

ASYLUM

written by

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**INT. ASYLUM - DAY**

A lightbulb SWAYS. The room's quiet is interrupted by the CREAKING. The SQUEAKY bulb swings back and forth, casting shadows across the face of a vacant expression.

The face belongs to JOSEPH, 40s. He sports a square jaw and a unkempt beard. His comatose expression morphs into a painful one as we...

DISSOLVE TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

1 **EXT. DESERT - DAY**

1

Dirt and dust fill the air. The hot rubber burns as the wheels peel down the empty desert road.

A cactus sways a little as a Dodge Charger ROARS by.

2 **INT. CAR - DAY**

2

A family SINGS out of tune but in unison. Living On A Prayer cuts through the sounds of the open road. JOSEPH, 40s, sports a rugged face but an easy smile. His shaved head wears a five o'clock shadow like a crown.

His wife, HAZEL, mid 30s with saucers for eyes, shares a loving look with her husband and then back to their kids, CHARLIE, 10, and EVIE, 13.

The sing along is interrupted. A car races past them, barely in control.

JOSEPH

Woah!

EVIE

Holy crap, did you see that?

HAZEL

Language.

Joseph reaches down toward his console. Hazel gently grabs his hand.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Let it go.

CHARLIE  
You gonna get him, Daddy?!

HAZEL  
Daddy is on vacation.

JOSEPH  
Daddy is going to let the on-duty  
police handle this so he doesn't go  
to Mommy jail.

Another car speeds past, almost running them off the road.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Are you kidding me?

He looks at Hazel with a pleading look. She exhales.

HAZEL  
Okay, go write them their ticket  
but after that, no more work.

JOSEPH  
You kids wanna go on a quick  
adventure?

CHARLIE  
YEAH!

EVIE  
YES!

Joseph smiles. He FLICKS on his lights. HAZEL looks nervous.

JOSEPH  
Everybody hang on!

Joseph gives chase. He picks up his radio.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Dispatch this 1277 with a possible  
10-51. Possible 11-94.

DISPATCH  
Copy, Advise if 11-95.

JOSEPH  
Copy that.

HAZEL  
I don't like that, actually, Joe.

JOSEPH  
Okay, okay. I'll get close enough  
to get the plates and call it in.

The kids SCREAM with excitement as Joseph picks up speed.

One of the vehicles is ahead and in sight.

HAZEL  
Can we slow down a bit.

JOSEPH  
The kids are having fun.

The first car turns hard, SCREECHING loudly. It heads back toward them. The second car follows suit.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Shit... Dispatch, Code 2, I repeat,  
Code 2.

DISPATCH  
What's your 20?

Gunshots RING out as the two cars exchange gunfire.

The laughter turns to CRYING.

JOSEPH  
I have two 925's. We're 10-71. I  
repeat, shots fired. Switching to  
Code 3.

The sirens SCREAM to life.

DISPATCH  
77, what's your 20?

JOSEPH  
I'm 10-10. Headed down Route 66,  
mile marker 1144.

DISPATCH  
You're off duty? Pursue with  
caution and wait for backup.

The first car ZOOMS by.

Time slows down as the driver and Joseph lock eyes. THE DRIVER's face is blurred out. Joseph leans in as if to get a better view. The face glitches even more.

A flash of light sears into Joseph's mind. Broken, pixelated images scatter his vision. Joseph grabs his temple.

When Joseph regains focus, he's met with the second car raring toward him at 190 mph.

Joseph reclaims his senses but not control of the car.

He swerves.

His car races off the road. A rock cluster awaits. Before impact, we hear kids and his wife SCREAMING.

HAZEL

Joseph!

She screams his name again. Joseph swerves off the road.

CUT TO BLACK.

The sound of his name ECHOES in his head. His name, distorted, but audible resurfaces in his mind.

FEMALE VOICE

Joseph?

The VOICE grows louder.

**END FLASHBACK.**

**END COLD OPEN.**

**INSERT SUPER:**

**ASYLUM**

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

A nurse, LESLIE, encouraging but firm, enters the hospital room. His name echoes.

NURSE LESLIE

Joseph?

The hospital television PLAYS in concert with BEEPS and HUMS of the room. Joseph, lay motionless, his diminished frame swallowed by the hospital bed. Dark circles, sunken eyes, and unkept stubble are all the remains of the vibrant man from before the crash.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)

Joseph, good morning, Sir.

His eyes flicker recognition and return to vacancy.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)

It's circle time. Let's get you up.  
Looks like it's time to get you a  
shave again.

Joseph motions to rise, winces, and rubs his neck. Eventually, he sits up in his bed.

JOSEPH

I need those meds.

NURSE LESLIE

Well, let's start with Tylenol.

She hands him a tiny cup with the two capsules. He stares back at her.

JOSEPH

May as well be Skittles. Can you  
just get me Benzo or Ambien?

NURSE LESLIE

You know I'm going to have to talk  
to Doc about that. They aren't on  
your approved list.

JOSEPH

Well, go get him.

He scratches his neck.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I just need a little. I don't think  
you appreciate my situation.

NURSE LESLIE

The only situation I appreciate is  
when Harold cleans the bathroom.

JOSEPH

Who's Harold?

Nurse Leslie holds up her ring finger. Joseph SCOFFS.

She removes a syringe from her smock pocket.

NURSE LESLIE

It's circle time. You get what you  
want if I get what I want.

She shakes the syringe.

Joseph stares at the needle, brimming with clear liquid. He  
stands but falls back on to the bed. Nurse Leslie gently, but  
forcefully, supports Joseph as they slowly make their way  
to the door.

JOSEPH

You weren't really going to use  
that thing on me, were you?

NURSE LESLIE

You'd be surprised how often I got  
to wheel someone to circle time.

JOSEPH

Unconscious?

NURSE LESLIE

Only until we get there. Then I  
give them this.

Nurse Leslie puts some smelling salt under Joseph's nose. One  
sniff, and he shoots to stand by himself.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)

Well, look who caught the spirit  
and can walk on his own.

(grabs his arm)

Let's go.

They exit through the door.

4

INT. RECREATIONAL ROOM - DAY

4

Joseph walks into an open recreational room. The space is as quiet as a library. Open spaces with several nooks for activity are unused. A nook with filled bookshelves and couches. Another nook has a pool table and ping pong table. A third nook has soda machines against the wall with several round tables and chairs. Packs of playing cards are neatly stacked on one table.

Another door to another small room is in front of them. Joseph stares through the tiny window of the door and into the room.

Indistinct CHATTER bleeds through.

He looks at the door and then at Nurse Leslie. She motions him in. Joseph steps across the threshold and stares into the room. The door SLAMS behind him. His eyes track Nurse Leslie slowly shrink as she exits down the hallway.

5

INT. CIRCLE ROOM - DAY

5

In the middle of the room is a circle of slightly rusted metal chairs with people in them. The circle is almost full.

