

SEVEN

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NOTE: THE HARD COPY OF THIS SCRIPT CONTAINED SCENE NUMBERS.
THEY HAVE BEEN REMOVED FOR THIS SOFT COPY.

INT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

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

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

Somerset goes to this wall and runs his finger across one of the

pale, red roses which decorates the older paper. He pushes the grime away, brings the rose out more clearly.

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

EXT. OLD HOUSE -- DAY

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

MAN (O.S.)

Is something wrong?

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

MAN

Is there something the matter?

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

SOMERSET

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

MAN

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

SOMERSET

No. I like the house, and this place.

MAN

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

Somerset nods, taking a deep breath. He smiles.

SOMERSET

That's what I mean. Strange.

Somerset looks back to the beautiful landscape. The man does not understand.

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

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

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

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

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

Though it seems impossible it ever could have gotten there, a car's burnt-out skeleton sits rusting in the bracken.

Ahead, the city waits. The sky is full of smokestacks and huge industrial cranes.

INT. AMTRACK TRAIN -- LATER DAY

The train is passing urban streets below. Slums and smashed cars. People stand in groups in the corners. Bleak.

Somerset's suitcase is now on the window seat. Somerset has moved to the aisle. He is reading his book. He looks up from the book and rubs his eyes, then looks back to continue reading, not once looking out the window.

EXT. CITY STREET -- NIGHT

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

Somerset passes a family of bewildered tourists. A WEIRD MAN has a hand on the tourist-father's suitcase.

It has become a tugging match with the Weird Man shouting, "I'll take you to a taxi... I'll take you." Ahead, a group is gathered on the sidewalk near two ambulances. People clamor to get a look at a BLOODY BODY which lies on the street.

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

INT. CAB -- NIGHT

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

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

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

SOMERSET
Why do you care?

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

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

CAB DRIVER
Crazy fucks.

The driver pulls away and the cab rages down the street. Somerset watches the parade of neon passing on the avenue. He slumps back in the seat and closes his eyes.

CAB DRIVER
Where you headed?

Somerset opens his eyes.

SOMERSET
Far away from here.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- NIGHT

The curtains are closed. The SOUNDS of the CITY are here as they will be everywhere in this story. A CAR ALARM is SOUNDING, shrill and clear. Somerset's life is packed into moving boxes, except for some clothing in a closet and hundreds and hundreds of books on the shelves of one wall. Somerset is lying on the bed, dressed only in his underwear.

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

Somerset situates on the bed, closes his eyes. Tick... tick... tick. The metronome's sound competes with the sound of the car alarm. Somerset's face tightens as he concentrates on the

metronome. His eyes close tighter. Tick... tick... tick. The swingarm moves evenly. Somerset's breathing deepens.

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

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

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

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

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SUNDAY

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- MORNING

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

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT -- DAY

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

DETECTIVE TAYLOR, 52, stands on the other side of the room, looks through a notepad.

TAYLOR

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

SOMERSET

Did the wife confess?

TAYLOR

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

Somerset beings walking around the apartment.

SOMERSET

Why always like this? Only after the fact... this sudden realization, that if

you shoot someone, or stick a knife in them, that person will cease to exist.

TAYLOR

Crime of passion.

SOMERSET

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

TAYLOR

This is a done deal. All but the paperwork.

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

SOMERSET

Did their son see it happen?

TAYLOR

I don't know.

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

TAYLOR

What kind of fucking question is that anyway?

Taylor walks over and grabs the coloring book to get his attention.

TAYLOR

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

(points)

He's dead. His wife killed him.

Taylor throws the coloring book back to Somerset and walks.

TAYLOR

Anything else has nothing to do with us.

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

Somerset puts down the coloring book. He stares at the floor,

showing no reaction to Taylor's tantrum.

MILLS

Uh, Lieutenant Somerset?

Somerset turns to see Mills.

EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

A body bag is carried through a crowd of people outside the tenement building.

Somerset follows the body bag out and Mills follows Somerset. They walk towards the end of the filthy block, past a man urinating on a car.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

(interrupting)

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

Somerset keeps walking, says nothing.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

I... I don't follow.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

Somerset stops and faces Mills.

SOMERSET

You just met me.

MILLS

Maybe I'm not understanding the question.

SOMERSET

It's very simple. You worked a nice, quiet town, but you fought to get here as if your life depended on it. I've just never seen it done that way before, Detective.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Not here.

MILLS

I realize that.

SOMERSET

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

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

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

MONDAY

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset lies asleep in bed. It is still dark outside. The PHONE beside the inactive metronome RINGS. Somerset awakens suddenly, startled. He looks towards the phone.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING

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

He takes his arm away and sits up, frustrated, sits on the edge of the bed. The room is a shambles, filled with moving boxes.

Light coming through the window glows upon a football trophy sticking from one box.

Large and noble, a golden player stands in frozen motion at the trophy's pinnacle.

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

TRACY

What is it?

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

MILLS

It's okay.

Mills leans to get the phone. Tracy seems frightened.

TRACY

Honey... where are we?

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, ALLEYWAY -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset and Mills, both wearing badges, walk with OFFICER DAVIS, a beefy, uniformed cop. They pass police cars and head into a trash strewn alleyway. Davis hands Somerset two flashlights.

DAVIS

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

SOMERSET

What time did you confirm the death?

DAVIS

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

They reach a rusty, side door, which Davis pulls open.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- EARLY MORNING

They enter a dark, ugly stairwell.

MILLS

(to Davis)

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

DAVIS

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

MILLS

The point is, whenever you find...

DAVIS

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

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

SOMERSET

(to Davis)

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

DAVIS

Yes, sir.

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

And I wonder how many times Officer Davis there has found a dead man who wasn't really dead until Davis was in the car calling it in and eating a donut.

SOMERSET

Drop it.

MILLS

For now.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset comes from the stairwell, looking down the dark hall. At the end of the hall, a door is open. The light of a CAMERA FLASH spills out from that room every few seconds.

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

INT. APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

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

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- EARLY MORNING

Somerset and Mills enter, using their flashlights in the dark. Mills takes out a handkerchief, covering his nose. ERIC is crouched on the floor, putting camera equipment away.

He's wearing a medical mask over his face. He hoists his bag and moves past the detectives.

ERIC

Enjoy.

Eric leaves. Somerset sweeps the room with his flashlight...

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

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

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

MILLS

Christ... somebody phone Guinness. I think we've got a World's Record here.

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

MILLS

Who said this was murder?

SOMERSET

No one yet.

MILLS

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

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

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

MILLS

Or not.

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

MILLS

Still... he could have tied himself up, to make it look like murder. I saw a guy once... committed suicide, but wanted to make sure his family could collect the life insurance, right?

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

There are small circular and semi-circular BRUISES on the back of the obese man's head and neck, some hidden under the hair.

MILLS

When we found him, he was lying there with a knife in his back, so what else could it be but homicide? Except, I finally figured out... he held the knife behind him... put the tip of it in his own back and got real

close to the wall... then he shoved his
body backwards...

SOMERSET

(irritated)

Please be quiet for a while, would you?

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

MILLS

(sarcastic)

Oh, yes, sir. Forgive me.

Mills stands and walks around to the other side of the table,
where he gets down again.

MILLS

There's a bucket here.

SOMERSET

What?

MILLS

There's a bucket. Under the table.

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

SOMERSET

What is it?

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

MILLS

It's vomit.

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

MILLS

It's a bucket of vomit.

SOMERSET

Is there any blood in it?

