

SEVEN

by

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White

The world is a fine place,
and worth fighting for.

-Ernest Hemingway
For Whom the Bell Tolls
1940

1 INT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

1

Sunlight comes through the soot on the windows, more brown than bright. SOMERSET, 45, stands in one corner of this small, second-story room. He looks over the ceiling, looks down at the worn wooden floors, looks at the peeling wallpaper.

He walks to the center of the room, continues his study, taking his time. He halts, turns to one wall where the current wallpaper is torn away to reveal flowery wallpaper underneath.

Somerset goes to this wall and runs his finger across one of the pale, red roses which decorates the older paper. He pushes the grime away, brings the rose out more clearly.

He reaches into his suit pocket and takes out a switchblade. He flips the thin, lethal blade free. Working deliberately, delicately, Somerset cuts a square around the rose, then peels the square of dry wallpaper away from the wall. He studies it.

2 EXT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

2

Somerset stands in front of the old home. He looks out at the surrounding farms and forests. He ponders something.

MAN (O.S.)

Is something wrong?

Somerset does not respond, just stares off. The MAN, 34, wears a real-estate broker's jacket, stands beside a FOR SALE sign.

MAN

Is there something the matter?

Somerset turns to face the man, then looks back at the house.

SOMERSET

No. No... it's just that everything here seems... so strange.

MAN

Strange? There's nothing strange about this place. The house'll need a little fixing up, that's for sure...

SOMERSET

No. I like the house, and this place.

MAN

I was going to say. Cause this place is about as normal as places get.

Somerset nods, taking a deep breath. He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

SOMERSET
That's what I mean.

Somerset looks back to the landscape. The man does not understand. He pulls the FOR SALE sign out of the ground.

3 INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

3

Somerset is in the window seat, looking out the window of the speeding train, smoking a cigarette. He is near the back of the car, away from the few other passengers.

Outside, farms, fields, small homes and lawns rush by. The panorama is dappled by the rays of the soon to be setting sun.

4 INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

4

The train is almost full, moving slower. Somerset has his suitcase on the aisle seat beside him. He holds a hardcover book unopened on his lap. He still stares out the window, but his face is tense. The train passes through barren terrain. The sun has gone under.

A car's burnt-out skeleton sits rusting in the desert. Far ahead, the city waits. The dirty sky is full of smokestacks and huge industrial cranes.

5 OMIT

5

6 EXT. CITY STREET, TRAIN STATION -- NIGHT

6

Somerset carries his suitcase outside the station. The city demands attention: cars and sirens screeching, people yelling.

Somerset passes a family of bewildered tourists. A WEIRD MAN has a hand on the tourist-father's suitcase. It has become a tugging match with the Weird Man shouting, "I'll take you to a taxi... I'll take you." Ahead, a group is gathered on the sidewalk near two ambulances. People clamor to get a look at a BLOODY BODY.

Policemen try to hold the crowd off. Ambulance attendants administer aid to the victim, who convulses. Somerset moves by, ignoring it all. He motions for a cab. One pulls up from the street's stream of vehicles.

7 INT. CAB -- NIGHT

7

Somerset throws his suitcase in and shuts the door behind him.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

CAB DRIVER
 (about the crowd)
 What's the big fuss?

Somerset looks out at the crowd, looks at the driver.

SOMERSET
 Do you care?

CAB DRIVER
 (under his breath)
 Well, excuse me all to hell.

The driver leans forward, checking it out. The circle of spectators shifts suddenly. A man has shoved another man and they're really going at it now. They swing and tear at each other's clothing. One man's flailing fist connects and the other man's face is bloodied. The fight grows even more spastic as Policemen try to stop it.

CAB DRIVER
 Crazy fucks.

The driver pulls away. Somerset watches the parade of neon passing on the avenue. He slumps back and closes his eyes.

CAB DRIVER
 Where you headed?

Somerset opens his eyes.

SOMERSET
 Far away from here.

8 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

8

The curtains are closed. A CAR ALARM is SOUNDING, shrill and clear. Somerset's life is packed into moving boxes, except for clothing in a closet and hundreds of books on shelves. Somerset is lying on the bed, in his underwear.

He reaches to the nightstand, to a wooden, pyramidal metronome. He frees the metronome's weighted swingarm so it moves back and forth. Swings to the left -- TICK, swings to the right -- TICK. Tick... tick... tick... measured and steady.

Somerset situates on the bed, closes his eyes.

Tick... tick... tick. The metronome's sound competes with the sound of the car alarm. Somerset's face tightens as he concentrates on the metronome. His eyes close tighter. Tick... tick... tick. The swingarm moves evenly. Somerset's breathing deepens.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

Tick... tick... tick. The car alarm seems quieter.

Tick... tick... tick. Somerset continues his concentration. The metronome's sound seems louder.

Tick... tick... tick. The sound of the car alarm fades, and is GONE. The metronome is the only sound.

Somerset's face relaxes as he begins to fall asleep. Tick... tick... tick...

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SUNDAY

9 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

9

Quiet. Somerset stands before a mirror, tying his tie, carefully, making sure the knot is neat, smoothing his shirt.

Next, he takes his suit jacket off the neatly made bed. He holds the jacket up on its hanger, brushing off a speck and inspecting it before sliding it on.

Somerset picks items off a moving box: his keys, wallet, switchblade, gold homicide badge. Finally, he opens the hardcover book from the train. From the pages, he takes the pale, paper rose.

10 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT -- DAY

10

Somerset stands before a wall which is stained by a star-burst of blood. A body lies under a sheet. A sawed-off shotgun lies not far from the body. The apartment is gloomy.

DETECTIVE TAYLOR, 52, stands looking through a notepad.

TAYLOR

Neighbors heard them screaming at each other for like two hours. It was nothing new. But, then they heard the gun go off. Both barrels.

SOMERSET

Did the wife confess?

TAYLOR

When the patrolmen came she was trying to put his head together. She was crying too hard to say anything.

Somerset beings walking around the apartment.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

SOMERSET

Why always like this? Only after the fact... this sudden realization that person will cease to exist.

TAYLOR

Crime of passion.

SOMERSET

Yes. Look at all the passion on the wall here.

TAYLOR

This is a done deal. All but the paperwork.

Taylor shifts his weight, impatient. Somerset looks at a coloring book open on the coffee table. There are crayons beside it. Somerset picks the book up, flips through the pages.

SOMERSET

Did the son see it happen?

TAYLOR

I don't know.

Taylor closes his notebook, perturbed. Somerset looks at the pictures of cute, crudely colored animals.

TAYLOR

What kind of fucking question is that anyway?

Taylor grabs the coloring book to get his attention.

TAYLOR

You know, we're all real glad we're getting rid of you, Somerset. You know that? I mean, it's always these questions with you... "Did the kid see it?" Well, who gives a fuck? Huh?

(points)

He's dead. His wife killed him.

Taylor throws the coloring book back to Somerset and walks.

TAYLOR

Anything else has nothing to do with us.

Taylor leaves, pushing past DETECTIVE DAVID MILLS, 31, who is just entering. Mills is muscular and handsome. He looks back at Taylor, then around the apartment, a bit disoriented.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: 2

10

Somerset puts down the coloring book. He stares at the floor, showing no reaction to Taylor's tantrum.

MILLS

Uh, Lieutenant Somerset?

Somerset looks to see Mills.

11 EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

11

A body bag is carried through a crowd of people outside the tenement building. Somerset and Mills follow. They walk towards the end of the filthy block, past a man urinating on a car.

MILLS

I'm a little thrown. I just got in town like twenty minutes ago and they dumped me here.

SOMERSET

Since we're just starting out, Detective Mills, I thought we could go to a bar... sit and talk for awhile. After that, we'll...

MILLS

(interrupting)

Actually, if it's all the same, I'd like to get to the precinct house a.s.a.p. Seeing how we don't have much time for this whole transition thing.

Somerset keeps walking, says nothing.

MILLS

I need to start getting the feel of it all, right? Meet the people.

SOMERSET

I meant to ask you something, when we spoke on the phone. I can't help wondering... why here?

MILLS

I... I don't follow.

SOMERSET

With all this effort you've made to get transferred, it's the first question that pops into my head.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

MILLS

I'm here for the same reasons as you, I guess. Or, at least, the same reasons you used to have before... before you decided to... quit.

Somerset stops and faces Mills.

SOMERSET

You just met me.

MILLS

Maybe I'm not understanding the question.

SOMERSET

It's very simple. You fought to get reassigned as if your life depended on it. I've just never seen it done that way before, Detective.

MILLS

I thought I could do more good here. I don't know. Look, it'd be great by me if we didn't start right off kicking each other in the balls. But, you're calling the shots, Lieutenant, so... however you want it to go.

SOMERSET

Let me tell you how I want this to go. I want you to look, and I want you to listen.

MILLS

I wasn't standing around guarding the local Taco Bell. I've worked homicide for five and a half years.

SOMERSET

Not here.

MILLS

I realize that.

SOMERSET

Well, over the next seven days, do me the favor of remembering it.

Somerset walks away. Mills stands a moment, pissed. He follows.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

MONDAY

12 OMIT 12

13 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING 13

It is barely light outside. Mills is wide awake in bed beside the sleeping form of his wife, TRACY, 30. Mills looks tired. He listens to passing traffic. He covers his eyes with his forearm.

He sits up, frustrated. This gets the attention of TWO DOGS lying on the floor, a golden retriever and a collie, who look to Mills. The room is a shambles, filled with moving boxes.

Light coming through the window glows upon a football trophy sticking from one box. Large and noble, a golden player stands in frozen motion at the trophy's pinnacle.

Mills looks at the trophy and a fond smile forms on his face. The PHONE RINGS. Mills looks towards it. Tracy awakens. She looks up with half-opened eyes, a beautiful woman.

TRACY

What is it?

Phone rings. Mills reaches to touch Tracy's shoulder.

MILLS

It's okay.

Mills leans to get the phone. Tracy seems frightened.

TRACY

Honey... where are we?

14 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, ALLEYWAY -- EARLY MORNING 14

The trunk of Somerset's car contain's a homicide kit: rain gear, surgical gear, etc. Somerset takes out rubber gloves and pockets them, closing the trunk. He walks to join Mills and OFFICER DAVIS, a uniformed cop.

They pass police cars and head into a trash strewn alley. Davis hands Somerset two flashlights.

DAVIS

Everything's like I found it. I didn't touch anything.

SOMERSET

What time did you confirm the death?

DAVIS

Like I said, I didn't touch him, but he's had his face in a plate of spaghetti for about forty-five minutes now.

Davis pulls open a rusty side door...

15 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- EARLY MORNING

15

They enter a dark, ugly stairwell.

MILLS

(to Davis)

Hold on... you mean you didn't check for vital signs?

DAVIS

Did I stutter? Believe me, he ain't breathing, unless he's breathing spaghetti sauce.

MILLS

The point is...

DAVIS

Begging your pardon, but the guy's sitting in pile of his own shit. If he ain't dead, he would've stood up by now.

Mills is angry, about to speak, but Somerset heads him off.

SOMERSET

(to Davis)

Thank you, officer. We'll need to talk to you again, after we've looked around.

DAVIS

Yes, sir.

Davis walks out, eyeing Mills. Mills watches him go. The rusty door slams shut. It's very dark. Somerset turns on his flashlight, hands the other to Mills and starts upstairs.

SOMERSET

I wonder what exactly was the point of the conversation you were about to get into?

MILLS

And I wonder how many times he's found bodies that weren't really dead until he was in the car calling it in and eating a donut.

SOMERSET

Drop it.

MILLS

For now.

16 INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- EARLY MORNING 16

Somerset comes from the stairwell. At the end of the dank hall, a door is open. The light of a CAMERA FLASH spills out every few seconds. Mills and Somerset move on.

Somerset takes out rubber gloves, looking at something on the floor ahead. A RECYCLING BIN sits outside the door. It contains many neat, string-bound stacks of issues of READER'S DIGEST.

17 INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- EARLY MORNING 17

There are lights on in this room. Lamps with dusty shades. A few porn mags on a table. Somerset and Mills cross. A couch against one wall is piled with yellowed, once white pillows. It faces two small televisions, both on with no sound.

18 INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- EARLY MORNING 18

Somerset and Mills enter, using their flashlights in the dark. Mills takes out a handkerchief, covering his nose. ERIC is crouched on the floor, putting camera equipment away. He's wearing a medical mask, hoists his bag and moves to exit.

ERIC

Enjoy.

Somerset sweeps the room with his flashlight...

At the stove, each burner has a used pot or pan on it. Food has been slopped there and on the adjoining counter-top and sink. Used utensils are everywhere, along with empty tin cans and jars. Cockroaches swarm.

The flashlight beam follows a trail of dripped sauces, soups and crumbs of food across the floor from the stove to a kitchen table. The kitchen table is covered in soiled paper plates which hold bits of half-eaten sandwiches, potatoes, beef stew, donuts and many other junk foods.

The kitchen is tiny; barely enough room for three people. The kitchen table is at the center. An OBESE MAN is slumped forward in a kitchen chair, face down dead in a plate of spaghetti.

MILLS

Jeez... somebody phone Guinness. I think we've got a record here.

Mills walks to the dead man, leaning to study, without touching.

MILLS

Who said this was murder?

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

SOMERSET

No one yet.

MILLS

Are we wasting our time? This guy's heart's got to be the size of a canned ham. If this isn't a coronary, I don't know what is.

Somerset moves his flashlight beam down the obese corpse, stops at the man's feet. Somerset kneels.

At the obese man's pants cuff, there's a tiny point of metal sticking out. Somerset uses a pen to lift the pants leg. Razor wire is tied around the swollen, purple ankle.

MILLS

Or not.

Somerset stands and steps back. Mills bends to take his place, shining his flashlight into the corpse's lap. The obese man's bloated hands are folded there, bound tightly with rope.

MILLS

He might have tied himself up... make it look like murder. I saw a guy once, wanted his family to collect life insurance, right?

Somerset does not listen. He is focused on the corpse, studies the back of the man's head and neck. He runs his pen against the back of the corpse's neck, combing the hair up.

There are small circular and semi-circular BRUISES there.

MILLS

We found him... knife in his back. Except, I finally figured out... he held the knife behind him... put the tip of it between his shoulder blades, got real close to the wall and grabbed onto the door jam...

SOMERSET

(irritated)

Please be quiet for a while, would you?

Mills looks up at Somerset from below. Somerset remains focused on the bruises.

MILLS

(sarcastic)

Forgive me.

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 2

18

Mills stands and walks around to the other side of the table. He gets down again.

MILLS

There's a something here.

SOMERSET

What?

MILLS

There's a bucket. Under the table.

Somerset crouches, pulls up the cheap tablecloth on his side. A METAL BUCKET sits under the table.

SOMERSET

What is it?

Mills slides under with his flashlight, angling in the confined space to look. He is repulsed and pulls back.

MILLS

It's vomit.

Mills stands and backs away, near the refrigerator, not wanting to be anywhere near that bucket.

MILLS

It's a bucket of vomit.

SOMERSET

Is there any blood in it?

MILLS

I don't know. Feel free to look for yourself, okay?

Somerset stands, stares at the obese man. He shakes his head, perplexed. There is a KNOCK at the door. The detectives look to see DOCTOR THOMAS O'NEILL, 52, the medical examiner, in the doorway. O'Neill is looking at the ceiling. He flicks the light switch. No light, so he flicks the switch up and down.

O'NEILL

Wonderful.

O'Neill seems a bit gone. He drops his black bag onto the floor beside the corpse. He begins to sort through the bag.

Mills turns to open the refrigerator. It's nearly empty.

MILLS

(to Somerset)

You think it was poison?

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED: 3

18

SOMERSET

Guessing is useless.

The trash can beside the refrigerator is filled to the brim with empty food containers. Mills begins to poke around with a pen.

O'NEILL

You girls have got forensics waiting outside. I don't know if we'll all fit though.

MILLS

There's room. Light's the problem.

Somerset looks at Mills, then at the space limitations.

SOMERSET

Two is company here.

(pause)

Detective Mills, go help the officers question the neighbors.

Mills looks up, not pleased.

MILLS

I'll stay on this.

Somerset is looking at the corpse.

SOMERSET

Send one of the forensics in on your way out.

Mills does not move. He lifts his flashlight to shine the light on the side of Somerset's face. A moment. Somerset looks at Mills, the light shining directly in Somerset's eyes. A longer moment. Mills switches off the light and leaves.

O'Neill places both hands on the dead man's head and lifts the swollen visage from the spaghetti.

O'NEILL

He's dead.

SOMERSET

Thank you, Doctor.

19 INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

19

Somerset drives with Mills as the passenger. Heavy traffic. Both stare ahead in silence. Mills is a bundle of nerves.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

MILLS

You've seen my files, right? Seen the things I've done?

SOMERSET

No.

MILLS

(looking out window)

Anyway... I did my time on door-to-doors, and walking a beat. I did all that shit for a long time.

SOMERSET

Good.

MILLS

The badge in my pocket says "detective," same as yours.

SOMERSET

I made a decision. I have to consider the integrity of the scene. I can't worry whether you think you're getting enough time on the playing field.

MILLS

Yeah, well, all I want is...

(pause)

Just, just don't be jerking me off. That's all I ask. Don't jerk me off.

Mills looks at Somerset. Somerset keeps his eyes on the road, but nods slightly. That said, Mills slumps low into his seat.

SOMERSET

We'll be spending every waking hour together till I leave. I'll show you your friends and enemies. I'll help you cut through red tape. I'll help you "integrate," as the captain puts it. However...

(pause, clears throat)

No matter how you beg or plead... jerking off is something you'll have to do for yourself.

This throws Mills. Somerset has a sense of humor?

SOMERSET

I don't think we should have that sort of relationship. We'd start quarreling over insignificant things.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 2

19

Mills lets out a nervous laugh, feels a bit of weight off his shoulders.

MILLS

Whatever you say, Detective. Beautiful.

20 INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- DAY

20

The room is large, cold and clean. Stainless steel and white tile. Many pathologists work at slabs. Mills and Somerset are with DOCTOR SANTIAGO, who stands over the dissected obese corpse.

SANTIAGO

He's been dead for a long time, and I can tell you it was not a poison.

Santiago moves to make room for Mills to stand beside him.

Mills moves up a little, but not much, looking on in disgust. Santiago reaches into the man's belly, moving something. There is a squashy sound. We do not see.

MILLS

Ah, man... how does somebody let himself go like that?

SANTIAGO

It took four orderlies just to put this body on the table.

Somerset leans to peer into jars on a table. Organs and blobs of mush sit in fluid. Somerset leans closer.

In one jar of pulp, two small, BLUE FLECKS float in the preserving fluid. Somerset taps the jar with his finger.

MILLS

How did that fat fuck ever fit out the door of his apartment?

SOMERSET

Please. It's obvious he was a shut-in.

SANTIAGO

Are you looking here? First... see how big this stomach is.

Somerset turns his attention back to the corpse.

SANTIAGO

And, see the strange thing. Stretches. And, here... look at the size of that, because of all the foods.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

MILLS

I can see what you're pointing at, but...

SANTIAGO

Lines of distention across the stomach, and parts have ripped open.

SOMERSET

This man ate till he burst?

SANTIAGO

Well, he didn't really burst. Not all the way. But, he was bleeding inside himself, and there was a hematoma on the outside...

(points to it)

... on the belly. Very large.

Somerset walks around the slab, looking down at the obese man's propped up, partially shaved head.

MILLS

He died by eating?

SANTIAGO

Yes.

SOMERSET

These bruises...

On the victim's head, more round and semi-circular bruises have been revealed, all about the same diameter as a dime.

SANTIAGO

I don't know what they are yet. They...

SOMERSET

The muzzle of a gun... pressed against the back of his head.

Santiago comes to look, nodding.

SANTIAGO

It's possible, if it was pushed against hard enough, sure.

Mills leans close to the bruises, squinting. He points with his pinkie finger, without touching.

MILLS

Christ... marks from the front sight, flush with the muzzle.