In the only non-metal chair sits MUNIZA, 30s middle eastern female with a head covering. Only her eyes are visible. She wears a white coat, while the rest of the people wear gowns. The cushion on her chair lifts her a bit higher than everyone.

To the left of Muniza is DAVID, late 30s. His dog tags hang from his neck and a faded picture of his woman rests in his hands.

Next to him is HANNAH, a flushed puffy face accompanied by dark circles around the eyes. Her jaundiced skin fights to reclaim its color. She holds a cup of water, looking at it with disdain.

SAMMY, 50s, stares at Hannah's chest. She notices.

HANNAH

Can I help you?

SAMMY

No, I'm fine, thank you.

Sammy looks to his other side, atNext to Sammy is ACE, 20s, whowinces as he adjusts his body in the chair.

MUNIZA  
You okay, Ace?

ACE  
No.

MUNIZA  
How can I help?

ACE gives her a knowing look.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)  
You know the rules-

ACE  
How does talking help me?

MUNIZA  
Excellent question. How does it?

ACE  
It's too early for this. Can I  
please get something for the pain  
before this circle shit?

He gets no response. Muniza looks at him and writes on her note pad.

Sammy's eyes float back over to Hannah. She again notices. She eggs on the behavior by stretching, touching her elbows behind her back, and putting her hair up in a bun.

Sammy sweats.

HANNAH  
Thirsty?

SAMMY  
I'm sorry, what?

HANNAH  
Seems like you want something.  
Maybe a little sip?

SAMMY  
I dont k-

HANNAH  
You get me a real drink and I'll  
show you more.

Sammy avoids eye contact and looks up at the ceiling.

MUNIZA  
The only drinks we're having are  
water and coffee.

ACE  
What are you writing?

Beat.

She continues writing without a responding to him.

ACE (CONT'D)  
Oh, you takin orders? Can I have a  
large order of Meloxicam and a side  
of Vicodin?

MUNIZA  
Angry this morning?

ACE  
It's called pain.

MUNIZA  
Emotional or physical.

ACE  
Right now now it feels like both.

MUNIZA  
Glad you can acknowledge this  
emotional side.

ACE  
You're causing it, Doc! You're  
depriving me. Aren't there rules  
against cruel and unusual  
punishment?

Muniza writes more. Ace rolls his eyes.

MUNIZA  
We're going to start soon. How  
about you, are you ready, Shuni?

Muniza looks at her, hopeful.

SHUNI, sits silently, staring into the void.

JADE, a butch construction worker SHOUTS out.

JADE  
You know she aint talkin. Can she  
even hear anything in there?

JEREMY. A scrawny teenager who always wears long sleeves and a beanie cap WHISPERS softly to SIMON, an olive colored man in his 40s who is making a napkin appear and disappear.

JEREMY

Didn't she, umm, lose a baby?

Jade slaps him behind the head.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

Ow!

JADE

Read the room, jerkwad.

JEREMY

She hit me.

Jade puts her hands in the air.

JADE

I did no such thing!

Muniza looks up.

MUNIZA

Friends, I didn't see what may or may not have happened, but please keep our hands to ourselves.

Jade smiles.

JEREMY

This is bullshit.

Simon holds up his hand.

SIMON

No. Real bullshit is believing everything you see is real.

Simon has decorated his robe to resemble a tuxedo and has a small chain for a pocket watch dangling from the robe pocket.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Tada! The napkin has escaped and is off to the real world.

In between Ace and Simon is an empty chair.

MUNIZA

Let's officially get the meeting started.

The side door opens and Nurse Leslie walks Joseph to the group.

NURSE LESLIE  
Everyone, this is Joseph. Joseph,  
this is, well, everyone.

The circle responds in unison.

ALL  
Hi, Joseph.

Joseph just stares.

ALL (CONT'D)  
Hi, Joseph.

They try again.

JADE  
No wheelchair today?

NURSE LESLIE  
He decided to walk.

After a beat, he sits in the empty chair, and Nurse Leslie leaves.

MUNIZA  
Welcome, Joseph. Do you know why we  
are here?

JOSEPH  
You're here because it's your job.  
I can't speak for the rest your  
little circle.

MUNIZA  
You referenced my work and the  
group as two entities to which you  
have no connection. Why is that?

JOSEPH  
I have no connection.

MUNIZA  
In general or to the group?

Joseph shakes his head.

JOSEPH  
I don't need help.

The group MURMURS a mix of knowing CHUCKLES and WHISPERS.

MUNIZA

You called the circle, little. Do group dynamics play small or big roles in your life?

JOSEPH

I don't have any groups in my life.

MUNIZA

Why is that?

JOSEPH

Can we stop with the questions? What is this?

MUNIZA

Officially, this is a suicide prevention support group.

JOSEPH

And unofficially?

MUNIZA

We're a group of people being honest with each other as we try to find our purpose.

Joseph's head snaps to attention.

JOSEPH

I'm not.

MUNIZA

Not what? Interested in finding your purpose?

JOSEPH

Suicidal. I'm not going to off myself.

ACE

Yeah, non of us are suicidal.

JOSEPH

I'm not like you all.

MUNIZA

Correct, we are all unique.

Joseph SCOFFS.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Then what brought you here?

JOSEPH

Magic.

Jospeh says sarcastically. Simon stands. He holds out the paper napkin, now a paper rose.

SIMON

A fellow conjurer!

JADE

Lemme guess, there was an accident, and they think you did it on purpose? That sound about right?

She air quotes on accident.

JOSEPH

You don't know what you're talking about.

JADE

They think you did it on purpose, ammirite?

Joseph stands.

JOSEPH

I overdosed on sleep meds. That was an accident. I don't have time to die.

JADE

Why's that, tough guy? Too busy living the high life?

JOSEPH

Finding my family's killer.

The circle stops buzzing.

After a beat, Muniza writes on her pad.

MUNIZA

Why take so much sleeping medication then, Jospeh?

He sits. His eyes find the light bulbs above him. He fights the emotion pending.

JOSEPH

When my family was run off the road, I lost everything worth living for.

Shuni's eyes shift toward him. She listens.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Why did I survive? It should have been me, not them.

His fists, now balls of tension, vice grip the air.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Every time I sleep, those last minutes replay over, and over in my head. The guy who did it, he's there, in my dream, but his face is fuzzy.

ACE

Fuzzy how?

JOSEPH

Blurred out. I take those pills so I can sleep longer. I'm a cop, well, was a cop. Trying to collect details on the diver. I need to see his face. I need to fix this.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'm not suicidal. You can write that down.

JEREMY

What do you plan to do if you ever figure out who it was?

JOSEPH

Introduce them to my family.

Dead silence.

MUNIZA

Thank you, Jospheh, for that, enlightening introduction. We are all looking forward to getting to know you. Is, umm, anyone else ready to give an update on their journey?

David stands.

DAVID

They can't have my picture.

MUNIZA

Who is they?