MILLS

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

Somerset stands, stares at the obese man. He shakes his head,
perplexed. There is a KNOCK at the door. The detectives look to

see DOCTOR THOMAS O'NEILL, 52, the medical examiner, in the doorway. O'Neill is looking at the ceiling. He flicks the lights switch. No light, so he flicks the switch up and down.

O'NEILL

Wonderful.

O'Neill seems a bit gone. He drops his black bag onto the floor beside the corpse. he begins to sort through the bag, surgical tools clinking together.

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

MILLS

(to Somerset)

You think it was poison?

SOMERSET

Guessing at this point is useless.

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

O'NEILL

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

MILLS

There's room. Light's the problem.

Somerset looks at Mills, then at the space limitations.

SOMERSET

Still... two is company here. And, three is certainly a crowd.

(pause)

Detective Mills, go help the officers question the neighbors.

Mills looks up, not pleased.

MILLS

I'd rather stay on this.

Somerset is looking at the corpse.

SOMERSET

Send one of the forensics in on your way out.

Mills does not move. He lifts his flashlight to shine the light on the side of Somerset's face. A moment. Somerset looks at

Mills, the light shining directly in Somerset's eyes. A longer moment. Mills switches off the light and leaves.

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

O'NEILL

He is dead.

SOMERSET

Thank you, Doctor.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

No.

MILLS

(looking out window)

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

SOMERSET

Good.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Yeah, well, all I want is...

(pause)

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

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

SOMERSET

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

(pauses, clears throat)

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

This throws Mills. Somerset has a sense of humour?

SOMERSET

Is that clear?

MILLS

Okay... sure... It's just that, with my old partner, you know...

SOMERSET

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

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

MILLS

Whatever you say, Detective. Beautiful.

INT. AUTOPSY ROOM -- DAY

The room is large, cold and clean. Stainless steel and white tile. Many pathologists work at slabs. A bone saw screams. Mills and Somerset are with DOCTOR SANTIAGO, who stands over the obese corpse which is pretty well dissected already.

SANTIAGO

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

Santiago moves to make room for Mills to stand beside him. Mills moves up a little, but not much, looking on in disgust. Santiago reaches into the man's belly. We do not see.

MILLS

Ah, man... how does somebody let himself go like that? Look at the blubber.

Santiago moves something and there is a squashy sound.

SANTIAGO

It took four orderlies and me all together just to put this body on the table.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Yes, it's obvious he was a shut-in. Not an enviable life, but, maybe he still deserves a modicum of respect in spite of that.

SANTIAGO

Are you looking here? First... see how big this stomach is. And, see the strange thing. Stretches. And, here it is distended. Look at the size of that, because of all the foods.

MILLS

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

SANTIAGO

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

SOMERSET

(disbelief)

Doctor, are you saying... this man ate till he burst?

SANTIAGO

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

MILLS

He died by eating?

SANTIAGO

Yes. And, there's something else here you have to look at and see.

Santiago goes to root through many jars on a table. Somerset walks around the slab, looking down at the obese man's propped up, partially shaved head.

SOMERSET

These bruises on the victim's head...

More round and semi-circular bruises have been revealed, all about the same diameter as a dime.

SANTIAGO

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

SOMERSET

They could have been caused by a gun. The barrel of a gun... pressed against the back of his head.

Santiago picks up the jar he was looking for, comes to lean and look at the obese man's head, nodding again.

SANTIAGO

If it was jammed against him hard enough, sure. It's possible. Here...

Santiago gives the jar to Somerset.

SANTIAGO

Most of the stomach's food contents are in the lab now.... but, these... I found these in his stomach too.

Somerset holds the jar up. Inside are many little pieces of blue plastic. They are curled slightly, as if they are scrapings. Somerset hands the jar to Mills. Mills shakes it, studying.

MILLS

Plastic?

SANTIAGO

Why these are in a fat man's stomach, I don't know.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- DAY

The room where the obese corpse was found is now lit by fluorescent light. Two forensics, a MALE and FEMALE, are dusting for prints. Somerset and Mills are on their hands and knees. Somerset holds the jar and touches the linoleum floor.

SOMERSET

Same color and texture.

MILLS

(to forensics)

Have you found any plastic scrapings near the stove or sink? Near the food?

MALE FORENSIC

What do you mean?

Mills and Somerset continue looking around the floor.

MILLS

(to Somerset)

This doesn't make any sense.

SOMERSET

You always have to find one singular thing to focus on. There's always one thing, and it may be as small as a speck of dust, but you find it and focus... till it's an exhausted possibility.

The forensics watch, curious. Somerset is near the refrigerator.

MILLS

It could be nothing.

SOMERSET

But, why would there be so many pieces in his stomach if it were nothing? It must have been intentional.

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

Somerset gets off the floor and looks down. These scratches are in front of the refrigerator. It looks like they were caused by the refrigerator having been pulled away from the wall and pushed back into place at some time.

SOMERSET

(to Mills)

Come here.

INT. APARTMENT, KITCHEN -- LATER DAY

Mills and Somerset pull the refrigerator, rocking it back and forth away from the wall to get a clear view behind it. They strain, pull it a few more feet, and release.

Mills leans to look at the wall behind. Shock.

MILLS

Holy shit.

Somerset comes to look. Behind the refrigerator, there is a space on the wall where the dust has been wiped away. In that space, the words: ONE IS GLUTTONY. The letters have been smeared on in grease. A NOTE is pinned beside them.

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

The captain's office is filled with pictures, books and mugsheets. Piles of paperwork abound, yet the office is meticulously well kept. The CAPTAIN, 50, sits at his tidy desk. He wears a white shirt and conservative tie.

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

SOMERSET

The bruises were caused by the muzzle of a forty-five. So, there was a gun against his head and he was given a choice. Eat, or get your brains blown out.

Somerset gets up to pace.

SOMERSET

He ate his fill, and was forced to continue eating... till his body rejected the food. the killer held a bucket under him, and then kept serving. He took his time. The coroner says this might have gone on for more than twelve hours. The victim's throat was swollen from the effort, and there was probably a point where he passed out. That's when killer kicked him in the stomach. Popped him.

MILLS

This was one sadistic motherfucker.

CAPTAIN

That seems obvious.

Somerset picks up a photocopy of the NOTE from behind the fridge.

SOMERSET

(reads)

"Dear Detectives, Long is the way, and hard, that out of hell leads up to light." It's the murderer's way of announcing himself.

CAPTAIN

Announcing what?

SOMERSET

There are seven deadly sins. Gluttony, wrath, greed...

CAPTAIN

So what? This victim...

SOMERSET

... envy, sloth, pride and lust. Seven.

CAPTAIN

Hey, so gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins. But, this was a fat guy. The killer may have felt this was the just best way to torture him.

And, writing on the walls happens all the time. It's like the fashionable thing to do.

SOMERSET

One is gluttony.

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

MILLS

This is his stuff. I've been out in the cold all day.

SOMERSET

This is a premeditated puzzle, and it's only the beginning.

CAPTAIN

Always working up there, huh, Somerset? Big brain's always cooking.

Somerset sits.

SOMERSET

I'm declining this case. I want us reassigned.

MILLS

Whoa, whoa... what?!

CAPTAIN

What's this: "I'm declining this case?" It don't work that way.

SOMERSET

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

CAPTAIN

I know what you're thinking, okay? You don't want to get in bed with this every night, but it's different now. You're retiring. In six days you're all the way

gone.

Somerset shakes his head.

CAPTAIN

You've left unfinished business before.

SOMERSET

Everything else was taken as close to conclusion as humanly possible. Also... this shouldn't be his first assignment.

