A History Of Violence

Screenplay
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Based on the graphic novel
By
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EXT. CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY - MORNING

A battered old motel by the side of the road. The roof is chopped up, nasty looking. Paint peels from the walls. A large, pathetic green papier maché dinosaur - some toothless mental case’s idea of a Tyrannosaurus Rex is situated in front of the office. A sign reads “Rooms $24.98 and up!”

The door to one of the units opens and LELAND, a reedy looking guy, almost made out of beef jerky, wearing an old Johnny Cash tee shirt, steps out, small suitcase in hand and takes in the morning. A voice calls out from inside.

BILLY
You think maybe we could just turn around?

LELAND
Nah.

BILLY - shorter, chunkier, wearing a cheap suit - walks out, hefting a grubby backpack and lighting a cigarette.

LELAND (cont’d)
Life’s all about choices, Billy. Ain’t no video game where you get to hit the restart button any time you ain’t happy.

They walk over to a well worn old convertible. Leland takes the top down and throws his suitcase in the back. Billy does the same with his pack.

LELAND (cont’d)
We are who we are and we done what we done. Whatever.

BILLY
Yeah, I guess. I’m just tired, though.

LELAND
Yuh. Me, too.

He tosses Billy the keys.

LELAND (cont’d)
Here. Warm ’er up and bring ’er on up to the office. I’m gonna go check us out.

BILLY
’kay.
CONTINUED:

Leland walks towards the office as Billy climbs into the car. Billy sits in the driver seat and looks around. The sun beats down on the desert. No breeze, just a faint, low electric hum from the power lines that head off into the distance. Billy closes his eyes and enjoys the sun on his face. He sighs and puts the key in the ignition. The engine starts. Billy kicks it into gear and slowly pulls out.

He drives the car up to the office and slows down, leaving the engine idling. He slides a casette tape – Johnny Cash singing “Further On Up The Road” – into the player and leans back, waiting patiently for his friend.

A long beat, and then Leland walks out of the office.

BILLY (cont’d)
What took so long?

LELAND
Nothin’. Little trouble with the maid, but everything’s fine now. Johnny!

BILLY
Johnny.

Leland, humming along with Johnny, slides into the drivers seat as Billy slides over.

LELAND
Damn. Eight AM and already this hot.

BILLY
Yuh.

LELAND
We got any water?

BILLY
Prolly not enough.

LELAND
Yeah. There’s a machine back in the office.

BILLY
I’ll go.

He climbs out of the car and Leland gets behind the wheel.

Billy walks to the motel office.
INT. MOTEL OFFICE

It’s quiet. Billy walks in and looks around, sees what he’s looking for. He walks across the room and as he goes, we see blood splattered on the wall.

Pull back to reveal the MOTEL CLERK behind the desk, shot in the chest, dead. A MAID lies on the floor in a pool of blood, shot in the head. Billy steps over her and goes to a cooler against the wall and takes out three bottles of water.

He hears a noise and freezes. He turns to see the bathroom door against the far wall open, and a LITTLE GIRL steps out. She sees the tableau in front of her and gasps.

Billy drops the bottles and pulls a revolver out of his waistband and points it at the girl. She looks at him in terror and opens her mouth to scream. Billy’s finger tightens on the trigger.

CUT TO:

BLACK

A scream rips through the silence.

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM & EDIE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TOM STALL, a slightly weathered husband and father of two, snaps awake at the sound of the scream and leaps out of bed, races to the door in the dark.

INT. STALL HOUSE - SARAH’S ROOM

SARAH STALL - an adorable five year old girl - is sitting bolt upright in her bed, screaming.

A light snaps on as Tom, wearing pajama bottoms and a worried look - comes racing in to save his daughter.

He takes her in his arms.

    TOM
    Sarah! Honey! What’s wrong? What is it?

His daughter stops screaming and looks around blearily, then up at her father.

    SARAH
    Daddy? Daddy?

    TOM
    Daddy’s here, baby. Daddy’s here.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SARAH
There were monsters!

TOM
No, baby. There’s no such thing as monsters. It was just a bad dream.
Daddy’s here now.

JACK STALL, 16, hair a mess, wearing a Beastie Boys tee shirt and boxers, walks in the door.

JACK
What’s wrong, Dad?

TOM
Hey, kiddo. Sarah just had a bad dream.

SARAH
I saw monsters, Jack!

Jack walks over to his sister’s bed and sits down beside her.

JACK
Monsters! Cool! What kind?

Tom shoots his son a dirty look.

SARAH
I don’t know. They were in the shadows.

JACK
Hmmm. Shadow monsters. They look pretty scary. But they can’t really do anything. Especially when the lights are on. They’re afraid of the light.

TOM
Jack!

EDIE STALL, a strong and lovely woman, possibly a little younger than Tom, stands in the doorway in a robe.

EDIE
What happened?

TOM
Sarah had a bad dream about monsters. (Shoots a look at Jack) I’m telling her there are no monsters.

SARAH
Jack says shadow monsters are afraid of the light.

(Continued)
CONTINUED: (2)

Tom shakes his head. Edie smiles.

EDIE
It would seem there are two schools of thought on the matter.

TOM
You could say that.

SARAH
I’m going to turn on my night light, just in case.

EDIE
That sounds like a brilliant solution.

Edie sits on the bed and hugs her daughter. Tom smiles and puts his arm around his son, who pulls away, embarrassed. He is, after all, 16.

EXT. STALL HOUSE

A large, sturdy farmhouse in the middle of a huge corn field - the house is at least a hundred years old, and well kept up. An old station wagon parked in front of a small barn. One barn door is open, revealing an old pickup inside. A tricycle in front of the porch. A propane tank a few yards from the front of the house, off to the side. Halfway across the field, a tiny shack that hasn’t seen use in decades. On the other side of the house from the barn, a swing set and a small slide.

Dawn’s rosy fingers creep across the cornfield. Another day in Taylorville, Indiana.

INT. STALL HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Edie, Tom and Sarah sit around a table, eating breakfast.

SARAH
I think Jack’s right about shadow monsters, Daddy.

TOM
Oh, really?

She nods.

SARAH
But I think there’s something he doesn’t know.

EDIE
What’s that, honey?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SARAH
I think shadow monsters aren’t as bad as other monsters. And I think when other monsters come, the shadow monsters beat them up.

TOM
Sort of protector monsters, then.

She nods and eats a spoonful of cereal. Edie smiles, then looks over at the empty space on the table and frowns.

EDIE
(Calling out)
Jack!

Jack walks in, dressed for school.

JACK
What?

Edie shakes her head. Jack sits down at the table, turns to Sarah.

JACK (cont’d)
Night light worked, didn’t it?

She nods vigorously. Tom turns to Edie.

TOM
I’m running a bit late today. Can you drop me off on the way in?

EDIE
Sure.

TOM
Great. Thanks. (Turns to Jack) What do you have going on today?

JACK
Nothing much. Math test in a few days. I think we’re playing baseball in gym today, so I can look forward to sucking hard in right field.

TOM
You remember what I told you, right? Hang back. Never let the hitter get one over your head...

JACK
Unless it’s over the fence.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUOUS: (2)

TOM

Right!

They continue their pleasant, familial chatter as we slowly pull back.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE - ROAD - DAY

The Stall's station wagon tools down the road towards town.

INT. STALL'S STATION WAGON

Edie's at the wheel. Tom sits next to her, looking out the window. Edie notices the half smile on his face.

EDIE

What?

TOM

Hmm? Oh, just thinking about Jack and Sarah.

EDIE

They're pretty incredible.

TOM

That's an understatement. Her whole theory about shadow monsters protecting her from worse monsters? She's just brilliant. They're both brilliant.

EDIE

God, it's amazing, isn't it?

TOM

What's that?

EDIE

One minute you're this dumb kid, running around like an idiot, getting into trouble, dreaming these impossible dreams, and then, all of a sudden, you're this grown-up sitting around worrying about whether or not your children are gonna be okay.

TOM

I remember reading a book in high school that had a bit about that.

(MORE)
CONTINUED:

TOM (cont'd)
Something about how one moment summer vacation’s the longest stretch of time imaginable and an unhooked bra strap is as close to heaven as you can possibly imagine. The next, you’re middle aged wondering where it all went.

EDIE
Don’t be in such a hurry. We’re not middle aged yet.

TOM
Yeah, I know.

EDIE
I don’t feel like a real grown-up yet.

TOM
Yeah. You think we ever will?

EDIE
Yup. Everyone does, eventually. Sooner or later, you’re gonna wake up and find out you’ve turned into that cranky old guy who yells out the window, “Keep that noise down, you goddam kids!”

TOM
God. Kill me before that happens, okay?

EDIE
Oh, honey, I’ll have left you long before that.

She smiles at him, and slows the car down. He leans towards her and they kiss. The kiss grows long and passionate - Edie is surprised, but happy. Tom’s hand slides inside the back of her shirt and moves towards her bra. She pulls away, laughing.

EDIE (cont’d)
What are you doing?

TOM
You know, an unhooked bra is still pretty damn close to heaven.

EDIE
You’re a nut.

He smiles warmly at her.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

EDIE (cont’d)
I’ll be done early today. All I have is the Watson’s will and Dave Ryan’s tractor sale. Want me to come pick you up?

TOM
We can go to the drive-in and make out tonight.

EDIE
Tom, there hasn’t been a drive-in in this town since the early nineties.

He smiles and looks intently at her. She looks back with the same intensity. These two are still very much in love.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE OUTSKIRTS

Tom gets out of the car, and Edie drives away. Tom walks towards town.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE — CENTER

A small town, pleasant and clean. Shops line the streets, and cars drive by — people on their way to work and school. Tom walks down the street, clearly enjoying the sun on his face.

A deep, thumping bass fades up behind him, and Tom turns to see a car cruising towards him, rap blasting out of it. THREE HIGH SCHOOL KIDS are in the car. Tom waves at the car as it goes by. The car slows, and JARED, the driver leans out the window.

JARED
Hey, Mr. Stall!

TOM
Hey, Jared.

JARED
Charlotte told me to tell you she’s gonna have to be half an hour late this afternoon.

TOM
Okay, Jared. Thanks.

JARED
No problem.

The car peels out, music still pounding. Tom watches them go, smiling.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

**TOM**
(To himself)
Keep that noise down, you goddam kids.

EXT. STALL’S DINER - DAY

A very nice, clean diner on a well travelled street. A couple of LOCALS walk by and wave to Tom as he approaches the diner. He opens the door, then pauses when he sees something.

He leans down and scrapes a smudge off the window with his finger. He walks into the diner.

INT. STALL’S DINER

PAT JOHNSON, a wiry man in his mid fifties in dusty overalls sits at the counter, sipping at a cup of coffee. He’s the classic Midwestern farmer.

MICK, the short order cook back in the kitchen waves as Tom comes in.

**TOM**
Morning Pat, Mick.

**PAT**
Who’s the craziest woman you ever dated?

**TOM**
Whoa. ‘scuse me?

**PAT**
Mick and me’s just talkin’ about women we been with. He once dated a woman used to attack him in the middle of the night.

**TOM**
She what?

**MICK**
She’d have these crazy goddam dreams where instead of her boyfriend, I was some kind of demented killer. I woke up one night she’d stuck a goddam fork in my arm.

**TOM**
Jesus.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MICK
I’m spurtin’ blood and she’s sittin’
there, crying, goin’ “Baby, I love you,
I love you.”

TOM
You broke up with her, right?

MICK
Nope. Married her. Lasted six years.
(Off Tom’s look) Nobody’s perfect, Tom.

Tom nods – he can’t argue with that.

PAT
Yeah, well, I got that beat. I dated a
psychiatrist in New York for a whole
year.

MICK
Hard to top that.

PAT
I’m tellin’ you, there’s only one
reason a person gets into that line of
work, and it’s not to help crazy folks.

TOM
What the hell were you doing in New
York?