DAVID

None of ya'll can have my picture.

MUNIZA

Did someone make you feel like your picture was in danger?

DAVID

Touch my picture and ya'll will be in danger. They can't have it!

MUNIZA

It's okay, David, we're all in this together. You can sit down now.

David opens his mouth to speak. As he does so, the back door opens. GARVIN, 50s, wearing a suit and leading a small entourage, barges in.

GARVIN

Muniza, a word.

MUNIZA

Can this wait until after circle time?

Garvin stares through her.

Muniza strides to meet Garvin by the door. The circle GOSSIPS. Questions about the accident fly, but his eyes follow Muniza. As soon as Muniza reaches Garvin, he unleashes.

GARVIN

You are a therapist, not a doctor. Do not undermine my team doing the actual medical work. If I need to find another therapist, I will.

Only Muniza's soul-crushed eyes are visible.

Muniza returns to the circle as Garvin SLAMS the door shut. She attempts to recover with grace.

MUNIZA

Where were we?

Her eyes swell with tears. She breathes and the emotion disappears.

6

INT. DINING HALL - DAY

6

The auburn rays of the morning sun shine through the dining hall. Joseph stands in line for breakfast. Everyone else TALKS amongst themselves.

Joseph stands alone, takes his tray of food and sits by himself. As soon as Joseph's butt hits the seat, Simon the Magician sits across from him.

SIMON

So you have magical dreams, huh?

Joseph looks at Simon.

JOSEPH

I'm not like you guys.

SIMON

That's good because none of us are alike.

The rose napkin from yesterday appears. Simon waves his hand over it. The flower transforms into a Christmas tree.

Joseph cracks a smirk.

JOSEPH

How long have you been in this place?

Joseph sneezes. He covers his face, looking for a tissue or napkins. Simon hands him the Christmas tree napkin.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Umm, keep it.

Sitting behind him at another table is Jade, who turns and offers him a napkin. Their fingers touch as he takes the napkin.

A flash of light.

He stares at Jade and wipes his nose.

SIMON

Oh, and uh, Nine months and ten days.

JOSEPH

Why so long?

Simon waves his hands; a biscuit appears.

SIMON

They think I'm crazy, but they're the crazy ones.

JOSEPH

Crazy how?

SIMON

A Chinese Water Torture Cell is performance gimmick.

JOSEPH

That was a Houdini trick wasn't it?

SIMON

You know Houdini wasn't his real name, right? He was trying to take after a famous French magician, Robert Houdin, and thought adding an "i", or an "ee" sound, at the end of a word meant "like something," like a mini me.

JOSEPH

Does adding an I at the end of a word mean it's French?

SIMON

No, funny enough, Houdini ended up bigger than Houdin. I guess in the end, adding an "i" made him even bigger.

JOSEPH

What does this have to do with Chinese Water Torture?

SIMON

I modified one and rebranded it as a Mexican Water Torture Cell... It's not racist either. I'm Mexican!

JOSEPH

I don't understand.

SIMON

I got trapped inside of it... on accident! Some people thought I did it on purpose.

JOSEPH

And you didn't?

SIMON  
Come on, I'm not crazy.

JOSEPH  
Aren't you?

Simon looks at him.

SIMON  
No, but are they?

Simon and Joseph look over.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
You know magicians aren't really magical, right? Everything we do is an illusion. To deceive people.

JOSEPH  
Got it.

Simon lowers his voice and looks around to ensure no one is close by.

SIMON  
The thing about becoming a master of deception is that you also become a master of identifying deception.

JOSEPH  
But who is deceiving who?

Just then Nurse Leslie appears at their table. Simon stiffens his back, surprised and uncomfortable with her presence.

NURSE LESLIE  
Who's ready for their meddies?

Joseph and Simon pause their conversation. They each take a mini cup filled with pills from Nurse Leslie and down the pills, chased by water. Simon opens his mouth and sticks out his tongue. Nurse Leslie examines.

She turns to Joseph, who just stares at her.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)  
Confirmation, please.

JOSEPH  
Of?

SIMON

She needs to confirm you swallowed  
your pills.

Joseph, uncomfortable, slowly opens his mouth. Nurse Leslie uses her pen to lift Joseph's tongue. He slaps her pen away. She stands up straight with a smile and writes on a clipboard. She scans the room, looking for her next victim.

SIMON (CONT'D)

That's the thing, it's all about  
control.

He makes sure no one is watching, then subtly removes the pills from mouth. He crams them into his biscuit to hide them.

JOSEPH

Deception.

SIMON

But the greatest control is from  
the shadows. Controlling people  
without them even knowing. The only  
thing that's free is deception.

Simon looks over Joseph's shoulder. Something in the distance catches Simon's eye. Joseph follows Simon's eye line.

Nothing.

When he turns back around, Simon is gone.

7

**EXT. RENOVATED BUILDING TOP - DAY**

7

A darkened sun bakes Joseph. He stands alone in an open floor plan of a half-constructed building. He shuffles to the edge of an unfinished wall and looks down six stories.

A deep male VOICE emanates from the shadows on his right.

MALE VOICE

It's just red tape.

Joseph spins. He carefully approaches the voice.

HERRY, 40s, a tall man with a belly stretching out his polo shirt like a sideways hammock, paces around in another room with his hand on his forehead. His agitation propels him.

A female voice says from an angle Joseph can't see.

IRIS, a rule follower with a perfectly manicured bun fires back at Herry.

IRIS  
It's my neck on the line, Herry.

Joseph tries to move over to get a look at the lady, but he can't without getting caught by Herry.

HERRY  
They won't find out.

IRIS  
I'm calling them to report it. I'll frame it as a shipping error. I'll say they sent us the wrong material.

HERRY  
How much will this cost me to fix?

IRIS  
People could die from this, and you're worried about the cost?!

HERRY  
Million? Two million?

IRIS  
No idea.

The silence is heavy.

HERRY  
Show me again.

Joseph sees part of the lady now that she's moved closer to Herry. Her left hand has a pink and blue silicone bracelet.

The duo face away from Joseph. He inches around to get a better look at them. They bend over to examine something at the edge of the floor.

IRIS  
This material here is already starting to bend under the pressure-

Herry shoves the lady over the edge.

She SCREAMS as she reaches back for him, only to plunge into the darkness below. Her pleas for help are cut short by a THUMP.

Joseph instinctively shoots to his feet and charges at Herry, who stands and looks down at the ground, no indication of hearing anything.

Joseph goes to grab him, but his hand goes through Herry's body, like he's a ghost.

The moment shakes Joseph. He looks down.

Iris lay on the ground, face down, not moving.

Herry calls someone on his cell phone.

HERRY

Hey, call the police. I just got here to meet with her and she was talking crazy. She said getting caught like this would ruin her life. I told her I needed to call it in since people's lives were at stake- I don't know man, she jumped. I tried to stop her- No idea. She's not moving. Okay, yah, I'll leave right away. No one else is here yet.