MILLS

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

Mills stands, furious.

CAPTAIN

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

MILLS

Give it to me.

CAPTAIN

How's that?

MILLS

There's nothing that says I have to work with him. If Somerset wants out, "goodbye." Give it to me.

The captain considers this.

SOMERSET

It's too soon for him.

MILLS

(to the captain)

Can we talk about this in private?

The captain looks at Somerset, then at Mills.

CAPTAIN

That's not necessary. You're in.

MILLS

Thank you.

CAPTAIN

Go start picking up the pieces. We'll

shuffle some paper and try to get you a new partner.

Mills looks at Somerset, then leaves, closing the door. Somerset seems deflated, staring at the floor. He looks at the captain.

CAPTAIN

You win, Somerset. You're out.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

TUESDAY

EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

A newspaper vendor lays out a pile of tabloid newspapers at the front of his busy newsstand.

The papers' headline is: BIZARRE MURDER!, in huge, black print.

The vendor lays out another tabloid pile. Headline: "EAT OR DIE" SAYS GLUTTONY KILLER!!, in big, red letters.

The vendor throws down a third tabloid stack. SICKENING MURDER -- EXCLUSIVE DETAILS INSIDE!, it reads.

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

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

SOMERSET

Come in.

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

CAPTAIN

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

As always, the neatly groomed captain clenches his jaw.

Somerset lines a new form in the typewriter, starts typing.

The captain strolls in. Two boxes sit on the floor with DETECTIVE MILLS written across them. He picks up one of the boxes and sets it on top of the other.

At the open door, the workman takes a razor blade from his kit. He brings it against the writing on the glass of the door: DETECTIVE SOMERSET. The workman pushes the razor to start scraping the name away, and the razor on glass sounds like fingernails on a blackboard.

Somerset looks up.

WORKMAN

Sorry.

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

CAPTAIN

Have you heard?

SOMERSET

(not looking up)

No, I haven't heard.

CAPTAIN

There was a second.

Somerset stops, looks at the captain.

SOMERSET

Already.

CAPTAIN

Greed. It was written in blood.

Somerset thinks about this, then turns to type.

SOMERSET

It's none of my business anymore.

CAPTAIN

I thought you might want to be filled in.

SOMERSET

I'm sure everyone's doing their best.

CAPTAIN

Yeah.

SOMERSET

Good.

Hunt-and-peck. The captain's jowls clamp. He steps up to Somerset's desk, begins to straighten the two piles of forms.

CAPTAIN

Come on. What are you going to do with yourself out there?

SOMERSET

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

CAPTAIN

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

SOMERSET

What are you talking about?

CAPTAIN

You know.

Somerset reclines, facing the captain.

SOMERSET

Did you read in the paper today, about the man who was walking his dog? he was attacked, and his wallet and his watch were taken. And then, while he was still lying unconscious, his attacker stabbed him with a knife in both eyes. It happened four blocks from here.

CAPTAIN

I heard.

SOMERSET

I have no understanding of this place anymore.

CAPTAIN

It's always been like this.

SOMERSET

Really?

Somerset saddles up to the typewriter.

SOMERSET

Maybe you're right.

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

CAPTAIN

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

in for a tool belt and a fishing rod.
(pause, walks to leave)
Maybe I'm wrong.

The captain leaves. Somerset looks up. He grabs the paperwork piles and ruffles them back to their disheveled state. He looks up at the workman.

The workman is looking at Somerset, has a rag in his hand to remove the last remnants of Somerset's name.

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

The workman is startled, continues his work.

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

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

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

It embeds in the dart board. Somerset sits.

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

He puts the book back down on the floor.

EXT. CITY STREET -- LATE NIGHT

Somerset gets out of his car. He walks down the sidewalk with a notebook in hand. THUNDER is HEARD. He takes a cigarette out of a full pack and lights it.

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

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

VAGRANT
Spare me a cigarette? Spare a cigarette?

SOMERSET

Sorry, last one.

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

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN LIBRARY -- LATE NIGHT

Somerset and GEORGE, 62, the night guard, enter the vast space of the deserted main library.

The lamps hanging from the ceiling give off a warm, pleasant glow over mahogany tables and chairs. To each side of this center area are tall bookshelves. Balconies surround the room on all four sides; three levels which overlook the center.

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

GEORGE

Sit where you'd like.

SOMERSET

Thanks, George.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hey there, Smilely.

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

SOMERSET

Evening, gentlemen.

They all say their hellos.

FIRST GUARD

Come on, George. Cards are getting cold.

GEORGE

(to Somerset)

Duty calls.

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

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

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

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

SOMERSET

(shouts up)

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

UP ON THE BALCONY

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

JANITOR

We got culture.

SECOND GUARD

(dealing cards)

Yeah, we got culture coming out our asses.

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

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

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

UP ON THE BALCONY

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

GEORGE

How's this for culture?

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

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

He closes his eyes and soaks it in.

UP ON THE BALCONY

George sits at the card table, takes out a cigar and lights up. He looks to the ground floor.

GEORGE

Where'd you get to, Smilely?

Below, Somerset comes out from the aisle.

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

Somerset looks up at George.

SOMERSET

Thank you.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN LIBRARY -- LATER NIGHT

MUSIC CONTINUES, spinning through the air like a slow, cool breeze.

Somerset walks, surrounded by books, carrying several. He pulls another off a shelf and adds it to his pile.

UP ON THE BALCONY

George lays down a winning hand. The others toss in their cards in disgust. George laughs, spouting cigar smoke.

Cigar smoke floats up in the air, thinning gracefully. Above, rain continues dancing on the ceiling windows.

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

Somerset sits, opens a book on the table and reads.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM/LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

MUSIC CONTINUES, uninterrupted over this scene. Music so pretty it is almost sad. Tracy, in a nightgown, sits up in bed, tense. She throws off the covers and goes to the door.

She stands looking into the living room where Mills is at a desk.

Mills sorts through paperwork and photos with his back to Tracy. A basketball game is on the television, but he pays it no mind. He sits forward, obviously frustrated, drinks coffee. He does not know Tracy is there.

Tracy watches her husband, concerned.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY, MAIN LIBRARY -- NIGHT