Mills stands straight, eyes excited, almost pleased.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 2

20

MILLS

Ladies and gentlemen... we have a homicide.

Somerset doesn't share his enthusiasm.

21 OMIT

21

22 OMIT

22

23 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

23

The CAPTAIN, 50, sits at his desk. He's a calm man, but whenever he is not speaking, without fail, he clenches his jaw over and over, causing the muscles in his neck and jaw to pulse. Somerset and Mills sit before him.

SOMERSET

He was given a choice. Eat, or your brains blown out. He ate his fill, and was forced to continue.

Somerset gets up to pace.

SOMERSET

The killer held a bucket under him and kept serving. Took his time. The coroner says this might have gone on for more than twelve hours. The victim's throat was swollen, probably from the effort, and there was definitely a point where he passed out. That's when killer kicked him. Popped him.

MILLS

Sadistic motherfucker.

SOMERSET

This was premeditated in the extreme. You want someone dead, you walk in and shoot them. You don't risk the time it takes to do this, unless the act itself has meaning.

CAPTAIN

Hold on... somebody had a gripe with the fat boy and decided to torture him...

SOMERSET

We found two receipts for groceries. That means the killer stopped in the middle of everything and made a second trip to the supermarket.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED:

23

The captain is disgruntled, clenching his jaw, looks to Mills.

MILLS

It's his stuff, man. I've been out in the cold all day.

SOMERSET

This is beginning.

CAPTAIN

We don't know that. We've got one dead guy. Not three. Not even two.

SOMERSET

No motive.

CAPTAIN

Don't even start your big brain cooking on this. Alright? We're spread thin as is. I can't afford a task force... eight-hundred lines, and I sure as hell don't need a bunch of cameras up my ass every time I get out of my car.

Somerset sits.

SOMERSET

I want to be reassigned.

MILLS

Whoa, whoa... what?

CAPTAIN

What are you talking about?

SOMERSET

This can't be my last duty here. It will go on and on.

CAPTAIN

You're retiring. In six days you're all the way gone.

Somerset shakes his head.

CAPTAIN

You've left unfinished business before.

SOMERSET

Everything else was taken as close to conclusion as humanly possible. Also... if I can speak freely...

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 2

23

CAPTAIN
(frustrated)
We're all friends here.

SOMERSET
If you want my opinion... it shouldn't be
his first assignment.

Mills stands, furious.

MILLS
This isn't my first assignment, dickhead.
What the hell?

SOMERSET
This is too soon for him.

MILLS
Hey, I'm right here. Say it to my face.

CAPTAIN
Sit down, Mills.

MILLS
(to captain)
Can we talk in private? I mean, I told you
before, it's not like I'm begging to work
with this guy...

CAPTAIN
Just, sit.

Mills does. The captain scratches his face, sighs.

CAPTAIN
I don't have anyone else to give this to,
Somerset, you know that. Nobody's going to
swap with you.

MILLS
Give it to me.

CAPTAIN
How's that?

MILLS
He wants out, "goodbye." Give it to me.

The captain considers this, looks to Somerset. Pause.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: 3

23

CAPTAIN

(to Mills)

I'm putting you on something else. Go down the hall. We'll shuffle papers and find a new partner.

Mills looks at Somerset, then leaves, closing the door.

CAPTAIN

You're stuck cleaning up the fat man. Stop making it more than it is.

Somerset seems deflated, staring at the floor.

CAPTAIN

That's all, Somerset. You're excused.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

TUESDAY

24 OMIT

24

25 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- DAY

25

A single window faces a billboard. TRAFFIC is HEARD. There are moving boxes on the floor. Somerset is at his desk with paperwork in two sloppy piles. He uses a manual typewriter, filling in a yellow form. He types hunt-and-peck. He finishes the form and pulls it out. There is a knock at the door.

SOMERSET

Come in.

The captain pushes the door and stands in the doorway with a PAINTER/WORKMAN at his side.

CAPTAIN

Pardon us. We have some business to take care of.

As always, the captain clenches his jaw.

Somerset lines a new form in the typewriter, begins typing. The captain strolls in. Two boxes sit on the floor with DETECTIVE MILLS written across them. He picks up one of the boxes and sets it on top of the other.

At the open door, the workman takes a razor blade from his kit. He brings it against the writing on the glass of the door:
DETECTIVE SOMERSET.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

The workman pushes the razor to start scraping the name away, and the razor on glass sounds like fingernails on a blackboard.

Somerset looks up.

WORKMAN

Sorry.

Somerset turns back to the typing, hunt-and-peck. The captain watches. The workman continues.

CAPTAIN

Have you heard?

SOMERSET

No, I haven't heard.

Somerset just keeps typing.

CAPTAIN

Eli Gould was found murdered.

Somerset stops, looks at the captain.

CAPTAIN

Someone broke into his law office and bled him to death. Wrote the word "greed" on the ceiling in his blood.

SOMERSET

Greed?

CAPTAIN

Mills is heading the investigation.

Somerset thinks about this, then turns to type.

SOMERSET

I'm sure everyone's doing their best.

CAPTAIN

Yeah.

SOMERSET

Good.

Hunt-and-peck. The captain's jowls clamp. He starts to straighten two piles of forms on Somerset's desk.

CAPTAIN

What are you going to do with yourself out there, Somerset?

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

SOMERSET

I'll get a job, maybe on a farm. I'll work on the house.

CAPTAIN

Can't you feel it yet? Can't you feel that feeling...? You're not going to be a cop anymore.

SOMERSET

Yes, that's the whole point.

CAPTAIN

Come on. You're not leaving.

Somerset reclines, facing the captain.

SOMERSET

A man is walking his dog at night. He's attacked. His wallet and his watch are taken. While he's still lying unconscious, his attacker stabs him with a knife in both eyes. That happened, last night, about four blocks from here.

CAPTAIN

I read about it.

SOMERSET

I have no understanding of this place anymore.

CAPTAIN

It's always been like this.

SOMERSET

Really?

Somerset saddles up to the typewriter.

SOMERSET

Maybe you're right.

The captain lays the paperwork down. Both piles are now neat.

CAPTAIN

You do this work. You were made for it, and I don't think you can deny that. I certainly can't believe you're trading it in for a tool belt and a fishing rod.

(pause)

Maybe I'm wrong.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 3

25

He takes a jar from his pocket. Inside are small pieces of blue plastic, curled slightly, as if they are scrapings.

CAPTAIN

This is for you. The coroner found them in the fat man's stomach, in with the food. Looks like little pieces of plastic.

SOMERSET

Thank you. Put them there.

The captain puts the jar down on the desk, walks to the door.

CAPTAIN

They were fed to him.

The captain leaves. Somerset looks up. He picks up the jar.

He looks in at the plastic pieces, shakes it.

Somerset gets up and heads to leave, passing the workman who has a rag in his hand to remove the last remnants of Somerset's name.

SOMERSET

(angrily)
Try putting a little elbow grease into it.

The workman is startled. Somerset heads down the hall.

25A INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- DAY

25A

The door to the apartment where the fat man was found murdered. Somerset uses his switchblade to cut the "crime scene" tape sealing the seam of the door. He enters.

25B INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- DAY

25B

The room where the obese corpse was found. Somerset flicks the light switch and gets fluorescent light. The place has been dusted. Somerset takes the jar from his pocket, looking around.

He looks to the ceiling. Walks around the kitchen table. He looks at the floor, then holds up the jar for study.

He gets down, holds the jar against the linoleum. Blue. Like the plastic scrapings. Same color and texture.

Somerset shakes his head, finding this strange. On his hands and knees, he searches the surface of the floor, examining every nick.

(CONTINUED)

25B CONTINUED:

25B

Somerset stops. There are deep scratches here. He fingers the grooves, then takes a piece of the plastic from the jar. He holds the piece to the floor, fiddles... fits it into a scratch.

Somerset stands, looking down. These scratches are in front of the refrigerator, like they were caused by the refrigerator having been pulled away from the wall and pushed back into place.

Somerset grips the refrigerator, pulling it. It isn't easy. He has to shift it a little at a time, rocking it back and forth.

The refrigerator's coming forward. Sweat forms on Somerset's face as he finally pushes from the side of the refrigerator, clearing the way for a view of the wall behind.

Somerset leans to look, numbed by what he sees.

SOMERSET

Oh, Lord...

There is a space on the wall where dust has been wiped away. In that space, the word: **GLUTTONY**. The letters have been smeared on in grease. A hand written NOTE is pinned beside them.

25C INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HOMICIDE BULLPEN -- DAY

25C

A busy, tight room with cubicles along the walls and desks crowded in the center. Somerset reads the note, which is sealed inside an evidence bag.

SOMERSET

"Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to light."

Somerset looks up. Mills is at one cluttered desk. The captain stands near. The captain shrugs at Somerset.

CAPTAIN

And...

SOMERSET

There are seven deadly sins.

Somerset takes an 8" by 10" from behind the bagged note, holds it up. The photo shows "GLUTTONY" written on the wall.

SOMERSET

Gluttony...

Somerset steps to Mills' desk (covered in photos from the greed case: law office, bloody floor, naked man) and picks up one of Mills' photos. It shows the word "GREED" written in blood on a ceiling. Somerset holds up "GREED" beside "GLUTTONY."

(CONTINUED)

25C CONTINUED:

25C

SOMERSET

Greed. And, wrath, envy, sloth, pride and lust. Seven.

Somerset puts the two photos and the note on Mills' desk. Mills looks to Somerset, then picks them up and studies them. Somerset heads out. A PHONE RINGS. The captain grabs it.

CAPTAIN

Hold on, Somerset...
(into phone)
I'll get back to you.

The captain hangs up, looks to Somerset in the doorway.

CAPTAIN

Look, Somerset...

SOMERSET

No. He wanted it. I don't... I can't have anything to do with this.

The captain stares at Somerset, who waits in the doorway.

MILLS

I'm on it.

The captain looks to Mills, then finally motions for Somerset to go. He does. The door shuts.

26 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATE NIGHT

26

There is a dart board on one wall. THWACK -- Somerset's switchblade hits the board and embeds.

Somerset crosses the nearly empty living room and takes the blade from the dart board. He walks back to stand in front of the only chair in the room. He throws the switchblade.

It embeds in the dart board. Somerset sits.

He picks a book off the floor and holds it in his lap. KIDS can be HEARD CURSING and playing LOUD MUSIC from outside the shuttered window. Somerset stares at the ceiling. He opens the book and looks at the pages... stares at the pages...

He puts the book back down on the floor.

27 EXT. CITY STREET -- LATE NIGHT

27

Somerset gets out of his car. He walks down the sidewalk with a notebook in hand. THUNDER is HEARD.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

He takes a cigarette out of a full pack and lights it.

He walks along the avenue. Cars race by in the street. People walk briskly past. At a public phone, a man shouts curses angrily into the phone, then starts pounding the phone box with the receiver. A fire engine passes in the street, sirens, horn and lights going full blast.

Somerset starts up a flight of massive stone stairs, past several sleeping vagrants. One VAGRANT sits up and looks to Somerset.

VAGRANT

Spare me a cigarette? Spare a cigarette?

SOMERSET

Sorry, last one.

Ahead of Somerset, the library looms, a powerful structure.

28 INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN LIBRARY -- LATE NIGHT

28

Somerset and GEORGE, 62, the night guard, enter the vast, deserted main library. Lamps above give off a warm, pleasant glow over mahogany tables and chairs. To each side of this center area are tall bookshelves. Balconies surround the room, overlooking the center.

Somerset is happy. This is his element, this peaceful, elegant place. George motions to the long, empty tables.

GEORGE

Sit where you'd like.

SOMERSET

Thanks, George.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hey there, Smilely.

Somerset looks up to the top balcony where TWO OTHER SECURITY GUARDS and one JANITOR look over the banister.

SOMERSET

Evening.

They all say their hellos.

FIRST GUARD

Come on, George. Cards are getting cold.

GEORGE

(to Somerset)

Duty calls.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

George pumps Somerset's hand, then moves to a stairwell leading to the balconies. Somerset walks down the main aisle, looks around at the shelves and shelves of books.

George reaches the top balcony and the others sit at a card table where a poker game is in progress.

Somerset puts his notebook down on one table and switches on a green banker's lamp. THUNDER SOUNDS. Somerset looks up.

Rain is beginning to fall on the windows of the high ceiling.

SOMERSET

(shouts up)

All these books, gentlemen... a world of knowledge at your disposal, and you play poker all night.

UP ON THE BALCONY

George has taken a huge BOOM-BOX from a broom closet.

JANITOR

We got culture.

SECOND GUARD

(dealing cards)

Yeah, we got culture coming out our asses.

They laugh. George sets the boom-box against the railing of the balcony so the speakers face towards Somerset.

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

Somerset has gone into one bookshelf aisle. Poker table conversation echoes from above. Somerset searches books, reading spines. He finds one book and pulls it, continues searching.

UP ON THE BALCONY

George hits play on the boom-box and turns the volume way up.

GEORGE

How's this for culture?

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

Somerset keeps looking for books. From far away come the strains of MOZART MUSIC filling the air. High, drifting music, such as AIR (On the G string.) Somerset stops, listens.

He closes his eyes and soaks it in.

UP ON THE BALCONY

(CONTINUED)

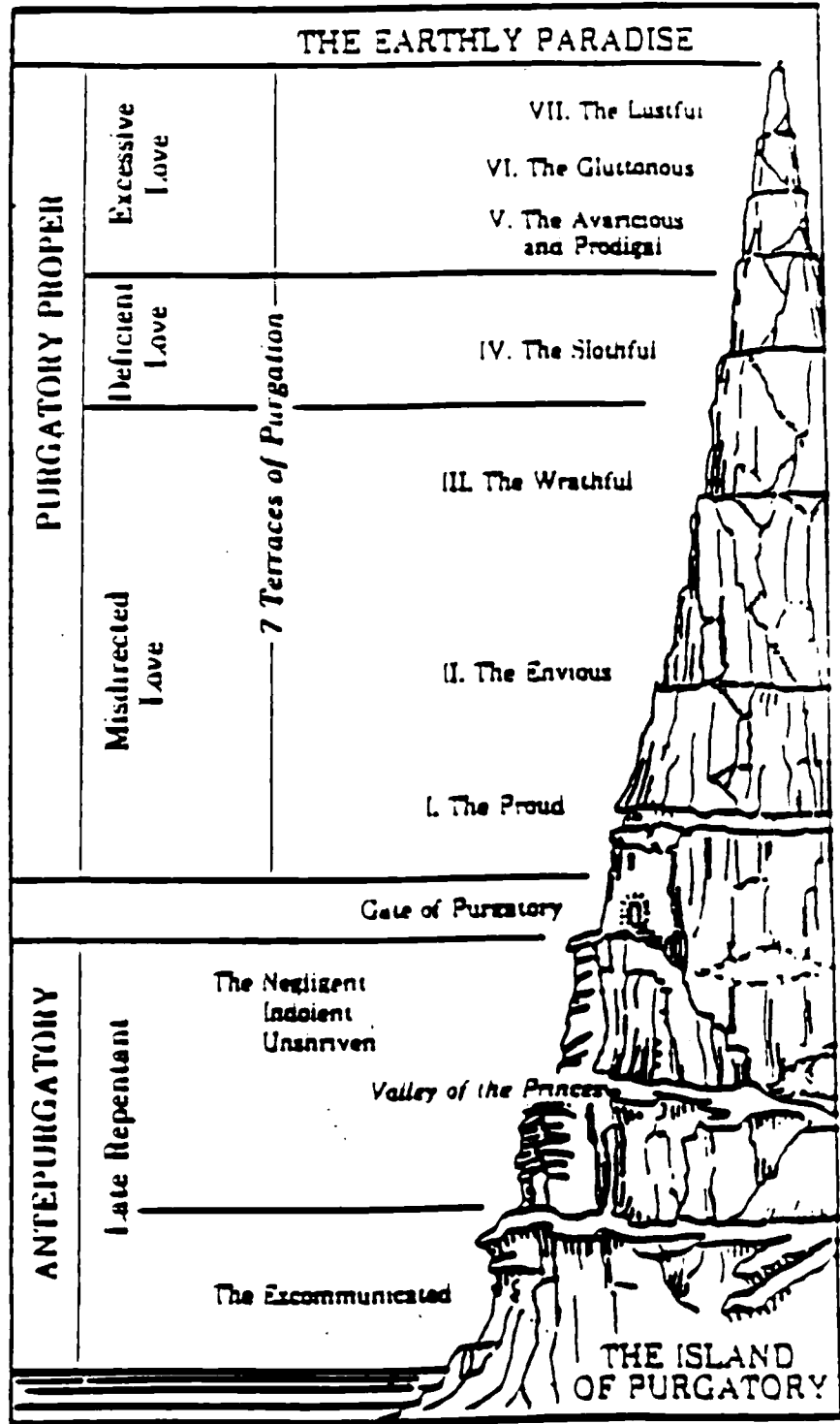
SEVEN (1996) PAGE 28 Missing from original

Note to Screenwriters:

A page or part of a page of the only available copy of the draft / shooting script is missing here. This situation is not unusual; many of the shooting scripts and drafts to be found in the libraries or the files of major studios and production companies have missing material, a fact which illustrates clearly the expandability of drafts / shooting scripts once the true text, the film itself, is created.

- 29 CONTINUED: 29
- Somerset crosses out GLUTTONY and GREED.
He takes a book off the pile and opens it. Turns pages.
His eyes move across the words, reading.
- 30 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM/LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT 30
- Mill looks tired. He's reading. MUSIC CONTINUES, uninterrupted over this scene. Music so pretty it is almost sad.
- He's seated at a desk, sorting through paperwork and photos. A basketball game is on the television, but he pays it no mind. He sits forward, obviously frustrated, drinks coffee.
- He does not know Tracy is there, standing in the bedroom doorway behind him. She's dressed in a nightgown.
- Tracy watches her husband, concerned.
- 31 INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN LIBRARY -- NIGHT 31
- MUSIC CONTINUES. A book lies open to this page:

(CONTINUED)



31 CONTINUED:

31

Somerset's hands close the book: DANTE'S PURGATORY. Volume II of the DIVINE COMEDY. Nearby, Somerset writes in his notebook:

YOU MAY WANT TO LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING BOOKS,
RELATING TO 7 DEADLY SINS:

DANTE'S PURGATORY
THE CANTERBURY TALES -- THE PARSON'S TALE
DICTIONARY OF CATHOLICISM

Somerset's hands tear the notebook page out. They fold it and place it in an envelope. Somerset writes on the envelope:

MILLS.

32 OMIT 32

33 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- NIGHT 33

Somerset's hands place the "Mills" envelope on a desk top. A light goes out.

The office is dark. Somerset exits.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

WEDNESDAY

34 OMIT 34

35 OMIT 35

36 INT. UPSCALE BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- MORNING 36

The door into an ugly stairwell bangs open and a reporter and cameraman run in, hurrying up the stairs. The cameraman turns on his bright flood light. A COMMOTION ECHOES from above. Mills enters from this same door, in no hurry, looking haggard.

Mills climbs the stairs. Up a few floors.

Ahead of him, there's a crowded, frantic press conference of sorts taking place on a landing. Reporters and camera people jockey for positions around MARTIN TALBOT, 47, a smartly dressed, impressive figure with a gold tooth in the front of his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

FLASHBULBS FLASH. Talbot's tries to quell overlapping questions.

TALBOT
One at a time, please. One at a time.
(pointing to reporter)
You there.

Mills has to squeeze through the crush of bodies.

REPORTER
(to Talbot, with glee)
Mister Talbot, can you confirm any of the rumors that Mister Gould was forced to mutilate himself?

TALBOT
I can't address any of the specifics while the investigation is still ongoing. Weren't you listening when I said that before?

Mills gets past, moving on. QUESTIONS are SHOUTED at TALBOT. One NEWSWOMAN with a mini-recorder breaks off from the group to follow Mills.

NEWSWOMAN
Detective... Detective, can I have a moment of your time?

MILLS
No.

