

DEAD ALREADY

by

Joe Rendace

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631-889-4090

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

SUPER: "Philadelphia, June 6 1989"

A lifeless structure of brick and mortar sits on a pier.

An explosion bursts glass and flames from a top window.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Amid broken wood and metal, a REDHEADED GIRL, 11, innocence lost in a few hours, lay bound. She screams.

A FIREMAN, 36, career blue collar, now soaked in blood, staggers next to the Redheaded Girl. He yanks her restraints.

FIREMAN

Hold on, baby! I'm here!

INT. WAREHOUSE - THIRD FLOOR - NIGHT

A MAN IN A WHITE suit, 45, were perfection to know a form, it now stands alone in the moonlight. Eyes closed until a clock tower outside strikes midnight, his blue pupils now appear.

MAN IN WHITE

At last.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

The Fireman tugs at the Redheaded Girl's ropes as he pulls out an ancient dagger. About to cut her restraint, he pauses.

Flames engulf their surroundings. The Fireman flips and sees The Man In White, who stands silent with a smile.

FIREMAN

This end's now, you bastard!

The Fireman leaps and plunges the dagger at the Man In White's chest. A bright, blinding light seizes the room.

The Redheaded Girl screams. Through the reflection in her eyes, a dark shadow looms. Her eyes flutter as she collapses.

Blood runs from a half-circle cut on her forehead.

FADE OUT.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RESORT - DAY

SUPER: "Present Day."

Skiers enjoy the slopes. VAL COBB, 28, a smile as big as his heart, finishes a ski run down the mountain trail.

CARRIE, 25, as wobbly in life as the trail she barely finishes, falls face first in the snow.

CARRIE

Where's that damn rescue dog with the Martini drink tied around his neck when you need him?

VAL

That's only in cartoons.

CARRIE

Did you see me skiing?

INT. MOUNTAIN RESORT - BAR - NIGHT

Fireplace, romantic resort bar. Carrie pours the last of a carafe of wine into her glass. Val nurses his soda can.

CARRIE

What's the deal, lover? You invite me for a romantic weekend and drink soda? What's a girl to think?

VAL

I get intoxicated on your beauty.

CARRIE

Flattery, huh? You know where that will get you? Right back to our room.

EXT. MOUNTAIN RESORT - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Val and Carrie approach a SUV. She fumbles for the keys.

VAL

Is this really necessary?

CARRIE

Honey, they were the cutest candles. I want tonight to be special. The shop closes soon!

Val sighs. Snow falls. He puts his hand out.

VAL  
I'll drive, little Miss Lush puppy.

She pulls away and gets behind the wheel.

CARRIE  
Excuse me, Mister soon-to-be  
detective, you don't start your new  
position until Monday. I'm fine.

Val frowns. He enters the passenger's side.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

She drives. The window is fogged. Val's concern is clear.

CARRIE  
Smile, would you? Aren't you  
excited about making Detective?

Val rubs his hand against the window.

VAL  
I'm excited when you don't keep  
your eyes on the road.

It snows harder. The visibility worsens. Carrie squints.

CARRIE  
Relax, baby. I think we're close.

High beams from an oncoming truck blind Carrie and Val.

VAL  
Carrie, look out!

EXT. HIGHWAY ROAD - NIGHT

Their SUV abruptly turns away from the oncoming truck, spins on an ice patch and goes off road, down into a ravine.

FADE OUT.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Val's squashed on the crowded, moving train with a bandage on his head. His left eye is blackened. A YOUNG BOY, 8, sits staring. Val uncomfortably smiles.

BOY  
Are you a good guy or bad guy?

VAL  
I'm one of the good guys.

The boy looks at his two action figures in his hands. One is wearing a white outfit, the other a black.

BOY  
Dressed in black like my bad guy?

VAL  
Well, life's not that simple.

BOY  
You got a black eye, too?

VAL  
(sighs)  
Sometimes good guys date bad women  
who shouldn't drink and drive.

The boy smiles before pointing his finger.

BOY  
There's a good guy.

The Man In White stands perfectly still with his eyes closed at the far end of the crowded train car. Val's curious.

The boy's MOTHER, 33, yanks her son up as the train stops.

MOTHER  
Didn't I tell you not  
to talk to crazy men!

The train pulls into the station. She yanks the boy out the open door as CAMERAMAN, 28, and TAMARA KEYES, 26, vain and a pain with plans to gain, enter. Cameraman adjusts his lens.

Tamara glances around at the dirty floor, wrinkles her nose.

TAMARA  
Uggh! If I wanted to smell urine  
and vomit all day, I would be  
knocked up like my sister every  
year. Are we ready yet?

The Cameraman flips a switch; the red LED turns green. He signals with his hand THREE, TWO, ONE. Tamara fakes a smile.

ON CAMERA SCREEN

TAMARA  
 This is Tamara Keyes, reporting  
 live for our daily SUB-WAY  
 OF LIFE series!

BACK TO TRAIN

The Man in White's eyes open.

INT. BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

SAM TYLER, 38, unrecognizably handsome exterior buried under internal demons of a life unintended, walks the lobby.

About to enter a Starbucks, he watches a BUSINESSMAN, 35, bumped by a BIKER guy, 28, as both enter the public bathroom.

INT. BUILDING - PUBLIC BATHROOM - DAY

The Businessman and the Biker stand using the urinals. Another MAN, 34, washes his hands.

Sam enters and leans against the wall by the door.

The Man shuts the water and leaves. Sam locks the door behind him. He moves near the men as they finish using the urinals.

Sam pulls a gun and aims it toward both men.

SAM  
 Hands' up.

The Biker and the Businessman are caught by surprise.

SAM  
 Come on. I know English hasn't  
 become the second language yet.  
 Hands' up, like the wedding song.

Both men hands' slowly raise. The Businessman has a cup of coffee in one hand. The Biker looks aggravated.

BIKER  
 You don't want to do this, asshole.

SAM  
 (surprised)  
 I don't? Hell. You're right.

SAM(cont'd)

But then I guess when I spent  
career day in High School sleeping  
off a hangover in the toilets, I  
pretty much mapped out my life.  
Wallets' out, gentleman. One hand.

BIKER

Screw you!

Sam sighs. He removes his Police badge from his pocket.

SAM

Listen, don't make me regret giving  
up custody of the coffee maker to  
my ex-wife. I'm two cups short of  
being able to deal with anyone. I  
saw the *bump and lift* routine. Give  
him his wallet back.

Muffled sounds of people yelling behind the locked door grate  
on Sam's nerves. The Biker bangs the marble wall.

BIKER

I didn't take his freaking wallet!

Sam glances at the door before turning back to the biker.

SAM

I wasn't talking to you!

Sam aims his gun directly on the Businessman, who now  
squints. Surprised but now aware, the Biker pats his vest.

The Businessman slowly uses one hand to remove a Harley  
Davidson embroidered wallet from his coat pocket.

BIKER

Son of a bitch!

The Businessman throws the wallet in the Biker's face while  
tossing his coffee on Sam. Sam is blinded by the coffee.

The Businessman, now referred to as PICKPOCKET, runs out the  
door just as a JANITOR, 56, opens it with his keys.

Sam grabs a paper towel and wipes his face. He licks his  
cheek as he runs out.

SAM

French Vanilla. I knew he  
was no good.

INT. BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

People knocked down, others pointing. Sam sees the commotion. He runs after the trail, leading him right into Starbucks.

INT. STARBUCKS - DAY

Seeing the Pickpocket run in the kitchen, Sam quickens his pace. He passes the startled COUNTER GUY, 23. Sam yells.

SAM  
Get me building security, and a  
double Mocha Grande to go!

INT. STARBUCK'S - KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is deserted. No sign of the Pickpocket. Coffee brewing all around. Sam stops, looks around. Gun raised, he closes his eyes and inhales, displays an addict's suffrage.

SAM  
This place is like a crack  
house for me! Don't make  
this any harder!

Sam jogs a few steps when a noise rings from the back door. The Pickpocket jumps from a counter, knocking Sam down.

Sam's gun drops to the floor. The Pickpocket grabs it and shakily aims it on the fallen cop.

PICKPOCKET  
You ass! Why didn't you just go!

No sign of fear in his eyes, Sam slowly rises.

SAM  
You know, if your voice was a  
little higher pitched, I'd swear  
you sound just like my ex-wife.

Sam steps closer. The Pickpocket, shaken, steps back.

PICKPOCKET  
Man, I will shoot you!

SAM  
(amused)  
Yeah, just like my ex-wife.



Sam lifts his Khaki shirt and reveals six healed bullet wounds in his chest and stomach.

The wounds almost form the shape of a smiley face. Two wounds as eyes, four underneath as a mouth.

SAM  
Go ahead! I'm missing the nose!

Flabbergasted, the Pickpocket hesitates.

Sam grabs a can of whipped cream and squirts the Pickpocket in his eyes. Yanking a pot of coffee off the counter, he knocks the Pickpocket out cold. Sam grabs his gun back.

The Counter Guy peeks in the room. He meekly holds up a bag with Sam's coffee order. Sam motions with his finger between the whipped cream pickpocket and himself.

SAM  
Separate checks.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Grimy, overpopulated open floor layout. COPS walking and talking. HOOKERS handcuffed. SECRETARIES typing at desks.

Sam enters with the handcuffed Pickpocket.

Two plain clothes detectives spot Sam. DICK#1 and DICK#2.

DICK#1  
Six shot Sammy! How's the chest!

DICK#2  
Back in action! Making the streets  
and coffee houses a safer place!

Sam nods going by. He pushes the pickpocket down in a chair by the desk of a surprised UNIFORMED COP, 25.

SAM  
Book him on a 103.

UNIFORMED COP  
Who the hell are you?

SAM  
The guy whose desk your rookie  
ass was assigned to while I've  
been in a coma for eight months.

The Uniformed Cop embarrasses quick.

UNIFORMED COP

Detective Tyler? I'm sorry sir. I didn't realize you were returning.

SAM

Forget it. Chief Delomo will probably have the same look on his face in about two minutes. Book this one. Keep the collar.

Sam walks away. Detective LEO, 43, never met a donut he didn't like, throws his arm around Sam as they walk.

LEO

You said you would take a few more weeks. What happened? This guy held up the coffee house before you got to the counter?

Sam shirks off Leo's arm. He makes a right angle turn to the coffee maker. It's empty.

SAM

I was tired of therapy. Turns out I did hate my mom, my inner child took three of six bullets to my chest and Dr. Phil never met my ex.

Leo squints toward an office door across the room. The closed glass door says "CAPTAIN DELOMO" in black letters.

LEO

He's going to be real happy to see you. I don't think Internal Affairs has left him alone since your...

(beat)

Drinks tonight?

Sam places the pot back down and walks away.

SAM

Before or after your A.A meeting?

LEO

(beat)

Before. I need to seem sympathetic to the hot blonde in my group.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

CAPTAIN DELOMO, 58, complete chief of police stereotype, rubs his temples. Sits in his mess of an office.

If he had a secretary, she would be under the piles of paperwork somewhere. A knock on his door hurts his head.

