED and JULIETTE are alone in the room, face to face. She brings up his hand, which holds a scalpel. Looking him in the eye, she guides his hand, running the scalpel delicately across her tongue, drawing blood...

JUMP CUT TO:

TED and JULIETTE make out, clawing at each other hungrily.

JUMP CUT TO:

They are SCREWING on an autopsy table, just two more naked bodies in a room full of them. The white light burns down on them. Lathered in sweat, JULIETTE looks over to make eye contact with a CADAVER, lying on a table next to them.

CUT TO:

INT. THE THIRTEEN STONES - NIGHT

The group sits around a table, JAKE on point with a cat-that-ate-the-canary look on his face.

TED
(suddenly)
Wait. You switched their blood.

JAKE
(pissed)
Oh, fuck you.

TED

You found some other patient with
advanced HIV and switched their
blood with John Doe's...

JAKE smashes a glass on the table. The group begins to
chant, pounding their beer mugs: "Ted-dy! Ted-dy! TED-DY!"

JAKE

You realize that took me nine
hours?

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL, HALLWAY - DAY

The RESIDENTS *Riverdance*. TED'S eyes are glazed, delirious.
JULIETTE takes his arm, holding him up. BEN STRAVINSKY
looks on disapprovingly.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

JAKE, his face a mask of sneering malice, presides over the
ritual.

JAKE

Let the lamp affix it's beam!

He tips the light down.

In a series of JUMP CUTS we see dead face after dead face
illuminated - every sex, race, age and flavor...

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - NIGHT

Finally, it is JULIETTE'S face, seen from above, light
burning down, gasping in CLIMAX.

We switch angles to see TED, soaked in sweat, silhouetted
against the white hot overhead lamp.

JULIETTE closes her eyes to the light and swoons to semi-
consciousness.

REVERSE MATCH
CUT:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

POV from the ground, looking up. A crowd has gathered around, silhouetted, looking down at the lens. The SUN substitutes for the overhead light.

PEDESTRIANS (O.C.)
Is there a doctor? Somebody call
911!

TED moves into frame, blocking out the sun. He kneels down, moving into CLOSE-UP.

TED
I'm a doctor.

The MUSIC CUTS. END MONTAGE.

DR. MORRIS (O.C.)
Dr. Gray?

CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

Taken by surprise, TED slams shut a sliding chest containing a freshly tagged CADAVER and spins around quickly to face DR. MORRIS.

DR. MORRIS
Is there something wrong?

TED
(heart pounding,
collecting himself)
No sir. You surprised me, that's
all.

DR. MORRIS
I'd like to see you in my office.

CUT TO:

INT. DOCTOR MORRIS' OFFICE - DAY

TED sits across from DR. MORRIS. He is obviously on edge, but covering fairly well.

DR. MORRIS
Is there anything you'd like to
share with me, Ted?

TED
I'm not sure I understand.

DR. MORRIS
No, of course not.

DR. MORRIS takes a long beat, looking TED over. We notice that TED is not looking so hot - pale, dark circles under the eyes, forehead clammy.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
Well, your work is certainly beyond reproach - exemplary. What concerns me-

TED
(interrupting him)
Thank you.

DR. MORRIS
... what concerns me is your extracurricular life.

TED
Why is that?

DR. MORRIS
(beat)
Ted, I've been at Memorial for twenty years. I've watched bright boys like you come, I've watched them go. You're young, supremely talented, hyper-competitive... you have a drive to win at any cost... but it could kill you, you know.

TED
(releasing his tension with a laugh)
Jesus, Doctor, that's a bit dramatic, isn't it?

DR. MORRIS
Just looking at you it's obvious that you're using.

This cuts TED'S laugh short.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
(shrugging it off)
We've all... experimented... at one time or another. God knows, I've done it all.
(MORE)

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
And you should know that based on
your work here I plan on giving you
my highest recommendation.

TED
I appreciate it.

DR. MORRIS
No doubt.
(beat)
Any plans for the holidays?

TED
Actually, I'd planned to spend
Thanksgiving with Gwen's family.

DR. MORRIS
Hm. That's good. Do that. An
opportunity, perhaps, to rethink
your priorities.

TED
Yes sir.

DR. MORRIS
And a little time away from Dr.
Gallo wouldn't hurt either.

TED
No sir, it wouldn't.

With a wave of his hand DR. MORRIS dismisses him. Relieved,
TED heads for the door.

DR. MORRIS
(perusing the papers on
his desk)
You've got it all laid out for you,
Gray. The money, the pussy, a
family of means.

TED says nothing.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)
(nonchalantly)
A shame if you fuck it up.

TED EXITS.

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED comes in the front door, flips on the lights. The answering machine is blinking red at his bedside; he walks over to check it.

We see that his suitcases are packed up and laid out on the bed.

He clicks PLAY on the machine.

JULIETTE

Hello.

The voice comes simultaneously from the machine, and behind him, in the room. TED spins around.

JULIETTE is sitting cross legged on the kitchen counter top, watching him.

TED

Jesus, what are you doing here?

JULIETTE

(nodding toward the
suitcases)

You going somewhere?

TED

I told you last week: I'm leaving town for the holidays.

JULIETTE

Oh, right. The fiance.
(beat)

So you're going through with that?

TED

Of course.

JULIETTE

Wow.

TED

Come on - what's going on with you and Jake? Don't you two have some sort of arrangement?