Mills keeps going. The woman watches him, looks back to Talbot and decides he's more important, hurrying back down.

FOLLOW Mills. He pushes through another door, into...

37 INT. UPSCALE BUILDING, SERVICE AREA -- MORNING

37

A dark physical plant room. Mills crosses past humming air-conditioning units, dripping pipes and janitorial lockers. To a door...

38 INT. UPSCALE BUILDING, OFFICE CORRIDOR -- MORNING

38

Mills comes out the service area door into a bright, ritzy hallway. This hall and the doors along it reek of money. A few cops and rent-a-cops are stand around near a portion of the hall that's been blocked off by a POLICE LINE saw horse.

Mills passes, nodding to the cops. He heads left, into another hall, around a corner, through an open door...

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

INTO A BOARDROOM. Several forensics sort and label plastic bags of evidence spread out across the vast meeting table. A photographer loads equipment. Mills crosses to an adjoining...

KITCHENETTE. Other cops brush past on their way out. The kitchenette leads to a small SECRETARIAL OFFICE. Mills moves to a huge mahogany door...

39 INT. LAW OFFICE -- MORNING

39

Mills enters. Huge law office with windows overlooking the wet city. T.V. in a corner shows the news. Two whispering FORENSICS are on ladders, dusting for prints around the word "GREED" on the ceiling in blood.

FORENSIC ONE
(to other forensic)
... going to screw it up, I swear. Fucking kid. Can't be more than...

The other forensic clears his throat, getting back to work. Forensic One shuts up. Mills notices this, weary.

MILLS
How's it coming?

FORENSIC ONE
Nothing yet, boss.

Mills watches them a moment, then turns his attention to another part of the office. He walks.

A leather chair sits in an open area. The chair and the carpet under it are covered in lots of brown, dried blood.

There is a trail of dripped blood from the chair to a big desk in front of a large, abstract modern art painting on the wall. On a cleared off section of the desk, a two-armed, counter balance SCALE sits, also blood stained. The desk has been dusted.

Mills stands staring at this. The TELEVISION is HEARD: ~~W... ..~~

ANCHOR (v.o.)
(from television)
... going cut live to downtown, where Defense Attorney Eli Gould was found murdered in his office early Tuesday morning. District Attorney Martin Talbot is now taking questions from reporters...

ON T.V., Talbot comes on screen. It's from the stairwell.

(CONTINUED)

NOT shown in present to Mills!
~~...~~
~~...~~
See shorts in the Range Valley
o.c.s.

39 CONTINUED:

39

A REPORTER (v.o.)
 (from television)
 ... a conflict of interest here? I mean,
 your prosecutors have lost more than a few
 very high profile cases to Mister Gould and
 his defense team...

TALBOT (v.o.)
 (from television)
 Now, that's ridiculous to the point of
 being offensive. There's no conflict
 whatsoever and any claim that there would
 be, or could be, is irresponsible.

Other reporters begin to shout questions, but Talbot's not done.

TALBOT (v.o.)
 Now, hold on... I want to address that.
 I've just come from a meeting with law
 enforcement officials, and they've assured
 me they put their best people on this
 thing.

Mills turns to looks at Talbot on the screen.

TALBOT (v.o.)
 This will be the very definition of swift
 justice.

Mills walks to turn the t.v. off.

MILLS
 (quietly to t.v.)
 Shut the fuck up.

He turns and looks to see the forensics looking at him. The
 forensics look away.

Mills walks away from the t.v., towards a picture frame on the
 floor. The frame has been placed specifically in the center of
 the room, facing the main doors.

It is a photo of a falsely pretty, middle-aged woman, smiling and
 wearing pearls. On the glass of the frame, two circles have been
 drawn with blood around the woman's eyes.

Mills sits on the floor. He stares at the photo.

40 OMIT

40

41 INT. MILLS' CAR -- MORNING

41

Mills gets in and slams the door. He is alone with the sound of the rain. He wipes water from his face and looks at his tired eyes in the rear view mirror. He leans over to the glove compartment and takes out two newly purchased paperbacks: The Canterbury Tales and Dante's Purgatory.

Mills makes a face and opens Dante's Purgatory to a bookmark. He rests the book on the steering wheel. He reads.

He bites his lip, leaning close to the words.

He's really concentrating, mouths some of it to himself. He finally shakes his head and closes the book, not understanding a word. Pause. He starts pounding the book against the steering wheel with all his might.

MILLS

Fucking, Dante, goddamn, poetry-writing,
faggot motherfucker...

Mills throws the book against the windshield, then puts his head back and closes his eyes, trying to calm. A long moment. Quiet.

BANG, BANG, BANG -- there's a loud BANGING on the window and Mills looks up, startled...

A Tall Cop is at the window in rain gear. Mills rolls it down. Tall Cop hands a wet paper bag through.

MILLS

Good work, Officer. Good work.

Mills rolls the window up, rips the bag open. Inside: Cliff Notes for Dante's Purgatory and for The Canterbury Tales.

MILLS

Thank God.

42 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- DAY

42

It still rains outside. Somerset sits filling out forms by hand. There's a second, smaller desk nearby. Mills enters with a ton of his own paperwork, stopping to notice "DETECTIVE MILLS" painted on the door.

Somerset looks up.

SOMERSET

(gathers his things)
Let me get out of your way.

Mills sets his paperwork on the desk. He is beat. Somerset moves to the smaller, temporary desk.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

They both sit and settle in, organizing, not looking at each other.

Both attend to their work. Here are two men, about five feet apart, each trying not to acknowledge the other's presence. Mills takes his Cliff Notes out, looks to see Somerset is occupied, and hides them in a desk drawer.

Somerset finishes one form, flips it and looks at Mills. Mills sorts through photos from the greed murder. Somerset continues writing. PHONE RINGS. Both men look at it. Phone rings again.

SOMERSET

It's a package deal. You get the phone with the office.

MILLS

(picks up, into phone)
Detective Mills.

(concerned, lowers voice)
Honey, hi. What's wrong? Is everything okay?

(listens)
Well... now, didn't I asked you not to call me here? I'm working...

(listens)
What? Why?

Mills is very confused.

MILLS

(into phone)
Why? Okay... okay, hold on.

Mills clear his throat and holds out the phone to Somerset.

MILLS

It's my wife.

SOMERSET

What?

Mills shrugs. Somerset stands, takes the phone.

SOMERSET

(into phone)
Hello?

(listens)
Yes, well... it's nice to speak to you.

(listens)
Well, I appreciate the thought... but...

(listens)
Then, I guess I'd be delighted. Thank you very much. Yes... goodbye.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: 2

42

Somerset hangs up, shakes his head.

Well? MILLS

I'm invited to have a late supper at your house. And, I accept. SOMERSET

How's that? MILLS

Tonight. SOMERSET

Mills is lost. Somerset goes to sit back down.

I don't even know if I'm having dinner there tonight. MILLS

43 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM/KITCHENETTE -- NIGHT

43

Food is cooking on the stove. Tracy is in the living room area carefully setting the table with good silver and china. The door is HEARD OPENING and CLOSING.

Mills and Somerset come down a short hall. Mills carries a brand new briefcase.

Hello, men. You made it. TRACY

Hi, honey. MILLS

Mills give Tracy a kiss, then presents Somerset.

I'd like you to meet Somerset. MILLS

Hello. SOMERSET

Somerset shakes Tracy's hand lightly.

It's nice to meet you. My husband has told me a lot about you... except your first name. TRACY

Oh... um, William. SOMERSET

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

TRACY

It's a nice name. William, I'd like you to meet David.

(to Mills)

David... William.

Mills smiles and nods this off, heading across the room.

MILLS

Great... I'm, uh, just going to put these things away.

Mills moves to an adjoining room. As soon as he opens the door, his DOGS are BARKING. Mills has to block their escape with his body. He greets them with kissing sounds as he shuts the door.

Somerset stands with his hands folded in front of him.

SOMERSET

It smells good.

TRACY

What? Oh, yes. I mean, thank you.

(motions to table)

Please, sit down.

Somerset takes off his jacket. Tracy goes to check on the food.

TRACY

You can put that over on the couch. You'll have to excuse all the mess. We're still unpacking.

Somerset notices something on Mills' desk. It's a medal, in a small, clear case amongst the papers and pens.

SOMERSET

I hear you two were high school sweethearts.

TRACY

High school and college, yes. Pretty hokey, huh? I knew on our first date this was the man I was going to marry. God... he was the funniest guy I'd ever met.

SOMERSET

Really?

Somerset has to think about that one for a second. He picks the medal up: a medal for valor from the Police Department.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: 2

43

SOMERSET

Well, it's rare these days... that kind of commitment.

He puts the medal down. Tracy is looking at the gun strapped under Somerset's arm as Somerset starts to unstrap it.

SOMERSET

(about the gun)

Don't worry. I don't wear it at the dinner table.

TRACY

No matter how often I see guns, I still can't get used to them.

Somerset lays the gun with his jacket.

SOMERSET

Same here.

Tracy smiles. Somerset goes to the table and transfers a small notebook from his breast pocket to his pants pocket.

A piece of paper falls to the floor, closer to Tracy.

TRACY

Anyway... what girl wouldn't want the captain of the football team as their lifetime mate? Here... you dropped something...

Tracy picks it up. It is the pale, paper rose. She looks at it as she hands it back to Somerset, who is self-conscious.

TRACY

What is that?

Somerset looks at the rose, then puts it away.

SOMERSET

My future.

Tracy tilts her head, looking at Somerset.

TRACY

You have a strange way about you... I mean interesting. I'm sorry. It's really none of my business. It's just nice, to meet a man who talks like...

(trails off, goes
back to stove)

If David saw that paper, he'd say you're a fag. That's how he is.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED: 3

43

SOMERSET

(smiles)

I guess I won't be showing it to him then.

44 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

44

A record player on a moving box PLAYS QUIET MUSIC. Tracy, Mills and Somerset are eating. Mills has a beeper beside his plate and occasionally fingers it absently.

TRACY

Why aren't you married, William?

MILLS

Tracy... what the hell?

Somerset pokes at his napkin, thinking.

SOMERSET

I was close once. It just didn't happen.

TRACY

It surprises me. It really does.

SOMERSET

Any person who spends a significant amount of time with me finds me... disagreeable. Just ask your husband.

MILLS

Very true.

Mills grins, but he means it.

TRACY

(to Somerset)

How long have you lived here?

SOMERSET

Too long.

(drinks)

How do you like it?

Tracy glances immediately to Mills.

MILLS

It takes time to settle in.

Somerset can see it is a sore subject.

SOMERSET

Well, you get numb to it pretty quickly. There are things in any city...

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

A LOW RUMBLING is HEARD. Plates on the table begin to clatter.

MILLS

Subway train.

The dishes clatter more. Coffee cups clink against their saucers. Tracy holds her coffee cup to stop it and smiles as Somerset to act like it's nothing, but she is clearly bothered.

TRACY

It'll go away in a minute.

They wait. The rumbling grows louder, knocks something over in the sink. The DOGS are HEARD WHINING and HOWLING from the other room. Somerset continues eating, fiddles with his food.

The record player skips, then plays on. The clattering begins to die down. The dogs quiet. Mills seems uncomfortable.

MILLS

This real estate guy... this miserable fuck, he brought us to see this place a few times. And, first I'm thinking he's good, really efficient. But then, I started wondering, why does he keep hurrying us along? Why will he only show us this place for like five minutes at a time?

Mills laughs lamely.

TRACY

We found out the first night.

Somerset tries to stay straight, but he can't help laughing.

SOMERSET

The soothing, relaxing, vibrating home.
Sorry...

He laughs harder, covering his mouth. Tracy and Mills laugh.

MILLS

Oh, fuck.

45 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

45

The record player plays another album. Tracy brings over a pot of coffee and pours. Mills and Somerset have beers.

TRACY

I don't think I've ever met anyone who doesn't have a television before.
That's... weird.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

MILLS

It's un-American is what it is.

SOMERSET

All television does is teach children that it's okay to be stupid and eat candy bars all day.

MILLS

What about sports?

SOMERSET

What about them?

Tracy brings over a plate of cookies and puts it on the table.

MILLS

You go to movies at least?

SOMERSET

I read.

MILLS

I just have to say, I can't respect any man who's never seen "Green Acres."

Somerset gives a blank stare. Tracy walks across the room.

MILLS

You've never seen "The Odd Couple?" This is sick. "The Honeymooners?!"

SOMERSET

I vaguely recall a large, angry man named Norton.

Tracy turns the record player down further, then goes into the bedroom and shuts the door behind her.

Somerset and Mills look at the closed door. A long moment. They look at each other, then sit for a time. Somerset puts down his beer, sighs. He looks around.

46 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

46

The living room table has been cleared and is now covered with various reports and 8" by 10" photographs. Mills and Somerset are both standing. Mills guides Somerset through the photos.

MILLS

Our guy got into office, probably before the building closed and security tightened up. Gould must have been working late.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED:

46

SOMERSET

I'm certain. He was the biggest defense lawyer around. Infamous, actually.

MILLS

Well, his body was found Tuesday morning, okay? But, get this... the office was closed all day Monday. Which means as long as the gluttony killing was done before the weekend, our killer could've gotten in here Friday. He could've spent all day Saturday with Gould, and Sunday and maybe even Monday.

Mills picks up one photo and shows it to Somerset. Long shot: it shows the greed murder scene. Gould sits dead in the leather chair, near the desk where the counter-balance scale sits.

MILLS

Gould was tied down, nude. The killer left his arms free and handed him a big, sharp butcher's knife. See... the scale here.

Mills pulls another photo. Close up: the two-armed scale. In one suspended plate is a one pound weight. In the other is a hunk of flesh.

SOMERSET

A pound of flesh.

Mills digs, comes up with a photocopy of a hand-scrawled note.

SOMERSET

(reading note)

"One pound of flesh, no more no less. No cartilage, no bone, but only flesh. This task done... and he would go free."

Mills takes out one photo showing the note pinned to the wall.

MILLS

The leather chair was soaked through with sweat.

SOMERSET

(nods, grim)

All day Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

(pause)

The murderer would want Gould to take his time. To have to sit there and decide. Where do you make the first cut? There's a gun in your face... but, what part of your body is expendable?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 2

46

MILLS

He cut along the side of his stomach. The love handle.

Somerset begins spreading the photos out in front of him.

SOMERSET

Look at these with fresh eyes. Don't let the killer guide you...

As he speaks, Somerset keeps shifting the photos; covering the corpse in one with the edge of another, editing each by overlapping with another.

SOMERSET

Even if the corpse is right there... it's almost like looking through it. Editing out the initial shock. You always have to find one singular thing to focus on. There's always one thing, and it may be as small as a speck of dust, but you find it and focus... till it's an exhausted possibility.

In the photos, there's the scale. The note on the wall. Shelves of books. The abstract, modern art painting.

GREED written in blood.

SOMERSET

He's preaching.

MILLS

Punishing.

SOMERSET

The sins were used in medieval sermons. There were seven cardinal virtues, and then seven deadly sins, created as a learning tool, because they distract from true worship.

MILLS

Like in the Parson's Tale, and Dante.

SOMERSET

You read them?

MILLS

Yeah. Well, parts of them. Anyway, in Purgatory, Dante and his buddy are climbing up that big mountain... seeing all these other guys who sinned...

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 3

46

SOMERSET

Seven Terraces of Purgation.

MILLS

Right. But there, pride comes first, not
gluttony. The sins are in a different
order.

SOMERSET

For now, just consider the books as the
murderer's inspiration. The books and
sermons are about atonement for sin. And,
these murders have been like forced
attrition.

MILLS

Forced what?

SOMERSET

Attrition. When you regret your sins, but
not because you love God.

MILLS

Like, because someone's holding a gun on
you.

Somerset stands, stretching, rolling his neck.

SOMERSET

No fingerprints.

MILLS

Nothing.

SOMERSET

Totally unrelated victims.

Mills nods, drinking from a beer.

SOMERSET

No witnesses of any kind.

MILLS

Which I don't understand. He had to get
back out.

SOMERSET

In any major city, minding your own
business is a science. At crime prevention
classes, the first thing they teach is that
you should never cry "help." Always scream
"fire." People don't answer to "help," but
"fire," that's entertainment. They come
running.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: 4

46

Somerset sits, turning his attention back to the photos.

SOMERSET

He must have left another puzzle piece.

MILLS

Look, I appreciate being able to talk this out, but, uh...

SOMERSET

This is just to satisfy my curiosity. I'm still leaving at the end of the week.

Mills is very tired. He rubs his eyes, then walks to take one more photo from his briefcase.

It is the photo of the framed picture of the falsely pretty woman with her eyes circled in blood.

MILLS

Gould's wife. She was out of town. If this means she saw anything, I don't know what. We've questioned her at least five times.

SOMERSET

And, if it's a threat.

MILLS

We put her in a safe house.

Somerset nods. The SUBWAY TRAIN is HEARD RUMBLING O.S. The apartment begins to shake again, from the train below. Mills runs his hands across his face, walks to the fridge to get beer.

Somerset stays focused on the photo of the wife. His coffee cup rattles a bit in its saucer and he reaches to steady it without looking. After a moment, the RUMBLING LESSENS.

Somerset runs his fingers over the eyes circled in blood.

Looking at the wife's photo.

SOMERSET

(holds photo up)

What if it's not that she's seen something? What if she's supposed to see something, but she just hasn't been given a chance to see it yet?

MILLS

Okay. But, what?

46A EXT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

46A

A grim motel with a broken neon and a promise of "FREE HBO IN EVERY ROOM." Somerset's car pulls up. Mills and Somerset get out, carrying file folders. They move to the entrance.

46B INT. SAFE HOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

46B

A poorly maintained elevator's door opens partially, then freezes up with a squeak. Mills squeezes out, followed by Somerset.

They head down the hall, where a POLICEMAN sits in a chair, bouncing a rubber ball off the floor and the wall and catching it.

The policeman looks up at the detectives, doesn't seem to care who they are. Mills shows his badge.

MILLS

We're here to talk to Mrs. Gould.

The policeman picks up a clipboard and hands it to Mills. Mills signs in. Somerset goes to knock on the room's door.

SOMERSET

(to the door)

Mrs. Gould?

No reply. Somerset knocks a bit louder, opens the door a crack. He enters, clearing his throat.

SOMERSET

Excuse me... Mrs. Gould.

Mills comes to enter with Somerset, shuts the door.

47 INT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

47

Bad room. Plain, with water spotted walls. Mills stands beside the woman from the picture, MRS. GOULD, shows her photos from the murder scene. The photos have been covered in sections to hide Mr. Gould's corpse. Mrs. Gould is crying.

Somerset is on the other side of the room, holding more photos.

MILLS

I'm sorry about this. I really am.

MRS GOULD

I... I don't understand.

Mills helps her flip through the photos. He isn't too keen to put her through this. Every once and a while, you can HEAR the KLUNK, KLUNK of the policeman bouncing his ball in the hall.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

47

MILLS

I need you to look at each one carefully... very carefully. Look for anything that seems strange or out of place. Anything at all.

MRS GOULD

I don't know why... why now?

MILLS

Please, I need you to help me if we're going to get who did this.

Mrs. Gould sobs quietly, wipes her tears.

MILLS

Anything... anything missing or different.

MRS GOULD

I don't see anything.

MILLS

Are you absolutely certain?

MRS GOULD

I can't do this now... please.

Mills looks to Somerset, looks at the photos Somerset holds.

MILLS

Maybe we better wait.

Somerset looks at the photos in his hand. These show Mr. Gould's corpse in the chair, not covered in any way.

SOMERSET

It should be now. There may be something we're not seeing.

MRS GOULD

Wait. Here...

MILLS

What is it?

Mrs. Gould points at the modern art painting on the wall in one photo. The painting is just splattered paint, abstract.

MRS GOULD

This painting...

MILLS

What?

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: 2

47

MRS GOULD

Why is this painting hanging upside-down?

Mills turns to look to Somerset.

48 INT. LAW OFFICE -- NIGHT

48

The greed murder site. Somerset, wearing gloves, reaches to take the modern art painting off the wall. Mills is near, watching.