8

**INT. RECREATIONAL ROOM - DAY**

8

Circle time is ending. Everyone is in their same seats. The CHATTER is slowing.

MUNIZA

That was a great time. I appreciate Ace sharing his thoughts and Jade telling us about her breakfast. Joseph, anything to share?

JOSEPH

What would you like to know...  
Doctor.

Her head tilts. She regards him.

MUNIZA

I'm a therapist, not a doctor. But you already know that.

JOSEPH

And how does that make you feel?

MUNIZA

I sense some sarcasm in your voice.

JOSEPH  
Impressive. You are a human and not  
some lab coat robot.

She writes on her clipboard.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Stop writing.

Muniza writes more.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
I said STOP!

Muniza sits back in her chair.

MUNIZA  
Why, Joseph, is there something in  
particular you'd like to discuss?

He pauses.

JOSEPH  
You think you're pretty smart,  
don't you.

MUNIZA  
I think we are all smart.

Joseph eyes her.

JOSEPH  
Your burka, is that for fashion or  
religious reasons?

She smiles.

MUNIZA  
This isn't about me-

JOSEPH  
What about the extra long sleeves?

He notices her arm.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
What happened? You might want to  
get that looked at.

The back door opens again. Garvin enters with his entourage.  
He doesn't speak, but silently waits with his arms crossed.  
Muniza notices him and quickly ends the meeting,

MUNIZA

Keep thinking of ways you all need to improve and be prepared to share tomorrow. Joseph, thank you for sharing your... attention to detail.

She nods her head, stands, and rushes to Garvin. Simon shuffles over.

SIMON

What was that all about?

JOSEPH

I don't like white coats trying to figure me out.

Simon points at Joseph with one hand, then at his own nose with his other hand. Then winks.

He quickly lowers his hands when someone walks by.

SIMON

So, you don't know who that guy was or why he killed that girl?

Simon's picking up a conversation that we didn't hear.

JOSEPH

Look, it was the first vivid dream I've had since the accident that wasn't about the accident. I'm not sure what my body is trying to tell me.

SIMON

You sure it was your body?

JOSEPH

What do you mean?

SIMON

The meds, man. I'm telling you. These meds mess with the mind.

Joseph considers this.

JOSEPH

I need some coffee. You want anything?

SIMON

Got everything I need right here.

Simon taps his temple.

SIMON (CONT'D)  
Besides, I need to get to work.

JOSEPH  
Work? Where do you work?

SIMON  
Mail room. Everyone has a job.  
You'll be assigned one eventually.

Several of the circle people stand around the coffee table. Joseph squeezes by to grab a paper cup. As he goes to reach for one, so does another hand... with a blue and pink silicone bracelet.

It belongs to Jade.

A white light flashes.

JOSEPH  
That bracelet, what does it mean?

JADE  
AFE awareness. Amniotic Fluid Embolism. It's when amniotic fluid gets into the mother's blood during birth. Mother typically dies.

JOSEPH  
Sounds-

JADE  
Terrible? Yeah. My daughter died from it two years ago.

JOSEPH  
Is that why you're here? Your daughter...

Jade turns away.

JADE  
Circle time ended five minutes ago.

Joseph's inner detective kicks in.

JOSEPH  
Sorry I didn't mean to offend you. It's just... I knew someone else who wore that bracelet, and I was curious.

JADE

You ever done AA before? Unless  
you're a sponsor, stay outta  
people's shit.

Joseph's eyes narrow.

JOSEPH

You ever worked for a man named  
Herry?

Jade goes pale and freezes. Her lip quivers.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

He was your boss, wasn't he?

JADE

One of my investors.

Tears fill Jade's eyes. She looks around, embarrassed, and  
wipes her face.

JOSEPH

He hurt someone you cared about,  
didn't he?

Jade's emotions cycle through anger, sadness, and fear.

JADE

You need to mind your fu-.

NURSE LESLIE

Who's ready for their meddies?

Jade turns away from Nurse Leslie, her hand shaking around  
her cup. Joseph faces Nurse Leslie, ready to take his cup,  
lost in thought.

MUNIZA (O.S.)

Joseph.

Muniza stands behind Joseph with her arms behind her back.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Please, finish your meds.

Joseph glances at Nurse Leslie, who wiggles her pen at him.  
He SIGHS, opens his mouth and sticks out his tongue. She  
pokes her pen under his tongue, then Joseph slaps it away  
then faces Muniza.

JOSEPH

This about the burka?

MUNIZA

We should do a one-on-one session.  
Get to know each other outside of  
circle time.

JOSEPH

You're not my type.

Muniza hands him an appointment card. He takes it.

MUNIZA

Because my day schedule is so full,  
I sometimes see patients after  
curfew.

JOSEPH

Wine or whiskey?

MUNIZA

I don't drink alcohol. But you  
already know that.

Joseph tries to hand her the card back.

JOSEPH

My night schedule is pretty full.  
Fridge raids..

Muniza doesn't take it. She pushes his hand against his  
chest.

MUNIZA

This isn't a request. It's an  
appointment.

Muniza turns to leave, but pauses and looks back.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Bring me some fruit, if you do  
decide to raid the fridge.

**INT. MUNIZA'S OFFICE - NIGHT**

LOW CLASSICAL MUSIC.

Pictures on the wall show Muniza in groups of other similar  
toned people, smiling. Probably family or friends.

The overhead light is off, but several floor lamps illuminate  
the room sufficiently. A brown, decorative curtain covers the  
window. A matching rug rests in the middle of the room.

Sitting on the two ends of the rug are two chairs, facing each other. A high back, overstuffed seat with patterns that match the drapes. And a typical wooden, kitchen chair with a removable red seat cushion.

Muniza writes at a wooden desk, seated an office chair. She sips from a mug filled with tea.

The door opens. Joseph pokes his head in, unsure of what he'll find. Once he sees her, he enters all the way.

MUNIZA

Welcome, Joseph.

Muniza rushes around the desk to stand on her rug with her mug in one hand and the pen and pad in the other. She's not wearing shoes. Everything else is the same as earlier.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

So glad you came.

JOSEPH

Thought I didn't have a choice.

MUNIZA

You didn't. I'm just happy I didn't have to send Nurse Leslie to you.  
(points to kitchen chair)  
Please have a seat.

Muniza sits in the overstuffed seat. She sets her mug on an end table by the seat.

Joseph walks towards the rug, still unsure.

Muniza CLICKS with her mouth and raises her hand at him.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

No shoes on the rug.

Joseph stops at the rug's edge and glances down at his shoes.

JOSEPH

I'll talk from here, then.

MUNIZA

Then I won't listen. And this appointment will need to be rescheduled for when you're ready.

JOSEPH

You have a foot fetish, or something?

MUNIZA

Interesting.

She scribbles something on her pad.

JOSEPH

(lifts his foot to step)

What are you writ--

Muniza SNAPS her finger at him.

