

The Child is the Father of the Man.

- William Wordsworth

...the theory of black holes was developed before there was any indication from observations that they actually existed. I do not know of any other example in science where such a great extrapolation was successfully made solely on the basis of thought. It shows the remarkable power and depth of Einstein's theory. There is still much we don't know, such as what happens to objects and information that fall into a black hole. Do they reemerge elsewhere in the Universe, or in another universe? And can we warp space and time so much that one can travel back in time? Maybe someone will come back from the future and tell us.

- Stephen Hawking

FADE IN:

The legend reads: OCTOBER 10th

EXT. MANHATTAN BRIDGE - PREDAWN - 1969

Darkness. Headlights bounce off thick sheets of RAIN. 6,500 gallon Esso OIL TRUCK barrels over wet studded pavement, heading towards Manhattan. It's going fast. Too fast.

Up ahead...at the BASE OF THE BRIDGE:

A large reflective sign - lit up by arc lights: MEN AT WORK.

There are TWO WORK CREWS, several hundred feet apart.

THE FIRST CREW is CON ED. A corrugated vacuum tube feeds into an open MANHOLE. A WORKER drops into the hole.

THE SECOND CREW is CONSTRUCTION. They're at the apron of the bridge securing lumber supports for the roadbed.

It's late and the men are tired. A mistake is made. A FORK LIFT loaded with LUMBER fails to negotiate a turn...whacks into an abutment... spilling its load onto the roadway.

Bad timing, because right now that Esso OIL TRUCK hits the OFF RAMP. Not a lot of time for the driver to react to a roadway spewed with lumber.

He does his best. Slams the brakes, spins the wheel, hits the horn, but it doesn't matter: 18 wheels skid across the blacktop - spitting thick smoke and burnt rubber, lifting off the slick pavement...twisting...flipping...hemorrhaging oil from its ruptured tanks...grinding its way towards...

MEN AT WORK. Seconds to react as an 80,000 pound juggernaut of death plows through parked cars like paper...crushing the Con Ed equipment...lurching to a halt on top of the MANHOLE.

EXT. FIRE STATION - 9TH BATTALION - CONTINUOUS

TWO FIRE TRUCKS (1000 Gallon Pumper and Mack Tiller Ladder) pull into the street.

EXT. LADDER TRUCK JUMPER SEATS - MOVING - CONTINUOUS

SIRENS wail, cherry tops spin.

FRANK SULLIVAN, 40, is strapped into an open-air jumper seat. A real life hard charger, Frank is the kind of iron's man fire fighters want coming in after them, should they get caught in harm's way. Kind-hearted and hard-fisted, he has the grace and courage of a man living by his convictions.

Across from Frank sits GRAHAM GIBSON, 20. A good-looking African-American, "Gib" is a Fire Fighter Fourth Grade, a tank man... and one nervous probie.

Through a window into the CAB, we SEE LT. BUTCH FOSTER, 50, on a walkie-talkie. A beefy old pro who's been through more fires than he can remember.

A walkie-talkie sits in a cradle between Frank and Gibson.

BUTCH'S VOICE  
(through walkie-talkie)  
...oil all over the street. Cracked water and gas mains. Four companies coming in...

Butch's voice continues as Frank calmly absorbs the information, while at the same time.

FRANK  
(re: rain)  
Oh, man. Hope it ain't like this in Baltimore tomorrow.

GIBSON  
Baltimore?

FRANK  
The game, Graham. The Series?

Gibson taps his wristwatch.

GIBSON  
Oh, yeah. Damn. My watch is busted.

FRANK

Hey, Rookie. Be cool. Just stay with me. This is what we do.

GIBSON

(still tapping his watch)  
I seem nervous, huh?

Frank laughs. Gibson grins, relaxes a bit. Frank checks his ROLEX DIVER'S WATCH. Multiple SIRENS fill the dawn.

FRANK

It's 5:30, Gib.

BUTCH'S VOICE

(through walkie talkie)  
...two Con Ed men trapped in an underground electrical conductor vault.

Frank's eyes harden. His game face sets up.

EXT. MANHATTAN BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

A tableau of impending danger. Thick black OIL bleeds from teh truck onto the street...pouring underneath the rig...and into the MANHOLE.

POLICE urgently cordon off the area, evacuating the workers. EMERGENCY PERSONNEL deal with the badly injured TRUCK DRIVER.

Firemen wedge sandbags between the hull of the truck and the three-quarters covered manhole -- trying to divert the oil away from the underground vault.

FIRE COMMANDER O'CONNELL yells at his men to finish the job and get the hell away.

The BIG TRUCKS ARRIVE. PUMPER ENGINE and Frank's LADDER TRUCK -- rapidly guided into position by men on the ground.

Frank, Gibson, Butch and the rest of the unit are on the ground instantly and ready for orders. They are looking at a nightmare ready to happen. Frank takes in everything.

FIRE COMMANDER O'CONNELL and a CON ED SUPERVISOR approach.

BUTCH

(deep irony)  
A fun one.

FRANK

Yep.

COMMANDER

We got high voltage cables ripped loose  
in the underground. They hit water, that  
fault's gonna arc.

Frank looks at the tanker over the manhole. There is now  
nobody around it.

FRANK

Why haven't they killed the juice?

SUPERVISOR

Switches are shorted out.

FRANK

You're shitting me!

SUPERVISOR

Wish I was. Oldest part of the system  
down there. We're on it, but it's gonna  
take awhile.

FRANK

We gotta go underground. Get those guys  
out, now.

SUPERVISOR

We tried. Bulkhead door's rusted shut.  
Won't budge.

COMMANDER

The block is being evacuated. I don't  
want anybody... including our  
boys...within fifty yards of that  
tanker...it's a fucking bomb.

Frank has been staring at the capsized rig.

Butch knows what he's thinking. But it's too late. Frank is  
gone...slogging through the oozing oil to the hull of the  
tanker. He kneels over the three-quarters covered manhole,  
using a flashlight to peer into the darkness below. Sparks  
from the loose cables spit off flashes of light as the cables  
hiss and slap against the ceiling and walls of the vault.

FRANK

This is the Fire Department. Frank  
Sullivan. You guys okay?

CON ED WORKER #1'S VOICE

Please man, you gotta get us out of  
here...

FRANK

That's exactly what we're gonna do.

And Frank is up, heading for his truck, signaling Gibson.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(yells to Con Ed Supervisor)  
How do we get to the vault door?

SUPERVISOR

There's a manhole at Canal and Bowery.

BUTCH'S VOICE

Forget it, Frank. No way you reach those men in time.

Frank grabs a "halaghan claw tool" and a walkie-talkie. Gibson nervously picks out two helmet lights...and they are off and running.

FRANK

(yelling back)  
I can do it, Butch. Me and my 'tank man' here.

COMMANDER O'CONNELL

(to all, and into walkie)  
Start spraying down the street. Let me know when we are fully evacuated.

EXT. MANHOLE - CANAL & BOWERY - CONTINUOUS

Frank uses the "adz" to rip open the heavy manhole cover.

INT. MANHOLE TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Frank and Gibson descend into the tunnel, strap lights on their leather helmets to illuminate the damp darkness. They race down the subterranean passage. The stench is thick. Butch's voice suddenly booms out of the walkie-talkie:

BUTCH

(via walkie)  
Frank, you hear me? Frank?

FRANK

(into walkie)  
Yeah, Butch?

BUTCH

(via walkie)  
The gas level is getting serious.  
The underground's combustible - it could flashover. I want you to abort! Now!  
Get the hell out of there!

Frank picks up the pace. Charges ahead. Guy's got balls.

GIBSON

(into walkie)

Frank. We gotta go back. Frank...

FRANK

(calling back to him)

Stay with me, Gib. We're gonna do this.

GIBSON

(charging after him)

I should'a been a fucking mailman.

Frank reaches the rusted 'submarine-like' VAULT DOOR. Pounds on the door... a faint response. He goes to work on it with the halaghan tool. Gibson arrives...pretty rattled. Frank gives him a wink and a smile. It's gonna be okay.

BUTCH

(via walkie)

Frank, where are you?

Frank digs down, suddenly the DOOR GIVES WAY

Oil and water rush from the VAULT, pouring over Frank and Gibson, foaming into the tunnel. But the door is mounted three feet off the ground. There is still three feet of oil and water trapped inside. And the smell of gas is now overwhelming...

FRANK

(into walkie)

We're in, Butch.

Frank probes the dark vault with the FLASHLIGHT BLADE. Through smoke we see TWO MEN huddled in the corner, trapped by three loose 'HOT' CABLES - WHIPPING AROUND THE TINY VAULT LIKE AN ELECTRIC HYDRA. Con Ed Worker #2 shivers, ankle broken, leaning on older Con Ed Worker #1.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Time to go home, fellas.

Gibson sprays the room, clearing out most of the smoke. Frank steps into the vault.

CON ED WORKER #1

Careful. If the hot end of those cables hits you, it'll conduct to the water and we're all fired.

Frank drops to his knees, ducking under the cables, shuffles

to center of the vault. Places his hands at opposite ends of the halaghan tool, hoping for the cables to pass directly over his head. A hairy beat, then...

Frank jackknifes out of the water, ramming the halaghan into the ceiling. It worked. The teeth on the "claw-end" and the spike on the "adz-end" are embedded into the concrete -- STAPLING THE CABLES TO THE CEILING. Make that balls of steel.

FRANK

Go, Gibby! Everybody move it.

Gibson and Con Ed worker #1 help injured Worker #2 out of the vault. Frank checks to make sure they've cleared the vault and lets go of the tool.

Frank jumps into the tunnel, hoists the injured worker over his back and races back down the tunnel.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(to Gibson)

Haul ass, that claw ain't gonna hold for long...

(into walkie)

Take cover -- she's gonna flash!

EXT. STREET - OIL TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

O'Connell and the few remaining cops & firemen run for it...

INT./EXT. MANHOLE - CANAL & BOWERY - CONTINUOUS

Frank, Gibson and the Con Ed men scramble towards the manhole. Butch and another fireman are waiting up top. They help the men -- who are covered in oil and slime -- up onto the street. And then they all tear away from the manhole...around a corner... collapsing on the pavement against a building.

K-A-B-O-O-M -- A MUFFLED EXPLOSION

The vault ignites, the tunnel "FLASHBACKS" -- a towering geyser of FLAMES AND DIRT ERUPTING out of the manhole from which Frank has just escaped.

In the distance, FLAMES erupt out of the other manhole...engulfing the OIL TRUCK...blowing it into a million pieces.

Through the INFERNO at the base of the Manhattan Bridge, Frank can see that no one is hurt. His eyes glistening with adrenaline and relief, he sits back against the building and throws an arm around Gibson.

FRANK  
You did good, Gib. Real good.

Frank looks over at the hyperventilating Butch and smiles.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Elvis has left the building.

INT./EXT. MIDTOWN TUNNEL - MORNING

Inside the tunnel. Dark. Moving fast. Flashes of LIGHT bounce off the shiny tile walls. The deep throated ROAR of a '67 HARLEY battles with Martha & the Vandellas' HEAT WAVE. We are with Frank, wearing a leather jacket with the insignia of his fire-fighting unit emblazoned on it, and a New York Mets BASEBALL CAP pulled down tight, as he rockets his chopper through traffic, out of the tunnel, and up into...

EXT. QUEENS - STREETS - CONTINUOUS

CREDIT MONTAGE begins as Frank cruises home. It has STOPPED RAINING. Frank passes by billboards and other evidence of the approaching METS/BALTIMORE ORIOLES World Series.

He circles a LITTLE LEAGUE ball field waving to some OLDSTERS.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - QUEENS - CONTINUOUS

Frank glides the Harley alongside his house. A feisty DALMATIAN PUPPY ELVIS barks his welcome from behind a fence.

Feeling fatigued, Frank dismounts and enters teh backyard, playing for a moment with Elvis while he uprights a TRAINING BICYCLE, tidies up BASEBALL EQUIPMENT, and glances up at a HAM RADIO ANTENNA secured to the roof, before entering through a backdoor. There is a sense of routine to all this.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The kitchen is empty. Breakfast dishes in the sink. Frank flips on the RADIO. It plays out under the rest of the MONTAGE as coverage of the oil truck crash blends into other news stories.

A note on the refrigerator reads: 8:15. Hey, Bud. I'm off to work. Johnny's at school. Elvis is fed. I luvs you.

Setting a grapefruit and a slice of toast on the table, Frank glances at the Daily News. But his eyes are tired, he stares off into space...letting go.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

A radio in the bedroom is tuned to sports news. Frank soaks in a hot bath. He looks like he might fall asleep - and does.

CREDITS END.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

CRASH! A SOFTBALL BLOWS through the window from the BACKYARD, landing on the rug next to the bed. Frank bolts awake, staring at the busted window.

He checks the clock. It is 5:15. He steps to the broken window. SEVERAL SMALL BOYS scurry from the yard. Two others, JOHNNY SULLIVAN and GORDO HERSCHE, both 6, stand frozen in place. Elvis tears in circles around them. All is very quiet. Then, from somewhere beyond the bedroom door, we HEAR The Beatles' BACK IN THE USSR...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

JULIA SULLIVAN, 32, is rockin' out, chopping vegetables.

JULIA  
(singing to song)  
...show me 'round the smokey mountains  
way down south...

Adorable, sweet and strong. Strawberry blonde hair, sapphire eyes, soft earthy vibe. A beauty.

Frank, wearing FDNY sweats, moves into the kitchen flipping the softball from hand to hand. Julia turns to him and rolls her eyes at the sight of the ball. Say no more.

FRANK  
Hey, bud.

JULIA  
Hey, bud.

Without breaking stride, he gives her a smack on the lips and steps to the screen door to the back porch.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Johnny stands nervously outside the door. Elvis sits at his side. Gordo watches from the safety of his own porch next door. Frank opens the screen door, casts a stern look down at his son.

FRANK  
Looks like two weeks worth of allowance,

Chief.

JOHNNY

I know. Sorry, Dad.

FRANK

Glad to hear that.

And Frank drops the softball into Johnny's mitt, closes the screen door and turns back into the kitchen. Johnny turns away into the yard.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

With a shrug, and sharing a kids will be kids smile with Julia, he grabs a cold Rheingold from the refrigerator and heads into...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...past a CONSOLE TELEVISION, to the HI-FI

FRANK

(calling to Julia)

How about a little of the King?

JULIA (O.S.)

(from kitchen)

Well, why not a little of the King?

Julia crosses her eyes, as if she could stop him. Frank moves to change records.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN

Suddenly, a PAN of spaghetti sauce bubbles over.

JULIA

Damn.

FRANK (O.S.)

You alright?

JULIA

I think I ruined the sauce...again.

As Elvis' SUSPICIOUS MINDS plays, Frank steps back in, moves up behind Julia, and takes her in his arms.

FRANK

What's the matter, Jules? Trouble workin' an eight hour shift, watching the kid and whipping up a little bolognese?

JULIA  
You didn't marry Donna Reed.

FRANK  
I'd go with you and Chinese take-out over her any time.

And he turns her around and they start to dance as Frank sings along to Elvis, badly.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(singing lyrics)  
Caught in a trap, I can't walk out,  
because I love you too much b-b-baby.

We follow the music as it drifts out into the YARD where we can SEE Johnny and Gordo looking in at the weirdness.

JULIA  
How was your tour?

FRANK  
The usual.

Frank spots Johnny and Gordo staring at them. He winks at the boys and swings Julia into a Fred Astaire dip.

JULIA  
(loaded)  
Butch called.

FRANK  
Did he?

JULIA  
He did.

FRANK  
It was under control, Bud. Butchy's just getting tight in his old age.

JULIA  
Nothing wrong with old age, Frank...long as you get there.

With a laugh, Frank drops Julia into another dip. As the music fades, we...

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - DUSK

CLOSE ON: BICYCLE TRAINING WHEELS lying on the sidewalk.

Johnny is precariously perched on his fire engine red BICYCLE. He wears a police badge and a whistle around his

neck. Frank stands beside him, holding on to the bike seat.

We're on a quiet side street next to house. It's the last light of the day.

Hold on Johnny's eyes...fear.

FRANK

Okay, start pedaling.

JOHNNY

Daddy put the wheels back on. I'm gonna fall.

FRANK

Don't think about falling, just keep pedaling.

JOHNNY

Daddy, I'm scared.

FRANK

C'mon, Chief, show some guts.

Johnny takes a gulp of air, doesn't want to disappoint his father, nods okay.

He starts pedaling. Slowly moving forward. Frank holds on to the seat. Frank's still hanging on - jogging along side.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I'm gonna let go!

Frank let's go. Johnny's pumping those little six year-old legs, but he starts to wobble out of control -- CRASH!

Johnny starts to cry, quickly gets up and runs back to the house. Julia comes out of the kitchen door. Johnny runs into her arms.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Don't quit on me now, Chief.

Johnny tears himself from Julia's arms, runs inside. Frustrated, Frank lights up another cigarette.

JULIA

Don't be so tough on him Frank, he's six years old.

(softer)

He just needs to know you're right there behind him.

Frank takes a deep drag on the butt. Steps onto the YARD and

stares up at the starry night.

ANGLE ON UPSTAIRS WINDOW

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

JOHNNY'S POV: Frank standing in the yard, wishing on a star.

Johnny looks up at the sky and makes a wish of his own.

PULL BACK & PAN UP TO STAR-STREWN SKY, CAMERA RACING TOWARDS:

EXT. OUTER SPACE - CONTINUOUS

Countless points of light blaze across vast blackness. A luminous blue sphere floats peacefully below EARTH. We are 22,000 miles away in geosynchronous orbit.

MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR PIECE OF HARDWARE drifts into and fills the frame - 1960's COMMUNICATION SATELLITE, NASA & HUGHES logos affixed to the glistening aluminum hull.

All is still for some moments. But then a sound disturbs the quiet of the cosmos. It's coming from the horizon. From something that looks like a hole in the fabric of space.

Bright streaks of starlight swirl around into that hole.

And slowly the satellite begins drifting towards it - pulled in by some invisible force.

FOLLOW THE SATELLITE AS IT IS SUCKED INTO THE VORTEX.

INT. SPACE ANOMALY - CONTINUOUS

We look through the ripple of warped space-time. As if holding a lens to one eye, we glimpse two earths at once -- two identical North Americas. The two earths turn slightly...

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - DUSK - 1998

THROUGH the screen door, we are CLOSE ON A MAN'S FACE, staring out... JOHN F. SULLIVAN, 35. John's eyes tell us he needs more than just a shave and a good night's sleep. This man has demons. Right now he is LOOKING OUT AT:

SAMANTHA TAYLOR, 33. A knockout. Dark blonde hair, piercing blue eyes. Not happy. She jams a suitcase into the back seat of her car and starts back for the house.

JOHN

So, that's it, Sam? You're just walking out?

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Samantha strides in past John towards a washer/dryer.

SAMANTHA

I've been walking out for the last six months. You didn't notice...or care.

She grabs clothes from teh dryer and exits to...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...towards a stairway beyond, John not far behind.

JOHN

Fine, go ahead and save the whole world, Sam.

(sipping his beer)  
You don't gotta worry about me.

SAMANTHA

Damn you. I tried. But you wouldn't help me.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Samantha steps into the bedroom to an open suitcase and travel bag. She starts jamming the clean clothes into the suitcase and then begins to close the case and bag.

JOHN

You're right. We should've quit a long time ago.

Sam can't hold back anymore - she cries openly.