SOMERSET

You're sure your men didn't move this?

MILLS

Even if they did, those photos were taken before forensics.

Nothing on the wall behind the painting. Blank space.

MILLS

Nothing.

SOMERSET

It's got to be.

Somerset puts the painting down, resting it on its bottom edge. It's backed by a sheet of brown papers stapled into the frame.

Somerset points to where the wire's eye screws used to be screwed into the frame, and to where they have been rescrewed.

SOMERSET

He changed the wire to rehang it.

Somerset takes out his switchblade. Mills is surprised.

MILLS

What the fuck is that?

SOMERSET

A switchblade.

Somerset cuts along the edge of the brown paper to get to the hollow space at the back of the canvas. He cuts out the entire sheet. Mills helps pull it away. Nothing. Empty. Mills looks at both sides of the paper, then tosses it.

MILLS

Nothing. Damn it!

Somerset lays the painting face up on the floor. He pokes his finger on the painted surface. He brings the flat of his blade against it, tries to peel some of the paint.

(CONTINUED)

48 CONTINUED:

48

MILLS

The killer didn't paint the fucking thing.
Give it up.

Somerset pushes the painting away, frustrated.

SOMERSET

There must be something.

MILLS

We're screwed. He's fucking with us.

Somerset backs away from the wall, staring at the space where the painting hung. There is only a nail. He turns, looking around the office, then crosses.

Mills puts his hands to his temples, furious. He picks up a lamp and throws it to the floor, venting.

MILLS

Motherfucker!

Somerset falls to his knees and pulls open a forensics kit. He takes out a fingerprint brush, examines bristles. Mills sees.

MILLS

What?

SOMERSET

Bear with me.

Somerset goes back to the wall where the painting was. He pulls over a chair, gets on it and starts brushing near the nail.

MILLS

Oh, yeah, sure. You got to be kidding?!

SOMERSET

Just wait!

Somerset brushes with a few wider strokes. He leans close, studies the powder residue. Leans closer still. Pause.

SOMERSET

Call the print lab.

49 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

49

Tracy is asleep, dressed, with the lights still on. She stirs, then awakens and sits up slowly. She squints from the light, sweaty and uncomfortable. She looks around and listens. All she hears is traffic.

50 EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

50

FROM OUTSIDE, looking into the apartment, we see Tracy come in from the bedroom. She sees Mills and Somerset are gone.

She comes to open a window, then moves to the kitchen area.

We're still LOOKING IN at her as she starts the dishes in the sink. The RUMBLING of the SUBWAY TRAIN is HEARD. The room begins to rattle, as before. The DOGS are HEARD WHINING.

Tracy looks out into the living room, ill at ease.

51 INT. LAW OFFICE -- NIGHT

51

The male forensic from the gluttony murder scene is here. He has a magnifying glass which he's using to study a very clear fingerprint in black powder on the wall.

MALE FORENSIC

Oh, man...

MILLS (o.s.)

Talk to me.

The male forensic bites his lip, still studying.

Mills and Somerset are watching the forensic who works O.S.

MILLS

(to Somerset)

Just, honestly... have you ever seen anything like this... been involved in anything like this?

SOMERSET

No.

MALE FORENSIC (o.s.)

Well, I can tell you, boys...

The forensic steps down from a stool. Behind him, where the painting once was, are fingerprints, clear and distinct. The prints have been left to form letters which form words: HELP ME.

MALE FORENSIC

... just by looking at the shape of the underloop on these, they are not the victim's fingerprints.

52 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, PRINT LAB -- NIGHT

52

Dark. A TECHNICIAN sits before an old computer. The computer's green screen shows enlarged fingerprint patterns being aligned, compared and rejected: whir - click - whir - click - whir - click. Mills and Somerset watch, bathed in a green glow.

MILLS

He just may be nuts enough.

SOMERSET

It doesn't fit. He doesn't want us to help him stop.

MILLS

Who the hell knows? There's plenty of freaks out there doing dirty deeds they don't want to do. You know... little voices tell them bad things.

Somerset doesn't buy it. The technician adjusts a knob, then turns to the detectives.

TECHNICIAN

I've seen this baby take as long as three days to make a match, so you guys can go cross your fingers somewhere else.

53 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

53

Somerset and Mills come out from the Print Lab. A janitor is mopping the hall. The computer is HEARD WHIRring AND CLICKing onwards. Somerset sits with a groan on a couch outside the lab door. Mills flops beside him.

SOMERSET

You meant what you said to Mrs. Gould, didn't you? About catching this guy.

MILLS

And you don't?

SOMERSET

(laughs, very tired)
I wish I still thought like you.

MILLS

Then, you tell me what you think we're doing.

SOMERSET

We pick up the pieces. We take all the evidence, and all the pictures and samples. We write everything down and note what time things happened...

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

MILLS

That's all.

SOMERSET

We put it in a nice neat pile and file it away, on the slim chance it's ever needed in a courtroom.

(pause)

It's like collecting diamonds on a desert island. You keep them just in case you ever get rescued, but it's a pretty big ocean out there.

MILLS

Bullshit.

SOMERSET

Even the most promising clues usually lead only to other clues. I've seen so many corpses rolled away... unrevenged.

MILLS

I've seen the same. I'm not the country hick you seem to think I am. Don't tell me you didn't get that rush tonight... that adrenalin, like we were getting somewhere.

Somerset slumps back, takes out a cigarette and lights it.

MILLS

And, don't try to tell me it was because we found something that might play well in a courtroom.

Mills sits back on the couch, closes his eyes and crosses his arms to sleep. Somerset looks at him. Somerset puffs the cigarette. The computer is heard: whir - click - whir - click...

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

THURSDAY

54 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- EARLY MORNING

54

Mills and Somerset are fast asleep on the couch, leaning against each other. People pass and look at them strangely. A man steps in front of the couch. He reaches with both hands to slap their faces simultaneously. It's the captain leaning over them.

CAPTAIN

Wake up, Glimmer Twins. We have a winner.

55 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAYS -- EARLY MORNING

55

The captain moves down the hall, passing photocopied mugshots over his shoulder to FIVE hardened POLICE OFFICERS who follow, four men and one woman. The officers check their guns and secure bullet-proof vests with "POLICE" spray painted across them.

CAPTAIN

He goes by the name Victor. His real name is Theodore Allen. His prints were found on scene by homicide.

Somerset and Mills follow behind, drinking coffee, still waking up. The mugshots show a man, VICTOR, 25.

CAPTAIN

This guy has long, long history of serious mental illness. His parents gave him a very strict, Southern Baptist upbringing, but somewhere along the line...

Two of the cops are talking.

CAPTAIN

You two can shut-up now!

The two cops face front like huge, embarrassed school children.

CAPTAIN

Thank you, fuckheads. Now, Victor dabbled in drugs, armed robbery and assault. Spent a couple of months in prison for the attempted rape of an under-aged boy, but his lawyer made sure he didn't stay. That lawyer was the recently deceased Eli Gould. The greed murder victim.

This news causes excited chatter amongst the cops.

CAPTAIN

We're finishing this today, ladies and germs. Victor's been out of circulation a while, but there's a residence still in his name. A search warrant's being pushed through the courts as we speak.

A red-headed cop, CALIFORNIA, leads the officers.

CALIFORNIA

So, have the housing cops walk up and ring the doorbell.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

CAPTAIN

Listen, California. The media swarm's going to be there within forty-five minutes. If a shot's fired, they'll be there in ten. So, you better make good. Headlines, not obituaries.

Mills looks to Somerset while the captain continues the briefing.

MILLS

Does this do it for you?

SOMERSET

Doesn't seem like our man, does it?

MILLS

You tell me. I'm new in town.

SOMERSET

Our killer seems to have more purpose.

MILLS

The fingerprints.

SOMERSET

Yes. They were there... so, it must be.

MILLS

We'll tag along.

Somerset wants no part of that.

SOMERSET

Why would we?

MILLS

(smiles)
Satisfy our curiosity?

56 INT. MILLS' CAR -- MORNING

56

Mills drives, follows a police van. He seems pumped and ready. Somerset takes two Roloids off a fresh roll and chews them.

MILLS

You ever take one?

Somerset takes out his gun, opens it to check the load.

SOMERSET

Never in my thirty-four years, knock on wood.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

SOMERSET (cont'd)

I've only ever taken my gun out five times with the actual intention of using it. Never fired it though. Not once.

(closes his gun)

You?

MILLS

Never took a bullet. I pulled my gun once. Fired it once.

SOMERSET

And?

MILLS

It was my first one of these. We were a secondary unit. I was pretty shaky going in. I was still a rookie.

Mills takes a corner, tires screeching.

MILLS

We busted the door, looking for this junkie, right? The geek just opened fire. Another cop was hit in the arm and he went flying... like in slow motion.

(pause)

I remember riding in the ambulance. His arm was Jello. A piece of meat. He bled to death right there.

SOMERSET

(pause)

How did it end?

MILLS

I got him. I got that son-of-a-bitch. I was doing really good up till then. Lots of street busts. I've always had this weird luck... everything always went my way, but this was wild.

(pause)

I got him with one shot... right between the eyes. Next thing I know, the mayor's pinning a medal on me. Picture in the paper, whole nine yards.

Somerset unrolls the window, feels the air across his face.

SOMERSET

How was it?

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: 2

56

MILLS

I expected it to be bad, you know. I took a human life... but I slept like a baby that night. I never gave it a second thought.

SOMERSET

I think Hemingway wrote somewhere... I can't remember where, but he wrote that in order to live in a place like this, you have to have the ability to kill. I think he meant you truly must be able to do it, not just faking it, too survive.

MILLS

Sounds like he knew what he was talking about.

56A EXT. SLUM BUILDING -- MORNING

56A

Police cars jump onto the sidewalk, halting near the towering tenement's entrance. The van and Mills' car continue past.

AROUND THE REAR OF THE TENEMENT

The police van makes a corner, roaring towards a back entrance and screeching to a stop. Mills' car stops behind. Mills and Somerset get out. Cops pour from the van.

57 INT. SLUM BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- MORNING

57

The five cops from the briefing, fully geared up and ready, rifles and handguns out, move quickly up the stairs in single file. Somerset and Mills follow, guns out. Somerset is sweating bullets. Mills is wild eyed, juiced.

Crack viles and hypodermic needles on the stairs crunch under the cops' heavy boots.

58 INT. SLUM HALLWAY -- MORNING

58

The cops enter the dank hall. They move cautiously. A man is lying on the floor, looking up, helpless, with dead eyes.

A door opens and a woman peeks out. The female cop points her gun and the door slams. California, leading the group, steps up to apartment 303. He has a search warrant scotch-taped to the front of his bullet-proof vest.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

CALIFORNIA
 (to black cop)
 This is it. Give it up.

The black cop hoists a heavy battering ram to California. The other cops get on both sides of the door. Somerset and Mills hang back a few feet, watching their backs.

BLACK COP
 (points to Mills)
 Cops go before Dicks.

Many people are sticking their heads out of doors in the hall.

CALIFORNIA
 Police! Open the door!!

California brings the ram forward with a splintering THUD -- once -- twice -- the door flies open. The cops storm in.

59 INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

59

The apartment is incredibly dusty. The cops charge down the short hall into this room where a bed sits against the far wall. California moves up to the bed. Someone lies under the sheets. Three other cops move, all training their weapon on the bed.

CALIFORNIA
 Good morning, sweetheart!

A blond cop goes into another room. California moves closer to the bed, gun up.

CALIFORNIA
 Get up, now, motherfucker! NOW!

60 INT. SLUM APARTMENT, ADJOINING ROOM -- MORNING

60

The blond cop enters, gun trained, looks around in confusion.

The room's tables, chairs and floor are covered with hundreds of colorful, plastic air fresheners.

61 INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

61

Mills and Somerset enter. Somerset looks at the cops around the bed, then looks at a nearby wall. His mouth drops in horror. On the wall, written in excrement: SLOTH.

SOMERSET
 Jesus...

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED:

61

California kicks the bed, enraged.

CALIFORNIA
I said get up, Sleepyhead!

He pulls the sheets off the bed and reveals the shriveled, sore-covered form of a man who is blindfolded and tied to the bed with a thin wire which has been wrapped time and time again around the mattress and bed frame. Tubes run out from a stained loincloth around the man's waist and snake under the bed.

CALIFORNIA
Fuck me!

Mills pushes past the other cops.

MILLS
Holy shit.

The cops recoil from the stench. Somerset steps up, putting his gun away.

SOMERSET
Victor?

BLACK COP
What the hell... ?

CALIFORNIA
(to Somerset)
Check this out, Dick...

California points with his gun to the end of the man's right arm. The hand is gone, severed at the wrist long ago.

MILLS
It is Victor.

SOMERSET
(points to a cop)
Call an ambulance.

The blond cop enters from the other room.

BLOND COP
What the fuck is this?

CALIFORNIA
Somebody call a hearse, more like.

The female cop has gone to one wall where a sheet is pinned up. She pulls the sheet down. Pinned behind the sheet are fifty-two Polaroid pictures; all pictures of Victor tied to the bed, with a date written at the bottom of each picture.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 2

61

It is a visual history of Victor's physical decay.

BLOND COP
What is going on?

Mills sees the female cop looking at the pictures.

MILLS
Hey, California, get your people out.

Somerset takes out rubber gloves and puts them on.

CALIFORNIA
You heard him. Hit the hall, and don't touch anything.

Somerset replaces the sheet over Victor, but not over his head. The cops file out and Mills goes to examine the pictures. California stays by the bed with Somerset.

CALIFORNIA
It looks like he's some kind of friggin' wax sculpture or something.

Somerset places his finger along Victor's throat.

MILLS
Somerset, you... you better look here.

Mills looks at the photos in awe. Somerset joins him.

MILLS
All pictures of Victor tied to the bed.
(crouches, points)
The last one is dated three days ago.

Somerset looks at the first photo. In it, Victor is bound and gagged, but he is healthy.

SOMERSET
The first one... it's dated one year ago.
To the day.

Somerset wipes his sweaty face.

California stands by the corpse, behind Somerset and Mills. He lifts the sheet on the bed to look under it.

CALIFORNIA
Mother...

Mills kneels and lifts the sheet which had covered the pictures off the floor. There is an open shoebox underneath.

(CONTINUED)

61 CONTINUED: 3

61

MILLS

What... ?

On the side of the box: TO THE WORLD, FROM ME.

California leans close to Victor's gaunt, blindfolded face, examining with morbid curiosity.

CALIFORNIA

You got what you deserved, Victor.

Somerset leans down beside Mills. Mills looks through the shoebox. Inside are plastic, zip-lock bags. One contains small clumps of hair. One contains a yellow liquid...

MILLS

(looking at bags)

A urine sample, hair sample... stool sample. Finger nails...

(looks to Somerset)

He's laughing at us.

California is still close to Victor's face, when Victor's lips twist open and Victor lets out a loud, guttural bark.

California jerks back, falling over a chair to the floor.

Mills and Somerset reel. They see California on the ground, scared out of his mind, pointing.

CALIFORNIA

He's alive!

Somerset and Mills look towards the bed.

Victor's lips move feebly as he lets out a sick, gurgling moan.

CALIFORNIA

He's still alive!!

62 EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING -- MORNING

62

A crowd has gathered at the entrance. Mills' car, the police van and two ambulances are parked on the sidewalk.

63 INT. SLUM HALLWAY -- MORNING

63

The cops are in the hall holding neighbors at bay.

64 INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

64

Three ambulance attendants are at the bed, working on Victor. One attendant uses wire cutters to clip Victor's bonds.

65 INT. SLUM STAIRWELL -- MORNING

65

Mills and Somerset are standing in the middle of one flight of stairs. Both are highly agitated.

SOMERSET

The way this has gone till now, I wouldn't have thought it was possible, but we may have underestimated this guy.

MILLS

I want him bad. I don't just want to catch him anymore. I want to hurt him.

SOMERSET

Listen to me. He's all about playing games.

MILLS

No kidding! No fucking kidding!

SOMERSET

We have to divorce ourselves from emotions here. No matter how hard it is, we have to stay focused on the details.

MILLS

I don't know about you, but I feed off my emotions. *Character Desc.*

SOMERSET

He'll string us along all the way if we're not careful.

Mills is looking at the floor, still burning. Somerset grabs him by the jacket.

SOMERSET

Are you listening to me?

Mills pushes Somerset's hand off.

MILLS

I hear you.

There is a sudden, brilliant FLASH OF LIGHT and the SOUND of a CAMERA ADVANCING. Mills and Somerset look.

Down the stairs, a REPORTER has his camera up, pointed at them.

REPORTER

Say cheese.

He take another picture, flashbulb flashing.

(CONTINUED)

65 CONTINUED:

65

Mills goes down the stairs, grabs the reporter, a balding, almost silly looking man with thick glasses and wrinkled clothing.

MILLS

What the fuck are you doing here?

The reporter squirms, holds up a laminated press pass on a cord around his neck.

REPORTER

I'm U.P.I., officer. I have...

Mills shoves him, and the reporter stumbles a few steps, then falls to the landing below.

MILLS

That doesn't mean anything! This is a closed crime scene!

Somerset comes to pull Mills back. The shaken reporter stands.

REPORTER

You can't do this! You can't...

MILLS

Get the fuck out of here!

The reporter scrambles down the next flight, out of sight.

REPORTER (o.s.)

You'll hear from my lawyer. I've got your picture! I've got pictures of you!

Somerset yanks Mills back harder, till Mills sits on the stairs.

MILLS

How do those cockroaches get here so quick?

SOMERSET

They pay cops for the inside scoop, and they pay well.

MILLS

(calming)

Sorry about that... I just...

SOMERSET

(sarcastic)

Oh, it's alright.

Somerset starts back up the stairs.

SOMERSET

It's always impressive to see a man feeding off his emotions.

66 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

66

Somerset and Mills are with DOCTOR BEARDSLEY. Victor lies inside an oxygen tent with tubes running into him. The room is dim.

DOCTOR

A year of immobility seems about right, judging by the deterioration of the muscles and the spine. Blood tests show a whole smorgasbord of drugs in his system; from crack to heroin... even an antibiotic which must have been administered to keep the bed sores from infecting.

Mills looks into the oxygen tent.

MILLS

He hasn't said anything, or tried to express himself in any way?

DOCTOR

Even if his brain were not mush, which it is... he chewed off his own tongue long ago.

Mills winces, moves away from the bed.

SOMERSET

There's no way he'll survive?

DOCTOR

Detective, he'd die right now of shock if you were to shine a flashlight in his eyes.

Silence for a moment, then the doctor lets out a chuckle.

DOCTOR

It's funny to think... he's experienced about as much pain and suffering as anyone I've encountered... give or take... and he still has hell to look forward to.

He chuckles again, engrossed in some information on a clipboard. Mills looks to Somerset.

MILLS

Harsh.

67 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- DAY

67

A blackboard. Written in chalk, in large letters:

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED:

67

1 gluttony	5 wrath
2 greed	6 pride
3 sloth	7 lust
4 envy	

This case has taken larger quarters. What looks like a classroom with chalkboards on the walls and a podium at front has been converted to office space. Many desks and folding chairs. Only a few occupied. Much info taped up on the walls. Somerset and Mills are at their paperwork covered desks near a window.

SOMERSET

(reading one sheet)

Victor's landlord says an envelope of cash was in the office mailbox each month. He says, quote, "I never heard a single complaint from the tenant in apartment three-o-one, and nobody ever complained about him. He's the best tenant I've ever had."

MILLS

A landlord's dream tenant: a paralyzed man with no tongue.

SOMERSET

Who pays the rent on time.

Somerset turns to the typewriter, types. Mills fills out a form by hand. He make an error and tries to erase, but the paper rips. He curses, crumples the paper and throws it.

MILLS

I'm sick of sitting around waiting.

SOMERSET

This is the job.

MILLS

There must be something in this pile of garbage we can follow. I mean, Christ... do we have to let this lunatic make all the moves.

SOMERSET

It's dismissive to call him a lunatic. Don't make that mistake.

