

Lines in the Sand

by
Jim DalGLISH

V.2
Version draft completed October 8, 2023

Adaptation based on original play "Lines in the Sand" by Jim
DalGLISH
Copyright Jim DalGLISH

Jim DalGLISH
4 Daisy Ln, Plymouth, MA 02360
JimdalGLISH@mac.com
1 617 308 0788

BLACK

We hear the sound of someone breathing heavily as they run. The breaths are frantic, as though the person were trying to escape from something frightening.

FADE IN:

EXT. EDGE OF A FOREST - DUSK

The breaths are coming from BILLY - a thin and rather fragile 15-year-old boy - as he staggers out of a stand of woods. A book bag is flung over his right shoulder. His clothes are disheveled and a bruise has just begun to form around his right eye.

As he is about to run into the field of high grass that surrounds the forest, he trips on a rock, and falls, losing his grip on his book bag in the process. On his knees, he grabs the bag and slings it over his shoulder, glancing back into the forest to see if anyone is following.

Billy staggers to his feet and continues to run as fast as he can into the field of high grass.

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE FOREST - CONTINUOUS

TOM - a 33-year-old, powerfully built man - hurries out of the woods and heads to an old beat-up pickup that is parked on the edge of a county road. His right hand is tightly gripping something in the pocket of his Carhartt utility jacket. He wears thick cotton coveralls and scuffed up boots. There is a little blood on the jacket.

He looks and moves as though he were feeling the adrenaline rush of a fight. Tom uses his left hand to open the door of the truck. It creaks from the rust on its hinges. He gets into the truck. Slams the door and starts the truck.

The pickup peels out, bald tires screeching on the cracked asphalt pavement as it careens down the county road that borders the woods. The truck heads toward the field of tall grass in the distance.

EXT. FIELD OF LONG GRASS - CONTINUOUS

Billy runs in a panic across the field of tall grass. He scans across the horizon as he runs - general idea of where he is headed, but there is doubt. He looks behind to see if anyone is following.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD ALONG THE FIELD OF LONG GRASS - CONTINUOUS

The pickup swerves a little as it barrels down the road.

INT. INSIDE PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Tom tries to keep the truck on the road as he looks out the window to see if he can spot Billy running through the field.

EXT. FIELD OF LONG GRASS - CONTINUOUS

As Billy runs across the field, we see Tom's pickup speeding down the road off to the side and behind Billy.

INT. INSIDE PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Tom sees a glimpse of Billy's head above the tall grass as he runs.

He smiles.

EXT. FIELD OF LONG GRASS AND TRUCK FROM ABOVE - CONTINUOUS

The truck has caught up with Billy. Tom has slowed to match Billy's pace. They are a few hundred feet apart.

EXT. FIELD OF LONG GRASS - CONTINUOUS

As he runs, Billy sees the truck following. He stops running and ducks below the grass. He hears that the truck has stopped. He parts the grass with his hands and looks forward. He can barely make out a diner that is a quarter mile ahead. He begins to sprint to the diner.

INT. INSIDE PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

From where he has stopped the truck, Tom scans the field to see if he can see Billy. He looks down the road to a traffic light that marks an intersection. He looks to the left. He sees the diner.

EXT. TRUCK FROM ABOVE - CONTINUOUS

The gears grind and the truck's tires squeal as it takes off toward the intersection.

EXT. EDGE OF PARKING LOT BEHIND THE DINER - CONTINUOUS

The parking lot lights behind the diner flicker on and buzz as Billy runs onto the pavement from the field. He pants heavily and bends over to catch his breath. He scans the lot. There are no other cars in the back part of the lot. He sees a field rat climb into the garbage bin. He looks off to the right and notices the pickup truck stopped at the traffic light. This give him another jolt of adrenaline and he runs toward the back door of diner.

INT. INSIDE PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

Tom is stopped at the light. He looks over to the diner and sees the parking lot lights flicker on. He can't see behind the diner. We hear the clicking of the truck's left turn indicator. Tom looks up to the traffic light. It's still red. He sees that there are no other cars on at the intersection... no other cars are approaching from either side, but he doesn't dare make an illegal turn. He growls and pounds the steering wheel in frustration.

INT. INSIDE PICKUP - CONTINUOUS

The light finally changes. Tom grinds the gears and the truck takes off.

EXT. TRUCK FROM ABOVE - CONTINUOUS

The truck turns left and drives toward the entry to the cafe parking lot. It's a traditional diner with a neon sign that blinks "Roadhouse". It's seen better days. There are about a dozen cars and trucks in the parking lot. A few people are exiting and heading to their cars. Tom pulls the truck into a spot in the front and gets out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

He scans the parking lot. No Billy. He looks through the diner windows. Still no Billy. He thinks for a moment. Then decides to head toward the door.

INT. DINER MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The restroom door opens abruptly and Billy enters carrying his book bag. He staggers to the sink and looks at his face in the broken mirror. The dried blood and the bruise forming around his eye freak him out. He drops his book bag on the floor next to the dirty sink and turns on the faucet. He bends over fills his hands with water and bathes his face. He taps the soap dispenser on the wall. Nothing. He washes his face and again and looks back up into the mirror. He face doesn't look much better.

INT. DINING ROOM OF CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Tom enters the diner and looks around. No Billy at the counter, just a few truckers drinking coffee. He tries to casually pass by the booths to see if Billy is sitting in one. The few people in the booths barely notice him. He sees the sign for the restrooms Men's pointing to the hallway that that runs back behind the kitchen. He heads in that direction.

INT. DINER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy stops trying to wash the bruise off of his face. He looks into mirror. He pauses as he hears the heavy steps of boots approaching the bathroom. He hurries past the urinal and enters a stall.

INT. STALL - CONTINUOUS

He clicks the rusty latch in place and sits on the toilet, bringing his knees up to his chest and resting his feet on the toilet lid. He closes his eyes tight.

QUICK FLASH

-- a group of inebriated high school boys whooping it up in a clearing in the woods. They roughly manhandle Billy, pushing him back and forth and grabbing at his clothes. Billy tries to escape, but he trips. He tries to stand, but the red woolen scarf that is tightly binding his wrists together make it difficult.

He looks up and sees KYLE - a handsome athletic high schooler wearing a fashionable jacket - sitting on a boulder a short distance away. Kyle looks worried, but doesn't try to help. Billy tries to stand but one of the bigger boys punches him in the face and Billy falls again.

KYLE

Hey! None of that shit. Play nice!

The jocks circle Billy to make sure he doesn't escape. Some are unzipping their jeans. He tries to free his hands from the red woolen scarf, but he fails. Kyle walks from where he has been sitting on the boulder and squats next to Billy. He gently puts his hand on the back of Billy's head to try to calm him down.

BILLY

Kyle?

Kyle grabs Billy's hair to hold him firmly in place.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. DINER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Tom enters. He looks around the filthy bathroom. Nothing. He looks under the stall. No feet. He is about to leave when he sees the book bag Billy left beside the sink. He looks back to the stall and smiles. Tom crosses to the bathroom door and locks it. He then crosses to the urinal, unzips, whips his cock out, and begins to piss. He whistles as he pisses - a song so out of tune it's unrecognizable.

INT. STALL - CONTINUOUS

Billy hears the whistling and the stream of Tom's piss as it hits the porcelain of the urinal. He tries to be as quiet as he can as he sits on the toilet with his legs up. He closes his eyes.

QUICK FLASH

-- Back at the clearing in the woods. The jocks have started to take their turns with Billy. Rubbing their exposed cocks on his face and taunting him. Kyle has a firm grip on Billy's neck to keep him in place. One of the guys - KEITH ANDERSON tries to piss on Billy's face. Kyle pushes him away.

KYLE

Knock it off, Anderson.

KEITH ANDERSON

What the fuck? Bitch probably likes it.

KYLE

Wasn't part of the deal, asshole.

Another one of the jocks gets in front of Billy and presents his cock. Billy resists.

KYLE (CONT'D)

(Softly to Billy:)

Relax and it will be over quick.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy opens his eyes when he hears the urinal flush. He tries to keep as quiet as possible as he hears the footsteps approach. He hears the water run in the sink. The tapping of the empty soap dispenser. The water stops. Billy hears the paper towel roller ratcheting out a square. A rip followed by the rough wiping of hands. The soft plunk of the wad of paper towels thrown into the wastebasket.

Then silence.

No retreating footsteps... no door opening and closing...

Silence.

TOM (O.C.)

I know you're in there.

Billy doesn't dare to breathe.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tom leans against the sink, holding the book bag.

TOM

I got your book bag.

After a moment, Billy opens the stall door and peers out.

BILLY

They out there?

TOM

Always someone out there.

Billy rushes to the sink, grabs his book bag and is about to leave when Tom grabs the strap and stops him in his tracks.

TOM (CONT'D)

You don't take care of that cut,
you're going to stain that shirt.

Billy takes the book bag off and washes his face in the sink. He looks into the mirror. The cut is still bleeding.

Tom crosses up behind BILLY and touches his shoulder. Billy jerks away from him and stumbles back against the stall partition.

TOM (CONT'D)

Easy.

Tom takes a few paper towels out of the dispenser. Billy tries to get past Tom, but Tom gently pushes him back against the stall partition. Tom folds the paper towels and wets them under the faucet.

He tries to put the paper towels on the cut above Billy's eye, but Billy flinches and cowers. Tom takes Billy's chin with his free hand and waits for him to open his eyes.

TOM (CONT'D)

You gotta work on that.

Tom covers the cut above Billy's eye with the paper towels.

There is a moment where they look into each other's eyes.

The moment is interrupted by someone attempting to enter the men's room by trying the locked doorknob.

Billy starts, but Tom holds him against the stall partition.

TOM (CONT'D)

Use the ladies!

BILLY

Is it them?

TOM

No.

BILLY

How do you know?

TOM

If you hadn't run off you'd know.

BILLY

You hurt them?

Tom shows Billy the dried blood on the knuckles of his free hand.

TOM

You know those guys were hiding in the woods?

BILLY

No.

TOM (CONT'D)

Why'd you let that kid tie your hands?

Billy looks away. Tom grabs his chin again.

TOM (CONT'D)

Look at me.

Billy looks away. Tom grabs Billy's chin again. Billy flinches again and cowers.

TOM (CONT'D)

You gotta fix that.

Tom grabs Billy's chin.

TOM (CONT'D)

Look at me!

Billy won't look. Tom slaps Billy's face. This shocks Billy for a second. Then he pushes Tom back.

TOM (CONT'D)

That's it. Why didn't you do that before?

(Silence.)

They always play so rough?

BILLY

Why didn't you stop it sooner?

TOM

Looked like you were enjoying it.

Billy pushes Tom. Tom pushes back. Billy punches Tom in gut. Tom barely reacts. Tom slaps Billy across his face. Billy begins to cower. Then punches Tom again in the gut. Tom slaps BILLY again. He cowers. Tom lifts his face back up. Tom slaps Billy. But Billy does not cower. He looks Tom in the eye.

TOM (CONT'D)

Better.

Billy puts his hand to his face where he had been slapped.

TOM (CONT'D)

Did that hurt?

BILLY

Yeah.

Billy takes his hand from his face.

TOM

Does it hurt now?

BILLY

No.

TOM (CONT'D)

The names they called you tonight. Out there in the woods. That still hurt?

Billy nods. Tom grabs more paper towels, wets them.

TOM (CONT'D)

Sticks and stones? That's bullshit. Taking a punch? Two seconds, it's over. It's living with the words. They have a way of getting inside like slow-acting poison. Because no matter what bullshit they spout. There's this little part of you that believes them. That's what kills you.

Tom wipes blood off Billy's forehead. Billy lets him.

That big one's got a helluva right hook. He tagged you good.

BILLY

I need stitches?

TOM

Nah. It's just a bleeder.

Door rattles again.

TOM (CONT'D)

(To door:) It's busy!

BILLY

Why did you lock the door?

TOM

I thought we needed some privacy.

Billy backs up.

BILLY

You some kind of perv?

TOM

TOM

When that kid took you into the woods, you must have known what he wanted. But you didn't call the cops. Why is that?

Billy looks down.

TOM (CONT'D)

We both know.

BILLY

I didn't want that.

TOM

You didn't think it was going to get rough? Maybe you didn't think his buddies were waiting?

BILLY

Why didn't you call the cops?

TOM

I handled it. Didn't I? All you have to do is say Thank You.

BILLY

That's all you want?

TOM

Say, Thank you. For saving your ass. That's all.

Billy considers for a moment.

BILLY
Thank you.

TOM
Good boy.

Tom looks closely at the cut.

TOM (CONT'D)
Gonna be a real shiner. Give you
something to show off at school.

BILLY
Can't go back there.

TOM
You stand up straight and proud
and you look those little bitches
in the eye. Like you did just now
to me. Okay?

Billy tries to look down. Tom grabs his chin. Billy looks
him in the eye.

TOM (CONT'D)
Okay?

Billy nods his head.

TOM (CONT'D)
Good boy.

Billy puts his hand on Tom's hand as it holds his face.
He looks into Tom's eyes. There is a moment of
connection. This makes Tom uncomfortable. He lets Billy
go.

TOM (CONT'D)
You hungry?

BILLY
Yeah.

TOM
Can I get you dinner?

BILLY
Where?

TOM
We're in a diner.

BILLY

Food sucks here.

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)

The burgers are okay.

TOM

You like fries? I like fries.

INT. BEDROOM OF THERESA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

THERESA - a woman in her late 20s, but who looks a decade older - rolls over and looks at the digital clock beside her bed. 6:34pm. There is a photograph in a frame of her - 8 years younger - with her son, mother and father. They smile for the camera. Next to the clock we see a big box store name tag that reads "Hello, I am Theresa."

She sighs and sits up. Bleary eyed, she sniffs, coughs, and swallows. The tangle of sheets make it difficult for her to maneuver to the edge of the bed. She sees a man's white t-shirt on the floor and reaches for it awkwardly. She sits up and puts it on over her head. She stands and walks barefoot toward the door to the hallway. She steps and nearly puts all her weight on a little class pipe on the floor before she realizes it's there. She kicks it out of the way and heads down the hallway.

A figure rolls over on the bed. He is Theresa's latest BOYFRIEND. He looks at the clock.

BOYFRIEND

Jesus fuck.