PAT
You ain’t the only one from out of
town. I was born and raised there.

TOM
In New York?

PAT
Uh huh.

TOM
City?

PAT
Well, sure.

MICK
Who’s the craziest girl you ever went
out with, Tom?

TOM
I dunno. I never really had any crazy
girlfriends.
CONTINUED: (2)

PAT
Sure wasn’t Edie.

TOM
Ha. No. She’s definitely the sanest woman I’ve ever known.

PAT
Honest, too.

TOM
I remember we’re out on our first date, and that song Me & Mrs. Jones comes on. (Tom chuckles) We’re talking about the lyrics, how it’s about this guy screwing some other guy’s wife, and Edie? She’s stunned. She always thought it was Mr. Jones singing about how great his wife was.

Tom shakes his head in amusement.

INT. TAYLORVILLE HIGH - BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Gym class - A softball game in progress. Jack sits on a bench by the wire fence, watching his team at bat. He and his teammates wear red gym shirts. The other team wears blue. JUDY DANVERS - same age as Jack and a real alterna-chick - walks up behind him and hits the fence. Jack turns.

JACK
Hey.

JUDY
Hey. How’s it going?

JACK
Same old crap. What do they have you guys doing?

JUDY
Sprints. I’d rather be playing ball.

Jack shrugs.

JUDY (cont’d)
What position you playing?

JACK
Coach has me playing deep right field. Real exciting.

JUDY
What’s the score?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK
We’re up by one. But they have one more inning.

The batter strikes out, and the COACH blows his whistle.

JACK (cont’d)
Well, gotta get out to the boondocks. Catch ya later.

JUDY
Yeah. Wanna work on math stuff later?

JACK
Sure!

He runs out to deep right field, putting on his glove. Judy goes back to join the other girls.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE HIGH - BASEBALL FIELD - LATER

Jack stands out in deep right field bored out of his mind. In the distance, on the track, Judy runs past and waves.

BOBBY JORDAN, class jock and all round tough guy, walks up to bat. One man’s already on third base.

BOBBY
One winning run, coming up.

His teammates cheer - “Go get ‘em, Bobby!” etc.

The PITCHER winds up and pitches. Ball. Bobby sidesteps it.

The pitcher winds up again and fires. Jack steps back, deeper into right field.

Bobby swings, and hits with a loud crack. The ball sails through the air right towards Jack. Bobby races towards first.

Jack races back and forth, glove ready, trying to get under the ball.

CLOSE ON - Bobby, smirking arrogantly. He knows Jack’s gonna miss.

THWAP!

Jack catches the ball.

The KIDS on Jack’s team cheer loudly.

Bobby looks furious.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Jack looks down at his glove, slightly amazed – this kid is NOT the big athlete. He looks up and sees his teammates cheering him.

COACH walks out on the field.

COACH
Game over. Reds win!

Jack looks around and smiles. Bobby storms off the field, furious. A couple of Jack’s teammates run up to him and pat him on the back. “Way to go, Stall!”

INT. TAYLORVILLE HIGH – BOY’S LOCKER ROOM

The boys getting back into civvies. Jack stands at his locker, putting on a shirt. Bobby walks over to him, a pair of his BUDDIES with him.

BOBBY
I guess you think you’re hot shit, Stall.

JACK
What? No. I don’t.

BOBBY
Little superstar, here, huh? Little hero saves the day at the last minute, right?

JACK
What? Bobby, it’s just a game. It’s just stupid gym class.

BOBBY
Who you callin’ stupid?

JACK
No, I said gym class was stupid.

BOBBY
(To his Buddies)
“No, I said gym class was stupid.”
Listen to this little faggot.

JACK
Yes, you’re right. I’m both little and a faggot. You got me dead to rights.

Bobby pushes Jack up against his locker with a thud.

BOBBY
Come on, chickenshit. Let’s do it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK
What would be the point?

BOBBY
What?

JACK
I mean, we’ve already established that
I’m little, that I’m a faggot and that
I’m chickenshit. What’s the point of
pummeling me mercilessly?

BOBBY
What?

JACK
I mean you win. You’ve established your
alpha male standing. You’ve established
my unworthiness. Doing violence to me
just seems pointless and cruel, don’t
you think?

Some of the other kids are laughing now, which pisses off
the confused Bobby. This is NOT the response he expected.

BOBBY
Come on, you punk ass bitch.

JACK
Shouldn’t that be “Little punk ass
chickenshit faggot bitch”?

BOBBY
God!

He pushes Jack against the locker and storms away, pissed
off. A few kids laugh. Jack breathes a sigh of relief and
turns back to his locker.

EXT. STALL’S DINER – DUSK

Tom stands outside the diner, stretching after a long day.
Edie pulls up in the station wagon. The rain is letting up.

EDIE
Hey, good looking.

TOM
Hey.

He climbs in.
INT. STALL’S STATION WAGON

Edie starts up and drives down the street.

    TOM
    Are we going to the store?

    EDIE
    We’re not going to the store.

    TOM
    We’re not?

    EDIE
    Jack’s studying over at Judy Danvers’ house, and Martha’s taking care of Sarah.

    TOM
    Oh yeah?

    EDIE
    Yeah.

    TOM
    So where are we going?

    EDIE
    We never got to be teenagers together.

    TOM
    Uh huh.

    EDIE
    I’m going to fix that.

Tom cocks an eyebrow.

    TOM (O.S.)
    Cannonball!

EXT. POND - NIGHT

The Stall’s station wagon sits near an idyllic pond. A cooler full of beer sits nearby, and a small boom box sits on the hood, blasting late seventies rock and roll.

Edie is in the water, naked. A naked Tom flies through the air, curled in a ball, and lands with a huge splash. Edie laughs, and Tom swims up to her and they kiss.

A loud buzzing, and Tom breaks the kiss to swat at a mosquito.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM
Damn!

EDIE
Yeah, that’s kind of the downside.

TOM
That and the freezing water.

EDIE
Sort of makes it hard to achieve the desired effect, huh?

TOM
Honey, there’s nothing hard within a mile of this place.

Another mosquito buzzes by and Edie swats at it.

TOM (cont’d)
You ever think maybe kids didn’t come here because it was so perfect but because they didn’t have anywhere else to make out?

She looks at him thoughtfully, then smiles.

EXT. POND – TWENTY SECONDS LATER

Edie and Tom, now loosely dressed, leap into the car and peel out.

INT. STALL HOUSE – TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Tom sits on the bed, taking off his shoes in a hurry. He quickly unbuttons his shirt, then pauses and calls out.

TOM
Hey, what’s going on in there?

EDIE (O.S.)
Keep your shirt on, I’m coming!

Tom looks at his half buttoned shirt and smiles, then takes it off. He walks over to the light switch and dims the lights. Too dim. Not dim enough. He gets it just right, unbuckles his belt, and the bathroom door opens.

Edie stands in the bathroom door, wearing her old cheerleader outfit, a lock of hair dangling over one eye, a knowing smile on her face.

TOM
Holy cow.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EDIE
You need some help with that, big boy?

TOM
What have you done with my wife?

She sashays towards him and takes his belt in her hands and yanks it. It catches, and she giggles, and then yanks again.

EDIE
No wives in here, mister.

Tom’s pants drop to the floor, and he takes Edie gently in his arms and lowers her to the bed, kicking his pants off as they go down.

They kiss, warm and hungry.

Tom slides down Edie and throws up her skirt. She laughs as his head slides under the skirt, and her laughs turn to moans of pleasure.

A beat, and then Tom slides back up, grinning.

EDIE (cont’d)
There wasn’t a lot of that in high school. Wasn’t much of this, either.

She rolls Tom over onto his back and slides down his stomach. Tom closes his eyes, smiling.

TOM
Rah rah.... Sis boom bah.

She reaches up and gives him a gentle smack in the face.

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - LATER

Edie and Tom lie under the rumpled sheets. Tom runs his fingers through Edie’s hair, staring off into the distance.

EDIE
What is it?

He rolls over takes her head in his hands and looks intently into her eyes.

TOM
I remember the moment I knew you were in love with me. I saw it in your eyes in an instant. I can still see it.
CONTINUED:

EDIE
Of course you can. I still love you.

TOM
I am the luckiest son of a bitch alive.

She leans down and runs her hand down his cheek.

EDIE
You’re the best man I’ve ever known, Tom. There’s no luck involved.

She rolls over and hits the switch on the bedside lamp. It flickers on and off, and she grimaces. Tom smiles and leans over her and shakes it, and the light snaps on in full. She kisses him on the cheek in gratitude, and picks up some papers and starts to read.

Tom looks at his wife thoughtfully. A smile spreads across his face, and he rolls over to go to sleep.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE — AFTERNOON

Tom walking down the street. Town’s a little more crowded than last time - it’s Saturday afternoon.

A pair of kids race by Tom. One kid has plastic Wolverine claws, the other is wearing huge green Hulk fists. He smiles as they pretend to duke it out.

INT. STALL’S DINER

The place is crowded. Charlotte is delivering a meal to a table. Mick is cranking away at a dozen orders. Tom walks in. SAM CARNEY, the local sheriff, sits at the counter sucking down some coffee. Tom slaps him on the back.

TOM
Hey, Sam.

SAM
Afternoon, Tom.

TOM
How’s things?

SAM
Good. Good. Gettin’ ready for Saturday night.

TOM
Yuh. Expecting trouble tonight?
CONTINUED:

SAM
Just the usual. Drunk assholes. Cow tipping.

TOM
Don’t forget UFO abduction.

SAM
Right. How’s Edie?

TOM
Good as ever.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE - NIGHT

The town square’s a nice piece of land. Well kept, a few trees, with City Hall – the nicest building in town – right in the center. Kids in cars drive around and around, music blasting from every window.

Jack and Judy sit alongside the building, passing a joint back and forth, watching the kids go round and round.

JUDY
You ever wonder what kids did for fun on a Saturday night a hundred years ago?

JACK
I dunno. I always figured they got into their parents’ wagon and went cruising around their town square playing loud banjo music and acting like idiots.

JUDY
So you think this is as good as it gets?

JACK
For us? Yeah. For now. Eventually we grow up and get jobs and have affairs and become alcoholics.

Judy looks at him a long beat, then takes a hit off the joint.

JUDY
Ya know, sometimes you depress me.

Jack smiles.
INT. BOBBY’S CAR

Bobby and his pals are driving around the square, passing a bottle of beer in a bag around. Bobby’s behind the wheel. He looks out and spots Jack and Judy and frowns.

BUDDY #1
Hey, isn’t that that Stall faggot?

BOBBY
Yeah.

BUDDY #1
You should go kick his ass.

BOBBY
I’m thinkin’ about it.

He swerves into the next lane, and a horn honks loudly at him. He hits the brake and looks back, sees he’s almost driven into another car – a battered old pickup. He flips the truck the finger- Leland and Billy sit inside the truck. Billy gives Bobby a very cold glare and Bobby pulls back his finger, scared. Billy nods and they drive on.

BUDDY #1
Who the fuck was that?

BOBBY
I don’t know. And I don’t want to.

INT. LELAND AND BILLY’S TRUCK

Billy’s looking back at Bobby’s car.

BILLY
Can I just say how sick I am of these podunk towns and the goddam podunks who live in them?

LELAND
You think if you keep saying that it’s gonna change anything?

BILLY
I’m just sick of this shit.

LELAND
Yeah, you made that clear about ten thousand miles ago, Billy. Until you come up with a better idea, I don’t want to hear about it anymore.

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CONTINUED:

BILLY
We are so goddam broke.

LELAND
Yeah, well, that’s easy to fix.

EXT. TOWN SQUARE

Jack and Judy, still sitting. Judy looks over to the street and sees Bobby climbing out of his car.

JUDY
Oh, shit.

JACK
What?

JUDY
Bobby.

JACK
What the hell is the matter with that guy? Let’s get out of here.

They get to their feet and walk the opposite direction.