MILLS

Oh, blah, blah, blah. The guy's insane. Right now he's probably dancing around his room in a pair of his mommy's panties, singing show tunes and rubbing himself with peanut butter...

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 2

67

SOMERSET

No.

MILLS

Sooner or later his luck's going to run out.

SOMERSET

No. He's not depending on luck. You've seen that. We walked into that apartment exactly one year after he first tied Victor to the bed, to the day. To the day! Because he wanted us to.

MILLS

We don't know for sure...

SOMERSET

Yes we do. Here...

Somerset picks up the photocopy of the first note.

SOMERSET

This quote... his first words to us. It's from Milton's Paradise Lost. "Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to light... "

MILLS

And so what?

SOMERSET

Well, he's been right so far, hasn't he?

MILLS

Just because the bastard has a library card, it doesn't make him Einstein.

SOMERSET

Just, realize... the type of intestinal fortitude it must take... to keep a man bound for a full year. To connect tubes to his genitals. To sever his hand and use it to plant fingerprints. He's methodical and exacting, and worst of all, he's patient.

MILLS

What does all that matter anyway? It's not our job to figure him out, is it? It's our job to catch him.

Something clicks for Somerset. He looks away, thinking.

Mills watches him.

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: 3

67

MILLS
What?

Somerset sits. Ponders, staring off into space.

MILLS
What is it?

Somerset stands back up, takes money out of his pockets.

SOMERSET
How much money do you have?

MILLS
I don't know... like fifty.

Somerset picks up the phone and dials, still sifting through his own money. Mills doesn't know what's going on.

SOMERSET
(to Mills)
I propose a field trip.

68 INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY -- DAY

68

Somerset walks through the busy main library, goes to a group of computer terminals. Mills follows, wound up. Somerset sits at one computer and works the keyboard, hunt-and-peck.

MILLS
Somerset... what the fuck?

Several people turn to shush him. Somerset takes out a notepad.

SOMERSET
At the top of the list, we'll put Purgatory, Canterbury Tales... anything relating to the seven deadly sins. Now, what the killer might research. What would he need to study to do the things he's done? What are his other interests? For example...

INSERT -- COMPUTER SCREEN

Somerset types. On the screen: SEARCH: JACK THE RIPPER.

69 EXT. HOT DOG WORLD -- DAY

69

The restaurant's sign reads: HOT DOG WORLD, HOME OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST DOGS. A MAN is trying to give out paper advertisements. People walk out of their way to avoid him.

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

MAN
 (to people)
 Take one, you stupid fucks! Here... take one! It's a fucking coupon! Take it!

70 INT. HOT DOG WORLD -- DAY

70

Mills and Somerset are in a booth, both on the same seat on the same side of the table. They look over their list of books. Mills goes to eat a hot dog, but Somerset stops him.

SOMERSET
 They had about fifty health violations during the last inspection.

Mills throws the dog down, looks at his watch.

MILLS
 Could you at least sit across from me? I don't want people to think we're dating.

Somerset watches a GREASY MAN, wearing a black suit, enter. The man's hair is slicked back.

SOMERSET
 Give me your money.

Mills hands his money to Somerset.

MILLS
 I'm handing you this, and for some strange reason, I have the idea I should know what the fuck we're doing.

Somerset folds the money with his own into the list of books. He holds the list under the table. Greasy Man comes to sit.

GREASY MAN
 Hey, Somerset. How are you? I didn't know this was going to be a menage-a-trois.

SOMERSET
 It's not a problem.

GREASY MAN
 Only for you do I do this. Big risk here... so I figure we'll be even-up. All fair and square.

Greasy Man has his hands under the table. He gets up to leave with his hand in his pocket. He picks up Mills' dog.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

GREASY MAN

About an hour.

Greasy Man leaves, eating the hot dog.

MILLS

Well, that was money well spent.

SOMERSET

Let's go.

71 INT. PIZZA PARLOR -- DAY

71

Mills and Somerset sit with a pizza before them.

SOMERSET

By telling you this, I'm trusting you more than I trust most people.

MILLS

It'd be best if you got to the point, cause I'm about ready to punch you in the face.

Somerset leans closer to Mills, speaks quietly.

SOMERSET

It's probably nothing, but even if it is, it's no skin off our teeth. The man at Hot Dog World is a friend, in the Bureau.

MILLS

Him?

SOMERSET

For a long time, the F.B.I.'s been hooked into the library system, keeping accurate records.

MILLS

What? Assessing fines?

SOMERSET

They monitor reading habits. Not every book, but certain ones are flagged. Books about... let's say, how to build a nuclear bomb, or maybe Mein Kampf. Whoever takes out a flagged book has their library records fed to the F.B.I. from then on.

MILLS

You got to be kidding.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED:

71

SOMERSET

Flagged books cover every topic the Bureau deems questionable... communism to violent crime.

MILLS

How is this legal?

SOMERSET

Legal... illegal. These terms don't apply. I don't applaud it.

Somerset takes a bite of pizza.

SOMERSET

They can't use the information directly, but it's a useful guide. It might sound silly, but you can't get a library card without i.d. and a current phone bill.

Mills is starting to warm to it.

MILLS

So they run our list.

SOMERSET

If you want to know who's been reading Paradise Lost, Purgatory, and say... The Life and Time of Charlie Manson, the Bureau's computer will tell you. It might give us a name.

MILLS

Yeah. Some college student who's taking English 101 and just happens to be writing a paper on Twentieth Century Crime.

SOMERSET

Yeah, well... at least we're out of the office. We've got pizza.

MILLS

How do you know all about this?

SOMERSET

I don't. Neither do you.

Somerset looks up. Greasy Man is entering the pizza parlor.

72 INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- EARLY EVENING

72

Dusk. The car is parked with Somerset at the wheel and Mills beside. They look through pages of connected computer paper.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

72

MILLS

This is a waste of time.

SOMERSET

We're focusing.

MILLS

I know, I know... focusing on one little thing.

SOMERSET

(reading aloud)

The Divine Comedy. A History of Catholicism. A book called Murderers and Madmen.

He hands the sheets to Mills. Mills looks them over.

MILLS

(reading)

Modern Homicide Investigation. In Cold Blood. Of Human Bondage. Human Bondage?

SOMERSET

It's not what you think it is.

MILLS

(reads)

The Marquis de Sade and Origins of Sadism.

SOMERSET

That is.

MILLS

(reads)

The Writings of Saint Thomas Aqu...
Aquin...

SOMERSET

Saint Thomas Aquinas.

(starts the car)

He wrote about the seven deadly sins.

73 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL/HALLWAY -- EARLY EVENING

73

Somerset and Mills walk up the stairs and turn a corner into this long hall. Somerset is looking at the computer sheets.

MILLS

You're sure you're reading that right?
John Doe?

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

SOMERSET

That's what it says. Jonathan Doe.

MILLS

This is stupid. It'd be just too easy.

SOMERSET

We'll take a look at him. Talk to him.

MILLS

Sure. Uh, excuse me... are you by any chance a serial killer? Oh, you are? Well, come with us then, if it's okay.

They reach a door, apartment 6A. Somerset knocks.

MILLS

What are you going to say?

SOMERSET

tongue of yours to work.

You do the

MILLS

Who told you about my silver tongue? You been talking to my wife?

Mills knocks on the door, hard.

MILLS

This is really lame.

A CREAK is HEARD O.S. Somerset turns to look towards it...

A male figure, JOHN DOE, is standing at the stairwell, wearing a hat and standing in shadow, looking towards them. Stark still.

Somerset furrows his brow.

The John Doe reaches into his coat, lifts his arm, pointing...

SOMERSET

Mills... !

BLAM -- GUNFIRE SOUNDS, deafening, as a bullet slams into door 6A, just missing Somerset as he and Mills hit the floor.

John Doe fires again...

The bullet blows a huge hole in the wall, throwing plaster. A third bullet follows, just above Mills and Somerset, and John Doe is heard running back down the stairs.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 2

73

The gunfire's still echoing, ringing, as Mills gets up and unholsters his gun.

MILLS
Jesus Christ...

Mills scrambles to the stairwell...

IN THE STAIRWELL

Mills bounds down stairs, turns a corner and leaps down another flight. He halts on the landing, listening. John Doe can be HEARD still RUNNING, below.

IN THE HALL ABOVE

Somerset rolls and takes out his gun. He stands, dazed.

MILLS (o.s.)
(from in stairwell)
What kind of gun was it?

IN THE STAIRWELL

Somerset comes into the stairwell.

MILLS (o.s.)
(from below)
Damn it, Somerset... what kind of gun?!
How many bullets?

BELOW, IN THE STAIRWELL

Mills hurries down more stairs.

SOMERSET (o.s.)
(from above)
I don't know. Might've been a revolver.

Voices echo. Mills loses his footing, falls...

Mills hits the next landing hard, dropping his gun.

MILLS
Fuck!

Mills gets back up and picks up his gun and keeps going.

ABOVE IN THE STAIRWELL

Somerset runs down the stairs, breathing hard.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED: 3

73

MILLS (o.s.)
 (from below)
 What's he look like?

SOMERSET
 Brown hat. Tan raincoat... like a... like
 a trench coat.

BELOW IN THE STAIRWELL

Mills stops, gun ready, moves to peer over the railing, down into the space at the stairwell's center...

John Doe is below, in shadow, aiming his gun straight up...

Mills jerks back as SHOT is FIRED from below and the bullet is heard WHIZZING...

ABOVE

The railing near Somerset splinters into a million pieces, sends Somerset ducking for cover.

ANOTHER BLAST from below -- the bullet is HEARD RICOCHETING above.

BELOW

Mills is crouched, waiting as the gunshot echoes.

MILLS
 (to himself)
 Five... that's five...

He leaps up and continues down the stairs.

73A INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, LOWER HALLWAY -- EARLY EVENING

73A

Mills comes down stairs and into a hallway, falling to one knee, sliding and pointing his gun one direction -- empty hallway.

He wheels the other direction, gun hand shaking, catches a GLIMPSE of John Doe just as he disappears around a corner far down the hall. Mills gets up, looking back to the number 2 by the stairs as he books, shouting back towards the stairwell...

MILLS
 Second floor! Second floor!

Mills sprints. FOLLOW him, tearing ass...

AROUND THE CORNER

(CONTINUED)

73A CONTINUED:

73A

Mills makes the turn, full speed ahead, bringing his gun up...

Far ahead, John Doe's running...

Mills takes aim...

Ahead, between John Doe and Mills, a tenant in t-shirt and underwear comes out an apartment, looking towards John Doe, blocking the line of fire...

MILLS

Get down! Move...!

The tenant turns to Mills, confused. Mills pushes past...

Ahead, John Doe makes an abrupt halt. A woman tenant is looking out her door and John Doe grabs her and throws her into the hall. She falls as John Doe shoves his way into her apartment.

BACK AT THE STAIRWELL

Somerset comes down the stairs, tired. He runs.

AROUND THE CORNER, IN THE OTHER HALLWAY SECTION

Mills reaches the apartment Doe entered, bursting in...

74 INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT -- EARLY EVENING

74

Mills enters, gun up. It's a railroad apartment, with all the rooms adjoining in a row. At the far end of the apartment, John Doe can be seen moving out one room's window onto a fire escape just as that room's door is swinging shut.

Mills charges through the apartment, full on...

He bashes through the closed door...

75 EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING, FIRE ESCAPE -- EARLY EVENING

75

Mills leans out the window over an alleyway. BLAM -- GUNSHOT. The window above Mills' shatters and Mills pulls back.

IN THE APARTMENT

Mills stays down for a brief second.

MILLS

(to himself)

Six! That's six...

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

75

He moves back to the window, just as BLAM, BLAM, BLAM -- three more bullets rattle the window and window frame. Mills recoils.

MILLS

Seven, eight, nine... Fuck!

OUT ON THE FIRE ESCAPE

Mills leans back out, slowly, searching, gun up.

Below, John Doe runs and rounds a corner, gone.

Mills scrambles out onto the fire escape, running a few steps and then vaulting the rail... crashes down on the roof of a car parked below. The windshield cracks.

Mills jumps off and continues the pursuit...

76 EXT. CITY STREET -- EARLY EVENING

76

Mills rounds the alleyway corner into people packed streets.

Several people are running, heading several different directions.

Mills comes to a halt, his focus confused, searching desperately. Others run upon seeing his gun. Woman scream and grab up their children. Mills can't see far down the sidewalk because of all the people. He moves forward...

He jumps atop a fire hydrant, gripping a street sign for balance, trying to see further down the street.

MILLS' P.O.V. -- There he is! John Doe can be seen, far off, moving across the street, through traffic, to the opposite sidewalk.

ON THE STREET, Mills runs, into traffic, avoiding cars, down the center line. Angry drivers scream at him.

Ahead, John Doe glances back, ducking into an alley.

Mills gets to the other sidewalk, yelling for people to get out of the way...

77 EXT. CITY ALLEYWAY -- EARLY EVENING

77

Mills comes to this tight alleyway. It's dark, with a long, tall, vertical sliver of street light far ahead. Mills runs...

Charging hard onwards...

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

77

A two-by-four swings out from a hidden nook along the side of the alleyway -- slamming Mills in the face with a THWACK!!

Mills' gun hits the alley wall and clatters into a puddle.

Mills hits the dirt, on his back, nose broken and split, face bloodied. He cries out, rolling to his side, clutching his face.

The two-by-four is dropped. John Doe's feet cross a short distance. Doe's hand reaches to pick up Mills' gun. (We never see John Doe's face.)

Mills still lies on his side, stunned, spitting blood and cursing, when he feels the barrel of his gun against the side of his face. Mills freezes.

John Doe moves the gun slowly across Mills' face, till the barrel reaches Mills' mouth. The barrel is inserted between his lips.

The gun's hammer is pulled back.

Mills quakes, tries to open his eyes, but he's blinded by the blood from his broken nose. For an instant, there is a sudden, BRIGHT FLASH of LIGHT.

After a long moment, the gun withdraws. From O.S., the bullets fall out of Mills gun onto his chest.

The gun drops. John Doe runs to the sliver of light. He's gone.

Mills lies for a long moment, gasping. At the alley's entrance, Somerset appears.

SOMERSET

Mills...

Mills rolls, shaken, feeling to pick up his bullets and trying to rub the blood from his eyes with his sleeve. Somerset arrives.

SOMERSET

Are you alright?

MILLS

I'm fine.

SOMERSET

What happened?

Mills gets up, collects his gun and pockets it, then walks past Somerset, heading back.

SOMERSET

Mills... ?

Mills starts running. Somerset runs to follow.

78 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL/HALLWAY -- EVENING

78

Mills moves from the stairwell, driven, his nose still bleeding, heading for apartment 6A. Somerset takes Mills arm, but Mills pulls away and keeps going.

SOMERSET

Wait... just wait.

MILLS

It was him.

SOMERSET

You can't go in.

Somerset grabs Mills again and Mills shoves him off.

MILLS

The hell I can't! We get in there and we can stop him.

SOMERSET

We need a warrant.

MILLS

We have probable cause now.

Somerset grabs Mills and shoves him against the wall.

SOMERSET

Think about it...

MILLS

What the fuck is wrong with you?

SOMERSET

Think about how we got here!

Somerset holds the crumpled computer paper in Mills' face.

SOMERSET

We can't tell anyone about this. We can't tell them about the Bureau, so we have no reason for being here.

Mills stops struggling, breathing hard, seething, trembling.

MILLS

By the time we clear a warrant someone else is going to be dead.

(CONTINUED)

78 CONTINUED:

78

SOMERSET

Think it through. If we leave a hole like this, we'll never prosecute. He'll walk.

(pause)

We have to come up with some excuse for knocking on this door.

MILLS

Okay... okay... get off.

Somerset releases Mills. Mills looks around the hall, then goes right to door 6A and KICKS IT IN -- the door jam splinters and the door swings open to darkness before swinging back, half-shut.

SOMERSET

You stupid son of a...

MILLS

No point in arguing anymore...

Mills strides down the short end of the hall, towards a window.

MILLS

(pointing back)

Unless you can fix that.

Mills stops, looking out the window. It overlooks a weedy, overgrown courtyard where a THIN VAGRANT lies asleep on the concrete. Mills turns, looking back to Somerset.

MILLS

How much money do we have left?

79 INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- NIGHT

79

On a stairwell landing, Somerset watches the thin vagrant from the courtyard talk to a uniformed POLICEMAN who writes on a clipboard, taking the statement.

THIN VAGRANT

So, I... I noticed this guy going out... going out a lot when those murders were happening. So... so I...

The vagrant's clinging to the rail, drunk and out of it. Mills is down further on the stairs, high strung, chomping at the bit.

MILLS

So, you called Detective Somerset, right?

(CONTINUED)

79 CONTINUED:

79

THIN VAGRANT
Yeah, I... I called the detective.
Because, because this guy seemed... creepy.
And... and...

MILLS
(urging him on)
And...

THIN VAGRANT
And, one of the murders was over there...
over... nearby here. I... I called the
cops...

The vagrant wipes drool from his lips. Mills comes to grip him so he doesn't fall, searching the policeman's face for suspicion.

MILLS
I told you the rest. You got it?

POLICEMAN
(still writing)
Yeah, whatever.

SOMERSET
Have him sign it.

The policeman holds the clipboard and pen out. Mills takes the pen and guides the vagrant's hand, almost signing it for him.

MILLS
Great. Is that it?

The policeman nods. Mills grips the vagrant and leads him down the stairs in a hurry, around a bend. Mills looks up to be sure they're out of sight, takes a wad of cash and shoves it in the vagrant's pocket.

MILLS
Go drink yourself happy.

Mills quickly guides the vagrant on his way, then turns and rushes up the stairs, taking them two at a time.

80 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- NIGHT

80

Mills pushes door 6A open, putting on rubber gloves. He steps in with Somerset behind. Somerset turns back to the policeman.

SOMERSET
(to policeman)
Wait outside.

(CONTINUED)

80 CONTINUED:

80

Somerset closes the door most of the way. Mills hits a switch on the wall and a lamp illuminates a desk.

The desk is in the center of the room, facing them. The room is bizarre. All the walls are painted black. All the large, curtainless windows are painted over.

Somerset puts on his gloves. Mills walks to the desk.

The desktop is rather tidy. Mills opens the middle desk drawer. It's empty except for The Holy Bible.

Somerset moves along shelves of books, looking at the spines. Lots of thick, oversized art volumes. A HISTORY OF THEOLOGY. HANDBOOK OF FIREARMS. HISTORY OF THE WORLD. SUMMA THEOLOGICA. UNITED STATES CRIMINAL LAW REVIEW.

At the desk, Mills opens another drawer. It's filled with at least forty empty aspirin bottles. He opens the next drawer and finds a rosary and several boxes of bullets.

Somerset comes to look at John Doe's "bed." No mattress. It's only a metal frame and springs with a worn sheet across it. The sheet is sweat stained and dotted by stains of rust.

Somerset walks around the bed to a narrow table against the wall. The table contains a strange tableau, like a mini stage, hand-made of cardboard and pasted Communion wafers. A human hand immersed in a jar of liquid is the centerpiece.

SOMERSET

(quiet, to himself)

Victor.

Above this, there's a clutter of pinned up articles, pictures and pencil drawings, all tight together and overlapping.

Mills picks up a small piece of paper from a letter holder. It's a pink receipt from WILD BILL'S LEATHER SHOP. Written: "CUSTOM JOB. \$502.64. PAID IN FULL." Mills puts the receipt down.

Somerset walks to a black door. Opens it.

81 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

81

Somerset enters. A ceiling light is on. Bare bulb. There are bookshelves filled with notebooks. Thousands of notebooks.

82 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- NIGHT

82

Mills moves from the desk to a hall. He tries a light switch, but it does nothing. He walks...

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

It's dark. A rather long hall. The only light is a red glow seeping from under the bottom of the closed door ahead.

83 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

83

Somerset takes one notebook down. It is a thick composition book with an unlabeled cover.