DELOMO

Yeah.

The door opens slowly. Sam peeks in and enters. Delomo flips.

DELOMO

Oh no! No! I just barely finished putting the Internal Affairs' kid through college because of you!

SAM

Missed you too.

Sam sits. His blank expression hints a grin.

DELOMO

You promised me six weeks notice before you came back. It takes at least that long for me to put in for an early retirement.

Sam reaches over and lifts Delomo's coffee cup. About to take a drink, he smirks and turns it upside down. It's empty.

SAM

I'll rip up your IOU's from the last year of poker games. We're even. I want back in.

Delomo grabs his mug back. He leans back in his chair.

DELOMO

Have you talk to Maggie?

SAM

Mostly through our lawyers.

DELOMO

I remember when my wife left. My life has been a hell since.

SAM

What? Rita came back the next day.

DELOMO  
Like I said. My life has  
been hell ever since.

A laugh doesn't find its way out. Just a sad grin from Sam.

DELOMO  
Go upstairs and fill out the  
paperwork. You need to start back  
slow. Maybe the desk for awhile.

Delomo squints at the coffee stains on Sam's clothes.

DELOMO  
Is that coffee on your shirt?

The door flips open. TINA, 24, uniformed cop, leans in.

TINA  
Captain, you need to see this!

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Dead quiet, the cops, robbers and everyone else stare at the  
wall mounted television. Delomo and Sam walk over.

DELOMO  
What are we looking at?

ON THE TV

Words "BREAKING NEWS" show. Tamara holds her microphone.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Cameraman films Tamara as the train car rattles in motion.  
All the passengers sit and stand motionless in fear.

TAMARA  
This is Tamara Keyes reporting live  
from the number six train in lower  
Manhattan. Myself and the  
passengers of this rush hour  
commute are being held hostage by a  
terrorist --

The white gloved hand of the Man in White appears and grabs  
the camera lens and positions it on himself.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

DELOMO

Oh, shit.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

A calm Man in White shakes his head.

MAN IN WHITE

Ladies and gentlemen. Authorities of all levels of corruption, please forgive my ratings conscious host. Despite her zealousness, she is correct in her characterization of the freedom of the people.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Leo pours a small amount of alcohol from his flask in a cup.

LEO

This'll kill my AA meeting tonight.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

The Man In White opens his jacket and reveals a bomb vest. The passengers all panic. Val remains calm.

MAN IN WHITE

Strapped to my chest is a sum of explosives capable of orbiting this train car around the sun.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

The phones ring off their hooks. Leo comes up to Sam.

LEO

Does Mr. Clean look familiar?

Sam does a once over view of Leo.

SAM

All nut jobs look alike.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

The Man in White remains calm as he speaks into the camera.

MAN IN WHITE

Now, while I am sure the proper authorities are scrambling to position forces as they attempt to delay my demands, I will make it simple.

MAN IN WHITE

I seek no monetary goal. Nor do I want any of my "colleagues" released from jail. I assure you, I have no equal. All I wish to do is speak to one man, in person. He has twenty minutes to meet at the 66th street station and board my train. If he is not alone, well... how many more threats are necessary?

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Delomo is in mid conversation on the phone. Cops scramble.

DELOMO

Yes sir, we'll have a team in place. Ten minutes at best.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

Tamara turns the camera back on her. Scared silly, she still acts like the pro reporter.

TAMARA

Who is this man? The man who our lives are depending on?

The camera turns and shows the Man in White's vest clock. It's set to twenty minutes. He begins it's countdown.

MAN IN WHITE

See you in twenty, Detective Sam Tyler.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Every eye in the station house turns to Sam. He remains still. Mouth open, Delomo doesn't realize he drops the phone.

DELOMO

What the hell did you do now!

SAM

Hey, he's not one of mine. I've never seen him before.

LEO

Well, he seems to know you.

DELOMO

Shit! Sam, get down to the computer lab and see if you ID his scan. Leo, get a team together and get down to the subway. Sam will radio with any --

Sam checks the bullets in his gun, already heading out.

DELOMO

Where the hell are you going?

SAM

For a ride with destiny. Don't waste our twenty minutes.

DELOMO

Sam! There's no way-- Internal Affairs will...

Sam's look is sincere. Words unneeded. Delomo sighs.

DELOMO

I still plan on ripping up the IOU's! Next time you'll owe me!

Sam's nod and sad grin pains Delomo.

SAM

We're even.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAY

The Man in White remains still, his eyes closed. Fear grips the passengers. Tamara babbles to Cameraman. Val sits silent.

The cameraman lifts the view on Tamara, cues her melodrama.

TAMARA

Who is this man that holds are our  
fate in his hands? This Sam Tyler?

The Man in White opens his eyes.

MAN IN WHITE

Your savior.

TAMARA

What do you want? Why do this?

MAN IN WHITE

Want? I want what everyone seeks at  
some point. A worthy opponent.

TAMARA

Opp... opponent? Our lives are --

MAN IN WHITE

(grin)  
Irrelevant.

The train screeches into the station. The sign for the "66TH STREET STATION" is visible through the train windows.

As the train stops, the Man in White turns to the doors.

TAMARA

It's Showtime.

The doors open. Not a soul around. Neither man nor cop.

The passengers look out. Tamara looks out. The Man in White  
doesn't. Expressionless, he looks at his watch.

It blinks "0:00". The Man in White raises the detonator.

MAN IN WHITE

A pity. This show is cancelled.

Tamara drops her mic. Val jumps up as the passengers cry out.

A crash rings out from behind the Man in White as Sam comes  
flying through the glass window. The train starts moving.

The Man in White's finger moves downward on the detonator.  
Game over. Yet, he smiles and lifts his finger.

Sam kicks him square in the chest. The Man in White falls  
back, dropping the detonator.



Val lunges and grabs the detonator. He holds it up, smiling triumphantly. In the process of pulling his gun on the Man in White, Sam confusingly moves his aim on Val.

SAM

Freeze!

Val's hands motion down, then back up. He stutters to speak.

VAL

Wait! Don't!

Tamara motions to the Cameraman. He turns it back to her.

TAMARA

This is Tamara Keyes reporting  
through the most frightening  
moment of my life!

Both Sam and Val turn to her at the same exact moment.

VAL/SAM

Shut up!

Tamara's mouth drops open. Sam and Val look back at each other and almost grin before Sam lifts the gun back on Val.

SAM

Put it down slowly.

Val motions to pull out his badge.

VAL

I'm a cop! Take it!  
He's getting away!

Val gently tosses the remote to Sam. Sam grabs it, looks intently on Val before he runs toward the front of the car where the Man in White enters the Operator compartment.

Sam yanks it open. The OPERATOR, 40, is unconscious. The Operator's side window is shattered. Sam yells toward Val.

SAM

Get in here and stop this train!

INT. TRAIN OPERATOR COMPARTMENT - DAY

Val enters and looks at the broken window before looking at the shattered and sparking control panel.

EXT. TRAIN - TOP - DAY

The darkened tunnel houses the runaway train. Sam, eyes bulged, crawls up the side to the top of the train. The Man in White crawls toward the opposite end. He turns and smiles.

INT. TRAIN OPERATOR COMPARTMENT - DAY

Val stares bewildered at the burnt out panel. He cautiously pokes at it, but it noisily sparks back at him. The Cameraman and Tamara pop out of nowhere. The lens is on Val.

TAMARA

Ladies and gentlemen, the operator is unconscious and our mysterious hero races to save our lives!

ON TV

Val stares, mouth open, at the camera.

BACK TO STATION

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Everyone stares, mouth open, at Val on the TV screen.

DELOMO

Oh shit.

INT. TRAIN OPERATOR COMPARTMENT - DAY

Val regains his composure. He ushers Tamara back.

VAL

Let's step it back. We're close to having this under control.

Tamara eyes show a smitten look. She suddenly looks confused.

TAMARA

We?

Val looks at the broken side window.

EXT. TRAIN - TOP - DAY

Sam crawls toward the Man in White who suddenly turns and

crawls back toward Sam. Shocked, Sam pulls and aims his gun.

SAM

Last stop!

The Man in White smiles and reveals an ancient dagger from his pocket. He resumes his crawling. Sam closes one eye.

Click. His gun jams. The Man in White lifts the knife and slams it down on Sam. Sam remains frozen.

His eyes closed, Sam slowly quints and sees the dagger stuck through his leather jacket, piercing the top of the train.

The Man in White smiles is gone.

INT. TRAIN - OPERATOR COMPARTMENT - DAY

Val furiously presses broken buttons on the operator's panel. Tamara bursts back in, Cameraman still filming.

TAMARA

Barreling to our death, our hero  
valiantly continues his quest! What  
lesson from the academy will you  
call upon to stop this train?

Val grabs her microphone. It causes her to flinch backward.

VAL

Improvisation.

Val shoves the microphone in the sparking panel box.

EXT. TRAIN - TOP - DAY

The brakes screech as the train seizes. Sam's body lunges off the top but he grasps the embedded dagger and stops his motion. He dangles off the front of the train.

A bright green glow temporarily blinds Sam.

The train's headlights flicker as the metal construct hisses.

EXT. TRAIN - BACK - DAY

The back door thrusts open. Val motions for everyone to exit. The passengers do so.

VAL  
Everyone head up .Stay together!

Val helps some up the platform ladder before he turn back.

EXT. TRAIN - TOP - DAY

Smoke still rises in the darkened tunnel. Val squints. Sam steps out of the cloud of smoke.

SAM  
That's your way of dropping anchor?

Val ignores the comment. He looks around.

VAL  
Where's... He couldn't have --

SAM  
(smirks)  
-- disappeared.

Bright lights from up ahead. A squad of cops in gear, guns raised, burst on to the scene. Val raises his hands.

Sam slips the dagger in his pants. Leo, the lead cop, lifts his helmet visor and smiles at Sam.

LEO  
Welcome back, Kotter.

INT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

The sign read "66TH ST Station." Bandaged forehead, Sam steps away from the medic toward Leo. The passengers are aided.

LEO  
Well, the tunnel is clean. Nothing there. What did he say to you?

SAM  
You just answered your own question. Nothing.

Leo studies Sam's eyes and is about to reply. Val interrupts.

VAL  
Excuse me, I'd like to make my statement at the precinct.

SAM  
 (glib)  
 Sure.

Sam motions to turn, then turns on a dime.

SAM  
 By the way. Who the hell are you?

Tamara, hair a mess, runs over with the Cameraman. She sticks a new microphone at the faces of Val and Sam.

TAMARA  
 Ladies and gentlemen, the dynamic duo who saved our lives!

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - DAY

The TV in Delomo's office shows the same scene, Sam and Val's surprised faces with Tamara's microphone in front of them. Delomo turns the TV off. Sam is sitting across his desk.

DELOMO  
 Renegade cops I don't need. Who the hell is the blonde boy wonder?

Sam glances outside at Val through Delomo's glass door.

SAM  
 Don't know. He rode back with Leo.

DELOMO  
 What happened down there, Sam?