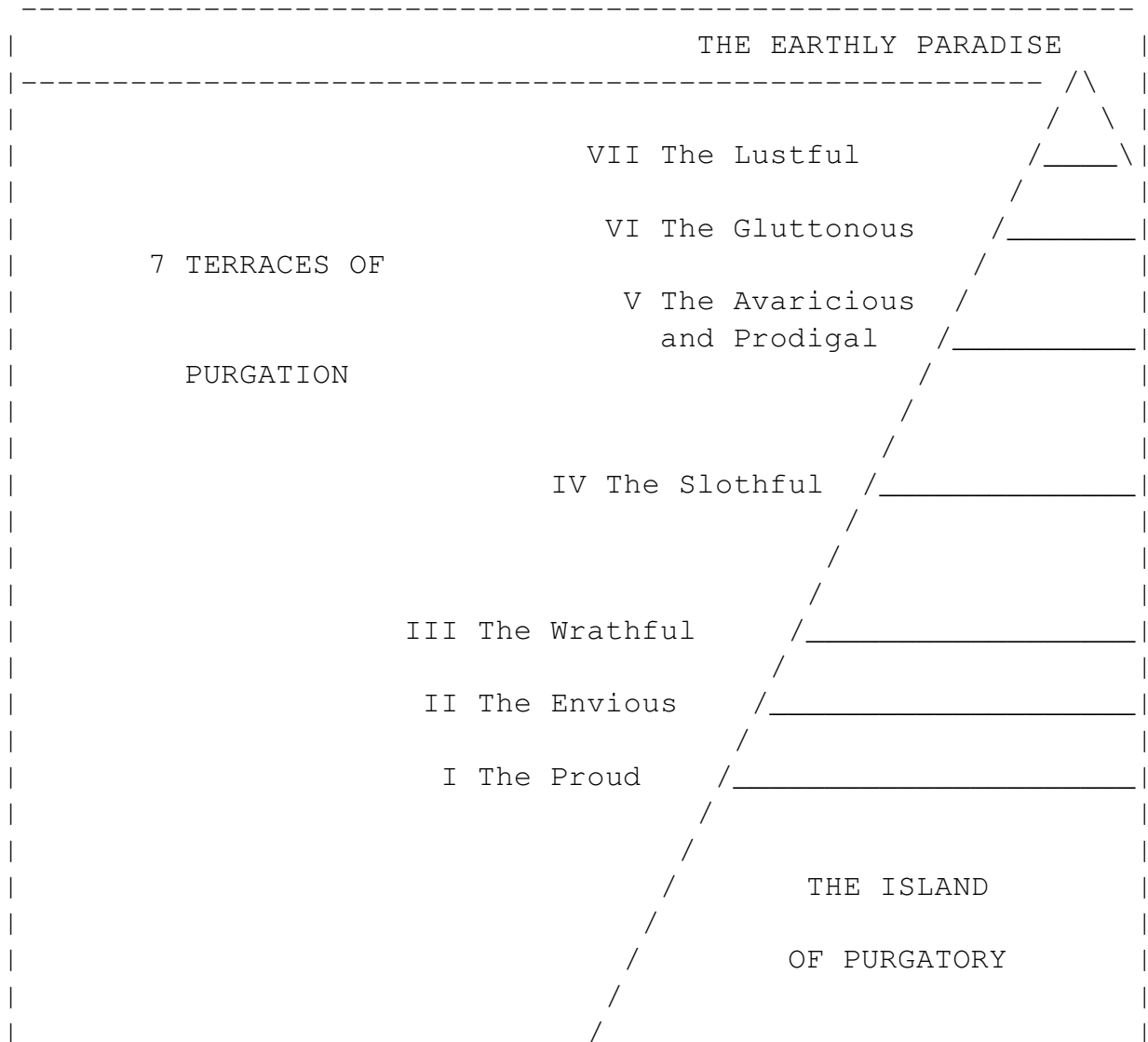
MUSIC CONTINUES. Somerset has two books open. He opens his notebook and brings a pen to bear. Writes:

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

GLUTTONY GREED WRATH LUST PRIDE ENVY SLOTH

He crosses out GLUTTONY and GREED. Somerset picks up one book: DANTE'S PURGATORY. Volume II of the DIVINE COMEDY. Somerset

opens it:



UP ON THE BALCONY

George and the guys finish another hand. George looks down at Somerset, who is writing in the notebook. George takes up the cards and starts shuffling.

GEORGE
(down to Somerset)
You know, Smilely... you're really going to miss us.

George shuffles again, but they flip wrong and a few go off the table, over the balcony.

DOWN ON THE MAIN FLOOR

Somerset looks up at George, then looks around.

SOMERSET
I just might.

ABOVE

The cards George dropped are fluttering, flipping downwards.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

The office is dark. Somerset is at his desk, writing:

DETECTIVE MILLS, YOU MAY WANT TO LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING BOOKS,
RELATING TO THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS:

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

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- LATER EVENING

Somerset lays an envelope on top of the two boxes which have Detective Mills' name on them. The envelope reads: MILLS.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

WEDNESDAY

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- MORNING

Somerset pushes the door open and notices "DETECTIVE MILLS" painted on the glass. Rain falls outside. Somerset goes to his desk, but stops. All his belongings have been moved to a small, temporary desk in the corner.

Somerset moves to open the top left drawer of the big desk. Empty. He goes to the temporary desk and urgently searches through the boxes of papers and files... finds what he was looking for. He holds a small frame which fits in his palm.

Inside the frame is a PHOTO of an attractive WOMAN. Somerset pops the frame open, looks at the picture, then puts the picture in his wallet.

Somerset sits at the temporary desk. He begins to sort through his papers. After a moment, he glances over his shoulder. The envelope he left for Mills is gone.

EXT. UPSCALE CITY BLOCK -- MORNING

It's raining. At one high-rent office building, many business men and women are coming and going in a lunch-hour hurry. Just to one side of the building, the CORONER'S WAGON drives out from the mouth of the parking garage into the rain. People on the sidewalk have to stop to let it cross to the street. At the same time, a large Lincoln Towncar turns off the street, heads into

the bowels of the garage.

EXT. UPSCALE BUILDING, UNDERGROUND GARAGE -- MORNING

Many police cars and news vans here, and police men and reporters and photographers everywhere. Mills, looking haggard, finishes a conversation with a TALL COP by the service elevator.

MILLS

... good. Do it. I'm going back up.

Tall Cop hurries away as Mills pushes repeatedly on the service elevator button. The elevator doors open and Mills steps in. As the door are shutting, a COMMOTION is HEARD. Mills stops the door and looks out.

Across the garage, the Towncar is pulling to a stop and reporters are rushing to it. FLASHBULBS are FLASHING.

MARTIN TALBOT, 47, impressive and well dressed, steps out of the car and faces the reporters as they start shouting questions.

In the service elevator, Mills lets the doors slide shut.

INT. UPSCALE BUILDING, SERVICE AREA -- MORNING

The service elevator opens to a dark physical plant room. Mills exits the elevator and crosses past humming air-conditioning vents, dripping pipes and janitor's lockers. To a door...

INT. UPSCALE BUILDING, OFFICE CORRIDOR -- MORNING

Mills comes out the service area door into a bright, ritzy hallway. This hall and the doors along it reek of money. A few cops are standing around. Ahead there's a police line, which Mills ducks under on his way to stately mahogany doors.

INT. LAW OFFICE -- MORNING

A huge law office. A television is on in one corner, showing the news. Windows overlook the rain wet city. Two FORENSICS dust for prints, whispering to each other when Mills enters.

FORENSIC ONE

(to other forensic)

... going to screw it up. I swear... I've seen...

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

MILLS

How's it coming?

FORENSIC ONE

Nothing yet.

Mills watches them a moment, then turns his attention to another part of the office. A leather chair sits in an open area.

The chair and the carpet under it are covered in a goodly portion of brown, dried blood.

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

Mills stands staring at this area. The TELEVISION is HEARD:

ANCHOR (v.o.)

(from television)

... going cut in live downtown right now, where Defense Attorney Eli Gould was found murdered in his office late last night. District Attorney Martin Talbot is taking questions from reporters...

ON T.V., Talbot comes on screen, a powerful presence, with a gold tooth in the front of his mouth. It's from down in the garage.

A REPORTER (v.o.)

(from television)

... a small conflict of interest here? I mean, your prosecutors have lost more than a few very high profile cases to Mister Gould and his defense team...

TALBOT (v.o.)

(from television)

Now, that's ridiculous to the point of almost being offensive. There's no conflict of interest whatsoever, and any claim that there would be, or could be, is irresponsible.

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

TALBOT (v.o.)

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

Mills turns to looks at Talbot on the screen.

TALBOT (v.o.)

You just wait and see how quickly we get a handle on it. This will be the very definition of swift justice.

Mills walks to turn the t.v. off.

MILLS

(quietly to t.v.)

Shut the fuck up.