Inside, the pages are filled with small handwritten sentences, thumb-nail sketches and blurry, glued in photographs; small photos, seemingly cut from contact sheets. The sketches, pictures and writings take up every single inch.

84 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, HALL -- NIGHT

84

Mills reaches the door at the end of the hall. He turns the knob and pushes the door open. He's bathed in red light.

85 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- NIGHT

85

Mills enters. He looks around, slowly. Stunned.

86 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

86

Somerset takes down another notebook and flips through the pages. Same as the first; filled to the brim with words and sketches.

Somerset crosses to another shelf and pulls another notebook. Same deal. Somerset looks around.

SOMERSET

Jesus.

MILLS (o.s.)

Somerset...

Somerset looks towards the door.

MILLS (o.s.)

Somerset, come here!

87 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, HALL/BATHROOM -- NIGHT

87

Somerset comes down the hall.

MILLS (o.s.)

We had him, damn it.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

Somerset reaches the bathroom where Mills stands looking up at the wall. The room has been converted into a dark room lit by red bulbs, with strips of film hanging from the ceiling.

SOMERSET

What are you talking about?

MILLS

We had him.

There are hundreds of prints on the walls and hanging from drying wires. Somerset looks around, trying to understand...

Pictures of John Doe's victims, alive and dead. Grotesque photos, of their pleading faces, and their dead bodies. Close shots of eyes, fingers and mouths. Mills sits on the closed toilet, throwing something into the nearby sink and resting his head in his hands.

MILLS

The pass was a fake.

In the sink -- it's a laminated press pass on a neck cord.

On the walls, more pictures: of the crime scenes, but from the outside looking in. Long shots. Police cars. Ambulances. Uniformed officers putting up police barrier ribbons outside buildings. The coroner's wagon.

Somerset stares at them, taking them in, realizing....

MILLS

We had him and we let him go.

In the backgrounds of the pictures: Somerset and Mills. In another: Mills crossing the street. In another: Somerset and Mills getting out of Somerset's car.

One photo, close shot, shows Mills and Somerset on the stairwell of the building where Victor's body was found. It is the picture taken by the balding, almost silly looking reporter.

88 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- NIGHT

88

A male forensic uses tongs to remove Victor's hand from the jar of liquid. He places the hand in a clear plastic evidence bag.

The forensic walks away with the hand, past a FEMALE SKETCH ARTIST who puts the finishing touches on an accurate drawing of the balding, almost silly looking reporter who wears thick glasses, now known as John Doe.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

SKETCH ARTIST

You're sure this is him?

Mills stands over the artist. Two deputy detectives, SARA and BILLY, work along with two other forensics searching, photographing and dusting.

MILLS

Just put it in circulation.

SKETCH ARTIST

You got it. Tomorrow morning, this city's good citizens will be on the lookout for Elmer Fudd.

SARA

(coming to Mills)

We can't find anything to hang on to. No paystubs, no appointment books or calenders. Not even an address book. And, you're not going to believe this...

MILLS

Keep looking.

SARA

It's just... we haven't found any fingerprints yet. Not a single one.

MILLS

You know, you're right, I don't believe you. Keep looking.

Mills walks away.

89 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- NIGHT

89

Somerset and three uniformed officers are looking through the notebooks on the shelves. Somerset squints at the notebook in his hand, shaking his head as he reads. Mills enters. Somerset looks up and closes the notebook.

SOMERSET

We could use about fifty more men here.

MILLS

I'm trying, alright? Just tell me what we've got.

Somerset pauses briefly at Mills' abruptness.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

SOMERSET

Well, there are at least five thousand notebooks in this room, and near as I can tell, each notebook contains two hundred and fifty pages.

MILLS

Then, he must write about these murders.

SOMERSET

(opens notebook, reads)

"What sick, ridiculous, puppets we are, and what a gross, little stage we dance on. What fun we have, dancing and fucking, not a care in the world. Not knowing that we are nothing. We are not what was intended."

Somerset turns a few pages.

SOMERSET

(reads)

"On the subway today, a man came to me to start a conversation. He made small talk, this lonely man, talking about the weather and other things. I tried to be pleasant and accommodating, but my head began to hurt from his banality. I almost didn't notice it had happened, but I suddenly threw up all over him. He was not pleased, and I couldn't help laughing."

Somerset closes the notebook.

SOMERSET

No dates indicated, placed on the shelves in no discernible order. It's just his mind poured out on paper. I don't think it's going to give us any specifics.

MILLS

Looking around... I've got a bad feeling these murders are his life's work.

A PHONE is HEARD RINGING in another room. Mills looks.

90 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- NIGHT

90

Everyone's looking around, and at each other, trying to find the source of the RINGING. Mills and Somerset enter, baffled. Mills looks to Sara. She shrugs and shakes her head.

Everyone searches. PHONE RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

Mills gets on his hands and knees.

MILLS

Here...

Mills crawls under John Doe's "bed." He comes back out with a rotary phone. Someone throws him a micro-cassette recorder. Mills turns the recorder on, makes sure it's running, then picks up the phone with the recorder to the earpiece.

MILLS

(into phone)

Hello.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

(from phone)

I admire you. I don't know how you found me, but imagine my surprise. I respect you detectives more every day.

MILLS

(into phone)

Okay, John, let's...

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

(from phone)

No, no! You listen. I'll be readjusting my schedule, in light of today's little setback. I just had to call and express my admiration. Sorry I had to hurt one of you, but I didn't have a choice. You will accept my apology, won't you?

Mills says nothing, containing his anger.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

I feel like saying more... but I don't want to ruin the surprise.

John Doe hangs up. Mills puts down the phone.

91 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- LATER NIGHT

91

Mills and Somerset stand looking up at the many surrounding photos of horror and misery.

MILLS

You were right.

Somerset looks to Mills.

MILLS

He's preaching.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

SOMERSET

(nods)

These murders are his sermon to all of us.
To all us sinners.

The door opens. It's the captain.

CAPTAIN

It's been a long day, kids. Go home. Just
make sure you sleep with the phone between
your legs.

92 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

92

Somerset winds his metronome. PHONE RINGS. Somerset does not
want to answer it, but does.

SOMERSET

(into phone)

Hello.

TRACY (v.o.)

(from phone)

Hello, William? It's Tracy.

SOMERSET

(into phone)

Tracy, is everything alright?

TRACY (v.o.)

Yes, yes, everything's fine.

SOMERSET

Where's David?

TRACY (v.o.)

He's in the shower, in the other room. I'm
sorry to call like this.

SOMERSET

It's alright, I guess.

TRACY (v.o.)

I, um... I need to talk to you. I need to
talk to someone. Can you meet me
somewhere... maybe tomorrow morning?

SOMERSET

I really don't understand.

TRACY (v.o.)

I feel stupid, but you're the only person I
know here. There's no one else...

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

I just...
SOMERSET

TRACY (v.o.)
Can't you get away, for a little while?

SOMERSET
I don't know, with this case.

TRACY
If you can, please call me. Please. I
have to go now... goodnight.

Tracy hangs up. Somerset looks at the phone, wondering.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

FRIDAY

93 INT. COFFEE CAFE -- MORNING

93

Somerset sits in the window booth with Tracy. The cafe is noisy.
Tracy stares into her coffee while she stirs it.

TRACY
I mean, you know this city. You've been
here for so long.

SOMERSET
It's a hard place.

TRACY
I don't sleep very well.

Somerset tries to be understanding, but glances at his watch.

SOMERSET
I feel strange being here with you...
without David knowing.

TRACY
I'm sorry, I only...

Two young punks step up to the window outside and look in at
Tracy. One flicks his tongue rapidly. Tracy looks away.
Somerset takes out his badge and holds it against the window.
One punk gives the finger and the other spits on the window.
They leave, laughing. Tracy tries to smile.

TRACY
Perfect example.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

SOMERSET

You have to put blinders on sometimes.
Most times.

TRACY

I don't know why I asked you to come.

SOMERSET

Talk to him about it. He'll understand if
you tell him how you feel.

TRACY

I can't be a burden, especially now. I
know I'll get used to things. I guess I
wanted to know what someone who's lived
here thinks. Upstate, it was a completely
different environment.

(pause)

I don't know if David told you, but I teach
fifth grade, or did.

SOMERSET

He mentioned it.

Tracy seems very upset, near tears.

TRACY

I've been going to some of the schools,
looking for work, but the conditions here
are... horrible.

SOMERSET

You should look into private schools.

TRACY

I don't know...

Tracy looks up, wipes at her eyes.

SOMERSET

What's really bothering you?

Tracy bites her lip.

TRACY

David and I are... going to have a baby.

Somerset sits back, the expression of soothing concern on his
face disappearing.

SOMERSET

Oh, Tracy... I have to tell you, I'm not
the one to talk to about this.

(CONTINUED)

TRACY

I hate this city.

Somerset sighs. He takes out a cigarette, but thinks better of it and puts it back. He looks out the window.

SOMERSET

If you're thinking...

(pause)

I had a relationship once, very much like a marriage. And, she was going to have our child. This is a long time ago. She and I had decided we were going to make the choice together... whether to keep the baby.

Tracy looks at Somerset.

SOMERSET

Well, I got up one morning and went to work... just like any other day, except it was my first since hearing about the baby. And, I... I felt this fear washing over me. I looked around, and I thought, how can I raise a child surrounded by all this? How can a child grow up here?

(pause)

So, I told her I didn't want us to have it, and over the next few weeks, I convinced her it was wrong. I mean... I wore her down, slowly...

TRACY

I want to have children. It's just...

SOMERSET

I can tell you now, I know... I'm positive I made the right decision. I'm positive. But, there's never a day that passes that I don't wish I had decided differently.

Somerset reaches and takes Tracy's hand.

SOMERSET

If you... don't keep the baby, if that's what you decide, then, never tell him you were pregnant. I mean that. Never.

(pause)

The relationship will wither and die.

Tracy nods, tears welling up again. Somerset smiles a bit.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED: 3

93

SOMERSET

But, if you do decide to have the baby, then, at that very moment, when you're absolutely sure, tell David. Tell him at that exact second, and then spoil that kid every chance you get.

There are tears in Somerset's eyes.

SOMERSET

That's all the advice I can give you, Tracy. I don't even know you.

He smiles again, wipes his own tears.

TRACY

William...

Somerset's beeper begins BEEPING. He takes it out and stands, wanting to leave. Tracy gets up and kisses him on the cheek.

TRACY

Thank you.

Somerset starts to back away.

TRACY

Keep in touch after you're gone, William. Please.

Somerset nods, raises a hand to say goodbye as he leaves.

94 INT. WILD BILL'S LEATHER SHOP -- DAY

94

Mills and Somerset are on one side of the counter and WILD BILL is on the other. Wild Bill is shirtless and covered in tattoos. He has a thick scar running down the center of his forehead and down his cheek. Leather belts, whips and jackets hang on the walls and from the ceiling.

WILD BILL

Yeah, he picked it up last night.

Wild Bill holds the pink receipt from John Doe's apartment.

MILLS

This was definitely him?

Mills points to the rendering of John Doe he holds.

WILD BILL

Yeah, John Doe. Easy name to remember.

(CONTINUED)

94 CONTINUED:

94

SOMERSET

What was this job you did for him?

WILD BILL

I got a picture of it here. It's a real sweet piece...

Wild Bills pulls a box from behind the counter, digs in it.

WILD BILL

I figured he must be one of those performance artists. That's what I figured. Like one of those guys who pisses in a cup on stage and drinks it. Performance art.

Wild Bill hands a Polaroid to Mills. We do not see it yet.

MILLS

Oh... give me a break.

WILD BILL

I think I undercharged him.

SOMERSET

(looks at photo)
You built this for him? You build this?

WILD BILL

I've built weirder shit than that. So what?

A POLICEMAN enters the store.

POLICEMAN

Detectives... we have a situation.

Mills and Somerset follow the cop out.

WILD BILL

Hey, my picture...!

Wild Bill watches them go, scratches his thick scar.

WILD BILL

Fucking pigs.

95 EXT. THE HOT HOUSE MASSAGE PARLOR -- DAY

95

It's a madhouse outside The Hot House, a bright red storefront bordered on both sides by porno theater after porno theater. A crowd is gathered around a police action in progress.

(CONTINUED)

95 CONTINUED:

95

Cops have formed a barrier, holding back the crowd and creating an aisle from the entrance of The Hot House to the back of a jail-van. Cops and detectives are escorting various men, women and transvestites into the large vehicle. The crowd, consisting of the dregs of society, is shouting. Some people are spitting and throwing trash at the cops.

96 INT. THE HOT HOUSE, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

96

TWO COPS are in front of a glass and steel cage. Inside the cage is a fat, BALD MAN with a wall of sex toys behind him.

BALD MAN

Just wait! Just wait!

One cop pounds his nightstick against the glass.

COP

Get out of the fucking booth!

BALD MAN

Just wait! I'll come out, just wait!

97 INT. THE HOT HOUSE, CORRIDORS -- DAY

97

All the lights are red and the walls are painted red. Mills and Somerset follow a THIRD COP through the twisting corridors. POLICEMEN can be HEARD SHOUTING and MAKING ARRESTS. ROCK MUSIC PLAYS, throbbing. They come to a door.

THIRD COP

I don't want to go in there again.

98 INT. RED ROOM -- DAY

98

Mills and Somerset enter. ROCK MUSIC CONTINUES, LOUD. A strobe light flashes from the ceiling. TWO AMBULANCE ATTENDANTS are in the room. The first attendant is placing a sheet over a bed, hiding the corpse of a blonde woman. The second attendant is trying to examine the pupils of a CRAZED MAN, 55, who is naked and wrapped in a sheet. A SWEATING COP holds crazed man down.

CRAZED MAN

He... he... he made me do it!

SECOND ATTENDANT

I have to look at you. I have to look at you!

LUST is scratched into the red paint on the wall in big letters.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

Mills and Somerset move towards the covered body.

FIRST ATTENDANT

(to Mills and Somerset)

You're not going to want to see this more than once.

CRAZED MAN

He had a gun! He made me do it!

The sheet is lifted for the detectives. They grimace at what they see. We do not see. Somerset closes his eyes and turns away. The first attendant replaces the sheet.

Mills steps back, takes out his handkerchief and sucks on it. He looks at the crazed man. The crazed man jerks around while the second attendant preps a needle.

SECOND ATTENDANT

He's in shock, man. He's gone.

CRAZED MAN

Take this thing off me... take it off!
Please, take this thing off me!

The sweating cop keeps his controlling grip on the crazed man.

CRAZED MAN

Get it off... oh, God!

SWEATING COP

(to Mills and Somerset)

You're the detectives, right? Right?
Well, you better see this!

Somerset's facing the wall. Crazed man's still yelling.

SWEATING COP

Hey... you better see what's strapped onto this guy!

Mills turns to the cop.

MILLS

We've already seen it!

99 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, INTERROGATION ROOM ONE -- DAY

99

A Polaroid on a table. It is the photo Wild Bill gave to Mills. It's a picture of a belt, made with extra leather straps so it can be worn securely around the groin. It is a strap-on phallus, except there is no plastic protuberance. Instead, there is a metal knife -- it's a strap-on butcher's knife.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

CRAZED MAN

And... and... and he said... he asked me if I was married. And, I could see he had a gun in his hand.

SOMERSET

Where was the girl?

CRAZED MAN

What? What?

SOMERSET

Where was the prostitute? Where was she?

The crazed man leans forward in his chair.

CRAZED MAN

She was... she was on the bed. She was just sitting on the bed.

SOMERSET

Who tied her down? You or him?

CRAZED MAN

He had a gun. He had a gun... and he made it happen. He made me do it.

(sobbing)

He made me put that... that thing on. Oh, Christ. He made me wear it... and... and he told me to fuck her. He had the gun in my mouth.

The man slides to the floor and hides his face in his hands.

CRAZED MAN

The gun was in my throat.

Somerset looks up at the mirror in the room. He stands and picks up the Polaroid as two cops enter to collect the crazed man.

100 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, INTERROGATION ROOM TWO -- DAY

100

Mills stands in this dirty room with the dirty, bald man from The Hot House's reception area booth.

MILLS

You didn't hear any screams? Nothing? You didn't notice when this man walked in with a package under his arm?!

BALD MAN

No, I didn't.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED:

100

MILLS

You didn't notice anything wrong? Nothing seemed strange to you?

BALD MAN

Everybody who goes in there has a package under his arm. Some guys are carrying suitcases full of stuff. And, screams? There're screams coming out of there everyday. It goes with the territory, little boy!

MILLS

You like what you do for a living? You like the things you see?

The bald man smiles strangely.

BALD MAN

No. No, I don't. But, that's life.

101 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

101

The blackboard:

1 gluttony	5 wrath
2 greed	6 pride
3 sloth	7 lust
4 envy	

The case has continued its growth. All the desks are now occupied. More information plastering the walls. Phones ring. Through a window into another room, one cop can be seen being interviewed by several eager reporters. Much activity.

Amongst all this, at their desks, Somerset and Mills are shell-shocked, silent. Somerset is looking at the blackboard. Mills is staring out an open window.

102 INT. SPORTS BAR -- NIGHT

102

Somerset and Mills sit with a full pitcher of beer. The jukebox plays for the other customers. The walls of the bar are covered with trophies, plaques and other victory symbols.

SOMERSET

He'd come home and read me these morbid crime stories. Murders in the Rue Morgue. Le Fanu's Green Tea. My mother would give him hell because he was keeping me up till all hours.

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

MILLS

Sounds like a father who wanted his son to follow in his footsteps.

SOMERSET

One birthday he gave me this brand new hardcover book, "The Century of the Detective," by Jurgen Thorwald. It traced the history of deduction as a science, and it sealed my fate, because it was real, not fiction. That a drop of blood or a piece of hair could solve a crime... it was incredible to me.

Somerset drinks, then pours more beer. Pause.

SOMERSET

You know... there's not going to be a happy ending to this. It's not possible.

MILLS

If we get him, I'll be happy enough.

SOMERSET

No. Face it now. Stop thinking it's good versus evil.

MILLS

How can you say that? Especially after today?

SOMERSET

You tell me... a man has beaten his wife to death, or the wife murdered the husband. Wash the blood off the walls. Put the killer in jail. Who won?

MILLS

You do your job...

SOMERSET

Where's the victory?

MILLS

Follow the law and do the best you can. It's all there.

SOMERSET

If we caught John Doe and he were the devil, if he were actually Satan, that might live up to our expectations. But, this is not the devil. It's just a man.

(CONTINUED)

MILLS

Why don't you shut up for a while? You bitch and complain... you think you're preparing me for hard times? You're not. You quit, but I'm staying to fight.

SOMERSET

Who are you fighting for? People don't want a champion. They just want to play lotto and eat cheeseburgers.

MILLS

Christ... how did you end up like this, huh?

SOMERSET

It wasn't one thing, if that's what you mean. It's just... I can't live anymore where ignorance is embraced and nurtured as if it were a virtue.

MILLS

And, you're so much better than everyone, right?

SOMERSET

Wrong. I sympathize completely. Apathy is a solution. In a lot of ways, it's easier to lose yourself in drugs than it is to cope with life. Easier to steal something than to earn it. Easier to beat a child than to raise it, because it takes so much work to love. To care.

MILLS

We're talking about people who are mentally ill. We're...

SOMERSET

No. I'm not. I'm talking about everyday life here. If you want to survive, you can't afford to be this naive.

MILLS

Fuck you. Listen to yourself. You say, "The problem with people is they don't care, so I don't care about people." It doesn't make any sense, and you know why...?

SOMERSET

But, you do care?

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: 3

102

MILLS

Damn right.

SOMERSET

And you're going to make a difference?

MILLS

(furious)

Yeah, "naive" as that may sound. And, I don't think you quit because you believe the things you're saying. I think you want to believe them, because you quit. You want me to agree with you: "Yeah, you're right, Somerset. This is fucked. Let's go live in a fucking log cabin." Well, I don't agree with you. I can't afford to. I'm staying.

Mills gets up, throws some money on the table.

MILLS

Thanks for the beer.