JOHN (CONT'D)

It's not your fault. It's mine. I can't change. Wish I could, Sam. But I can't.

And suddenly Samantha's tears turn to anger.

SAMANTHA

That's not true and you know it.

John has no reply. All he can do is watch as she takes her stuff and heads for the door.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Chief.

John stands immobilized in the middle of the room. He looks down and spots a TEDDY BEAR half stuck under a reading chair.

And then to a photo of him and Sam at a CARNIVAL SHOOTING GALLERY. Sam's holding the teddy bear. John turns at the SOUND of the backdoor slamming. Looks out a window down to Samantha getting in her car and driving away.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

John enters, goes straight for a half empty bottle of BUSHMILLS IRISH WHISKEY. As he brings the bottle to his mouth...BRRRING. The PHONE.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Swigging Bushmills as he steps to a combination portable phone/answering machine, John takes off his jacket. We notice two things: an NAPPED DETECTIVE SHIELD and a .38 REVOLVER.

BRRIING. John grabs the phone.

JOHN

What? It don't matter, Lady. Why?...  
Cause I don't got no friends or family.

BANG. Slams down the phone. And stares around the room.

WE'VE BEEN IN THIS HOUSE BEFORE -- 29 YEARS AGO. This was Frank and Julia Sullivan's house. Time has not been good to it. Furnishings haven't changed much, but the house is missing the warmth it had when a family filled it with love.

John's eyes dart to a PHOTOGRAPH next to the desk. It is a picture of THE SULLIVAN FAMILY from back then. Too many memories. He grabs his coat, heads out...

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - QUEENS - EVENING

The field is EMPTY. Covered in shadows. John sits alone on the top row of the BLEACHERS, cradling his bottle of BUSHMILLS. He takes a long pull. As he stares down at the empty field, his eyes slowly drift over to home plate...

AUDIO FLASHBACK: a VOICE rises up out of the darkness. The voice of memory...

ANNOUNCER

Batting next. Johnny Sullivan.

We hear the SOUNDS of CHEERING parents. The CLAPPING, WHISTLING & SHOUTING is hauntingly juxtaposed against the empty playing field and bleachers we see on the screen.

CRACK: sound of the bat solidly connecting with the ball.

CAMERA follows invisible runner from home to first base.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)  
Sullivan's safe at first. Batting for  
Johnny's father is...Coach Newman.

John takes a deep breath, glances from first base back to home plate...then looks off into the distance - a cold thousand yard stare.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - NIGHT

John shuffles up the pathway. The SOUND of a TV - X-FILES - filters out from inside the house.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

John walks in the front door. GORDY JR., 8, carrying an overstuffed BLT, whizzes by...

GORDY JR.  
Hi, Uncle John.

John notices smoke filtering out of his kitchen.

JOHN  
I'm not your uncle, kid.  
(yelling into kitchen)  
Gordo, what are you doing here?

GORDO (O.S.)  
Sully! Is that you?

Follow John into the kitchen.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Meet GORDON HERSCHE, 35, computer geek, lovable dough boy. Last seen by us in 1969 as a six-year old.

GORDO  
Hey, Sull. My cable's out again.

JOHN  
What the hell is that smell?

John glances at a mound of burnt bacon dripping on the stove.

GORDO  
Can you believe Ellen still won't let me cook in the house? I melt one lousy frying pan, y'know?

Gordy Jr. scoots into the kitchen.

GORDY JR.

John, guess what? Dad's taking me fishing. Wanna come?

JOHN

Wish I could, Gordy. But you bring me back a big one.

GORDO

Hey, OK if Gordy uses your old gear?

JOHN

I think it's somewhere in the closet... if you can find it.

Gordy Jr. runs out. O.S. sounds of him rummaging through hall closet.

GORDO

So Yahoo went up another two points. Man, did we miss the boat on that one.

John puts the Bushmills bottle down, and grabs two Molsons.

JOHN

Coulda, woulda, shoulda, pal.

John laughs, hands Gordo a beer, and lights up a cigarette.

GORDO

Sam called Ellen.

John reacts. Nothing else needs to be said. A beat, then...

GORDO (CONT'D)

Why don't you come with us? Three days of fresh air and barbecue would do you some good, man.

GORDY JR. (O.S.)

Dad, John, c'mere...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS

Gordy Jr. sticks out of the closet, attempting to drag out a large BLACK STEAMER TRUNK, stenciled with yellow letters.

GORDO

Hey, Gordy, what 'ya doing?

GORDY JR.

Dad, check it out. Fire Department! Can I open it up?

John thinks about it for a second. Noting the curious glee in little Gordy's face, nods OK.

Gordy Jr. pops open the latches, opens the trunk. Gordo crouches down beside his son, checks out the dusty contents.

HOLD ON JOHN'S REACTION to what Gordy Jr. finds in the trunk.

GORDY JR. (CONT'D)

Wow.

Gordy Jr. reaches in and takes out: FDNY HELMET & JACKETS. Briefly puts on the enormous helmet, then sets it aside.

Reaches back into the trunk and pulls out the disassembled pieces of a 12 gauge SHOTGUN.

GORDO

Hey! Gimmie that!

Gordo takes the shotgun from the boy and places it gingerly inside the closet.

Simultaneously, Gordy Jr. hands off a leather-bound SCRAPBOOK to John. Before John can react, Gordy Jr. lifts up an AMATEUR RADIO TRANSCEIVER.

GORDY JR.

What's this, Dad?

ANGLE BACK ON JOHN

Powerful memories fill his face.

GORDO

John, that's your Dad's old ham radio. Remember? Remember how we used to beg him to let us talk on that thing?

CLOSE ON

the transceiver and microphone - mint condition 1965 Yaesu FT 101, and a "Silver Eagle" Astatic D-104 microphone.

JOHN/GORDO

This is not a toy.

GORDY JR.

Can we try it Dad, can we try it?

Gordo looks at John.

JOHN

What the hell.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Glass doors separate the study from the family room. The HAM RADIO is set on a dusty wooden desk. Scotch-taped to the top of the radio is a diagram for the radio setup and "QSL" cards: certificates from around the world acknowledging "contact" with "WB2YXB" -- FRANK SULLIVAN, BAYSIDE NY.

Gordo hooks up the radio. Gordy Jr. shuts off the TV.

GORDY JR.

So this was what people used before the Net, huh?

GORDO

Man, do I feel old.

GORDO TURNS THE RADIO ON. Shows Gordy how it works. Gordy rotates the tuning dial, nothing but "dead bands." STATIC.

JOHN

It's junk, kid. Nobody uses those things anymore.

KNOCK. Front door opens. John's head turning around. Meet ELLEN, 35, Gordo's wife. The grown-up in the family.

ELLEN

Gordo, do you know what time it is?

(a beat)

Hi, John.

JOHN

Ellen.

Ellen notices John's weary look but says nothing. We get the sense she knows what is wrong.

ELLEN

C'mon Gordy, let's go.

GORDY JR.

Oh, mom...

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Gordo and family pour into the yard between the two houses. John shuffles out behind them. Gordo and Gordy Jr. quickly disappear into their house, but Ellen lingers for a moment - looking back at John standing alone.

ELLEN

You all right, John?

JOHN

Oh, yeah.

Ellen holds her glance for a moment. John smiles, thinly masking his sadness. Ellen nods okay, and she is gone. John looks up at the stars, then down to the HAM RADIO ANTENNA on his roof, now looking raggedy from 29 years of neglect.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - LATER

CLOSE ON

TV: LARRY KING is interviewing STEPHEN HAWKING.

John is back on the Bushmills. He races clumsily for the CORDLESS PHONE. CLOSE ON SPEED DIAL BUTTONS. John hits #3.

JULIA

(answering machine voice)

Hi, this is Julia. Please leave a message after the tone.

JOHN

Hey, Ma, it's me. Checking in. Probably at work. Anyways, I'll see you tomorrow night. Love you.

John puts down the phone. Stares at the FDNY trunk. He stumbles to it. Sits down and opens it up. It's filled with his Dad's stuff. He picks up and leafs through the old SCRAPBOOK - PHOTOS and CLIPPINGS illustrate FAMILY HISTORY...

A quick glimpse of Dad's high school baseball team; Mom and Dad's 60's wedding.

CLOSE ON PHOTO:

John at his First Communion pictured with his MOTHER - WE SENSE LOSS AND SADNESS IN HIS EYES - THIS BOY LOOKS HURT.

A folded newspaper drops out. John picks it up. Front page of the DAILY NEWS. Top half READS: "October 13, 1969. AMAZIN'S TAKE GAME 2 - SERIES EVEN." The lower half READS: "FIREMAN KILLED IN WAREHOUSE BLAZE"

He shoves the paper back in the scrapbook. Puts the album down - he can't deal with those wounds. He glances up at the TV:

LARRY KING

Is this anomaly connected to the space storm and the NASA satellite that

disappeared in 1969?

HAWKING

We don't know. But given the similarities of their location and appearance, this is a question that merits further investigation.

NOTE: Larry King's show plays for the duration of this scene.

John settles in, takes off his work shirt. Underneath he has on a T-shirt. We notice a NICOTINE PATCH on his arm. Doesn't stop him from burning another Marlboro.

JOHN IS SUDDENLY STARTLED BY A NOISE FROM THE STUDY - A LOUD BURST OF STATIC.

FRANK

(over radio)

CQ 15, here is WB2YXB, by for call.

John gets up, Bushmill bottle in hand, and stumbles into...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

FRANK (O.S.)

CQ 15, come in 15.

Approaching the desk, John sits down at the radio. Reaches out to the mic -- presses down on the red squawk bar.

JOHN

Uh, hello?

FRANK (O.S.)

WB2YKXB, who've I got?

JOHN

(slightly slurred)

Name's John.

In the BACKGROUND of FRANK'S VOICE, we barely hear WALTER CRONKITE interviewing someone.

FRANK

Are you licensed to broadcast, buddy?

JOHN

Look, I don't really remember how this thing works.

FRANK

Listen, you can't broadcast without a

license. Unless this is an emergency,  
you gotta get off the band.

JOHN  
(chuckling)  
Pal, my whole life's an emergency.

A pause.

FRANK  
Where are you transmitting from?

JOHN  
Queens, New York.

FRANK  
Whatta ya know. Bayside, born and  
raised.

JOHN  
I thought these things were for talkin'  
around the world.

FRANK  
15-band closes down at night. During the  
day you can chew the band with China if  
you want.

JOHN  
I can't believe people are still using  
these things.

As John releases the squawk bar, the distant sound of Frank's  
TV filters out of the HAM.

FRANK  
Can you hold on a second?

And then John hears the sound of a door closing.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Sorry 'bout that. So Queens, you psyched  
for the Series?

JOHN  
(taking a swig)  
I don't really follow baseball anymore.

FRANK  
What?

JOHN  
I got fed up with all the bullshit.

FRANK

Fed up? Lemme tell you something, in a 1000 years, when school kids study America, they're gonna learn about three things: the Constitution, Rock 'n' Roll, and Baseball.

Despite his mood, John has to smile.

FRANK (CONT'D)

How can you live in Queens and not love the Amazin's?

John warms to the topic of his boyhood heroes.

JOHN

If you're talking The Amazin' Mets, well, that's different. You know people talk about Seaver, but I'll love Ron Swoboda til the day I die.

Static crackles out over the radio. The signal weakens.

FRANK

(through static)

I'm right with you, man. He's got the heart of a lion. Hey, how 'bout the first game of the Series?

JOHN

Yeah. It was all over after Buford nailed Seaver's first pitch outta the park.

More static.

FRANK

No way, brother. Ain't gonna happen.

BZZZSSSSH - loud static. THE SIGNAL IS GONE.

JOHN

Who the hell was that?

Behind him, on TV, Larry King and Hawking continue talking.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1969

ANOTHER FINGER PRESSING DOWN ON THE RED SQUAWK BAR... FRANK SULLIVAN. Seated at the polished wooden desk.

FRANK

Hello, Queens. You there?

Silence. The signal is gone. Frank leans forward, jiggles the frequency dial, trying to regain the signal. No luck.

Slightly frustrated, he stands and opens the glass doors to the family room where Julia is watching TV - a very young STEPHEN HAWKING is being interviewed by WALTER CRONKITE, 52.

JULIA

Frankie, Johnny wants to say goodnight.

FRANK

(a little distracted)

Sure.

He starts to take a step into the room, and stumbles over Elvis, sleeping by the door...KNOCKING INTO and CRACKING a GLASS PANE in one door.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - 1998

John, dog tired and more than a little wasted, gets up from the desk, inadvertently leaving the Ham Radio ON, and shuffles for the family room through the glass doors.

CAMERA HOLDS, CLOSE on the GLASS PANE...CRACKED in the exact same spot where Frank knocked into it 29-YEARS AGO.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Frank unpins the police badge from Johnny's shirt, takes the whistle from around his neck. He pulls up the covers and softly kisses Johnny's forehead. You can tell he loves this kid more than anything in the world.

FRANK

(lullaby-like)

Take me out to the ballgame, take me out  
with the crowd. Buy me some peanuts and  
cracker jack...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - 1998

John plops down on sofa, half asleep. The TV drones on.

JOHN

...I don't care if I never get back.

FADE TO BLACK.

The LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 11th - FIRST GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

Blue sky. A SOFTBALL soars into view. It drops down and

into a WILLIE MAYS' style basket catch by Frank Sullivan.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - QUEENS - DAY - 1969

The same Little League field that Frank circled on his Harley yesterday, October 10, 1969. And the same field at which John sat in the stands drinking last night, October 10, 1998.

We are in the 9th inning of a friendly SOFTBALL GAME between the local COPS and FIREMEN. A lot of NYPD and FDNY T-shirts, sweats and caps. Plenty of Mets stuff, too.

Having made the catch, Frank coolly pulls the ball from his mitt as he starts running toward the infield diamond. Tagging up at 3rd, sorely tempted to try for home is SATCH DELEON, 30, NYPD Detective. Satch feints for the plate, Frank feints the throw. For a maddening, gleeful moment, Frank has Satch caught between 3rd and home.

In the STANDS, Johnny Sullivan, Marge Hersch and the FAMILIES of the other ballplayers scream for whomever they want to win this game of chicken.

On the SIDELINES, Johnny, Gordo and the other KIDS serving as BATBOYS and WATERBOYS, jump around in anticipation.

At HOME, Butch Foster stations himself to take the throw.

Suddenly, Satch fakes to 3rd, then bolts for home. Frank pegs it to Butch, who tags the sliding Satch. Game over.

SATCH  
Lucky throw, fire boy.

FRANK  
(jogging in)  
Luck, my ass.

They square off. Pretending to fight. Julia steps between them. And they all descend into laughter.

Frank and Satch each wrap an arm around Julia and start off. Within a step, Johnny slips in under Frank's other arm.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(to Johnny)  
See that, kid. Practice. Practice.

INT/EXT. BUTCH'S HOUSE - DAY - LATER

Close on a TV: PRESIDENT NIXON tosses the first ball to open the 1969 WORLD SERIES.

REVERSE to see many of the PLAYERS and FAMILIES from teh

softball game are parked around a couple of TVs watching the game. BEER flows from a keg. SOFT DRINKS are passed around. HAMBURGERS and HOT DOGS are cooking on the BBQ.

Satch sits with Johnny and Gordo and some other kids.

Frank and Julia tend the BBQ. Butch brings out some beers. A fun day.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY - 1998

A DETECTIVE'S CAR pulls up next to a couple of BLUE & WHITES at West 155th St. The Northern tip of Manhattan Island.

Across construction barricades is a half-torn down GREEK RESTAURANT. Several UNIFORMS can be seen beyond it, looking at something on the ground.

As John exits the car, the passenger door swings open and we MEET a guy we haven't seen in 29 YEARS - SATCHEL DELEON, 59. Shaved head, square jaw. A ram-rod straight, craggy warrior. Thirty-plus years on the force now endow him with a rare combination of smarts, guts and sense of humor.

SATCH

(as they walk)

Don't choke on your pride, Sull. You ain't ever gonna catch another one like that.

JOHN

She made up her mind. Nothin' I do is gonna change it.

SATCH

Nothing you're willing to do.

Spotting John and Satch, a UNIFORM approaches them. They keep on walking.

JOHN

What's the story?

UNIFORM

Survey crew found a body. Actually a skeleton. Over here.

The uniform leads John and Satch around some overgrown weeds to SEE a patch of freshly unearthed dirt...out of which sticks a HUMAN SKULL and COLLAR BONE.

In the B.G., a CRIME SCENE unit can be seen arriving by van.

SATCH

Be real careful when pulling it out. And get the dirt around it.

As Satch turns to talk to a second UNIFORM and a couple of SURVEYORS, John notices a man raking leaves in a yard not far away. As he starts to him, to Satch:

JOHN  
I think I'll visit the neighbor.

INT. SHEPARD RESIDENCE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON FRED SHEPARD, 72. As the scene unfolds, we can SEE the half torn down diner/crime scene through a window. Satch oversees the operation.

MRS. SHEPARD, 70, hands John a cup of coffee.

JOHN  
Thanks.

John looks out the window.

MR. SHEPARD  
Used to get breakfast there all the time back from the boat. Them Greeks were good people. Once that McDonalds opened up on Dyckman, they lost all their business.

John glances around the room - notes family PHOTOGRAPHS.

There's a picture of Shepard in younger days on a commercial fishing boat. Next to it a faded black and white picture of Mrs. Shepard, 35. A few pictures of the Shepards and their YOUNG SON. And at the end, a color photograph of the same son, about 20, in DRESS BLUES, graduating from the Police Academy - CLASS OF '64.

JOHN  
Your son on the job?

MR. SHEPARD  
Was. Carl died in the line of duty.  
October '69.

JOHN  
I'm sorry.

Shepard points to a frame above the fireplace: Distinguished Service Medal, CARL SHEPARD, awarded posthumously.

MR. SHEPARD  
My boy lived and bled blue.

Silence. Mr. and Mrs. Shepard stand very still. John discreetly glances at his watch.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MOMENTS LATER

THUNDER in the distance. CRIME SCENE personnel have made some progress in unearthing the skeletal remains. A couple of drops of rain tap the ground and the bones.

John stands looking down at the skeleton. A long beat. And then he turns to Satch and they start for the car. Behind them, the skeleton is carefully pulled free from the ground. WE SEE its wrists are BOUND with GLASS TAPE.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - MANHATTAN - EVENING - LATER

CHINESE TAKE-OUT CARTONS are placed in a microwave.

WIDEN TO REVEAL

the woman holding the cartons: JULIA SULLIVAN, 29 YEARS OLDER than the last time we saw her. But she looks okay, she looks happy.

We are in the kitchen of Julia's Upper West Side apartment. It is raining. We notice THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE outside a BAY WINDOW.

JULIA  
(calling out)  
I thought it'd be nicer to eat here.

JOHN (O.S.)  
Sounds good.

JULIA  
(walking into the other room)  
I'm sorry Sam couldn't make it.

JOHN  
(lying badly)  
Yeah, those grad school applications are driving her crazy.

Julia hands John a Coke. Close on her face - she feels her son's pain.

JULIA  
I'm sure everything'll work out.  
(beat)  
She really loves you...

JOHN

(changing the subject)  
So how are things at the hospital?

JULIA  
Fine. You know Dr. Schwartz retired last month?

JOHN  
No kidd'n, he musta been pushing 90!

JULIA  
Close.

Beat.

JOHN  
So how'd you like LION KING?

JULIA  
Oh, I loved it. I wish you'd gone.