Sam hesitates and puts his head back to rests his eyes. The phone rings. Delomo answers.

DELOMO  
 Yes. They're both here.  
 (beat)  
 No. Oh, come on, They --  
 (beat)  
 Yes. Yes, sir.

Delomo slams the phone down. He looks at Val outside.

DELOMO  
 Nice suit.  
 (to Sam)  
 Refresh my old mind. Did you wear a nice suit the first day that you made Detective?

Sam opens his eyes.

SAM  
You're kidding me.

DELOMO  
On his way to the 14th Precinct. He  
transferred in from Queens.

Delomo hits his desk intercom and leans closer.

DELOMO  
Tina, send in Mr. Cobb.

Sam stares out the window as Val enters.

DELOMO  
Have a seat, son.

Val sits next to Sam and nods at him. No return greeting.

DELOMO  
This here has been a big day all  
around for you, hasn't it?

VAL  
Just doing my job, Captain.

Sam stares at him.

SAM  
Who the fuck are you?

Val's brow lowers. He skips the anger. Puts his hand out.

VAL  
Val Cobb --

Delomo leans back in his rickety chair and smirks at Sam.

DELOMO  
-- your new partner.

Both Sam and Val are surprised.

SAM  
What? No! I really don't have --

DELOMO  
-- a choice, Sammy. Do you think I  
want any part of this? That was the  
mayor chewing my ass a new toilet  
seat size.

DELOMO(cont'd)

(to Val) )

Seems you made a big impression,  
Mr. Cobb. Your transfer downtown  
has been put on hold.

SAM

Tell the Mayor if he's going to  
play ringmaster to this circus, he  
needs to find a different clown.

Sam yanks the door open, slams it closed. Delomo's not fazed.

VAL

Sir, did I do something?

DELOMO

Don't take it personally, kid. He's  
coming off a bad run of luck.

Delomo opens his drawer. He tosses a folder in front of Val.

DELOMO

About a year ago, he was lead on a  
drug sting. The operation went bad.

Val opens it and stares at scattered newspaper clippings.

Headlines read "DRUG BUST MASSACRE" and "WEST SIDE SLAYING".

Photos of police bodies under sheets. Val shifts in his seat.

DELOMO

He lost his squad. All of them.

Val looks at another clipping. It says "DETECTIVE SAM TYLER  
MIRACULOUSLY SURVIVES." He holds it toward Delomo.

VAL

What's this about?

DELOMO

Sam was pronounced dead at the  
hospital. They even sent him down  
to the morgue and ran the story.  
Six shots to the chest and the man  
still found a way to live! I think  
it was to come drink my coffee and  
piss me off, but hey, that's fine.

Amazed, Val stares at the article and clean-cut photo of Sam.

DELOMO

He lapsed into a coma only to find his wife wouldn't wait around after his awakening. Been a rough go.

Val slowly closes the folder.

DELOMO

Don't let his bark worry you. He'll be cooperative as long as you stay on his good side.

Val begins to nod before stopping.

VAL

He doesn't have a good side, does he?

Delomo goes to sip his coffee, frowns, turns it over.

DELOMO

His wife got it in the divorce.

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - DAY

Sam grunts to his desk and drops in his seat. Tina walks over and places a cheap tin trophy filled with coffee beans.

TINA

Compliments of your buddies.

Sam looks over at Dick#1 and Dick#2, who are still laughing.

DICK#1

Does Starbucks sponsor the Oscars!

DICK#2

Smile for the camera, Sammy!

Sam hides a smile under his scowl. Tina grins.

TINA

They missed you, Sam.

Tina walks away. Val walks over. He sits on the other side of Sam's desk. Sam continues to stare at the trophy.

VAL

(carefully)

If there's anything I can do for --

Sam's turns sour. He glances back at Delomo's door.



SAM  
Do you know what I did when I first  
made Detective?

Val's eyes dart back and forth.

VAL  
Well, I --

Sam motions with his head to an OLDER DETECTIVE, 50, sitting  
at a desk ten feet away. He has one leg.

SAM  
I congratulated him on the arrest  
that cost him his leg. Then I  
challenged him to a foot race.

Sam stares at Val, almost a scolding stare. Sam rises, walks  
to the coffee table. Tina steps closer to Val.

TINA  
Don't take it personally. When I  
first started, I never realized how  
much trouble cops have expressing  
their emotions; their pride.

Val feels stupid. He puts his head down.

VAL  
Right. Sometimes we're supposed to  
read between the lines. Sometimes  
we forget that.

TINA  
It's OK. So, welcome to our little  
house. Is there a special lady who  
helped you celebrate your new  
position?

For a second, Val gives it some thought.

VAL  
Yes.  
(beat)  
Somewhere out there.

She smiles and saunters away. Sam walks back over.

VAL  
Whatever you need me to do,  
detective. Say the word.

Sam's annoyed expression lessens. He tries to grin.

SAM  
Listen. I --  
(beat)  
Coffee?

VAL  
Oh, no thanks. I'm a tea man.

Sam's expressionless. He picks a bean from the trophy.

SAM  
Well, then more for me.

Dropping the bean back, Sam's arm catches the trophy and knocks it over. Beans everywhere.

SAM  
Shit.

Sam scoops up the beans on the desk. He kneels down to get the beans off the floor.

SAM  
Do me a favor. Grab the ones under the desk. Can you reach?

Val leans down, reaches blindly under the desk.

VAL  
Sure.

Val's arm disappears under the wood. Click! Val's eyes widen as he yanks it back toward his body. A handcuff is on his wrist, attached to something underneath.

Sam stands up.

SAM  
Hang around here and let me know when the coffee is ready.

Val slumps down, aggravated but silent.

INT. POLICE LAB - DAY

Tech equipment, many computers. Sam enters in mid-speak to the lab tech, LARRY, 37, coffee stain on his white coat.

SAM  
Anything on the fingerprints?

Larry gives the dagger back to Sam.

LARRY

Sam, I'm still shocked to see you back today, but you know I have to file this evidence in the database.

Sam puts the dagger in his coat pocket.

SAM

Just give me a few hours, Lar. I spent more than that in the bathroom after your wife's meatloaf. You owe me that much.

Both men break out with a grin.

LARRY

Three more hours, Sam.

SAM

What did you turn up?

LARRY

Not much. There's nothing in our database. I sent them over to the Bureau. Nothing.

(beat)

It was pretty awful, wasn't it? She really can't cook.

Sam heads out.

SAM

She's at least there trying. Call me if anything turns up.

EXT. STATION HOUSE - DAY

Sam walks out of the building and stops. One by one, he stares at the face of each pedestrian walking by.

Each time he sees a male in a white suit, he sees the actual pedestrian's face morph to the Man in White, then back to normal. Sam rubs his hands over his face.

INT. HALLWAY OF APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Sam walks up the last step. He turns the corner to see MAGGIE, 38, an earned disposition of a veteran cop, minus a gun. She exits an apartment. Sam spots her first

SAM  
Legally, I can arrest you for  
breaking and entering.

His presence doesn't make her day.

MAGGIE  
No, that would be after today.

She holds up a key. He doesn't accept it. She lowers it.

MAGGIE  
I couldn't find my red shoes. I  
thought they were still here.

SAM  
Hot date?

Maggie tightens her lips. The silence festers.

SAM  
You took your stuff when you left.

MAGGIE  
(sympathy)  
The red pair was your favorite.

Sam hears the attempt at a truce. He can't meet it halfway.

SAM  
I know.  
(beat)  
I almost stopped smiling when I  
hammered them to pieces.

MAGGIE  
(angry)  
It didn't have to be like this.

SAM  
You left.

She raises the key again. This time he raises his hand.

MAGGIE  
No. You left after your coma...

She moves her hand sideways and drops the key on the floor.

MAGGIE  
...and you haven't come back yet.

Maggie walks away. Tears form in her eyes. Sam drops his head. After she's gone, he picks up the key.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

The place is a mess. Void of a woman's touch, the drab and dreariness is apparent. Sam opens the fridge. Two bottles of beer and a jar of mayonnaise vie for the shelf's attention.

Sam grabs a beer and drops on his messy couch. He lays back and closes his eyes. As he turns sideways, his eyes open.

He sticks his finger under his shirt. A dab of blood is on it. He removes the dagger from his coat pocket. Stares at it.

SAM

Forget about it, Sam. Six bullets  
couldn't put you to rest.

He studies the dagger and runs his finger across its length.

He suddenly notices a note tacked on his desk board. It says "Samuel, my lawyer needs your pension information. - Maggie".

Angered, Sam throws the knife, end over end, at the board. Like a dart, it pierces square in the center of the note.

As it hits, a small compartment opens on the dagger.

Sam rises and walks across the room. He studies the weapon closely before he pulls it out. The dagger closes.

SAM

Come on! Enough with the games!

Sam slams the dagger deep into the wooden top of his computer desk. The compartment pops open.

Sam looks inside. In gothic lettering is the word "RXNETH". Sitting back in his seat, he lifts his cell phone and dials.

INT. POLICE LAB - DAY

Larry answers the phone.

LARRY

Hello? OK. Go ahead.

Larry leans over the computer. Using one finger, he types the letters "R-X-N-E-T-H". His finger hits the "ENTER KEY".

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- A jolt of electricity traverses from the pressed key.
- The electricity flows from the PC and out of the network cable in the mainframe computer.
- The electricity leaves the building, travels over the telephone poles, to a large satellite dish.
- The dish shoots a beam into the sky, hits a receiving dish and beams down to a globe view of the city of Philadelphia.
- The beam hits a receiving dish attached to the roof of a broken down apartment building.

MONTAGE ENDS

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

A mess. Computers and gadgets all over. LARS, 25, an embarrassment among hacker peers, slumps in a chair snoring. The monitor lights up, jars Lars.

LARS  
We got a hit? We got a hit!

Lars stumbles over pizza boxes and runs into a small bedroom.

INT. APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY

The bedroom's mess matches the living room.

NIA VORS, 38, on a mission for answers where little else matters, sleeps on a broken bed. Lars yells her awake.

LARS  
We got a hit! Nia, we got one!

Jarred, Nia takes a second to focus her eyes.

NIA  
What? Where? Please tell me the  
East Coast?

Lars draws a blank look. Nia notices and smirks.

LARS  
I, uh...

Lars runs out of the room. Nia grunts. She puts on her shoes.

NIA  
Idiots. All men. Idiots.

Nia stands and pulls her red hair into a pony tail, displaying a half-circle scar on her forehead. The bedroom wall is a collage of newspaper clippings and hand drawings.

One headline reads "HEROIC FIREMAN DIES IN LINE OF DUTY"

The date reads May 25 1989.

The hand drawings are sketches of a Man in a White suit.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Lars types, lightening fast.

ON MONITOR

It displays a geographical grid that pinpoints down to New York City on the map. Down to the lab's police station.

LARS  
It's NYC. A generic login from the police database. It was only input once. You think we got a random?

Nia squints at the data jetting across the screen.

NIA  
Wait on it.