INT. STALL’S DINER

Mick’s behind the stove, cleaning and closing the place down, Charlotte’s wiping down a table. JEFF and LISA, a pair of high school kids sit at a booth, eating ice cream. Tom is sitting behind the counter, talking to Pat, who’s finishing up his dinner.

PAT
Good as ever, Tom.

Pat slaps some bills down on the counter and heads for the door. He waves to Mick, who waves back.

PAT (cont’d)
See you in church, Tom.

TOM
Ayuh. Have a good evening.

Pat opens the door to walk out, and bumps smack into Leland.

PAT
Oh, excuse me.

LELAND
S’alright, old man.

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CONTINUED:

He holds the door open for Pat and lets him out, smiling coldly. Pat looks at him, troubled. Billy walks in after Leland, watching Pat go. Billy and Leland walk up to the counter.

    TOM
    Just closing up, fellas.

    LELAND
    Coffee. Black.

    BILLY
    Same. And some pie. Gimme some pie.

    TOM
    Guys, I told you we’re just closing up.

    LELAND
    I said coffee!

Charlotte looks up at this, worried. Jeff and Lisa look over, interested. Tom looks at Leland a beat, then nods.

    TOM
    Okay. I think we can handle that.

He walks over to the coffee machine and picks up a pot.

    TOM (cont’d)
    Charlotte, you can go home now if you want.

    LELAND
    (Nods to the door)
    Billy.

Billy walks over to the door, cutting off Charlotte.

    BILLY
    I think you’re gonna stick around a while, honey.

    CHARLOTTE
    Tom?

Tom looks at her, worried, then over to Jeff and Lisa, who look scared. He turns to Leland.

    TOM
    We don’t carry much money here, but you’re welcome to all of it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

LELAND

Oh, I know that, asshole. I do know that.

He pulls out a gun and points it at Tom, who stands with the coffee pot in his hand.

Billy pulls out his gun and points it at Charlotte. Lisa screams.

LELAND (cont’d)

Shut up, bitch!

She stops, terrified. Jeff puts his arm around her, looking at the two men in fear.

LELAND (cont’d)

Show this asshole we mean business, Billy.

BILLY

(Nodding to Charlotte)

What, her?

LELAND

Yeah, her. Fuck her. Do it.

TOM

No! Don’t!

Billy shrugs and pulls the trigger.

Click.

Billy looks at the gun, puzzled. Leland looks to Billy—what the fuck?

Without even thinking, Tom lashes out with the coffee pot, smashing it into Leland’s face, the glass shattering. Leland cries out and drops his gun, falls to the floor.

Tom leaps over the counter and picks up Leland’s gun.

Billy quickly ratchets another bullet into the chamber of his gun and turns to Tom.

Tom fires, hitting Billy in the chest, sending him spinning.

Lisa screams.

Leland grabs a knife from the floor and slams it into Tom’s foot.
CONTINUED: (3)

Tom screams in pain and whirls, sees Leland on the floor, the knife in his hand, and fires down, through the top of Leland’s head. Leland’s face explodes in a shower of gore.

Billy staggers towards Tom, clutching his bloody chest, his gun in his other hand.

BILLY
MOTHERFUCKER!!

He raises the gun to fire again. Tom whips the gun up and fires, hitting Billy in the stomach and sending him crashing through the diner window in a shower of glass.

Lisa stops screaming. Mick walks out from the kitchen, stunned. Charlotte stands there, in shock.

Tom slowly gets to his feet and surveys the carnage. Leland lies on the floor, his head a bloody mess. Billy lies outside on the sidewalk, dead, one of his feet propped up on the shattered window. Outside, people yell and shout and scream.

Tom struggles to stand upright, blood gushing from his foot.

Mitch runs over to him and holds him up.

The rest is a swirl of disconnected images from Tom’s POV:

Sam, the local sheriff, bursts into the diner, gun in hand.

An ambulance in front of the diner.

A crowd of people watching as PARAMEDICS lead Tom to the ambulance. Jack and Judy in front of the crowd, watching in shock. Jack reaches out to touch his father’s hand.

The back of the ambulance. Tom being laid down. Edie bursts through the doors and hugs her husband.

FADE TO BLACK.

A long beat

FADE IN:

EXT. STALL’S DINER – ON TV – TOM’S POV

A LOCAL REPORTER stands in front of the diner, the window still shattered. A crowd of people in the background. The image is blurry, coming slowly into focus.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

REPORTER
...where Tom Stall, the owner of this
diner, fought off two savage criminals.
The two men, Leland DeVore and William
“Billy” Orser, were wanted by Texas and
California police for two weeks in
conjunction with several murders in
those states. Stall, a family man with
long standing ties to the community....

Switch
A reporter interviews Jeff and Lisa and their parents.
Switch
A reporter interviews Mitch.
Switch
A reporter interviews Charlotte.
Switch

TV – INT. STUDIO – THE RUNYAN REPORT

A slick, dark studio. A flinty eyed man in his fifties,
wearin a dark blue suit and a red tie sits behind a desk.
A picture of Tom is being projected behind him, the words
“American Hero” written across it.

RUNYAN
Three days ago, Tom Stall was just
another hard working business owner,
the manager of Stall’s Diner in
Taylorville, Indiana. But now, thanks
only to his true American character,
he’s a hero to all of us. When he found
himself in a...

The screen goes black.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM – DAY

Tom sits on the edge of the bed, fully dressed, and
switches the TV off in disgust. Edie walks in, an ORDERLY
behind her, pushing a wheelchair.

EDIE
Honey?

TOM
God. Are you as sick of hearing about
me as I am?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

   EDIE
   I’ll never be sick of you, honey. They’re here to check you out.

   TOM
   Thank God for small favors.

He stands up and looks at the wheelchair.

   ORDERLY
   Regulations, sir. You have to let us wheel you out.

   EDIE
   It’s true. Just do it, honey.

Tom chuckles and gets in the wheelchair.

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING AREA

Tom is wheeled out to find dozens of locals and well wishers waiting for him. They pat him on the back. “Way to go, Tommy!”

Jack, carrying Sarah, comes over to his father. Tom warmly squeezes his son’s shoulder and kisses him on the forehead. Jack pulls back, embarrassed, which makes Tom smile.

EXT. STALL HOUSE - DUSK

A PERKY FEMALE REPORTER stands outside Tom’s house, a CAMERAMAN shooting her.

   PERKY REPORTER
   We’re in Taylorville, outside the home of American hero Tom Stall, who is just now returning from the hospital with his family.

The car pulls down the lot and stops. The reporter races over to Tom as he climbs out of the car, limping slightly.

   PERKY REPORTER (cont’d)
   Mr. Stall, Jenny Wyeth, KTWA News. How did it feel when you saw those ruthless killers’ guns pointed at you?

Tom pauses a moment, struck by the stupidity of the question.

   TOM
   How did it feel?
CONTINUED:

PERKY REPORTER
Yes, sir.

TOM
Not very good. Is this a slow news day?

PERKY REPORTER
Well, sir, we....

TOM
I mean, what I did... Anyone would have done that. It was just a terrible thing, and I think we’ll all be better off when we get past it.

PERKY REPORTER
Yes, but...

TOM
I really need to go be with my family. Thank you.

He turns and walks into his house.

PERKY REPORTER
Uh... From Taylorville, this is Jenny Wyeth, and, uh....

INT. STALL HOUSE – LIVING ROOM

Tom storms in, followed by Jack and Sarah, then Edie. He looks out the window and sees the news van peeling out. He plops down into his armchair.

TOM
God. It’s good to be home. I hope there won’t be much more of that.

JACK
They just want an interview, Dad. You’re a hero.

TOM
No, I’m not. I got lucky. Very lucky.

EDIE
This will all blow over as soon as they have some other hot story.

TOM
Maybe the Lydons will have another two headed cow.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK
That would be cool! I never got to see the last one.

Tom rolls his eyes and smiles. Edie looks out the window.

EDIE
Those goddam reporters.

TOM
They still out there?

EDIE
There’s a car parked across the field. They’re just sitting there.

She walks into the kitchen. Tom stands up and walks to the window and looks out.

TOM’S POV -

EXT. STALL HOUSE

A dark sedan is parked on the other side of the field, by the road, its lights on dim.

INT. STALL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Tom looks thoughtfully at the car and frowns.

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - LATER

Tom sits on the bed, looking out at the night. Edie walks in in her nightgown and puts her arms around him.

EDIE
You okay, baby?

TOM
I just keep thinking....

EDIE
About the diner?

TOM
I killed two men.

EDIE
Two really bad men.

TOM
I know. I know.
CONTINUED:

EDIE
They would have killed you.

TOM
Yeah, probably. I can’t help thinking that.... I dunno... If I’d just managed to take them down. Sam could have arrested them. Maybe they could have earned another chance... Made up for what they did?

EDIE
I’m not going to let you eat yourself alive over this. Some situations really are black and white, and you did the right thing. Period. End of story.

She kisses his cheek.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE OUTSKIRTS - MORNING

Edie drives along the road, alone, and pulls over by the side.

INT. STALL’S STATION WAGON

Edie leans back and addresses the pile of sheets in the back.

EDIE
Okay, Mr. Fugitive. We’re here.

Tom sticks his head out of the pile.

TOM
Nobody followed us?

EDIE
Nope. You’re in the clear. For now.

TOM
Thanks, baby.

EDIE
You sure you really want to go back to work so soon?

TOM
I have to, babe. It’s my job.

EDIE
You’re such a man.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM
The manliest.

They kiss, and he climbs out.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE

Tom walks down the sidewalk. A car slows down as it passes him and a MIDDLE AGED MAN sticks his head out.

MIDDLE AGED MAN
Hey, Tommy! Way to go!

TOM
Thanks, Hector. Come by the diner. Have some breakfast.

MIDDLE AGED MAN
Will do, Tommy!

The car pulls out and drives away. The kids who were playing Wolverine vs. Hulk earlier come racing by, one of them firing an invisible gun at the other two.

KID
This is my diner, you punks! Blam blam blam!

Tom flinches at this, and the kid runs smack into his legs. Tom helps the kid up, and the kid looks at Tom in awe.

TOM
You okay?

The kid nods, and Tom pushes him on his way, disturbed.

EXT. STALL’S DINER

A large piece of wood covers the broken window. Tom unlocks the door and walks in. The place is quiet. He looks around, the first time he’s been here since then....

Mick walks out of the kitchen.

TOM
Hey, Mick.

Mick throws his arm around Tom and hugs him hard. Tom’s a little taken aback.

MICK
Hey, boss. Back to work, huh?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM
Uh... Yeah. Back to work.

MICK
Good.

Charlotte walks up to them.

TOM
Hey, Charlotte.

She hugs him.

TOM (cont’d)
Hey, you guys. I’m your boss.

CHARLOTTE
We’ll go back to hating you next week, okay?

TOM
Okay.

INT. STALL’S DINER

Tom turns on the lights and looks around. Mick nods to the window.

MICK
Good as new, huh?

TOM
Yeah.

MICK
You sick of seeing yourself on TV?

TOM
Ayuh.

CHARLOTTE
It’s good just to go back to something normal. I am not going to miss all those cameras.

MICK
You sure made certain those cameras didn’t miss you. How tall is Larry King, really?

Charlotte glares at him.

CHARLOTTE
I’ll start the coffee machine.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM

Good.

MICK

Turn on the backup, too. We’re gonna need a lot today.

TOM

You expecting a lot of customers?

Mick smiles.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STALL’S DINER – AFTERNOON

Every table is filled. There are a few empty seats at the counter. Tom behind the counter, sorting through some checks. Edie walks in. Several of the customers wave to her and greet her. She smiles and nods back.

She walks up to her husband and plants a big kiss on his cheek.

TOM

Hey, honey.

EDIE

Hey, baby.

TOM

What brings you by?

EDIE

Just wanted to see how you were doing.