JULIETTE

What do you care? No one owns anyone.

TED

No.

They stare each other down for a long beat. Letting it go, JULIETTE begins to unbutton her shirt and open her legs. *

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MONTGOMERY HOUSE, HAMPTONS - MORNING

In a wide view, TED pulls into the driveway of a beautifully landscaped estate. GWEN runs out to meet the car; the PARENTS stand together on the front steps. The young lovers embrace.

We punch in close as they come away to study each other's faces. GWEN is golden, radiant. TED has cleaned himself up; he doesn't look as bad as he did in DR. MORRIS'S office, but is still noticeably gaunt and pale compared to the guy we saw early on.

TED

How did I go without you for so long?

GWEN

(running her fingers along his face)

Look at you... you've been working so hard...

She almost starts to tear up. TED pulls her close.

TED

I'm OK. It's alright.
Everything's alright now.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MR. MONTGOMERY and TED are sitting in fat stuffed chairs, fireplace glowing, drinking beer and smoking cigars.

MR. MONTGOMERY

I hear you're kicking ass with the residency.

TED

It's been quite an experience...
Quentin Morris is a good man.

MR. MONTGOMERY
I never liked that fruitcake.

TED
(surprised)
He speaks very highly of you.

MR. MONTGOMERY
Of course, why wouldn't he?

MR. MONTGOMERY has a laugh.

MR. MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)
Look, bottom line, it's the right
program for you right now, it lets
me sell you to the brass... you've
got to nail those boards though.

TED
Oh, I'll nail them.

MR. MONTGOMERY
I know you will. Working forensic
in DC is as good as it gets. Top
cases... top dollar.
(leans in, less cocky)
Listen Ted, this job would stand
whether or not you were marrying my
daughter. I want you to know that.

TED nods humbly.

MR. MONTGOMERY (CONT'D)
What about Africa? You get any
hunting in?

Now it's TED'S turn to laugh.

TED
Hunting? I have to say, the
hunting is much better in
Philadelphia.

MR. MONTGOMERY
Atta boy... I think.

GWEN appears under a warmly lit hallway arch, looking sleepy
and wonderful.

GWEN
I'm stealing my fiance back.

MR. MONTGOMERY

Uh Oh.

He gives TED a wink.

NOTE: the following scenes between TED, GWEN, JAKE and JULIETTE take place simultaneously, and will be intercut to mirror one another.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

GWEN and TED lie nude under a blanket, face to face, on an array of pillows by the fireplace.

TED

This is what I really missed.

GWEN

Me too.

(she wrinkles her nose)

Cigar breath.

TED smiles, kisses her. The pace is slow and sensual.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JAKE has JULIETTE pinned to the concrete floor of a filthy basement. A bare bulb lying on the ground at the end of a twisted wire illuminates the room. JULIETTE wears a black bra, torn black stockings and nothing else; JAKE is shirtless with black leather pants and glistening with sweat.

He grabs her by the hair and wrenches her head back, opening her mouth and exposing her neck. She gasps, breathes heavily. He rips her bra away and tosses it.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

TED plants tiny kisses along the swanlike curve of her neck. GWEN traces patterns in the curls of his hair and down his back, gracefully ticklish with pleasure of his touch.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JULIETTE claws and pushes at JAKE'S mouth; he works her hands away, eyes lit up with malice, and spits in her face.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

TED and GWEN roll over, half covered by a blanket. She mounts him slowly, eyes closed, savoring it. TED gently blows air from his lips, completely in the moment.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JULIETTE is on top. She works on a pair of white latex gloves, curls her right hand into a fist and, face blank, slugs JAKE in the mouth. His lower lip splits; he works his tongue over it, tasting his own blood.

With clinical efficiency, JULIETTE unclasps a leather case and lets it unroll on the ground. It contains a dozen or so 6" stainless steel needles.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

TED and GWEN reverse again. TED pauses over her, stretching out the moment.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JULIETTE takes one of JAKE'S nipples between two fingers and stretches it, holding the tip of the needle to the gooseflesh close enough to touch.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

TED thrusts. GWEN takes him in with a soft moan.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JULIETTE presses the needle through, puncturing the skin. A little dark ball of blood begins to pool. JAKE grits his blood-soaked teeth and hyperventilates.

Spiderlike, her fingers seek out another needle.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

TED works his way down, leaving a trail of kisses along EVE'S belly.

CUT TO:

INT. ABANDONED BASEMENT - NIGHT

JAKE is a porcupine. There are needles in his chest, his stomach, his cheeks. JULIETTE taps at the needles with her fingers; they loll around, brushing against one another with a sound like tiny windchimes, each movement bringing fresh pain. JAKE twitches and writhes in perfect agony. He shrieks.

CUT TO:

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT

GWEN'S face tenses, then releases, in perfect bliss as TED goes down on her.

FADE TO BLACK.

NOTE: end mirror intercutting.

INT. GUEST HOUSE, HAMPTONS - NIGHT, LATER

GWEN and TED caress each other's faces in the afterglow.

GWEN

I have an early Christmas present
for you.

TED

I think I just got it.

GWEN

No, better.

TED

Impossible.

GWEN
I'm coming back to Philadelphia
with you. Not in two months, but
now. I finished my work and I can
fly back up to take the bar exam.

TED stares at her.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Only if it's OK.

TED
Are you serious?

She nods, smiling. We can see TED'S mind working.