INT. POLICE STATION - LAB - DAY

Larry looks at the monitor, says "RXNETH. NO RESULTS FOUND."

LARRY  
There's nothing in the database, Sam.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Sam, phone to ear, continues to stare at the dagger.

SAM  
Snoop around and let me know.

Sam hangs up. He stares into space for a moment before unconsciously hitting his computer keyboard with his elbow.

His computer comes out of standby. The monitor turns on. Sam stares at the YAHOO search page.

INT. APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

The glow of the monitor shines in Lars' eyes.

LARS

Bingo!

Nia's try to smile. It's foreign to her muscle memory.

NIA

Can you get me the name of the  
logged on user and a phone number.

ON MONITOR

"SAMUEL TYLER" appears. Lars grabs the printout.

LARS

We have a one Sam Tyler. I cross  
referenced his Internet account  
with the station house database.  
He's a cop in the city. My guess is  
he had a tech run a scan at work.

Nia snatches the paper from his hand. She shoves her paperwork into a knapsack and grabs her car keys.

NIA

Thanks for your equipment.

She heads out. Lars is upset.

LARS

Uh. Will I see you again?

Nia stops and picks her bra off the lamp. She turns to Lars and holds it up before she shoves it in the bag.

NIA

Consider my gratitude paid in full.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

An old fashioned grease pit, complete with the counter lined stools and booth jukeboxes. A few customers toil about. Sam walks in, finds his counter seat and eyes the waitress, 43.



SAM  
The usual.

She pours coffee and puts a chocolate donut in front of Sam. There's a WOMAN to his left, but her back is to him.

SAM  
You mind passing the sugar?

The woman pushes it over. Sam grabs it but she won't let go.

SAM  
Let -

He looks up. The Woman is Tamara.

TAMARA  
So off the record, why did your wife really leave you?

He yanks the sugar away and uses it.

SAM  
Isn't there a traffic jam or something you should be covering?

She drops a file in front of him.

TAMARA  
Your whole life. Complete in one plain folder. It looks like the last year was anything but plain.

Sam flinches. About to yell, he remains calm.

SAM  
What do you want?

TAMARA  
An exclusive. This is my story.

Sam laughs a disgusted laugh.

SAM  
You would put yourself back in harm's way for the glory?

Tamara wink before a serious grin appears.

TAMARA  
Isn't that what you do?

Sam leans back. Silence.

TAMARA

We're not that different, you and I. That bastard put my life, your life and those passengers at risk this morning. I want to be the first to know when you put him down. I'm owed that much.

She puts her business card and a twenty on the counter.

TAMARA

This one is on me.

Still silent, Sam doesn't acknowledge her exit. Slowly, he picks up his donut. About to eat it, it breaks and falls.

Sam takes a deep breath. Without turning his head, he speaks to the MAN, on his right.

SAM

Napkins?

The napkin holder is pushed near Sam. Once again, Sam reaches for it without looking. A handcuff clicks on Sam's wrist.

Sam looks up. The Man is Val, who clamps the other handcuff to the steel rail under the counter. He drops a coffee bean.

VAL

Coffee's ready.

Sam yanks once at the restraint. The clanking noise causes a few customers to lift their heads. Sam stops.

SAM

Now what?

Val leans back on his stool.

VAL

Now I tell you that was a good call on the pickpocket this morning.

Val puts his elbow on the counter and opens his raised hand out of reach from Sam's hand.

VAL

Arm wrestle?

Sam stares at Val before glancing at his arm. A small grin appears on Sam's face as he eats the rest of his donut.

SAM  
RXNETH

VAL  
What? Say again?

SAM  
What does it mean to you?

VAL  
Is it animal, mineral or vegetable?

Sam removes the dagger from his coat.

SAM  
He dropped it back on the  
train. There's a hidden  
compartment in it. The word  
"RXNETH" is written inside.

Without lifting it, Val visually inspects the dagger.

VAL  
I don't see a compartment.

Pausing in mid sip, Sam puts his coffee down. He silently  
looks at the dagger before lifting it and slamming it in the  
counter. Val jumps back. Customers jump back. Coffee spills.

VAL  
Easy!

Val grabs napkins and pats at the coffee on his pants.

SAM  
Second door on the right.

Sam motions toward the back bathroom. Val walks toward it.

VAL  
(mumbles)  
How long until he bites.

Val disappears into the bathroom. Sam looks at his handcuffed  
wrist. He gives it a feeble tug before sipping his coffee.

SAM  
Still needs sugar.

He blindly puts his free hand out again towards the sugar and  
unseen GUY on his left.

SAM

You mind?

An grenade is pushed in Sam's hand. Sam gazes at Guy, who's the Man in White. Sam grabs his gun but stops in his tracks.

MAN IN WHITE

Ah, ah, ah.

The Man in White calmly has his suit jacket open. An explosive vest is strapped to his chest. Sam lowers his gun.

SAM

What do you want from me?

The Man in White carefully buttons his white jacket. He removes a gold digital stopwatch and places on the counter.

MAN IN WHITE

Your gun on the counter, if you may. The time is nearing.

Sam carefully places his gun and the grenade on the counter.

SAM

Who are you? Some punk I put away a long time ago? Some brother of some punk I put away? You know what? Either way I don't give a fuck.

MAN IN WHITE

Such fire! Such passion! Not like the torturous months of physical therapy needed after your coma.

SAM

(beat)

Who the hell are you?

MAN IN WHITE

An ironic choice of words. You were close. So close to being mine.

The Man in White rubs his finger in the sugar on the counter. He puts his finger to his tongue.

MAN IN WHITE

Close enough that I could... taste...

A cocked gun is heard from their left.

VAL (O.S.)  
Get your hands up where  
I can see them!

Val stands positioned a few feet behind Sam. The customers panic at the sight of the gun. It's bedlam as they stampede to exit. The Man in White smiles.

MAN IN WHITE  
Ah, the faithful partner. Leading  
another comrade to his glorious  
death, Samuel?

SAM  
What do you want from my life?

MAN IN WHITE  
Once again, the irony! Your "life".  
Man after man I've hunted down in  
search of the one. Savage, Gore,  
Dread. Nothing!

The waitress tries to run by. The Man in White grabs Sam's gun off the counter and the waitress in a split second.

SAM  
Don't do it. I'm the one you want.

MAN IN WHITE  
True. Which is why she can die.

The Man in White holds the gun to her head. Val steps closer.

VAL  
Let her go!

The Man in White grins. He lifts the grenade off the counter.

MAN IN WHITE  
(to waitress)  
So many people you feed. May I?

He raises the grenade up to her mouth. She tightens her lips.

MAN IN WHITE  
Ah, ah.

His gun to her temple, she slowly takes the ring handle of the grenade between her teeth. Sam looks at Val.

SAM  
Shoot him.

Val, surprised, does a double take on Sam.

VAL

What?

The Man in White laughs. He looks at Val.

MAN IN WHITE

Give me his handcuff key.

Sam's anger increases.

SAM

Shoot him!

Val remains silent. Hesitant.

MAN IN WHITE

The key or she pays for your sin.

Val locks his focus on the Man in White. He tosses the key.

MAN IN WHITE

Doubt will always lead you to me.

The Man in White pulls the grenade from its ring lock. Pushing the waitress at Sam, the Man in White tosses the grenade over into the kitchen.

SAM

Down. Get down!

The explosion rocks the store. The fire quickly spreads through. Smoke everywhere. Crouched down behind the counter, Sam holds the screaming waitress. Val is by his side.

SAM

Where is he? Find him!

Val looks numb, dazed.

VAL

I don't --

The counter now broken, Sam's handcuff is loose.

SAM

I'm getting her out of here! I'll  
be back for you!

Sam takes her hand and crawls her toward the front door. Coughing like mad, she drops down. Sam picks her up.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

A crowd has gathered. The panicked store customers are hysterical. Bystanders are buzzing. Tamara runs toward over.

TAMARA

Oh my...

She looks around and finds a group of CHINESE tourists. ZUP RUTER, 50, tourist clothes and camcorder stands watching.

Tamara grabs him.

TAMARA

You! I need you! Film me now!

Shocked by her zealousness and beauty, he speaks Chinese to his group of male buddies. He winks at her and raises his eyebrows. She smirks.

TAMARA

Not like that.

He turns his camcorder on.

TAMARA

This is Tamara Keyes, live!

Sam and the waitress burst out of the smoke and flames. A few people help them up. Cop cars screech in front.

TAMARA

Sam, wait! Where are you going!

Sam glances back as he runs in.

SAM

To get your story.

INT. DAY OWL COFFEE SHOP

The flames are everywhere. Sam crawls his way back in. He finds Val where he left him, up against the counter. Val doesn't see Sam until he's near him.

SAM

Where did he go? Where is he?

Val raises the Man in White's vest of explosives. The watch is in his other hand. It's counting down from 5:58:50.

VAL  
Leave me. Get out. Now.

The burning roof collapses over them.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Tamara is huddled near the coughing waitress.

TAMARA  
What happened in there?

An explosion rips from the store. Glass, brick and mortar everywhere. The fire rages.

Fire engine horns blare closer from the horizon. The silence from the bystanders is broken by Tamara's yelling.

TAMARA  
Somebody needs to get them out!

Out of nowhere, the same intense green glow seen from the train earlier beams from every crevice of the store.

Tamara and the crowd shield their eyes.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Nia, map in hand, drives on a street. She sees the green glow from a block away.

NIA  
Got you!

Nia whips the car, making a 90 degree turn down the block.

EXT. BUILDING - ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Across from the burning coffee shop, the Man in White peers down at the green glow from a high-rise office tower.

MAN IN WHITE  
At last.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Flames and smoke consume the shop as a shadow emerges unscathed. A hush falls over the crowd when Sam carries Val, unconscious and bleeding, out of the inferno.



The cops and EMS workers rush to their side. Attempting to check the blood stains on Sam, he pushes everyone away.

SAM  
I'm fine! Check his wounds.

Dropping Val across two workers' arms, Sam heads past the crowd. Tamara moves in his path.

TAMARA  
Jesus! How did you get out alive?

SAM  
Wrong person. Wrong miracle.

Tamara watches him leave before turning to Zup, still filming.

TAMARA  
Cut.

Zup's camera does a FADE TO BLACK.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The darkness consumes the silence. Sam lays unconscious across his couch. A clanking noise rings out. Barely able to raise an eye, Sam squints, sees nothing before closing it.

The clank rings out again. Sam squints again. Val is now standing in front of him. Sam's eyes widen.

SAM  
What the -- How's the head? I meant  
to follow the ambulance but--

A droplet of blood runs down Val's skull past his cheek.

SAM  
Are you okay?

Still silent, the blood begins to pour from Val's head.

SAM  
Kid, we need to get you back  
to the hospital. Now!

Sam loosens his own collar. He's drenched with sweat.

SAM  
What's wrong with you?

Sam grabs Val's shoulders. Flames appear on Val's arms. It quickly spreads all over Val and the apartment.

Sam looks up into Val's face. Val is now the Man in White with a wide grin on his face that transforms into a laugh.