JOHN  
I know. I'm sorry. Work.

JULIA  
You work too hard, John.

JOHN  
Look who's talking.

They share a laugh. And then slowly the laughter dies. John's expression changes as he quietly lights a cigarette. Julia knows what he's thinking...

JULIA  
29-years tomorrow.

A long beat.

JOHN  
I wish I could remember him better. Truth is, most of the stuff I know is from the stories you used to tell. But they're not mine. They're not my memories. They're yours.

Julia glances at an old photo of Frank, then back to John.

JULIA  
You would have liked him, John. And he would have liked you.

PING. The microwave timer sounds off.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CLEAR NIGHT - 1969

CLOSE ON

Frank's dog, Elvis. Poking his nose in a carton of Chinese take-out on the floor. An arm drops into frame - scruffs the puppy's back. The Rolex diver's watch tells us the arm belongs to Frank.

WIDEN TO REVEAL:

Frank sitting at his desk. He fires up an unfiltered LUCKY STRIKE, pops a Rheingold. Next to him a Daily News headline - NASA INVESTIGATES SPACE STORM.

FRANK

...WB2YXB calling unidentified station,  
Queens. CQ 15.

JOHN (O.S.)

(over radio, sounds like he's  
had a few drinks)

Hello?

FRANK

I been Q-ing you all night. How the hell  
did you do it?

JOHN (O.S.)

Huh?

FRANK

The World Series. You called Buford's  
homer.

JOHN (O.S.)

Wasn't too tough, buddy. Game happened  
almost thirty years ago.

FRANK

What are you talking about? I'm talking  
about this afternoon.

JOHN (O.S.)

This afternoon?

Frank puts his finger on the squawk bar, about to say something, but just at that moment his son Johnny appears in the doorway in his pajamas.

JOHNNY

Daddy, come up and sing the baseball.

FRANK

(to Johnny)  
I'll be up soon, Little Chief.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - RAINY NIGHT - 1998

John Sullivan's face, thunderstruck. The camera stays on John. He puts down his drink.

FRANK (O.S.)  
Sorry 'bout that.

JOHN  
What'd you just say?

FRANK (O.S.)  
Oh, that was my kid.

John looks up at the photo on the wall: FRANK, JULIA AND SIX YEAR OLD JOHNNY SULLIVAN (CIRCA 1969). A beat, then:

JOHN  
You call your son Little Chief?

FRANK (O.S.)  
Uh huh....

JOHN  
What'd you say your name was?

CUT TO CLOSE ON

FRANK  
Frank...Frank Sullivan.

NOW BACK ON

JOHN  
Is this some kind of joke? Gordo is that you? Are you fucking with me?

FRANK (O.S.)  
Look pal, I'm just askin' how you...

JOHN  
You're telling me your name is Frank Sullivan, you live in Queens and you just saw the first game of the '69 Series...live?

FRANK (O.S.)  
Right...and I'm asking how you called the game.

JOHN

Gordo, if this is you, so help me...

FRANK (O.S.)

What the hell does Gordy have to do with it?

John's POV - top of radio - in FADED PEN, on a piece of masking tape, is written: "WB2YXB"

JOHN

What'd you say your station...uh, your call letters were?

FRANK (O.S.)

W...B...2...YXB.

The call letters hang in the air. A breath, then...

JOHN

Now you listen to me. My name is John Francis Sullivan, I live at 1060 41st, where I've lived my whole life. And I saw the first game of the '69 Series at my Uncle Butch's house with my father...

FRANK (O.S.)

What?

JOHN

29-years ago.

CUT TO:

Frank dropping his cigarette in the ashtray. It rolls out and lies smoldering on the desk. He doesn't even notice.

FRANK

29 years...?

BACK ON

JOHN

My dad's name was Frank Patrick Sullivan, he was a fire fighter and a die-hard Mets fan. And every night when I went to bed he sang to me...

(softly, almost singing)  
Take me out to the ball game, take me out with the crowd...

Beat.

FRANK (O.S.)

What the hell...

JOHN  
I'm dreaming this. Shit, this is a dream.

FRANK (O.S.)  
I'm not dreaming.

John reaches out to touch the radio. But he stops, his hand hovering just above it.

JOHN  
So you're Frank Sullivan, huh? It's 1969 and you're sitting at your desk in the study, just chewin' the rag?

BACK ON FRANK.

He smells smoke, sees the cigarette burning a hole in the desk. Spooked, Smokey the Bear just started a fire.

FRANK  
Christ!

Frank beats out the flame with the newspaper.

JOHN (O.S.)  
What's going on?

FRANK  
(lying)  
Nothing...I just spilled something.

CUT TO:

A DISTINCTIVE BURN SCAR GRADUALLY MORPHING ONTO JOHN'S DESK.

John pushes the Bushmills to the side, staring at the scar. It hits him - hard.

JOHN  
Oh my god.

FRANK (O.S.)  
What?

JOHN  
You just burned the desk.

FRANK (O.S.)  
What's happening?

John rubs his fingers over the old burn scar.

JOHN

You burnt the desk...I can see it.

Eerie quiet, the only sound is the rain outside John's window.

BACK ON

FRANK

That's impossible.

JOHN (O.S.)

What if it's not...

ON JOHN

reaching out, touching the radio.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Dad...?

FRANK (O.S.)

Johnny...?

Shockwave. A long moment of absorption. INTERCUT Frank and John.

FRANK (CONT'D)

How could this be happening?

JOHN

I don't know.

FRANK

We gotta be bouncing off the mother sun spot of all time.

JOHN

Sun spot?

FRANK

Yeah, that's how Hams work.

JOHN

Wait a sec...there was something on the news. Something about this space anomaly. I think they said it was connected to some storm in '69.

Frank glances at DAILY NEWS HEADLINE - SPACE STORM. He says nothing for a long beat, struggling to understand.

FRANK

You sound...ground up...?

JOHN  
I'm thirty-five years old.

FRANK  
Thirty-five? That would make it...

JOHN  
1998.

Frank pulls back from the radio...

FRANK  
1998...? This is wrong. Who are you?  
Why are you doing this?

JOHN  
I'm not doing anything.  
(beat)  
Look, I don't know what's going on. But  
I swear on my life, I'm here at your old  
desk, on your Ham, in our house, right  
now...in 1998.

John's voice has a conviction that Frank cannot deny.

FRANK  
It's really you, isn't it?

JOHN  
Yeah...I think so.

Silence. Both men trying to wrap their minds around the reality of the situation. Slowly accepting.

FRANK  
Thirty-five? Jesus, you're almost as old as I am...  
(long beat)  
What's your life like? You married? Got kids?

Beat.

JOHN  
No, not yet.

FRANK  
Too busy playin' ball, huh?

JOHN  
Nah, I gave it up.

ON FRANK

Johnny gave up baseball?

FRANK  
You happy?

John takes a sip, the answer caught in his throat.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
You're still my Little Chief, right?

JOHN  
I'm trying to be, Dad. I'm tyrin'.  
(pausing)  
It's good to hear your voice.  
(quiet beat)  
I missed you...so much.

Quiet beat. A burst of static crackles the air.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
(re: static)  
What's that?

FRANK  
I think I'm losing you.

JOHN  
No wait, don't go!

FRANK  
It's okay. I'm still here, Chief.

JOHN  
But you're not...you're not still here.

More static. The signal breaks up, then returns weaker.

FRANK  
What are you talking about?

JOHN  
I lost you.

FRANK  
What?

JOHN  
I never knew you, Dad.

FRANK  
Why?

JOHN

Fire.

FRANK

On the job?

JOHN

It was an abandoned warehouse - hit by  
lightening.

(beat)

Butch told Ma it was just one wrong turn.  
Said it wasn't your fault. You went with  
the training, with your instincts.

(beat)

If you'd just gone left instead of right,  
you would've made it.

FRANK

That can't be...that's not gonna happen.

JOHN

It did, Pop. It did.

FRANK

When?

JOHN

October 12, 1969.

Heavy static now. They can barely hear each other.

FRANK

But that's tomorrow.

JOHN

(fully realizing)

Tomorrow. Jesus...it hasn't happened.  
It doesn't have to happen.

Both men frantic. Their words overlapping...

JOHN (CONT'D)

Don't go. Don't go in that warehouse...

FRANK

I don't understand.

Final blast of static. The SIGNAL is GONE. The BAND is  
GONE.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Moonlight casts a glow over the sleeping Johnny. Frank steps  
in and stands looking down at him.

EXT. ROOF OF JOHN'S HOUSE - NIGHT - 1998

John crawls out a window, through the rain, onto the roof.

JOHN'S POV

Rusted Ham radio antenna, half-fallen over.

John scoots over to it, straightening it. But he slips, sliding down the roof, coming to rest against the chimney.

A light pops on from an upstairs window across the street. Gordo appears in the window. Does a double take when he sees John, sitting on the roof, soaked, drunk.

GORDO

(sliding open window)

Sull! What the hell!

JOHN

I talked to him Gordo. I talked to my Dad.

Gordo's heart starts to break. His best friend has slipped over the edge.

GORDO

C'mon, man. Get inside. I'll come over. We'll play some Nintendo.

JOHN

No. I gotta tell him the address, so he doesn't go in.

GORDO

Go in where?

JOHN

The warehouse. Buxton seeds. It's tomorrow.

GORDO

I know pal. I remember. Twenty-nine years tomorrow.

The LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 12th - SECOND GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

EXT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE/BUXTON SEED CO. - AFTERNOON - 1969

BLACK CLOUDS, EARTH SHATTERING THUNDER. A massive BOLT OF LIGHTNING rockets out of the menacing sky STRIKING THROUGH A WINDOW on the 3rd floor of the warehouse. A FIRE BEGINS.

INT. FIRE HOUSE - 9TH BATTALION/REC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

GAME 2 plays on TV. Butch, Gibson and the rest of the unit sit around enjoying the game. A very distracted Frank stands watching from the doorway to the kitchen.

We are in the bottom of the 9th with the Baltimore Orioles' Brooks Robinson coming to the plate.

GIBSON

Oh, man. Robinson is gonna nail it and we're gonna be dead.

SUDDENLY THE ALARM SOUNDS, moving the groaning firemen reluctantly to action, and freezing Frank in surging anxiety.

Gibson is up and passing Frank...who begins to move like he's in a trance.

A RAPID MONTAGE of Frank, Butch and the others readying to head out. Gibson grabs a little TRANSISTOR RADIO.

BUTCH

Let's move it, gentlemen...three alarm.  
Lit up abandoned warehouse. West 49th.

Frank looks like he's going to throw up.

EXT. MANHATTAN ST. - COP BAR - DUSK - 1998

John, lost in thought, rounds a corner towards the bar.

EXT. STREET - LADDER TRUCK - MOVING - AFTERNOON - 1969

The LADDER & ENGINE trucks barrel out of the firehouse.

As SIRENS SCREAM, Frank and Gibson secure themselves into position. Gibson excitedly switches on his radio to the game. He notes that Frank is not the least bit into it.

GIBSON

Sully, you cool?

Frank seems not to hear him.

GIBSON (CONT'D)

Frank. Hey, man. You alright?

FRANK

I'm alright, Gibby.

From the RADIO we HEAR the last play of the game as Brooks Robinson grounds out 3rd to 1st. METS WIN! CHEERS are heard

in the streets and from the CABS of the racing fire trucks.

Gibson whoops it up. Frank barely acknowledges the win.

INT. COP BAR - DUSK - 1998

John moves through the crowd of cops - ad lib greetings - slides into a booth occupied by Satch and Gordo.

GORDO

How you feeling?

JOHN

Better.

SATCH

You get your roof fixed?

John shoots a look at Gordo, who quickly changes the subject.

GORDO

Can you believe it, Yahoo goes up another point today...

EXT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - DUSK - 1969

Located off the East River in lower Manhattan. The 9th Battalion Fire trucks are first on the scene. A couple of GREEN & WHITES are already there, uniform cops keeping a few onlookers at a safe distance.

FLAMES shoot out from the 4th and 5th FLOOR WINDOWS. Starting to lick their way up to the 6th floor and roof. SMOKE billows out of the windows on the 3rd and 2nd floors. Lighter smoke spirals out from the door on the 1st floor.

Frank, Gibson and other firemen under Butch's command take stock of the situation and start to deploy.

HOSES are run from HYDRANTS to the PUMPER TRUCKS.

The LADDER is swung into position for an assault on the roof.

GIBSON

Bastard's moving fast.

BUTCH

Thank God it's abandoned.

(to the men)

Surround and drown...nobody goes in.

Frank nods in agreement. Directly above them, another BOLT OF LIGHTNING CRACKS through the darkening sky.

A death shudder creeps up Frank's spine. And for the first time in his life, Frank Sullivan is SCARED SHITLESS.

Frank stares up at the sky, transfixed. THUNDER punches the sky with a huge roar. RAIN starts to fall.

And in the distance, as if from inside the burning building, a FAINT SCREAMING is first heard, and growing louder.

FRANK

Hear that?

BUTCH

What?

Suddenly, out of the building runs a STONED TEENAGE GIRL screaming and babbling incoherently.

GIRL

Help! Help! Oh, god. Help. She's up there. She's trapped! Please!

Immediately galvanized, Frank moves to the girl.

FRANK

Hey, hey. It's gonna be okay. We're gonna help. Okay? Okay.

She starts to calm down.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Now tell me, who's up there?

GIRL

My girlfriend, Molly.

FRANK

Where?

GIRL

In a room...an office...or something. We live there. Top floor. Something fell on her. I couldn't help her. Please, you gotta...gotta...

Frank looks to Butch. A beat. Butch gives him the nod. Frank and Gibson gear up and go.

INT. COP BAR - DUSK - 1998

GORDO

You realize that if you'd bought a thousand dollars worth of Yahoo in '96, it'd be worth fifty-grand today?

SATCH  
You doin' okay, John?

JOHN  
Tough day, you know.

Satch and Gordo nod in sympathy. Gordo raises his glass. Satch and John follow. A yearly ritual.

GORDO & SATCH  
To your dad.

JOHN  
To my dad.

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - DUSK - 1969

Frank and Gibson step into the warehouse. Butch behind them. Flames haven't reached this area yet, but the ROAR of the fire above them is deafening, and smoke billows down THE STAIRWAY before them. They sprint towards it and start up. ONE FLOOR. TWO FLOORS. THREE FLOORS, and suddenly they are face to face with a WALL OF FIRE blocking access to the 4th floor.

Frank and Gibson stop and stare into the inferno.

FRANK  
It looks open on the other side.

GIBSON  
Don't know what's behind it.

FRANK  
One way to find out.

And he barrels through the line of fire onto the 4th floor. Gibson starts to do the same when the 5th floor gives way above Frank, sending burning timber and debris cascading around him and cutting off Gibson's route.

Now Frank's only way to go is up the stairs toward the 5th floor. He turns to Gibson. Coming up behind him is Butch. Across a gulf of flames Frank yells and waves at them to get the hell out. And then suddenly, part of the 3rd floor around Gibson and Butch starts to go.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(screaming over fire)  
Get out...while you still can...

Frank turns and bolts for the 5th floor as a huge flaming BEAM CRASHES down onto the stairway behind him, forcing

Gibson and Butch to scramble like hell back down the stairs.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(soft)  
...it's not your time.

INTERCUT WITH

EXT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Fire fighters are efficiently and expertly hard at it.  
Running out lines. Extending ladders. Moving a FIRE BOAT  
into place - all communicating via walkie-talkies all on teh  
same frequency.

The BIG LADDER is now in place. As it telescopes up, the  
ROOF MAN, BILL CAWLEY, begins his climb.

PUMP TRUCKS and THE FIRE BOAT keep pumping water onto the  
blaze. But no matter. For the moment, this is one OUT OF  
CONTROL NIGHTMARE FIRE.

BACK TO

Frank reaching the 5th floor. It's an inferno. He keeps  
moving, tearing up the stairs for the 6th floor.

GIBSON (O.S.)  
(over walkie)  
Gotta be another way up, Frank.

FRANK  
(into walkie)  
Then fuckin' find it.  
(heading in)  
I'm going for the girl.

BUTCH (O.S.)  
(over walkie)  
Billy, you better get up top.

EXT. WAREHOUSE BUILDING/LADDER - CONTINUOUS

ROOF MAN edges up the ladder, as it telescopes above him.

ROOF MAN  
This is Billy, Frank. I'm on my way.  
South side.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

FRANK  
(reaching 6th floor)  
Glad to hear it. See you on top.

FIRE has torched OPEN a GAPING HOLE IN THE ROOF.

Frank peers around through the smoke and fire and rain. Then he sees, huddled in the temporary safety of the corner of an OFFICE, but trapped by a fallen CONDUIT, the GIRL, passed out from smoke inhalation.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(into walkie)  
I've found the girl.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A HIPPIE CRASH PAD

Frank dashes into the office and heaves the conduit off the girl. He hoists her over his shoulder and heads out.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Butch and Gibson exit the warehouse past the HOSE CREW already working its way into the building.

They look up to the top of the warehouse where the LADDER is haltingly inching its way up the side of the building.

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE/6TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The fire on this floor is now a raging inferno. Flames shoot up from the stairway below through the open roof. Surrounded by fire, Frank, carrying the girl, strides for what looks like a WINDOW on the south side of the floor.

FRANK  
(into walkie)  
It's real hot in here, Billy. I'm coming out quick.

But apprehension rips across Frank's eyes as he reaches the window and looks down to see.

EXT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The top end of the ladder FROZEN some 10 FEET BELOW THE WINDOW. BETWEEN WALKIE-TALKIES.

ROOF MAN  
I'm jammed up here, Frank!

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

FRANK  
Oh mother...

EXT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Butch and Gibson are now by the base of the LADDER TRUCK which is near the canal side of the building. Butch screams at the ladder OPERATOR.

BUTCH

What the fuck, GINO! Tell me!

LADDER OPERATOR/GINO

Gear box cracked, Butch. We're fucked.

BUTCH

(into walkie)

Frank! Frank!

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - 6TH FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

FRANK

I know, Butch. I know.

Frank clicks off the walkie-talkie and turns to survey the hell around him. THE STAIRWAY IS GONE.

To the RIGHT is a DOOR, flames around it, but none coming from the room beyond it.

To the LEFT, another DOOR, a metal one, this one surrounded by fire - flames licking out all around it from room beyond.

EASY CHOICE. Frank turns, heads towards DOOR ON THE RIGHT.

No. Wait. HE STOPS. SOMETHING'S WRONG. HEART POUNDING, LUNGS COLLAPSING, EYES & SKIN BURNING, EVERY FUCKING BRAIN CELL SCREAMING...THINK!

WE HEAR JOHN'S WORDS ECHO IN FRANK'S HEAD:

JOHN (V.O.)

...one wrong turn...

(beat)

If you'd just gone left.

And for the first time in his life, Frank Sullivan goes against his instincts and his training as he...

TURNS BACK AROUND AND GOES THE OTHER WAY.

INT. COP BAR - DUSK - 1998

Gordo is in the middle of a story when...

GORDO

...principal calls us in 'cause Gordy hacked into the school system - sent out a little X-rated e-mail.

(nervous laughter)  
Scary, huh? Eight-years old.

SATCH  
Just keep him away from girls.

...something happens - TIME STUTTERS AND REPEATS:

SATCH (CONT'D)  
(repeat)  
Just keep him away from girls.

The effect is like a phonograph needle stuck in the groove. It lasts only a second and nobody seems to notice. Nobody except John, who looks wildly disoriented. He grabs hold of the edge of the table as if to keep his equilibrium.