TED (CONT'D)
That's... completely incredible.

GWEN
Then you don't mind?

TED
Of course I don't mind. Baby, it's
the greatest news I could imagine.

She embraces him. TED looks past her into the dark room,
eyes blank.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

GRIFFIN is sitting at a hospital computer terminal after
hours. In a series of cuts we see him alter entries on
patients' records, one after another:

TRANSFERRED, TRANSFERRED... RELEASED. RELEASED... JANE DOE.
JOHN DOE... JANE DOE... JOHN DOE... KILL TED... KILL TED...

*

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

The door unlocks, swings open. GWEN enters first, bright
eyed, taking the place in.

GWEN
Oh my God, look at this view.

TED is right behind her. He scans the room nervously,
looking for anything incriminating.

He sweeps a pair of handcuffs off the kitchen counter into the trash bucket as GWEN drops her bags and walks over to the window.

TED
If I knew you were coming I
would've cleaned up.

GWEN smiles, glowing in the backlight of the big windows.

GWEN
It's perfect.

Something catches the corner of TED'S eye. He walks into the bedroom, toward the nightstand, where GWEN'S picture sits. To our eye it seems immaculate... he takes it up, has a careful look: on GWEN'S cheek, a tiny spot - *blood?*

TED
(calling out to her)
You wanna order in?

He rubs it clean, walks back out to GWEN...

... and freezes in his tracks. GWEN is holding up a ziplock bag: a big chunk of crystallized meth and the pipe to smoke it.

GWEN
What the fuck is this?

TED
(cool)
Whoa. Gwen, don't freak out. I'm
holding it for someone, a resident.
He's trying to kick, and I'm
helping him.

GWEN'S not buying it.

GWEN
A resident.

TED
Honey. Do I look like a tweaker to
you?

GWEN
(a little shaken)
Maybe I should find a hotel for a
few days.

TED
 Earth to Gwen. This is me.
 (starts to laugh)
 Baby, seriously.

He grabs the bag from her and tosses it on the table and hugs her.

GWEN
 Why didn't you throw it away?

TED
 (quick)
 I ran out of here in a flash to see
 you. *

He stares at her cool as a cucumber.

TED (CONT'D)
 You've never really lived in the
 city before... it's going to be a
 little overwhelming at first, the
 craziness... but I want you here. *

GWEN
 I'm sorry.

TED
 No, I'm sorry. I'm sorry that you
 even have to hear about a situation
 like this. (holds her face) I will
 never let you be put in harm's way. *

GWEN *

(wanting to change the
 subject)
 If we're going to this party thing
 we should start getting ready.

TED
 (mischievous)
 We have time.

He runs his finger along her belly. She gives in, shares a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. KING'S BALLROOM - NIGHT

A sumptuous black-tie Christmas Ball at the University. Ice sculptures, waiters in white, flowers everywhere, a knockout spread of food and drink, jazz trio, the works.

TED and GWEN step up from the coat room. GWEN is the epitome of beauty and class, and TED complements her famously. They greet BEN STRAVINSKY and his geeky date, DONNA.

TED
Ben, this is my fiance, Gwen.

BEN STRAVINSKY
It's a pleasure. Wow, I've been hearing all about you from, uh, day one.

GWEN
Nice to meet you, Ben.

BEN STRAVINSKY
This is my Donna.

GWEN
Madonna, nice to meet you.

DONNA
(friendly)
It's just Donna.

GWEN
Oops.

TED spots JAKE and JULIETTE by the Dragon ice sculpture. They look dazzling.

JAKE notices TED.

JAKE
(to Juliette)
I'll be damned. The Prodigal Son returns.

JULIETTE betrays no emotion. They make their way over. BEN STRAVINSKY sees them coming and immediately ushers DONNA away.

BEN STRAVINSKY
We'll, uh, catch you later. Very nice to meet you, uh, Gwen.

JAKE and JULIETTE step up. If this were a couples competition, it would be a draw. GWEN does stand an inch taller than JULIETTE.

TED

Gwen, these are some of my fellow residents, Jake Gallo and Juliette Bath. Gwen Montgomery.

JAKE kisses GWEN'S hand with exaggerated archness. The tension is palpable; GWEN picks up on it.

JAKE

Has Ted told you about all of the people he's killed?

GWEN

Yes, I hear he cuts them up quite well.

JULIETTE

He's learning.

JAKE

Practice makes perfect. The wonderful thing about the death business is -

GWEN

Never a shortage of clientele?

JAKE

(pleased)

Exactly. Blissful immunity from cyclical economic ebb and flow. People just keep dying, and dying...

JULIETTE

Are you a school teacher?

GWEN

I'm taking my bar exams in February.

JAKE

Impressive. You haven't killed any lawyers yet have you, Ted?

TED

Oh, there's been so many, how can I keep track?

JULIETTE

I would have ended up a lawyer if I hadn't passed my MCATs.

GWEN
Too bad, we might've been
roommates.

This quick comment shuts JULIETTE up.

TED
I'd like to introduce Gwen to Dr.
Landau, if you don't mind.

JAKE
Don't worry about us.
(nodding to indicate the
buffet)
We'll be at the trough assembling
our meat plates. You two enjoy the
evening.

JAKE and JULIETTE walk away. GWEN pulls TED closer, gestures
toward JAKE with her eyes, then looks back at TED,
questioning. TED doesn't get it.

GWEN
Is he the one?