The fire spreads all over Sam. He can't pull away. The Man in White's fiery hand grabs Sam by the face as he leans closer.

MAN IN WHITE

Three hours and ten minutes.

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sam jumps awake. Seated on the bench, he's in a cold sweat. Nia is his first view. Sam coils back.

NIA

Whoa! Slow down! It's okay!

Sam needs a moment to focus. He's leery of her presence.

SAM

Who the hell are you?

Nia reacts to his choice of words. She pulls back.

NIA

Don't. Don't say that word.

SAM

(beat)

Who are you?

NIA

Your partner is doing fine. He suffered a mild concussion.

Sam looks toward a room door ten feet away before he calms.

SAM

Are you Nurse Ratched?

Nia raises her hand to hit, but instead forms a handshake.

NIA

Nia. Nia Vors.

Sam stares at her hand before rising. He starts to walk away.

SAM

Great. Now I'll recognize the Christmas card.

NIA  
 He just came to you, didn't he?  
 In your dreams? Nightmare, really.

Sam stops, turns. He looks at the wall clock over Nia's head.  
 It reads "6:51 P.M."

NIA  
 Listen, I can imagine what you're  
 thinking. But you need to hear me  
 out. I can help you.

Nia pulls a collection of drawings of the Man in White out of  
 her bag. Sam steps closer and looks down. His face now pale.

SAM  
 Who is he?

NIA  
 Our worst nightmare.

TERESA, 30, pure New York-Italian tough girl, storms by.

TERESA  
 Son of a bitch! I'll kill him!

Sam watches her push Val's hospital room door open. He moves  
 his hand toward his gun. Nia puts her hand over his.

NIA  
 Relax, quick shot. That's the anger  
 of a woman scorned.

SAM  
 Um. I should know that tone by now.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Sam and Nia slip in the room. Val's eyes bulge as he perches  
 up in his bed in his hospital nightgown. A cursing Teresa is  
 restrained by a NURSE, 45.

TERESA  
 Where's my sister, you asshole!

Teresa flings her bag at Val. Sam steps between the two.

SAM  
 (to Val)  
 We have something else in common.  
 (to Teresa)

(MORE)

SAM(cont'd)

Miss, calm down or I'll have the nurses introduce you to the pointy side of a large sedation needle.

Teresa continues to struggle in the Nurse's grip.

TERESA

Ask Romeo where my sister is!

Val clears his throat.

VAL

I dropped your sister off at her apartment yesterday morning.

TERESA

Liar! I went there! My messages from the weekend were still unheard on her answering machine!

All the women in the room scornfully look at Val.

VAL

I...uh. Maybe she stayed by a friend. Did you call Lisa? Your sister didn't feel well after our fender bender upstate.

Sam raises an eyebrow. Teresa ponders his words. Nia speaks.

NIA

Miss, I suggest you check around first. Call your sister's friend before attacking New York's finest.

Sam looks at Nia. Teresa shirks the nurses off. Fixing her clothes as she walks toward the door, she stops by Nia.

TERESA

You don't smell like a cop.

Teresa eyes Sam up and down before looking back at Nia.

TERESA

But I'll tell you what I told my sister. Don't get involved with one. It's like dying in slow motion.

Teresa walks out. The door shuts. Sam turns to Val.

SAM

Has the priest been in here yet?

VAL

What?

SAM

The priest. Has he been here?

VAL

No.

Sam throws Val his clothes from the chair.

SAM

Then I'll be downstairs.

(to Nia)

Let's go.

INT. HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR - NIGHT

The doors shut. Sam hits the lobby button. Nia remains quiet.

SAM

Your drawings are old. How old?

Nia clutches her knapsack.

NIA

I've learned time is a relative term. There's moments when I know it was thirty years ago. There's times when I feel like it was yesterday. Times when I feel like... it's never ended.

SAM

What's your link to him?

NIA

Link? We're all linked. You. Me. Your partner. All of us. Even the next person we see when the doors --

Open to a surprised Tamara, about to enter. Sam rolls his eyes as he walks around Tamara and exits.

SAM

I know my link to this one. A chain link around my neck with a short leash.

Nia and Tamara size each other up before they scurry to follow Sam out of the elevator.

INT. HOSPITAL - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sam walks to his car as if the women were not in pursuit.

TAMARA  
Wait! Slow down!

Sam opens the door to the police vehicle.

SAM  
(to Nia)  
Get in.  
(to Tamara)  
Get out.

Nia raises her eyebrows at Tamara and gets in the car.

TAMARA  
I have info you need to hear!

Sam leans out the window.

SAM  
Take a number.

Sam screeches away. Tamara calms. Stares at their departure.

INT. SAM'S CAR - NIGHT

Sam drives fast out of the lot. Nia buckles herself and looks at the radio clock. It reads 7:10 PM.

NIA  
Time is running out. I need to  
prepare you.

SAM  
Time? What do you know about time?

NIA  
I know midnight is coming.  
So is he.

Sam stops in front of the hospital. He stares at her as the car's back door opens. Val gets in. Sam drives away.

Deep in thought, Sam starting speaking as if he already was.

SAM  
How did you find me?

NIA

The dagger. The blade you've been wondering about. That's the key.

Val's still puzzled.

VAL

Key to what? What did I miss?

INT. POLICE STATION - BOOKING AREA - NIGHT

The trio enter. Traverse cops and criminals. Phones ringing.

SAM

How do you know about the dagger?

NIA

Technology is a wonderful thing. If you sneeze right now, someone, somewhere with access to a satellite and the proper hacking software will say "Bless you" from the other side of the world.

Sam's face takes offense to her last comment.

SAM

Bless me? You got the wrong guy.

NIA

No. Not this time. I've searched for you for years. Long hard years looking for a sign. Not knowing when or where. Any sign to point me in the right direction. The letters on the dagger. RXNETH.

Val is puzzled.

NIA

Do you know there is no reference to that word in any language? Do you know how often it's come up in any search engine for the internet or police databases around the world? Once! Once before you today! And do you want to know what that was? It was a frantic three hour flight to Alabama that led me to an empty office building with a cat rolling on the keyboard!

Sam squints at Nia.

SAM  
Riggght.  
(beat)  
Can you hand me my coffee cup?

Curious to his demeanor, Nia hands him his cup from his desk.

SAM  
Have a seat. I'll be right back.

Sam walks away. Flustered, Nia drops down in a chair. Val sits across from her.

NIA  
He's impossible!

VAL  
You noticed that too? I think  
Gandi would have slapped him.

Nia finds a moment to smile at his boyish charm.

NIA  
So why was that woman's sister all  
in a huff? What happened?

VAL  
Nothing newsworthy. Otherwise I'm  
sure Tamara would have me on the  
nightly news by now.

NIA  
Tamara? You mean the one outside  
the coffee shop explosion? She was  
at the hospital. What's her angle?

VAL  
Miss... I'm sorry. I don't even  
know your name. I'm Val Cobb.

Val extends his hand. Nia reciprocates.

NIA  
Nia. Nia Vors.

VAL  
I don't know her angle, Miss Vors.  
To tell you the truth. I've had  
trouble figuring anyone or anything  
out. What a way to start a job.



NIA  
 (squints)  
 Today is your first day?

Sam walks over. The steam rises from his cup of coffee.

SAM  
 Okay. Now I'm in my happy place.

NIA  
 I need you to stand still. To take me serious. You have no idea what you're up against.

SAM  
 Oh, I do. I finally do.

NIA  
 (surprised)  
 You do?

SAM  
 Uh huh. Come with me and I'll show you what I discovered.

Confused, Nia rises and follows Sam into another room.

NIA  
 Good. We're running out of time. We need to --

INT. DARKENED ROOM - NIGHT

As they walk though in, Sam pushes Nia into a cage. He turns on the light. It's an empty jail cell room.

NIA  
 Hey! What are you --. No!

Sam shuts the cage and locks it. He raises his coffee cup.

SAM  
 Amazing how quick prints can be lifted and analyzed, Miss Vors.

Nia bites her lip in disgust. Sam raises a sheet of paper.

SAM  
 Or should I say Miss Picola? Or Miss Foneril? Or... hell, I ran out of paper to print on. Arrested twelve times since age 14.

(MORE)

SAM(cont'd)

B and E, solicitation, rioting. A stint for mental instability. Add hacking into the police database tonight and you would do any dad proud.

Enraged, Nia's outburst is something fierce.

NIA

Don't mention my father. Forget all that! It's time! Now! Tonight!

SAM

Why don't you sleep off whatever you're on. We wil talk tomorrow.

Sam starts to leave and pull the door closed behind him as he exits. Nia screams.

NIA

There won't be a tomorrow! He's setting you up! Think! He found you, didn't he! He gave you the dagger, didn't he! And the glow!

Sam stops. The words reverberate in his head. He realizes Val stands a few feet away. He shuts the door.

SAM

Don't.

Sam walks past Val. Val pursues.

VAL

He gave you the dagger?

SAM

If you want to define lunging the blade at my body as "giving", then yeah, he gave it to me.

VAL

What in God's name is going on?

Val roughly grabs Sam's arm. Sam looks down at the clasp.

SAM

Temper temper, lover boy. Before I ask what exactly happened back at the hospital with your gal pal.

Val's eyes come alive. He releases his grip on Sam. About to comment, Sam is caught off guard by a sharp left uppercut from Val. Sam falls back into the desk.

VAL

Is that what you want? You want to  
keep pushing me until I'm like you!  
Stop testing me!

Sam wipes the blood from his lip. A small grin appears.

SAM

Life's a test. Welcome to my world.

Sam launches himself into Val's stomach. The two men tumble backward, falling into another desk. Sam hovers over Val, grabbing him up by his collar.

SAM

A bitter ex-wife.

Sam lands a blow to Val's chin, sending him down.

SAM

A body full of bullets.

Val tries to rise, but another blow to his mid section buckles him over. He's no match for the hardened veteran.

SAM

A psycho in white playing fucking  
games with me!

Sam's blows become more vicious. His pent up fury boils over.

SAM

And now you, Barbara Walters and  
this jailbird complete my fucking  
test! I'm done being tested!

Bloodied and close to unconscious, Val focuses his swollen eye on Sam. His words are a whisper.

VAL

Testing your faith.

Sam's eyes go blank. He suddenly notices a cross hanging from the chain around Val's neck.

Sam's clenched fist hangs trembling in the air. A pause for all eternity, his brow lowers. Continuing his final blow, Sam shatters the wooden desk's side board above Val's head.

Sam drops next to Val. Almost in a daze, he sits motionless.

VAL

Two days ago I was enjoying a relaxing weekend getaway before my first day on the job today. Since then, I've been run off the road, on a runaway train and trapped in a burning building. But you want to know something? I know it's going to work out.

Sam stares at Val. The sincerity is in Val's eyes.

SAM

How can you say that? How can you say that with a straight face?

Val raises the cross out of his wrinkled shirt collar.

VAL

Because I believe it in my heart.

Sam rises. His silence reflects his soul searching.

SAM

I was like you. A lifetime ago.