INT. KITCHEN OF THERESA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Theresa enters the kitchen from the hallway. The kitchen is like the other rooms in Theresa's rented house - drearily painted walls, linoleum tile floors, second-hand fixtures and appliances. But you can tell Theresa tries to keep it as clean and uncluttered as possible. There is a print of a painting of Christ praying in gethsemane hung above the kitchen table.

She grabs a half-filled coffee carafe from the coffee maker on the counter and fills a mug. The mug says "World's Best Mom." She puts the mug in the microwave and presses re-heat.

She turns from the microwave leans back against the counter and waits for the coffee to heat up. We hear the whirl of the microwave oven and Theresa stands there and looks off vacantly into no place in particular.

INT. DINER BOOTH - 30 MINUTES LATER

Tom and Billy sit at a booth at the diner as far away from the other customers as possible. The naugahyde seat covering is a little ripped. There is a miniature jukebox on top of the table, just below the window. The sun has set. There are a few streaks of red in the sky. A half-eaten cheeseburger sits discarded in a red plastic basket. Most of the fries are gone. A fountain glass with the dregs of a chocolate shake sit beside it. There is a mug with a little coffee in it.

Tom is looking at Billy and pondering something. Billy doesn't want to look Tom in the eye.

TOM

You know why they go after you?

BILLY

Because they're assholes?

TOM

It's because inside they're scared little dipshits.

BILLY

Why pick on me?

TOM

Putting down a guy like you is the easiest way to cover it. You're a good student. Right?

Tom reaches over and grabs the book bag from off the booth bench.

BILLY

Hey!

Billy tries to grab it back but fails. Tom opens bag and begins to pull books out. This upsets Billy, but he knows he can't stop Tom and he doesn't want to make a scene.

TOM

Biology. Geometry.

BILLY

Put them back.

Tom pulls out an instrument case. Opens it. It's a flute.

TOM
Figures.

BILLY
Fuck off.

Tom pulls out note cards bound with a rubber band. Shows them to Billy.

BILLY
Debate.

TOM
Write for the newspaper?

Billy stares at Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)
Class play?

Billy stares at Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)
Student Council?

Billy stares at Tom.

TOM (CONT'D)
When do you have time to study?

BILLY
Classes are a joke.

TOM
Have a sport?

BILLY
Track. I suck.

TOM
Trying to run away from a lot.

BILLY
Two and a half years I'm getting
the fuck out of this hellhole.

Tom removes a sketchbook from bag.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Don't!

Tom pushes Billy's hands away and opens sketchbook.

TOM

You do these?

Tom is impressed by the sketches. He can't help but smile.

BILLY

Give it back.

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Fuck you.

TOM

How long you been doing this?

Billy shrugs.

TOM (CONT'D)

I like the swan.

We see the drawing of the swan. It's a pencil drawing that shows talent. It has a unique style that is sophisticated for someone Billy's age.

As the scene continues, the focus moves back and forth between the sketches, Billy, and Tom.

BILLY

Didn't get the head right.

TOM

Looks good to me. Who's this?

BILLY

Track coach.

TOM

He a good guy?

Billy nods. Tom holds up another sketch.

BILLY

Rhonda.

TOM

Girlfriend?

BILLY

Best friend.

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT.)
Fuck off.

TOM
What's this?

BILLY
Old house.

TOM
Grandmother?

BILLY
How'd you know?

TOM
Good guess.

Tom is obviously pleased by what he sees. He laughs.

BILLY
You're laughing at me.

TOM
No. I just can't believe...

BILLY
Stop looking at me like that.

TOM
You want to do this. I mean... For
real?

BILLY
Just scribbles.

TOM
It's more than that.

BILLY
What are you, some kind of art
critic?

TOM
Just a few lines. And you see...
How do you do that?

BILLY
Negative space. What's left blank
is just as important as what you
can see.

TOM
You make me do some of the work.

Tom turns the page and is struck by what he sees. It's the jock who was sitting on the rock and who held Billy's head still. Billy looks down and tries to pull the sketchpad away. Tom stops him.

TOM

Boy who took you into the woods?

Billy looks down.

BILLY

Kyle.

TOM

Pretty boy know about this?

Billy doesn't answer.

TOM (CONT'D)

That negative space you were talking about. A little dangerous when you don't get it right. Or maybe you had your reasons for getting it wrong.

Is that why you followed him into the brush?

QUICK FLASH

-- Tom's memory of watching from a distance as Kyle leads Billy to the clearing in the woods.

TOM (V.O.)

Why you let him tie your hands.

-- Tom's view of Billy and Kyle joking around. Kyle is tying Billy's wrists together with a red scarf. Billy is laughing. He thinks it's a joke.

TOM (V.O.)

You thought it was just fun and games. Was he a good fuck? Before tonight?

-- We hear voices from the other part of the woods. They are approaching. Billy looks concerned. Kyle pretends not to notice.

TOM (V.O.)

Why'd he call in his boys? You like gang bangs.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY
Did it look like it?

TOM
His boys find out?

BILLY
He tried to stop them.

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Shut up.

TOM
I heard him all right

QUICK FLASH

-- Kyle's face.

TOM
Go easy on him.

KYLE
Go easy on him.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY
They made him do it.

TOM
(He scoffs:)
He take your cherry?

BILLY
You disappointed?

TOM
What the fuck...?

BILLY
I've seen you. The past couple of
days. Piece-of-shit green truck.
A few blocks from school. That's
you. Right?

QUICK FLASH

-- Billy walking by truck. Tom is in driver seat pretending to read the paper.

BILLY (V.O.)
Real subtle. Same routine after class.

-- Billy spotting the truck in the DQ parking lot.

BILLY (V.O.)
What happen on Thursday?

BACK TO SCENE.

BILLY
You score an eighth grader or something? Why me? Something about me that you can just smell?

TOM
You think that's why...?

BILLY
What else could it be?

TOM
Why didn't you call the cops if that's what you thought? Why not call them now?

Tom puts his flip phone on the table.

TOM (CONT'D)
Be my guest.

Billy does not reach for the phone.

TOM (CONT'D)
I tell you what.

Tom throws some bills on the table.

TOM (CONT'D)
Here. Should cover the meal and a nice tip. Good luck walking back home in the dark. Maybe those guys are still hanging around. You gonna take the shortcut through the woods?

Tom gets up to leave. Billy grabs his arm to stop him.

TOM (CONT'D)

I rescue your ass. I put my neck out for you. Take all five of those punks on and what do I get? This pedo... perv shit? What do you think would be happening right now if I hadn't come along? You'd be bleeding into your soiled boxers as you limped home. You want to call the police, go on. No skin off my ass. Go ahead. Call.

Billy takes the phone. He pauses.

TOM (CONT'D)

Did I come up to you? Did I make you do anything? I saved your little white ass. They should give me a goddam medal.

Billy puts the phone back down on the table.

BILLY

Nice phone. Buttons. Flip. Special.

Tom laughs.

TOM

You think I wanted to hurt you? If that's what you think, why are you sitting there right now?

BILLY

I'm not done with my burger.

Tom laughs. Billy picks up his burger and takes another bite.

TOM

How is it?

BILLY

Sucks.

TOM

Fries?

BILLY

Want some?

TOM

I'm good.

Billy sucks on the straw. The shake is gone and the straw makes a sucking sound. Billy keeps sucking trying to get every last drop. Tom laughs.

BILLY

What?

TOM

Want me to get you another one?

Tom looks around. He sees waitress at the counter flirting with a trucker.

BILLY

I'm good.

TOM

How's the eye?

BILLY

Hurts.

Tom takes ice out of his water glass and wraps a napkin around it. He places it on side of Billy's face. BILLY takes over holding the napkin.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Thanks.

TOM

You didn't grow up here, did you?

BILLY

What makes you think that?

Tom shrugs.

TOM

Where you grow up?

BILLY

Someplace you never heard of.

TOM

Miss the old place?

BILLY

Yeah. Grandparents mostly. My friends.

TOM

No dad?

BILLY

Everybody's got a dad. Some people just don't know who he is.

TOM

You never asked?

BILLY

You want to see her go over the edge, just ask. He must have been a real asshole.

TOM

Maybe he had his reasons.

BILLY

I'm sure they were good.

Tom drinks the rest of his coffee.

TOM

So... a few years back you and your mom just took off?

BILLY

She got something in the mail and totally freaked.

QUICK FLASH

-- Theresa looking panicked as she reads an official-looking letter.

TOM (V.O.)

What was it?

BILLY (V.O.)

Fuck should I know.

-- An upset Theresa talking to Billy's grandmother.

BILLY (V.O.)

I heard her talking to Gran. It was like an explosion.

-- Billy looking out of the window of an overpacked car as it backs out of his former home's driveway and heads down the street. He sees his grandmother standing on the stoop, crying.

BILLY (V.O.)

Within two days we were packed and barreling down the highway to god knows where. She wouldn't let me say goodbye to my friends.

BACK TO SCENE.

BILLY

I'm not even supposed to talk to them.

TOM

She must have had her reasons.

BILLY

She's keeping them to herself.

TOM

Why here?

BILLY

She liked the church.

TOM

Good a reason as any.

BILLY

This place is a shithole.

TOM

Seen worse.

BILLY

It's like a prison. You know what that's like?

TOM

Yeah.

BILLY

You do?

(TOM doesn't answer.)

BILLY (CONT'D)

So I was right. God. Prison.

TOM

I made a mistake.

BILLY

Hard to give up, huh?

TOM
That's behind me.

BILLY
Which one are you?

TOM
What do you mean?

BILLY
Bill? Mike? Pete? You one of the
assholes who didn't show at the
park? Lose your nerve?

TOM
I'm not one of those.

BILLY
Did Scotty tell you about me?
Tell him to stick with his wife
and three kids and leave me alone.

TOM
You meet these guys online?

Billy doesn't respond.

TOM (CONT'D)
They know you're under age?

BILLY
I'm 15. It's my body. I should be
able to do whatever I want with
it.

TOM
You feel good about what you do
online?

BILLY
What am I supposed to do?

Tom takes sugar canister and pours sugar over the table
top.

BILLY (CONT'D)
What the hell?

TOM
You gotta draw the line. Someone
comes after you. Wants something
from you, you don't want to
give... You draw the line.

Tom uses his finger to draw a line through the pile of sugar.

BILLY

And if he doesn't give a shit?

TOM

You fight for that line with everything you've got. Some ass want you to think the same way he does and you don't see eye-to-eye... draw another line.

Tom draws another line at a right angle to the first.

TOM (CONT'D)

He wants you to say something you don't want to say... another line.

Tom draws a third line at a right angle to the second.

TOM (CONT'D)

He wants you to do something you don't want to do... another one.

Tom draws a fourth line and completes the square.

TOM (CONT'D)

And you hold them. Because inside those lines... that's you. Who you are. You are a boy now. But you draw those lines... Hold them... First step to being a Tom.

BILLY

(Ironically:)

I was wondering how that works.

TOM

You need some friends who are boys.

BILLY

They don't like me.

TOM

You're afraid of them.

BILLY

Duh.

TOM

There's got to be some guys you can...

BILLY

At this school there're three kinds of guys: jocks, tools, and a bunch of white guys in hoodies and pants so low their asses hang out. The jocks call them Wiggers. Have you listened to any of them?

Billy does an accurate, but comic impressions of them. Tom gets a kick out of it. The waitress and the truck driver notice and stop their conversation to observe from from a distance.

BILLY (CONT'D)

(Using a "bro" voice: `)

Bro... Dude... Chill, dude. I'm chilling, bro. Want some weed? You chilling, dude? Let's chill. Epic fail on the chill, dude. Get chill, bro. Bitching chill. Awesome weed. Are we chill, dude, or are we chill?

(Billy stops the impression:)

Even the smart ones. Because you either gotta be tough, act tough or sound stupid.

TOM

You got to figure out a way...

BILLY

They don't like me.

TOM

What do you give them to like? You have a lot more than you think.

Waitress comes over.

WAITRESS

You done here?

TOM

We're good.

Waitress calculates the total and slaps the bill on the table. She goes back behind the counter to her trucker.

TOM

Why did those boys call you Billy?

Billy looks at Tom blankly.

TOM (CONT'D)
Hold still, Billy Billy. You'll
like it! Why they call you Billy?

BILLY
It's my name.

TOM
No, it's not.

BILLY
What makes you think so?

Tom points to the signature on the cover of the
sketchbook.

TOM
Christian.

BILLY
It's my pseudonym. Do you know
what that is?

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)
A lot of artists have them.

TOM
Why you choose Christian?

BILLY
None of your business.

TOM
Okay.

BILLY
What's **your** name?

Tom doesn't answer.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Yah. I didn't think you'd tell.
What are you afraid of?

Tom doesn't answer.

BILLY (CONT'D)
I think I know.

Billy slides out of the booth and grabs his backpack.

TOM
Where you going?

BILLY
The bathroom.

Tom stops him by grabbing the backpack.

TOM
Taking your stuff?

Billy stares at TOM.

TOM (CONT'D)
You afraid I'm going to rip you
off? Or are you thinking of
slipping out the back?

Stand off.

TOM (CONT'D)
Either way is fine. Don't worry
about dinner. It's on me. All you
have to do is say thank you.

BILLY
(He can't help but be
polite:)
Thanks.

TOM
You're welcome.

Billy walks past the counter - the waitress and trucker
are too engaged to notice. He turns and follows the sign
to to restrooms.

INT. BACK HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Billy walks past the rest rooms and exits the door.

EXT. PARKING LOT BEHIND DINER - CONTINUOUS

Billy kneels under the light over the back door and opens
his book bag.

INT. DINER BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Tom glances back to where Billy exited.

Nothing.

He turns and picks up the bill. He looks at the figures and calculates the tip. He takes the bills he earlier threw on the table and picks up a few. He leaves a twenty, puts the rest in his wallet and returns it to his back pants pocket.

He looks around and gestures to the waitress to say he's paid the bill.

EXT. PARKING LOT BEHIND DINER - CONTINUOUS

Billy can't find something in his book bag. He opens a few of the pockets and searches. He is getting frantic.

INT. DINER BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Back in the Diner Tom looks to see if anyone is looking. No one is.

He takes a Ruger 9 mm semiautomatic pistol out of the pocket of his jacket. He removes the magazine and shoves the clip into his pants pocket. He returns the pistol to his jacket pocket.