Realizing she's referring the resident with the drug problem.

TED
Ah. Shh. Very perceptive,
counsellor. Come on.

He leads her to DR. LANDAU to make introductions.

JULIETTE is staring bullets at TED and GWEN. JAKE picks up
on this with some irritation. He pulls her aside.

JAKE
What is this?

JULIETTE
(pulls away)
What are you talking about?

JAKE
You know, I thought this was a
childish infatuation that would
wear off, but I'm starting to
wonder if you've lost your mind.

JULIETTE
(sarcastically)
Don't worry, darling. I'm yours.

JAKE looks as though he might enjoy skinning her alive.

JULIETTE (CONT'D)
Have another drink.

JAKE
Thanks, I will.

He leaves her standing there.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

TED sits at the kitchen table in a wife beater and boxer shorts, typing away on a laptop. His tuxedo is laid out on the bed.

*

GWEN comes out of the bathroom in a babydoll nightie. She comes up behind him and runs a finger along his shoulder; he tilts his head toward her but doesn't turn. She finally clears her throat to get his attention.

He turns around and has a look.

TED
Look at you.

GWEN
Look at me.

TED'S cellphone rings. He checks the caller ID: JAKE.

TED
I should take this.

TED walks into the other room closing the door behind him, talking as he goes.

TED (CONT'D)
Hello. Yeah, calm down. Where are you?

TED'S muffled voice is indiscernible in the next room. GWEN looks over the picture on the nightstand - the two of them together. He clicks off and comes back in.

TED (CONT'D)
I have to go.

GWEN
It's him, isn't it?

TED
I'm sorry.

GWEN
(beat)
I know. Just be careful.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL, BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

TED strides quickly through the maze of underground corridors leading to the old morgue.

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

TED walks in on a nightmarish scene. JAKE is in the center of the room, walking in circles, naked from the waist up, still in his tuxedo pants and dress shoes. He is completely covered in blood and obviously fucked up out of his mind on crank and booze.

The room is like a slaughterhouse. THREE NUDE WOMEN, in various stages of mutilation, are splayed around the room like broken mannequins.

JAKE is brandishing a shiny but somewhat antiquated looking SURGICAL CLEAVER.

JAKE flips out when he sees TED. He slips on the blood slicked floor and falls on his ass.

JAKE
TEDDY-BOY! FUCKING TEDDY BOY!

TED'S heart is pounding, but his outward demeanor is icy calm.

TED
Hello Jake.

JAKE is back on his feet. He attempts to find the words that will encapsulate the magnificence of what he has done; finally, he can only open his arms wide, a grand gesture taking in the entire scene, and just stands there, beaming with pride.

TED (CONT'D)
Where are the others?

JAKE
(scoffing)
The others? Those sycophants?
Fuck them.

TED
What happened?

JAKE
A simple transaction, Teddy. I
paid my money and I got my money's
worth. Got stabbed too.

JAKE shows off a gash in the right side of his rib-cage like
a kid showing off a 1st place ribbon.

TED
These are all hookers?

JAKE
Yep.

His mood shifts on a dime.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Whores... all whores...

The childlike exuberance is gone; JAKE'S face goes dark... we
become acutely aware of the large CLEAVER in his hand.

TED
We gotta clean this up, Jake.

JAKE
(starting to snap)
Oh, clean it up? What, this?

He starts to go nuts with the CLEAVER on one of the bodies,
hacking at it like a wild man.

JAKE (CONT'D)
LIKE THIS? HOW'S THAT? IS THAT
BETTER?

TED stays cool on the outside, but we can see that he's
starting to sweat.

TED
You're losing it, Gallo...

JAKE
 (momentarily calm)
 Losing it? Losing it. Teddy.
 I've fucking found it.

He gestures all around.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 This is it. THIS IS IT!

He crosses the room in a heartbeat and brings the knife up to TED'S face. JAKE turns the blade in the light, showing TED his own reflection in the mirrored surface.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 Look here. What do you see? What
 the hell are you? You're me.
 You're a fucking killer. An
 animal.

He turns the blade sideways and touches the edge to TED'S face, trembling with balled up rage; he could cut him in half with a flick of the wrist.

JAKE (CONT'D)
 (burning)
 You hypocrite... Golden Boy,
 parading around with your Ivy
 League cunt... she doesn't know
 you... I know you...

TED
 (calmly)
 What about the game?

JAKE turns on a dime again.

JAKE
 (as if nothing has
 happened)
 What about it?

TED
 Isn't that why you called me here?

TED has caught him off guard and takes advantage. He shoves JAKE away and stalks over to first girl, BLACK, 20's.

TED (CONT'D)
 Come on, let's play.
 (he kicks her arm away
 from her face)
 This one.
 (MORE)

TED (CONT'D)

You sliced her jugular vein, and by the bubbles in her mouth, I can see that she didn't die of blood loss, she died of suffocation - to be precise, she choked on her own blood.

JAKE gets into it. He starts acting each killing out, in a crazy pantomime, as TED describes them. We also see graphic, jarring flashes of the killings as they happened.

TED walks over to the next girl, ASIAN, 30's.

TED (CONT'D)

This one? I'd say you clocked her bloody good in the temple...

(looks around, spots a baseball bat)

... with that bat over there, giving her a near fatal aneurism. Of course I'd need to pry her head open to know with mathematical certainty.

JAKE

What do you mean near fatal?