TOM

Doing good. Business is great. I oughta shoot someone every week.

She gives him a slightly worried look, but he smiles back at her – everything’s okay.

The door opens and three men – very out of place – walk in. FRANK & CHARLIE, two very assured looking gentlemen in their mid thirties, tough as hell. In between them is GIUSEPPE TORINO, an older man wearing shades and a black suit. A scar runs down from the right side of his forehead down to his cheek.

The three men stop at the door, ignoring the looks they’re getting from everyone, and look intently at Tom.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EDIE
More reporters?

TOM
They don’t look like reporters.

The three men make their way to the counter and sit. There are only two seats, so Frank stands behind Torino and Charlie, like a guard. Tom puts menus down in front of them, hands one to Frank, who ignores it.

TOM (cont’d)
Would you gentlemen like some coffee?

TORINO
You’re the hero.

TOM
Oh, I don’t know about that, sir. I just...

TORINO
The big hero. You sure took care of those two bad men.

TOM
I really don’t like talking about it, sir. We’re just trying to get back to normal here. Can I offer you gentlemen some coffee?

TORINO
Sure. Give me some coffee. Make it black, Joey.

TOM
Yes, sir. And your friend.... Excuse me?

TORINO
I said make it black. Joey.

TOM
Who’s Joey?

TORINO
You are.

TOM
My name’s Tom, sir.

TORINO
Of course it is. Just one cup.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Edie watches, troubled. Tom walks over to the coffee machine and pours a cup. He puts it in front of Torino who picks it up, takes a long sip.

TORINO (cont’d)
Good coffee.

TOM
Thank you.

TORINO
Hard to find coffee this good in Philadelphia. But you know that, don’t you, “Tom.”

TOM
I don’t really remember. I’ve only been to Philly once. For a day. Passing through. Is that where you gentlemen are from?

CHARLIE
Like you don’t know.

TOM
I’m sorry. Do we know each other?

TORINO
You tell me.

He takes off his sunglasses, revealing that his right eye, the one with the scar above and below it, is white, milky and dead. Edie gasps. Tom looks at him, puzzled.

TOM
Sir, I’m very sorry. You seem to think you know me, and I wish I could help you. I really have no idea where we would have met.

CHARLIE
Come on, Joey. Cut the crap.

TOM
My name is Tom.

CHARLIE
Joey Furillo. Your name is Joey Furillo.

Edie steps up.

(CONTINUED)
EDIE
If you aren’t going to order anything, my husband and I would appreciate it if you men would be on your way.

Charlie turns to her and smiles. Torino keeps his gaze fixed on Tom.

TORINO
We ate on the road.

TOM
Sir, we really are busy. If you’re not eating, we should give your seats to paying customers.

Torino nods, and Frank reaches into his jacket pocket. Tom and Edie tense.

Frank pulls out a wallet, takes out a fifty dollar bill, and puts it on the counter. Charlotte notices what’s happening and looks on, concerned.

FRANK
Now we’re paying customers.

TOM
I can’t take this.

TORINO
It shouldn’t be a problem for you.

TOM
Look, mister. I’ve been exceedingly polite to you, but if I have to, I’ll call the authorities and we can take this up with them. I will not have anyone come into my business and threaten me.

CHARLIE
Mr. Torino’s just making conversation.

TOM
Whatever you want to call it. This conversation is over.

CHARLIE
He wants us to leave, Mr. Torino.

FRANK
You know what he does when he don’t like people, Mr. Torino.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

CHARLIE
Yeah. I’m scared. We should leave
before he goes all Dirty Harry on us.

Torino stands up.

TORINO
Thank you for the coffee, Joey. It
really is very good.

TOM
It’s Tom. Tom Stall.

For the first time, Torino smiles. He and his men head for
the door. Tom watches them go. Edie picks up the phone and
dials.

EDIE
Hello, Molly? This is Edie Stall. Is he
in?

Tom turns to her.

TOM
You calling Sam?

EDIE
Yeah.

TOM
Isn’t that overreacting?

EDIE
These days? No. Do you know those men?

TOM
No. Of course not.

EDIE
For all we know, they’re friends of the
men who tried to rob you.

Tom nods.

EDIE (cont’d)
Hello, Sam?

EXT. TAYLORVILLE OUTSKIRTS

A black sedan drives slowly down the street. A Sheriff’s
car pulls up behind it, lights flashing. The sedan pulls
over.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Sam gets out of the sheriff’s car and walks up to the sedan. The window rolls down, and Frank sticks his head out. Charlie sits next to him. A shadowy figure – Torino, we assume – sits in the back.

FRANK
There a problem with my driving, officer?

SAM
May I see your license, sir?

FRANK
Sure. (Hands Sam the license) I thought I was under the limit.

Sam looks at the license, then walks back to his car. Frank turns to Charlie, who looks impassively ahead. Sam walks back to the car and hands Frank the license.

SAM
Step out of the car, sir.

Frank steps out.

SAM (cont’d)
Place your hands on the hood, sir.

Frank does as he’s told, and Sam pats him down.

FRANK
I ain’t carrying anything, officer.

SAM
What’s your business in Taylorville, sir?

FRANK
We’re tourists.

SAM
What business did you have at Stall’s Diner today?

FRANK
We heard the coffee was terrific.

SAM
Well, let me make something clear, Mr. Lazorko. This is a nice town. We have nice people here. We take care of our nice people. Do you understand me?

(CONTINUED)
FRANK
Sure.

SAM
Don’t let me see you around again.

FRANK
Keep up the good work, officer.

SAM
I’m not an officer. I’m the sheriff.

FRANK
I’ll remember that.

SAM
You’re not going to need to. You’re leaving town.

Frank shrugs and gets back in the car.

FRANK
You lettin’ us off with a warning, officer? Sheriff?

SAM
Yeah. A warning.

FRANK
Thanks. You have a great day.

They pull out and take off. Sam watches them go, troubled.

EXT. GAS STATION – DAY

Torino’s sedan pulls into the station and Torino gets out and heads for the men’s room. Frank starts pumping gas. Charlie gets out and stretches.

CHARLIE
What do you think?

FRANK
About what?

CHARLIE
All this. Joey.

FRANK
I dunno. It’s been twenty years. I mean, yeah, boss says the guy looks kinda like Joey, but you know, I look kinda like Mel Gibson and you look a lot like Godzilla.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHARLIE
Funny asshole.

FRANK
I mean, for all we know Joey’s put on eighty pounds, gone bald and dresses like a ballet dancer these days. He could be anywhere.

CHARLIE
Yeah. What if it’s not him. What if he’s the wrong guy?

FRANK
You sayin’ every guy you ever sent down was the right guy? He’s the wrong guy, then he’s the wrong guy. Fuck ‘im.

CHARLIE
Yeah.

FRANK
We do our job. Let the bosses worry about the right guy and the wrong guy.

Charlie nods. Torino walks out of the men’s room.

TORINO
What’re you talking about?

FRANK
Game last night. Atlanta kicked some ass.

INT. STALL HOUSE

Tom and Edie doing the dishes. The doorbell rings.

TOM
I’ll get it.

He goes to the door, opens it to find Sam.

TOM (cont’d)
Sam. Everything okay?

SAM
You mind if I come in, Tom?

TOM
No, of course not. Come on in. We just finished putting Sarah to bed, so we have to keep it low for a bit.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

They walk in and sit in the living room. Edie joins them.

SAM
Edie.

EDIE
Sam. What’s going on?

SAM
Those men who came in to see you this morning....

EDIE
God. Yes. Thank you for that.

SAM
Well, I did a little digging this afternoon. Tom.... You don’t know these fellas, do you?

TOM
Jesus, Sam. No. I’ve never seen them in my life.

SAM
Okay. Because these are some bad men. (Takes out a notepad) Charles Olivieri, out of New York. Indicted on three counts of murder. Frank Lazorko, Philadelphia. Indicted on one count of murder, questioned in relation to dozens of acts of violence you do not want to hear about. Both men work for Giuseppe Torino, the fella with the eye. He has a major history of violence. Spent fifteen years in prison on several accounts of assault. Suspected in half a dozen murders and more disappearances. Tom, these guys are organized crime from the East Coast. They’re the real thing. The bad men.

EDIE
Jesus. Jesus, Tom.

Tom looks at her, worried.

SAM
I have to ask you a question, and you have to know that I’ve known you as long as you been here, and Edie and I go back to high school. (MORE)
CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (cont'd)
If there's one person in this town outside your family you can trust, it's me.

TOM
I know that, Sam.

SAM
Are you in some kind of witness protection plan?

Tom is a little surprised, a little taken aback by the question.

TOM
Wha... Some kind of... Are you...?

He laughs.

SAM
It's no laughing matter, Tom.

EDIE
Of course he's not, Sam.

SAM
I'd just like to hear Tom tell me that, Edie.

TOM
Sam. God. I love that. It's hilarious. No. No. I'm not in some kind of witness protection program. Those men just have the wrong guy. They saw me on TV, I reminded them of someone... Johnny....

EDIE
Joey.

TOM
Joey something. Lord, the idea of me....

Edie smiles.

SAM
I honestly didn't believe it, Tom. But I had to ask. I did a little research on the name Joey Furillo. Didn't find anything, but there is a Richie Furillo in Philadelphia. He's the head of organized crime in the city.

(MORE)
CONTINUED: (3)

SAM (cont'd)
Men like this come to our town, start
harassing a citizen... We have to take
it seriously.

TOM
Sure. Of course. I understand.

SAM
So, look, I talked to Torino and his
men today. Made it real clear that if
they didn’t have business here, they
weren’t welcome in town. You let me
know if you see them coming around,
okay?

TOM
Of course.

Sam stands up to go.

EDIE
Would you like some pie, Sam?

SAM
Aw, no thanks, Edie. I’d love some, but
I have to get back to work.

Tom walks him to the door and shakes his hand.

TOM
Sam. Thank you. It’s good to know
you’re watching out for us.

SAM
Come on, Tom. You know we look out for
our own here.

Tom smiles and pats Sam on the back as he leaves. He closes
the door and turns to face a troubled Edie.

TOM
Don’t worry. They have the wrong guy.
They’re leaving. It’s over and done
with.

They hug.

INT. STALL’S DINER

Tight on Leland, looking straight at us.

LELAND
I’m gonna kill you and everyone you
know and your whole goddam family.
CONTINUED:

A loud roar and Leland is hit in the chest by a shotgun blast and flung across the room.

Tom walks across to him, smoking shotgun in hand. He looks over the body, but Leland has become Torino. He lies on the floor in a pool of blood, his chest ripped open, laughing.

Tom looks at him, puzzled, and Torino slowly raises a gun towards Tom and squeezes the trigger.

BLAM!

CUT TO:

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tom’s eyes snap open and he cries out. He’s bathed in sweat. Edie wakes up, sees him, and holds him tight. Tom looks out the window at the dark night.

EDIE
What is it, baby?

TOM
God.... A dream... Just a dream...
Jesus...

EDIE
It’s okay, baby. It’s okay.

She holds him tight.

EXT. STALL HOUSE - DAWN

Tom quietly walks out the front door and walks down the road.

INT. STALL’S DINER

Tom getting ready to open for business. He walks to the front door and opens it, then freezes.

Torino’s black sedan is sitting in the middle of the street, engine running.

Tom steps outside.

EXT. STALL’S DINER

Tom stands looking at the sedan a long beat. The sedan shifts into gear and slowly rolls down the street. It slows as it passes the diner, the rear window rolled down, Torino staring coldly at Tom.
CONTINUED:

The window slides up, and the car picks up a little speed. Tom runs after it.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE – STREET

Tom comes to the end of the street and watches the sedan slowly drive down the street, towards the outskirts.

TOM

Jesus.

He runs after it, desperate and scared, hobbling on his injured foot. He pulls his cell phone out of his pocket and punches a number as he runs.