He takes out a package of gum out of his jacket pocket. He removes a stick, unwraps it, pops it into his mouth, rolls the foil into a wad and drops it on the table. He returns the gum to his jacket pocket.

He chews.

EXT. PARKING LOT BEHIND DINER - CONTINUOUS

A distraught Billy lets out a growl, zips up all the book bag pockets, stands and slings it over his shoulder. He crosses back through the door and re-enters the back hallway of the diner.

INT. DINER BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Tom is about to get up and leave, when Billy quickly and with purpose crosses the length of the diner in front of the counter. When he gets to the booth, he searches the bench he was sitting on and underneath the table

Nothing.

He stands up and faces Tom.

BILLY
You take my phone?

TOM
No.

BILLY
Don't bullshit me.

TOM
I'm not.

BILLY
I need my phone.

TOM
We'll find it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN OF THERESA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Theresa uses a spatula to remove two sizzling cheeseburgers from a cast iron skillet and places them on hamburger buns she has arranged on two plates.

THERESA
(Calling out as
though to another
room.)
Billy?! Dinner is ready!

She places the plates on the kitchen table. She has tried to make the table look presentable with napkins and silverware. She has placed one of the burgers in front of her boyfriend, who sits slumped over as he texts. The other plate she places at spot on the other side of the table where the seat is empty.

THERESA
(To boyfriend:)
What's up?

BOYFRIEND
Arranging a little fun.

She's about to say something to stop him...

BOYFRIEND (CONT'D)
It's Friday, babe!

She gives up and sighs. She notices the empty spot at the table.

THERESA
(Calling out:)
Billy?!

No answer.

She crosses across the kitchen and opens the door to the basement.

THERESA
(Calling down the
stairs:)
Billy?!

No answer.

INT. BASEMENT STAIRCASE - CONTINUOUS

The basement light comes on and Theresa grabs the shaky handrail as she walks down the steps to the concrete floor.

INT. OUTSIDE THE DOOR TO BILLY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

In the gloomy light we see a handmade sign on the door to Billy's room that simply says "NO". Theresa's knocks on the door softly.

THERESA
(Softly:)
Billy? Dinner's ready.
Cheeseburger. Your favorite.

No answer.

She slowly opens the door. The room is dark.

THERESA
Billy?

She turns on the light. It looks like the bedroom of an artistically inclined gay boy who doesn't have a lot of resources to decorate, but who manages to use his creativity to make it look like more than a large utility closet in a basement.

There is no Billy.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CLEARING IN THE WOODS - CONTINUOUS

The clearing in the woods where Billy was attacked. There is a full moon that reveals the shapes the trees and boulders that surround the clearing. The sounds of crickets, small animals, and the calls of birds that hunt at night can be heard.

The rays of two flashlights scan and cross as they enter the clearing. The moonlight reveals that they are held by Billy and Tom. Tom holds an old rusty chrome flashlight. Billy's is orange, square, and plastic and he holds it by its handle

TOM

You sure you had it before you followed him into the woods?

Billy doesn't respond. He seems a little nervous.

Tom searches by shining his flashlight on the ground and kicking the leaves out of the way. Billy is preoccupied by shining his light at the trees and the boulders. He remembers what had happened in the woods an hour before and is afraid the jocks are still there.

BILLY

Call my phone.

TOM

No.

BILLY

510 - 632...

TOM

I'm not calling your phone.

BILLY

Why?

TOM

You're a smart boy. Figure it out.

They search.

TOM (CONT'D)

It should be somewhere near here.

BILLY

How can you tell?

Tom picks up the red scarf. He shows it to Billy, who takes it and tries to rip it. He's not strong enough.

He wads it up and is about to throw it into the woods, but stops. He folds it carefully and puts it into his backpack. He sees that the Tom has watched him do this. He goes back to searching though the leaves on the ground. This triggers a memory.

QUICK FLASH

- Kyle holding Billy in place. Billy, his hands tied with the red scarf, looks up into Kyle's eyes in a panic.

KYLE

Relax and it will be over quick.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

You know the guys hiding behind the evergreens?

Billy shakes his head.

TOM (CONT'D)

They on one of his teams?

BILLY

He's not like them.

QUICK FLASH

- Kyle calling out to his boys.

KYLE

Try it, guys... Fucking smooth lay.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

He was tonight.

BILLY

That's not him.

TOM

How you figure?

BILLY

Last summer at Boy Scout camp. He was nice to me.

TOM
You are a boy scout?

BILLY
Shut up.

Billy gives up searching and sits on a log.

BILLY
We're not going to find it.

TOM
I'll look. You tell me about your
boy scout.

BILLY
The older guys formed a club. The
Boner Brigade.

QUICK FLASH

-- Billy's story plays out the way he describes it.

BILLY (V.O.)
They'd sneak into our tents at
night. While we were sleeping.

-- Some of the boys wake up, but the older scouts
overpower them.

BILLY (V.O.)
Hold us down and pull our shorts
off. Smear shaving cream on our...
on us... and threaten to shave us
because we didn't deserve to have
hair.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM
Where were the adults?

BILLY
Up on the hill in their own tent.

TOM
You say something?

BILLY
They laughed and said it was part
of growing up.

TOM

What did your boyfriend say?

BILLY

He's not my... That it was no big deal. Just initiation.

Billy remembers more.

They made a flag.

He can't go on.

TOM

Go on.

BILLY

Why do you care? Who the fuck are you?

TOM

Someone who will listen to this story. Anyone else do that for you?

BILLY

One asshole.

QUICK FLASH

- Keith Anderson enters Billy's memory. He is an older scout who has an athletic build.

He wears his scout uniform as he parades around in front of his pals...

BILLY (V.O.)

Keith Anderson...

Anderson's cock is pulled out of his open fly.

He used to walk around with his dick hanging out.

As Anderson walks he bats his large plumped-up cock back and forth with his hands. He is obviously proud of his package. His pals get a kick out of it.

TOM (V.O.)

He must have thought he really had something there.

KEITH ANDERSON

What you looking at, pecker peeper?

TOM (V.O.)

Classy guy.

- the boner brigade gather in the clearing where the troop's tents are clustered. They are attaching a flag to the rough-hewn flag pole a short distance from the smoking camp fire. One of the boys holds the flag out. Stitched on it is the outline of a large erect penis.

BILLY (V.O.)

They made a flag. When they ran it up the flag pole, it was a sign for all his buddies to go into their tent and...

- the boner brigade enters the tent in high spirits, clapping each other on the back. Billy watches from a distance.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy's eyes are closed. He opens them and glances over to Tom, who has stopped searching and is looking at Billy with concern.

TOM

Go on.

BILLY

We were on a canoe trip. Across the lake from camp. Overnight. No tents. Just our sleeping bags and cheesecloth to keep the bugs from biting your face.

QUICK FLASH

- Billy in his sleeping back on his back.

BILLY (V.O.)

I woke up. Middle of the night. I thought it was raining.

- Billy wipes his eyes as ejaculate hits his face.

BILLY (V.O.)

Four of them. Standing over me. I was half-asleep and didn't know what the fuck.

- From Billy's perspective on the ground. Four scouts in their underwear in a circle as they tuck their cocks back into their tighty whities and run off into the woods, whooping it up.

BILLY (V.O.)

The next morning I came to the fire for breakfast.

- Billy's hair is disheveled and he has dried cum on his face. The boys who have gathered around the fire look at him and burst into laughter.

BILLY (V.O.)

Funniest thing they'd ever seen. I didn't know why until Kyle came over and told me I needed to wash up.

- Kyle leads Billy to the lake and hands him a facecloth.

BILLY (V.O.)

We went down to the lake and he helped me wash it off.

- Kyle and Billy take their packs to a canoe and push off into the lake. They begin to paddle.

BILLY (V.O.)

Kyle and I decided to get the hell out of there, so we took a canoe and set out back to camp.

A thunderstorm blew up. The rain hit. Wind started to blow. Real hard.

- Huge storm clouds billow behind them as Kyle and Billy struggle to keep the canoe on course as they try to cross the lake.

BILLY (V.O.)

We couldn't keep up and it drove us to the far side of the lake. A point with a bunch of boulders.

- Lighting strikes as they bring the canoe ashore, tip it over and get under it.

BILLY (V.O.)

We hauled the canoe up the rocks,
tipped it over and took cover.
Then the lightening really
started. It was right on top of
us.

BACK TO SCENE

Tom has seen something shiny under the leaves. The phone.
He picks it up and is about to show it to Billy. Billy is
in his own world telling his story. He reconsiders and
puts the phone in his pocket instead.

BILLY

But I didn't panic. I was brave.
And Kyle saw that. He saw that I
was an okay guy. Not just some
retard. I was an okay guy. It blew
all night. Really came down a few
times. But with the rain slickers
Kyle staked down over the canoe we
stayed warm and dry. And the next
morning... when it cleared... we
hid the canoe and grabbed our
packs and took off. Because we
both had had enough of their shit.
We had had enough and we took off.

TOM

They didn't come looking for you?

BILLY

We were always one step ahead.

TOM

Huh.

BILLY

For three days. Me and Kyle

TOM

Must have gotten hungry.

BILLY

We ate berries and fish and...
stuff we found.

TOM

Merit badges came in handy.

BILLY

Swimming in the afternoon. Laying on the boulders on the shore under the sun. Talking. Stuff we never told anyone else. He doesn't have it so easy.

TOM

Who does?

BILLY

But in the woods... No one watching or giving us shit. Doing whatever we wanted for once. We were brave and strong and free.

TOM

Wild boys.

BILLY

On the last day we walked back into camp to get on the bus. Everyone just stared at us.

Billy flips the bird to a group of imaginary boy scouts.

TOM

So... Kyle is your buddy?

Billy nods.

TOM (CONT'D)

Maybe I have him wrong.

BILLY

You do.

TOM

Maybe there was a reason for tonight. Maybe something you're forgetting to tell.

BILLY

Why do you think he did it?

TOM

This wasn't your first time. With him here. Was it.

Billy can't look him in the eye.

TOM (CONT'D)

Was he gentle with you?

QUICK FLASH

- Kyle sits on the boulder in the woods. He has his arms wrapped around Billy. He kisses Billy's neck. Billy tilts his head back and they share a tender kiss. They part and smile at each other.

TOM (V.O.)

You know that's okay. What you did with him. If he treated you right.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY

Why did he do it then?

TOM

Did you say something to someone? Maybe fat girl? Tell her about him or the daddies in the park? She blab to her friends?

Billy shakes his head.

TOM (CONT'D)

Did someone see something they shouldn't have? That sketch you made?

QUICK FLASH

- Billy at his locker. He is showing Kyle the sketch he made of him. Kyle smiles and looks deeply into Billy's eyes.

TOM (V.O.)

A look you gave him?

- As they walk down the hallway like they own the school, Kyle's bros see Billy and Kyle as they share this moment.

KEITH ANDERSON

What the fuck?!!!

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

Maybe he brought you here to cover his ass... teach you a lesson. Stop giving him the moon eyes because it didn't mean shit.

BILLY

It wasn't just me. It was him too.
It meant something.

TOM

Something so big and powerful...
The thing he was afraid of the
most. That he had to kill. He tied
you up... spread his jacket and
put you down like it was before an
altar.

BILLY

He's not like them.

TOM

99% of the world is made up of
assholes and losers. All that
bullshit you hear every day.
About everyone being special.
Yeah. They're special. They're
assholes and losers in their own
special way.

BILLY

He's a good guy.

TOM

You are the 1%, Christian.

BILLY

Billy!

TOM

You got more in your little
pinky... Those boys hiding behind
the evergreens know it. And you
being something they think they
should be better than drives them
nuts. Do they have to be that way?
Fuck no. They could learn. If
someone was there they could look
up to. But who? Those scout
leaders who let that shit go down?
We got a bunch of boys running
around. Hell, they could be 40
years old and still be boys. Lost
little dipshits. Because we've
spent so much on everyone else.
Making amends for centuries of
shit... We've left them behind.
Ignored what they need.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

That's why when you nick them, peel back their skin and look at the layers inside... fear... rage... resentment... under so much pressure it's almost impossible to tamp down. Maybe not so much for gentle boys like you. But it's there. Like a pressure cooker full of nails. Alone you are a worthless pile of shit, but you find a few buddies... pals just like you who have an axe to grind... All it takes is a push in the wrong direction... And that primal thing that goes back to the first time the first man got hungry. The first time he stood on two feet to see over the long grass. The first time he was charged by a thing with sharper teeth than his own. The first time he saw something shiny in another man's hand. Something pure and beautiful that he didn't have. The first time he picked up a sharp stone and raised it over his head. That thing comes out and it's more real than anything you feel under the sun. The scent of something wild. The cry of the vulnerable. And you are on the hunt. The chase begins and you are off. Until you overtake it. Bring it down. Run your blade through its flesh. And the rest go in for the kill. That thing is in every man... That thing you need to learn to control. You saw that here tonight.

BILLY

I didn't see that in his eyes.

TOM

What did you see?

BILLY

He was scared.

TOM

That's not what I saw.

BILLY

Fuck what you saw. You don't know what he's done for me. All your stupid caveman bullshit? Where the fuck did you get you get that?

TOM

If he came up to you on Monday. At school. Took you aside and apologized...

BILLY

...He will.

TOM

And he'll mean it?

BILLY

He'll mean it.

TOM

You would forgive him?

BILLY

Yes.

TOM

After what he did to you here tonight.

BILLY

I would forgive him.

This makes Tom pause. Billy's words have moved him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Why are you staring at me like that?

TOM

Let's go.

BILLY

My phone.

TOM

We can come back tomorrow when it's light.

BILLY

We?

TOM

I'll give you a ride home.

BILLY

I'll walk.

TOM

Then I'll follow you on the road.

BILLY

No you won't.

TOM

Those boys. Know where they ran off to? Maybe they're afraid you may talk. They know where you live, right?

Billy considers.

TOM (CONT'D)

Get in the truck. You've done it before. Gotten into stranger's cars. Those men you met online. In the park.

BILLY

I'm not going to suck your dick.

TOM

If I had wanted that, I would have joined the boys tonight, now wouldn't I?

BILLY

You won't touch me?

TOM

I promise.

BILLY

Take me straight home?

TOM

Come on, son. You've had a tough night. Let me take you home.