John breaks into a cold sweat. His HEART POUNDING AWAY.

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE - DUSK - 1969

Franks reaches the door on the LEFT. White heat and flames shoot everywhere...A FUCKING FURNACE. He tries to open it. IT'S LOCKED! WHAM! Frank kicks at it. WHAM! WHAM! The door blows open and flames leap out, the energy of the blast tossing Frank and the unconscious girl back onto the floor, fire surging over their heads. But then...

He sees something on the other side of the doorway, inside the room, on the far wall.:

A SMALL METAL SWINGING DOOR.

INT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE/CHUTE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank cradles the girl. Gets down on his knees, crawling under the heat. Reaching the SWINGING DOOR. Pushes it open, revealing:

A smooth metal SPIRAL SEED BAG CHUTE.

Frank rips open his jacket and bundles the girl to him. He works himself and the girl onto the top of the chute.

The ROOM BEGINS TO SHAKE. BRICKS TUMBLE OUT OF THE WALL. The whole GODDAMN BUILDING is going to COLLAPSE.

Frank lurches forward until he and the girl start to move down the chute.

INT. WAREHOUSE CHUTE - CONTINUOUS

As Frank and the girl plunge through the bowels of the inferno...large portions of the building begins disintegrating around them...a giant storm of BRICKS, MORTAR, METAL AND BURNING WOOD biting their tails...

Gaining speed through each up-rushing floor...5-4-3-2...Frank and the girl zoom down towards the END OF THE SLIDE only to find IT'S BOARDED UP. OH SHIT!

Frank grips the girl tight, raises his BOOTS, bends his knees, and like a HUMAN BATTERING RAM, SMASHES THROUGH THE ROTTED PLYWOOD BOARDS

EXT. BUXTON WAREHOUSE/EAST RIVER CANAL - CONTINUOUS

THEY'RE AIRBORNE. Frank and the girl. Floating in SLOW MOTION out over the CANAL and landing in the water between the WAREHOUSE DOCK and the FIREBOAT.

A YELL snaps Butch's and Gibson's attention to what is happening. Gibson starts running for the CANAL, ripping off his coat and hat before leaping into the water. But Frank is getting pulled down by his fire tank and the weight of the girl. Finally, Gibson reaches him, taking the girl. Frank quickly sheds his jacket and the tank.

Butch stands watching on the dock. He takes a moment to close his eyes in thankful prayer.

GIBSON  
You okay, man?

FRANK  
(starting to giggle)  
Elvis has left the building.

Hitting the water has shot the girl back to consciousness. A look passes between her and Gibson. A look he won't forget.

SILENCE. Then the thunderous SOUND of the WAREHOUSE CAVING IN on itself, sending flames shooting high into the sky.

Frank lies back, floating on the water, the rain pelting around him, letting the miracle of it all, take him over.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
(soft)  
Little Chief.

CRASH! A GLASS OF WHISKEY SHATTERS ON THE TABLE. WE AR:

INT. COP BAR - DUSK - 1998

It happens again. Time stutters and repeats. As if the film sprockets were caught in the projector.

CRASH! The GLASS SHATTERS AGAIN! CRASH...CRASH...

Camera ratchets into the exploding storm of the flying glass, ice and whiskey. And then time stops as we hold close on a frozen shard - in it, the cracked reflection of John's eye.

The camera moves through the reflection and into.

JOHN'S EYE

A burst of light and then...distorted images. Like looking at reflections through a smashed mirror. The cracks gel, and we are in...

MONTAGE. A SERIES OF QUICK FLASHING IMAGES.

1969: Frank, Johnny, Butch and Satch at the World Series.

1971: Johnny and Gordo sitting on Frank's lap, at the Ham.

1972: Frank and Johnny, playing catch.

1976: Johnny winning a swimming race at Longbranch Boys Club, Frank cheering.

1984: Frank, Julia and Satch beaming with pride as John graduates from the police academy.

These images appear as DISJOINTED FRAGMENTS OF NEW MEMORIES - A PAST THAT DIDN'T EXIST BEFORE. A past where Frank Sullivan didn't die in that fire.

It's like watching random frames from the Sullivan Family's 8mm home movies as John's brain struggles to absorb decades of NEW MEMORIES in the span of seconds.

JOHN'S POV

Normal vision slowly returning. The broken glass is rocking on the table.

INT. COP BAR - CONTINUOUS

GORDO

John. John, you all right?

JOHN

(a whisper)

Longbranch...?

GORDO

What?

John doesn't respond.

SATCH  
You're not looking too good.

JOHN  
Whoa, I just...I just...

GORDO  
What is it?

Beat.

JOHN  
My father didn't die in a fire?

GORDO  
Huh?

JOHN  
My father didn't die in a fire?

GORDO  
Fire? What are you talking about? He had cancer, John.

JOHN  
Cancer. It was the cigarettes. Right?  
The cigarettes?

GORDO  
Yeah, lung cancer. Ten years ago.

His hand shaking, John takes a long sip of his beer. Gordo and Satch exchange a concerned look.

SATCH  
Maybe you outta lay off a little...

JOHN  
Gordo, I wasn't dreaming. I talked to him, it was real.

GORDO  
Huh?

JOHN  
The Ham radio. That's how come he didn't die in the fire.

A loaded silence. Three guys looking at each other, thinking very different things.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1969

FRANK

(into radio mic)  
Johnny? Johnny? You there? C'mon,  
Chief, answer me...

Nothing but static. Frank jiggles the frequency dial.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Chief?  
(louder)  
Chief, are you there?

Silence. And then a voice...

JOHNNY (O.S.)  
I'm right here, Daddy.

Frank turns. Johnny, sleepy faced, wrapped in his blankie, stands just outside the room - he looks a little scared.

FRANK  
It's okay, Chief.  
(beat)  
C'mere.

Johnny shuffles over, Frank lifts him up on his knee - brushes the hair out of his face...and gets an idea.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Streetlights flood the tree-lined street. Frank & Johnny standing next to the little red bicycle.

FRANK  
Okay, partner, whatta you say we tame this bronco.

CLOSE ON

Johnny's eyes: SHAME & FEAR - doesn't want to disappoint his father again, but too scared to get on the bike. Frank reaches out, holds Johnny's hand.

JOHNNY  
I'm scared.

FRANK  
Don't be scared. This time I'm right behind you if you fall.

JOHNNY

Daddy, Daddy, I can't.

FRANK

No, but we can. We can do it together.  
Spirit and guts, Chief.

A long beat. Johnny takes a deep breath, nods OK, slowly getting on the bike. Frank's holding on to the seat.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Take your time. I'm not gonna let go  
'til you say okay.

Johnny takes a gulp of air, starts pedaling. Slowly moving forward. The bike picks up some speed.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You ready?

JOHNNY

Wait...

FRANK

I'm right here behind you...

Frank's still running alongside, holding on to the seat.

JOHNNY

Okay!

Frank lets go. Johnny keeps pumping those little six-year old legs. A bit wobbly at first, but he's gonna make it. On Johnny's eyes: determination & self-confidence.

FRANK

(clapping)

Yes! That's it! You got it, you got it!  
Way to go, Chief!

JOHNNY

I'm doing it! I'm doing it!

ON FRANK'S FACE

The proud father.

FRANK

(under his breath)

Atta boy.

OVERHEAD SHOT

Johnny blissfully riding around Frank in a big gentle circle. Frank slowly spins around keeping his eyes on his Little

Chief.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1998

John walks in the front door, takes off his coat...

The house looks different. Cleaner, furnishings less ragged. John moves through his home, taking in the subtle changes. He reaches the study. And there, beside the desk, is something that makes him stop:

A PHOTOGRAPH on the wall beside the desk -- FRANK, JULIA & FOURTEEN YEAR-OLD JOHNNY SULLIVAN.

JOHN

Oh my God...

The picture changed. John aged from 6 to 14. Julia's hairstyle and clothes changed from 60's to 70's. Frank's hair receded and grayed. Jon is staring at evidence of a history that didn't exist before.

John grabs the old family scrapbook he found in Frank's trunk. Opens it, unfolds "FIREMAN KILLED" CLIPPING.

The main headline still reads: "OCTOBER 13, 1969. AMAZIN'S TAKE GAME 2. 2-1 LEAD. SEE SPORTS."

But the sub headline now reads: "FIREMAN RESCUES RUNAWAY FROM INFERNO"

John turns, stares at the radio questioningly. He starts to sit down at the desk when he spots something on the front edge of it. WORDS CARVED INTO THE WOOD, 29 YEARS AGO by fire fighter Frank Sullivan. The day John saved his father's life: I'M STILL HERE CHIEF

The last letter is missing. But then a patch of wood starts to morph - as if it were being carved by an invisible knife.

A BURST OF STATIC. RADIO CRACKLES TO LIFE.

FRANK (O.S.)

(through radio)

...can you hear me?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON FRANK

One hand on the squawk bar, the other holds the jack-knife he is using to finish carving the letter F.

JOHN (O.S.)

(through radio)  
Dad...?

FRANK  
Chief?! Is that you?

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN

JOHN  
Yeah, it's me.

FRANK  
You're the voice of an angel, Johnny. If you hadn't told me, no way I would'a ever made it.

Frank cuts himself off in mid-sentence.

JOHN  
Dad, you there? You okay?

FRANK  
Yeah. I'm okay.  
(beat)  
What about you? I want to know. About you. And your mom.

John hesitates for a moment. Lights up a smoke.

JOHN  
We're doing all right, Dad. We're doing good.

FRANK  
Tell me.

JOHN  
It's hard to explain. Something happened today. It was like a dream. And when I woke up I had all these new memories. Good times. Times we never had before.

FRANK  
I'm glad.

But John looks troubled. Something bothering him. He takes a hit off his cigarette.

JOHN  
Dad, I gotta tell you this...cause you should know. Cause I still remember.

FRANK  
What, Johnny? What is it?

JOHN

What it was like when you died in the fire...

Both men are silent for some moments. The hum of static. A breath, then --

JOHN (cont'd)

We needed you. I needed you. So many times...I wished for you. But you weren't there for me.

(beat)

Mom tried. But she was hurting. I used to hear her, every night, for years, crying herself to sleep.

Frank grips the radio mic, stunned.

FRANK

I didn't think...

The static grows. John leans into the mic

JOHN

Well, you think about it. And you remember, cause I don't wanna lose you again. I don't ever want Mom...

John's voice cracks, choking back the tears.

FRANK

(over static)

You won't. I swear to God you won't. I love you, son.

A blast of static. The signal is gone. It is quiet.

John leans back. Takes a breath. Reaches out for the phone.

CLOSE ON PHONE'S THREE SPEED DIAL BUTTONS.

John HITS #3.

JULIA'S VOICE

(through answering machine)

Hi, this is Julia. Please leave a message after the tone.

JOHN

Ma, it's me. Call me. We gotta talk.

As John slowly hangs up the phone, something catches his eye. Something that wasn't there yesterday.

LONGBRANCH BOYS' CLUB SWIMMING TROPHY...A GREAT SUMMER.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - LATE NIGHT - 1969

Through several glass windows a CLOCK READS: 11:52 PM.

Julia and other medical personnel are working on a heart attach victim and they are winning. She is in charge and she is impressive. Cool...efficient...expert.

A sixth sense causes her to look up to see:

FRANK.

Standing behind the windows. Motionless. Gazing at his wife.

Julia holds on him for a split second, concern and surprise etching across her face. She turns back to her work, then says something to another ER nurse, who nods okay. Satisfied the patient is out of the woods, she peels off her gloves and heads for the door.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM/HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Julia steps through the door as Frank approaches.

JULIA

Frank...what's wrong?

FRANK

Nothing. I just wanted to see you.

He takes her in his arms, snuggling his head against her neck, losing himself in the scent of her hair.

FRANK (cont'd)

(whisper)

I'm not goin' anywhere, Jules. For the rest of your life.

It's hard to tell, we can't see his face, but it looks like Frank is crying.

JULIA

Frankie, what is it?

But Frank is silent. So they just stand there, holding each other. And then Julia notices the burn and scrape marks on Frank's arms and neck.

JULIA (cont'd)

I got a bad feeling today...I was

worried.

FRANK

I'm here. Bruised but not broken.

Frank pulls his head back, looks into his wife's eyes and kisses her on the mouth. It's a long kiss.

As they come up for air.

JULIA

Where's Johnny?

FRANK

I tucked him in at Gordo's.

JULIA

You give him his drops?

FRANK

One in each ear.

(beat)

What would you do without me?

JULIA

Probably marry some rich doctor and never have to work...

Julia sees something through a glass door that stops her short. A YOUNG INTERN is standing over a gurneyed PATIENT. The YOUNG INTERN is changing the I.V. BAG.

JULIA (cont'd)

What's he doing? Frank, I gotta...

He knows she's back on the job. Waves "no problem."

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CUBICLE - CONTINUOUS

Julia interrupts the Young Intern as he hooks up the bag.

JULIA

Excuse me doctor, is that Benazepril?

INTERN

Yes.

Julia quickly shuts off the I.V.

JULIA

I gave this patient 50 mills of Benedryal on admittance.

(unhooking I.V. bag)

Mix them and he's dead.

INTERN  
Why wasn't I made aware?

JULIA  
It's in his chart.

The intern steps back: "Oh shit." Julia takes charge.

The patient stirs: a SCRAGGLY HIPPIE, looks kind of like Pacino in SERPICO. A breathing mask covers his bearded face. Barely conscious, his eyes focus on Julia.

After a quick double check of the patient, Julia looks up. Through the glass door she can see Frank watching.

FRANK  
(mouthing to words)  
I love you, Bud.

JULIA  
(mouthing back)  
I love you more.

The clock on the wall now reads: 12:01 AM.

And the LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 13th - WORLD SERIES TRAVEL DAY

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY - 1969

SURREAL IMAGES. SOMEONE'S POV...

MEN and WOMEN, standing and sitting, seen only from teh waist down. All wearing dark cloths and speaking in hushed voices. A recognizable VOICE? The edge of a CASKET? A NIGHTMARE.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT - 1998

John is bathed in SWEAT. He twists to CAMERA and his eyes pop open. A glazed, confused look pours out of them.

SEE past an empty bottle of BUSHMILLS on the night stand - a clock READS 12:01 AM.

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

THE NIGHTMARE REPEATS - like some horrible instant replay.

MEN and WOMEN, standing and sitting, seen only from the waist down. All wearing dark clothes and speaking in hushed voices. FLASHES OF FACES SWIMMING INTO THE POV...indistinct, blurring into each other. Is that UNCLE BUTCH? SATCH?

GIBSON?

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - BEDROOM / BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A terrified and disoriented John stumbles out of bed. He moves to the bathroom. But he stops. Something is wrong. The bedroom has changed. It looks like a DUMP.

John shakes his head, trying to blink away the nightmare. But the room does not change back. He goes to teh bathroom. Splashes his face. He looks up to the mirror and...

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

The same horrible instant replay. Flashes of faces swimming into the POV...

JOHNNY'S POV

He is CROUCHED UNDER A TABLE. STARING AT THE CASKET. Alone. Bewildered. Crying.

A MAN, seen only from teh waist down, approaches the table. As he crouches down his face drops into the frame. It is FRANK. His face etched in a terrible pain.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

The kitchen looks different: dirtier, uncared-for. John looks different too: like a guy on the tail end of a lifetime bender. He cracks open a Bushmills. Pours a couple of shots into his instant coffee. Several sips to settle his nerves. He reaches for the cordless phone and HITS SPEED DIAL #3.

CASHIER (V.O.)

Noah's Deli. Can you hold?

Confused, John clicks down the receiver. His hand is shaking as he punches the speed dial button for the second time.

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

Noah's Deli.

On the slam of John's phone, we got to...

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - MANHATTAN - MORNING

John knocks on the door. It opens to reveal a Jamaican woman clutching a crying infant, a toddler hanging off her leg. Behind them we half recognize Julia's apartment. We know it's her apartment because of the BAY WINDOW and the view of THE GEORGE WASHINGTON BRIDGE. But everything else is different. Different furniture. Different pain job.

John stands speechless. The Jamaican woman regards him...

JAMAICAN WOMAN  
Can I help you?

JOHN  
(relaxed)  
I'm looking for Julia Sullivan.

JAMAICAN WOMAN  
I think you have the wrong apartment.

JOHN  
But this is her place. 910 Riverside.  
Apartment 3C.

JAMAICAN WOMAN  
I'm sorry, but no one by that name lives here.

John just stands there, lost, questioning his grip on reality. Liquor on his breath, fear in his eyes, he is a scary sight. Jamaican woman does the smart thing - she slams the door.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - DETECTIVE SQUAD - COFFEE ROOM - LATER  
ON SATCH, scavenging the fridge while absorbed in some papers.

Through the open door he SPOTS JOHN across the squad room. Even at that distance, Satch can see John's unsteady walk and fucked up demeanor. Satch's eyes go to stone.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - MEN'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

John leans over the sink, wet paper towels pressed to his face. He barely reacts to the SOUND of the door. He does react to the silence that follows. Satch stands in the doorway...looking him over.

JOHN  
What?

A long silence.

SATCH  
Another rough night, huh? That it?

JOHN  
Yeah. That's it.

John moves for the door. But Satch grabs him, slams him against the wall. Startled, John freezes.

SATCH  
Do not disrespect me. Disrespect  
yourself all you want. But not me. Or  
anybody else around here. You got that?

John shrugs, sagging against the wall.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
This is getting real old, John. And I'm  
tired up to here with it...

JOHN  
I'm sorry. I just...you know...I...

SATCH  
And I'm tired of the I'm sorrys. I don't  
need 'em. What I need is a partner I can  
count on.

(pause; softens)  
I care about you. Not cause of me and  
your old man. Not cause of your mom.  
But because of you.

Satch steps back. An awkward beat.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
We got the preliminary forensics on that  
skeleton.

(opening door to the squad)  
Your gonna want to look at it.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - DETECTIVE SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Satch and John approach their adjoining desks. Satch slides an 8X10 PHOTO off the top of an OLD YELLOWED POLICE FILE and hands it to John. It is a picture of the skeleton discovered behind the Greek Diner. But what catches John's attention, what picks at his subconscious, is the decaying GLASS TAPE binding the wrists.

SATCH  
Bad memories...  
(re: photo)  
You imagine the odds...us diggin' up a  
Nightingale Murder?

John looks from the photo to the file on Satch's desk. It reads: NIGHTINGALE MURDERS. John slowly sinks into his chair.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
She makes ten.

JOHN

Ten? No. I remember this case. Three.  
He killed three women.

SATCH

What're you talking'? You know better  
than anybody, John. You've read this  
file a thousand times.

John fixes on the file. Then slowly reaches for it. It's filled with police and forensics reports. And PHOTOS. Crime scene shots of 9 DEAD WOMEN. Linked by TWO gruesome details - they were all GARROTED, wrists bound with GLASS TAPE.

John turns over the last PHOTO and his heart stops...his universe crashing down on him.

CLOSE ON THAT PHOTOGRAPH: A MURDER VICTIM. GARROTED. GLASS TAPED WRISTS. JULIA SULLIVAN.

JOHN

No.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Julia is at the door watching Frank tuck Johnny in. Johnny wears his Mets' cap and cradles his baseball glove. He's in that exhausted/excited kid moment before sleep sets in.

FRANK & JOHNNY

(very soft)

Buy me some peanuts and cracker jack...I  
don't care if I never get back...

Johnny's eyes close.