MUNIZA

No!

They have a stare off; Joseph keeps his foot raised, thinking about lowering on the rug.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

I have one rule in this room.

JOSEPH

You're in charge?

MUNIZA

Only feet on the rug.

(picks up mug)

Now you can decide. Do you want to return to your room and continue your howling at the moon, or can we talk?

Joseph surveys the room, noticing a clock that says 11PM. He SIGHS, then kicks off his shoes.

Joseph goes to step on the rug with his socks on.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Bare feet.

Joseph makes a face of frustration, and aggressively removes his socks and tosses them at his shoes.

Joseph takes two steps onto the rug towards his seat and stops. His feet twists into the rug's fiber. He glances at Muniza without looking at her.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

You can only feel it's real softness with bare feet.

Joseph sits in the kitchen seat.

Muniza lifts the bottom of her burka and sips from the mug.

JOSEPH

Am I supposed to close my eyes when you do that?

MUNIZA

Do what? Drink tea? Why would you do that?

JOSEPH

I don't know, so I don't accidentally see your chin? Isn't that why you wear that thing? To hide your face from everyone.

MUNIZA

Would you like some tea?

JOSEPH

Why am I here?

MUNIZA

I want to know more about these dreams you're having.

JOSEPH

Who's that man that keeps interrupting our circle thing?

Muniza writes on her pad and takes a beat as she stares at him, thinking.

MUNIZA

I'll make a deal with you.

JOSEPH

I thought there was only one rule.

MUNIZA

This isn't a rule. It's a deal.

Joseph waits for her to continue as he studies the room.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

We both can ask each other questions. But only one until the other answers.

JOSEPH

I've already asked mine.

He stares.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Tick tock.

MUNIZA

And, nothing said in here can leave this room.

JOSEPH

(snickers)

Yeah right.

MUNIZA

I'm bound by HIPAA. Unless you tell me you're going to hurt yourself or someone else, I can't share it outside of these walls.

Joseph attempts to rub his feet on the rug without her noticing. She does.

JOSEPH

Deal.

MUNIZA

His name is Garvin. He's the director of this facility.

JOSEPH

Why is he always pissed at you?

MUNIZA

That's not the deal.

JOSEPH

What do you want to know about my dreams?

MUNIZA

Do you think they're actual dreams, memories, or something else?

JOSEPH

No idea.

MUNIZA

Elaborate.

JOSEPH

Memories are part of it. But for some reason I can't remember the guy's face.

MUNIZA

Did you actually see the face when it happened?

Joseph glares at Muniza. He makes a slight face at her.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

That's right.

(beat)

Garvin and I sometimes disagree on treatment philosophies. This.

(points to herself and Joseph)

Is healthy and sustainable. His philosophy is...

Muniza catches her from finishing her thought.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Tell me about your wife.

JOSEPH

No.

MUNIZA

Joseph-

JOSEPH

She's dead.

MUNIZA

Not the accident. Can you tell me a memory that involves your wife. What was her name?

Joseph points at her.

JOSEPH

You trying to sneak in two questions there?

MUNIZA

Caught me.

Joseph leans forward and puts his elbows on his knees.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A younger Joseph , stands, arms full, with a SCREAMING baby wrapped in a pink blanket. He bounces her, trying to get her to calm down.

Hazel enters the room, smiling.

JOSEPH

Are you sure she's fine? It's almost been an hour.

Hazel stands next to Joseph and rubs his back.

HAZEL

She can feel your energy. When you calm down, she'll calm down.

JOSEPH

Well, how am I supposed to calm down with her crying?!

Hazel gets behind Joseph and starts massaging his shoulders.

HAZEL

Sit.

Joseph sit on the edge of the bed. Hazel crawls over the bed on her knees right behind him. She bites her lower lip as she gives Joseph a deep tissue massage on his shoulders.

Joseph's breathing slows, and he closes his eyes. The CRYING slows down and lowers to a heavy snore.

He opens his eyes and sees Hazel looking at him in the mirror that's in front of him. They hold their gaze for a beat in the reflection.

Joseph rotates on the bed. His eyes meet hers. They're faces inch toward each other. He doesn't stop until their lips collide. The passion grows. Hazel smiles through the passionate kisses that Joseph is offering. He continues to bounce the baby. The baby COOS. They LAUGH as we-

DISSOLVE TO:

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. MUNIZA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Muniza stares at Joseph, per paper over the pad. Her mind lost in his his story.

JOSEPH

Are people ever kept here when you think they should be released?

MUNIZA

You mean discharged? This isn't a prison.

JOSEPH

Is that your question?

MUNIZA

As I said, there are some philosophical differences.

JOSEPH

That's not an answer.

MUNIZA

I think it is.

JOSEPH

Deflecting.

He mimes writing on a paper.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I'll try a different question. Do the meds here cause mental side effects among the patients?

MUNIZA

I don't deal with medication. I can't speak to that.

JOSEPH

Another deflection.

MUNIZA

You're not happy with my answers?

JOSEPH

Is that your question?

Pregnant pause.

MUNIZA

Yes. I want to know.

JOSEPH

No, I'm not satisfied. Because I never get a straight answer.

MUNIZA

Maybe you're not asking the right questions.

JOSEPH

Maybe this place is hiding something.

Muniza's body shift at the statement. She takes a deep breath and reaches for her mug. As she lifts it, the mug shakes.

Joseph notices.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

If I wanted to see my file.

(points to her notepad)

Not your notes.

(beat)

My official file in the hospital.

The one that shows why I'm here.

Where do I find it?

Muniza takes another deep breath, lifts her burka, and finishes her tea.

MUNIZA

It's getting late. This has been a great first meeting.

Muniza stands and waits for Joseph to follow her. He remains in his seat, looking up at her.

She takes a few steps towards him and stops right in front.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

From what I hear, they keep all official files in the file room down the hall. I've never been in there myself, so I can't speak to more than that.

Joseph stands. Their faces are inches from each other.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)

Remember our deal. **INT. FILE ROOM - NIGHT**

Pale green light cuts through the darkness.

12:00 AM Blinks.

A door with windows opens slowly.

A figure, wrapped with a white sheet, creeps in as quiet as the shadow that trails him. He closes the door without a noise and hovers like a ghost across the room to file cabinets.

The pale green light from the clock reveals Joseph's worn, tired, but determined face.

He tries to open a drawer in a filing cabinet, but it's locked.

He tries another.

Locked.

He creeps to the corner with a desk and computer. He slides back the keyboard tray, only to find post-it notes.

One of them reads:

PASSCODE

But there are four words written and crossed out. At the bottom of the list reads:

HATEPASSWORDS123

Joseph glances at the door again, then slips into the office chair. He wakes up the computer. It whirls to life.

The username is already in the textbox. He types in the passcode and the screen lights up.

His fingers CLACK against the keys. He CLICKS enter. After a beat, Jade's profile picture appears on the screen. He reads to himself.