Billy turns and begins to walk back down the path through the wood. Tom pauses and looks off into the distance. He closes his eyes and remembers.

QUICK FLASH

- Images of flashing, unfocused figures - men - as they go back and forth grabbing something - or someone - that is frail and weak. Men's indistinct but gleeful shouting.

Flashes of violent pushing and grasping. A higher-pitched voice yells out. Laughter. Heavy breathing fills the space in Tom's mind.

BACK TO SCENE

It is Tom's heavy breathing. He opens his eyes and slows his breathing down. He sees that Billy has stopped a short distance away and is staring at him. Billy doesn't know what to make of what he has just seen Tom go through.

BILLY

You coming?

TOM

Yeah. I'm coming.

Tom crosses past Billy. Billy follows him out of the clearing. Into the woods. Back towards the truck. The beams of their flashlights fade into the blackness of night.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. KITCHEN OF THERESA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Theresa is about to dump the cheeseburger she had made for Billy into the garbage, but she reconsiders and places the plate back on the counter and removes a plastic container from the cupboard.

She picks up her phone and presses the Messages button. She chooses Billy and texts "Where r you? Rhondas? U coming home tonight?" She waits for a moment and looks at the screen. Nothing.

She looks out the window and sees her boyfriend pouring gasoline from a gas can over a bunch of logs he has stacked in a fire pit. He steps back and puts the gas can to the side. He lights a match and throws it on the wood. It starts instantly with a whoooooosh. He howls with excitement. He sits down on one of the lawn chairs facing the fire and lights up a glass pipe. He takes a hit of whatever he is smoking tonight.

Theresa sighs. Then she notices the half-empty bottle of Southern Comfort that sits on the kitchen table. She resists picking it up. She places the burger in the plastic container, puts the top on it, and places it in the refrigerator.

She checks her messages again. Nothing.

She looks at the half-empty bottle of Southern Comfort.

She looks outside to the blazing fire. Her boyfriend has turned on a portable boom box and is playing red-neck, southern-fried rock. Loud.

Theresa sees two men wearing flannel shirts and dirty jeans walk into the light cast by the fire pit. They high five the boyfriend.

She looks at the bottle.

Then back to the fire pit and the men.

Then back at the bottle.

She picks it up, unscrews the cap, and takes a swig. She closes her eyes. She feels the warmth of the alcohol.

EXT. COUNTY ROAD THAT RUNS BY BILLY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Headlights of the driving down the road. It slows down and pulls up a short distance from a ranch house that has seen better days. There are a few beaten up cars in the drive way. The driveway curves as it approaches the road. From where the truck has stopped the side and back yard of the house can be seen. Theresa's boyfriend and his bros are standing around the fire. Drinking beer, smoking from the pipe, and listening to the boom box. There is an open mailbox on a pole not too far from where the driveway meets the road.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Tom eases down on the brake. The car stops well short of the driveway. He grinds the gear into park and turns off the lights. There is enough ambient light from the moon to see Billy and Tom in the front bench seat.

BILLY

Why you stopping? The driveway's...

TOM

You can walk from here.

BILLY

You don't want to be seen with me.
Big brave guy.

Tom and Billy hear the commotion coming from the fire pit and look in that direction.

EXT. FIRE PIT IN THE BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

Theresa walks out of the back door holding the bottle of Southern Comfort. There is less in the bottle than before. The men cheer her arrival.

TOM (V.O.)

Someone's getting their Friday on.

BILLY (V.O.)

Shit.

TOM (V.O.)

Doesn't look like mother's been missing you too bad tonight, son. Who are the men?

BILLY (V.O.)

Her latest and his pals.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

TOM

Not the kind you'd take home to meet grandma. Where'd she find him?

BILLY

Under a rock.

Man laughs. Billy slinks down in his seat.

TOM

What's up?

BILLY

They can see us.

TOM

They're already too wasted. This shitty old truck may as well be invisible. Doesn't look like booze. Or pot. She using?

Billy doesn't answer.

TOM (CONT'D)

Crack? Meth? Heroin?

Billy doesn't answer.

TOM (CONT'D)

How long will this go on?

BILLY
Till Sunday morning.

TOM
Then what?

BILLY
Mass.

TOM
Church? She can pull that off?

Billy nods.

TOM (CONT'D)
That's a talent. How long between parties?

BILLY
Not long enough.

TOM
Neighbors don't like it, I bet.

BILLY
It's not the best neighborhood.

They hear the sound a revved up hotrod barreling down the Road. They look as it careens into driveway and screeches to a stop.

EXT. FRONT YARD AND SIDE YARD - CONTINUOUS

Man gets out of the hotrod and ambles over around the side of the house to the back yard and the fire pit. He looks too slick in a sleazy way. The bros cheer when they see him. More high fives.

BILLY (V.O.)
They must have run out of stuff.

TOM (V.O.)
He's a charmer.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

TOM
You mother have a regular job?

BILLY
She has problems with punctuality.

TOM
She like this in your old town?

BILLY
Not so much.

TOM
Your Gran wouldn't let this
happen, I bet.

Billy gives Tom a suspicious look.

TOM (CONT'D)
Strong woman, your grandmother?

Billy nods.

BILLY
She'd disappear for a few days.
Then come back. Gran would make
her go to church. They'd be there
for hours.

TOM
When this happens, what do you do?

BILLY
Sneak in around the back. Hide in
my room.

TOM
The scum she brings home try to
get you to come along to the
party?

Billy doesn't answer. Tom frowns.

TOM (CONT'D)
You have a place you can stay?
Fat girl?

BILLY
Her name is Rhonda, asshole.

TOM
Can you crash there tonight?

BILLY
She's out of town with her
parents.

TOM
Anywhere else?

No response.

TOM (CONT'D)

No place?

BILLY

I don't have a lot of friends.
Okay?

There is the sound of shattering glass.

EXT. FRONT YARD AND SIDE YARD - CONTINUOUS

Theresa - still holding the bottle of Southern Comfort - is yelling at the bros as they throw their empty beer bottles into the fire pit. They share more hits from the pipe and Theresa's agitation and the men's laughter become more raucous. The party is escalating whether Teresa want it to or not.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Billy is starting to have a panic attack.

BILLY

Shit.

TOM

Easy now.

BILLY

Shit!

TOM

Easy.

BILLY

Shit!

TOM

Come on, son.

Billy is hyperventilating.

BILLY

Assholes!

TOM

Calm down.

BILLY

Fuck!

TOM

Easy now. You can do it. Like at Camp. On the lake.

BILLY

That night when the storm hit and Kyle and I... Under the canoe. When the lightning hit. I wasn't an okay guy. I wasn't brave and strong. I panicked. They found us. The next day. And took us back to camp. We didn't run and hide. I lied.

TOM

You're going to be okay.

BILLY

I cried all night. Like a baby.

TOM

You can stay with me tonight. I'll bring you back when things calm down.

BILLY

Great. This worked out just great for you, didn't it? Your lucky day. I tell you what. Why don't we just get things started.

TOM

... Billy...

BILLY

... Whip it out and I'll go down on you right now. Then you can take me back to your place, do me and take trophy shots. Hey, guys, look at the twink I nailed tonight!

TOM

Like I said...

BILLY

... If you're lucky I won't go to the cops and you won't end up back in the slammer...

TOM

... if that's what I wanted, I would have...

BILLY

... How do you want me? On my knees?

TOM

Knock it off.

BILLY

I'm tired of this shit. Look at this place. It's like she's running away from something.

TOM

Maybe she thinks she's protecting you.

BILLY

Why does she have to be so fucked up?

TOM

Maybe this whole thing is her way of dealing with it.

BILLY

Are you nuts?

TOM

She has her reasons.

BILLY

What are they?

Tom doesn't answer.

BILLY

Who the fuck are you? Why the fuck have you been following me? What the hell do you know about any of this?

TOM

What do I know?

Tom makes a decision.

TOM (CONT'D)

That your real name is Christian. You were born in St. Joseph's hospital at 8:34 in the morning of February 3. You weighed 6 pounds 4 ounces. Your grandmother's name is Gertrude, people call her Gertie.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

You and your mother lived with your grandparents - the rooms above the garage in the back - at 234 Boyd Avenue. You attended Our Lady of Lourdes school. You moved out - probably in the middle of the night - sometime in August two years ago and no one has heard from you since.

BILLY

Who the fuck are you?

TOM

Your father.
I'm your father.
I've waited 15 years to say that.
I'm your father.

EXT. EXTERIOR OF TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Billy exits the car and runs a short distance away. He's freaked out.

TOM

Christian.

BILLY

Don't come near me.

TOM

You have every reason to be upset.

BILLY

Stay away.

TOM

I didn't know how to... That's why I've been waiting... since I found you a last week... I've been trying to find a way, son.

BILLY

Don't call me that!

TOM

They wouldn't tell me where you were. I didn't even know if she kept you.

BILLY

You are not my father.

TOM

I wrote letters to you. Where the fuck was I supposed to send them?

BILLY

You're lying.

TOM

My parole hearings. Your grandmother showed up like clockwork to make sure I stayed exactly where I was... I'd ask about you and she'd tell me to rot in hell.

BILLY

Leave me alone.

TOM

But 12 years is 12 years and when it was over there was nothing she could do about it. Even if I had to stay 1,000 feet from you.

BILLY

You are not my father.

TOM

I am according to the DNA test.

BILLY

What did you do? Rob a bank? Beat the shit out of someone? Fuck! You were one of her dealers!

TOM

In some states, doesn't matter if you're only 18, you knock up a 15 year old, they put you away. Especially if the 15 year old has a bible-thumper for a mother. She got into your mom's head and turned something that was about love into something that was dirty and shameful and disgusting. It was your gran who convinced her it was rape. And who are the cops, and judge and jury going to believe? I was fucked!

BILLY

Fuck you.

TOM

One stupid mistake.

BILLY

Oh, is that what it was?

TOM

And I paid for it. With 12 years. And that should be it. Right? I did my time. Bullshit. I'm going to pay for it for the rest of my life. I'm on every fucking registry in every goddamned state in this union. You know how many neighborhoods I've been run out of? How many jobs I've lost?

BILLY

This is perfect.

TOM

What I did will stick with me till the day I die and there's nothing I can do about it.

BILLY

Hey everyone... my dad's a rapist!

TOM

Don't say that.

Tom reaches out to Billy.

BILLY

Don't touch me, perv!

TOM

I had to find you and make it right. I figured it was the only way I would ever have a chance to make something out of my shit life. I got out, the first thing I did was come looking.

BILLY

Yeah. I was first on your list.

TOM

I get out and your mother grabbed you and took off and your Gran covered the tracks.

BILLY

How did you find us?

TOM

Those friends back home you're not supposed to talk to? Guess she forgot to tell you not to text.

QUICK FLASH

- Muriel - a 15-year-old girl in a fast food uniform flashed through Billy's mind.

BILLY (V.O.)

Muriel?

TOM (V.O.)

It took me a while, but eventually she told me...

BILLY (V.O.)

You hurt her?

TOM (V.O.)

I would never hurt...

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY

Never. Right.

TOM

I don't do that.

BILLY

Then why did they throw you away?

TOM

I couldn't control myself. I made a mistake. If I could take it back, I would...

BILLY

If the stupid Catholic girl just hadn't gotten knocked up and told her mom. If she just had gotten an abortion on the sly. I was the fucking problem.

TOM

You are not the problem.

BILLY

You are not my father. I don't even know your name!

TOM

Tom Norman. You're last name is Norman.

BILLY

The fuck it is!

Billy rushes Tom and begins to punch him.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Your name is douchebag...

Billy continues to swing at Tom. Tom deflects the punches easily.

TOM

Christian...

BILLY

Go back to hell. No one wants you here.

Billy lands a flurry on punches to Tom's body. Tom overpowers him by turning him around and holding him tightly.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Get your fucking hands off me....

TOM

Easy now.

BILLY

Don't touch me!

TOM

Easy.

BILLY

You're lying.

TOM

Calm down.

BILLY

Lies. All lies.

TOM

It's the truth. Son. The Truth.

Billy gradually gives up. They fall to their knees. Tom continues to hold him tightly. Billy is crying. Tears are in Tom's eyes.

TOM (CONT'D)

I've waited for 15 years... every hour of every day thinking about you... if you were walking... were you talking... how tall where you getting... what sports you played... the color of your eyes... If you were happy. I wanted you to be happy so bad. That if I had to suffer, it was so that you could be happy. That's the deal I made. I've been waiting for so long. And now I'm here. You are my last chance. Whatever I have to do, I'll do it. Nothing will ever harm you again. I promise. I've got you, son.

Billy has calmed down. Tom combs his fingers through Billy's hair.

TOM (CONT'D)

You okay?

He nods. Tom looks off to the fire pit. The fire has died down a little and no one is there.

TOM (CONT'D)

Looks like they brought the party inside. Let's get out of here.

BILLY

Where?

TOM

I got a place you can stay til things settle down.

BILLY

And then?

TOM

I haven't gotten that far. Whatever works best for you. Okay?

Billy Nods.

TOM (CONT'D)

Get in the truck. I'll join you in a moment.

Billy is about to ask.

TOM (CONT'D)

Gotta take a piss.

Billy crosses to truck and gets into the passenger seat. He looks toward the house - away from where Tom has crossed toward the rusty mailbox. Tom pretends to unzip fly. Instead of fishing himself out, he removes Billy's phone from his pocket. He takes a napkin out of his pocket and wipes the phone down. He holds the phone with the napkin. He pretends to shake and tuck himself back into his jeans. As he crosses to the truck, he casually places the phone into the open mailbox.

Billy has not seen any of this.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Tom opens the door and sits in the driver's seat. He starts the truck up. Places it in gear.

TOM

Let's go.

EXT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Truck revs. Then pulls out and heads down the road. It goes about 500 feet before the truck's lights come on.

INT. THERESA'S KITCHEN - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Theresa sits at the table. Her bottle of Southern Comfort sits empty in front of her. She is obviously more than a little intoxicated. The bros are taking more hits from the glass pipe. She reaches into her pocket and removes her phone. She presses the message button. She clicks down on Billy's name. She notices he hasn't responded. She types "?????" and clicks send.

EXT. RUSTY MAILBOX - CONTINUOUS

The open mailbox lights up. Billy's phone screen has turned on and received the message alert from his mom.