JULIA

Boy is he excited about the game  
tomorrow.

FRANK

He ain't the only one.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - LATER

Marvin Gaye plays from the HI-FI. Frank grabs a beer, as Julia comes in -- putting on her coat while taking her keys from a hook. She's wearing her nurse's uniform.

JULIA

I'm off.

FRANK

(turning to her)

Wish you weren't.

JULIA  
(stepping to him)  
Do you know how much I love you?

Frank takes her in his arms. Starts to move her to the music.

FRANK  
Yeah, actually I do.

They kiss. And dance. And kiss. And dance. He starts to slip her coat off. She laughs and wriggles away from him. Naughty boy. And she is out the door.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - NIGHT - 1998

John pulls in past SAMANTHA'S CAR as she comes out the back door with the Teddy Bear and other stuff she left behind.

John gets out of his car, clutching the 'Nightingale' file. His eyes are red, swollen by tears and booze.

SAMANTHA  
John, are you all right?

The answer is no. He looks terrible, as haunted as any man could possibly be. He doesn't mean to, but he snaps --

JOHN  
What are you doing here?

Samantha jumps, frightened.

SAMANTHA  
Ellen said you were working. I just wanted to pick up the rest...

John turns, lost and ashamed. Sam walks to her car and starts to cry.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

John enters, plunks the Nightingale file on the desk.; He stares at the FAMILY PHOTOGRAPH on the wall.

JULIA IS MISSING. A look of loss in Frank and John's faces.

John fingers the Nightingale file. A nightmare.

He hits the ANSWERING MACHINE BUTTON to hear Samantha's halting message. As that plays...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

John steps to teh counter and pours himself a stiff Bushmills. Turns and steps back into...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

John collapses in the chair. Stares at the words carved in the desk - I'M STILL HERE CHIEF. He rubs his fingers over the smooth carving...his eyes going to the radio.

A quiet moment. John slowly puts his hand on the squawk, leans into the mic...

JOHN

Dad, you there? Can you here me?

(silence)

Dad? I need you to be there.

A long beat. The hum of static. And then...

FRANK (O.S.)

(through radio)

Right here, Chief. Sorry I lost you last night. Damn thing keeps cutting out.

JOHN

Dad...Dad... There's... I need to...

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN.

FRANK

Are you alright"?

JOHN

(sipping Bushmills)

Something happened, something...

FRANK

What? Johnny, what's wrong?

JOHN

It's Mom.

FRANK

What? What is it?

JOHN

She's not here.

FRANK

Whatta you mean she's not here?

JOHN

She...she died. It's like it just happened.

FRANK

She just died, your mother just died?

JOHN

No Dad, it happened a long time ago, a long time ago for me.

A dreadful moment of silence.

FRANK

When?

JOHN

October 22, 1969.

FRANK

Jesus Christ...that's...ten days from now.

(beat)

How?

Silence.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Johnny, I gotta know.

Long beat. You could hear a fuckin' pin drop.

JOHN

She was murdered.

Eerie silence as John's words hang in the air.

FRANK

Murdered? Why?

JOHN

There was this case. A serial. He murdered three women, all nurses, between '68 and '69. The papers called them the Nightingale Murders. They never caught him. But the killings just stopped.

FRANK

What kinda twisted animal.

JOHN

Dad, we did something. Something to make it worse.

FRANK

Whatta you mean...

JOHN

He didn't just kill three women anymore.  
He killed ten.

FRANK

What are you talking about?

JOHN

Something we did changed the  
case...changed history.

(beat)

Mom wasn't dead. But then after you  
didn't die in the fire something must  
have happened. And this guy, this  
Nightingale guy, he kept on killing...it  
was like a spree...seven more women.

FRANK

I gotta take her away, John. I'm gonna  
take your mother away. He can't hurt her  
if I take her away.

JOHN

I don't know...

(beat)

What about the other women?

FRANK

I'll warn them.

JOHN

That'll never work. They'll just think  
you're crazy.

FRANK

What can we do? You don't even know who  
this guy is.

JOHN

No. Nobody got...

(realizing)

Wait a minute. I might not know who he  
is, but I know where he's gonna be. I  
got the case file. We know what he's  
gonna do before he does it.

FRANK

So what should I do? Call the police?  
You think they'll believe me?

JOHN

They will if they catch him in the act.

You can make that happen, Dad. You can tail the victim and call it in at just the right moment.

FRANK

I don't know, John. I'm a fire fighter. This is...this is different.

JOHN

I do know. I'm a cop. This is what I do.

John takes a long sip from the Bushmills.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You ever talk to a victim's family? The one's left behind? They don't act like what you'd think. There's panic and fear. But mostly, it's like there's this logic problem. And if they could only solve it, everything would be okay.

(a breath)

But if you look real close - look at their eyes - you can see it. Just a glimmer. But somewhere they know. They know their world is never gonna be the same.

FRANK

What if the radio stops working? Christ, what if I can't reach you again?

JOHN

Then you get Mom the hell out. But Dad, those other women weren't supposed to die. We don't try to stop this guy, we're gonna live with that for the rest of our lives.

Frank takes a deep breath, swallows some air.

FRANK

What do I gotta do?

John grabs the THICK YELLOWED POLICE FILE. Opens to homicide report on Karen Reynolds. CLOSE ON FORENSIC PHOTO

KAREN REYNOLDS' CORPSE

JOHN

The next victim was Karen Reynolds...It happens tomorrow.

(reading)

Case file says she left St. Vincents at

six. Show'd up at Cozy's Bar around six thirty. She walked outta that bar around seven-thirty. They found her dead in an empty lot behind the place at eight o'clock.

Frank jots down teh info.

FRANK

Why not just get the cops to watch the bar?

JOHN

They'll question her. Whatever they tell her could change what happens.

(beat)

No, I want you to follow her. See if anybody's watching her, hittin' on her. I'm betting somebody's gonna walk outta that bar with her. When they do, you call the cops.

Close on NIGHTINGALE FILE on John's desk. Zoom in on the date below KAREN'S HOMICIDE PHOTO: October 14, 1969.

The LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 14th - 3RD GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

INT./EXT. KOREAN GROCERY - EVENING - 1969

A woman waits to pay for a mini pack of Kleenex and some gum. KAREN REYNOLDS. A wool coat over her Nurse's uniform.

Frank's and John's voices continue over the scene.

FRANK (V.O.)

What do I tell them?

JOHN (V.O.)

Tell 'em there's a homicide in progress... cause by the time they show up there will be.

As Karen moves to the cash register, the CAMERA WIDENS TO REVEAL FRANK, awkwardly pretending to read a magazine.

Frank readies to follow her when he suddenly trips over a crate of vegetables and goes down on one knee.

Karen looks in the direction of the accident, and for a split second, her eyes lock with Frank's. Embarrassed, Frank looks away as he rights himself.

Frank edges out of the grocery store as Karen steps into the street and dodges traffic towards a corner BAR/RESTAURANT at the end of the block, past a heavily overgrown VACANT LOT.

Frank follows Karen across the street and finds himself, just as Karen enters the bar, at a point near the murder site described by John. He pauses to stare at it.

INT. COZY'S BAR & RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

Frank enters the place. Sort of a singles atmosphere, but a comfortable one. It's HAPPY HOUR. On the TV, the Mets' Gil Hodges offers his analysis of Game 3.

Frank looks about, down the bar and into an area with booths and tables. A few folks at the bar. A group of YOUNG WOMEN laughing in a booth. But NO KAREN REYNOLDS. Frank's blood runs cold in a spasm of panic when...

WOMAN'S VOICE

Hey, Chuck.

BARTENDER

Hey, Karen.

Frank wheels around just as Karen passes him from teh LADIES ROOM. There is the trace of a bump, enough for Karen to take note of Frank. Ad lib EXCUSE ME. She then starts moving down teh bar towards the booth of young women.

Frank checks out everyone in the bar, not knowing quite what he's looking for.

Karen slips into the booth with her friends. Ad lib HELLOS.

Frank orders a beer, but his eyes are fixed on the booth. Karen and a friend take note of Frank staring at them. Embarrassed, he turns away, checking his watch: 6:40PM. And at just that moment a SCRAGGLY MAN passes by, taking a seat at the end of the bar. We have seen this man before.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - DET. SQUAD - MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

Satch and a YOUNG DETECTIVE stand at the sinks, washing up.

YOUNG DETECTIVE

Is that really how you got the Son of Sam? Parking tickets?

Satch shrugs a yes. Wipes his hands and heads out into the squad. The Young Detective follows.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - DETECTIVE SQUAD - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON SQUAD ROOM WALL CLOCK: 6:45PM

John's at his desk. Keeps glancing at the phone, fiddling with the NIGHTINGALE FILE... A PHOTOGRAPH OF KAREN REYNOLDS.

Satch passes John on his way to the coffee machine.

SATCH

Any word on our bones?

John shakes his head no. Young Detective joins Satch at the coffee machine. John overhears:

YOUNG DETECTIVE

But how'd you think of it?

SATCH

You're pulling over with a .44 bulldog tucked in your pants getting ready to blow somebody's brains out...I figure the last thing you're thinking about is alternate side of the street parking.

Young Detective nods, impressed. John is less impressed.

JOHN

That's what we need here, Satch. A lucky break.

SATCH

That wasn't luck, Johnny boy. That was smarts and ten plus on the job.

INT. COZY'S BAR & RESTAURANT - NIGHT - 1969

BOTTLE OF RHEINGOLD drops into frame next to half empty one.

BARTENDER

From the girls, pal. All of 'em.

Frank glances at the women in the booth. They're all looking at him, smiling. A big one from Karen.

His watch says 7:05. Taking the new bottle, Frank steps from the bar, past the Scraggly Man and walks to the booth. Charmingly shy, Frank is kind of at a loss for words.

FRANK

I was, uh, I'm not really...

YOUNG WOMAN #1

(noting Frank's jacket)

Fireman, huh?

FRANK  
(noting wedding ring)  
A married fireman.

YOUNG WOMAN #3  
Oh, what the hell. Have a seat. What's your name, fireman?

FRANK  
Frank.

And Frank takes a seat, sliding in next to Karen. An awkward moment for him as she takes a closer look at his face.

KAREN  
Do I know you?

FRANK  
I don't think so.

KAREN  
(puts it together)  
From the Korean market up the street.  
(laughing)  
Mr. Lee make you pay for those veggies.

YOUNG WOMAN #1  
You following her, Frank? You're not some kind of stalker or something?

FRANK  
I follow fires, nothing else.

General laughter all around.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - DET. SQUAD - NIGHT - 1998

John has a CORKBOARD set up next to his desk. On it he has arrayed several photos of the Nigthingale victims under the dates of their murders. He looks over at the photos, then at the forensics photo of Karen Reynolds on his desk. BRRING! John shoots a look at the wall clock. It reads: 7:45.

JOHN  
(grabbing the phone)  
Sullivan.  
(beat)  
You're kiddin'...  
(grabbing pen; scribbling)

Satch is alerted by John's sudden burst of energy.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Mario, you are the best...right, right,

right. Spell it out for me.

INT. COZY'S BAR & RESTAURANT - NIGHT - 1969

At the bar, the Scraggly Man stares at Frank and the women. Franks checks his watch as he tells a story. It's 7:50.

FRANK

Yeah, it was a close call, but...

KAREN

Close! The news said it was a miracle you guys got out alive!

FRANK

Close is just close if you're still alive to talk about it, y'know/

The women around him are clearly enraptured.

In B.G. - at the bar - the Scraggly Man, looking frustrated, slides off his stool and strides out of the place.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - NIGHT - 1998/EXT

John hangs up the phone. Satch looks at him, "Whatta we got?"

JOHN

Our lucky break. Mario ID'd the dental. Mary Finelli...reported missing April 16, 1968.

SATCH

(looking at corkboard)  
April 16...? That means she was the first.

JOHN

Which means he probably knew her.

SATCH

This case just got hot. We pull on this string...

But for some strange reason John has stopped listening to Satch. Something else has got his full attention. It is the Nightingale file that lays open on his desk. It is changing...Karen Reynolds' forensic photo disappears. In fact everything about her, all evidence of her murder - police reports, photos, witness reports - is GONE.

John's eyes shoot to the corkboard. The head shot of Karen Reynolds and the date of her murder are also GONE. John

looks between the file and the board.

JOHN  
(whisper)  
Dad...

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT - 1969

Frank and Julia stand on the porch, eyes on Johnny - up past bedtime, proudly riding his bike up and down the street.

JULIA  
(a stretch and a yawn)  
I think I'm gonna head up, take a shower.  
(slight smile)  
You wanna tuck the monster in and join me?

Frank doesn't take the bait.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
What's the matter?

Beat.

FRANK  
There's something I gotta take care of.  
Something I need to tell you about.

JULIA  
Okay...

FRANK  
I've been talking to this...guy...this cop...on the HAM...and, uh, he...

JULIA  
Honey, what is it? Just tell me.

FRANK  
I've been talking to Johnny...on the radio.

JULIA  
I know. He loves that thing.

FRANK  
No. Not our Johnny. I mean, it's Johnny...but not now...in the future.

It takes her a moment to absorb what he just said. And then she gets it... he's talking about a game.

JULIA

Sounds like fun.

She kisses him on the forehead and heads into the house.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
I'll be upstairs...if you want to play.

FRANK  
I'm serious.

JULIA (O.S.)  
So am I.

A quiet beat. And then...

JOHN'S VOICE  
(over static)  
Karen Reynolds is alive and well. We did it, Dad.

We are now...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1998 & 1969

FRANK (O.S.)  
(over the HAM)  
I'll be damned.

JOHN  
Did you see him? Do you know who he is?

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN

FRANK  
No. I just kept talking to her.  
(beat)  
There was a lot of guys in that bar - could'a been any of 'em.

JOHN  
It's okay. This is working. This is gonna work.

FRANK  
Whatta we do now?

JOHN  
(consults file)  
Sissy Clark, 190 Riverside Dr., apartment 3C. Tomorrow.  
(skimming file)  
She's a nursing student. Paying her way as a cocktail waitress at the Peppermint Lounge, on west 63rd. Left work at two A

M...killed in her apartment, between two thirty and five.

Frank jots down the info. Fires up a Lucky.

FRANK

Got it.

JOHN

Dad, I think I may be able to get you enough information to make sure the DA can nail this bastard.

FRANK

How?

JOHN

Coupla days ago they dug up a body in Washington Heights - Mary Finelli. Girl disappeared in '68. Turns out she was his first kill. Which means he probably knew her. Most serials know their first victim. I'm gonna do some checking - see if I can put any of this together...

FRANK

All right, I'm with you.

(beat)

I just hope we know what the hell we're doing.

A soft burst of static. The signal returns a little fuzzy.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Tell me something good, Chief. Tell me about the future.

JOHN

(lighting up a Marlboro)

Well they found out cigarettes give you lung cancer.

Frank takes a beat, contemplating the cigarette in his hand.

FRANK

What else, John. It must be different, huh? Are people living on the moon?

JOHN

Didn't happen, we got enough problems down here.

FRANK

What are we like in...1998?

JOHN  
(lying)  
We're okay...we're good, Dad.

FRANK  
(groping for good news)  
Hey, what about the Amazin's? They pull it off?

JOHN  
You really wanna know?

FRANK  
Yeah, you betcha.

JOHN  
Well, game five was the big one. It turned in the bottom of the 6th. We were down 3-0. Cleon Jones gets hit on the foot - left a scuff mark on the ball. Clendenon comes up. The count goes to 2 2. High fastball. He nailed it. Weis slammed a solo shot in the 7th to tie. Jones and Swoboda scored in the 8th. We won, Pop.

FRANK  
Wow.

Julia walks into the study.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
Hang on a sec, John.

JOHN  
(over the HAM)  
You there?

ON FRANK

realizing something.

FRANK  
Jules, I want you to say hello to somebody...  
(re: radio)  
I'm on with John - that guy I told you about.

JULIA  
The future guy?

FRANK

Yeah, but, no kidding around, he's a good guy, a real good guy...

Sensing that somehow this is important to her husband, Julia gives in, willing to play along with his radio game. She shares Frank's chair, he puts his arm around her.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
John, say hello to my wife...Julia.

JOHN  
H-hi.

JULIA  
Hey, future boy. Frank tells me you're a cop?

JOHN  
Yeah, that's right.

Hearing voices, Johnny, Gordo and Elvis wander in from the family room. They are in their pj's...a sleepover. Julia gives them a smile, turns back to the radio.

JULIA  
My six year-old here keeps telling me he wants to be a policeman. Right after he retires from the majors. We just gave him a badge and a whistle for his birthday.

JOHN  
Yeah...I remember.  
(smiling)  
I used to play cops and robbers but y--  
...my mom wouldn't let me have a toy gun.

JULIA  
You're mom sounds like she's got some smarts.

JOHN  
She's pretty special.

JULIA  
Are you a good cop, John?

JOHN  
I try to be.

JULIA  
Then I'll bet she's real proud of you,  
huh?

JOHN

Yeah. I just wish I'd told her how proud  
I was of her.

JULIA

I'm sorry. I didn't realize...  
(beat)

But she knew, John. A mother knows  
what's in her son's heart.

Little Gordo reaches for the microphone.

JULIA (CONT'D)

I better go. It's been good talking with  
you.

Julia scoops Johnny up, carrying him off to bed. But little  
Gordo does not follow...fascinated by the radio.

GORDO

I wanna talk on the radio.

Frank laughs, as Gordo climbs up on his lab.

GORDO (CONT'D)

This is the Space Cowboy. I'm an  
intergalactic traveler from the  
Federation planet earth.

JOHN

Gordo?

GORDO

How'd you know my name, mister?

John sits back, marvelling at how young Gordo sounds. A  
thousand childhood memories playing in his head. And then he  
lights up...realizing the opportunity.

JOHN

Hey, Gordo. My name is Santa Clause.  
And I'm gonna give you the biggest  
Christmas present you ever had.

Gordo looks at Frank: is this for real? Frank nods, smiling.

GORDO

I better give you my address then.

JOHN

Oh don't worry kid, I know where you  
live. Now I want you to go upstairs and  
write this down, buy Yahoo.  
You got that Space Cowboy. Y-a-h-o-o.

It's a magic word and I never want you to forget it.

GORDO  
You got a deal, mister. I mean Santa.

The sound of Julia's voice calling Gordo to bed. Gordo scampers out. Static filters through both radios, then...

FRANK  
John, you still there?

JOHN  
I'm right here, Dad.

FRANK  
You all right?

JOHN  
Yeah, I think so...

FRANK  
Don't worry, Chief. I'm not gonna let anything happen to her...no matter what.

BZZZZ-SHHH. A burst of loud static. The band goes dead.

John takes a beat to come down. He gets up, making his way into the KITCHEN. There's a half-full bottle of BUSHMILLS on the counter. John reaches out to grab but the bottle. But then he stops. It is time to stop. John turns on the faucet and dumps the booze down the drain.

The LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 15th - FOURTH GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

INT. FINELLI HOUSE - MARY'S ROOM - DAY - 1998

CLOSE ON

a white vinyl DIARY with a blue heart shaped padlock held by a hand. A page is turned and the name ALAN SILVER comes clear.

RACK FOCUS TO

an old Catholic High School yearbook on the dresser below the diary and a PICTURE of DARYL ADAMS, 18 years old.

JOHN'S VOICE  
Can I keep these for a little while?

On SOPHIA FINELLI, 55, a profound sadness sits at her core.