VAL

Why do you hate me? What is it?

SAM

You don't get it, do you? The mayor has his head up his ass. You're still green. Wet behind the ears. I can't have your inexperience cost the rest of the team their...lives.

Sam's words fade to a choked up whisper.

SAM

I've run the incident through my mind a thousand times. And you know what? I can always change it. I can always give myself a second chance. But that's not reality. That's not in the grand scheme of ... I won't let you be part of this.

VAL

I read the report. Not your fault.

SAM

A leader prepares for every contingency. My first time out as

(MORE)

SAM(cont'd)

squad commander and -- Shit! I can't. I won't have your life on my conscious.

VAL

You can't live with a death wish. You're lucky to be alive.

SAM

Lucky? Lucky my marriage has fallen apart? Lucky I haven't slept a single night since I cost eight children the joy of ever seeing their fathers again? What the hell do you know about luck?

VAL

I know I'm lucky you were on that train this morning. I know every person on that train was lucky you were there to stop that madman. Listen; me, you, the men you lost, we all know the risks when we take the job. You mention children, if you have kids one day, what would you tell them? Give up when life deals you a blow? Or a few blows? Life is like a title fight. You can lose a few rounds, but only the eventual winner will struggle on his feet to claim the final round.

Sam stares at him.

SAM

Is this where you pass the basket down the pews, preacher?

Val almost reacts when a grin appears on Sam's face.

SAL

Final round, huh?

Sam ponders. Takes a deep breath before he nods.

SAM

Ding Ding.

Sam puts his hand down to help. Val accepts the gesture.

Standing up, Val straightens his clothes and wipes his bloody lip with a napkin from a desk.

VAL  
Does all the sarcasm help you  
through the pain?

SAM  
Old saying. Laugh or you cry. I've  
found it gets me through the day.

Captain Delomo leans out his office door.

DELOMO  
Both of you! In here now!

The two men walk toward Delomo's office. Sam whispers to Val.

SAM  
Screaming works for him.

INT. CAPTAIN DELOMO'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Delomo sits. Sam and Val sit on the other side of his desk.

DELOMO  
I've got 22 lawsuits breathing down  
my ass from the runaway train and a  
psycho still on the loose after  
that explosion! I've got nothing  
coming in on his identity! What the  
hell happened at the coffee shop?!

Sam ponders the question. He hesitates.

SAM  
I ordered a donut. Was I supposed  
to bring you one back?

DELOMO  
Don't start with this, Sam.  
(to Val)  
Boy wonder. What about you?

Val looks at Sam. Sam's stillness makes its point.

VAL  
I don't eat donuts, sir.

Delomo is at a loss. About to yell, the phone rings. Delomo  
answers. Val winks at Sam.

DELOMO  
Delomo. Yes.  
(beat)

(MORE)

DELOMO(cont'd)

No, sir. There's no new info on him, but they have leads.

Delomo widens his eyes towards the men in search of a response to his lie. Both shake their heads "No."

Delomo smirks. His conversation continues. The television near Sam and Val shows news footage of the coffee shop fire.

VAL

You carried me out of that?

SAM

And not a thank you. Last time I pull your ass out of an inferno.

The words barely finish coming out of Sam's mouth when both men realize the same thought.

VAL

How did you walk out of an inferno?

Sam removes the gold watch from his pocket.

The TV displays Sam carrying Val out of the inferno. The bright glow surrounds the two men.

They look at each other before staring at the TV.

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Nia sits with her arms crossed, puss on her face.

SAM

What do you know about the glow?  
How did I walk out of there?

NIA

I'm sorry, are you talking to me?

Sam opens the lock on the cage.

SAM

Listen, I can --

Nia punches Sam in the stomach before storming past him. Sam's cell phone rings. He catches his breath and answers.

SAM

Tyler.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Maggie, holds her pair of red high heels in one hand and Sam's phone in the other.

MAGGIE

(sad)

Hi.

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Sam's demeanor changes. His voice mellows.

SAM

Hi.

MAGGIE (V.O.)

I just thought I'd call.

Sam walks away from Val and Nia. Out of the room. Val turns back to Nia.

VAL

How are you involved in all of this, Nia? What does RXNETH mean?

NIA

There's no definition for it. But it has meaning between the two of them. My guess it's the mark of the weapon of choice in the game.

Val's puzzled. Nia glances at the clock. 8:40 PM.

NIA

We're running out of time.

Nia runs her finger along a large city map on the wall.

NIA

We need to figure out where he's going to have it. Fast.

VAL

Have what?

Nia stops on the East side docks. She circles the warehouses.

NIA

Judgement day.



INT. SIDE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sam enters an empty side hallway.

SAM  
I'm hanging in there.

Sam looks at the phone number on his phone. It shows HOME. He leans against the window, looking out at the city.

SAM  
How are you?

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Maggie slowly paces back and forth.

MAGGIE  
I'm sorry about this afternoon.  
It's been so hard. So hard to get  
through this. I don't know when I  
cried more; the nights you were in  
the coma, or the nights after you  
came out of it.

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Nia sticks pins in multiple warehouses on the board.

NIA  
The glow was the sign. The rules of  
the game are simple. They each get  
to display one sign to show the  
other that the right players are  
present. A sign above and beyond  
what a normal human being could  
ever conjure up. He sought out the  
sign to confirm Sam as his mark.

Val looks at the circled warehouses.

VAL  
Confirmation of what? What game?  
What are you talking about? None of  
this makes sense!

NIA  
Think. Sam's sign, the glow, was at  
the coffee shop.

(MORE)

NIA(cont'd)

I saw it when I arrived. Where was the other? Where was that bastard's mark. Think!

Confused, Val's thoughts race madly in his head.

FLASHBACK

INT. SUBWAY CAR

Val pokes at the sparking conductor's panel. Tamara and the other frantic passengers on the runaway train lay behind.

A bright glow appears from out of the front of the train as it suddenly jerks to a screeching halt. Val shudders.

END FLASHBACK

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Val is speechless. Nia notices.

NIA

Where?

VAL

The train. This morning.

NIA

That was his escape, wasn't it?

VAL

How do you know this? All of these things you're saying?

Nia brushes the hair from her eyes and reveals her scar.

NIA

It's happened before. It's about to happen again.

INT. SIDE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Through the window, Sam can vaguely see his apartment window.

About three city blocks out ahead, he can almost make out Maggie's shape passing his window apartment.

SAM  
Maggie, I'm not proud of the way  
I've acted. I know I've made my  
share of mistakes.

Sam rummages through a desk next to the window. He pulls out  
a pair of binoculars and focuses his view on her.

SAM  
But I can see things clearer now.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
You sound different. I wish  
things were different.

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Nia scans the room.

NIA  
What do you know about Sam?  
Detective Tyler? I need his  
personal info, quick.

VAL  
Personal? I told you I met the man  
this morning. Other than the guy  
has had a miserable year, what are  
you looking to find out?

Nia scurries on a computer. She pulls up Sam's records.

NIA  
A miserable year. A year where he  
came so close to death, right?

VAL  
Well. There was the situation on  
the stakeout.

Nia listens as she types.

VAL  
Wait.

Val leans over another computer. He starts to type.

Faces appear on the screen. A TED SAVAGE, 32. DAVID GORE, 43.  
THOMAS DREAD, 36. All cops. All their files say the same  
things across the screen.

KILLED IN ACTION.

VAL  
Oh, no.

NIA  
What?

VAL  
Something that he said in the diner  
to Sam. He said, Savage, Dread,  
Gore. It didn't register at first.  
I thought he was dramatic. But --

He turns the screen toward Nia. She almost gets excited.

NIA  
He's been searching for him.  
Searching for awhile now. None of  
them fit the final criteria.

VAL  
Which was?

NIA  
They stayed dead.

Val steps back. He sits on the edge of the desk.

NIA  
He'll look to bait Sam. He'll  
challenge his every thought,  
everything he believes in.

Val looks toward the hallway Sam walked out.

INT. SIDE HALLWAY - NIGHT

The view remains of Maggie through the binoculars.

SAM  
It's time for a change. I think...

A tear forms in Maggie's eye.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
I think it's time for things to  
change too, Sam. I've been seeing  
someone for a few months now.

Sam lowers the binoculars, he can feel it coming.

SAM  
Maggie.

MAGGIE (V.O.)  
Sam, he asked me to marry him.

Sam lowers his head and closes his eyes.

INT. JAIL CELL ROOM - NIGHT

Val gets in front of Nia. She stops typing.

VAL  
What does he want from Sam?  
What's he after?

NIA  
To test him. To test his faith.  
He'll strike at the thing he  
cherishes most in this world.

INT. SIDE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Sam slowly raises his head.

SAM  
Maggie, please...

Sam lifts the binoculars as he speaks. His eyes widen.

SAM  
No!

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Maggie stares blankly out the window.

MAGGIE  
Sam, please...

SAM (V.O.)  
Maggie! No!

INT. SIDE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Through the binoculars, the Man in White is now seen standing behind Maggie.

SAM  
No!

Maggie is baffled. The Man in White closes in on her. One hand over her mouth, he seizes Maggie from behind.

SAM  
NO! You son of a bitch!

The Man in White smiles out the window at Sam. His eyes reflect an inferno as he pulls Sam's curtains closed.

Sam drops the binoculars and turns back to the cage room. He runs into Val in the doorway.

VAL  
Your wife! You need to --

SAM  
My apartment! He's got her!

INT. MAIN STATION ROOM - NIGHT

Sam rushes toward the main exit door. He screams to Leo.

SAM  
Get the closest car on radio near  
my apartment! Close the building  
down! No one gets out!

Cup to lip, Leo is in mid sip.

LEO  
What's going on? Where are you  
going!

Sam's flings his badge in the garbage.

SAM  
To hell.

Sam exits. Leo's puzzled. Val and Nia run by.

EXT. STATION HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam bursts out of the building. He runs off the street.

Val and Nia rush out of the building. Tamara's car screeches in front of the duo.

TAMARA  
Get in!

EXT. MANHATTAN STREET - NIGHT

Cars honk and swerve around Sam as he darts in and out. His phone rings. He looks at it. It says home. He answers.

MAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

Such a beautiful woman. I love the color of her dress.

Maggie's muffled screams drive Sam insane.

SAM

You're dead! Anything happens to her and you're dead!

MAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

Unfortunately, that threat does little to advance our situation. Let's see if she has the same luck in life as you did, Samuel.

Still running, Sam suddenly stops and looks up at his apartment windows. An explosion blows the windows out.

SAM

No!!

Fire and glass rain down upon the sidewalks below.

People in the streets run screaming from the falling debris. Sam drops to his knees. Numb, he stares upward, wait to dies.

A large chunk of wall heads directly for Sam.

Val pushes Sam out of the way from the giant chunk. It crashes into the ground. Sam snaps out of it.

VAL

Don't push your luck, six shot.

SAM

Maggie...

Tamara and Nia step out of the car. Sam rises.

TAMARA

She's alive! Listen!

Tamara holds up a police scanner. A COP'S voice speaks.

COP (V.O.)