INT. STALL HOUSE – TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM

Edie sleeps as the morning sun peeks through the curtains. The phone by the side of the bed rings and she rolls over.

EDIE

(Eyes closed)
Honey, get that.

She realizes Tom’s not there, and rolls over to answer the phone.

EDIE (cont’d)
Hello?.... Tom? Where are....? What?
Coming here? Tom... Hang on. What? Are you serious?

EXT. TAYLORVILLE OUTSKIRTS

Tom, running desperately down the street, talking on the phone.

TOM

The shotgun, Edie. Get the shotgun. They’re coming to the house!

INT. STALL HOUSE – TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM

Edie slams the phone down and runs to the closet. A rifle and a double barreled 12 gauge shotgun lean side by side against the wall. She grabs the 12 gauge, and races out of the room.

INT. STALL HOUSE – LIVING ROOM

Edie tears down the stairs, holding the shotgun. She runs to the front door and peers out the window. Nothing.
EXT. TAYLORVILLE OUTSKIRTS

Tom, running frantically, in horrible pain, sweat pouring down his face, his legs cramping, his injured foot killing him. In the far distance, he sees the sedan turn down a small road.

    TOM
    No! No!

He runs, harder. Breath comes in short, pained bursts, gasps.

His left leg cramps and he cries out in pain, but keeps going.

Down the road, through the field.
Across the field.
Panting. Gritting his teeth. Screaming.
Through the field, through the corn.
Falls. Hard. WHAM!
Staggers to his feet and burns on.
He comes to the end of the field, leaps over the propane tank, comes to the house.
Quiet. No car. He stops, panting, red, damp with sweat, dirty.

He cautiously approaches the front door.
Which whips open, to reveal....
Edie. Holding the gun. Confused.

    EDIE
    Tom?

He staggered to her and wraps her up in his arms.

    EDIE (cont’d)
    Tom, what’s going on?

    TOM
    I don’t know, baby. I don’t know.

    EDIE
    I’ll call Sam.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM
No. Don’t. I don’t even know... I don’t even know if it was them.

She looks at him, worried. He staggers into the house.

INT. STALL HOUSE - BATHROOM

Tom in the shower, washing it all off.

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM & EDIE’S BEDROOM

Tom steps out of the bathroom, wrapped in a towel, and sees Edie standing there.

TOM
Hey.

EDIE
Hey.

TOM
I think I’m losing my mind.

EDIE
No, you’re not. You’ve been through some serious trauma. And these men are just making it worse. I’m here, baby. We’re all here. We all love you. It’s going to be okay.

They hug and Tom kisses his wife.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE MALL - DAY

A typical Midwestern mall. The Stall’s station wagon pulls into the parking lot and Edie gets out, gets Sarah, and the two of them head into the mall. Behind them, in the distance, a familiar black sedan pulls into the parking lot and sits.

INT. TAYLORVILLE MALL - SHOE STORE

Edie sits in a chair while a SHOE SALESWOMAN helps her try on a pair of shoes. Sarah is roaming around the store, bored.

SALESWOMAN
How do they feel?

EDIE
Good. I like them.
CONTINUED:

SALESWOMAN
I have a pair of these myself. They look great, and they really last.

EDIE
Okay. I’ll take them. Now we need a new pair for her.

They both turn to look, but Sarah’s gone. Edie gets up.

EDIE (cont’d)
Sarah?

No Sarah. Worried, Edie walks to the door and looks out into the mall. The Saleswoman follows.

SALESWOMAN
M’am?

Edie turns, and the woman nods to her feet. Edie is still wearing the new shoes.

EDIE
I have to find my daughter.

SALESWOMAN
I’m sorry, m’am. I can’t let you leave the store with those.

Edie kicks off the shoes in exasperation and walks briskly out of the store. A hand grabs her shoulder and she whirls.

It’s Charlie, Torino’s man. Edie gasps.

CHARLIE
Mrs. Stall.

EDIE
Oh my God. My daughter! Where is she?

Charlie nods, and Edie follows his look to see Sarah standing outside the toy store, looking in the window. Torino and Frank sit on a bench across from her. Edie walks to her daughter, followed by Charlie.

EDIE (cont’d)
Sarah! NEVER do that again!

SARAH
I’m sorry, Mommy. But look! They have the new Kimberly!
TORINO
No need to worry, Mrs. Stall. We were keeping her safe.

EDIE
You stay the fuck away from my family, you son of a bitch.

TORINO
There’s no need for that kind of language, Mrs. Stall.

EDIE
Look, I don’t know what you want, and I don’t care. If I see you again, this will be police business.

TORINO
Yes, you’re an attorney, aren’t you? You have some strong ties to the local law enforcement community. I respect that. But we’re not here to break any laws, Mrs. Stall. I just want what’s mine.

EDIE
My husband is not the man you think he is.

TORINO
That’s certainly possible. Please. Have a seat. Let me tell you a story.

She glares at him, not moving.

TORINO (cont’d)
Mrs. Stall. This is a crowded shopping mall. Even if I was the bad man you seem to think I am, what could I do here? Please. Sit.

EDIE
I’ll stand.

Torino sighs and nods.

TORINO
(To Charlie)
Never argue with a woman. Especially a woman lawyer.

Charlie smiles.

(CONTINUED)
TORINO (cont’d)
Mrs. Stall, your husband’s name is Joey Furillo. Twenty years ago, I worked with his older brother, Richie. Richie had come up through the ranks of our business, and he’d trained Joey to follow in his footsteps. The boss would give me a job, I’d pass it on to guys like Joey. And let me tell you, Mrs. Stall, your husband was very good at what he did. He had that crazy meanness that made him a natural. Joey Furillo came to see you, it meant negotiations were over. It meant you were not long for this world, you understand?

Edie looks at him, sickened.

TORINO (cont’d)
When Richie got his button – when he got bumped up the ladder – he had to leave Joey back working for me. Joey didn’t like that, Mrs. Stall. He blamed me for the fact that his brother didn’t take him with him. I wasn’t too thrilled, either – Richie was always better than me at keeping Joey in line. Without him, he was wild. Unpredictable. But business is business. You’re a lawyer – you understand that. I used to own a little cheese shop on Seventh street. Nice place. I was proud of it. One night, after closing, Joey and a friend of his came tearing in, knocked down the door, guns blazing.

EDIE
This is crazy.

TORINO
Five of my friends were hit. Of the three who lived, one of ‘em can’t use his arm anymore. Another is permanently brain damaged, Mrs. Stall, and I started the day with two good eyes. Joey’s friend, well, he went down in the fight, but Joey – your husband – took off. This sort of thing is bad for business. Richie.... He wasn’t happy at all. His brother had disgraced his family. Me, I just wanted to get on with my life. Learn from my mistakes and move forward.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
TORINO (cont'd)
But when I turned on my television the other day and saw Joey Furillo staring me in the face, I knew I had to do something. You say he’s the wrong man. He’s not Joey Furillo. Perhaps this is true. Anything’s possible. But would you forget the man who took your eye, Mrs. Stall? I doubt it.

Edie looks at Torino calmly for a long beat.

EDIE
Mr. Torino, let me tell you how I’m going to spend the rest of my day. I’m going to take my daughter and we’re going to buy her a pair of new shoes. Then I’m going to my office and calling Judge Lane. He’s the toughest judge in the county, but he has a crush on me a mile wide, and I’m going to push through a restraining order against you and your.... associates. If I see you or them within five hundred feet of me, my children or my husband, I’m going to have you arrested. If you come anywhere near my home, I’m going to shoot you. Can I possibly make myself clearer to you?

Torino smiles.

TORINO
No, Mrs. Stall. You can’t. I want to thank you for your time. You have an enchanting daughter.

Edie reaches out her hand to Sarah, who takes it. They turn and walk away. Her back turned to Torino, Edie’s face cracks - in spite of her tough facade, she’s terrified.

TORINO (cont’d)
Mrs. Stall.

She turns.

TORINO (cont’d)
Don’t forget your shoes.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE HIGH - HALLWAY - DAY
Jack and Judy walking out of a class.

JUDY
How’s your dad?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK
I dunno. A little weird.

JUDY
What he went through? That would freak anyone out.

JACK
Yeah. I guess.

Jack is pushed from behind and staggers forward, dropping his books. He and Judy turn to see Bobby and his buddies standing there.

BOBBY
So your old man’s some kind of tough guy. What’s he think of his wimp son?

Jack glares at Bobby.

BOBBY (cont’d)
You think he’d take this shit? You think he’d make jokes? Come on, bitch. Say something funny.

JUDY
Leave him alone, Bobby.

BOBBY
Shut up, skank.

Jack glares at Bobby.

BOBBY (cont’d)
Ooh. He’s getting mad.

JUDY
Come on, Jack. Let’s get out of here.

Jack doesn’t move.

JUDY (cont’d)
Jack, come on. He’s an asshole. You know that. He doesn’t mean shit. Let’s go.

BOBBY
Yeah, puss. Run away. God DAMN, but your daddy must be real shamed by you.

Jack takes a step towards Bobby, angry.
BOBBY (cont’d)
Say something funny, bitch. Make me laugh.

Jack turns to walk away. Bobby smiles.

Without warning Jack whirls and grabs the larger boy by the shirt and hurls him into a locker. He dives into Bobby, fists swinging, and pummels him mercilessly. Blood spurts from Bobby’s nose. Jack punches him hard in the stomach, then kicks him in the balls.

With a cry, Bobby falls to the ground, and Jack savagely kicks him in the stomach and head. Judy tries to pull him off, but he pushes her away.

JACK
Are you laughing? Are you laughing now?
Are you fucking laughing, you motherfucking cocksucking piece of shit?

Judy and Bobby’s buddies try to pull Jack back, but he’s furious, possessed. A TEACHER steps out of a classroom and sees what’s happening, grabs Jack and yanks him off of the battered, bleeding Bobby.

INT. STALL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Tom confronts his son.

TOM
What the hell were you thinking?

JACK
He’s been riding me all year. He’s a jerk.

TOM
“He’s a jerk”? That’s it? That’s no excuse. You stand up to him. You don’t nearly put him in the hospital.

JACK
Oh, big deal. It’s the best thing anyone could have done to him. Besides, I only got suspended.

TOM
His parents could still sue us. We can’t afford that, Jack. We don’t have that kind of money.
CONTINUED:

JACK
Oh, what? Mom’s not gonna take the case? Whatever, dad.

TOM
Goddammit. In this family, we do not solve problems by hitting people.

JACK
No. In this family, we shoot them.

Before he can even think, Tom lashes out and smacks Jack across the face.

Jack staggers back, stunned. A horrified look crosses Tom’s face.

Tears streaming down his face, Jack turns and runs out of the house.

TOM
Jack.... Oh, no.... Jack....

He stands there, looking at the open door, appalled at what he did.

INT. STALL HOUSE - TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Tom lies on the bed in the dark, very upset. He hears the door open downstairs and rolls to his feet and heads for the door.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Tom comes down the stairs.

TOM
Honey. Something really....

EDIE
Tom. You have to listen to me.

TOM
What? What’s wrong, baby?

He comes down the stairs and takes his wife in his arms.

TOM (cont’d)
Are you okay?

EDIE
I’m okay. We’re fine. Torino and his men followed us to the mall.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM
He what? Jesus Christ. Call Sam. We have to call....

EDIE
I took care of it, honey. I called Sam. I went to the courthouse, and we got a restraining order.

TOM
For all the good that will do...

EDIE
It’s something. If he comes around again, we can have him arrested. But I have to tell you something....

TOM
What?

She leads him over to the sofa.

EDIE
This man Torino... He really believes you’re this Joey something. He told me a story this afternoon... He’s certain it’s you. We have to find a way to convince him it’s not.

TOM
I don’t know how to do that, honey. He won’t believe the truth.

EDIE
I know. It’s just... It’s crazy. It’s crazy. Why can’t we just have our lives back?

Sarah looks at her mother, upset. Tom kneels by his daughter.