Just then the ASIAN WOMAN'S mouth opens, producing a hissing, labored gasp. Her eyes blink lazily. JAKE HACKS AT HER in a fury, finishing the job.

TED backs away, moving to the next victim, a CAUCASIAN FEMALE, 20's.

TED

Ah, yes. Do I detect a bit of a Jack the Ripper influence here? Should we go so far as to call it a tribute?

JAKE starts to laugh hysterically.

TED (CONT'D)

You disemboweled her - obviously while she was still alive. Oh, look, blood on her right hand, and the wrist is broken. So we know who stabbed you. I suppose that would be why you gutted her.

(her taps a finger to his forehead)

Psychology.

Again, JAKE acts out the killing, turning it into a Fred Astaire dance, throwing out his arms and taking a bow at the end.

CUT TO:

INT. ROYAL ALBERT HALL - TIME INDETERMINATE

Still shirtless and covered in gore, JAKE stands exultantly on the stage of a giant concert hall, bathed in floodlights and soaking in a standing ovation.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

TED is clapping his hands, woodenly.

TED

Bravo.

JAKE

(darkening)

You lack a certain enthusiasm, Dr. Gray.

TED

To be quite honest with you I fail to see the genius here.

JAKE

(burning holes in him)

You fail to see.

(beat)

You fail to see...

We see that JAKE has been pressing the blade into his wrist to the point of drawing blood.

Then: JAKE crosses the space between them in a heartbeat and has the CLEAVER pressed up to TED'S throat... he holds it there, teeth gritted, eyes closed, hand trembling, face to face. Somehow TED stays icy cool, staring him down.

JAKE transforms again. The energy drains away; his arm drops. He tosses the CLEAVER across the room, where it lodges weakly, randomly, in a HOOKER'S neck. The handle hits the concrete with a dead CLUNK.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Buzz killer.

TED
Let's go to the incinerator.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT BUILDING, PARKING GARAGE - DAWN

TED parks his car and gets out. JULIETTE appears in the shadows.

JULIETTE
Hi.

TED
What are you doing here?

JULIETTE
I guess I missed you.

TED
Do you know where I just was?

JULIETTE
No.

TED
With Jake in the dungeon. He went
apeshit and thrill-killed three
women.

*

JULIETTE
I'm finished with him.

TED
I think you should leave.

She steps up to him. The proximity is devastating. There's an undeniable electricity between them.

JULIETTE
I'm sorry about tonight. Your
fiance is beautiful. You must be
very happy.

TED
Did you hear what I said?

She tries to put her hand on his face; he grabs her wrist. They stare each other down.

All at once he's jammed her against a van and they are tearing at each other's clothes.

They go down to the concrete. TED enters her with real savagery. JULIETTE puts teeth marks into his shoulder.

We see that all of this is being watched from the shadows. A passing car brings a face out of the black, eyes a simple text of raw, unedited hate: it's JAKE.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

JAKE is holding court, explaining a complex procedure to a group of new RESIDENTS. He is composed and confident; we see in him no trace the previous night's horrific excesses.

TED enters, interrupts.

TED
Dr. Gallo, may I have a moment?

JAKE
(cool as a cucumber)
Certainly, Dr. Gray.
(to the students)
Excuse me.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY, HOSPITAL - DAY

TED pulls JAKE to a quiet corner.

JAKE
Well?

TED
I'm done. I'm out.

JAKE
Nobody gets out.

TED
What's that supposed to mean?

JAKE
(beat)
The words that you're saying right now are very dangerous; you should really be more careful.

TED

Don't be so dramatic. Look, it's not like I can say anything to anyone... I'm up to my eyeballs in this.

JAKE

(laughing)

Yes, you are.

TED

I've got my fiance living with me now. I'm looking over my shoulder every second.

JAKE

That's good. You should be looking over your shoulder.

(beat)

Listen: we won't be caught, ever, because we won't let ourselves be caught. We don't tolerate weakness, we don't tolerate dishonesty, or disloyalty, or stupidity... it's a long list. Should I go on?

*

TED

(breaking eye contact)

Alright. Look, I'm sorry... last night caught me off-guard.

JAKE

(grinning)

Yeah, that was some crazy shit.

TED chuckles.

TED

Uh huh.

JAKE

So you're good then.

TED

I guess I just am.

JAKE

Great, because we're meeting tomorrow night.

TED

Tomorrow?

JAKE
That's right. You busy?

TED
No... no, I can get away.

JAKE
Good.
(beat)
You won't want to miss this one. I
have a surprise planned.

TED
Oh, really.
(shakes his head bitterly)
I can't even imagine.

JAKE flashes a million dollar smile.

JAKE
I'll see you at midnight.

JAKE walks off. TED watches him go, his face hardening.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - DAY

TED is snooping around with a flashlight. He examines the ventilation, the locks. He traces the wiring of the lights along the ceiling to the wall with the flashlight beam.

CUT TO:

EXT. DREXEL UNIVERSITY - DAY

TED is on the main campus at a payphone. In his hand is the folded piece of paper JULIETTE gave to him with her number on it.

He dials.

JAKE'S VOICE (O.C.)
Hello?

TED quickly hangs up. Across the quad he sees CHIP and GRIFFIN watching him.

He starts walking across the street and spots CATHERINE talking with another resident. She watches TED cross. TED heads back towards the hospital.

CUT TO:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

TED is looking through a microscope. BEN STRAVINSKY is pressing a slide.