FINELLI  
Detectives' been through that stuff  
already back then.

John nods. A beat.

FINELLI (CONT'D)  
You'll bring them back soon?

JOHN  
Promise.

John pulls a clear plastic BAG from his pocket with a patch of the partially disintegrated clothing found on Mary Finelli's skeleton.

JOHN (CONT'D)  
Do you know this?

Mrs. Finelli gasps in recognition, her eyes turning to a closet door.

John opens the door to reveal MARY's CLOTHES, lined up in perfect order. Visible among them is a "Candy Stripper" uniform... a perfect match with the patch John holds.

FINELLI  
Mary volunteered over at St. Vincents' after school. She loved it...was going to become a doctor.

Silence. Tears start to run down her cheeks. John understands this woman's pain. He looks around the room at Mary's possessions. Faded pictures. Mary and her family. Mary and her friends.

FINELLI (CONT'D)  
Her room...I just couldn't...it should only be her room...you know?

John does know.

FINELLI (CONT'D)  
I'm happy you found her, Detective. It makes it easier...now, to know for sure. You know?

Silence again. John nods.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - MEN'S ROOM - AFTERNOON

John and Satch stand at the urinals.

JOHN

Okay, lemme walk you through it.

SATCH

Mind if I shake it off first...so's I can concentrate better.

John waits for Satch to finish. Then, as they head out into the hallway...

JOHN

Three guys show up in both the yearbook and diary.

INT. DETECTIVE SQUAD - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The first guy passed away ten years ago. The second one died in Vietnam.

The room has a HOLDING PEN opposite the door. A table is pushed up against the door wall and a more elaborate layout of the murder victims, paperwork, and calendar/timeline graphs sit on the table and are pinned on a cork board. Mary Finelli's uniform is there.

John shows Satch a photo in Mary Finelli's year book.

JOHN

The third one is Daryl Adams.

Satch looks, nods, and steps back. Waits for more. John hands him Daryl Adams' rap sheet.

JOHN (CONT'D)

I ran him through BCI...got a hit.  
Busted for sexual assault: March 22, 1970. Eight days after the last Nightingale murder.

SATCH

So you figure the murders stop 'cause he's off the street. Then by the time he gets paroled, he's smartened up enough to control himself?

JOHN

Not the first time that's been true. I'm telling you, I got a feeling about this guy. This is the guy, Satch.

SATCH

Uh, huh.

JOHN

What?

SATCH

I'm just trying to figure what interests me more: the possibility that Daryl is the guy, or you making him absolutely the guy.

EXT. NEW YORK ST. - PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - 1969

SISSY CLARK steps off a BUS. She crosses the street towards the club. The bus moves out and WIPES FRAME, revealing Frank sitting at the intersection on his Harley.

Sissy enters the club. Frank guns the Harley into an alley.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - MOMENTS LATER

Business is light at this hour. The BARTENDER is setting up. The Flying Nun plays on a couple TV's over the bar - the audio drowned out by loud Motown music.

Frank enters and looks around. No Sissy. This time he does not panic. He sits at the bar.

INT. RESTAURANT - KITCHEN - DUSK - 1998

CLOSE ON

the 47-year old face of Daryl Adams. A notably unimposing guy. He is not a happy camper.

He is one of two PLUMBERS installing fixtures in the kitchen of a new place. Several other people are at work getting the kitchen ready. So as not to be overheard...

DARYL

That was over thirty years ago. I paid for that and then some.

JOHN

You go to Xavier High School, Daryl?

DARYL

Yeah.

JOHN

You remember Mary Finelli?

DARYL

(mentally steps back)  
What are you saying?

JOHN

You know what I'm saying.

DARYL

No, I don't.

JOHN

Well, I think you do.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - 1969

HAWAII FIVE-O plays on the TV's, the ROLLING STONES over it.

Frank sits at the same place we last saw him, watching Sissy and scanning the crowd, trying to find a face that might give him pause.

Sissy, looking sixty and terrific in her Go-Go waitress outfit, moves about doing business. She steps to the bartender to give her drink orders and pick up prepared drinks, coming within inches of Frank.

SISSY

Give me a couple Bloody's, Gus, and a Dewars on the rocks.

She casts a friendly eye at Frank.

SISSY (CONT'D)

How ya doin' there?

FRANK

Just fine. You?

SISSY

Right now, just fine. Ask me later, fireman.

And she's off with the drinks. He checks his watch. It reads: 9:35PM.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

A clock on the wall reads: 9:35PM

The Nightingale murders display has been removed. Daryl sits at the table in the middle of the room. John sits opposite him. Satch leans against the two-way mirror wall.

JOHN

Sexual assault, Daryl. Five years. But you got lucky, right? You got away with something else. Something you figured nobody knows about.

DARYL

What I know is what I told you.

JOHN

Let me tell you what I know, Daryl. You went to Saint Xavier with Mary. You lived five blocks from her. You liked her. But she ain't interested. That must've hurt, huh?

DARYL

So what?

JOHN

So, what'd you do about it, Daryl?

DARYL

Nothing.

Satch can see this is going nowhere.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - 1969

The 11 O'clock NEWS is on TV. A "Super" shows the Mets won Game 4. Score 2-1. Mets lead series: 3-1.

CREEDENCE CLEARWATER PLAYS out of the sound system.

Sissy takes the order from a LONG HAIR GUY down the bar, his back to the camera, and starts towards the cash register area. The bartender serves Frank another club soda. As Frank drinks the bartender pulls a PACK OF CIGARETTES from his shirt pocket. But the pack is empty.

BARTENDER

You spare a smoke?

FRANK

I'm trying to quite. Turns out those things'll kill you.

The bartender laughs, as Frank stands and heads for the bathroom.

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

A CLOCK reflected in the two-way mirror. 12:15PM.

Satch stands drinking a cup of coffee behind the mirror. Before him, through the glass, sits Daryl Adams, with John pacing like a panther ready to spring.

Suddenly, he slaps down crime scene homicide photos of several women in front of Daryl, who blanches...

DARYL

Oh, my God! What is that?! Why you showing me this shit!? JESUS! JESUS! Get those away from me!

JOHN

Nicky Moore. Patty Ryan. Mary Finelli. These names mean anything to you, asshole? Julia Sullivan! She mean anything? She means something to me!

John looks like he's about to hit Daryl, but he glances towards the two-way mirror, controls himself.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - 1969

Nilsson's EVERYBODY'S TALKIN' fills the air.

A sexy WOMAN approaches Frank wearing an Emma Peel body suit. Sissy stands nearby, giving drink orders to the bartender - she can't help but smile at the following.

WOMAN

You fight fires, honey?

FRANK

Yep. That's what I do.

WOMAN

I bet you do.

The bartender leans into the PA at the bar and announces.

BARTENDER

Last call.

Frank flashes his wedding ring at the sexy woman. Smiles at her and shrugs "I'm sorry."

INT. 23RD PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

The clock reads 1:30AM.

John sits at the end of the table, opposite Daryl. His quiet masks the dark menace he is barely in control of. Daryl stares at him like a deer caught in the headlights.

Satch sets a Coke before Daryl and starts to leave the room.

SATCH

I gotta take a leak.

(to Daryl)

You need to use the head? You can,

y'know. If you want to.

Daryl shakes his head "no."

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - EVENING - 1969

End of the night. The place winds down. An old movie on the TV's. Elvis' SUSPICIOUS MINDS plays softly.

Frank watches as Sissy picks up her last tip and heads to the back to change into her street clothes.

SISSY

See you, Fireman. Don't talk so much next time.

Frank smiles, checks the time. 2:00AM. He looks around. Nobody suspicious about. He starts up for the bathroom...

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

Satch enters with a fresh cup of coffee, settles back to watch.

INTERCUT - INTERROGATION AND OBSERVATION ROOMS

With great ceremony John removes his watch, his gun, and lastly, his badge, and sets them off to one side.

JOHN

You know, Daryl, sometimes, despite all the training we cops go through. Despite all that we are taught about right and wrong. Despite all that we would like to honor in ourselves, we can come to a place where we don't give a fuck. Know what I mean?

And John starts up from his seat and walks toward Daryl.

JOHN (CONT'D)

You are going to tell me what I need to know, Daryl.

SUDDENLY, in the door strides...

SATCH

John.

John freezes. Looks towards Satch.

SATCH (CONT'D)

Got a minute?

JOHN  
Yeah. Sure.

Satch opens the door and steps out. John collects his watch, badge and gun and follows.

INT. SQUAD HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

SATCH  
He ain't our guy, John.

JOHN  
Just cause he didn't want to look at the photos doesn't mean he isn't the doer.  
Not everyone fits the profile.

Long beat.

SATCH  
If he was gonna give something up he would'a done it already.

John pauses for several seconds, then nods slowly.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - MEN'S ROOM - EVENING - 1969

SUSPICIOUS MINDS filters in. Frank zips up, heads to the sink. Bends over to wash his hands, and suddenly.

His face is smashed on the edge of the sink. He twists to the floor, fighting to maintain consciousness.

A black Frye boot explodes into Frank's gut. He rolls over, looks up at the LONG HAIR GUY from the bar. Frank seems to recognize him. We know him too - SCRAGGLY MAN. But we don't know his name yet. So we'll call him...

KILLER  
You following me?

CLOSE ON

Killer's eyes, evil fuckin' black dots. He lifts Frank to his knees. Then rips a fist into Frank's face.

KILLER (CONT'D)  
I asked you a question, asshole.

Frank is clearly incapacitated. Killer lifts him to his feet so they are eye-to-eye.

FRANK  
(barely able to speak)  
Mary Finelli...

A look of absolute shock wipes across the Killer's face.

KILLER

Who the fuck are you?

Caught off guard, Frank is able to slam his knee into Killer's balls. Killer goes down like a stone, but Frank is too battered to take advantage.

He collapses on top of Killer, who pushes him off, scrambles up, and delivers a massive kick to his head. Frank is out cold.

Quickly, Killer rolls Frank over and rifles his pockets finding his WALLET. He grabs something from it, then tosses it aside. He then takes something out of his pocket, a thin leather garrote. He coils it around his hands and snaps it taut. He bends down to start the job when suddenly, the bathroom door opens and...

TWO very stoned MEN stumble in.

STONED MAN #1

Whoa, dude. Is he okay?

KILLER

Yeah. He just needs a little time  
kissing the porcelain.

And Killer muscles Frank into a toilet stall and puts his head in the bowl. He closes the door, quickly leaving.

In the stall, Frank spills onto the floor, his legs sticking out into the bathroom. His face flush to the tile, his eyes trying to focus on something lying just outside the stall...

His WALLET.

EXT. 23RD PRECINCT - PARKING LOT - NIGHT - 1998

John gets in his car. Sits there, staring into the night.

INT. PEPPERMINT LOUNGE - MEN'S ROOM - EVENING - 1969

Frank starts to come around. He reaches out and grabs his wallet off the floor. His money still there. Credit cards, too. But something's missing. His DRIVER'S LICENSE.

SUDDENLY PANIC SEIZES FRANK.

INT. APARTMENT HOUSE STAIRWELL - LATER

Frank tears up the stairs...

INT. APARTMENT HOUSE CORRIDOR - SISSY'S DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Frank bangs on it. Scared. Desperate.

FRANK

OPEN UP, OPEN THE DOOR....ah....ummm....THIS  
IS THE POLICE.

Frank keeps banging on the door. A NEIGHBOR'S DOOR swings open a crack. AN OLD LADY peers out from behind a security chain. Frank stops banging.

FRANK (CONT'D)

It's okay, Ma'am. I'm the police.

Old Lady skeptically looking him up & down - noticing Frank's bruised face. She quickly closes the door.

Frank reaches inside his jacket pocket, pulls out a small bent metal wire, homemade LOCKPICK. He goes to work on Sissy's lock. CLICK, CLICK, CLICK - got it. He opens the door, steps inside.

INT. SISSY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

It's dark. And then a sound...scratching and popping, the sound of a PHONOGRAPH NEEDLE makes when it reaches the end of the vinyl and is scratching against the label.

The wind catching a curtain allows the shaft of a street light to beam brightly into the room, and in one swift moment, Frank is staring at a NIGHTMARE: Sissy Clark's murdered body. Her dress hiked above her waist. Her panties ripped off. Paper stuffed into her mouth. Her hands bound with glass tape. Frank is transfixed and sickened by Sissy's twisted face, her eyes frozen open in horrible death.

EXT. SISSY'S APARTMENT HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Frank staggers out of the building towards his Harley. He bends over and blows his dinner, then mounts the bike and kicks the motor over. As he roars off down the street, WE SEE in the building window...

THE OLD LADY looking down at him.

The LEGEND reads:

OCTOBER 16th - FIFTH GAME OF THE WORLD SERIES

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - MORNING - 1969 & 1998

FRANK

He killed her John. He killed her and I didn't do a thing to stop it.

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN.

JOHN

It's not your fault, Dad.

FRANK

Yes it is...we did this. We changed everything.

(pausing)

I've been having bad dreams, Johnny. Dreams where I die...in the fire.

(soft)

I was supposed to die in that warehouse.

JOHN

No.

ANGLE ON

Frank. Trembling, overcome by an awful combination of fear, guilt and shame.

FRANK

This is wrong...it's like we cheated...

JOHN

I know...

(beat)

But Dad, you can't go back. You didn't die in that fire. And no matter what you do, nothing is gonna change that. So all we can do is deal with this...and try to make it right.

FRANK

I don't think I can. I'm not a cop. I can't. I can't stop this guy.

JOHN

But we can, we can do it together. Spirit and guts, remember?

FRANK

Johnny, I know, but...

Frank starts to light up a Lucky. But he stops, stubbing the cigarette out.

JOHN

I need you to believe in me. To believe that we can do this.

FRANK  
John, he's got my driver's license.

JOHN  
What?

FRANK  
He took my driver's license, John, he knows where we live.

JOHN  
He took your wallet?

FRANK  
No, he tossed the wallet, but he kept the license.

JOHN  
He touched your wallet! Where's your wallet?

FRANK  
In my pocket.

JOHN  
We got him! Dad you got him!

FRANK  
What?

JOHN  
His prints. You've got his prints. I'll run them through criminal index. You gotta get me that wallet.

FRANK  
How the hell am I gonna do that?

JOHN  
(thinks)  
Listen to me, very carefully, take your wallet out, just touch it on the corners.

FRANK  
What...

JOHN  
Please, Dad, just do it.

FRANK  
Okay, okay...

Frank does as John asks. Taking out his wallet.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I got it.

JOHN

Right, now I need you to tape it up on  
the outside, where he touched it, so the  
prints keep.

FRANK

Huh?

JULIA

Then you gotta hide it somewhere.  
Somewhere where nobody's gonna find  
it...for 29 years!

(looking around the room)  
Put it under the loose floorboard by the  
window!

FRANK

(getting it now)  
I gotcha, I gotcha Chief!

JOHN

It's gonna work, Dad. We're gonna stop  
him.

FRANK

Hang on.

Frank fishes around the desk drawer for some electrical  
tape...quickly ripping off strips of tape...covering the  
wallet. Then he goes to the window. Crouches on the floor,  
digging his nails around edges of the loose floorboard.

BACK TO JOHN

getting up.

FRANK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(over the HAM)  
Okay.

John scrambles to window. Crouches down on floor, reaching  
to find: FRANK'S WALLET COVERED IN ELECTRICAL TAPE!

John goes back to the radio.

JOHN

We're in business. Just sit tight...and  
don't worry.

And John is up, grabs gun & shield. Sprints for the door.

INT. POLICE FORENSICS LAB - DAY - 1998

CLOSE ON SPLIT COMPUTER SCREEN:

LEFT SCREEN: A FROZEN IMAGE - A BLOWN UP THUMB PRINT.

RIGHT SCREEN: HUNDREDS OF FINGERPRINTS FLASH ON AND OFF - THE COMPUTER IS SEARCHING FOR A MATCH.

BINGO. The right screen freezes. A THUMB PRINT... A MATCH!

Pull back to reveal John, standing over a forensic computer technician, HECTOR. Hector hits a few more keys, a photograph pops on the screen - it is NOT DARYL ADAMS!

JOHN

What the hell?

Hector hits another key, the man's name and photo pops up...

CARL SHEPARD

HE'S 30 YEARS OLDER than when he tangled with Frank in the men's room last night, but this is the killer- Carl Shepard.

Below Shepard's photo, various biographical information: social security, address, current employment, and a New York City Police Department Discharge - September 1973.

ON JOHN

A strange look of recognition.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The old neighbor's son...the cop. But he's dead.

HECTOR

What are you talkin' about? I know this prick. He worked outta Brooklyn North.

JOHN

(realizing)  
He never died...

EXT. SHEPARD RESIDENCE - LATER

John exits his car to find Fred Sheppard watering his plants.

JOHN

Just came by to wrap up over there.  
Thought I'd say "hello."

SHEPARD

Glad you did. Come on in. Buy you a cup of coffee?

INT. SHEPARD RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

They enter the living room. No Mrs. Shepard. John's eyes fix on the police academy graduation PHOTO of CARL SHEPARD. His gaze then shifts to photos of Mrs. Shepard.

JOHN

(beat)

Wife around?

SHEPARD

(a startled half-laugh)

No. No. Well, sort of. In my heart.  
Been dead 29 years.

JOHN

Oh. Sorry. How so?

MR. SHEPARD

Well, she, Eve was murdered, Detective.  
An ugly one to tell you the truth.

John's breath catches. His look shifts back to the photo of Carl Shepard.

Mr. Shepard reaches to open an album. There are several photographs of the young Mrs. Shepard. A couple where she is dressed in a NURSE'S UNIFORM.

John is stunned. One can only imagine what is now racing through his mind.

MR. SHEPARD (CONT'D)

The mother of a cop, and they never found the bastard who did it.

Blown away, John looks out the window to where Mary Finelli's skeleton was found.

JOHN

Happens that way sometimes.

(beat)

Son still on the job?

MR. SHEPARD

Nah. Doin' P.I. work now. Got caught up in them Knapp Hearings. Set up by some dirty cops who needed a fall guy. Hurt him bad. Would've broken his mother's heart.

John can only stay inside himself and wonder at the madness of the world.

INT. BROOKLYN WATERFRONT RESTAURANT - LATER

John walks past the lunchtime crowd, makes his way to the BAR. Grabs a stool two...seats away from...Carl Shepard.

John orders a soda, glances over at Shepard. Their eyes meet. John holds his gaze. A slight nod...

JOHN

You used to be on the job?

SHEPARD

Yeah, long time ago. I know you?

JOHN

I look familiar?

SHEPARD

(looking him over)

No. What house you work?

John gets up, slides next to Shepard.

JOHN

The 2-3. Homicide.

SHEPARD

A hot shot, huh?

JOHN

Nah, just working the job.

SHEPARD

I hear that.

JOHN

As a matter of fact, I caught a case that goes back to your day...one of the Nightingale murders.

Beat.

SHEPARD

No kiddin'?

JOHN

No. Missing teenager. Disappeared thirty years ago. Found her bones last week. Buried behind some old diner, up by Dyckman street. Mary Finelli.

John waits again for Shepard's reaction...

SHEPARD

Huh.

JOHN

(sipping drink)

Talk about dumb luck. Odds of anybody finding that girl, thirty years later. And then the chances of hitting a dental...forget about it. Bets part is she's the first victim. She knew the doer. I'm betting those bones are gonna do a lot of talking.

Shepard says nothing, but his eyes are burning into John.