TOM
Hey, baby. Everything’s okay. Don’t worry. Mommy and Daddy are just having a tough week. Why don’t you go play upstairs.

SARAH
Okay, Daddy.

He hugs his daughter, and she scampers upstairs. Tom watches her go, then turns to his wife. Edie is crying.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

EDIE
God. I’m so sorry. What’s happening to us?

Tom takes his wife in his arms and holds her tight.

The sound of a car pulling up outside interrupts them. Tom looks out the window, and a black look crosses his face.

TOM
Get the guns.

EDIE
Tom?

TOM
Edie, go upstairs and get the guns. Both of them.

Edie heads for the stairs.

EXT. STALL HOUSE

Torino’s sedan is parked in the driveway. Torino, Frank and Charlie get out of the car.

Tom appears in the doorway of the house, rifle in one hand, shotgun in the other. Edie stands behind him.

TOM
Get off my land.

TORINO
We’ll go, Joey. We just want you to come with us. Come back to Philly.

TOM
I’m not the man you think I am, Torino. But I will shoot you where you stand if you don’t get off my property.

TORINO
You really believe this crap, don’t you?

Torino shakes his head in amazement. He nods to Charlie who leans back into the car. Standing behind Tom in the doorway, Edie tenses.

EDIE
Tom... Where’s Jack?
CONTINUED:

Charlie drags Jack out of the back of the car. Tom’s jaw tightens. He puts down the shotgun, still holding the rifle.

    TORINO
    We don’t want to hurt these people,
    Joey. Just come with us.

Tom starts to lower the rifle.

    EDIE
    (Whispering)
    What are you doing?

    TOM
    I have to go with them.

    EDIE
    Tom...

He looks at his wife and she looks back, brave, but shaking.

    EDIE (cont’d)
    They’re going to kill us all.

Tom nods, and turns back to Torino. He looks like he’s about to give up, then he whips the rifle up and in one smooth, quick move, aims and fires.

The bullet spangs into the propane tank in the field, which EXPLODES, shooting fire everywhere, sending Torino, his men and Jack sprawling to the ground. Frank takes the brunt of it, his back protecting Jack.

Tom dives to the ground, rifle in hand.

    TOM
    Jack! Run!

Jack scrambles to his feet, and Tom fires at Charlie and Torino, covering his son. Jack makes it to the field, dives into the corn, vanishing.

Charlie and Torino fire wildly at the house. Tom hits the ground and rolls off the side of the porch.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Edie curls up on the floor, screaming as bullets slam into the walls and the furniture.

    SARAH (O.S.)
    Mommy?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

EDIE
Stay down, baby! Mommy’s coming! But
stay down!

She crawls towards the stairs.

EXT. STALL HOUSE

Tom crouches by the side of the house, rifle in hand. He
checks the load - one bullet left. He peers up at the
porch, sees the shotgun lying there, and frowns. A bullet
zings past his face, and he dives back, scrambles behind
the house.

The circle of fire where the tank was is expanding. The
field is starting to burn.

Charlie and Torino crouch down. Torino nods towards Frank,
who lies face down, his back ripped to shreds, on fire.
Charlie shakes his head - “no.” Torino grimaces. He points
to the other side of the house, gestures for Charlie to
head that way. Charlie scuttles off.

Behind the house, Tom straightens up, back to the wall, and
slides towards the other side of the house.

He creeps around the corner, alongside the porch, and looks
up. The shotgun’s gone.

Charlie creeps around the side of the porch and bumps right
into Tom. The two men scramble to bring their guns up, but
they’re in too tight. Tom drops the rifle and goes for
Charlie’s throat.

The two men roll on the ground, pounding the shit out of
each other. Tom bites Charlie’s hand hard, until blood
squirts out. Charlie screams in pain. Tom rolls on top of
him and punches his throat hard, over and over.

Charlie chokes and gurgles and dies. Tom keeps pounding.

Tom cries out in pain as a bullet tears through his
shoulder, knocking him forward. He rolls over to find
Torino standing over him, gun in hand, glaring in rage.
Torino cocks his gun and points it right at Tom’s head.

TORINO
You have anything to say before I kill
you, you miserable prick?

Tom stares back, hatred in his eyes, clutching his wounded
shoulder.
CONTINUED:

TOM
I should have killed you back in Philly.

Torino smiles, relieved. Finally!

Tom clenches his jaw, ready for the shot.

BLAM!

Blood splatters all over Tom as Torino’s chest explodes. Torino staggers forward and falls to the ground. Tom rolls out of the way and sees Jack standing there, a dazed look on his face, the shotgun in his hands.

Tom staggers towards Jack and takes the shotgun from him. Jack is frozen, non-responsive. He just stares at the dead man on the ground.

Edie steps out the front door, Sarah in her arms, and walks briskly towards her husband and son.

EDIE
Oh my God. Tom? Are you okay? Is it over? Is it over?

She rushes over and hugs her son tight.

Tom stands, looking at his family for a moment. Edie looks back at him, a mixture of conflicting emotions on her face, but mostly anger. Tom hesitantly steps toward them, then takes them all in his arms. Outside, the fire in the field rages.

In the distance, sirens.

EXT. STALL HOUSE - LATER

A fire truck parked in the field, FIREMEN putting out the last of the fire.

Tom sits on the back of an ambulance as the Paramedic bandages his shoulder. Sam is questioning him as Edie stands by, still holding the dazed Sarah. Jack stands off in the distance, looking at the spot where Torino lay.

TOM
They had the wrong man, Sam. They had the wrong man.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SAM
I know. I’m going to have to come back later and ask you some formal questions, but it’s going to be okay, Tom.

Tom nods. The Paramedic finishes up his shoulder.

PARAMEDIC
Sir, we’re going to have to take you to the hospital now.

TOM
Wait a minute.

He gets up and walks to Jack, puts his hand on his son’s shoulder.

TOM (cont’d)
Jack?

No answer.

TOM (cont’d)
Jack. You did the right thing. I know it’s hard to believe, but you did.

Jack turns slowly to face his father.

TOM (cont’d)
It’s not going to be easy, the next few days, or weeks. It could take a long time to get right with what happened.

Jack stares intently at his father, looking for something.

TOM (cont’d)
Jack... What is it?

Jack shakes his head and walks over to his mother, leaving Tom alone. The Paramedic approaches him.

PARAMEDIC
Sir? We have to go now.

He gently puts a hand on Tom’s good arm and guides him to the ambulance. Sam turns to Edie.

SAM
We can take the kids with us if you want to ride with him, Edie.

She looks at Sam and smiles faintly in gratitude.
INT. AMBULANCE

Tom lies back on the stretcher.

Edie climbs in and sits beside him, a distant look on her face. She holds his hand, but doesn’t look at him. The ambulance takes off.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM – NIGHT

Tom lies in the bed in the dark, staring at the ceiling. The door opens, and Edie walks in. He reaches out to her.

TOM
Edie.... Honey... Are you okay?

She steps back, away from him.

EDIE
Tell me the truth.

Tom looks at her a long beat, then hangs his head.

TOM
You heard.

EDIE
No. I saw. I saw Joey, not Tom. You didn’t grow up in Portland. And you never talked about your adopted parents because you didn’t have any. You killed men.... You killed men for money.

TOM
Edie... It wasn’t like that.

EDIE
What was it like, Tom? Make me understand what it was, so I can be okay with having given almost twenty years of my life to a lie.

TOM
It wasn’t a lie.

EDIE
Are you going to sit there and tell me it depends on what your definition of the word “is” is? Goddam it, Tom... Joey.... Shit! Whoever you are! The lie is over. It’s dead. I want to know the truth right now.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

TOM

Edie....

She glares at him, furious.

TOM (cont’d)
It’s true. I worked for those guys. I did things for them... But I swear to you, Edie, I swear to God, we never hurt anyone who wasn’t part of it. If you were in, you were fair game. That was part of the risk. But we never... Jesus, Edie. You have to know that.

She looks at him hard.

TOM (cont’d)
My brother, Richie... He got moved up the ladder, and I was stuck with Torino. And Torino was a monster. He didn’t care who got hurt. I couldn’t work for him, and the guys at the top, they wouldn’t let me out. So I went to Torino. I knew he wouldn’t listen to talk, so I went armed. And it got out of hand. A lot of people got hurt, and Torino was higher up than me. I knew nobody - not even Richie - would believe my side of the story.

EDIE
Richie was your brother...

TOM
It didn’t matter. He’d taken the oath. He was part of it, on the way to the top. I’d crossed the line. Torino and his men, they were made, protected. You raise a hand against them, you have to die. It’s that simple.

EDIE
Your own brother....

TOM
Yeah. So I left.

EDIE
And you came here.

TOM
I went a lot of places. It takes a long time to shed your skin, Edie. I didn’t lie to you. I killed Joey Furillo.
(MORE)
CONTINUED: (2)

TOM (cont'd)
I didn’t have any other choice. I went out to the desert and I killed him. And I spent the next few years becoming Tom Stall. Edie, you have to know this. I was born again when I met you. You... this town... these people... you gave me what I needed to start over, to become decent.

EDIE
Decent? A decent man doesn’t lie to his family, Tom. A decent man doesn’t give his children a made up name.

TOM
Edie....

EDIE
We never lie to each other, Tom. That was the deal, remember? Our love can get us through anything. My God. You never told me anything BUT lies.

TOM
We can start again. We can just go back to normal. It’s so easy, you’ll see.

EDIE
I have to think, Tom. I have to go think very long and very hard about all of this.

She turns and heads to the door. He reaches out and touches her arm.

TOM
Joey’s dead, Edie.

She walks out.

EXT. TAYLORVILLE HIGH - BASEBALL FIELD - DAY

Jack sits on the bench and watches the girls’ class running around the track. He sees Judy and waves to her. She nods, but doesn’t come over.

Jack walks over to the track, walks up to Judy.

JACK
Hey.

JUDY
Hey.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK
What’s going on?

JUDY
Nothing. Running laps. Coach notices you here, you’ll get into trouble.

JACK
Who cares?

A long, awkward, silent beat.

JUDY
Well... I have to finish my laps.

She smiles uncomfortably at him.

JACK
Yeah. Okay. Fine.

He turns and walks away. She watches him, troubled, then turns to go after him, to say something - anything. The GIRLS’ COACH blows her whistle.

GIRLS’ COACH
Danvers! Get back on the track!

Judy sighs in frustration and goes back to running.

EXT. STALL HOUSE - DAY

A big chunk of the field is black from the fire. The taxi pulls up in front and Tom gets out and walks to the front door. Jack sits on the porch.

TOM
Hey.

Jack looks up at him.

JACK
What am I supposed to call you now?

TOM
What? Jack, please. You have to...

JACK
I have to what, Dad? What do I have to do? This isn’t a normal life, so I don’t have any idea what I have to fucking do anymore. If I go rob Miliken’s Drug Store, will you ground me if I don’t give you a piece of the action? What, Dad? You tell me?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Tom says nothing – what can he say?

JACK (cont'd)
You know what you are, Dad?

Tom looks at his son, not answering.

JACK (cont’d)
You’re the monster in Sarah’s closet.

Tom frowns.

JACK (cont’d)
You can’t tell me anything.

He gets up and walks away, leaving Tom standing there, upset.

INT. STALL HOUSE

Tom walks into the empty house. He looks around. It’s still.

Tom walks around the house, looking into the empty rooms.

INT. STALL HOUSE – SARAH’S ROOM

Tom sits on his daughter’s bed and picks up one of her dolls. He gently puts it back on the bed and looks out the window.

INT. TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM

Tom stands in the doorway, looking. Nothing has changed, but nothing’s the same.

EXT. STALL HOUSE

Tom slowly walks outside and looks at the devastation. He walks to the shed in the back and gets out a wheelbarrow and takes it to the field, starts loading it up with burnt out corn husks and bits of metal.