EXT. TRUCK - 10 MINUTES LATER

The truck heads down the road. It appears to be traveling to a bright spot over the horizon. A town? A truck stop?

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Tom drives. Billy just sits there. Awkward silence. Billy turns on the radio. Static. He finds a channel, but it is barely audible. A woman is singing a pop ballad. He recognizes her voice. He relaxes a little.

TOM

You know her?

Billy gives Tom an incredulous look.

BILLY

You don't?

Tom shrugs.

BILLY (CONT'D)

She's on all the time. I mean...

The tune fades out. More static as Billy tries to find the station again. He gives up and turns the radio off.

BILLY (CONT'D)

God this truck is a piece of shit.
You pay money for it?

TOM

No.

BILLY

It's hot?

TOM

Friend gave it to me.

BILLY

Some friend.

TOM

All it had to do was get me here.

BILLY

You never heard of her. Not a
single song?

TOM

What's so special about her?

BILLY

It's not her... well, it is, but
it's more about what she sings.

TOM

Okay.

BILLY

She makes you feel... I can't explain it.

TOM

Try.

Tom notices Billy's florid gestures as he speaks.

BILLY

It's like what you want to hear when you're really down. When she sings, it's like that voice you hear inside and you feel it and you own it like it's yours. When I think of myself as strong and fearless, it's her voice I hear.

TOM

You gotta find your own voice.
(Pointing to Billy's chest:)

It's inside there. Don't be afraid of it. Let it come out. Are you gay?

Billy gives him an incredulous look.

TOM (CONT.)

Listen. You can fuck around with guys and old men in a park restroom and not be gay. Gay is a lot of other shit. Not just fun and games. You know - the whole thing. Are you gay?

Billy looks down.

TOM (CONT.)

Go ahead. Say it.

BILLY

(With difficulty:)
I'm gay.

TOM

Okay. First time you've ever said that? Out loud?

Billy nods

TOM (CONT.)

Good. Got that out of the way.
Won't be so hard to say it now.
Try it again.

BILLY

I'm gay.

TOM

Say it like a man.

BILLY

I'm GAY as shit!

TOM

Better. When you say it, don't cry
or act all ashamed. Say it like
it's no big deal and it won't be.
Why the trolls? Do they pay you?

BILLY

I'm not a whore.

TOM

Why not boys your own age?

BILLY

They take care of me.

TOM

For an hour. Before they head back
to their families. You don't have
to blow them to get that.

BILLY

It's the only thing I have to
give.

TOM

You have a lot more than that.

BILLY

How you know all this stuff? You
someone's bitch in prison?

TOM

A buddy inside. He made no big
deal of it and it wasn't. One more
thing. You can be gay without all
that fairy shit.

BILLY

You like making me feel bad about
myself?

TOM

You're just not drawing on the right stuff. Kinda like that woman on the radio. You don't need her and you don't need all those gestures.

BILLY

What?

Tom imitates Billy's gestures.

TOM

Why you do that?

BILLY

This?

Billy gestures with some ferocity.

TOM

You don't have to do that.

BILLY

I'm expressing myself.

TOM

There are a lot of ways you can get your point across. Why you do it that way?

BILLY

Because it feels good.

TOM

Find something that feels better.

BILLY

If only you were here before I got into all my bad faggot habits.

TOM

All I'm saying is you gotta make more male friends. Ones your own age. They'll help you feel not so afraid of being a man.

BILLY

What did you do to Muriel?

TOM

What do you mean?

BILLY
To make her tell you where I was?

TOM
I didn't make her do anything.

BILLY
You said...

TOM
She told me. Simple as that.

BILLY
(Imitating Tom's
voice in an
unflattering way:))
Hey, Muriel. I'm Chris's long
lost daddy just sprung from the
slammer. I want to see my kid.
You know where his crack-whore
mother's hiding him?

Tom laughs.

TOM
I was working as a night janitor
at the taco joint.

BILLY
She promised.

TOM
She didn't know what she was
telling me.

BILLY
What did you do to her?

QUICK FLASH

-- Tom's memory of working at the fast food joint. He wears a janitor uniform and carries a mop. Muriel is talking - a lot - and Tom is listening.

TOM (V.O.)
I listened. Jesus Christ, wind
that girl up and...

BILLY (V.O.)
...She's a talker.

TOM (V.O.)

I listened. Mostly about how much she misses her best friend.

BACK TO SCENE

BILLY

How'd you find her?

TOM

Took me two years. At your old school. Online. Your neighbors. Nothing. Then clear out of the blue. I got lucky. One night while I was cleaning the Fryolator something wound her up. She's a good kid. Eats too many of those chalupas...

BILLY

She has a glandular problem she can't control.

TOM

You mean her mouth.

They laugh.

TOM (CONT'D)

She's a good kid.

(Pause.)

So... What do you want me to call you? Billy? Christian? or something else?

BILLY

Billy.

TOM

Why that one?

BILLY

One I got to choose for myself.

TOM

You can call me Tom. But maybe someday soon - when you get to know me better - you can call me something else.

BILLY

Role play, huh? You old guys all like that shit.

Tom reaches into his shirt pocket, but doesn't find what he is looking for.

TOM

Could you get me a stick of gum
out of my coat pocket?

Billy reaches for the wadded-up jacket at his feet and rifles through the pockets. He pulls out the handgun.

BILLY

What the fuck?

TOM

Easy now.

BILLY

Jesus Christ!

He drops the gun on the floor of the truck.

TOM

Pick it up.

BILLY

No fucking way.

TOM

You afraid of it?

BILLY

No.

TOM

Then pick it up.

He doesn't.

TOM (CONT'D)

I got the clip in my pocket.

BILLY

What does that mean?

TOM

It's not loaded.

BILLY

Why do you have a gun?

TOM

You think I beat them off with
just my fists tonight?

BILLY

You shot them?

TOM

We were there after dinner. See
any bodies?

BILLY

What did you do?

QUICK FLASH

-- Tom confronts the group of jocks holding Billy down. He grabs Kyle forcefully and pulls him away from Billy. Billy falls back and scrambles to his feet. Tom punches Kyle in the face.

TOM

If you hadn't run off after I
popped pretty boy in the face,
you'd know.

-- Billy has managed to get the scarf around his wrists untied. He runs off as several of the jocks turn on Tom and the punches start to fly. Tom pulls the gun out of his pocket and brandishes it.

TOM (V.O.)

They didn't back down. I pulled
the gun and they ran like little
girls.

-- The jocks take off the opposite direction as Billy. Kyle, his eye bloody is the last to turn tail and run. Tom puts the gun back into his pocket and looks off to where Billy has run. He turns and runs back to his car.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

Ever hold a gun before?

BILLY

No

TOM

Go ahead. Won't bite.

Billy tentatively picks up the gun.

BILLY

Drawing those lines through the sugar must be a lot easier when you're packing heat.

TOM

Packing heat? Where you get that?

BILLY

TV.

Billy starts playing with the gun - pointing it, pretending to shoot, making gunshot sounds with his mouth, etc.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Who am I? I'm danger boy. And I gotta gun. I gotta gun. Look at me, bitch. I gotta gun. Run, baby. Go ahead.

Billy holds the gun out with both hands and tosses his head as though to fling long hair from his eyes.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Freeze, motherfucker!

Tom sees this and shakes his head.

BILLY (CONT'D)

What?

TOM

That must have felt real good. You don't even know when you're doing it. Do you?

This gets under Billy's skin. He begins to caress and lick the barrel of the gun.

BILLY

Oh, yeah. Yeah. Shoot for me, baby. Right in the face.

TOM

Knock it off.

BILLY

Isn't that what's it's all about? Some men have to pack heat and some men just pack.

TOM

What the hell is that supposed to mean?

BILLY

Now we know where you're packing.

TOM

Give it back.

He hands the gun over.

BILLY

You're not supposed to have that. Are you?

TOM

I'm not supposed to do a lot of things.

BILLY

Like what?

TOM

Get within 100 yards of you. Write to you. Talk to you.

BILLY

If you do?

TOM

One way ticket back inside.

BILLY

You need a kidney or something?

TOM

(laughing:)
You didn't want to meet your dear old dad?

BILLY

Dream come true.

TOM

It was. Last couple of years it was all I could think about. And when I got here and saw you. Trying to find it in all the wrong places. I knew there was a reason. They are not going to hurt you anymore. None of them.

Billy looks out the window and become concerned.

BILLY

Where are we going? Town is back there.

TOM

You think I'd risk hanging out in that town?

BILLY

Where are you taking me?

TOM

My place.

BILLY

Stop this shit-bag truck and let me out.

TOM

It's just up the road. Relax.

Silence as Tom drives on.

BILLY

How long were you inside?

TOM

11 years, 271 days and 9 hours.

BILLY

For knocking up a 15 year old?

TOM

Paternity test had me by the balls. I had just turned 18 so they had to try me as an adult. Your Gran made sure they threw the book at me.

BILLY

But if my mother said it wasn't...

TOM

Your gran got into her head with all that Catholic shit. Got her to say all kinds of stuff. Like I forced her. It didn't have to go down that way, but it did.

BILLY

She should have gotten rid of me right away. Save all the hassle.

TOM

I just wish it hadn't happened the way it did.

BILLY

12 years? That makes you... 31... 32?

TOM

About that.

BILLY

You don't look it.

TOM

Younger?

BILLY

Older. A lot.

TOM

Living in a sardine can will do that to you. Put your head down.

BILLY

Why

TOM

Just do it.

Billy slouches down in his seat. Tom turns the wheel. Then slows the car down.

EXT. PARKING LOT OF THE HI HO MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

The truck comes to a stop in a space in front of a motel room of the Hi Ho Motel. The place has seen better days. There are a few cars in front of some of the rooms and light can be seen through the crinkled metal blinds. At the end of the line of rooms is a brightly lit office. Through the window we can see the figure of the night manager.

We see Billy's peeking through the bottom of the truck window.

BILLY

You're fucking kidding me.

QUICK FLASH

- Billy has a memory flash of him and his mother carrying suitcases from a car to a door of a room on the second floor in the same motel. It's early evening and they look tired from driving.

BACK TO SCENE

Tom gets out of the truck and crosses to the door and opens it with his key. He holds it open and stands in the space between the door and the truck in order to block as much of the view as possible from the motel office. Billy gets out of the truck quickly and crouches as he runs toward the room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy scurries into the room. Tom enters and closes the door.

TOM

Something tells me you've done that before.

BILLY

(Channeling Bette Davis:)

What a dump.

TOM

You just can't help it, can you?

BILLY

What?

TOM

It's not so bad.

BILLY

I know this place. It is.

TOM

Your daddies take you here?

BILLY

Shut up. We lived here till we found our place. No TV?

TOM

Cheaper without it and the phone.

Tom sits on one bed. Billy sits on the other.

Pause as neither know what to say or do next.

Tom crosses to ice bucket and crosses to the door.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE MOTEL - CONTINUOUS

Tom exits the room with the ice bucket. He looks both ways to make sure no one is there. He crosses down the half-covered walkway in front of the cars toward the ice machine.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy crosses to the books spilling out of the duffle bag on the floor. He opens one - a textbook - and pages through pages of equations and text. He picks up another and thumbs through it.

Tom returns with full ice bucket. He places it on the dresser and crosses into the bathroom.

BILLY

You read these?

TOM (O.S.)

Yep.

BILLY

For fun?

TOM (O.S.)

For school.

BILLY

You're in school?

TOM (O.S.)

College.

BILLY

Around here?

Tom returns carrying a wet washcloth.

TOM

Online.

BILLY

(Sarcastic:))
That's impressive.

TOM

Only ones who would take me.

He crosses to the ice bucket and removes a few cubes and wraps them in the wet cloth.

TOM (CONT'D)

When I was a kid... I got a full-ride. Engineering. They didn't hold it till I got out.

He kneels beside Billy and holds the ice-wrapped cloth to his face. Billy flinches, but he allows Tom to hold the cloth in place.

TOM (CONT'D)

Full ride. Not bad, huh?

BILLY

(Looking through a book:)

You understand this stuff?

TOM

It's science. Gotta make sense. Right?

BILLY

You can get an engineering degree online?

TOM

If I get these courses under my belt. I can show the real schools I'm serious.

Tom removes the cloth to look at Billy's black eye. Then he puts it back. Billy takes over holding it.

TOM (CONT'D)

Hot and cold. Without what happens when something goes from hot to cold and back, nothing works. No engines, machines, even weather. Hell it can't even rain. And this? Slows everything down so it doesn't swell so much. These figures and equations... that is the language you need to master it.

BILLY

Totally online.

TOM

Yep.

BILLY

No assholes poking you in the back, pushing you into your locker, asking for your notes so they can cheat.

TOM

A few instructors who are pricks, but you deal.

BILLY

All this just sitting in front of your computer?

TOM

Saving up for one. In the meantime, I find a library with one I can use. Till they run my name and kick me out. Then it's a new branch... new town.

Billy examines the second book.

BILLY

Looks hard.

TOM

You ever play pool? Then you know it and you don't even know it. Pretend your cue is this force. Harder you hit, the faster and further it goes. Cause, effect. Simple as that.

Billy pulls out a sheet of paper folded into the book.

TOM (CONT'D)

Got an A on that one. Library in town let me print it out. Bet you've seen plenty of those. Smart boy like you. Maybe you could help me study sometime. Do our homework together. I work nights down at the plant. So I have time in the evenings... when you get done with school... after band practice... track... debate... all the things you do. Think you'd like that?

A drop of water falls from the icepack and drops onto the test.

TOM (CONT'D)
What the...? You're going to
get...

The red A gets blurred.

TOM (CONT'D)
Shit.

Tom grabs the test from him. He is getting mad.

TOM (CONT'D)
Fuck.

BILLY
Sorry. Okay. I'm sorry!

Tom looks at Billy who is upset. He realizes he has lost control and he's ashamed.

TOM
It's okay. Hey. Nothing to worry
about.
(Laughing:)
What was I going to do, frame it?
Won't be the last one. Right?

Tom takes the icepack and crosses to where some cups are wrapped in plastic. He rips off the plastic and wraps it around the wet washcloth.

TOM (CONT'D)
My fault. No worries.

He crosses back to Billy.

TOM (CONT'D)
Let me see.

He holds Billy's chin.