JOSEPH  
Suicide attempt.

The note on the screen claims that her life was ruined after she made a mistake ordering the wrong material.

He clicks to more pictures. Eventually he finds one with Herry. The caption under it reads, HERRY HUSKERS. CEO OF HUSK FINANCIALS. He opens a search browser and types in HERRY HUSKERS. A long list of links appear. He starts CLICKING.

Joseph highlights a webpage with a home address and pastes it in a word document. He glances back over his shoulder, then clicks, PRINT.

He returns to the page with the pictures and clicks PRINT again.

The printer kicks on in the corner. It's old, slow, and LOUD.

Joseph slides the chair to the printer and grabs the first sheet with the address. The second page, with Herry standing in the background speaking on the phone, is nearly done.

A light down the hallway interrupts the darkness.

FOOTSTEPS approach.

Joseph returns the office chair to its spot. He checks the blinds. The next picture is done. He grabs it. He scurries to a window and tries to open it.

It's stuck.

The next picture is finally done. He takes a step towards the printer, but the door BURSTS open.

CARL, a grumpy security guard, pokes his head inside. Joseph leans against the wall behind the door, holding his breath.

Carl clicks on his flashlight and surveys the room. The light stops at the LOUD printer finishing up its job. Carl leaves the door open and approaches the small pile of papers with various pictures in the printer tray. He picks one up and scans it.

Joseph slowly approaches the door behind him. His sheet, still covering his body, catches something on a filing cabinet. Joseph pulls to dislodge the sheet.

A pen on top of the surface, unbeknownst to Joseph starts to roll off the cabinet. Joseph watches as it falls to the ground.

It CLACKS.

Carl spins. Just as the light lands on the elevated sheet, Joseph charges at Carl. They grab each other and wrestle to the ground.

Joseph manages to slip off the sheet and wrap it around Carl's head and ties it into a knot.

CARL

I can't see.

The bedsheet has Carl in a Boston Crab and is winning. Carl continues to struggle. Joseph grabs Carl's hat and bolts to the door.

A thought stops Joseph. He jolts back into the room, and grabs the stack of papers with the pictures. He also grabs a pen and the scotch tape holder and leaves the room before Carl can untie himself.

10

**INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT**

10

Joseph puts on Carl's security hat and keeps his head down. His arms are filled with messy papers and a scotch tape holder.

Someone appears down the hallway; Joseph turns down another hallway.

CARL

Help!

Joseph sees a fire alarm. He looks around. Just as he's about to pull it, he hesitates, takes off the cap, covers his hand, and pulls the alarm.

Blue dye shoots out onto the hat.

Joseph speed walks down the hallway until he finds a group of residents exiting their rooms. He tries to organize his papers, hides the scotch tape holder, and blends in with the crowd. They meander through the exit.

11

**EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT**

11

Once in the courtyard, Joseph eases to the side, behind bushes next to the building. He places the scotch tape holder on the ground.

SIMON

What are you doing over here?

Joseph stands and freezes.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Someone might think you're up to something.

Joseph smiles and spins to see Simon standing there.

JOSEPH

I need your help.

SIMON

Are we doing a trick? How big?

Joseph walks over to Simon and places his hand on his shoulder.

JOSEPH

David Blain-ee

Simon smiles.

SIMON

What do I need to do?

JOSEPH

Be my look out.

Simon smiles and nods before turning to face the courtyard.

The crowd is getting bigger. Workers are walking around with flashlights.

Jade marches around with princess slippers and an extra fluffy white robe.

JADE

Tell me that little twerp didn't do it again!

Jeremy rushes away from Jade with a towel around his waist.

JEREMY

I was in the shower this time!

Ace falls to the ground with his hands covering his ears.

ACE

Can someone please make it stop! My meds haven't kicked in yet!

Hannah walks around in a revealing nighty.

HANNAH

It's a little chilly out here.

JADE

(to Hannah)

What are you wearing? You couldn't have thrown on a robe?

Hannah points to Sammy, wearing a robe. Sammy gives an embarrassing smile.

SAMMY

I bought her a drink.

Joseph folds one of the papers with the pictures and starts taping it. He flips over another page, leans it against the wall, and writes in big, bold letters,

"I KNOW WHAT YOU DID TO ME!"

"GET ME OUT OF HERE OR I WILL TELL THE COPS!"

"I NOW HAVE EVIDENCE!"

SIMON

Who is that to?

JOSEPH  
Keep a look out!

Joseph holds up the folded/taped paper. We can clearly see now it's a make-shift envelope. He holds up another sheet with an address and starts writing addresses in both the "to" and "from" sections.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
You work in the mail room, right?

SIMON  
I don't have any stamps.

Joseph stuffs the envelope with the papers and seals it with tape.

JOSEPH  
Doesn't matter.

CARL (O.S.)  
Where is he?!

Carl SCREAMS from the other side of the courtyard. More workers are coming out. They are aggressively searching for someone.

SIMON  
Why doesn't it matter?

Simon's foot begins to tap, nervously with the growing tension.

Joseph hands the over stuffed envelope to Simon.

JOSEPH  
I put the intended address as the return address. Once it hits the post office...

SIMON  
Tada?

JOSEPH  
Ta freaking da.

Simon's face lights up.

The SHOUTING and flashlights move towards them.

Joseph crams the envelope into Simon's hand, trips him, pushes him to the ground and with one fluid move shoves him under a bush.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Trust me.

CARL

There he is!

Carl leads a group of security guards and orderlies. They surrounds Joseph. The horde of security guards and the wall of the building box him in.

Simon, laying flat under a bush, continues to hide.

JOSEPH

Can I help you gentlemen?

Joseph voice is as cool as the night breeze.

GARVIN

Are you sure it's him?

Garvin emerges from behind a wall of flashlights.

CARL

Absolutely, Sir.

Garvin slinks right up into Joseph's face.

GARVIN

Send everyone else back inside.

JOSEPH

You'll excuse me then.

Joseph moves to leave. Garvin's hand blocks his path. Joseph stares at the hand and then meets Garvin's eyes.

GARVIN

I haven't had a chance to meet you, Mr. Clayton, and welcome you to our little village.

JOSEPH

Does that make them the village people?

GARVIN

No-

JOSEPH

Village idiots?

GARVIN

Those are your friends, and I am just the doctor.

JOSEPH

Notice, you're not my friend. Just the witch doctor.

Garvin smiles.

GARVIN

What were you doing in my office?

JOSEPH

I didn't realize this was your office. I thought we were outside.

CARL

We checked the cameras.

Garvin holds up a hand, silencing Carl. GARVIN  
Let's make a promise. Let's respect each other, like men, and promise not to lie to one another.

Behind Carl and the other security guards, Muniza quietly approaches the group and catches Joseph's eye. Joseph's stare bounces between Garvin and Muniza.

JOSEPH

You mean like a deal?

GARVIN

I don't make deals with people like you. You're not trustworthy.