TED
Look at this.

BEN STRAVINSKY steps over to the microscope, removes his glasses, and focuses the eyepiece.

BEN STRAVINSKY
(lightbulb)
Anemia.

TED
That's right, he was anemic. It's amazing how many people go through life, not knowing what's going on inside of them.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TED and GWEN are eating Chinese food.

TED
I've gotta take off for a few hours tonight.

GWEN says nothing, just stares at him.

TED (CONT'D)
I know... I know. But I have to.

GWEN
You don't have to.

TED
This will be the last time. That is a promise.

GWEN
(studying him)
I believe you.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL, BASEMENT LEVEL - NIGHT

Subterranean corridors... Empty rooms... The pulse and flicker of disused fixtures...

INT. THE OLD MORGUE - NIGHT

JAKE, CATHERINE, GRIFFIN, and CHIP are convened around the table. Their eyes are all glazed over and BLOODSHOT RED. There is a body, covered by a shroud. The group is minus two: JULIETTE and TED are absent.

*
*

GRIFFIN
We're conspicuously short tonight.

JAKE
You've noticed.

CATHERINE
(bitterly)
She's with him.

JAKE
No, I don't think so.

GRIFFIN
We're going to have to get rid of him.

*

CHIP
I concur.

CATHERINE
And her.

GRIFFIN
Fuck yes and her.

JAKE
True, true... it's a shame. I'd hoped we could take care of it all at once.

(beat)
JAKE (CONT'D)
Let the lamp affix it's BEAM!

JAKE aims the overhead lamp at the head of the slab and tears away the shroud. It's JULIETTE.

A COLLECTIVE GASP from the group. Their eyes light up, exhilarated. They have truly, all of them, transformed into MONSTERS.

JAKE (CONT'D)
Doctors, let's have a look inside.

They move in, hungrily. Only the high-pitched buzz of a drill and friction of shears is heard. CHIP produces a leather bag and whips out the familiar meth paraphernalia. *

But JAKE notices something odd. The air has begun to ripple under the light, as if a colorless gas is being released into the room.

JAKE (CONT'D)

What?

He sees that CHIP is about to light the pipe. *

JAKE (CONT'D)

Oh, I get it.

CHIP clicks in the flame-jet, igniting the gas in a tremendous bloom of blue flame. *

It is INSTANTANEOUS. In the blink of an eye, the RESIDENTS are burning up like a coven of vampires, writhing and screaming. On the table, JULIETTE catches fire.

JAKE crawls along the floor to the wall of sliding cabinets where the cadavers were stored once upon a time. He fumbles with a latch. GRIFFIN, burning alive, desperately tries to open the steel door leading out into the hallway. It is jammed from the outside. CATHERINE writhes on the ground, a burning witch. CHIP slices his own throat. *

INT. HOSPITAL, BASEMENT HALLWAY - NIGHT

TED watches the door, listening to the screams, stone-faced.

CUT TO:

INT HOSPITAL, ATRIUM - NEXT MORNING

A FIRETRUCK is parked out front. TED enters to a crowded waiting room. Doctors, officers, news crew. DR. MORRIS finds TED and pulls him aside.

TED

What's going on?

DR. MORRIS

Ted, I'm so sorry. You haven't heard.

TED

Heard what?

DR. MORRIS

There was a fire last night, on the lower levels... you're going to have to prepare yourself for a shock, Ted. It appears that several of our residents were killed.

TED

Who?

DR. MORRIS

Juliette Bath. Griffin Cavanaugh.

TED

(putting on quite an act)
My God.

DR. MORRIS

There are two other bodies that have yet to be identified.

*

TED says nothing, just turns this over in his head.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

The fire department suspects arson, although I can't believe...

TED

You said two bodies.

*

DR. MORRIS

Unidentified, although...

TED

Plus Juliette Bath.

DR. MORRIS

Right.

TED

Plus Cavanaugh.

DR. MORRIS

That's right.

TED

Then there were four.

*

DR. MORRIS

Ted, I'm so sorry. I know how close you must've been to...

TED is pale as a ghost, and this time it's no act.

TED
I'm sorry, may I just... I'd like
to step outside for a moment.

DR. MORRIS
Of course.

EXT HOSPITAL, FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

TED is dialing frantically on his cell phone.

TED
Come on, come on, pick up...

BUSY SIGNAL.

TED (CONT'D)
(suddenly in a panic)
FUCK!

He bolts and runs.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

GWEN is laying in bed, going through a box of photos. So many of her and TED.

The doorbell buzzes.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S CAR - DAY

TED speeds recklessly down the road, pounding on the horn to clear traffic, attempting to redial the cell.

CUT TO:

INT TED'S APARTMENT, FRONT DOOR - DAY

GWEN opens the door and gasps in shock. There's a MUMMY standing there.

The MUMMY'S face is in profile; it turns to face her. With some relief GWEN realizes that it is JAKE GALLO. Only half of his face is bandaged... the other half smiles winningly.

JAKE

You remember me. From the party?
Sorry about this, my dermatologist
did a face peel and he's making me
wear this thing for a couple of
days...

GWEN

Of course. Jake Gallo, isn't it?

JAKE

I didn't mean to scare you.

GWEN

No, I'm sorry, I just... Ted
already left.

JAKE

(friendly)
I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

TED comes to a screeching halt outside his building, jacking
one wheel up on the sidewalk; he gets out and runs.