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

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

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

Mills sits on the floor, stares at the photo.

INT. MILLS' CAR -- MORNING

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

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

He bites his lip, leaning close to the words.

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

MILLS

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

Mills throws the book against the windshield, then puts his head back and closes his eyes, trying to calm. A long moment. Quiet. BANG, BANG, BANG -- there's a loud BANGING on the window and Mills looks up, startled...

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

MILLS

Good work, Officer. Good work.

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

MILLS

Thank God.

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

It still rains outside. Somerset sits at the big desk which is now Mills'. He fills out form by hand as Mills enters with a ton of his own paperwork. Somerset looks up.

SOMERSET

(gathers his things)

Let me get out of your way.

Mills sets his paperwork on the desk. He is beat. Somerset moves to the temporary desk. They both sit and settle in, organizing, not looking at each other.

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

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

(picks up, into phone)

Detective Mills here.

(listens, lowers voice)

Honey... I asked you not to call me here.

I'll call you back...

(listens)

What? Why?

Mills is very confused.

MILLS

(into phone)

Why? Okay... okay, hold on.

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

MILLS

It's my wife.

SOMERSET

What?

Mills shrugs. Somerset stands, takes the phone.

SOMERSET

(into phone)

Hello?

(listens)

Yes, well... it's nice to speak to you.

(listens)

Well, I appreciate the thought... but...

(listens)

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

Somerset hangs up, shakes his head.

MILLS

Well?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

How's that?

SOMERSET

Tonight.

Mills is lost. Somerset goes to sit back down.

MILLS

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

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

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

The door to the apartment is HEARD OPENING and CLOSING. Mills and Somerset come down a short hallway. Mills carries a brand new briefcase.

TRACY

Hello, men. You made it.

MILLS

Hi, honey.

Mills gives Tracy a kiss, then presents Somerset.

MILLS

I'd like you to meet Somerset.

SOMERSET

Hello.

Somerset shakes Tracy's hand lightly.

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

Oh... um, William.

TRACY

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

(to Mills)

David... William.

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

MILLS

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

Mills moves to the adjoining bedroom. Somerset stands with his hands folded in front of him.

SOMERSET

It smells good.

TRACY

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

(motions to the table)

Please, sit down.

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

TRACY

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

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

SOMERSET

I hear you and Mills were high school sweethearts.

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

Really?

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

SOMERSET

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

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

SOMERSET

(about the gun)

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

TRACY

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

Somerset lays the gun with his jacket.

SOMERSET

Same here.

Tracy smiles. Somerset goes to the table and transfers a small notebook from his breast pocket to his pants pocket. A piece of paper falls to the floor, closer to Tracy.

TRACY

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

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

TRACY

What is that?

Somerset looks at the rose, then puts it away.

SOMERSET

My future.

Tracy tilts her head, looking at Somerset.

TRACY

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

(goes back to stove)

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

SOMERSET

(smiles)

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

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

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

TRACY

Why aren't you married, William?

MILLS

Tracy... what the hell?

Somerset pokes at the napkin, thinking.

SOMERSET

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

TRACY

It surprises me. It really does.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Very true.

Mills grins, but he means it.

TRACY
(to Somerset)
How long have you lived here?

SOMERSET
Too long.
(drinks)
What do you think so far?

Tracy glances immediately to Mills.

MILLS
It takes time to settle in.

Somerset can see it is a sore subject.

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

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

MILLS
Subway train.

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

TRACY
It'll go away in a minute.

They wait. The rumbling grows louder, knocks something over in the sink. Somerset continues eating, fiddles with his food. The record player skips, then plays on. The clattering dies down. Mills seems uncomfortable.

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

Mills laughs lamely.

TRACY
We found out the first night.

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

SOMERSET

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

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

MILLS

Oh, fuck.

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

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

TRACY

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

MILLS

It's un-American is what it is.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

What about sports?

SOMERSET

What about them?

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

MILLS

You go to movies at least?

SOMERSET

I read. Remember reading?

MILLS

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

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

I vaguely recall a large, angry man, and

someone called Norton.

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

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

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM

The only sounds are from the city outside. The living room table has been cleared and its surface is now covered with various forms, reports and 8" by 10" photographs. Mills and Somerset are both standing. Mills guides Somerset through the photos.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

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

MILLS

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

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

SOMERSET

A pound of flesh.

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

SOMERSET

(reading note)

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

Mills takes out one photo showing the note pinned to the wall beside where "greed" is written in blood.

MILLS

The leather chair was soaked through with sweat.

SOMERSET

(nods, grim)

All day Saturday, and all day Sunday.

(pause)

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

MILLS

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

Somerset's still studying the photos.

SOMERSET

He must have left another puzzle piece.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

This is just to satisfy my curiosity. I'm still leaving town Saturday.

Mills is very tired. He rubs his eyes, then walks to take one more photo from his briefcase. It is the photo of the framed picture of the falsely pretty woman with her eyes circled in blood.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

And, if it's a threat.

MILLS

We put her in a safe house.

Somerset nods. He puts down the photos he's holding. He begins spreading all the pictures out.

SOMERSET

Look at these with fresh eyes. Don't see what the killer wants you to. Don't let guide you...

While he speaks, Somerset keeps shifting the photos, for example: covering the corpse in one with the edge of another.

SOMERSET

Even if the corpse is right there... it's almost like looking through it. Editing out the initial shock. Look at the room.

In the photos, there's the scale. The note on the wall. Shelves of books. The Modern Art painting.

GREED written in blood.

SOMERSET

He's preaching.

MILLS

Punishing.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Like in the Parson's Tale, and Dante.

SOMERSET

Did you read them?

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Seven Terraces of Purgation.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

For now, let's just consider the books as the murderer's inspiration.

The books and sermons are about atonement for sin. And, these murders have been like forced attrition.

MILLS

Forced what?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

Mills runs his hands across his face, walks to the fridge to get beer. Somerset keeps looking at photos and papers.

SOMERSET

No fingerprints?

MILLS

Nothing.

SOMERSET

Totally unrelated victims.

Mills nods, drinking from a beer.

SOMERSET

No witnesses of any kind?

MILLS

None. Which I don't understand. He had to get back out.

Somerset sits in a chair, picks up the photo of the wife. Runs his fingers over the eyes circled in blood.

SOMERSET

In any major city, minding your own business is a perfected science. There's a public crime prevention course offered at the precinct house once a month. The first thing they teach is that you should never

cry "help." Always scream "fire," because people don't want to get caught up in anything. But a fire... that's an evening's entertainment. They come running.

Looking at the wife's photo.

SOMERSET

This is the one thing.

MILLS

I know.

SOMERSET

(holds photo up)

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

MILLS

Okay. But, what?

INT. SAFE HOUSE -- NIGHT

The room is like a hotel room. Mills stands beside the woman from the picture, MRS. GOULD. Mills shows her photos from the murder scene. The photos have been covered in sections to hide the Mr. Gould's corpse. Mrs. Gould is crying. Somerset is on the other side of the room, holding more photos.

MILLS

I'm sorry about this, Mrs. Gould. I really am.

MRS GOULD

I... I don't understand.

Mills helps her flip through the photos. He isn't too keen to put her through this.

MILLS

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

MRS GOULD

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

MILLS

Please, I need you to help me if we're

going to get who did this.

Mrs. Gould sobs quietly, wipes her tears.

MILLS

Anything... anything missing or different.

MRS GOULD

I don't see anything.

MILLS

Are you absolutely certain?

MRS GOULD

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

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

MILLS

Maybe we better wait.

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

SOMERSET

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

MRS GOULD

Wait. Here...