TOM (CONT'D)
Beauty. Something to be proud of.

He places the plastic-wrapped pack on the side of Billy's face. He holds it there. Billy holds Tom's hand.

TOM (CONT'D)
I'll be damned. Looks like you got
stuck with the Norman nose.
(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

Spitting image of my granddaddy.
Where you got your brains too.

Tom laughs. Then musses up Billy's hair. Billy wrinkles his nose, but appears to like it.

BILLY

I'm not as smart as you think. I work hard. Because I have to. To get out of this town. And who gives a shit?

TOM

I know that feeling.

BILLY

It sucks.

TOM

First couple of months it was all about beating myself up for being such a dumb ass. For doing that to her. You start out as a jock with a good GPA and three schools that accept you under early submission. You're the golden statue on top of the wrestling trophy you won junior year. But that disappears and you eat yourself alive with regret until there is nothing left. You start turning into what everyone thinks you are. Prosecutors... witnesses... You get thrown into a tiger pit, how do you survive? Turn into a tiger. And that's what I was for a few years. No better than what they all thought I was. Till I saw the light.

BILLY

You find God or something?

TOM

My bunkmate. The one I was telling you about.

Tom gestures effeminately.

BILLY

Knock it off.

TOM

You wouldn't believe the shit they would say to him and he'd turn it around.

QUICK FLASH

- Prison setting with Tom's prison mate and a thug. Tom provides the voices for the action.

TOM (V.O.)

(Rough voice:)

Hey, cuddles, why don't you come here and suck my dick!

(Sassy voice:)

I wouldn't put my lips to that useless uncooked piece of Vienna wiener, if I were drowning and your balls were pumped full of air.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

(Normal voice:)

It was like poetry. And if they came back at him, he was there with a capper. You wouldn't take a pop at him because you knew if it started, it would be to the death. He took a shine to me.

Billy looks at Tom with a raised eyebrow.

TOM (CONT'D)

it wasn't like that.

QUICK FLASH

- Prison cell with Tom and bunkmate. They are both reading. But you can feel a supportive camaraderie between them.

TOM (V.O.)

He'd bring me books from the library and make me read them. Then we'd talk and it would be like the world in the books came alive right there in the 12 x 12 foot cell. Close your eyes and you'd be right there.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

By the time he got out I could do it by myself.

BILLY

Maybe we could visit him.

TOM

For a lot of guys serving time is easy. It's getting out that's hard.

QUICK FLASH

- Urban neighborhood at night. Tom's cellmate - dressed flamboyantly - is getting bashed by a bunch of thugs. We see his last moments of life as he bleeds to death in a gutter.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

He left me the truck. I found the gun in the glove box. Only friend I had left.

BILLY

Your mom... dad?

TOM

Some people start off not knowing their parents. Others lose them along the way.

BILLY

They die?

TOM

Forgiveness can be a difficult thing.

BILLY

What was she like?

TOM

Who?

Tom gets it.

BILLY

Back when you knew her.

TOM

Pretty... Not show-off pretty.
Like the hair and makeup and the
clothes. She was just beautiful
the way she was.

Tom pulls a photo out of his wallet. It is worn. He hands it to Billy who has never seen the photo before.

QUICK FLASH

-- Back in time to when Tom and Theresa were younger. Theresa is beautiful and a bit shy. Tom is trying to overcome his own awkwardness. You can tell their feelings for each other are strong by way they smile and blush when their eyes meet. Tom narrates the scene.

TOM (V.O.)

I took it out by the lake near the school. Girl like her, you go full steam ahead, she'll run. So I went easy. God she had a pretty smile. You can see it. I was a senior. She was a freshman. But when we talked it wasn't like that. We couldn't help but whisper.

-- Memory of meeting Billy's Gran at the door. She is formidable.

TOM (V.O.)

I'd come over after school. You'd think I was a rabid dog the way your Gran acted.

-- Theresa is sitting next to her mother in a pew in church. She turns and sees Tom a few rows behind. They smile at each other.

TOM (V.O.)

I even went to church. Just to see her.

-- They meet in the school cafeteria.

TOM (V.O.)

In the cafeteria I'd place my tray next to hers. First time I did that, shoulda seen her blush. I knew right away. Go slow.

-- Tom's buddies come up behind Tom and Theresa and they start to harangue them. They are very intimidating. Tom shields her from them.

TOM (V.O.)

Pay no attention to my buddies.
They tried to get into my head,
like your scouts getting into your
boyfriend's head.

-- More scenes of Tom's buddies teasing him and haranguing him. They are obviously jealous of Tom's romantic success.

TOM (V.O.)

Because they see something
beautiful that they can't have and
that brings it out.

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

But no matter what jackass thing
they said or did, I knew I had to
go slow.

Tom takes the photo back from Billy.

TOM (CONT'D)

If I could make her smile like
that again. I would walk up to
her.

QUICK FLASH

-- Tom's fantasy. He is the age he is now - dressed in better clothes - walking up to the front door of Billy's house. He knocks on the door. Change of perspective as we see the door open. He looks up nervously and smiles. He gives words to what we see Tom speak.

TOM (V.O.)

I'm sorry. It was my fault. I've
paid for it. With everything they
could throw at me.

-- Theresa looks at Tom with fear... then concern... then sympathy... and finally a sad smile.

TOM (V.O.)

And if I said it right, she'd know
that it was true.

(MORE)

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

And she'd see the 18-year-old boy
she fell in love with.

-- Theresa and Tom walking hand in hand next to the lake.

TOM (V.O.)

And all those bad years would be
erased and we could go back and
I'd be gentle... just hold her
hand... and we'd whisper and she'd
smile again.

BACK TO SCENE

Tom is still looking intently at the photo of Theresa.

TOM

Like the way she smiled for me
when I took this picture. And I'd
fix everything I had ruined.
That's why I came back.

BILLY

To fix it.

TOM

I fixed it tonight, didn't I?
Back there in the woods? I can fix
this too.

BILLY

How?

Tom has no words.

BILLY

You don't know. Do you?

TOM

Things have kinda taken a turn I
wasn't expecting. I was still
checking things out when your boy
scouts decided to play rough
tonight.

BILLY

Great.

TOM

I took a huge risk saving your
ass. I'll have to take you back
tomorrow.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

But you can't tell anyone I'm hanging around. You got that?

BILLY

No.

TOM

We gotta wait till you're 18 before I can see her again. I blow it, she'll take off with you sure as shit.

BILLY

Three years?

TOM

I can be like a regular dad. The ones who don't get custody. Work their asses off to keep their ex in the house and only see their kids two weekends a month. Only I won't be making any mortgage payments. Hell, I haven't been able to keep a job more than six weeks... janitor, roadwork, parking crew... doesn't matter. They run a check, I'm out on my ass. We could do it that way. On the down low. You sneak out when you can. Call when something gets fucked up like tonight. Only you can't tell anyone. You do and I'm back inside. For good this time.

BILLY

She'd forgive you.

TOM

How do you know that?

BILLY

You just have to mean it.

TOM

I do.

BILLY

Did you love her?

Tom nods.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Did she love you?

Tom nods.

BILLY (CONT'D)
You sorry about going too fast?

Tom nods.

BILLY
You got to tell her.

TOM
It's been a long time. I haven't
had anyone close like that... Not
since her.

BILLY
We'll practice. Like it's a play
or something. If you saw her
again, what would you say?

(Tom gets down on his knees.)

TOM
(Unconvincing:)
Forgive me! I beg you!

BILLY
That sucks.

TOM
What the fuck.

BILLY
It has to be real.

TOM
It is.

BILLY
We'll work on it.

TOM
You'd do that for me?

Billy nods. Tom chuckles.

BILLY
You just got to mean it. I'll help
you with the other stuff.

TOM
Flowers? Chocolate?

BILLY
 She's got to see it's from
 (pointing to his
 chest:)
 Here.

TOM
 You'll know when I'm ready?

BILLY
 (Joking:)
 Might take a couple of months.

TOM (CONT'D)
 We can start practicing tomorrow.

Billy nods.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Getting kind of late.
 (Gesturing to the
 bathroom:)
 You can use... if you need... the
 stuff in there...

BILLY
 I'm okay.

TOM
 Better than beneath a canoe.
 Right?

BILLY
 Barely.

TOM
 I'm gonna... Why don't you turn
 in? Big day tomorrow.

Tom exits into bathroom. He closes the door most of the way. We hear water running. Then the sound of him brushing his teeth.

Billy looks awkwardly around the room. He sees some clothes in a heap on the floor. He picks them up, folds them and puts them in the rickety dresser.

The water turns off. We hear Tom urinate into the toilet.

Billy picks up Tom's jacket from where it is draped over the chair at the desk. He crosses to a coat rack and hangs it up. He sees the outline of the gun in the pocket. He takes the gun out and stares at it.

He reaches into the pocket with his other hand and removes the bullet clip.

He has fun pretending to be "Danger Boy" with the gun.

Billy hears the toilet flush.

He quickly puts the gun and clip back into the jacket pocket.

Water runs again as Tom washes his hands and face.

Billy crosses to the center of room and Tom re-enters.

They look at each other, not knowing what to do.

TOM
(Pointing to the
closest bed:)
I'll take this one.

Billy shrugs. Tom takes off his shirt and throws it to the desk. He takes off his pants. Wearing only his boxers, he climbs into the bed. He reaches over and turns on the lamp that sits on the stand between the beds. He plugs his flip phone into the power source.

Billy tried not to stare as Tom took off his clothes and got in bed. But he couldn't help himself.

TOM (CONT'D)
Get the light?

Billy crosses to the switch by the door and turns it off. He crosses back to the other bed. He faces away from Tom and takes off his shirt. He is embarrassed by his body. He tries to fold the shirt, but it takes too long, so he rolls it into a ball and drops it on the floor. He takes off his pants and gets under the covers of his bed as quickly as he can. He pulls the bedspread up to his shoulders.

Beat of silence.

BILLY
Those books you read... in
prison... That worked?

TOM
Close your eyes. You'd be there.

BILLY
From a book?

TOM

Jail cell can make you pretty desperate.

BILLY

Where'd you go?

TOM

Anywhere the book lead. Japan. London. Tasmania. And not just now, but from long ago too. Once or twice even the future. Those were a trip. Hated reading before I got in. Funny how that works.

BILLY

What's your favorite place?

TOM

I don't know.

BILLY

The one that was best when you closed your eyes?

TOM

Alaska. Whole book of stories about what it was like... during the Gold Rush. Sled dogs and Eskimos and mining camps. Biggest mountain in North America.

BILLY

You been there for real?

TOM

I've been nowhere.

BILLY

Think it's pretty?

TOM

In a wild way.

BILLY

I'd like to go.

TOM

You would?

BILLY

Maybe we could go together?

TOM

(Laughing:)

You and me. Alaska?

BILLY

Once we get everything settled here. Prove to her that you're sorry. That you're a good guy. Might take a while, but I'll work on her. I'll tell her how you helped me tonight. Maybe with you around, she'll realize she doesn't have to be afraid anymore. Maybe you could chase the assholes away... so she can get straight again. You can come over for dinner and we can all watch TV and I'll go to my room and study so you can sit in the living room and whisper. Like you used to. I know she wants that. She just doesn't know how to get it. You'll get a better job down at the plant and trade your truck for a nice new car that we'll drive to church every Sunday.

TOM

Cheer you on at your track meets. Come see you debate. They let parents do that?

BILLY

If they want to be bored to death.

TOM

Your band concerts.

BILLY

And the guys at school will see me with you. And they will know that I'm a cool guy. Because I have a dad like you. And then, next summer. When I'm off school. We'll get into that new car. Just you and me. We'll get out of this butthole town and we'll drive. North. And west.

TOM

Through Whitehorse and the Yukon.

BILLY

We'll keep going.

TOM

Over the Richardson and on up to
Fairbanks.

Billy closes his eyes to see it.

QUICK FLASH

- Tom and Billy in a new pickup. They are driving down
the open road. They look happy. We see a variety of
landscapes outside the pick up windows.

BILLY (V.O.)

And it will be just you and me.

TOM (V.O.)

And nature. Everywhere you look.
None of the shit that ties you
down here. No courthouses, no
registry... no assholes trying to
get you to do the things you know
are wrong.

BILLY (V.O.)

A place where you are not afraid
to show who you are inside.

TOM (V.O.)

A place where you can start over.

- Tom and Billy are camped out in the wilderness. It's
night.

BILLY (V.O.)

And at night... A night so deep
and dark you can't see anything -
not even your hand right in front
of your face - until you look
up... into the night sky. And
there they will be... Every single
star in the Milky Way. The same
stars that were there back in the
time of the cavemen. We'll see the
same stars they saw then. When
they first started making up their
stories. To bide the time between
night and day. And we will look up
and we will be small.
Insignificant. Nothing. But it
won't be scary. Because we will be
a part of something. Huge.
Enormous. A part of everything.

(MORE)

BILLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Everything that you can see and
what you can't.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy is looking at the ceiling of the motel room.

BILLY

Just me and you. And we will be
brave and strong and free.

He looks over to Tom. Tom has fallen asleep.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Goodnight. Dad.

Billy turns the lamp off.

FADE TO BLACK.

LOCOMOTIVE TRAIN WHISTLE PASSING CLOSE

FADE IN:

EXT. BEHIND MOTEL - 2:15 AM

A freight train passes behind the Motel. It blows it's
whistle. SFX - Train whistle

INT. MOTEL ROOM - 2:15 AM

Lit from the ambient light from the neon motel sign
shining through the window, Tom wakes with a start from
the sound of the locomotive passing just inches away on
the other side of the wall. He is in bed. He looks down.

Billy has crawled into Tom's bed and is sleeping with his
head on Tom's chest.

Tom is shocked to find the sleeping Billy snuggled up
against him. But he decides not to disturb him or push
him off.

The sound of the train fades.

Tom puts his hand on Billy's head and smooths his hair
gently. He looks down at him. Smiles.

He kisses the boy's forehead. Then leans back and closes his eyes. He falls asleep with his son in his arms.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - 8:15 AM

The morning sun shines in through the blinds on the window. Tom is asleep in the bed. On his side.

Billy is dressed and sits on the desk chair a short distance way. He holds an art pencil and his sketch book. He sketches a close up of Tom as he sleeps. He seems to be inspired, because the sketch is one of his best.