-- Caucasian male dressed in white  
seen heading west down 4th street.  
Repeat, a female hostage --

Nia steps in front of Tamara. She waves a piece of the map torn from the office wall.

NIA

The docks! That's the way  
towards the docks, isn't it?

VAL

He could be anywhere. There's block  
after block of warehouses.

Standing a few feet away from everyone, Sam is still.

SAM

No. There's only one.

Tamara, Nia and Val turn to face Sam's direction when a fire truck cuts between the trio and Sam, blocking their view.

The truck clears out of their way. Sam's gone.

VAL

What! Where did he go!

Nia rummages through her knapsack, yanking out paper. She shows it to Tamara.

NIA

Where is this?

Tamara perks up.

TAMARA

Everyone in the car.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Off the waterfront, the abandoned remains of a warehouse sits quietly in the moonlight. Sam stops his run in front of it.

Sam stares at it. The burnt out view morphs into a view from a prior time of the warehouse before it was destroyed.

Sam blinks. The view returns to present day.



INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sam cautiously enters. All is quiet. The darkness envelops every corner save for the illumination from the moonlight.

A rat scurries in the far corner. The floor boards above creak. Sam pulls his gun and moves up the decimated stairs.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

INT. WAREHOUSE - STAIRWELL - DAY

The view morphs back to when the it was still intact.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - DAY

FIVE POLICEMEN in armored gear and visors crouch behind a wall silently peering around the wall at four THUGS, who sit at a table counting money amid white powder bags and guns.

COP#1's head jerks while he silently holds in a sneeze. Unconsciously, COP#2 speaks.

COP#2

Bless you.

The Five Policemen panic and are aware at once of the sound. COP#1 raises his visor and reveals he's a clean shaven Sam.

Bullets tear through the wall. Sam drops his visor shut. The Five Policemen charge the room. A battle of bullets is heard.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Amid the abandoned remains, Sam lowers his head.

MAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

If only you could have  
that moment back.

Sam raises his gun in the air. He twists and twirls in search of the body attached to the voice. He finds nothing.

MAN IN WHITE (V.O.)

If only you hadn't failed. Badly.

Sam's eyes go blank.

INT. TAMARA'S CAR - NIGHT

Tamara furiously swerves in and out of traffic. Nia, seat belt on, holds tightly to the dashboard. Val's in the back.

NIA

Hey! Slow down! Do you drive a  
ambulance on the side?  
I figured you chase them.

Tamara glances at the clock on the radio. It says 11:42 PM.

TAMARA

We're running out of time.

VAL

How do you know where they are?

Tamara tosses a folder over her shoulder to Val.

TAMARA

Give a journalist her due. This  
psycho has been playing games with  
Sam from the beginning. Why? I have  
no frigging clue! But whatever he  
wants, he wants it to be dramatic.  
I'll bet my life he's heading to  
the same warehouse where Sam almost  
died last year.

Val looks at the news clipping of Sam's drug fiasco. The warehouse is seen in the background of the photo.

NIA

She's right.

Val leans closer to the front seat. Tamara looks at Nia.

TAMARA

Miss...?

NIA

Vors.

TAMARA

Who are you? How are you involved?

VAL

Yes, how? You haven't said how  
you're involved, just what will  
happen. How do you know?

NIA

(beat)

Thirty years ago, I was kidnapped  
and held hostage in a warehouse.  
Down in Philadelphia. My hometown.

VAL

Oh, I'm sorry.

NIA

No! It's not about my pain!

TAMARA

Then what's it about, Miss Vors?

Nia yanks the drawings of the Man in White from her knapsack.

NIA

It's about stopping an unstoppable  
demon who's playing a game! The  
same game played thirty years ago!

Val lifts one of the pictures. Then another.

VAL

The man we're after looks to be in  
his thirties. This can't be the  
same man. From what you're saying,  
he would be over 60 years old by  
now. Who is he?

Val ponders his words after he hears them aloud.

VAL

What... is he?

NIA

Something incomprehensible.  
Indescribable. I'm.... not sure.  
But make no mistake about it.

(beat)

It's him.

INT. BURNT OUT WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sam aims his gun in all directions.

SAM

Come out, you son of a bitch! You  
better pray that she's okay!

MAN IN WHITE (O.S.)

Pray?

Sam flips around in the direction of the voice. Ten yards away stands the Man in White.

MAN IN WHITE

I'm afraid that's something I gave  
up doing a long, long time ago.

Sam centers his aim. The Man in White remains still, his hands behind his back. Sam looks around.

SAM

Where is she!

The Man in White loses his grin.

MAN IN WHITE

She's gone.

SAM

No. You're lying.

Aim still focused, Sam's finger presses against the trigger.

MAN IN WHITE

Do it.

Sam's hand trembles.

MAN IN WHITE

Fulfill your destiny, Samuel.

Sam flinches, then fires his gun. Six shots ring out.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Gunshots are heard as Tamara's car screeches to a halt. Nia and Val leap from the car.

NIA

Oh no! No!

Val moves toward the building. He draws his gun.

VAL

Wait here. I'm going in.

Val disappears into the building. Tamara walks past Nia.

TAMARA  
Can you work a camera?

Tamara shoves a camcorder in Nia's chest.

TAMARA  
I'm getting my story.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Sam lowers his gun. The Man in White stands in the same spot, unharmed. He looks at his body, then to the wall behind him.

Bullet holes line the wall high above his head. His eyes focus on Sam and his demeanor changes.

MAN IN WHITE  
What are you doing?

Sam tosses handcuffs in front of the Man in White's feet.

SAM  
My job.

The Man in White's pupils turn a fiery red. Sam notices.

MAN IN WHITE  
Touche'. How did you know I was lying about her death?

SAM  
Instinct. It's too simple. Too easy for you. You want your fifteen minutes of fame to last longer.

Sam raises his aim back on the Man in White.

SAM  
Where is she?

The Man in White waves his arm and the moonlight enters the window. It lights the far corner of the room.

Hanging from a rope around her wrists, Maggie's unconscious body dangles in the air.

SAM  
Oh God. No!

MAN IN WHITE  
(smiles)  
Once again, you have failed her.

Sam lunges at and tackles the Man in White to the ground. He rains blow after blow on the Man in White's face.

SAM  
You -- I'll kill --

Sam's punches have no effect on the Man in White's face. His smile remains strong.

MAN IN WHITE  
Use it! Fulfill --

A loud, creaking precedes the wooden floorboard beneath them collapsing. Both men fall through.

Sam grasps on to the dangling beam. The Man in White is holding on to Sam's leg. The two men make eye contact.

SAM  
Go back to the hell you came from!

Sam kicks his leg down. The Man in White falls through the floor beneath them. The sight of his body vanishes.

Sam climbs up the beam. He drops on his back, breathing hard.

SAM  
Maggie...

Wobbling to his feet, he makes it over to Maggie.

SAM  
Hold on, baby!

Sam grabs the dagger from his pocket and cuts at her rope. He cradles her limp body, cleaning the blood from her face.

SAM  
Oh God! Please! Breathe!

Angered beyond comprehension, Sam screams upward.

SAM  
Why?! What more do you want from me?! Leave her the fuck alone!

Barely conscious, Maggie coughs. Her eyes squint open. She sees Sam and attempts a smile. Her voice barely a whisper.

MAGGIE  
I'm sorry... about the shoes.

Sam laughs and cries. He hugs her tightly.

SAM  
Hold on. I'm going to get  
you out of here.

INT. WAREHOUSE - FIRST FLOOR

Tamara walks a few steps ahead of Nia.

TAMARA  
This is Tamara Keyes reporting live  
to you from an abandoned warehouse  
along the west dock of Manhattan.

Nia is barely listening to her. She unconsciously holds the  
camcorder halfway in front of her body.

TAMARA  
Hey! A little higher!

Nia stares at her surroundings.

NIA  
It's the same. All the same.

TAMARA  
What are you talking about?

NIA  
When I was kidnapped, my father  
just about lost his mind. Bad  
enough he was a fireman, but he was  
recovering from a breakdown related  
to a rescue that also went bad. His  
squad died. He miraculously  
survived. My mother couldn't deal  
with him afterwards. She left.

TAMARA  
How were you rescued?

NIA  
My father. He found me. He... was  
led to me. The same as now. The way  
Sam has been led the whole time.  
The warehouse was on fire.  
Everything collapsing around me.  
Just as my father was cutting my  
ropes, he appeared.

TAMARA  
This man?

NIA  
Whatever else he is, he's no man.

TAMARA  
Did he try to stop your father?

NIA  
No.  
(beat)  
He gave himself up.

INT. WAREHOUSE - UNDISCLOSED LOCATION - NIGHT

A dark shadow appears in the moonlight. The Man in White steps in to view. Out through the broken window, the view of a clock tower in the distance strikes midnight.

MAN IN WHITE  
At last.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR

Sam places his coat under Maggie's head. He starts to cut her restraints with the dagger.

SAM  
You're going to be okay.

A beeping noise startles Sam. He pulls the gold wrist watch from his pocket. It BLINKS 0:00.

MAN IN WHITE (V.O.)  
It's time, Samuel.

Sam lifts his head. The Man in White stands ten feet ahead.

MAN IN WHITE  
I don't hear the confidence in your voice, Samuel. Could you be doubting your words? Your faith?

Sam grips the dagger tighter.

MAN IN WHITE  
She's still alive? You certainly picked the right woman to spend eternity with. What was your vow on the altar? What did you swear to do? Protect her? 'Til death do you part'. Isn't that the saying?



Sam's lip curls. His hand trembles.

MAN IN WHITE  
You failed. Like you always have.

Sam rises. Dagger in hand. His enemy puts his arms straight.

MAN IN WHITE  
I give up. Take me in.

INT. WAREHOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Nia runs up the steps, Tamara in tow. The clock tower finishes its gongs.

NIA  
No! It's happening! It's midnight!

TAMARA  
What? What's happening!

NIA  
Right after midnight! My father lunged at him with the dagger!

TAMARA  
He stabbed him?

Nia pauses on the steps.

NIA  
I... I don't remember anything after that. I was in coma for almost a year. When I woke, everything was different.

TAMARA  
What was different?

NIA  
There wasn't any indication that the Man in White existed. That my kidnapping ever happened. All reports on my father claimed he died in the fire with his squad a year earlier.

Tamara stops a few steps below.

NIA

What Sam doesn't know is that he didn't survive the drug bust last year! He died! He died! His body's being used for the game! He's being used as a pawn in this ultimate game. Just like my father!

INT. BOTTOM TO STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Val stands up against the wall and listens to Nia and Tamara. His gun at his side, he shocked by Nia's omission.

INT. WAREHOUSE - STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Nia realizes her thoughts aloud. Tamara is calm.

NIA

It was as if when my father went to kill him --

TAMARA

-- he lost the game.

Tamara is too calm.

INT. BOTTOM TO STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Val hear noises upstairs from the opposite side of the room. He turns and runs across the room and up the steps.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

Val emerges from the stairwell and ducks out of sight from Sam and the Man in White who are an twenty feet away.