Mills leaves, other patrons watching him.

Somerset takes out a cigarette and goes to light it. The lighter won't light. When it finally does, Somerset's hand is trembling.

103 INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

103

Mills comes quietly into the dark bedroom. Tracy is asleep on the bed. Mills takes off his suit jacket, puts it down.

He sits on a chair and unties one shoe, takes it off, then looks at Tracy. Looks at her a long moment.

He puts the shoe on the floor and goes to get on the bed. He kisses his wife's forehead, kisses her cheek, then wraps his arms around her. He holds her tight, kisses her again. Tracy stirs.

TRACY

Honey?

Mills runs his fingers along her face.

MILLS

I love you.

Mills holds her tighter. She wraps her arms around him. They lie together, clinging, holding tighter still.

- 104 OMIT 104
- 105 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT 105
- Somerset is in bed. The metronome is sounding; tick... tick... tick... The SOUNDS of the CITY are LOUD.
- Somerset closes his eyes, concentrates on the metronome. Tick... tick... tick... TWO MEN are HEARD outside, YELLING at each other. Somerset rolls over, restless. Tick... tick... tick...
- GLASS is HEARD SHATTERING. Somerset opens his eyes. MORE GLASS, bottles being smashed. Somerset sits up. He reaches over, grabs the metronome and throws it against the wall.
- 106 INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT 106
- THWACK. Somerset's switchblade hits the dartboard on the wall and the blade embeds.
- Somerset crosses the room, still dressed for bed. He is tense. He takes the switchblade from the dartboard, paces back across the room, turns, holds the blade, then throws. The blade sticks.
- Somerset paces back to the dartboard, pulls the blade, paces back, throws the knife. THWACK. He goes to the board, gets the blade, paces, turns, throws. THWACK.
- INSERT -- TITLE CARD
- SATURDAY
- 107 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- DAY 107
- A clock on the wall says 12:30.
- 108 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- DAY 108
- Three deputy detectives are reading John Doe's notebooks. PHONE RINGS from the other room.
- 109 INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- DAY 109
- One deputy enters. He goes to the phone near the bed. The phone's been hooked into recording device with a speaker and tracing equipment. The deputy turns everything on, answers.
- JOHN DOE (v.o.)
(through speaker)
I've gone and done it again.

110 INT. LUXURY APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- DAY

110

Somerset is looking around this femininely decorated bathroom with a forensic, GIL. Both wear rubber gloves.

In the sink, objects covered in blood: a pair of scissors, a hypodermic needle, first-aid tape and gauze bandages, a bottle of anesthetic, a straight razor and a tube of super glue.

GIL

He really did a number on her, didn't he?

Gil opens the plastic shower curtain and looks into the tub. The tub and shower wall are splattered with blood. The tub has a few inches of water in it. The water is cloudy red. A few bits of tape and gauze float in it. Gil jiggles the drain's knob. Some bubbles pop up from the clogged drain.

111 INT. LUXURY APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- DAY

111

PRIDE is written in lipstick on a full length mirror. Below that: I DID NOT KILL HER. SHE WAS GIVEN A CHOICE.

Mills and Dr. O'Neill are in the room. O'Neill goes through his black bag. They're by a bed where a WOMAN lies dead under a blanket. The woman's head is sloppily bandaged with heavy white gauze and tape. The gauze is stained by spots of blood. Only her eyes and mouth have been left uncovered. A zoo's worth of stuffed animals have been placed across the bed. The woman holds a stuffed unicorn.

Somerset enters from the bathroom as Mills reaches to take the unicorn from the woman's grasp.

There is a cordless phone in her left hand, and her hand clings to it.

Her right hand holds a bottle of prescription pills. Mills tries to open the fingers of this hand with a tongue depressor, but they are super-glued to the bottle. Mills turns the woman's hand slightly so two red pills roll out onto the blanket.

SOMERSET

Sleeping pills.

Mills examines the left hand. The phone is glued into it.

O'Neill steps up, holding a thin pair of silver scissors. He leans to slide the scissors under the woman's bandage mask, starts cutting.

Somerset goes to a dresser where the woman's purse sits open. He takes out the driver's license and looks at the photo. The woman in the picture is stunningly beautiful.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

SOMERSET

You see what he did?

Mills is watching the doctor work.

MILLS

He cut her up and dressed the wounds.

SOMERSET

(holds up his left hand)
Call for help, and you'll live. But,
you'll be disfigured.

(raises right hand)

Or, put yourself out of your misery.

O'Neill removes the bandages. Mills looks away. We do not see.
O'Neill looks to the detectives.

O'NEILL

He cut off her nose to spite her face, and
he did it very recently.

112 EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

112

Mills' car pulls up in front of the precinct house. Mills and
Somerset get out. They wade through cars towards the old
precinct house building.

SOMERSET

I've decided to stay on this, till it's
over. Till it's either done or we can both
see it's never going to finish.

Mills remains impassive.

MILLS

Oh, you want to stay now?

SOMERSET

One of two things will happen. We're
either going to get John Doe, or he'll
finish his series of seven, and this case
will go on for years.

MILLS

You think you're doing me a big favor by
staying?

SOMERSET

I'm requesting you keep me on as your
partner a few more days. You'd be doing me
the favor.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

112

Mills walks on.

MILLS
You knew I'd say yes.

SOMERSET
No, actually, I wasn't sure at all.

Somerset and Mills climb the stairs of the precinct house. Behind them, in the street, John Doe's car pulls up and parks.

Cars behind begin BEEPING. People behind begin cursing and screaming for him to move.

John Doe steps out, his brown work boots, pants and shirttails are splattered with blood.

He walks towards the precinct house, hands in his pockets, like he's out for a stroll. People on the sidewalk avoid him.

113 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, RECEIVING LOBBY -- DAY

113

Mills and Somerset walk past booking cubicles and benches of handcuffed low-lives. Junkies are being led through by uniformed cops. The place is swimming with activity. The two detectives head to the wide duty desk at the end of the room.

SOMERSET
As soon as this is over, I'm gone.

MILLS
Big surprise.

They pass through a gate and Somerset goes towards a staircase leading upstairs. Mills stops at the duty desk. Other cops are vying for the DUTY SERGEANT'S attention.

MILLS
Mills and Somerset are on the premises.

SERGEANT
Wonder-fucking-ful.

Another PLAIN CLOTHES COP behind the duty desk leans over to hold out a few phone-message note to Mills.

PLAIN CLOTHES COP
Your wife called this morning. Do us a favor and get yourself an answering machine, how 'bout it?

Mills nods and waves dismissively, pocketing the messages without looking at them and walking to follow Somerset.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED:

113

JOHN DOE (o.s.)

Detective.

Mills heads towards the stairs.

JOHN DOE (o.s.)

Detective!

Mills looks back... stops.

John Doe stands inside the precinct house doors. He gives a very slight smile.

JOHN DOE

I know you.

Somerset stops, looks back down the stairs.

Mills is staring at Doe, not comprehending.

Doe holds up his arms as if to say, "Presto, here I am." All eyes go to the blood-soaked figure of John Doe. There comes a sudden, near-silence in the room.

One UNIFORMED COP takes out his gun, points it at John Doe.

UNIFORMED COP

It's him!

Several other cops drop what they're doing and draw weapons.

Mills, still off balance, takes out his own gun, walking back through the gate. He points the gun at John Doe.

MILLS

Get down. Get down on the floor.

Cops move slowly in on Doe from all sides.

ANOTHER COP

You heard him, fuckface. Get down!

Somerset comes back through the gate.

SOMERSET

Be careful!

John Doe gets down on his knees, hands in the air. Mills, pulse pounding, steps up, gun in both hands. Not too close.

MILLS

Down! Face on the floor!

ONE COP comes from behind and nudges Doe with his foot.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: 2

113

ONE COP

Spread your legs and get your hands out in front of you!

John Doe lies on his stomach, obeying. Mills comes up and puts his gun right against Doe's head.

MILLS

Don't move. Don't move an inch.

One cop begins frisking Doe. Another comes to put on cuffs. Somerset comes to Mills' side.

SOMERSET

I don't believe it.

JOHN DOE

(to Somerset)

Hello.

The cop putting on the handcuffs looks up at Somerset and Mills.

COP

What the fuck is this... ?

The cop holds up Doe's cuffed hands. Doe winces. Every single one of Doe's fingers has a bandage wrapped around it.

John Doe tries to muster a smile, his face pressed against the floor, glasses askew, gun at his temple.

JOHN DOE

(to Mills)

I want to speak with my lawyer.

114 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, OBSERVATION ROOM -- DAY

114

Mills holds a fingerprint card. The black ink prints are just useless blobs, smeared with blood.

Mills, Somerset and the Captain stand in darkness. Mills looks up from the print card through a two-way mirror into an interrogation room.

In the interrogation room, John Doe sits, handcuffed to the wall. This is not some superhuman serial killer.

He looks more like an eccentric college professor, not seething with anger, but looking around with calm, almost lazy eyes. The lawyer, MARK SWARR, sits taking notes and talking with Doe.

(CONTINUED)

Handwritten note: *Handwritten note: "This is not some superhuman serial killer."*

114 CONTINUED:

114

CAPTAIN

He cuts off the skin of his fingertips. That's why we can't find a single usable print in the apartment. He's been doing it for quite a while. Keeps cutting before the papillary line can grow back.

MILLS

What about the trace on his bank account and the guns? There must be something to connect him with a past.

CAPTAIN

So far it's all dead ends. No credit history. No employment history. His bank account's only five years old and it started as cash. We're even trying to trace his furniture, but for now all we know is he's independently wealthy, well educated and totally insane. We may never know how he got that way.

SOMERSET

Because he is John Doe, by choice.

MILLS

When do we get to question him?

CAPTAIN

You don't. It goes to court now.

MILLS

He wouldn't just turn himself in. It doesn't make any sense.

Somerset moves from the window, crossing the room to sit.

CAPTAIN

Well, there he sits. It's not supposed to make sense.

SOMERSET

He's not finished.

MILLS

He's pissing in our faces again and we're just taking it.

CAPTAIN

You're wound too tight, Mills. Let it go.

The captain walks. Mills is furious. He presses his fingers against the two-way-mirror, pushes to crack his knuckles loudly.

(CONTINUED)

114 CONTINUED: 2

114

MILLS

(to Somerset)

You know he's fucking us.

SOMERSET

You and I are, probably for the first time ever, in total agreement. He wouldn't just stop.

MILLS

Well... what the fuck, man?

SOMERSET

He's only two murders away from finishing his masterpiece, right? I can't even imagine how he'll try to finish it. Can you?

Mills looks in at John Doe. Somerset comes to stand beside.

MILLS

No.

SOMERSET

We'll wait for his plea.

115 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- DAY

115

Mills is at the desk, feet up. He stares at the blackboard.

1	gluttony	5	wrath
2	greed	6	pride
3	sloth	7	lust
4	envy		

Clock on the wall says 4:45. Somerset packs books into boxes, preparing for his eventual departure. No one else around.

The captain opens the door, steps in and clears his throat, looking like there is something making him very unhappy.

116 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- DAY

116

Mills and Somerset stand together. The captain is behind his desk with ~~Martin Talbot, the D.A.~~, seated in front of him. Mark Swarr is addressing them all, seems nervous but in control.

SWARR

My client says there are two more bodies...
two more victims, hidden away.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

SWARR (cont'd)

He will take Detectives Mills and Somerset to these bodies, but only Detectives Mills and Somerset. Only at six o'clock today.

Talbot wipes his moist brow with a handkerchief.

TALBOT

Oh, Christ.

MILLS

Why us?

SWARR

He says he admires you.

SOMERSET

(to captain)

This is all part of his game.

SWARR

My client claims that if the detectives do not accept this offer, these two bodies will never be found.

CAPTAIN

Frankly, counselor, I'm inclined to let them rot.

TALBOT

We don't make deals, Mr. Swarr.

Mills gets in Swarr's face.

MILLS

How is it defending a scumbag like this? You proud of yourself?

CAPTAIN

Ease back, Mills.

SWARR

I'm required by law to serve my clients to the best of my ability, and to serve their best interests.

Mills back off.

CAPTAIN

Well, we're going to have to pass.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: 2

116

SWARR

My client... he also wishes to inform you,
if you do not accept, he will plead
insanity, across the board.

TALBOT

(to no one in particular)

Let him try! I'd like to see him try!

SWARR

Come now, Martin. We all know, with the
extreme nature of these crimes, I could get
him off with such a plea.

Talbot considers this, wringing the handkerchief in his hands.
Mills looks at Somerset. Somerset looks at him.

TALBOT

I'm not letting this conviction slide, I
can tell you that right here and right now!

SWARR

He says, if you accept, under his specific
conditions, he will sign a full confession
and plead guilty... right here, right now.

Talbot glares at Swarr.

CAPTAIN

(to Mills)

What do you think?

MILLS

I'm in.

SWARR

It has to be both of you.

SOMERSET

If he were to claim insanity, this
conversation is admissible. The fact that
he's blackmailing us with his plea...

SWARR

And, my client reminds you, two more are
dead. The press would have a field day if
they found out the police didn't seem too
concerned about finding them... giving them
a proper burial.

SOMERSET

If there really are two more dead.

The captain picks up a sheet from his desk.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED: 3

116

CAPTAIN

The lab report came up from downtown. They did a quickie on Doe's clothing and fingernails. They found blood from Doe, from him cutting his own fingers... there was blood from the woman whose face he cut off, and blood from a third party. As yet unidentified.

TALBOT

(to Somerset)

You would be escorting an unarmed man.

Somerset thinks it over. He looks to Mills.

MILLS

Let's finish it.

Somerset looks at the floor, then at Swarr.

SOMERSET

(to the captain)

Well... get the fucking lawyer out of the room and we can talk about how this whole thing's going to go down.

117 INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, BATHROOM/LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

117

Somerset's hand reaches to the sink to pick up a razor.

Somerset and Mills are at the sinks, looking at themselves in mirrors, shirtless. They have shaving cream spread across their chests. Somerset flicks his cigarette in the sink, then brings the razor up to start shaving the hair off his chest. Mills is already doing the same.

SOMERSET

If John Doe's head splits open and a U.F.O. flies out, I want you to have expected it.

MILLS

I will.

They continue shaving.

MILLS

If I were to accidentally cut off one of my nipples, would that be covered by workman's compensation?

Somerset smiles just slightly.

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

SOMERSET

I suppose so.

(pause)

If you were man enough to actually file the claim, I'd buy you a new one out of my own pocket.

Mills finishes shaving, washes and wipes his chest off with a towel. He turns dead serious.

MILLS

Listen, Somerset... I uh...

Mills pauses, sighs. Somerset stops shaving and looks at him.

SOMERSET

What is it?

MILLS

Well...

(pause)

It's nothing.

Mills continues shaving. Somerset watches him.

118 INT. READY ROOM -- DAY

118

Somerset and Mills have their shirts open. A female technician tapes a transmitter and microphone to Mills' chest. Somerset is already wired up, pressing the adhesive to make sure it'll hold.

The technician finishes prepping Mills. Somerset buttons up his shirt. The technician packs up her kit, leaving. The room is quiet. Somerset picks up his bullet-proof vest, slides into it.

Mills looks at his watch. He puts on his own vest, fastening it tight. He looks at Somerset.

Somerset takes out a roll of antacids and pops a few. Mills holds out his hand and waits for an antacid. Somerset looks at him, flicks a few into Mills' palm. Mills chews them.

SOMERSET

Cold as ice.

Somerset picks up his gun off a chair. Mills picks up his gun. They both check them out and close them up. They lay the guns in the holsters at the small of their backs.

They look at each other. Somerset holds out his hand. Mills shakes it.

119 INT. CITY STREET, PRECINCT HOUSE FRONT -- DAY 119

The street is full of shadows as the sun is falling low. At the front of the precinct house, a throng of reporters shifts anxiously. A line of policemen holds them back.

Martin Talbot steps out of the precinct house, cops on either side of him. The press swarm lurches forward, flashbulbs exploding. Talbot holds out his hands, preparing to speak.

120 EXT. CITY STREET, PRECINCT HOUSE REAR -- DAY 120

At the rear of the precinct house, Somerset's car pulls out of the fenced in parking lot. The car speeds up on the street and turns a corner, heading into the grim city.

121 EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP -- DAY 121

California is dressed in full battle gear, looking through binoculars to the city below. The wind blows hard.

A PILOT, holding two helmets, comes up behind California. A sleek police helicopter sits on the roof's helipad.

CALIFORNIA

Is this wind going to hurt us?

PILOT

Just makes the ride more fun.

The cocky pilot grins.

122 INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY 122

Somerset is at the wheel. Mills is behind the protective wire mesh, in the back seat beside John Doe. Doe's handcuffs are attached to ankle cuffs by a length of chain. He's looking out the window, sweaty but placid.

SOMERSET

Who are you, John? Who are you really?

John Doe looks to Somerset's eyes in the rearview mirror.

JOHN DOE

What do you mean?

SOMERSET

I mean, at this point, what would it hurt if you told us a little about yourself?

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED:

122

JOHN DOE

(pause)

It doesn't matter who I am. Who I am means absolutely nothing.

(looking out, to Somerset)

You need to turn left here... at the traffic light.

MILLS

Where we headed?

JOHN DOE

You'll see.

Mills looks at Doe for a long time in silence.

MILLS

We're not just going to pick up two more bodies, are we, Johnny? That wouldn't be... shocking enough. Not for you. Not for the newspapers.

JOHN DOE

Wanting people to pay attention, you can't just tap them on the shoulder. You have to hit them with a sledgehammer. Then, you have their strict attention.

MILLS

What makes you so special that people should pay attention?

JOHN DOE

Not me. I'm not special. I'm not exceptional.

(pause)

This is, though. What I'm doing.

MILLS

I don't see anything unusual about these precious murders of yours.

JOHN DOE

That's not true.

MILLS

In two months, no one's going to even remember this happened.

Doe looks down for a moment, then looks up, almost shyly.

(CONTINUED)

122 CONTINUED: 2

122

JOHN DOE

You can't see the whole... ~~the whole~~
complete act yet. But, when this is done,
it's going to be... so...

MILLS

Spit it out.

JOHN DOE

It's going to be flawless. People will
barely comprehend, but they won't be able
to deny.

MILLS

Could you possibly be any more
non-specific? I mean, as master plans
go...

JOHN DOE

I can't wait for you to see. I can't wait.

Doe licks his lips. He clenches his hands into fists, digging
his bandaged fingertips into his sweaty palms.

JOHN DOE

(looks to Mills)

It's really going to be something.

MILLS

Well, I'll be standing right beside you the
whole time. You be sure to let me know
when this whole, complete reality thing is
done. Wouldn't want to miss it.

JOHN DOE

Oh, don't worry. You won't...

123 INT, POLICE HELICOPTER -- DAY

123

The helicopter is in flight above the city. California is
strapped in, hanging out the door. He holds a high powered
automatic rifle, wears goggles and a helmet/headset.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

(through headset)

... you won't miss a thing.

Two other armed cops sit in the chopper's belly. California
leans in and looks up towards the pilot.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED:

123

CALIFORNIA
 (into helmet microphone)
 Head over the bridge and keep them in
 sight. Just keep your distance.

The pilot looks back and nods.

124 EXT. CITY SKY -- DAY

124

The chopper dips, flying like a bullet over the polluted city,
 heading towards the setting sun.

125 EXT. CITY STREETS -- DAY

125

Somerset's car moves along a highway at river's edge. Heading
 for a huge suspension bridge filled with speeding traffic ahead.

126 INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

126

John Doe has his head against the window, looking up at the
 bridge, excited. He sits back, glances out the back window, then
 faces front, bites his lip, fidgety, like a kid on Christmas Eve.

Somerset's watching him through the rearview mirror.

SOMERSET

What's so exciting?

JOHN DOE

It's not too far now.

MILLS

(to John Doe)

I've been wondering, and maybe you can shed
 some light on this for me. Do people know
 when they're insane? Like, here's what I
 mean... when you're in bed at night, and
 you're almost about to fall asleep, do you
 ever just stop and say to yourself, "Man,
 oh, man, am I ever nuts. It's interesting,
 what a complete fucking fruitcake I am."