Muniza disappears into the shadows. Joseph briefly searches for her in the crowd.

JOSEPH

I was searching for something online.

GARVIN

What was it?

Joseph exhales.

JOSEPH

Okay, okay. Pictures of your mom.

Garvin, unimpressed, removes a handkerchief from his pocket and wipes the side of his face.

GARVIN

You think you're the first patient who believes they're smarter than me, then the process?

(MORE)

GARVIN (CONT'D)

This doesn't bother me. Patients here lie all the time. Our job is to help them accept the truth.

JOSEPH

Truthfully, you're little circle jerk is bullshit.

Garvin shakes his head, pulls out a pocket watch.

GARVIN

All in due time.

Garvin steps back.

GARVIN (CONT'D)

Take Joseph to the room. Everyone else back to their havens.

The sound of shoes rubbing against the floor fill the hallway as two orderlies grab Joseph by the arms and drag him away.

12

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT**

12

Joseph is thrown into a secure, dentist like chair. They strap down his arms and legs. What little cold, crackling fluorescent light that escapes into the room is absorbed by the padded walls. The pinch of a needle stings his arm.

The broken fluorescence begin to blur. The world slips in and out of focus.

GARVIN

What were you looking for?

Garvin stands in the corner, next to a countertop putting on gloves. More blur. Joseph's speech escapes his lips.

JOSEPH

What are you hiding?

Joseph's world glitches. In a flash, Garvin bolts in front of Joseph. Joseph squints his eyes, trying to stay focused. Garvin pings back and forth.

GARVIN

I ask the questions in here.

JOSEPH

What's happening.

GARVIN

That sounds like another question.

Garvin looks out the one way mirror.

GARVIN (CONT'D)  
Up the dose.

Everything pixelates as we...

13 BEGIN ALTERED FLASHBACK: 13

14 INT. CAR - DAY 14

A haze obscures Joseph's mind's eye. He drives in the desert. His wife smiles in the passenger seat. He looks in the review mirror where his girls usually sit, but it's Garvin.

GARVIN  
What were you looking for?

Joseph shakes his head awake.

END ALTERED FLASHBACK.

15 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 15

Joseph squints. He turns away from the light. He SPEAKS faintly.

JOSEPH  
Anybody have sunglasses?

Nurse Leslie brings a cup of water to Joseph's mouth.

NURSE LESLIE  
You want me to turn off the sun?  
Here, drink more water.

A shade is pulled from across the room. It's a window. Joseph looks out but quickly closes his eyes. Joseph MUMBLES.

JOSEPH  
How long have I been in here?

Garvin appears from behind Joseph. New suit. Clearly a new day.

Muniza, in the background, eyes downcast, exits the room.

GARVIN  
I've been generous and given you  
sunlight. That can go away very  
quickly.

Weak and groggy, Joseph's pale face musters a smile..

JOSEPH  
You saying I need a tan, Doc?

GARVIN  
What are you looking for?

JOSEPH  
You gotta expand your vocabulary.

Garvin motions to the far wall. The orderly closes the shade. Half of Garvin's face is obscured by shadows.

GARVIN  
What were you looking for?!

JOSEPH  
Unstrap my arms, and I'll show you.

Garvin shrugs, and pushes fluid into an IV that floods into Joseph's veins.

GARVIN  
Your choice.

Joseph's body stiffens with pain.

16 BEGIN ALTERED FLASHBACK: 16

17 INT. CAR - DAY 17

Joseph smiles at his wife. Just as she reaches for his hand, the car ZOOMS by. Joseph glances at her, expecting her reaction.

HAZEL  
You're off duty!

She places her hand on his arm.

The second car flies by.

HAZEL (CONT'D)  
Fine.

Joseph floors it.

As they catch up to the second car, it slows down. The back window opens. Garvin's head emerges and he SCREAMS.

GARVIN  
Why were you in my office?!

A person sits in front of Garvin in the passenger seat.

HAZEL  
Joseph!

He turns his head to reveal Herry's face.

END ALTERED FLASHBACK.

18

**INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY**

18

Joseph wakes up. Garvin stands in front of him with crossed arms. New suit.

GARVIN  
What were you looking for?

Joseph MUMBLES to himself.

JOSEPH  
Herry

GARVIN  
What? Who's Herry?

Joseph's LAUGH rises.

JOSEPH  
The monster under your bed.

Garvin leans into Joseph's face. Joseph, now with a full and matted beard holds Garvin's gaze.

GARVIN  
You're wrong, detective.

Garvin inserts another needle into the IV. Nurse Leslie's eyes register concern.

NURSE LESLIE  
Sir-

GARVIN  
I have one more.

NURSE LESLIE  
No, Sir.

Nurse Leslie walks around Joseph, whose head falls to its side.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)  
 You're already over. At this pace,  
 he won't make it.

Garvin takes his time to return the needle to its place, then leaves the room. Nurse Leslie unstraps Joseph's arms.

19

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

19

A hand, skin scarred and burned under a sleeve, turns the handle on the doorknob. The SQUEAK of the hinges cry as the door opens.

Joseph shifts at the door's opening. The dark eyes of Muniza stare back at him. He summons the energy to speak.

JOSEPH  
 Philosophical differences?

MUNIZA  
 I, this-

JOSEPH  
 No fancy comeback?

MUNIZA  
 This isn't what I signed up for.

JOSEPH  
 Like I did.

He tries to lift his arm, still shackled.

MUNIZA  
 Listen to me, there isn't much  
 time.

She looks over her shoulder.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)  
 I don't agree with what is  
 happening here, but I don't have  
 any power to stop it.

Joseph SCOFFS.

MUNIZA (CONT'D)  
 He's dangerous. I didn't have any  
 choice-

JOSEPH  
 We all have a choice.

MUNIZA  
You can't fight him.

JOSEPH  
I'm in this chair for me.

MUNIZA  
What does that mean?

JOSEPH  
I'm exactly where I need to be.

Footsteps.

MUNIZA  
I have to go, but remember, you  
can't win, so find a way to gain.

JOSEPH  
Got nothing left to lose.

As the footsteps grow LOUDER, Muniza averts his gaze one last  
time and exits.

20

**INT. HALLWAY - DAY**

20

The amber tones from the sun's waking bleed through the  
windows. Nurse Leslie helps Joseph limp down the hallway  
towards his room.

NURSE LESLIE  
Why are you doing this?

JOSEPH  
Why do we do anything?

NURSE LESLIE  
You can't fight him.

Weak, Joseph tries to respond.

JOSEPH  
I keep hearing that.

NURSE LESLIE  
What does that mean?

JOSEPH  
Forget it.

NURSE LESLIE  
You okay?

JOSEPH  
I'm just getting warmed up.

NURSE LESLIE  
Look, you can try, but he always wins.

JOSEPH  
I've already lost everything.

NURSE LESLIE  
Not your life.

JOSEPH  
I'm really livin it up.