Tom slowly wakes up. Billy closes the sketchbook, crosses to the other bed, and sits down. Tom rolls over and sits on the side of the bed.

Tom reaches out and playfully tousles Billy's hair. Billy likes it. So does Tom.

TOM

Like eggs? Waffles? Pancakes?

Billy shrugs noncommittally.

TOM (CONT'D)

Let's grab some breakfast before we head back to see if the party has wound down. Okay?

BILLY

We don't have to.

TOM

What?

BILLY

Go there.

TOM

The diner?

BILLY

The house.

TOM

Uhhh...

BILLY

Like you said last night.

TOM
We said a lot of things last
night.

BILLY
I meant everything I said.

TOM
So did I.

BILLY
So we don't have to go back. It
can be just you and me for a
while.

This brings Tom up short.

TOM
You'd like that? Say Fuck it and
hit the open road?

Billy nods.

TOM (CONT'D)
What about your mom?

BILLY
She won't care.

TOM
You're all she's got.

BILLY
I can send postcards so she won't
worry.

TOM
Just take off.

BILLY
Like you said last night.

TOM
(Laughing:)
Jesus!

BILLY
I could get my GED anywhere.

TOM
You are quite the something. You
know that?

BILLY

Any place would be better than
this shit hole.

TOM

One thing I know, you don't tie
things up, shitholes have a way
following you wherever you go.
Give me a few and we'll head
across the road have a coffee,
some bacon, a few eggs sunny side
up. Then we'll talk real talk.
None of this crazy-assed stuff.

Billy looks disappointed.

TOM (CONT'D)

Come on now. You gotta teach me
how to say what I need to say
first. Remember?

Tom crosses into the bathroom. We hear the shower curtain
opening and the water turning on.

He returns to the room and opens the dresser drawer and
sees the folded clothes.

TOM (CONT'D)

(Laughing:)
You're going to make someone a
nice little wife.

BILLY

You're a pig.

TOM

Maybe now, but I can learn.

BILLY

So can a pig.

Tom makes a loud pig squeal sound. This surprises Billy.
He chases Billy around the room grunting, snorting and
squealing like a pig. Billy laughs as he tries not to get
caught.

Tom catches him, picks him up and throws him to the bed.

He stands back and holds his arms up in victory.

TOM

King of the swine!

Billy laughs. Tom realizes he must look ridiculous. He laughs and grabs a shirt and a pair of pants and exits into the bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM OF MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tom closes the bathroom door. places the clothes on the sink. Takes off his t-shirt and boxers. He holds his hand out to test the temperature then steps in and closes the faded plastic curtain behind him. He hums or whistles as he showers.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy puts the sketchpad back in his book bag. He paces around the room. He goes to the window, opens the blinds and looks out. He turns around and sees Tom's flip phone on the nightstand between the beds.

He walks to the phone. He looks out the window. He looks at the phone.

He picks up the phone and disconnects it from its power source. He walks to the window with the phone in his hand. He turns and looks at the bathroom door.

Tom is still humming / whistling.

Billy smiles.

Billy decides.

He turns to the window, flips the phone open and dials a number.

He waits.

INT. THERESA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

RING of Theresa's mobile phone next to her bed. She reaches out from under the covers and repeatedly hits the top of her digital alarm clock (8:20am.) We see her face as she emerges from the covers. Her hangover makes her look like a train hit her. She figures it out and grabs the phone. She gets out of bed and stumbles a little as she heads through the door to the hallway. She doesn't want to wake her boyfriend - who is dead to the world on the other side of the bed.

When she gets into the hallway, she looks at the number, but doesn't recognize it.

She decides to answer anyway.

THERESA
Hello?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

BILLY
They gone?

THERESA
(Still out of it:)
Who is this?

BILLY
It's me.

THERESA
Who?

BILLY
Your son! Jesus, Mom. ...

THERESA
Whose phone are you using?

BILLY
A friend's. Are they gone? ...

She looks into the living room. There are three men passed out on the couch, chair, and floor.

THERESA
Uhhhhh...

BILLY
Shit.

She walks into the kitchen where she won't be heard. The kitchen looks like a bomb went off in it. This upsets her.

THERESA
You didn't come home last night?

BILLY
I did, but your party was taking off so I did too.

She tries to clean up the mess a little, but she doesn't know where to start.

THERESA
Where are you?

BILLY
A friend's place.

THERESA
Who?

BILLY
Tom.

THERESA
Do I know him?

BILLY
Yeah, you know him.

THERESA
Classmate?

BILLY
No. He's older. He helped me last
night. I could have been hurt real
bad. But he helped me, so I'm
fine.

THERESA
(Suddenly concerned:)
What... What... What happened?

BILLY
Why would you care?

THERESA
I care!

BILLY
Didn't look like it last night.

THERESA
Are you okay?

BILLY
I'm fine. Okay. I'm fine.

THERESA
You are such a little drama queen.
Why do you always do this to me?
When are you coming home?

BILLY
Not until they're gone.

Theresa enters the living room and nudges the bro on the floor with her foot. He doesn't move. She kicks him a little harder. He wakes with a start.

BRO #1
What the fuck, dude!

THERESA
(To the men:)
Party's over.

She kicks or nudges the two others to wake them. They are not happy.

THERESA
Everybody out!

BRO #2
Jesus fucking christ!

THERESA
Out! Now!

They stand and start getting their shit together. She goes back to the kitchen.

THERESA (CONT'D)
(Back into the
phone:)
Okay... Satisfied?

Billy decides to go there.

BILLY
Why didn't you tell me about him?

THERESA
Who?

BILLY
My dad.

THERESA
Because you don't have a dad.

BILLY
Everybody has a dad.

THERESA
He didn't act like it. He took
off. Like I told you.

BILLY
No, he didn't.

THERESA
And how would you know?

BILLY
Because he told me.

Theresa suddenly stops.

BILLY (CONT'D)
Tom.

Theresa stops breathing.

BILLY (CONT'D)
My dad.

Theresa begins to panic. She's too blown away by the news to speak.

BILLY (CONT'D)
I'm with him now. I could have been hurt real bad last night and he came and helped me. And he drove me home and was going to drop me off.

THERESA
(panicking:)
Where are you?!

BILLY
I just called to say that I'm fine and I'm not coming home. You got your druggies there so you don't need me.

THERESA
Where ARE YOU?!

BILLY
I'm not telling you.

THERESA
I'm calling the police!

BILLY
Yeah, they'll stop by and take your statement. With your dealer in the next room. That's funny, mom. Do you even listen to yourself?

THERESA
(Pleading:)
Billy come home!

Theresa's boyfriend enters the kitchen. He is hungover too. But he looks at her with concern. She waves him off and exits the kitchen door to be alone. He goes back to bed.

EXT. THERESA'S BACK YARD - CONTINUOUS

She crosses down the steps. We see the bros getting in their cars and driving away in the background.

BILLY

You need to be on your own for a while. Give you time to figure your shit out.

THERESA

What did he tell you?!

BILLY

You, Gran, prison, everything. He's been trying to apologize to you for 15 years, but Gran wouldn't let him. He came to find us to make it all better. My dad found me. And he saved me. Okay? I was in trouble and he saved me.

THERESA

What did he tell you?!!!

BILLY

You got pregnant, he was 18, you were too young, Gran freaked out and got inside your head and twisted it all around so they threw the book at him.

Theresa's knees give way and she collapses to the back steps. She sits there and begins to cry. Billy can hear her on the phone.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Why do you have to overreact to everything? It was a long time ago. You gotta get over it, Mom.

Theresa's crying has an impact on Billy.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Don't cry. You were right to like him. I do too. He wants to help us. He just doesn't know how yet.

THERESA

Come home, Billy! Please come home!!!

BILLY

Why? What the fuck is there for me there?

THERESA

What did he tell you?

BILLY

The whole story.

Theresa decides to finally tell Billy.

THERESA

Did he tell you about his gang?

QUICK FLASH

- Theresa's memory of a hot rod following her and Tom as walk down the sidewalk of a lane on the edge of a woods. We see Tom look nervously over his shoulder at the car. It pulls over and four guys in high spirits get out run up to them.

JOCKS

There's Tommy and his girl! St. Theresa! The virgin goddess of Holyoke high!

- Two of them grab Theresa and two grab Tom. They both protest but the taunts continue.

JOCKS

All that talk, but have you sealed the deal yet, Tommy boy?

THERESA (V.O.)

Did he tell you how they dragged me into the woods?

BILLY (V.O.)

No.

JOCKS

Tonight's your lucky night Tommy boy!

- She struggles and cries out as they drag and carry Theresa into the woods. Tom yells.

YOUNG TOM

Fuck off, assholes. Leave her
alone!

Tom tries to push the two jocks off, but they overpower
him and pull him along behind.

BILLY (V.O.)

How many?

THERESA (V.O.)

Did he tell you how they pulled my
dress off and held me down?

- They lay the struggling Theresa down over one of the
jocks's jackets that he has spread out over the forest
floor.

THERESA (V.O.)

How I kicked and screamed and
punched them and begged them to
let me go?

- They rip Theresa's panties off her. Two jocks hold her
down. The other two push Tom toward her.

JOCKS

Come on Tommy boy, give the cock
tease what she deserves!

- One of the jocks holds Tom and the other unbuckles his
belt and pulls his jeans down.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy is curled up on the floor in a corner of the motel
room.

QUICK FLASH

- Billy remembers his own assault in the woods. We see
the violent flashes of his memory

THERESA (V.O.)

He raped me. Did he tell you that?
Did that son of a bitch tell you
that!

BACK TO SCENE

She cries.

THERESA

He raped me and then they all just
took off.

QUICK FLASH

- The guys run back to the car. Tom pulls up his pants
looks completely freaked out. He can't bear to look at
Theresa. He runs in the opposite direction.

- With her face battered and bleeding and her clothes
torn, we see Theresa stumbling barefoot through the
woods.

THERESA (V.O.)

Left me there. To walk barefoot
all the way home. They found the
bastards at the basketball game.

She is overcome with tears and can not go on.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. MOTEL ROOM - MORNING

Billy looks shellshocked. He keeps looking at the
bathroom door. He can still hear Tom singing in the
shower.

BILLY

No... That's not... He didn't...
That wasn't him...

THERESA

Ask him about the DNA test!

BILLY

He said he loved you. That you
loved him. You whispered... It was
those other guys. They put him up
to it.

Billy wipes the tears from his eyes.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I don't believe you. Why should I?
You've lied to me my entire life.

THERESA

Where are you?!!

BILLY

I'm not going to tell you.

THERESA

Christian!!

BILLY

You'll ruin it. Like you ruin everything. Go back to your druggies and take another hit and forget I even called. Forget I ever existed, okay? Isn't that what you've always wanted? Now's your chance.

He flips the phone shut.

END INTERCUT PHONE CONVERSATION

EXT. BACK STOOP OF THERESA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Theresa clicks the screen on her phone to find the last incoming number and clicks to dial it back.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy is in shock. He wanders over to the sketch pad and looks at the drawing. He looks at the bathroom door.

The phone rings. He looks down at the number. He clicks the ignore button.

EXT. BACK STOOP OF THERESA'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Theresa gasps in frustration. She dials 911.

911 OPERATOR

Hello. What's your emergency?

THERESA

It's my son...

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy paces around the room. He doesn't know what to do. He looks at the sketch he has made of Tom.

He looks to the closed bathroom door. He hears the sink running.

INT. MOTEL ROOM BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tom is at the bathroom sink. He clears the condensation from the mirror and we see his face. He runs the water and smiles as he begins to shave.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The phone in Billy's hand rings again. He looks down at the number. It says "Clay County Sheriff's Office." His eyes get big. He doesn't know if he should answer it or not. He clicks the ignore button and flips the phone closed.

He slowly starts to panic.

He puts his pants on. Then his shirt.

The panic builds.

We hear the running bathroom sink turn off.

Billy places the phone on the bed and walks to the coat rack. He removes the gun from Tom's jacket pocket. He takes the clip out and tries to insert it into the handle.

It won't fit.

His hands are shaking.

He tries it again.

And again.

It finally slides into place.

He puts the gun in his back pocket and picks the phone up off the bed. He crosses to the middle of the room, stares at the bathroom door and waits.

The door opens and Tom enters, showered and wearing the shirt and pants he brought into the shower with him. He is in a good mood.

TOM

Ready?

Tom sees Billy's bare feet.

TOM (CONT'D)

Better put on some shoes if we're going to grab some chow. I'll even buy you a chocolate shake.

Tom sits on the bed and puts his socks on. He sees Billy just standing there.

TOM (CONT'D)

You still thinking about us taking off?

Tom puts his shoes on.

TOM (CONT'D)

I know it's fun to think about, but we can't let our imaginations get outa hand.

Tom looks up at Billy and gives a "what's up?" gesture.

BILLY

Did you lie to me?

TOM

We gotta figure things out here first, then we can talk about maybe taking a trip or two.

BILLY

Did you lie to me?

Tom looks at Billy. Time stops for a beat.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Did you rape her?

TOM

(Carefully:)
Yes. I raped her. I did time. Like I said.

BILLY

Not like you said.

TOM

Everything I told you was the truth.

BILLY

Your buddies? The four other guys?

TOM

Where did you...?

BILLY

... They held her down...

TOM
 ...Five minutes they'll be
 here...

BILLY
 ...In the woods...

TOM
 ...It wasn't supposed to happen
 that way. I loved her. I would
 never hurt her... They couldn't
 stand what we had...They jumped
 us...

QUICK FLASH

- Tom's memory of the woods. The jocks have Theresa
 stripped and on the ground. One of the jocks pulls Tom's
 jeans down. The other boys are molesting Theresa who is
 struggling to free herself. Tom mirrors some of the
 Jock's dialogue.

TOM (V.O.)
 ...They got into my head...

JOCKS
 Look, guys. She's wet for him.
 You got her wet, Tommy boy.
 Congratulations...

- They throw Tom on top of her and egg him on.

BILLY (V.O.)
 ...And she's such a Jesus freak...

JOCKS & TOM (V.O.)
 ...Stop being such a pussy,
 Tommy Boy...

BILLY (V.O.)
 ...she didn't have it
 scraped out...

JOCKS & TOM (V.O.)
 ...She's ready for you...