The sheriff’s car rolls down the driveway and Sam steps out.

SAM
Hey, Tom. Good to see you up and around.

TOM
Hey, Sam.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SAM
I could sure go for some of Edie’s lemonade.

TOM
Come on in.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Sam is pacing around the living room. Tom walks in with two glasses of lemonade and hands one to Sam, who takes a deep long sip.

TOM
So what brings you out here, Sam?

SAM
Well, you know. I just wanted to see how you were doing.

TOM
I’ll be okay.

Sam nods.

TOM (cont’d)
There’s something else.

SAM
Yeah. There is. Tom... I’ve been running through it all for the last couple days, and it just doesn’t fit.

TOM
What doesn’t fit?

SAM
None of it.

Tom nods. He looks out the window and sees the station wagon rolling up.

SAM (cont’d)
Edie home?

TOM
Yeah.

SAM
We don’t have to do this now.

TOM
Might as well.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

The door opens, and Edie walks in. Tom and Edie kiss very perfunctorily. Sam notices.

    EDIE
    Hey, Sam.

    SAM
    Edie. How’re you doing?

    EDIE
    I’m okay. What brings you out here, Sam?

    SAM
    Tom and I were just talking about that, Edie.

Edie looks to Tom, who’s close-mouthed and glum looking. She nods.

    EDIE
    I’d like to hear it.

    SAM
    Well... It’s just that none of this adds up. I can buy Torino thinking you might be this Joey fella. But these are serious men. They wouldn’t have come here, they wouldn’t have gone through all this if they weren’t dead certain they had the right man.

Tom doesn’t say anything. Edie looks at Tom, then back to Sam.

    EDIE
    What are you saying, Sam?

    SAM
    I’m saying I think I need to know the truth.

    TOM
    The truth.

    SAM
    You owe it to the people of this town, Tom.

    EDIE
    Sam.

    SAM
    Hmm?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Tom looks at Edie anxiously.

EDIE
You’ve got too much time on your hands.

SAM
Sorry?

EDIE
I don’t know why those men were so convinced Tom was this Joey person, and frankly, I don’t care. You’re the one who said we look out for our own around here, and if Tom Stall isn’t one of our own, I don’t know who is. Tom is who he says he is, and that’s all that matters, Sam. Hasn’t this family suffered enough?

Sam looks at her a long beat.

SAM
Well, goddam, Edie.

He finishes his lemonade, puts it down, and gives her a slow smiles and nods.

SAM (cont’d)
I guess I’ll be on my way.

He heads to the door, then stops.

SAM (cont’d)
You folks give a ring if you need anything. Tom, you need some help fixing up the field this weekend, you let me know, alright?

Tom nods. Sam touches his hat and walks outside. Tom and Edie stand alone, watching Sam get into his car and drive off.

TOM
Edie....

She slaps him hard.

EDIE
Fuck you, Joey.

Tom shakes the slap off, and for the first time we see something different in his eyes - Joey has just made his entrance....

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Tom grabs her arm, and there’s a beat of electricity and fear between them. He kisses her hard, and as mad and full of hatred as she is, she kisses him back.

They tear at each other in anger and lust. This is a new man Edie’s with – someone other than her husband.

Tom tears her shirt open and yanks her pants down. She falls back and he catches her, leans her back against the stairs. He pulls her pants the rest of the way off and rips her panties off.

Tom pulls his pants down and they go at it on the stairs, raw, animalistic, full of anger and passion and the thrill of something new, something dangerous and terribly wrong.

Their orgasms come fast and hard, and they lie on the stairs, him on top of her, breathing hard.

She pushes him off her – not in the friendliest way – and picks up her clothes and walks upstairs.

Tom lies on the stairs, watching her go, processing what just happened.

INT. TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM

Tom sits on the bed, listening to Edie in the shower. The water turns off, and after a beat, she walks out in a bathrobe, a towel around her head.

Tom looks up, ready for the conversation. She walks past him, and out of the door, then closes it behind her.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DUSK

Jack sits on the tracks, a bottle in a brown paper bag in his hands. He watches the sun set over the trees.

    JUDY (OS)
    Hey.

He turns to see Judy.

    JACK
    Hey.

    JUDY
    Since when did you start drinking?

    JACK
    I don’t.

A long beat.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JACK (cont’d)
It tastes like shit.

He chucks the bottle. She sits down next to him.

JUDY
Want to smoke a joint?

JACK
Nah. Thanks.

Judy shrugs and lights up, takes a deep hit. They sit in silence for a long beat.

JUDY
So Mr. Beezer said “Shit” today.

JACK
Beezer?

JUDY
Yeah. He slammed his thumb with a hammer in class.

JACK
Beezer never curses.

JUDY
Right. I know. We’re all, like, whoa! Dude!

A long beat.

JUDY (cont'd)
Jodi and Mitch broke up.

JACK
Again?

JUDY
Yeah, I guess they do that every week, huh?

JACK
They’re gonna end up married someday.

JUDY
No way.

JACK
They are.

JUDY
That’s crazy.
CONTINUED: (2)

JACK
Bet you.

JUDY
Okay. Five bucks.

JACK
Make it ten. We’ll have jobs by then.

She smiles and leans her head on his shoulder.

INT. TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Edie sleeps on one side of the bed, tossing and turning, not able to sleep. The other side of the bed is empty.

INT. STALL HOUSE - GUEST ROOM

Tom lies on the guest bed, staring at the ceiling.

He finally rolls over and closes his eyes.

FADE TO:

BLACK.

A phone rings.

TOM
Hello?

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
You’re still pretty good with the killing, Joey.

TOM
Richie?

MAN’S VOICE (O.S.)
So, you gonna come see me, or do I have to come to you?

INT. TOM AND EDIE’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Edie wakes up with a start, frightened. Tom is standing in the closet door, getting dressed.

EDIE
What are you doing?

TOM
I have to go back to Philly.
CONTINUED:

EDIE
Tom?
Tom stops and turns to her.

TOM
My brother called.
She looks at him, puzzled.

EDIE
Your....
The reality of her life comes rushing back to her, and she wakes up fully.

EDIE (cont’d)
Richie.

Tom nods. Edie looks around the room, searching for a way out.

EDIE (cont’d)
What does that mean, Tom.... Joey...
What the hell am I supposed to call you?

Tom looks at her, sorry as hell.

EDIE (cont’d)
Richie calls you and you have to go.

TOM
If I don’t, he’ll send someone else.

EDIE
And you’ll just kill them, too. You’re good at that.

TOM
Edie...

Edie gets up and puts on her robe.

EDIE
Goddammit, you prick. I don’t know how I’m supposed to react to this... To any of it. Last week, I had the best life. My children were brilliant, my husband was brilliant, we were all brilliant. Now.... Christ, I don’t even know if we’re really married. I’m guessing you didn’t legally change your name.

(CONTINUED)
TOM
Edie, I’m sorry.

EDIE
You are. You’re the sorriest son of a bitch in the world. What happens to our kids, Tom? What does this mean for Jack? For Sarah? Do they have this thing inside them, too? My God. My son killed a man. Because of you...I have an idea — why don’t I just call you Vinnie? Or Dom? Fuck! This is not my life!

TOM
I have to go. I have to see my brother.

EDIE
What are you gonna do? Talk it out? Slap him around? Kill him?

TOM
He’s not gonna let this just go away. They know where we live, Edie. I was hoping it would end with Torino, but that was stupid.

EDIE
But Richie... He’s your brother...

TOM
He’s also the boss, and I killed three of his men.

EDIE
Goddammit. You can’t.

TOM
For twenty years I’ve run from this. I did a damn good job of lying to myself and everyone around me, but you can’t do that. You can’t just make it go away by wishing.

EDIE
You don’t have to go.

TOM
What do you suggest, Edie? Do it all over again? Change all our names, start over somewhere else as the Smiths?

She looks at him, not saying anything. Tom frowns and buttons his shirt. He turns to her.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

TOM (cont'd)
There aren’t any choices left for me, Edie. I thought I’d made this all go away. But this kind of thing... It’s always there. It was just waiting. I have to do this. We’ll never get back to normal if we just let this hang over our heads.

EDIE
Back to normal? Jesus. Normal. Normal is history, Tom. We danced on its grave last night.

Tom finishes buttoning his shirt and turns to her. A long beat, then he kisses her, hard. She kisses him back, then pushes him away.

EDIE (cont'd)
We won’t be here when you get back.

TOM
I hope you are.

He walks out of the room without looking back. Edie drops onto the bed, slightly in shock. She reaches over to turn on the lamp, and it flickers off and on. She shakes it, but it doesn’t do anything. In a flash of rage, she lashes out, slamming the lamp against the wall, where it shatters.

EXT. STALL HOUSE
The barn in the back. Tom opens the doors and goes inside. There’s a roar of an engine, and a moment later, a big, battered pickup drives out. He swerves around the station wagon and disappears down the road.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA - NIGHT
The city looks alive at night. The skyline is brightly lit and beautiful. Tom - let’s call him Joey now, because that’s who he is - sits in the shadows of the steps of the Art Museum looking over it. It’s been a long time. His hair’s scruffy and he hasn’t shaved in a couple days.

A loud roar, and two souped up cars blast past the museum, a late night street race. Joey smiles faintly in recognition and stands, heads down the stairs to his truck.

EXT. CAFE DES ARTISTES - NIGHT
A corner restaurant in the middle of the city. Joey walks up to it and looks at the sign hanging outside. He walks in.
INT. CAFE DES ARTISTES

A nice boho kind of joint. College kids and young urban professionals enjoy vegetarian meals in a delicate, pretty decor. A maitre’d approaches him.

MAITRE’D
How many in your party, sir?

JOEY
What happened to Murph’s?

MAITRE’D
Sir?

JOEY
This place used to be Murphy’s Tavern. Christ, I mean, forever. Since the forties, at least.

MAITRE’D
Oh, Murphy’s. They were shut down at least six years ago.

JOEY
For what?

MAITRE’D
They were serving minors.

Joey shakes his head.

JOEY
Yeah, that figures.

MAITRE’D
Will you be having dinner, sir?

JOEY
No. I don’t think so. Thanks.

He stops, then turns back.

JOEY (cont’d)
Track and Turf still around?

MAITRE’D
That place on 45th? Yeah. I think so.

Joey nods and walks out.
INT. TRACK AND TURF - LATER

A real dive bar. A broken neon sign in the window reads “Track & Turf” backwards. A battered old bar in the middle. A few booths, a couple tables with mismatched old chairs.

A decent sized, albeit ratty crowd fills the place. Joey walks in and looks around. He looks in the corner and sees a decrepit old slide bowling machine and smiles. He walks to the bar and sits. The bartender walks over to him.

JOEY
Genny Cream.

The bartender puts a bottle in front of Joey, who takes a long pull and looks around the place. He spots a MAN sitting in a booth in the back and gets up and walks over to him.

JOEY (cont’d)
Where’s Ruben?

MAN
Ruben? Shit. Ruben’s been dead for ten years, man.

Joey nods and turns to walk away.

MAN (cont’d)
The man is gone, but his tradition lives on.

JOEY
Yeah?

The man nods. Joey sits down across from him.

JOEY (cont’d)
I’m looking to buy.

MAN
You bought from Ruben?

JOEY
Long time ago.

MAN
What you lookin’ for?

JOEY
Something in a semi-automatic. I need two of them. And ammo. Couple more items. I need to see what you’ve got.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

The man nods.

    MAN
    You a cop?

    JOEY
    Do I look like a cop?

    MAN
    Shit. You look like a farmer on vacation.

Joey smiles.

EXT. SCHUYLKILL EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT

Joey’s truck roars down the road.

INT. JOEY’S TRUCK

Joey looks at a piece of paper, then up at the signs on the freeway. He turns off at an exit.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS

Joey’s truck drives down hilly, heavily treed streets. Ancient stone walls surround some of the houses. The truck slows down and pulls over by the side of the road.