Sam slams the Man in White against the wall, his forearm flush against his neck.

MAN IN WHITE

What are you doing? I give up. You can't. You're a--

SAM

What? Cop? Not anymore. I'm just a man. A man who's had enough.

VAL

(mumbles)

Oh, no. No.

Val raises his gun and moves through the shadows across the room and passes the other stairwell entrance. Nia runs up.

Tamara calmly appears after Nia.

NIA

Wait!

VAL

Stand back! I've got to stop Sam before he kills him!

NIA

No! You can't help him! He needs to make the decision on his own! Only the chosen one can beat him by choosing life over death!

VAL

How can you be sure?!

NIA

It's clear now! Revenge consumed my father! It's consuming Sam!

A muffled shot rings out. Nia's face turns blank; Blood runs from her mouth. She drops to her knees, then to the ground.

Gun at her side, Tamara stands over Nia's dead body.

Val's surprised look turns to anger. He aims on Tamara.

VAL

Put it down!

Tamara is not fazed. She spins the gun on her finger.

TAMARA

The poor thing. She really did a hell of a job, pardon the pun, of helping. She led the chosen one here, just as he planned it.

VAL

Who are you?

TAMARA

Who am I? Who are you? Who is anyone? Let's say I was just another aspiring actress who got a little too high one night during a producer's party.

She spins the gun until her aims fall on Val.

TAMARA

Who knew I didn't make it!

Another muffled shot from her gun rips through Val's chest. He falls to his knees bleeding, yet his aim still on her.

TAMARA

I felt his touch flow through me  
that fatal night. Felt him embrace  
me all these months since.

Tamara's eyes turn a fiery red.

TAMARA

He's close. So close to claiming  
another victory. Another million  
souls from that fucking, self  
centered, self righteous ruler!

Val's arm shakes but his aim remains between her eyes.

TAMARA

Above all, Sam can't stop his most  
basic instinct. The instinct that  
he is now embracing in his weakest  
hour. The instinct that will cost  
him the game!

About to pull the trigger, Val hesitates. He lowers his gun and embraces the cross on his neck chain. He closes his eyes.

Surprised at his action, Tamara pulls the trigger. The muffled shot lodges in the center of Val's forehead. Eyes blank, he falls dead.

TAMARA

The instinct of murder.

On the opposite side of the floor, Sam holds the Man in White against the wall. He cocks the dagger back, about to strike. The Man in White grins. His voice becomes a demonic whisper.

MAN IN WHITE

Yes. Be what you are.

Sam's eyes lock with the Man in White. With a final roar, Sam lunges the knife towards the Man in White's stomach.

MAN IN WHITE

(deeper voice)

Yes!

A bright light emits from the Man in White's face and body. A glow that consumes the room. Flames ignite out of nowhere and set the room ablaze.

Sam is frozen like a statue, his dagger still inches from entering the Man in White's stomach. The Man in White, while still somewhat maintaining his features, morphs into a larger, red bodied, hell-like DEMON.

The Demon's large hand lifts the frozen Sam off the ground. He speaks not to Sam, but almost through him.

DEMON

Show yourself! The game is over!

Sam remains frozen.

DEMON

You've lost! Lost again! The contest is over. Show yourself!

ACROSS WAREHOUSE FLOOR

The flames surprise Tamara as they consume the ground around her. Nia's body is instantly burned to dust. Turning frantic, the flames seize Tamara, setting her ablaze.

TAMARA

No! Master, no!

Devoured, Tamara disappears under the flames. The fire dances around Val's body, leaving him unscathed.

BACK TO DEMON

The demon's growl intensifies.

DEMON

Show yourself!

Sam's frozen jaw slightly trembles. His eyes blink.

SAM

(whispers)

You... got...

The Demon's eyes focus in on Sam.

SAM

... the wrong guy.

The Demon's eyes widen. A bright silver glow, brighter than the demon's glow, seizes everything.

The Demon turns toward the direction of the glow.

BACK TO VAL

Standing upward, unharmed by the ferocious blaze, Val's arms are extended outward as his body floats inches above the ground. The light emits from Val's body and glowing eyes.

BACK TO DEMON

Fear is evident in the Demon's eyes.

FLASHBACK BEGINS

EXT. MOUNTAIN HIGHWAY - NIGHT

The snowstorm unleashes its fury on the night. The snowy road shows tire tracks going off-road into a ravine.

EXT. RAVINE - NIGHT

Val's SUV lies smashed into a large tree.

INT. VAL'S SUV - NIGHT

Carrie's bloody dead body slumps in the driver's seat. Val's dead body sits beside her. The shattered, bloody windshield in front of his seat matches the wound on his forehead.

Val lifts his head. The silver glow is in his eyes.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

The Demon's expression reveals the truth.

DEMON

No!

FLASHBACK

INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT

Amid the collapsing inferno, Sam lifts the unconscious Val off the floor. The bright silver glow surrounds both men, shielding them from the falling debris.

Unseen by Sam, Val's eyes emit the silver glow.

FLASHBACK ENDS

INT. WAREHOUSE - SECOND FLOOR - NIGHT

The glow from Val intensifies. It consumes everything on the warehouse floor. The debris and the walls until both areas are seen from one view. The glow pushes the demon back.

The Demon's grip weakens on Sam's body, which now bathes in the silver glow. Sam's frozen body begins to stir.

The demon's red skin starts to boil. He screams in anger.

DEMON

You were the chosen one!  
You're dead! Dead!

Sam shakes his head clear. His scowl focuses back on the Demon, hand still clutching the dagger.

SAM

No. I'm just the dumb son of a  
bitch who's lucky to be alive.

Sam thrusts the dagger into demon's chest. The demon roars.

Falling back to the ground, Sam shields his eyes from the fury unleashed by the Demon. The entire room is engulfed by both fire and the glow.

Awestruck, Sam touches upward. His hand moves no further than the barrier formed by the glow that shields his body.

Sam's hand moves back toward his body as the barrier begins to crush him. The fire increasing tenfold. Sam's eyes widen.

SAM

No! Noooooooo --

FADE OUT.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Five Policemen in armored gear and visors crouched behind a wall. Sam and COP#2, 29, are closest to the edge of the wall. In the other room sits four THUGS counting money.

Bags of powder and a multitude of weapons are everywhere. Sam jerks his head as he silently holds in a violent sneeze.

Unconsciously, Cop#2 motions his lips to speak. Sam throws his visor up. His eyes bugged out, he covers Cop#2's mouth.

The other cops sigh a breath of relief. Sam raises his eyebrows toward Cop#2. Cop#2 nods apologetically.

Sam nods before lowering his visor. He motions with his fingers to the squad. Leading the charge, Sam bursts up and around. The view remains on the wall the squad stood against.

SAM (O.S.)  
Freeze! Hands' up!

INT. NIA'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Nia washes her face. Pulling her hair into a pony tail, she stares at the scar on her forehead. She turns and looks though the doorway at her bedroom wall.

The collage of newspaper clippings read; "HEROIC FIREMAN DIES IN LINE OF DUTY" She stares at her hand drawings and sketches of the Man in White.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Snow pounds the dimly lit country road.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Val wipes his hand against the fogged window. The concern on his face escapes Carrie as she drives.

CARRIE  
So, are you excited about making Detective?

VAL  
I'm excited when you don't keep your eyes on the road.

The snow is heavier. The visibility worsens. Carrie squints.

CARRIE  
Relax lover, I think we're close.

Out of nowhere, high beams from a large truck blind Carrie.

VAL  
Carrie, look out!

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

Their SUV abruptly turns away from the oncoming truck. The truck goes past as the SUV spins on an ice patch.



The SUV goes off the road. About to head down into the ravine, it slides and crashes into another SUV.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Val's stiff body is braced against the seat. His arms leveraged against the dashboard, he looks over at Carrie. Carrie is face down against the steering wheel. Blood drips.

VAL  
Carrie! Oh God! No!

As he reaches for her, she lifts her head.

CARRIE  
Ow... Crap!

She holds her hand toward Val.

CARRIE  
I broke a nail!

Emotions overcome Val. He brushes her hair off the wound.

CARRIE  
Ouch!

VAL  
You'll live. Val looks around. He rubs the fogged window.

CARRIE  
What did we hit?

VAL  
I'm not sure what...

As Val rubs a spot clear, a blinding light shines in. Val is taken back. The door is yanked open. A hand pulls Val out.

VAL  
Hey! What's are you --

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - SHOULDER - NIGHT

Sam holds Val upright. He looks for signs of an injury.

SAM  
You okay? Anyone hurt?

Val pushes Sam off.

VAL  
I'm fine. We're fine.

Sam makes a face.

SAM  
Yeah, well, I can't say  
the same for my truck.

The snow still blowing, Val looks at Sam's dented red SUV.

VAL  
Listen, Mr. ...?

SAM  
Tyler.

VAL  
Mr. Tyler. I'm sorry about  
your truck.

Both men peek over Sam's truck, down into the ravine.

VAL  
Unfortunately, I might  
have wound up down there.

Sam thinks about it. He nods.

SAM  
Yeah. Could have been worse.

Val turns back to Sam.

VAL  
What are you doing out here?

Carrie and Maggie walk around from the other side of the SUV.

MAGGIE  
That little shop down the road?  
Oh, it's to die for!

SAM  
(smirks)  
Don't ask.

Maggie wrinkles her nose.

MAGGIE  
And my husband can't live without  
his coffee for five minutes! Did  
you find it?

Sam raises a Thermos cup.

SAM

I told you a glow in the dark cup  
would come in handy.

Maggie rolls her eyes. She looks at Carrie.

MAGGIE

He aggravated me about going to get  
the candles and I threw his thermos  
out the window.

Everyone is silent for a second. Maggie, Carrie and Val  
laugh. Sam remains straight faced.

SAM

That's not funny.

Maggie and Carrie walk away toward Val's SUV.

MAGGIE

We're at the Pocono Lodge too.  
Maybe we can do brunch tomorrow?

The women exit view. Sam looks at Val.

SAM

Seriously. That's not funny.

Val smiles. He takes a step forward. He looks down the road.

VAL

Where did that trucker go?

Sam takes a sip of his coffee.

SAM

Y'know, now that I think about it,  
the rig never slowed down. Even  
when it passed you.

Val sees the tail lights from the rig in the far distance. He  
stares at it, almost hypnotized by it.

VAL

That's a serious game of chicken  
I'm not looking to play.

EXT. MOUNTAIN ROAD - NIGHT

The snowstorm has picked up speed. Visibility is nil. The speeding rig continues down the road at a torrid pace.

INT. THE RIG CAB - NIGHT

Illuminated only by the green light of the 70's style radio, a tacky, wide grinned plastic devil's head hangs from the rear view mirror.

A pair of white gloved hands are on the steering wheel.

The Man in White, impeccably dressed in his white vest and suit flashes a devilish grin.

The song, THE DEVIL WENT DOWN TO GEORGIA, echoes as the highway sign out the windows reads "New York - 75 Miles."

FADE OUT.