JOHN (CONT'D)

The past is a funny thing. We've all got skeletons in the closet. You just never know when they're gonna pop up and bite you in the ass, Carl.

John slips something on the bar, next to Shepard. It is a crime scene photo of Shepard's murdered mother. He reels back, totally losing his veil of composure. He is freaked.

SHEPARD

Who are you?

JOHN

I'm the train wreck you didn't see coming. And I'm gonna steal your life away. You went down 30 years ago. You just don't know it yet.

And with that, John gets up, leaving Shepard stunned.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - DAY - 1969 & 1998

Johnny and Gordo sit cross-legged in front of the TV. THE WORLD SERIES is on. Game 5. First inning.

Julia is busy bringing in groceries from her car.

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN.

FRANK

You're telling me this maniac is a cop? What the hell am I supposed to do with that one?

JOHN

Call the FBI. Use a pay phone. Don't give 'em your name, Dad. Just tell 'em that it was Shepard who killed Finelli and Clark and the others. That he's the Nightingale.

In the B.G. of Frank's house a DOORBELL RINGS. Julia can be seen going to answer it. It is Satch. There are ad lib greetings that we don't clearly hear.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Tell them where Finelli's body is buried. They'll be able to connect him to her. Same high school. Same class. I'm betting they search his place they find some souvenirs.

Satch steps into the study...1969.

FRANK

Okay, I'm on it.  
(sees Satch)  
Hey.

SATCH

Hello, Frank.

Frank's hand lifts off the squawk bar. He notes Satch's tone and demeanor.

FRANK

What are you doing here, Satch? You off today?

JOHN (O.S.)

(over the HAM)  
Dad, you there?

SATCH

Frank, we need to talk...

FRANK

(into radio)  
John, hold on a second.  
(to Satch)  
I'm in the middle of something important here. You mind if...

Frank suddenly spots something through the front window. Satch's partner, PHIL HAYES, and TWO UNIFORMS out at the curb.

Half a penny drops. All his senses go on alert. And instinct kicks...he hits the squawk bar.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Satch, you gotta just give me...Satch is here John. You hear me? Satch is here.

SATCH

I'm sorry, Frank, but you need to come outside.

Frank releases the squawk bar.

Johnny and Gordo remain fixed on the game, oblivious to anything else. In the kitchen, we can see Julia moving around putting away the groceries.

JOHN (O.S.)

(over the HAM)

Dad, what the hell is going on?

FRANK

(into mic)

Just a minute, John...okay? Don't go away.

Julia now becomes aware of the tension in the voices in the other room. She looks outside and sees Phil and the uniforms. She looks at Frank and Satch with confusion.

Frank hits the squawk bar again. He wants John to hear this.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What is going on here, Satch? What are those guys doing out there?

SATCH

I think you know, Frank.

FRANK

No, I don't.

SATCH

Let's go outside and talk. We need to do that.

FRANK

About what?

SATCH

Let's go. Do us both a favor.

A long beat. Frank sees Julia staring at them. She is now a bundle of growing anxiety. Frank stands up.

FRANK

Okay.

(to Julia)

It's okay, Bud. I'll be right back.

(into radio)

Stay there, John.

And then he and Satch walk out the front door.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FRONT YARD - CONTINUOUS

...and towards a spot halfway between the house and the cops. From inside the house, Johnny and Gordo have begun to take in the activity.

SATCH

Where were you last night, Frank?

The rest of the penny drops. Frank stalls, trying to think

FRANK

What do you mean?

SATCH

Do you know where I found this?

And he hands FRANK his missing DRIVER'S LICENSE. Frank looks like a truck hit him.

SATCH (CONT'D)

415 Greenwich St. #302. Under the body  
of a murdered woman.

FRANK

No. This isn't what you think.

SATCH

I wanna be wrong here. But we need to go  
to the precinct and talk about it.

FRANK

Okay, okay. I need to go say something  
to Julia and finish up with the guy on  
the radio.

SATCH

You can talk to Julia. Forget the radio.

Frank nods. Takes stock of the cops by the cars and heads back into the house.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Julia, who has been watching through a front room window with Johnny, moves to meet Frank. Behind Frank, Satch signals

Phil and the uniforms that all is okay, giving Frank a couple of steps on him.

Frank steps into the house and wraps his arms around Julia, turning so he can see both Satch outside and where he wants to go inside.

FRANK

Trust me, Bud. Do that for me.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS

Frank moves Julia toward teh desk, lulling Satch a moment, then quickly steps to the HAM radio and hits the squawk bar.

FRANK

John, you there?

JOHN (O.S.)

(over the HAM)

Yeah, Dad. What the hell is going on?

FRANK

Satch is busting me for Sissy Clark's murder. John...

Julia stares dumbfounded at Frank.

SATCH (O.S.)

Frank.

Satch strides by Julia and reaches to take Frank's elbow. Frank wheels at the sound of his name and the touch, and he lurches back from Satch.

FRANK

...you gotta help me, Chief.

-- and the movement yanks the mic cord to the radio tight, dragging it to the edge of the desk.

Johnny tears into the room and clutches onto his mother.  
"Daddy, Daddy!"

SATCH

That's not the deal, Frank. Don't do this to your family.

And Frank throws his hands up in front of his chest in an "I give up" gesture.

JOHN (O.S.)

Dad! Dad! What's going on? Satch?!

And the HAM radio CRASHES to the floor in 1969.

SMASH CUT TO:

1998. The HAM RADIO TRANSFORMING...a large dent appearing in its casing before John's eyes...dials cracking.

Dread creeps into John's face as we SMASH CUT TO:

JOHN'S POV

We see what John sees in 1998. But we also go inside his mind and glimpse flashes of new childhood memories. Memories of seeing his father arrested for murder. Images that match JOHNNY'S POV from moments ago in 1969.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY - 1969

Frank sits at a metal table bolted to the floor, Satch sits across. Phil stands. Two cups of coffee on the table. The room is very bare. Cinder block walls.

Padded locks and bars over the windows. A small metal cabinet against the far wall. Satch and Phil smoke. Frank does not.

FRANK

Carl Shepard. Detective out of the 15th precinct.

Satch stares at Frank with utter incredulity. Phil lights a smoke, tossing the pack and the matchbook on the table.

FRANK (CONT'D)

I swear, Satch.

SATCH

Uh, huh...

(beat)

Uh, huh. And you got this from the guy you were talking to on the radio when I came in?

FRANK

As nuts as that sounds, yes.

SATCH

Uh, huh.

FRANK

Satch, would you listen to me here. Just you and me. Can I talk to you here, alone?

Satch looks over at Phil.

SATCH  
Give me a little time with this guy.

Phil nods his understanding, steps out of the room.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
Frank, this is not the time to be worried about covering up if you had a thing with this girl.

FRANK  
He's not gonna stop, Satch. He's gonna keep on...

SATCH  
Are you listening to me? You're in a world of shit. An eye witness has you outside the dead girl's apartment. We got your prints all over the place. Plus the fucking driver's license, Frank.  
(beat)  
You gotta give me something here. Something I can believe.

It's quiet for a moment. And then a sound filters in under the door. The sound of cops cheering. It's the World Series.

Frank sits up - takes a beat.

FRANK  
What if I could prove it to you, Satch?

SATCH  
How's that?

FRANK  
What if I told you that in the bottom of the 6th we're gonna be down 3-0. And Cleon Jones is gonna get hit in the foot. It's gonna leave a scuff mark on the ball.

SATCH  
Frank, please...

FRANK  
The next batter, Clendenon, hits one outta the park.

SATCH  
Frank, this is insane...

FRANK

In the bottom of the 7th, Weis is gonna hit a solo home run. Jones and Swoboda are gonna score in the 8th. The Mets are gonna win 5-3.

(beat)

Go watch the game, Satch.

SATCH

Go watch the game? Go watch the fucking game? Frank, they're gonna make you for Sissy Clark's murderer. It matches the Nightingale's profile. You understand what that means?

We hear the bolt slide, the knob turns and the door opens.

PHIL

His wife is here. She wants to talk to you.

Satch nods okay to Phil. He closes the door.

SATCH

Whatta you want me to tell her?

Frank struggles for an answer...but comes up speechless. Satch looks like his heart is breaking. Unable to comprehend how Frank could have slipped this far. A long beat, then...

FRANK

She's in harm's way. He's gonna be coming for her.

Satch snorts, incredulous. Frank reaches over the table and takes his hand, deadly serious.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Promise me, as a friend. October 22, don't let her out of your sight.

Satch nods okay. They have an understanding.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SGT'S DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Satch walks down the stairs. Julia alone on the bench.

She sees Satch approaching, stands up, looking at him for an answer, for an explanation...for hope.

SATCH

(after a beat)

Let's walk, get a cup of coffee.

Julia nods okay. They exit the precinct house and into...

EXT. 17TH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

...the street. Around the corner we catch sight of someone familiar - someone Julia and Satch don't recognize: Shepard.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SGT'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

Shepard approaches the desk, flashes his shield at Sergeant.

SHEPARD

You got a collar in here for the  
Nightingale murders?

DESK SGT.

Yeah.

SHEPARD

I'm working with one of the victims outta  
Brooklyn North. You mind I take a shot  
at him?

DESK SGT.

That's Deleon and Hayes' collar.

SHEPARD

They around?

DESK SGT.

Just missed Deleon. Hayes is up in the  
squad.

SHEPARD

Where's the collar, in the cells?

DESK SGT.

No, I think he's up in interrogation.

SHEPARD

I'll go find Hayes.

Shepard turns, gliding through the lobby like a shark...

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Satch and Julia sit at a booth in the back. Satch stirs his coffee, trying to start a very hard conversation. As he struggles to begin, the camera notices something in the B.G. At the counter: a few stray people gathered around watching the WORLD SERIES on an old TV.

AUDIO COMES UP.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Shepard passes the COFFEE ROOM. It is packed with detectives, gathered around a TV...watching the game. Phil Hayes is among them. And as Shepard passes, Phil half catches a glimpse of him as he glides down the hall and enters.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank looks up to see Shepard, who quickly closes the door behind him... and unholsters his gun. An eerie moment.

SHEPARD

On your feet.

Frank waits a beat. Then very slowly, he stands.

SHEPARD (CONT'D)

Now turn around, face the wall.

Frank steps back, slowly turning. Shepard holsters the gun. Kicks Frank up against the wall as he reaches into his pocket and takes out the leather garrote we saw in the Peppermint Lounge Bathroom. He coils it around his hands.

SHEPARD (CONT'D)

How did you know?

Frank is trembling.

FRANK

(facing the wall)

You twisted animal...

SHEPARD

Evidence says you're the animal.

(snapping garrote tight)

That's why you hung yourself.

But Frank turns.

FRANK

You try putting that thing around my neck and I'll rip your throat out. You want me dead, use the gun.

Shepard smiles, unfazed...

SHEPARD

Let me draw you a picture. You live at 1060 41st Ave. You have a wife who works at New York Hospital. And a six-year old

at P.S. 130.

Shepard gives Frank a look that would make a Marine Drill Sergeant shit his pants. Shepard knows Frank's weakness, the one thing that would make him submit to death.

Closing his eyes, Frank turns to face the wall...But the door handle rattles, someone is outside coming in. Shepard quickly yanks Frank away from the wall, shoving him in a chair at the interrogation table.

The door opens.

PHIL

What the hell is going on here?

FRANK

You got to help me. He's trying to kill me.

Shepard just laughs. Phil scans the room - everything looks normal, a cop questioning a perp.

SHEPARD

Mind if we take it outside?

Phil shrugs okay.

SHEPARD (CONT'D)

(to Frank)  
I'll be right back.

Shepard and Phil step out - bolting the door behind them.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Shepard and Phil stand outside the door.

SHEPARD

...didn't mean t step on your toes. They sent me up from downstairs, I thought you'd be in there with him.

PHIL

What are you looking at him for?

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank's expression begins to harden. His eyes search teh room. CLOSE ON his EYES. He looks like John - controlled rage piercing through that Sullivan thousand yard stare.

He stands, turning around, looking for something, anything that he can use to get the hell out of there.

His mind's racing, fire fighter training kicking in. And then he looks up - just below the ceiling, above the door - a 2'X2' ELECTRICAL CONDUCTOR BOX.

Follow Frank's eyes to something else. An AIR CONDITIONER MOUNTED IN THE WINDOW.

Frank goes to the window. Runs his fingers along the air conditioner's thick electrical cord - thinking. He unplugs it. And then he RIPS cord out of the unit, exposing wire.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

A loud cheer rises out of the coffee room - the game is heating up. Shepard and Phil are still standing outside the interrogation room. Shepard flashes a smile, having said something that makes Phil laugh...

PHIL

Yeah, half the uniforms are either at the game or on the street. It's gonna be a riot if they pull it off.

SHEPARD

(glancing down the hall - in direction of sound of TV)

What's the score?

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Julia's crying. Satch has no words to comfort her, now way of explaining any of this. He reaches out across the table...taking her hand. And as they sit quietly.

CAMERA tracks towards the counter. And we hear something that Satch does not. The sound of a voice. TV ANNOUNCER. THE SERIES...

TV ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Cleon Jones thinks he's hit. I think the ball hit him in the foot...

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank uses the heel of his shoe to rip the plug off the other end of the electrical cord. Both ends now have exposed wires.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - COFFEE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Close on a MATCH. Pull back to reveal Shepard lighting Phil's cigarette, then one for himself. They are inside the squad's coffee room now. All eyes on the TV:

TV ANNOUNCER

Hadges is coming outta the dug out. He's calling for the ball. Can we get a shot of the ball?

Shepard inhales deeply, sneaking a glance down hall at the closed interrogation room door.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Satch looks past Julia, distracted, curious.

SATCH

Can you excuse me for a second?

Julia seems bewildered as Satch gets up out of the booth, making his way through the restaurant and towards the TV.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank, in full throttle, drags a chair against the wall. Climbs on the chair, uses a dime to unscrew the ELECTRICAL CONDUCTOR BOX.

He then unscrews the master fuse and SHOVES ONE END OF THE ELECTRICAL CORD'S EXPOSED WIRE AROUND THE FUSE CYLINDER. After re-tightening the fuse, and careful not to touch the other end of the cord, he jumps off the chair.

FOOTSTEPS. Frank freezes. Someone's walking down the hall.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Wall to wall cops. Mesmerized by the game, especially Phil.

TV ANNOUNCER

There's a scuff mark on the ball! The umpire has reversed his decision. He's sending Jones to first base!

The cops erupt. Cheering.

SHEPARD

(yelling over the noise)

You mind I go back at teh fire boy for a while? I won't lay a hand on him, just want to see what he's got?

PHIL

Go ahead, knock yourself out.

Shepard gives Phil one last smile, then slips out - casually heading down the hall...towards the interrogation room.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank, sweating bullets now, takes the two coffee cups off the table and pours their contents ON THE FLOOR. The coffee forms a SMALL PUDDLE which Frank is careful not to let slip over the door saddle.

He puts the cups down. Then opens the cabinet, rifling through, finding a can of LYSOL spray.

Sounds of cops cheering filter in under the door.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Satch is riveted to the TV as Clendenon steps up to the plate. Strike on.

Satch jumps - Julia has come up behind him, touching him on the shoulder. She looks mad: how the hell can he be watching the ball game at a time like this?

JULIA

What's going on, Satch?

Beat.

SATCH

(dumbfounded)

I don't know.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

All eyes on the TV. Another strike to Clendenon. 0-2 count.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The door knob turns. The door half-opens. Shepard sticks his head in, scanning the room. He relaxes a bit when he sees Frank sitting quietly at the table.

Shepard opens the door a little further, takes a half step into the room...and into the puddle of coffee!

Frank raises his arm. He's holding the live electrical cord. Shepard: What the fuck? Frank flicks the cord...which lands like a snake at Shepard's feet...in the puddle of coffee.

5,000 volts surge through Shepard's body.

SPARKS AND SMOKE SHOOT OUT OF CONDUCTOR BOX...

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON TV. Clendenon still up. 1-2 count. The wind up...

But something is wrong with the TV. A spark shoots out of the back of the set.

And then the entire 17th Precinct goes DARK. Frank has shorted out the electrical system.

The cops look at each other in a moment of pissed confusion.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Frank lunges over the table, smashing a wooden chair over Shepard's head. He's in overdrive. Kicking the still live cord out of the coffee puddle, he then drags Shepard's body into the room, shutting the door.

Frank quickly rips off Shepard's SPORTS JACKET, pocketing Shepard's WALLET and BADGE.

And then, moving very fast, Frank grabs the LYSOL can and the matches Phil left on the table. He LIGHTS A MATCH and holds it IN FRONT OF THE LYSOL CAN. He points the can at the ceiling - at the FIRE ALARM SENSORS. Hits SPRAY button - Professional Fire Fighter ingenuity - HOMEMADE BLOW TORCH.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

FIRE ALARMS sound off. SPRINKLER SYSTEM kicks in, water gushing from the ceiling. Cops begin to move, investigating.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank cracks open the door and slips out. As the door closes, Shepard's eyes pop open.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sprinklers rain down on Frank as he moves down the hall. Through the darkness he can see someone coming. It's Phil. Frank covers his face...searching for a place to disappear.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Nobody breathes. All eyes on the TV.

The count is now 2-2. The pitch is a high fastball. Clendenon takes a massive swing. He nails it. HOME RUN!

The coffee shop breaks into cheers. Everyone screaming their heads off. Everyone except Satch, who just stands there, in complete and utter shock. Julia looking at him questioningly.

SATCH  
(yelling over the madness)  
He was right! Everything he said. He  
was telling the truth.

JULIA  
Then you believe him?

SATCH  
Yeah I do. You bet your life I do.

And they hug. The weight of the world sliding off Julia's shoulders. But someone is trying to get Satch's attention. It is the counter man, he's holding a phone.

Satch takes the phone, beat, his face goes ashen.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
I'm on my way...

He drops the phone, heading for the door.

SATCH (CONT'D)  
(to Julia)  
Wait here, I'll send a uniform.

And Satch is gone.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Power is still off. Sprinklers still gushing. Amidst the chaos, a bathroom door swings open. A man steps out. A cop. Leather jacket, gold shield. It's Frank. He slips through the madness, heading down the hall and towards the stairs.

EXT. 17TH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

Satch races down the crowded block...dodging celebrating Mets' fans...bolting up the precinct steps into the house.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Phil runs in. Scanning the room. But it is empty. No Frank. No Shepard. Just a puddle of coffee on the floor.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SGT'S DESK - CONTINUOUS

Satch charges into the lobby. The lights start to flicker back on. Chaos giving way to order.

Satch heads for the stairs.

And there is Frank, wearing Shepard's jacket and shield. But in his hurry, Satch has not spotted him.

Frank quickly steps behind a pillar as Satch tears by him and up the stairs.

Stay with Frank as he turns...calmly walking by the Sergeant's desk, gliding out the precinct door and...

EXT. 17TH PRECINCT - CONTINUOUS

...disappearing into the street.

FRANK  
(little smile)  
Elvis has left the building.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY - 1998

John stalks down an apartment building hallway, gun drawn. He reaches a door. Two locks and a bell. Fuck 'em. John smashes his bulk into the door...one...two...three times. It bursts off its hinges. John charges in.

Place is empty. Like somebody got the hell out in a hurry. A few odds and ends left behind in the haste...including a pile of unpaid bills. CARL SHEPARD.