The handheld CAMERA follows him into the building and up two
flights of stairs... he puts his weight into the door, which
gives easily - it was already slightly ajar.

INT TED'S APARTMENT - DAY

The loft is quiet. No signs of struggle, only sheer white
curtains blowing in the breeze. TED walks slowly to the bed.

GWEN is there, lying peacefully, face obscured by the softly
billowing curtains. Photographs are scattered across the bed
like leaves. He moves the curtains away.

She could be sleeping. Untouched, immaculate, eyes closed.
The sun kisses her lashes.

TED

Gwen.

TED falls to his knees by the bed. Smooths the hair from her
face. Puts his cheek to her lips, listening for breath. His
hand gently runs down the length of her arm, thumb finally
resting against her wrist and pressing for the pulse.

Finally he lets his head rest on her chest. The strength goes out of his limbs. His body starts to quake; we realize he has begun to sob... it is the most emotion we've seen from DR. Gray.

He is too late.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT DOCTOR MORRIS' OFFICE - DAY

TED sits in his usual spot, staring blankly out the window. DR. MORRIS enters, sits across from him at his desk.

DR. MORRIS

I've just spoken with Inspector Vincent in the homicide division. Investigators have concluded that the fire was set by Jake Gallo. They feel the evidence is quite clear.

(beat)

The Inspector asked if there were any residents or members of my staff who I felt might be able to offer any insight into the investigation... any clue at all as to what might've driven one of our most promising young doctors to commit an act of such... brutal atrocity.

(beat)

I could think of no one.

(beat)

Can you think of anyone, Dr. Gray?

TED

(robotically)

Several names come to mind, sir. But as they are all names of individuals killed in the fire, I suspect that questioning them would likely prove fruitless.

DR. MORRIS

Hm. Fruitless, indeed.

He bores into TED with a long look. TED meets his eyes impassively.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

There is also the question of Miss Montgomery.

(MORE)

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

I cannot tell you how devastated I was by this news, compounding what was already an extraordinary tragedy for the hospital, and you in particular. I believe you loved this girl very much. I'm truly sorry, Ted.

TED

Thank you, sir.

DR. MORRIS

As to the cause of death, neither Dr. Landau nor myself have been able to reach a firm conclusion based on our initial examination. A full autopsy will be required.

TED

I'm doing it.

DR. MORRIS

Excuse me?

TED

I don't want anyone else to touch her, but me.

DR. MORRIS runs a hand through his hair; he speaks with difficulty.

DR. MORRIS (CONT'D)

I'm sure you're aware that Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery will have to specifically request that you perform the autop-

TED

Yes, sir. I have already spoken with the Montgomeries. They gave me their blessing.

DR. MORRIS

I want you to know that I discourage this idea in the strongest of -

TED

(cutting him off)

Dr. Morris, I can only urge you not to stand in the way of the parents' wishes... and my own.

For a moment DR. MORRIS seems to struggle internally with a decision he cannot voice. When he finally speaks, it is with resignation, and some bitterness.

DR. MORRIS
Alright then.
(beat)
She's yours.

CUT TO:

INT PATHOLOGY ROOM - DAY

A scalpel turns circles in TED'S fingers, shiny as mirror, glinting and glittering in the light.

TED is in the room all alone with GWEN. He slowly approaches her. Her body is like white, virgin snow, almost glowing.

TED, stone faced, meticulously makes incisions with the scalpel into her flesh. As he peels the tissue back, the colorful insides paint a beautiful contrast to her delicate, powder white skin.

He pulls several organs from her body like candy from a box. He is careful with every inch of her, and makes meticulous notes of every detail.

He cuts samples from her tissues and weighs several organs, paying close attention to the heart.

He examines her eyes, her fingernails, and individual golden hairs plucked from her head.

When he is finished he painstakingly stitches her back up, leaving her as pure as when he started. The stitching is a beautiful sort of artwork.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

From a distance we watch GWEN'S casket, piled high with flowers, being lowered into the earth.

It's a large funeral. MR. and MRS. MONTGOMERY are clearly shattered. They hug TED like a son. BEN STRAVINSKY is there, along with several other RESIDENTS we recognize, in support of TED. They shake hands and offer condolences. DR. MORRIS keeps to the back... it's as though he's brought along his own personal dark cloud.

As the crowd begins to disperse TED pulls BEN STRAVINSKY aside. They talk privately as DR. MORRIS watches suspiciously.

CUT TO:

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - DUSK

TED enters the loft. He sets his bag down on the floor. A CREAK. He quickly turns around. Nothing.

He walks slowly to the closet and opens the door. It contains all the things a closet should contain - and absolutely no burnt up psychopaths. For good measure, TED double locks the front door.

He sits down at his computer and types.

CUT TO:

EXT DREXEL UNIVERSITY - NEXT MORNING

TED passes several RESIDENTS on the walkway between the Health Science Buildings. They greet him; he acknowledges with a nod.

Turning a corner, he finds himself alone. He walks a ways, then stops suddenly, imagining footsteps. He turns, looks back over his shoulder. No one.

CUT TO:

INT. PATHOLOGY ROOM - NIGHT

It is late night at the lab. Small groups of residents are scattered about the room, finishing up paperwork and discussing casework. TED sits alone in front of a microscope with a stack of notes. The big overhead lights are shut down for the evening; the room is lit in pools from the many table fixtures.