MILLS

What is it?

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

MRS GOULD

This painting...

MILLS

What?

MRS GOULD

Why is this painting hanging upside-down?

Mills turns to look at Somerset.

INT. LAW OFFICE -- NIGHT

Where the greed murder took place. Somerset, wearing gloves, reaches to take the modern art painting off the wall. Mills near, watching.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

Nothing on the wall behind the painting. Blank space.

MILLS

Nothing.

SOMERSET

It's got to be.

Somerset puts the painting down, resting it on its bottom edge. The painting is backed by a thick sheet of brown papers stapled into the wooden frame. Somerset points to where the wire's eye screws used to be screwed into the frame, and to where it has been rescrewed.

SOMERSET

He changed the wire to rehang it.

Somerset takes out his switchblade. Mills is surprised.

MILLS

What the fuck is that?

SOMERSET

A switchblade.

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

MILLS

Nothing. Damn it!

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

MILLS

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

Somerset pushes the painting away, frustrated.

SOMERSET

There must be something.

MILLS

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

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

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

MILLS

Motherfucker!

Across the room, Somerset falls to his knees and pulls open a forensics kit. He takes out a fingerprint brush, examining the bristles. Mills sees this.

MILLS

What?

SOMERSET

Bear with me.

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Just wait!

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

SOMERSET

Call the print lab.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

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

EXT. MILLS' APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

FROM OUTSIDE, looking into the apartment, we see Tracy come in from the bedroom. She sees Mills and Somerset are gone. She comes to open a window, then goes to the kitchen area.

We're still LOOKING IN at her as she starts the dishes in the

sink. The RUMBLING of the SUBWAY TRAIN is HEARD starting. The room begins to rattle, as before.

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

INT. LAW OFFICE -- NIGHT

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

MALE FORENSIC

Oh, man...

MILLS (o.s.)

Talk to me.

The male forensic bites his lip, still studying.

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

MILLS

(to Somerset)

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

SOMERSET

No.

MALE FORENSIC (o.s.)

Well, I can tell you, boys...

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

MALE FORENSIC

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

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, PRINT LAB -- NIGHT

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

MILLS

He just may be nuts enough.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

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

TECHNICIAN

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

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- NIGHT

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

SOMERSET

You meant what you said to Mrs. Gould, didn't you? About catching this guy. You really want to believe that, don't you?

MILLS

And you don't?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Oh, that's all.

SOMERSET

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

in a courtroom.

(pause)

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

MILLS

Bullshit.

SOMERSET

I'm, sorry, but even the most promising clues usually lead only to other clues. I've seen so many corpses rolled away... unrevenged.

MILLS

I've seen the same. I'm not the country hick you seem to think I am.

SOMERSET

In this city, if all the skeletons came out of all the closets... if ever hidden body were to suddenly rise again, there'd be no more room for the living.

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

MILLS

Don't tell me you didn't get that rush tonight... that adrenalin, like we were getting somewhere.

Mills sits back on the couch, closes his eyes.

MILLS

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

Somerset looks at Mills, who crosses his arms to sleep. Somerset puffs the cigarette.

The computer is heard: whir - click - whir - click...

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

THURSDAY

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, HALLWAY -- EARLY MORNING

Mills and Somerset are fast asleep on the couch, leaning against each other. People pass and look at them strangely. A man steps

in front of the couch. He reaches with both hands to slap their faces simultaneously.

It's the captain leaning over them.

CAPTAIN

Wake up, Glimmer Twins. We have a winner.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- EARLY MORNING

A windowless classroom. The captain stands at a podium in front with a white screen at his side. A mug-shot of a man, VICTOR, 25, is projected onto the screen from a slide projector.

CAPTAIN

He goes by the name Victor, as many of you know, and his prints were found on scene by Detectives Mills and Somerset.

FIVE hardened POLICE OFFICERS, four men and one woman, sit in chairs facing the captain. They all wear bullet-proof vests with the word POLICE spray-painted across them.

Somerset and Mills sit in back, drinking coffee, still asleep.

CAPTAIN

Now, this guy's a real beauty. He has a long, long history of serious mental illness. According to the head-shrinkers, it seems his parents gave him a very strict, Southern Baptist upbringing, but somewhere along the line he dropped his marbles.

Two of the cops in the front row are talking.

CAPTAIN

Hey, you two can shut-up now!

The two cops separate like huge, embarrassed school children.

CAPTAIN

Thank you, fuckheads. Now, Victor spent a couple of months in prison for the attempted rape of an eight year old boy, but his lawyer made sure he didn't stay long. Before that, he dabbled in drugs, armed robbery and assault. We've been doing our best to keep an eye on him, but he's been out of circulation for a while.

FEMALE COP

If he disappeared, what do you want from

us?

CAPTAIN

His last place of residence is still in his name. A search warrant is being pushed through the courts as we speak.

A red-headed cop, CALIFORNIA, raises his hand.

CALIFORNIA

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

The cops laugh. The captain is clenching his jaw, angry.

CAPTAIN

Listen, California. When you go in, if Victor isn't home, one of his buddies might be house-sitting, so you go in guns first. Besides using, Victor deals, and we know what kind of crowd he runs with.

There is some chatter amongst the cops.

CAPTAIN

This is what the D.A. has a hard-on for right now, Ladies and Germs, so we do not question why.

Mills leans to Somerset while the captain continues the briefing. They whisper.

MILLS

Does this make it with you?

SOMERSET

Doesn't seem like our man, does it?

MILLS

You tell me. I'm new in town.

SOMERSET

He doesn't have the desire somehow. Our killer seems to have more purpose. More purpose than Victor could ever conceive of.

MILLS

The fingerprints.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

We'll tag along.

Somerset wants no part of that.

SOMERSET

Why would we?

MILLS

(smiles)

Satisfy our curiosity?

INT. MILLS' CAR -- MORNING

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

MILLS

You ever take one?

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

SOMERSET

Never in my twenty-four years, knock on wood. I've only ever taken my gun out five times with the actual intention of using it. Never fired it though. Not once.

(closes his gun)

You?

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

And?

MILLS

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

Mills takes a corner, tires screeching.

MILLS

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

(pause)

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

A pause.

SOMERSET

How did the fire fight end?

MILLS

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

(pause)

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

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

SOMERSET

How was it?

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Sounds like he knew what he was talking about.

INT. SLUM BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- MORNING

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

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

INT. SLUM HALLWAY -- MORNING

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

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

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

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

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

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

CALIFORNIA
Police! Open the door!!

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

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

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

CALIFORNIA
Good morning, sweetheart!

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

CALIFORNIA
Get up, now, motherfucker! NOW!

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, ADJOINING ROOM -- MORNING

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

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

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

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

SOMERSET

Jesus...

California kicks the bed, enraged.

CALIFORNIA

I said get up, Sleepyhead!

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

CALIFORNIA

Fuck me!

Mills pushes past the other cops.

MILLS

Holy shit.

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

SOMERSET

Victor?

BLACK COP

What the hell... ?

CALIFORNIA

(to Somerset)

Check this out, Dick...

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

MILLS

It is Victor.

SOMERSET

(points to a cop)

Call an ambulance.

The blond cop enters from the other room.

BLOND COP

What the fuck is this?

CALIFORNIA

Somebody call a hearse, more like.

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

BLOND COP

What is going on?

Mills sees the female cop looking at the pictures.

MILLS

Hey, California, get your people out.

Somerset takes out rubber gloves and puts them on.

CALIFORNIA

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

Somerset replaces the sheet over Victor, but not over his head.