John's eyes glaze over in rage and fury. But then he sees something that makes him stop and think. There is a telephone on the floor, in a corner. John stares at the phone, wheels spinning. He reaches in his coat and takes out his notebook. Flipping through pages. Notes on Shepard: social security, address, DMV registration, and a series of phone numbers...home, office, cellular.

John runs to the phone. Punches in the cell number. Ring.

SHEPARD  
(over phone)  
Hell-

JOHN  
You have the right to remain silent. If you give up that right...

INTERCUT SHEPARD AND JOHN

Shepard is in his car, over a bridge, on the run...

SHEPARD  
Who the fuck is this?

JOHN  
Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law.

SHEPARD  
Sullivan?

JOHN  
You have the right to speak to an att --

SHEPARD  
Fuck you, asshole.

JOHN  
It's a small world, Carl. And I'm gonna find you. Real soon.

INT. SHEPARD'S APARTMENT - WEST 74TH ST. - DAY - 1969

CLICK, CLICK -- dead bolt turning...

Front door opens and SHEPARD WALKS IN. His '69 apartment is far nicer than the place we just left John in '98.

Shepard runs to the bathroom. Rips off the toilet's tank lid, reaches down and pulls out a .357 Magnum Colt Python, wrapped in clear plastic.

He rips off the plastic, shoves the pistol in his waistband, heads into the kitchen.

He gropes behind the refrigerator, close on an envelope glass taped to back of the fridge. Shepard's hand finds the envelope...he rips it loose. And then he opens it - revealing its contents, souvenirs, POLAROID PHOTOS OF THE NIGHTINGALE MURDERS, WOMEN'S JEWELRY, NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS...

Shepard takes out a match to burn the photos. But then...

The broom closet door bursts off its hinges. Frank instantly on top of Shepard. The souvenirs go flying in the air. Frank pummels Shepard's head and back. But Shepard smashes his elbow in Frank's Adam's apple, lands a solid uppercut square on Frank's nose. Frank's eyes watering up, VISION BLURRING.

CLOSE ON

Frank's hand, groping for the handle of a glass pitcher atop the kitchen counter.

Shepard reaches for his gun, points the .357 at Frank's head. Shepard's finger squeezing the trigger. It's over. But...

FRANK SMASHES THE GLASS PITCHER down on Shepard's skull. Shepard drops. CRACK, the gun fires, BLASTING AIR.

FRANK scrambles for the window. He's outta there, expertly thundering down fire escape.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND SHEPARD'S APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Frank hits the pavement, twisting his ankle. Hears metal rattling, looks up. Shepard's clattering down after him.

Shepard tries to get off a shot through the fire escape grid. BANG! The shot ricochets wildly. Frank takes off, limping and staying close to the building out of the line of fire.

The streets are still empty, the city glued to their TV's. Frank hits CPW. He glances left, right, straight ahead. Central Park.

Frank runs into the park.

INT. SHEPARD'S APARTMENT - W. 74TH ST. - DUSK

The door is kicked open. Satch and Phil enter, guns drawn. They take in the damage from the fight. Following the trail of blood back to the kitchen. And there, strewn across the floor are Shepard's photos of his victims, the newspaper clippings, the jewelry, and the envelope with the glass tape still on it.

Satch knows.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK BRIDGE - UNDER CONSTRUCTION - CONTINUOUS

Frank hears pounding footsteps - Shepard is catching up.

Frank's adrenaline kicking in, sprints around a bend in the path, reaches long wooden bridge spanning Central Park Lake.

The bridge is being restored. Barricades across the entrance.

Frank hurdles over the barricades, runs onto the bridge.

Shepard trips in the dirt. Gets back up, reaches the bridge, knocks over a barricade, runs to the middle of the bridge.

FRANK'S DISAPPEARED. Shepard stops, listens - nothing.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK BRIDGE - UNDERNEATH - CONTINUOUS

Frank dangles below the bridge, holding onto the steel girder of substructure - 8 ft. above water. Not moving a muscle, not making a sound, barely even breathing.

CLOSE ON SEWER RAT

Crawling on Frank's arm. Caught off guard, Frank flinches, sending the rat tumbling.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK BRIDGE - TOP OF BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

Bridge side railings have been removed for construction.

Shepard hears something hit the water. Rushes to the side of the bridge, points his gun at the water. BANG!

Shepard leans out further aiming the gun at the water. Shepard's outstretched arm only a few feet from Frank's head. Frank silently swings his body forward reaching out...

Snags Shepard's arm, pulling him hard, over the side.

SHEPARD FALLS, grabs for something, anything. Wraps his arms around Frank's leg, hangs on tight.

Frank struggles, kicks wildly, trying to shake Shepard off. Shepard hangs on with his left arm. Pulls out the gun with his right. He aims it at Frank's head. Cocks back the hammer.

FRANK LETS GO. KERPLUNK. They plunge into:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - LAKE - CONTINUOUS

Murky water, thick with dirt and slime, 5' deep.

Frank's hanging on to Shepard's arm, trying to wrestle the gun free. But Shepard's using his free hand to gouge Frank's eyes. Frank bites down hard on Shepard's wrist.

The gun sinks silently to the muddy lake bottom.

But Shepard gets both hands on Frank's throat. Shoving his head into the shallow water. Shepard's grip is like a vise, Frank futilely tries to pry Shepard's fingers open.

Frank is blinded by polluted water. Starting to lose consciousness. Desperately, he searches the muddy lake bottom for the gun. But he's getting weaker, fading out...

Then he feels something. A BRICK, fallen off the bridge, half buried in the mud. Frank struggles to dig it up. Summons his last ounces of strength, yanking it back and forth, it's getting loose.

But Shepard's hands are squeezing tighter. Frank finally goes limp. A few last bubbles float to the surface. Shepard smiles. Catching his breath, slightly loosens grip on Frank's lifeless neck.

Frank springs off the lake bottom, rises out of the water like a jack-in-the-box. Holding the brick with both hands, he swings. CONTACT.

The brick smashes against Shepard's head. Knocking him to yesterday. He drops like a rock.

Frank waits for Shepard to come up for air. Nothing.

Frank crawls out of the water, collapsing onto the embankment. He just lies there, heart pounding, chest heaving.

And suddenly, Frank is startled by a MASSIVE ROAR - the sound of eight million New Yorkers screaming in unison. The Mets have just won the World Series.

Frank laughs, slowly getting to his feet.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK WEST & 65TH - PAY PHONE - DUSK

Frank's dripping blood and filthy lake water. The streets have instantly erupted with celebrating Mets' fans. A giant party. Cars whiz by, honking their horns, passengers leaning out, pumping fists in victory. Frank has to yell above the racket.

DESK SGT.  
(over phone)  
17th Precinct.

FRANK  
Detective Deleon.

DESK SGT.  
(over phone)  
Hold on.

INT. 17TH PRECINCT - SQUAD ROOM

The Nightingale evidence from Shepard's kitchen floor is spread all over the squad room.

SATCH  
Deleon.

INTERCUT FRANK.

FRANK  
Satch, you gotta listen to me...

SATCH  
Frank. We know. We know it's Shepard.

FRANK

No kidding. I'm on the corner of 65th  
and CPW. Come get me.

Frank clicks down the receiver, slides in a dime, dials  
another number. A beat, then...

JULIA

(over phone)

Hello?

Frank smiles, and we dissolve to

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - LAKE - NIGHT

The area cordoned off. Detectives and uniforms. EMS wagon.  
An inflatable boat is being placed in the lake. Two police  
frog men are climbing into their gear.

Pan over the scene to find Frank and Satch. Frank's got a  
blanket wrapped around him. They talk quietly as Satch walks  
Frank to a waiting green and white squad car.

SATCH

You missed a hell of a game, Frank.

FRANK

Next time lets put some money on it.

SATCH

(to the uniform driver)

Get him home safe.

Satch sticks out his hand...Frank takes it. They hold each  
other's grip for some moments. Frank starts to say "thank  
you", but Satch silently cuts him off.

Frank climbs in the car. Satch closes the door, taps on the  
roof, Frank is on his way home.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S ROOM - LATER

JOHNNY is asleep in bed. Elvis sleeps at the foot of it. In  
the shadows next to them, Julia sits very still in a rocking  
chair, half-asleep, half-awake. Staring out the window. Her  
eyes are bloodshot. She has been through hell.

A faint STAIRWAY CREAK. Elvis stirs. He looks up to SEE:

FRANK standing in the doorway. He looks a wreck.

FRANK

Hey, bud.

JULIA  
Frank...

And she is out of the chair. They meet in a hug. Over her shoulder Frank takes a long look at his sleeping son.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - LATER

Relatively cleaned up, but very bruised, Frank is at the desk, trying to repair the DISASSEMBLED RADIO. Julia comes in and sets down a cup of coffee. She kisses him on the top of his head, casts a wondering eye on the radio, and leaves.

EXT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - NIGHT - 1998

John pulls into the driveway and stops. He stares out the window, exhausted. And then something catches his attention. A SOUND. Coming from inside the house. The HAM RADIO?

He bolts from the car, runs to the door, scrambles to get the backdoor key into the lock, as --

FRANK (O.S.)  
(over the HAM)  
John, John? You there? Johnny?

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

John barrels into the kitchen, leaving door ajar, and runs...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - CONTINUOUS - 1969 & 1998

John hits the squawk bar on the HAM which...

JOHN  
I'm here, Dad. I'm here.

INTERCUT FRANK AND JOHN.

FRANK  
We did it, John. We stopped him.

A short pause, John looks confused. He sits down.

JOHN  
Wait. Something's wrong. I don't...

FRANK  
What's wrong?

JOHN  
I don't remember. Why don't I remember?

WHACK! CLOSE ON FRANK, the back of his skull smashed by the

butt of a .45 wielded by CARL SHEPARD.

FRANK hits the floor with a thud, Shepard looming over him, reaching for a set of handcuffs.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1998

JOHN

Dad? Dad? What's...

WHACK! The butt of a .45 smashes the back of JOHN's skull. He tumbles to the floor...fighting to stay conscious.

CARL SHEPARD stands over him, the gun pointing at his head.

SHEPARD

My turn to steal your life.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1969

Shepard stands over Frank. Frank tires to struggle up. Shepard forces him back down, tromping a boot into his chest.

SHEPARD

You're a clever fuck, fireboy.

And he snaps a handcuff on one of Frank's wrists then wrenches him to a steel radiator in the family room where he circles the pipe to the floor with the handcuff chain and attaches the other cuff to Frank's other wrist.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - STUDY - NIGHT - 1998

John is woozy. He reaches down to his holster - it is empty! Shepard has got John's 9mm in his left hand. Holding the .45 to John's head, Shepard pops the clip out of the 9mm and tosses it aside. He then snaps a handcuff around John's wrist, begins dragging him to the radiator.

John's FOOT ERUPTS up into Shepard's groin. The .45 goes flying across the room. For a suspended moment, both men are riveted to the .45 spinning on the floor.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Frank, struggling to breathe, is slumped by the radiator staring up at Shepard's groin. The .45 goes flying across the room. For a suspended moment, both men are riveted to the .45 spinning on the floor.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Frank, struggling to breathe, is slumped by the radiator staring up at Shepard, who is staring back with pure menace.

The SOUND OF A SHOWER can be heard upstairs. Shepard looks up. Smiles.

SHEPARD  
Time to meet the family.

FRANK  
(struggling to breathe)  
This is between you and me.

SHEPARD  
Not any more.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Julia luxuriates in a steaming shower. Singing, softly.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

A BRUTAL STRUGGLE FOR THE GUN between John and Shepard.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Frank desperately tugs at the handcuffs. Steel bites down on his wrists.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Julia smiles as she sees a figure through the curtain.

JULIA  
Hey, Bud. Want to join me?

And the shower curtain flies open to reveal SHEPARD.

SHEPARD  
Sure do.

Julia lets out a bloodcurling scream and plasters herself against the shower wall.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank reacts to the scream and tears with everything he has in him to rip away from the radiator. No way.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - JOHNNY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Johnny stirs awake at the sound of the scream...

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

John and Shepard are in a desperate TUG OF WAR over the gun.

They KICK viciously at each other. Butting heads. But John is still woozy from the head wound and Shepard is still very strong. BANG! The gun goes off.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Julia is paralyzed against the wall. Staring into the dead as-marble eyes of Shepard. He looks her up and down.

SHEPARD

Nice.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Frank's wrists are bleeding. He can't get out. But then he sees something. Something he can use. His WATCH. Frank struggles to unfasten the watch strap. He does it. He pinches the metal clasp with his thumb and forefinger and guides it to the keyhole in the left handcuff. He works it. Nothing. Then CLICK. He's out!

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

John Shepard fight furiously. But John has managed to get control of the .45's TRIGGER. He squeezes it. BANG. ANOTHER ONE. BANG! BANG!

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Shepard's hands are moving towards Julia's breasts. SUDDENLY she lashes out, DIGGING HER NAILS DEEP INTO SHEPARD'S FACE...TEARING FLESH, DRAWING BLOOD.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

CLOSE ON SHEPARD, struggling with John. A LARGE SCAR ETCHES ONTO HIS FACE, in the exact spot where Julia dug her nails in 29-years ago. BANG!! BANG!!

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Shepard grabs Julia by the throat. Slams her against the wall, knocking her unconscious onto the shower floor. He touches the GASH on his face, stares at the blood.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

BANG! BANG! John keeps squeezing that trigger.

CLICK. CLICK. No more bullets.

Shepard lets go of the gun, heave John over and grabs him by the neck...strangling him.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT - 1969

Shepard is on top of Julia in the shower. He uncoils the garrote, snaps it taut, and starts around her neck.

And then a SOUND. Instantly recognizable. Beyond adequate description. But once you've heard it, you don't forget it...

CHUUT, CHUUT, CHUUT: THE SOUND OF A 12-GUAGE PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUN RATCHETING AROUND THE CORNER.

Shepard's head spins about.

FRANK STANDS IN THE DOORWAY, SHOTGUN AIMED AT SHEPARD'S FACE.

FRANK

Get your fucking hands off my wife.

SHEPARD

Don't. Don't do it, Frank. You're not a killer.

He is right. Frank hesitates. Shepard LUNGES, grabbing the shotgun barrel.

BOOM! Frank FIRES. BUCKSHOT RIPS THROUGH THE AIR. SHEPARD'S RIGHT HAND EXPLODES...blood spattering everywhere.

Like a wounded animal, Shepard bolts, blowing past Frank.

Frank gently wraps Julia in a towel. The fading sound of Shepard thundering down the stairs. Out the door.

And then softer footsteps. Coming closer. Johnny appears in the doorway. Safe and sound.

INT. SULLIVAN HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT - 1998

SHEPARD RIGHT HAND GOES LIMP AROUND JOHN'S NECK. HE STARES IN SHOCK AS HIS HAND BEGINS TO DISFIGURE.

John starts to choke back to life...

And then something happens. Some kind of SHOCK-WAVE ripples through the house -- bending light - bizarrely distorting everything in its path, including Shepard and John.

The shock-wave is over. But the house is different. Changed.

Shepard scans the changed room - disoriented, bewildered. CRASH! John pounces. Pounding blows to Shepard's head.

John is on top of Shepard, hands on his neck. As John squeezes the life out of him, Shepard struggles to reach down his leg with his good hand...

There's something down there. An ankle holster. Shepard strains to get his hand on the gun. He does.

In a flash, Shepard has the gun to John's temple.

CLICK. Shepard cocks back the hammer.

SHEPARD

You were the kid. I remember now.

Keeping the gun pressed against John's temple, Shepard gets to his feet.

SHEPARD (CONT'D)

But this time, no Daddy.

John closes his eyes. It's over, he knows he's gonna die.

SILENCE. Then a sound. A sound we've heard before. A sound you never forget. Music to our ears.

CHUUT, CHUUT, CLICK: THE SOUND OF A 12-GAUGE PUMP-ACTION SHOTGUN RATCHETING A ROUND IN THE CHAMBER.

Shepard looks up to see: MAN HOLDING SHOTGUN.

B-O-O-O-M: SHOTGUN BLAST: Buckshot ripping into Shepard. Impact lifting him off his feet. He lands dead on the floor.

CLOSE ON JOHN'S FACE

Opening his eyes. Looking up at the doorway. Blinking through shotgun smoke, trying to focus. Not believing what he sees.

FRANK SULLIVAN - AGE SIXTY-NINE

John looks up at his father, speechless.

FRANK

I'm still here, Chief.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FIELD - MORNING - SOME YEARS LATER

We are soaring high above a baseball diamond. Clear light air, you can see for miles. Float down to the field...

The first taste of Spring and Softball. Picnic baskets. Flowers. Kites flying. Children running.

The bleachers filled with families and loved ones.

Among them sits SAMANTHA. She's smiling, she's glowing...she's pregnant. PULL BACK to reveal SATCH, GORDO, ELLEN & GORDY JR. A dalmation puppy scampers at their feet, barking in recognition as...

Frank Sullivan steps into the batter's box.

CLOSE ON

Pitcher: 22 year-old African-Amerasian, a muscular beanpole. Embroidered on the back of the his FDNY jersey is his nickname: PHIRE POWER.

Quick shot of first baseman. GRAHAM GIBSON - once a nervous PROBIE, now a seasoned vet. And one hell of proud father.

GIBSON  
(to pitcher)  
Take it easy on him son, he's older than Moses.

Frank sneers at Gib, then glances up at GIB's WIFE in the bleachers. She looks familiar, it's the girl Frank saved in the warehouse 29-years ago.

PHIRE POWER twirls his arm...

Frank takes a big swing...contact...the ball fouls back behind the plate. Towards the parking lot. Where among the old Chevys and Fords sits a brand new MERCEDES. The custom license plate reads: YAHOO.

CRASH! Frank's foul ball comes down hard. As the Mercedes' windshield spiderwebs we hear an off-camera scream...

It is Gordo, jumping up, running across the field. From the parking lot his eyes meet Frank's. An I'M SORRY shrug, and Frank turns his attention back to the game.

The next pitch is high and outside.

Frank takes a looping swing...driving the ball to the gap in right center. Frank jogs to first. An easy single.

From first, Frank glances over at the third base coach: JULIA. Her hair pinned up under a Mets cap, Julia puts two fingers in her mouth and belts out a loud whistle as...

The next batter steps out of the dugout. It is John Sullivan.

CLOSE ON

John as he makes his way to the plate.

Check out his eyes: they're different, he looks like his father. They've got that Frank Sullivan sparkle.

John steps into the batter's box, cocks back to wood.

FRANK

Bring me home, son! Bring me home!

PHIRE POWER uncorks the fastest softball pitch you've ever seen. John jumps on it. Rips a massive shot to deep center, way over the fence.

The crew in the stands are on their feet, cheering.

Frank rounds third, John catches up. A double high-five from Julia and they jog home together. The game is over.

Frank puts his arm around John. Heading for the bleachers.

A little boy totters up to them. Jumping into John's arms. His name is Frank Jr.

JOHN

Hey there, Chief.

John gives his son a kiss, glances up at Samantha in the bleachers. They share a smile. And as they step off the field, his little boy reaches up, takes John's hat off his head and puts it on his own...

FRANK JR.

Elvis has left the building...

CLOSE ON

John's face. In his eyes, bliss.

CUE Bruce Springsteen's: TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALLGAME.

END CREDITS ROLL OVER:

Archival film footage. 1969 World Series. Game Five. The last pitch. Mets win. Shea stadium erupts. Fans stream onto the field. Lifting the players on their heads. The madness continues for a while, then slowly fade to Fifth Ave. Mets' ticker tape parade. It's a hell of a party.