INT. JOEY’S TRUCK

Joey sits in the driver seat, sipping coffee from a “World’s Greatest Dad” mug. He’s fully strapped - loaded holsters under each arm. A huge knife in a strap-on holster sits next to him. He finishes the coffee, slips the strap on around his leg under his pants, and puts a jacket on over the holsters. He gets out.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREETS

Joey walks down the street, coming to a large stone wall. Joey walks along the wall until he comes to an open gate. He walks through the gate.

EXT. RICHIE’S MANSION

A long driveway leads up to a very old stone house, surrounded by densely wooded land.

Joey walks up the driveway.

Two GUARDS stand by the front door, large men in suits, keen eyes taking in everything. They step towards Joey.
CONTINUED:

    JOEY
    I’m here to see Richie.

    GUARD #1
    Joey?

Joey nods.

    GUARD #1 (cont’d)
    Come on in.

The Guard opens the door and Joey steps inside.

INT. RICHIE’S MANSION - ENTRYWAY

The place is ornately decorated. Lots of deep reds and gold. Two more GUARDS sit at the foot of the enormous stairway. Guard #3 walks up to Joey, smiling.

    GUARD #3
    You ain’t aged much at all, Joey.

Joey doesn’t respond. The Guard nods to him.

    GUARD #3 (cont’d)
    Gotta frisk you.

    JOEY
    I’ll save you the trouble. I’m packing.

Guard #3 shakes his head.

    GUARD #3
    Let’s have it.

    JOEY
    Sure. Give me yours, I’ll give you mine.

    GUARD #3
    Jesus, you always were a prick. I can’t let you in to see the boss with you packin’.

    JOEY
    Then tell him to come see me. I’m out at the George Washington Motor Lodge. Checking out tomorrow.

    RICHIE (O.S.)
    Can you believe that place is still standing?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Joey and the Guards look up to see RICHIE FURILLO walking down the stairs, another Guard behind him. He’s got quite a few years on Joey, but he’s got a real power and force to him.

RICHIE (cont’d)
Didn’t you bang Jill Levy there?

JOEY
I never banged Jill Levy.

RICHIE
You should have.

JOEY
Hello, Richie.

GUARD #3
Richie, he’s packing.

RICHIE
(Waving him off)
Of course he is. Joey’s got a lot of enemies back here. Not all of ‘em are old men with one eye.

The two brothers hug.

RICHIE (cont’d)
Been a long, long time, broheem.

JOEY
Yeah.

RICHIE
Come with me.

He leads Joey into the study, followed by two of the Guards.

INT. RICHIE’S MANSION - STUDY

A huge room. A big wooden desk sits in front of large windows. Books line the shelves on the wall. Richie walks over to a bar against the wall and pours himself a drink.

RICHIE
You want anything?

JOEY
No.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RICHIE
So you like that farm life? Milking cows and shit?

JOEY
I don’t have a farm.

RICHIE
No? Torino thought you lived on some kinda farm. Said he could smell pig. How that old fart would know what a pig smells like, I dunno. But that’s what he said. You like being married?

JOEY
What?

RICHIE
Do you like being married? Does it work for you? I can’t see it working for me. I never felt the urge, you know? Lotta great lookin’ women in the world, I never met one made me want to give up all the others. Sure, you can fuck around, but it’s so much goddam work, keeping it quiet. Not worth the effort. Don’t see an upside. You see the upside, Joey?

JOEY
Yeah, Richie. I do.

Richie sits behind the desk, gestures to Joey to sit across from him. Joey checks out the two Guards who stand by the door, then sits.

RICHIE
Man, it is so good to see you. It’s been a long, long time. I’m pretty pissed at you, broheem. You coulda called. You coulda dropped a postcard in the mail.

Joey doesn’t say anything.

RICHIE (cont’d)
Aw, what did you think would happen? We’re brothers.

JOEY
(Quoting)
“Business comes first.”
RICHIE
Yeah, yeah. I know, I know. What am I gonna do? You bust up a made man’s place, you kill some of his guys, you take his eye. Jesus, Joey. You took his eye. Barbed wire, wasn’t it? That’s disgusting. You always were the crazy one.

JOEY
Not anymore.

RICHIE
Yeah, I heard you’re livin’ the American Dream. You really bought into it, didn’t you? You been this other guy almost as long as you been yourself. Hey, when you dream, are you still Joey?

JOEY
No. Joey’s been dead a long time.

RICHIE
And yet, here you sit, big as life. You know you cost me a lot of time and money. Before you pulled that shit with Torino, I was a shoo-in to take over when the boss croaked. A shoo-in. It was made very clear to me, Joey. I had to clean up your mess, or nothing was ever gonna happen for me. You got no idea how much shit I had to pull to get back in with those guys. You cost me a hell of a lot, Joey. A hell of a lot.

JOEY
You’re doing alright here.

RICHIE
Yeah, I am. But it took ten years longer than it shoulda. I’m always gonna be ten years behind, you know? Eh. What’re ya gonna do? It’s good to see you again, Joey. You look healthy. You look happy.

Joey opens his mouth to say something, then pauses. He spots a flash of light in the window behind Richie. He whips his hand up just in time to catch the piano wire Guard #3 is dropping over his head.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

Richie watches intently as the Guard struggles to garotte Joey. The Guard yanks back hard, and blood spurts as the wire cuts into Joey’s hand.

With his free hand, Joey reaches for one of his guns. Guard #4 runs over and grabs his hand and his injured shoulder.

Joey cries out in pain, braces his feet against Richie’s desk and pushes back hard.

He slams into Guard #3, who loses his grip on the piano wire. Joey swings his bloody fist up into Guard #4’s face.

Guard #4 staggers back, and Joey scrambles to his feet.

The study door bursts open and the first two Guards rush in, guns drawn.

Joey whips out one of his guns and fires wild, nailing Guard #1 in the chest. Guard #2 dives to the ground. Joey turns and, without pausing, without thinking, dives out the enormous window in an explosion of glass and wood.

EXT. RICHIE’S MANSION

Joey hits the ground with a thud and a grunt of pain. He scrambles for the dense trees. Shots ring out from the house.

INT. RICHIE’S MANSION - STUDY

Richie is furious, screaming at Guard #3. Guard #1 lies on the floor in a pool of blood, twitching. Guard #2 kneels over him.

    RICHIE
    How do you fuck that up? How do you fuck that up?

    GUARD #3
    I’m sorry, Richie, he...

    RICHIE
    Get him.

He storms over to the door and walks out into the entryway.

INT. RICHIE’S MANSION - ENTRYWAY

Guard #5 meets Richie at the door to the study.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RICHIE
He’s out there. He ain’t going anywhere. Get the damn dogs and let’s finish this.

Guard #5 opens the front door and

GUARD #5
Yeah, okay, Richie, we got...

BLAM BLAM BLAM!

A hail of bullets cut him down from outside.

Richie dives back behind the stairs.

Guards #2 & 3 run out of the study, guns in hands. Joey dives through the front door guns blazing. A bullet slams into Guard #3’s forehead, and #2 dives behind a chest.

Joey races up the stairs. Guard #2 fires at him from behind the chest, sending up a shower of splinters as the bullets spang into the stairs and the railing.

Joey crouches against the wall on the landing, waiting for Guard #2 to come out.

Guard #2 crouches back behind the chest, waiting for Joey to make his move.

Guard #2 looks off to the side, and sees Guard #4 peering through a cracked door, unsees by Joey. The two guards make eye contact, and Guard #4 nods.

Guard #2 dives out from behind the chest, racing for the study door.

Joey lurches forward, ready to shoot.

Guard #4 pops out of the door to Joey’s side.

Joey sees something moving in his periphery and, mid jump, swings to his side, blasting, hitting Guard #4 in the chest, sending him flying.

Joey hits the ground just as Guard #2’s bullets slam into the wall where Joey’s head was just a split second earlier. Joey whirls and fires - click.

He rolls, dropping his gun, and pulls out the other one from his holster, and slides behind the body of Guard #4.

(CONTINUED)
Bullets slam into the dead Guard’s back as Joey hunches down behind him, propping him up with one hand, pressed against the railing of the landing.

Joey grits his teeth and pushes hard, and with several loud cracks, the body of Guard #4 breaks through the slats and falls to the ground.

Guard #2 steps back reflexively, and Joey sticks his gun over the side of the landing, firing wildly – bullets slam into the body of the last Guard.

Quiet. The dust settles. Joey lies on the floor of the landing, gun dangling from his fingers, catching his breath.

A clicking sound, and Joey looks up to see Richie standing over him. Joey closes his eyes and nods.

RICHIE
Jesus, broheem. It really is like riding a bike, isn’t it?

He gestures to stand, and Joey stands up, dropping his gun. Richie looks around at the carnage, awe struck.

RICHIE (cont’d)
You just keep fucking up my guys. It’s my fault, isn’t it? If I’d brought you up with me, we coulda avoided all of this.

Joey doesn’t respond, just stares evenly at his brother.

RICHIE (cont’d)
You ever notice how your mistakes always come back to fuck with you?

Joey sticks his forehead up against the barrel of Richie’s gun.

JOEY
Shut up, Richie. Just shut up and do what you’re gonna do.

RICHIE
I want you to beg for me.

JOEY
Not gonna happen. Just end it.

RICHIE
Alright. Then beg for your family.
CONTINUED: (3)

JOEY
My family...?

RICHIE
I seen your wife on TV. She’s got a
real bloom to her. I think I’ll fuck
her before I kill her. How about that?
You willing to beg for that?

Without warning, Joey whips his head to the left, causing
Richie’s gun to slide forward, past his head. Richie
staggers forward, and Joey slams his elbow into his chest
and sticks his foot back behind his ankle, knocking him to
the ground with a thud.

Richie drops his gun, and Joey goes down with him, smoothly
pulling the knife from his ankle holster.

Joey sits on top of Richie, knife raised, ready to plunge
it into his chest. Richie is terrified, holding his hands
up.

RICHIE (cont’d)
Joey! Come on, man! I’m your brother!
We’re family!

JOEY
We’re not family.

He slams the knife down.

EXT. SCHUYLKILL RIVER - DAWN

Joey stands at the edge of the river, battered and blood
soaked. He walks down to the edge of the water and hurls
his revolvers as far as they’ll go. He takes the bloody
knife out of its holster and throws it after them. He tears
off the knife holster and the underarm holsters and throws
them into the river as well.

He rips his bloody shirt off and throws it in after the
weapons, then falls to the ground and sits, staring out as
the sun rises over the city.

He sits a long, long time.

EXT. STALL HOUSE - DUSK

Tom’s pickup pulls up in front of the house. Tom gets out
and looks at the house, sees the station wagon parked in
front.

The field has been cleaned up, all remnants of the propane
tank are gone.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Tom walks to the front door and opens it.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Empty. Tom hears a sound in another room, and heads for the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

Edie sits at the head of the table, dishing out dinner to Jack and Sarah. Jack and Sarah look up when he walks in, then go back to their meals. Edie doesn’t look up. Tom stands in the doorway a long beat, then sits in his chair.

A long beat as the family eats. Tom looks around at his family, who don’t return his look. He closes his eyes and fights back the tears. Sarah looks around the table, at her mother and brother, then her father. She’s thinking hard.

Sarah gets up and walks over to the counter and picks up a plate and some silverware and puts them in front of her father, her face very straight. Tom looks at her, his eyes wet, and smiles. She shoots him an uncertain smile, then goes back to her seat.

Jack, chewing his dinner, looks at the serving plate in the middle of the table. He swallows, then pushes the plate over in front of his father, not making eye contact. Tom smiles in gratitude.

He looks across the table at Edie, who stares intently at the food in front of her.

After a long beat, she looks up at her husband, her face impassive. He looks back, no idea what she’s thinking, no idea what the future holds. But he sees something in her eyes, and for now, that’s enough.

There’s hope.

FADE TO BLACK