The cops file out and Mills goes to examine the pictures. California stays by the bed with Somerset.

CALIFORNIA

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

Somerset places his finger along Victor's throat.

MILLS

Somerset, you... you better look here.

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

MILLS

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

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

SOMERSET

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

Somerset wipes his pale face.

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

CALIFORNIA

Mother...

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

MILLS

What...?

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

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

CALIFORNIA

You got what you deserved, Victor.

Somerset leans down beside Mills. Mills looks through the shoebox. Inside are plastic, zip-lock bags.

One contains small clumps of hair. One contains a yellow liquid...

MILLS

(looking at bags)

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

(looks to Somerset)

He laughing at us.

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

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

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

CALIFORNIA

He's alive!

Somerset and Mills look towards the bed.

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

CALIFORNIA

He's still alive!!

EXT. SLUM APARTMENT BUILDING -- MORNING

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

INT. SLUM HALLWAY -- MORNING

The cops are in the hall holding neighbors at bay.

INT. SLUM APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- MORNING

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

INT. SLUM STAIRWELL -- MORNING

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

No kidding! No fucking kidding!

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

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

SOMERSET

Are you listening to me?

Mills pushes Somerset's hand off.

MILLS

I hear you.

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

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

REPORTER

Say cheese.

He take another picture, flashbulb flashing.

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

MILLS

What the fuck are you doing here?

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

REPORTER

I have a right, Officer. I...

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

MILLS

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

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

REPORTER

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

MILLS

Get the fuck out of here!

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

REPORTER (o.s.)

The public has a right to know!

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

MILLS

How do those cockroaches get here so quick?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

(calming)

Sorry about that... I just...

SOMERSET

(sarcastic)

Oh, it's alright.

Somerset starts back up the stairs.

SOMERSET

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

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

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

DOCTOR

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

Mills looks into the oxygen tent.

MILLS

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

DOCTOR

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

Mills winces, moves away from the bed.

SOMERSET

There's no way he'll survive?

DOCTOR

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

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

DOCTOR

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

He chuckles again, engrossed in some information on a clipboard. Mills looks to Somerset like, "this guy's nuts."

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

A blackboard is nailed to the wall. Written in chalk:

| | |
|----------------|---------|
| 1 gluttony (x) | 5 wrath |
| 2 greed (x) | 6 pride |
| 3 sloth (x) | 7 lust |
| 4 envy | |

Somerset and Mills are at their paperwork covered desks.

SOMERSET

((reading one sheet))

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Who pays the rent on time.

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

MILLS

I'm sick of sitting around, waiting for him to kill again.

SOMERSET

This is the job. It's not an Easter egg hunt.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

It's too dismissive to call him a lunatic. We can't make that mistake.

MILLS

Oh, blah, blah, blah. The guy's insane.

SOMERSET

It's a fine line between insane and inspired.

MILLS

Hey, Freud, what brand of bullshit are you shoveling, huh? Right now he's probably dancing around his room in a pair of his mommy's panties, singing show tunes and rubbing himself with peanut butter...

SOMERSET

No.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

We don't know for sure...

SOMERSET

Yes we do. Here...

Somerset picks up the photocopy of the first note.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

And so what?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

Just, realize... this is not some common lunatic. The type of intestinal fortitude it must take... to keep a man bound for a full year. To connect tubes to his genitals. To sever his hand and use it to plant fingerprints. He's methodical and exacting, and worst of all, he's patient.

MILLS

What does all that matter anyway? It's not our job to figure him out, is it? All we have to do is catching him.

Something clicks for Somerset. He looks away, thinking.

Mills watches him.

MILLS

What?

Somerset sits. Ponders, staring off into space.

MILLS

What is it?

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

SOMERSET

How much money do you have?

MILLS

I don't know... like fifty.

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

SOMERSET

(to Mills)

I propose a field trip.

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY -- DAY

Somerset walks through the busy main library, goes to a group of computer terminals. Mills follows, wound up. Somerset sits at

one computer and works the keyboard, hunt-and-peck.

MILLS

Somerset... what the fuck?

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

SOMERSET

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

INSERT -- COMPUTER SCREEN

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

EXT. HOT DOG WORLD -- DAY

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

MAN

(to people)

Take one, you stupid fucks! Here... take one! It's a fucking coupon! Take it!

INT. HOT DOG WORLD -- DAY

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

SOMERSET

They had about fifty health violations during the last inspection.

Mills throws the dog down, looks at his watch.

MILLS

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

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

SOMERSET

Give me your money.

Mills hands his money to Somerset.

MILLS

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

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

GREASY MAN

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

SOMERSET

It's not a problem.

GREASY MAN

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

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

GREASY MAN

About an hour.

Greasy Man leaves, eating the hot dog.

MILLS

Well, that was money well spent.

SOMERSET

Let's go.

INT. PIZZA PARLOR -- DAY

Mills and Somerset sit with a pizza before them.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

Somerset leans closer to Mills, speaks quietly.

SOMERSET

It's probably nothing, but even if it is,

it's no skin off our teeth. The man at Hot Dog World is a friend, in the Bureau.

MILLS

Him?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

What? Assessing fines?

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

You got to be kidding.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

How is this legal?

SOMERSET

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

Somerset takes a bite of pizza.

SOMERSET

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

Mills is starting to warm to it.

MILLS

So they ran our list.

SOMERSET

If you want to know who's been reading Paradise Lost, Purgatory, and say... The

Life and Time of Charlie Manson, the Bureau's computer will tell you. It might give us a name.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

How do you know all about this?

SOMERSET

I don't. Neither do you.

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

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

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

MILLS

This is a waste of time.

SOMERSET

We're focusing.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

(reading aloud)

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

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

MILLS

(reading)

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

SOMERSET

It's not what you think it is.

MILLS

(reads)
The Marquis de Sade and Origins of Sadism.

SOMERSET
That is.

MILLS
(reads)
The Writings of Saint Thomas Aqu...
Aquin...

SOMERSET
Saint Thomas Aquinas.
(starts the car)
He wrote about the seven deadly sins.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL/HALLWAY -- DAY

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

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

SOMERSET
That's what it says. Jonathan Doe.

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

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

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

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

MILLS
What are you going to say?

SOMERSET
You do the talking. Put that old silver
tongue of yours to work.

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

Mills knocks on the door, hard.

MILLS

This is really lame.

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

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

Somerset furrows his brow.

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

SOMERSET

Mills... !

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

John Doe fires again...

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

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

MILLS

Jesus Christ...

Mills scrambles down the stairwell...

IN THE STAIRWELL

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

IN THE HALL ABOVE

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

MILLS (o.s.)

(from in stairwell)

What kind of gun was it?

IN THE STAIRWELL

Somerset comes into the stairwell.

MILLS (o.s.)

(from below)

Damn it, Somerset... what kind of gun?!
How many bullets?

BELOW, IN THE STAIRWELL

Mills hurries down more stairs.

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

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

Mills hits the next landing hard, dropping his gun.

MILLS
Fuck!

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

ABOVE IN THE STAIRWELL

the stairs, breathing hard.

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

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

BELOW IN THE STAIRWELL

ready, moves to peer over the railing, down into
stairwell's center...

in shadow, aiming his gun straight up...

s SHOT is FIRED from below and the bullet is

ABOVE

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

far below -- the bullet is HEARD RICOCHETING

BELOW

waiting as the gunshot echoes.