NURSE LESLIE  
Remember why you're here.

JOSEPH  
You all think I'm crazy.

NURSE LESLIE  
No, your family. Remember why you're here.

Cheering ERUPTS from down the hallway. Joseph perks up.

JOSEPH  
What was that?

NURSE LESLIE  
Not sure, but we need to get you to bed.

JOSEPH  
No time.

NURSE LESLIE  
What are you trying to prove?

JOSEPH  
I'm not trying to prove anything. I told you all why I'm here and I told you what I have to do.

NURSE LESLIE  
Would she have wanted this?

They catch their reflection in the mirror. Joseph looks like a shell of himself.

NURSE LESLIE (CONT'D)

You say you're not like everybody here and that you need your meds. Look at you. You're turning into a different man than you were.

JOSEPH

This is the price.

NURSE LESLIE

What are you talking about.

JOSEPH

Grief. Grief is the price we pay for love.

NURSE LESLIE

Okay, now it's bed time.

JOSEPH

Not yet. Take me to the noise.

She regards him for a moment.

NURSE LESLIE

Okay, but after that, bed.

The shuffle down the hallway as the CHEERING grows louder.

21

**INT. RECREATIONAL ROOM - DAY**

21

Nurse Leslie and Joseph enter together.

A smiling Garvin stands in the middle of the room with his arm around Jade. They are surrounded by all the patients and staff.

A slight moment of recognition flickers across Garvin's face as Joseph and Nurse Leslie enter. The smile broadens.

GARVIN

We love each and every one of our patients. Most of you know this.

He turns toward Joseph.

GARVIN (CONT'D)

But what we love even more is watching them reenter society, changed, renewed and whole.

The room BILLOWS in praise.

GARVIN (CONT'D)

The circle continues, no matter  
where its parts may be.

ALL

The circle continues!

Familiar faces from the circle line up to hug Jade goodbye.

JOSEPH

What in the David Koresh is  
happening?

NURSE LESLIE

Looks like Jade is leaving the  
circle.

JOSEPH

English...

NURSE LESLIE

She's being discharged today.

JOSEPH

Why?

NURSE LESLIE

No idea. I've been with you all  
week.

He turns to her.

JOSEPH

It's been a week?

NURSE LESLIE

Never seen anyone last that long.  
Normally they break in a couple a  
days.

Simon strides over.

SIMON

Well, you look like crap.

JOSEPH

That's no way to talk to a lady.  
Nurse Leslie looks just fine.

Simon's smile falls.

SIMON

No! I meant-

NURSE LESLIE

It's okay, Simon. I know what you meant. We're on the way to his room.

JOSEPH

I'm fine. Let me sit here a minute. You go say goodbye.

Nurse Leslie considers this, then lowers Joseph into a chair by a table. She leaves to go speak with Jade.

Simon sits next to Joseph.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

You got the letter out?

SIMON

Within forty eight hours, things started happening.

Simon slides a cup of punch over to Joseph.

SIMON (CONT'D)

But Joseph, you were right.

JOSEPH

About what?

SIMON

Ta freaking da.

Just then Jade sees Joseph and rushes to him.

JADE

Hey, Joe.

She bends over and gives him a hug. As they embrace, she WHISPERS in his ear.

JADE (CONT'D)

Thanks.

As she pulls back, Garvin stands directly behind Jade, staring down at Joseph.

Jade, and the rest of her fans, exit through the door. Garvin stays back. He glances over at Simon, then back at Joseph. Garvin TAPS the table, nods slightly, and walks towards the door, keeping his eyes on Joseph.

Garvin disappears through the door.

SIMON

I know he's smiling, but G man is not happy.

Joseph eyes Garvin gliding out of the room.

CUT TO:

22 BEGIN FLASHBACK: 22

23 **EXT. DESERT - DAY** 23

Dirt and dust fill the air. The hot rubber burns as the wheels peel down the empty desert road.

A cactus sways a little as the car ROARS by.

24 **INT. CAR - DAY** 24

A family SINGS out of tune but in unison. Living On A Prayer cuts through the sounds of the open road. JOSEPH, 40s, sports a rugged face but an easy smile. His shaved head wears a five o'clock shadow like a crown.

His wife, HAZEL, mid 30s with saucers for eyes, shares a loving look with her husband and then back to their kids, CHARLIE, 10, and EVIE, 13.

The sing along is interrupted. A car races past them, barely in control.

JOSEPH

Woah!

EVIE

Holy crap, did you see that?

HAZEL

Language.

Joseph reaches down toward his console. Hazel gently grabs his hand.

HAZEL (CONT'D)

Let it go.

CHARLIE

You gonna get him, Daddy?!

HAZEL

Daddy is on vacation.

JOSEPH  
Daddy is going to let the on-duty  
police handle this so he doesn't go  
to Mommy jail.

Another car speeds past, almost running them off the road.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Are you kidding me?

He looks at Hazel with a pleading look. She exhales.

HAZEL  
Okay, go write them their ticket  
but after that, no more work.

JOSEPH  
You kids wanna go on a quick  
adventure?

CHARLIE  
YEAH!

EVIE  
YES!

Joseph smiles. He FLICKS on his lights. HAZEL looks nervous.

JOSEPH  
Everybody hang on!

Joseph gives chase. He picks up his radio.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Dispatch this 1277 with a possible  
10-51. Possible 11-94.

DISPATCH  
Copy, Advise if 11-95.

JOSEPH  
Copy that.

HAZEL  
I don't like that, actually, Joe.

JOSEPH  
Okay, okay. I'll get close enough  
to get the plates and call it in.

The kids SCREAM with excitement as Joseph picks up speed.

One of the vehicles is ahead and in sight.

HAZEL  
Can we slow down a bit.

JOSEPH  
The kids are having fun.

The first car turns hard, SCREECHING loudly. It heads back toward them. The second car follows suit.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)  
Shit... Dispatch, Code 2, I repeat,  
Code 2.

DISPATCH  
What's your 20?

Gunshots RING out as the two cars exchange gunfire.

The laughter turns to CRYING.

JOSEPH  
I have two 925's. We're 10-71. I  
repeat, shots fired. Switching to  
Code 3.

The sirens SCREAM to life.

DISPATCH  
77, what's your 20?

JOSEPH  
I'm 10-10. Headed down Route 66,  
mile marker 1144.

DISPATCH  
You're off duty? Pursue with  
caution and wait for backup.

The first car ZOOMS by.

Time slows down as the driver and Joseph lock eyes. THE DRIVER's face is blurred out. Joseph leans in as if to get a better view. The face glitches even more.

A flash of light sears into Joseph's mind. Broken, pixelated images scatter his vision. Joseph grabs his temple.

When Joseph regains focus, he's met with the second car raring toward him at 190 mph.

Joseph reclaims his senses but not control of the car.

He swerves.

His car races off the road. A rock cluster awaits. Before impact, we hear kids and his wife SCREAMING.