JOHN DOE

It's more comfortable for you... to label
 me insane.

MILLS

Seems a pretty accurate label to me.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

126

JOHN DOE

It's something I wouldn't expect you to accept... but, I didn't choose. I was chosen.

MILLS

Sure you were.

SOMERSET

I don't have any doubt you believe that, John. But, you're ignoring a glaring contradiction.

Silence. Doe lets a long moment pass, hesitant.

JOHN DOE

Meaning what?

SOMERSET

Well, I'm glad you asked. If you were chosen... as if by some higher power, your hand was forced... well...

Somerset turns in his seat to look Doe in the eye.

SOMERSET

... then it's strange you took so much pleasure in it.

Somerset stares at Doe. Doe stares back. After a moment, Somerset turns back to the road ahead.

SOMERSET

You enjoyed torturing those people. That's not really in keeping with martyrdom, is it?

It's the first time anything's gotten to Doe. He's ashamed, though trying not to let it bother him.

JOHN DOE

(long pause)

I... I doubt I enjoyed it any more than Detective Mills would enjoy time alone with me in a room without windows.

(looks to Mills)

Isn't that true? How happy would it make you to hurt me, with impunity.

MILLS

(coy mocking)

I wouldn't do something like that, Johnny. I like you. I like you a lot.

(CONTINUED)

JOHN DOE

You wouldn't because you know there are consequences. It's in those eyes of yours, though... nothing wrong with a man taking pleasure in his work.

(pause, shakes his head)

I won't deny my own personal desire to turn each sin against the sinner. I only took their sins to logical conclusions.

MILLS

You killed innocent people to get your rocks off. That's all.

JOHN DOE

Innocent? Is that supposed to be funny? Look at the people I killed. An obese man, a disgusting man who could barely stand up. If you saw him on the street, you'd point him out to your friends, so they could join you in mocking him. If you saw him while you were eating, you wouldn't finish your meal. After him I picked the lawyer. And, you both must have been secretly thanking me for that one. This was a man who dedicated his life to making money by lying with every breath he could muster... to keep rapists and murderers on the streets.

MILLS

Murderers?

JOHN DOE

(ignoring)

A woman...

MILLS

Murderers like you?

JOHN DOE

(ignoring, louder)

A woman... so ugly on the inside that she couldn't bare to go on living if she couldn't be beautiful on the outside. A drug dealer... a drug dealing pederast, actually.

(laughs at that one)

And, don't forget the disease spreading whore. Only in a world this shitty could you even try to say these were innocent people and keep a straight face.

(getting worked up)

This is the point.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JOHN DOE (cont'd)

You see ~~a deadly~~ sin on every street corner, in every home, literally. And we tolerate it. Because it's common. It's trivial, and we tolerate, all day long, morning, noon and night. Not anymore. I'm setting the example, and it's going to be puzzled over and studied and followed, from now on.

MILLS

Delusions of grandeur.

JOHN DOE

You should be thanking me.

MILLS

And, why is that?

JOHN DOE

You're going to be remembered, because of me. The only reason I'm here right now is because I wanted to be.

MILLS

We would have found you eventually.

JOHN DOE

Really? Biding your time? Toying with me. Is that it? Letting five people die until you finally felt like springing you trap?

Doe leans towards Mills, slowly getting to him.

JOHN DOE

(angrily)

Tell me what it was that gave me away. What was the indisputable evidence you were going to use against me right before I walked up to you and put my hands in the air.

MILLS

I seem to remember us knocking on your door.

JOHN DOE

And, I remember breaking your nose.
(leans further forward)
You're only alive because I didn't kill you.

MILLS

Sit back.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED: 4

126

John Doe doesn't sit back, staying very close.

JOHN DOE

(whispers)

I spared you.

(pause)

Remember that every time you look in the mirror at that nose on your face for the rest of your life. Or, should I say, for the rest of what life I've allowed you to have.

Mills shoves Doe back, gripping him, fed up and furious.

MILLS

I said, sit back, freak. Sit back!

Mills releases Doe. Doe takes a deep breath and lets it out.

In the front seat, Somerset turns to shoot a concerned glance at Mills, then faces front, looking in the rearview mirror.

IN THE MIRROR: Doe, calm, gives Somerset a smile.

Doe then turns his attention back out the passenger window, watching the world pass by, his face against the glass.

Mills looks out his window, letting his anger come down.

JOHN DOE

Don't ask me to pity those people. I don't mourn them anymore than I mourn the thousands who died in Sodom and Gomorrah.

Mills almost lets this pass, but can't. Blunted anger:

MILLS

You fuck. You really think what you did was God's good work?

Pause. John Doe is pressing his forefinger into the tip of his thumb, causing blood to drip from under the bandage.

JOHN DOE

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

127 EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING

127

The helicopter flies over huge, blackened industrial parks, past smokestacks spewing soot. The sky is turning crimson.

128 INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

128

California leans way out, looking back at the city.

- 129 EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING 129
Somerset's car comes down this rocky, deserted strip, towards the industrial parks. The car tosses dirt into the air where it is captured on the wind.
- 130 EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING 130
The chopper roars, high, above the stretch of industrial road. This is the only road through vast desert. Huge electrical towers carry power cables to the horizon.
- 131 INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING 131
California still leans out, gun poised, looks over the desert.
CALIFORNIA
There ain't no ambush out here. There ain't no fucking nothing out here.
PILOT (v.o.)
(through headset)
I'm not gonna be able to land anywhere near those wires.
CALIFORNIA
I know it. We got about two minutes before they come up behind us. Go high. Way up. In sixty seconds, cut to the east.
- 132 EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING 132
The chopper climbs, really moving.
- 133 EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING 133
Somerset's car comes down the road.
The car slows and stops. Mills gets out and goes to extract Doe. Somerset gets out, looking west to the industrial parks and city beyond. The sky is red.
Somerset walks and looks to the east. The sky is darkening. Very far away, a passenger train moves to the east.
Somerset watches the train, walking to the edge of the roadway. He looks down and steps back from what he sees.
A dog lies dead, old and moldering.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

Somerset turns to the car, where John Doe stands with Mills. Doe points with his cuffed hands to the dog, grins.

JOHN DOE

I didn't do that.

134 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING

134

The wind howls, pounding on John Doe as he walks slowly, encumbered by the chain between his ankles. Mills is with Doe, squinting from the dust. He looks ahead, cautious. Somerset walks behind them.

Doe keeps looking back towards the car on the industrial road.

MILLS

What are you looking for?

Doe looks forward.

JOHN DOE

What time is it?

SOMERSET

Why?

Somerset looks at his watch. It's one minute after seven.

JOHN DOE

I want to know.

Mills gives Doe a shove.

Somerset looks back towards the industrial road, worried.

MILLS

Just keep leading the way.

JOHN DOE

It's close.

SOMERSET

Mills!

Mills and Doe look back at Somerset. Somerset is facing the industrial road, pointing. A van is coming, dust flying.

Somerset looks at Mills. Mills looks at Somerset. They take out their guns. Somerset starts towards the road.

SOMERSET

Stay with him.

(CONTINUED)

134 CONTINUED:

134

MILLS

Wait!

SOMERSET

There's no time to discuss it!

Somerset runs to head off the van.

John Doe begins walking to follow Somerset.

JOHN DOE

There he goes.

Mills levels his gun at John Doe's head.

135 EXT. DESERT, NEAR INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

135

Somerset runs, breathing hard, opening the top of his bullet-proof vest to speak into his hidden microphone.

SOMERSET

There's a van... coming down the industrial road. Coming from the west.

136 INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

136

The chopper circles in the air with the sun behind it. Another cop is in the hatchway beside California, looking through binoculars. The RADIO RECEPTION is BREAKING UP, crackling.

SOMERSET (v.o.)

(from headset)

... delivery van... west...

There's a BLAST of STATIC. California hits his helmet.

CALIFORNIA

God damn power lines.

SOMERSET (v.o.)

(from headset)

... don't know what it is. Come around. Come around.

137 EXT. DESERT, NEAR INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

137

Somerset continues, charging to the road.

SOMERSET

Just get ready for anything and wait for my signal. Wait for me.

138 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING

138

Mills keeps the gun on John Doe, watches Somerset far off.

JOHN DOE

It's good we have some time to talk.

Doe starts walking again.

MILLS

Get down. Get down on your knees!

Mills grabs Doe and kicks his knees out, making Doe kneel.

Mills positions himself behind Doe. Now, Mills can keep the gun on Doe and still watch Somerset.

139 EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

139

Somerset comes up on the road, near his car. He signals for the van to stop, then fires a warning shot in the air.

The van is about one hundred yards away, still coming.

Somerset walks towards it, breathless, pointing his gun.

SOMERSET

Stop the van! Stop!

The van brakes, wheels sliding on the loose roadway. Stops. Somerset moves up to it, staying about ten feet away.

SOMERSET

Get out! Get out with your hands on your head! Do it now!

The driver of the van, a DELIVERYMAN, pushes the door open and slides out, slow, takes off his sunglasses.

DELIVERYMAN

Jesus Christ, man, don't shoot me!

SOMERSET

Turn around. Hands on your head!

DELIVERYMAN

What the hell's going on?

SOMERSET

Who are you? What are you doing out here?

DELIVERYMAN

I'm... I'm just delivering a package.

140 INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

140

California listens as the chopper spins over industrial parks.

DELIVERYMAN (v.o.)
(through headset)
It's just a package for this guy... David.
Detective David Mills.

CALIFORNIA
Motherfucker.

The pilot looks back at California.

PILOT
Let's do it.

CALIFORNIA
No! Wait for Somerset!

141 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING

141

Mills and Doe can see Somerset keeping his distance from the deliveryman. The deliveryman moves to the back of the van and opens the van's rear door.

JOHN DOE
When I said I admired you... I meant what I
said. I do admire you.

Mills keeps his eyes on the van, but steps up to place his gun at the back of Doe's head. Pulls the hammer back.

MILLS
Shut up.

142 EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

142

Somerset comes to put his gun right behind the deliveryman's ear.

SOMERSET
Slowly.

The deliveryman nods, reaching to take a brown package, about a foot square, from the van.

DELIVERYMAN
This... this guy paid me five hundred bucks
to bring it out here. He wanted it here at
exactly seven o'clock.

SOMERSET
Put it down. Put it on the ground.

(CONTINUED)

142 CONTINUED:

142

DELIVERYMAN

Okay...

He puts it on the road and backs away, holding up his hands.

Somerset glances across the desert to see Doe on his knees with Mills behind him. Somerset looks at the package. Written on top: DETECTIVE DAVID MILLS -- HANDLE WITH CARE.

SOMERSET

(to deliveryman)

Face the van. Do it! Face it with your hands behind your head.

Somerset keeps his gun on the deliveryman and his eye on the box. The delivery man presses his face against the side of the van.

Somerset frisks him hastily, shoves his hand in the deliveryman's back pocket and pulls out his wallet.

SOMERSET

Turn around.

The deliveryman obeys. He's scared. Somerset goes through the wallet, shaking it, dumping it's contents on the ground.

He bends to retrieve the driver's license, looking at it and comparing it to the deliveryman's face. Somerset pockets the license, then moves to the van, opening the driver's door.

Somerset examines the driver's area, looks under the seat, then takes the keys from the ignition and pockets them. He motions to the deliveryman.

SOMERSET

Climb in... get me your registration.

DELIVERYMAN

Alright...

Somerset backs up, keeping his gun trained, while the deliveryman climbs across the front seat. Somerset pulls back his bullet-proof vest and speaks into the mic.

SOMERSET

There's a package here. It's from John Doe.

Somerset doesn't know what to do. He walks around the package.

SOMERSET

I don't know... I don't know...

143 INT. HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING 143

California's getting nothing but STATIC. He pounds his helmet, turning to look to the pilot.

CALIFORNIA
(into mic)
Bomb squad. Call it in now!

143A EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING 143A

The deliveryman warily brings the registration to Somerset. Somerset glances at it, shoves it in his pocket, then reaches to take the deliveryman's i.d. tag off his uniform.

Somerset looks out towards Doe and Mills, then to the package.

143B INT. HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING 143B

California waits, listening, looking into the blood-red sky.

SOMERSET (v.o.)
(through headset)
I'm going to have to open it.

144 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING 144

Mills watches Somerset push the deliveryman away.

JOHN DOE
I wish I could have been a normal man like you. I wish I could have a simple life.

MILLS
What the fuck is going on?!

145 EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING 145

Somerset shoves the deliveryman.

SOMERSET
Go. Run!

The deliveryman gladly starts running down the industrial road, not looking back.

Somerset turns. He walks, kneels in front of the package, reholstering his gun, talking into his microphone.

SOMERSET
I sent the delivery guy out on foot. Have him picked up. He's heading west.

(CONTINUED)

145 CONTINUED:

145

Somerset pulls his switchblade, clicks it open.

SOMERSET
I'm opening the package now.

He cuts across the top of the box, hands shaking, cuts quickly.

He fumbles with the thick tape, ripping it.

He pulls the box open, pulls at some bubble-wrap inside.

146 INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

146

The pilot grits his teeth. STATIC ROARS.

PILOT
(into helmet mic)
We lost him. Let's go!

CALIFORNIA
We are going to wait!

California listens. FAINTLY, through WHITE NOISE:

SOMERSET (v.o.)
(through headset)
Oh, Christ... oh Christ...

147 EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

147

Somerset stumbles backwards, away from the open box.

He is horribly shaken, eyes filled with numb fear. He leans against the van for support, wretches, sick, holds the back of his hand to his mouth.

SOMERSET
No...

148 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING

148

Mills is watching Somerset, grabs John Doe by the shirt.

MILLS
Get up. Stand up! Let's go!

Doe stands, tries to walk. Mills is moving quickly, towards Somerset. Doe can't keep up.

JOHN DOE
You've made a good life for yourself...

(CONTINUED)

148 CONTINUED:

148

MILLS

Shut up!

Doe falls and Mills starts dragging him.

149 EXT. DESERT, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

149

Somerset wipes saliva from his lips and tears from his eyes. He takes a deep breath, looks to see Mills dragging Doe.

SOMERSET

Oh, fuck, no...

Somerset straightens, tries to pull himself together. He swallows, draws his gun.

SOMERSET

(into hidden mic)

Listen... listen to me. Whatever you do... don't come in here. Stay away. No matter what you hear, do not move in!

(starts towards Mills)

John Doe has the upper hand.

Somerset picks up his switchblade and flips the blade back in. He enters the flatlands, running.

150 EXT. DESERT -- EARLY EVENING

150

Mills sees Somerset coming and pulls Doe so that Doe stands.

JOHN DOE

(quietly, watching)

Here he comes.

MILLS

(shouts to Somerset)

What the fuck is going on?

JOHN DOE

(to Mills)

I want you to know, I wish I could have lived like you do.

Somerset keeps running towards Mills, mud splattering.

SOMERSET

Mills... put down your gun! Throw it away!

Mills leaves Doe behind, walks towards Somerset, gun down.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED:

150

MILLS

What?

Somerset is fifty yards away and closing.

SOMERSET

Throw your gun down now!

MILLS

What are you talking about? What happened?

JOHN DOE

Do you hear me, Detective Mills? I'm trying to tell you how much I admire you, and your pretty wife... Tracy.

Mills freezes, turns to John Doe.

MILLS

(to Doe)

What did you say?

Doe smiles.

Somerset slows, close by, out of breath.

SOMERSET

Throw your weapon, detective! Now!

JOHN DOE

(to Mills)

It's disturbing how easily a member of the press can purchase information from the men in your precinct.

SOMERSET

David... please...

JOHN DOE

I visited your home this morning, after you'd left.

Mills is filled with aching terror.

JOHN DOE

I tried to play husband... tried to taste the life of a simple man. It didn't work out... but I took a souvenir.

Mills turns to look at Somerset with pleading eyes. Somerset holds out his hand.

SOMERSET

Give me the gun.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 2

150

JOHN DOE
Her pretty head.

MILLS
Somerset?

JOHN DOE
Because I envy your "normal" life. It
seems envy is my sin.

Fury rises in Mills. He grips John Doe's shirt collar, pressing his gun against John Doe's forehead.

Somerset raises his gun and points it at Mills.

SOMERSET
No!

Mills sees Somerset's gun, raises his gun to Somerset, still gripping Doe.

MILLS
(to Somerset)
Tell me it's not true!

SOMERSET
I can't let you do this.

MILLS
What's in it?!

Somerset keeps his gun on Mills, can't hold back tears.

MILLS
What's in it the fucking box!

Somerset still cannot answer, gun in his hand trembling.

JOHN DOE
He just told you.

MILLS
Somerset... it's not true.

JOHN DOE
Oh, it is.

SOMERSET
David... please...

Mills stares at Somerset, gun pointed. The wind whips across them. The HELICOPTER can be HEARD distantly.

Mills turns his gun back to John Doe.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 3

150

SOMERSET

Listen to me. This is what ~~he~~ wants!

Doe stares up at Mills with wild expectation.

JOHN DOE

Become vengeance, David...

MILLS

(to John Doe)

Shut up!

JOHN DOE

Become wrath...

MILLS

Shut your fucking mouth!

Mills pistol whips John Doe across the face, knocks him to one side. John Doe straightens, still on his knees, face bloodied.

JOHN DOE

Kill me.

Doe lowers his head, waiting for execution.

SOMERSET

He wants you to do it!

Mills holds the gun at Doe's head, undecided, furious.

SOMERSET

You know you can't...

MILLS

Wrong.

SOMERSET

You murder a suspect, you're throwing everything away. Everything!

JOHN DOE

She begged for her life, detective...

Somerset edges towards them, gun leveled at Mills all the while.

MILLS

(looks to Somerset)

Stop it! You stay away!

JOHN DOE

She begged for her life... and for the life of the baby inside her.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 4

150

Mills' face fills with confusion -- then a wave of horror.
Doe's eyes register shock.

JOHN DOE

You didn't know.

Mills gags, tears welling up. He kicks...

SLAMS John Doe in the face, knocking him onto his back. Doe's gasping, glasses cracked, again getting back onto his knees.

SOMERSET

I won't let you do it!

MILLS

Fuck you! Fuck you! You won't say anything. He tried to run... I shot him... whatever...

Mills tears at his bullet-proof vest, reaching under to yank at the microphone and receiver...

MILLS

No one has to know.

He rips off the wire and throws it aside, standing with the gun aimed at John Doe's head.

SOMERSET

If you're gone, who fights?!

MILLS

For what?!

JOHN DOE

Don't listen!

Mills stands, both hands on his gun, shaking, trying to bring himself to pull the trigger.

Somerset takes a step forward, gun still leveled at Mills.

SOMERSET

David! Who takes my place? If you're gone, who's going to fight!?

MILLS

Who cares?

Mills cocks the hammer of his gun.

John Doe closes his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

150 CONTINUED: 5

150

Somerset pulls hammer of his gun.

BLAM! -- blood explodes across John Doe's face.

Blood splatters up onto Mills, but Mills seems surprised. He turns, gasping, looking to Somerset...

Somerset stands, terrified, his smoking gun pointed down at John Doe. He shot Doe, not Mills.

John Doe falls back and gurgles, his chest burst and flowing from the bullet that ripped him, looking towards Somerset in horror.

JOHN DOE

No... not you...

Mills stares at Somerset in disbelief.

MILLS

(to Somerset)

What... what are you doing?

Somerset takes a step forward, gun pointed...

SOMERSET

I'm retiring.

Somerset's eyes are filled with tears.

GO TO BLACK:

COMPLETE BLACK. One GUNSHOT is HEARD -- BLAM!

151 OMIT

151

152 OMIT

152

153 OMIT

153

154 OMIT

154

155 OMIT !

155

the end

Handwritten notes and scribbles:

in angle only

run towards the

van pool of Somerset

Shoots on

Not

depressed