TED presses his eye to the microscope. His fingers adjust the focus which goes BLURRY.

*

A voice calls out.

RESIDENT (O.S)

Dr. Gray?

*

TED jerks his head up. The lab is emptying out for the evening; a YOUNG RESIDENT is tapping him on the shoulder.

RESIDENT
Good night, Doctor.

TED
(to the last of them)
Najid. David. Tracy. I'll see
you Monday.

The lab is mostly dark; a few scattered fixtures light a table here and there. TED shakes the cobwebs from his head. He removes the slide and pushes a new one in. He examines it and makes a note. He rubs his eyes, sighs heavily. All is quiet.

He picks up a pencil and is about to continue writing when his hand freezes. He looks straight ahead.

From behind him, a shape emerges out of the dark. Something swings forward, toward his head. TED makes no move to react.

The blow sends him crashing to the floor. The table light is knocked off kilter. We hear a struggle but see only glimpses.

TED is dragged across the slick floor of the lab and slammed into a corner. A table light is flipped on and aimed sideways to strafe across the floor and frame him, like a floodlight on an escaped prisoner. His hands are tied behind his back with a plastic zip-tie. A trickle of blood runs down his forehead.

TED'S attacker moves into the light. We make out the shiny, pink flesh of his half-burned face. He just stands there, breathing.

TED (CONT'D)
Well?

From his pocket, JAKE produces a crudely folded sheaf of papers.

JAKE
I read something wildly amusing
today, thought I'd share.

TED
Feel free.

JAKE
(holding the papers up to
the light, reading)
"Patient name: Gwendolyn Iris
Montgomery. Age: 25....
(MORE)

JAKE (cont'd)
 Eyes: green, blah blah blah...
 (he tosses the page aside,
 searches the next)
 "Conducting pathologist determines
 cause of death to be due to an
 arrhythmia of the heart, a direct
 consequence of mitral valve
 prolapse..."
 (he crumples the page and
 throws it in TED'S face,
 laughing)
 Great shit, huh?

TED
 A riot. What do you care?

JAKE
 (sobering)
 Because I have composed a poem
 sublime, and you are my critic, my
 only critic... and having read
 carefully your review of my work,
 my conclusion is that it sucks.

TED
 (shrugs)
 Maybe you're just too close.

JAKE delivers a VICIOUS KICK to TED'S gut, doubling him up.

JAKE
 No, I don't think so. You know as
 well as I do that this one was well
 above average. It was fucking
 immaculate.
 (losing his train of
 thought)
 She never really knew you, did she?

TED
 You're referring to my fiance?

JAKE
 Yeah, her.

TED
 Only the good half.

JAKE
 Didn't think so. And there you
 were, ready to march right down
 that aisle. Jesus, I did you one
 hell of a favor. By the way, props
 to you for killing everybody.

TED
Oh yeah, sorry about that.

JAKE
No, no, it's my bad. I should've
seen it coming. It's in the past.
The important thing is that in the
end - and yes, this is the end, Ted
- I won.

TED
How so?

JAKE
I did one that you couldn't figure
out. I. Won.

TED laughs. JAKE starts to laugh with him.

TED
I don't think so.

JAKE
Oh, I think so.

TED
Come on, man, that mitral valve
prolapse bullshit... that's just
what I told to her parents so
nobody would freak out.

JAKE
(gets serious)
Uh huh.

JAKE points the gun at TED'S head. CLICK - he cocks the
hammer.

TED
Actually, I do have a theory.

JAKE regards him grimly.

JAKE
Alright. So. Impress me.

TED takes a beat to compose his thoughts.

TED
Gwen made the fatal mistake of
turning her back on you. And when
she did...

Behind JAKE, BEN STRAVINSKY emerges from the shadows, a damp cloth in his hand.

TED (CONT'D)
You covered her mouth with an ether
soaked cloth...

BEN STRAVINSKY puts the cloth over JAKE'S mouth and firmly pries the gun from his hand. He then lays him back onto the autopsy table.

TED (CONT'D)
But you were careful not to let her
lose consciousness. You injected
potassium into her basilic vein
under her armpit...

BEN plunges a syringe into JAKE'S armpit... and then walks over to TED with a scalpel and cuts his hands free.

TED (CONT'D)
This helped preserve her body...
before you dripped nitroglycerin on
her tongue.

BEN hands TED an eye-dropper and he drips clear fluid onto JAKE'S tongue.

TED (CONT'D)
And then you watched her slowly
fade into the afterlife. Which
took approximately 7 minutes, the
same amount of time it takes the
average person to fall asleep.

TED sets the dropper down.

TED (CONT'D)
She could hear everything you said
to her. And the last thing she saw
on this earth was your delightful
face.

TED glances toward BEN STRAVINSKY, and BEN hands him the scalpel.

TED (CONT'D)
Time?

BEN STRAVINSKY
Six minutes, thirty seconds.
Twenty nine, twenty eight...

TED
Doctor Stravinsky, let's have a
look inside.

With the scalpel TED makes an incision from JAKE'S navel to his sternum. Blood erupts. BEN STRAVINSKY moves into place with a rib saw and shears. JAKE cannot move or scream. Only his pinky retains circulation; it twitches wildly. The CAMERA moves in on JAKE'S frozen face, eyes wide. The sound of a high pitched drill reverberates through the lab, down empty corridors, and into the night.

CUT TO BLACK.

ROLL CREDITS.

★