BILLY (V.O.)
 ...and flushed down a
 toilet ...

JOCKS
Seal the deal, limp
 dick. It's time to lose
 your cherry....

BILLY (V.O.)
 ...The stupid catholic girl
 kept it...

BACK TO SCENE

TOM
 (Imitating the
 jocks:)
 If you don't, one of us
 will....

BILLY

...But She kept me and now every time she looks at me, she sees you and she remembers that night...

TOM

(Imitating the jocks:)

...One of us real men...Let's flip for it, boys....

BILLY

...And you come here and you want me to call you daddy...?

QUICK FLASH

- Tom's memory of the woods. He's on top of Theresa... the jocks kicking at him and chanting "Seal the deal." One of the jocks has grabbed Tom's bare ass and started push down down on top of Theresa with repeated thrusts.

TOM (V.O.)

... From the second I was on top of her. I whispered it over and over.

- Close on Tom's and Theresa's faces... She has panic in her eyes. He is trying to comfort her by kissing her.

YOUNG TOM

I love you. I love you. I love you

TOM (V.O.)

I love you. I love you. I love you.

YOUNG TOM

Look at me. It's me.

JOCKS

If you don't take it, we will!

YOUNG TOM

Don't pay any attention to them. It's just you and me.

- One of the jocks kneels down next to Tom. He puts his hand on Tom's shoulder. Tom looks into his eyes. The jock resembles Kyle.

BRO

(Surprisingly calm and encouraging:)

Don't let us down, Tommy boy.

(MORE)

BRO (CONT'D)

You got this, bro. Time to join
the club.

- His words confuse Tom even more.

YOUNG TOM

(To Theresa:)

It's no big deal... you're going
to be fine... Okay... No big
deal... It happens to everyone.

BRO

(Calm, encouraging:)

That's it, bro. Sweet talk her.

JOCKS

(Chanting:)

Seal the deal! Seal the deal!

- Theresa is crying softly as Tom holds her tightly. He looks into her eyes. She looks into his. The Bro looks on encouragingly.

YOUNG TOM

Shhhh... Shhhh... Don't cry,
Terry. Pretend we're not here.
Pretend we are far away... by the
lake... Just you and me...
Do you love me? Tell me... Like
you did before. Tell me now...
Tell me now and I'll make it
better. Do you love me?

YOUNG THERESA

(Frightened, confused
and crying:)

I... I love you...

YOUNG TOM

That's it! And I love you too...
Do you feel it, Terry? Do you?
That's my love. Feels nice doesn't
it? That's my love... Let me show
you how... There... right there.
Feel it? That's how much I love
you... That's it, Terry. That's
it. Open up... Let me show you how
much I love you. Let's make love.

- Tom begins to thrust in to Theresa. She cries out. The jocks cheer.

- The cheering subsides. The jocks are in awe as they watch Tom thrusting into Theresa as she lies still.

YOUNG TOM

(Whispering:)

That's it, baby... Let it
happen... It's me... I got you...
I'm here... just let it happen.
Let's go there... someplace new...
Someplace beautiful... and full
love... Shhhhhhhhh...

BACK TO SCENE

TOM

If I didn't they would have.

BILLY

Fucking coward!

TOM

You know what happened, Billy.
You saw it last night.

BILLY

It's not the same.

TOM

Ask pretty boy. That night I was
just as scared as him.

BILLY

You raped her!!!

TOM

No one wants to believe that after
thousands of years that that
animal is still inside. You saw
it. It came out last night... same
as it came out 15 years ago. I
couldn't stop it then. But I know
how to draw the line now. Why
can't anyone believe me?

Tom is getting ready to leave. He stands up and throws
the duffel over his shoulder.

BILLY

Where are you going?

TOM

Far away as fast as I can.

Billy pulls the gun out from behind his back and points
it at Tom.

BILLY

No.

Tom laughs and begins to walk toward the door.

TOM

Baby, come on. That's cute but...
Give me the gun.

Billy fires a shot through the desk just in front of Tom. This surprises Tom. He begins to walk forward again, but Billy fires another shot just missing Tom's leg.

BILLY

I'm drawing the line this time.
It's right here.

TOM

You're serious. Okay. Maybe you don't know this, but... If you don't let me out of here, in about two minutes, the cops will come through that door with their guns drawn and they won't be asking any questions. They'll see a pistol... In your hand or mine, makes no difference. It won't matter that I did my time... that I tried to stay my 100 yards away... that I saved your ass from those snot-nosed little bitches... that I'm sorry for what I did. That I'll never do it again. None of that will make a shit load of difference. If by some miracle they don't cut me down right here in this room, they will drag me out that door and throw me back inside... this time for good. And everything I've worked my ass off for. Everything I tried to make right again. Will be ripped away from me.

BILLY

I don't care.

TOM

You do. Billy. Son. I've been watching you for weeks. I know you. You aren't like the rest. You are better than them. In every way. That's why you won't hurt me.

Tom slowly crosses to Billy.

TOM (CONT'D)

I'll come back. I'll keep my distance this time, but I'll come back and I'll watch and make sure no one hurts you again. I'll be just like a good father. Is it a deal?

Billy shakes his head.

TOM (CONT'D)

Okay. I get it. You don't trust me. Real curve I threw you. Will take you a little while to process. But in the meantime, give me the gun and I'll take off and...

BILLY

No.

TOM

I gotta run, little guy. Give me the gun.

BILLY

No.

TOM

Give me the gun.

Tom dives for the gun wrestles Billy to the floor. They struggle over the gun. Tom manages to wrest it away from Billy, he falls back on the floor. On his knees, he tries to gather his things up.

A siren is heard. It is approaching.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

A squad car is speeding down the county road toward the motel.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Tom stops packing and looks at Billy. Tears are forming in his eyes.

TOM

Shit.

Other sirens join in and grow louder. Tom realized that there is no escape.

TOM (CONT'D)

I guess this is it.

(Tom laughs.)

I could have taken off... been all the way to the other side of the world right now. But I didn't. Because I had to make sure she was okay. That you... my son... were fine. I was hoping I'd be able to get to know you better. You get to know me. The real me. Not the shit you're going to hear.

(Tom becomes more emotional as he speaks.)

I just wanted to see her. The beautiful girl that will always be in my mind. Say I was sorry. Make it up to her. Somehow. But then I saw what I had done to her. I am every reason for why she is the way she is now, Billy. That is my fault. How the fuck am I going to fix that?

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

More squad cars with flashing lights and sirens enter the parking lot. The Manager is seen talking to one of the cops that had previously pulled in. He points to the motel room in front of Tom's truck.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

TOM

But you. Not you, Billy. I see you and I see... She made the right choice. Because you, son... you are so smart... and so talented... so beautiful. And I'm so proud of you. We almost pulled it off. Didn't we? Came that close. I woulda walked down the street, my arm around your shoulder. This is my son. I have a son. My boy. My little man...

Tom tries to embrace Billy, but he pulls back.

Sirens turn off. We hear car doors open and slam and police radio with the dispatcher saying, "Amber alert: All units to Hi Ho motel." During the rest of the scene we hear the dispatcher relaying information.

Tom begins to panic. He looks at the gun. He starts to tremble.

TOM
I'm not going back.

Tom looks through the blinds of the window and sees that the police cars have started to form a half-circle to barricade the motel room.

TOM(CONT'D)
My last line. Right here.
Looks like I've drawn myself right
into a corner, doesn't it?

Tom is breathing heavily. His adrenalin is racing. He points the gun at his own chest.

TOM(CONT'D)
They should never have locked me
up. Should just have shot me
through the heart.

He can't pull the trigger. This freaks Billy out. He lunges for the gun.

BILLY
No!

Tom holds the gun still as Billy tries to pull it away.

TOM
Here's your chance, Billy. Eye for
an eye. Tooth for a tooth. That's
how justice works. I took her life
away, you take mine. I'm too much
of a fucking coward. But not you,
Billy. You are a brave boy. Put me
out of my misery!

Loud pounding knock at the door. Tom and Billy freeze.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 (O.C.)
It's the police.

More loud pounding.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 (O.C.)
Tom Norman? You in there?

TOM
What do you want?

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 (O.C.)
Open the door.

TOM
Stand back.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1 (O.C.)
William Brennan, are you in there?

BILLY
I'm okay.

TOM
I got a gun.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Police scramble back from the door and run behind their patrol cars.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1
He's got a gun! Fall back! Behind
the cruisers! All units! Fall
back!

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy and Tom hold the gun. It is still pointed at Tom's chest.

BILLY
Why did you...?

TOM
I'm not going back.

BILLY
Put the gun down. Please. They
won't understand and they'll hurt
you.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1
(V.O.)
(through bullhorn:)
Put the gun down and come out with
your hands raised.

TOM

I go out there, you know what will happen?

BILLY

Give me the gun and you'll be fine.

TOM

You know that's not true.

BILLY

I'll tell them that you saved me.

TOM

Doesn't matter.

BILLY

You may have to go away for a little while.

Tom laughs.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I'll come and see you. I promise.

TOM

They won't let you.

BILLY

They'll have to. You're my dad.

This touches Tom.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I'll send you stories... about what I'm doing... what I see... where I go... and you will be able to go there with me. All you have to do is close your eyes.

TOM

You'd do that?

Billy nods.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1
(V.O.)

(through bullhorn:)

If you don't come out, we'll have to come in.

BILLY
You just have to do something
first. Okay? Kneel.

Tom kneels.

BILLY (CONT'D)
You gotta tell me the truth.

TOM
I promise.

BILLY
Are you sorry for what you did?
To my mother. To me.

TOM
Yes.

BILLY
Do you ask for forgiveness?

TOM
Yes.

BILLY
Say it.

TOM
Forgive me. Please.

BILLY
Do you promise to make up for your
sins?

TOM
Every day for the rest of my life.
But whatever I do... I know it
will never be good enough to make
up for...

BILLY
It doesn't have to. You just have
to mean it.

TOM
And you would forgive me?

BILLY
I will try.

TOM
You will?

Billy nods.

BILLY

I'll tell them about how you helped me. How you saved my life. And how you were gentle and kind to me. That's got to count for something. Right?

TOM

Sure.

BILLY

I'll tell everyone that you are a good guy. That you will be a good father. That you will try to love your son with all your heart.

TOM

I do, son. I do.

BILLY

Even though he is a loser.

TOM

You are perfect. Just the way you are, little man.

Tom hugs Billy. Billy returns the hug.

Tom pulls back. He kisses Billy on the forehead.

TOM (CONT'D)

I have a son.

Billy hugs him again. Tom has to pull him off.

TOM (CONT'D)

Let me go first.

Tom hands the gun to Billy.

TOM (CONT'D)

Cover me.

Billy's eyes get big.

TOM (CONT'D)

Kidding, kid. See you on the other side.

Tom crosses to the door.

TOM (CONT'D)
 (Yelling through the
 door:))
 I'm unarmed and I'm coming out.

Tom opens the door and puts his hands above his head. He takes two steps out of the door.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

As Tom steps out four police in protective gear rush him and tackle him to the pavement. They treat him roughly - kicking and punching him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy is standing in front of the window. He has been watching. He opens the window and yells out.

BILLY
 Stop kicking him! He's a good guy!
 Stop! He's sorry! I have a gun!
 I'll use it if you don't stop!
 I'll use it!

TOM (O.C.)
 Billy! No!

Billy fires the gun into the ceiling.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1
 (V.O.)
 (through bullhorn:)
 Fall back! Hold your fire!
 Positions behind the cruisers.
 Hold your fire!

TOM
 Put the gun down, Billy! Put it
 down.

They haul Tom to the police car and throw him in the back seat.

A car pulls into the parking lot. Theresa is driving. The car stops a short distance away from the cop cars and she gets out and runs toward the line of cops.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #1
(through bullhorn:)
Put the gun down, Billy! Put it
down and come out!

THERESA
Billy!

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #2 stops her from going any
further.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #2
(Trying to calm her:)
We got this, Ma'am.

THERESA
Get your hands off me!

The officer backs up and holds their hands up.

THERESA (CONT'D)
I'm his mother!

LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER #2
It's just him in there, ma-am.
He's going to be fine. We took
care of the problem.

Theresa looks over to the back seat of the cop car and
sees Tom sitting awkwardly with his hands cuffed behind
his back. His face is bloody and bruised from the punches
and kicks he has received from the cops.

Tom sees Theresa staring at him. There is a moment of
shock. Tom breaks it by calling out to her...
apologizing... imploring her to forgive him with
everything he has held inside for 16 years. Tears join
the blood streaming down his face.

But the window is rolled up and the cop car is sound-
proofed. She can't really hear his muffled voice - only
see the words formed by his lips.

She turns away from the cop car and faces the motel room.

THERESA
Billy, come out. Please!

INT. MOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Billy begins to panic.

He looks at the gun. He looks around the room.

None of it makes sense. He is frightened and has nowhere to go. He collapses to his knees and starts to hyperventilate.

BILLY

Brave. And strong. And free.

He closes his eyes. We can see he is concentrating on something. He is seeing something.

QUICK FLASH

-- He sees himself standing standing in front of beautiful wild landscape. The wind blows through his hair as he looks forward toward the sun. As he gazes out into the beauty of nature, his breathing slows back to normal.

BACK TO SCENE

Billy opens his eyes.

He places the pistol on the floor. He stands and walks to the door.

He pauses for a moment.

He inhales and looks forward.

BILLY

Brave. And strong. And free.

He opens the door. The sun shines bright through the opening. He steps out into the light.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR IN A MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT - A FEW YEARS LATER

Billy - several years older - is in the passenger seat of an ordinary car. He turns to the man behind the wheel - a little older than Billy. Billy gives the man a kiss and exits the car.

EXT. MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Billy walks across the parking lot. A text arrives on his phone. It's from his mother. The picture on the text reveals a more put-together Theresa than we have seen before. It reads "R U Ok?"

Billy texts. "Fine. Talk later."

Billy heads to a guard house and presents his ID. We see a tall wall topped with concertina wire.

INT. MUNICIPAL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Billy walks through a corridor and turns a corner. An armed guard lets him through a door that leads to a common room. There are men sitting at tables wearing prison uniforms.

Billy looks around until he spots Tom.

Tom sees Billy and a huge smile spreads across his face.

Bill returns the smile as he crosses to Tom's table.

FADE TO BLACK.

- END -