MILLS

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

continues down the stairs.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, LOWER HALLWAY -- DAY

stairs and into a hallway, falling to one knee,
ing his gun one direction -- empty hallway.

direction, gun hand shaking, catches a
glimpse of John Doe just as he disappears around a corner far
Mills gets up, looking back to the number 2 by
ooks, shouting back towards the stairwell...

MILLS
Second floor! Second floor!

FOLLOW him, tearing ass...

rn, full speed ahead, bringing his gun up...

John Doe's running...

Mills takes aim...

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

MILLS
Get down! Move... !

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

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

BACK AT THE STAIRWELL

Somerset comes down the stairs, tired. He runs.

AROUND THE CORNER, IN THE OTHER HALLWAY SECTION

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

INT. TENEMENT APARTMENT -- DAY

Mills enters, gun up. It's a railroad apartment, with all the

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

Mills charges through the apartment, full on...

He bashes through the closed door...

EXT. TENEMENT BUILDING, FIRE ESCAPE -- DAY

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

Mills leans back out, fanning with his gun, searching.

Below, John Doe runs out the alleyway's mouth and rounds a corner, gone.

Mills curses, scrambling out onto the fire escape, running a few steps and then vaulting the rail... crashes down on the roof of a car parked below. The windshield cracks. Mills jumps off and continues the pursuit...

MILLS

(to himself)

That's six...

EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

Mills rounds the alleyway corner into people packed streets.

Several people are running, heading several different directions.

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

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

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

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

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

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

EXT. CITY ALLEYWAY -- DAY

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

Charging hard onwards...

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

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

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

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

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

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

The gun's hammer is pulled back.

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

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

The gun is dropped. John Doe runs towards the sliver of light. He's gone.

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

SOMERSET

Mills...

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

SOMERSET

Are you alright?

MILLS

I'm fine.

SOMERSET

What happened?

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

SOMERSET

Mills... ?

Mills starts running. Somerset runs to follow.

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL/HALLWAY -- DAY

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

SOMERSET

Wait... just wait.

MILLS

It was him.

SOMERSET

You can't go in there.

Somerset grabs Mills again and Mills shoves him off.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

We need a warrant.

MILLS

We have probable cause now.

Somerset grabs Mills and shoves him against the wall.

SOMERSET

Think about it...

MILLS

What the fuck is wrong with you?

SOMERSET

Think about how we got here!

Somerset holds the computer paper, now crumpled in his hand. He waves it in Mills' face as Mills struggles.

SOMERSET

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

Mills stops struggling, breathing hard, seething, trembling.

MILLS

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

SOMERSET

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

(pause)

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

MILLS

Okay... okay... get off.

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

SOMERSET

You stupid son of a...

MILLS

No point in arguing anymore...

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

MILLS

(pointing back)

Unless you can fix that.

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

MILLS

How much money do we have left?

INT. TENEMENT BUILDING, STAIRWELL -- EARLY EVENING

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

THIN VAGRANT

So, I... I noticed this guy going out...

going out a lot when those murders were happening. So... so I...

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

MILLS

So, you called Detective Somerset, right?

THIN VAGRANT

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

MILLS

(urging him on)

And...

THIN VAGRANT

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

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

MILLS

I told you the rest. You got it?

POLICEMAN

(still writing)

Yeah, whatever.

SOMERSET

Have him sign it.

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

MILLS

Great. Is that it?

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

MILLS

Go drink yourself happy.

Mills quickly guides the vagrant on his way, then turns and

rushes up the stairs, taking them two at a time.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

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

SOMERSET

(to policeman)

Wait outside.

Somerset closes the door most of the way. Mills hits a switch on the wall and a lamp illuminates a desk. The desk is in the center of the room, facing them. The room is bizarre, with some areas cluttered and others barren. All the walls are painted black. All the large, curtainless windows are painted over.

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

The desktop is rather tidy. The only blatantly strange thing is a set of notches carved into the wooden surface: three notches. A candle has been allowed to burn down at one corner of the desk and the wax trail goes all the way to the floor. Mills opens the middle desk drawer. It's empty except for The Holy Bible.

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

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

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

Somerset walks around the bed to a narrow table not far away against the wall. The table contains a strange tableau, like a mini stage, hand-made of cardboard and pasted Communion wafers. A human hand immersed in a jar of liquid is the centerpiece.

SOMERSET

(quiet, to himself)

Victor.

Above this, on the wall, there's a clutter of pinned up articles about the seven deadly sins, pages from art books, pencil drawings of Christ, all tight together and overlapping.

Mills picks up a small piece of paper from a letter holder. It's

a pink receipt from WILD BILL'S LEATHER SHOP.

Written: CUSTOM JOB. \$502.64. PAID IN FULL. Mills puts the receipt back down on the desk.

Somerset walks to a black door. Opens it.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset enters. A ceiling light is on. Bare bulb. There are bookshelves on three walls, filled with notebooks. Thousands and thousands of notebooks.

Somerset takes one notebook down. It is a thick composition book with an unlabeled cover. Inside, the pages are filled with small handwritten sentences, thumb-nail sketches and blurry, glued in photographs; small photos, seemingly cut from contact sheets. The sketches, pictures and writings takes up every single inch.

Somerset takes down another notebook and flips through the pages. Same as the first, filled to the brim.

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

SOMERSET

Jesus.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- EARLY EVENING

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

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

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset walks to a 16mm film projector. It sits facing a battered white screen. Somerset turns the projector on, backing away to switch off the bare bulb above.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, HALL -- EARLY EVENING

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

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Mills enters. He looks around, slowly. Stunned.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- EARLY EVENING

The projector is clattering in the dark, running a piece of film through. The film is spliced to run as a non-stop loop. Somerset watches the screen, light strobing across him.

The screen shows a bright image of clouds drifting, with strange superimposed angels in flowing robes floating jerkily. It's like a weird, old Hollywood version of Heaven.

The images switch abruptly to fire and tormented souls laboring around a pit of molten goo, where more tormented humans squirm. Like Heaven, it's a scratched piece of film from Hollywood's early days.

MILLS (o.s.)

Somerset!

Somerset is engrossed in the images.

MILLS (o.s.)

Somerset... come here!

Somerset hears him.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, HALL/BATHROOM -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset comes down the hall.

MILLS (o.s.)

We had him, damn it.

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

SOMERSET

What are you talking about?

MILLS

We had him.

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

Pictures of John Doe's victims, alive and dead. Grotesque photos, of their pleading faces, and their dead bodies. Close shots of eyes, fingers and mouths.

Mills sits on the closed toilet, throwing something into the nearby sink and resting his head in his hands.

MILLS

The pass was a fake.

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

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

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

MILLS

We had him and we let him go.

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

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

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

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

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

SKETCH ARTIST

You're sure this is him?

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

MILLS

Just put it in circulation.

SKETCH ARTIST

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

SARA

(coming to Mills)

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

MILLS

Keep looking.

SARA

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

MILLS

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

Mills walks away.

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

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

Somerset looks up and closes the notebook.

SOMERSET

We could use about fifty more men here.

MILLS

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

Somerset pauses briefly at Mills' abruptness.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

Then, he must write about these murders.

SOMERSET

(opens notebook, reads)

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

Somerset turns a few pages.

SOMERSET

(reads)

"On the subway today, a man came to me to start a conversation. He made small talk,

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

Somerset closes the notebook.

SOMERSET

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

MILLS

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

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

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

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

Everyone searches. PHONE RINGS.

Mills gets on his hands and knees.

MILLS

Here...

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

MILLS

(into phone)

Hello.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

(from phone)

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

MILLS

(into phone)

Okay, John, let's...

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

(from phone)

No, no, no! You listen. I'll be back on schedule tomorrow, even with this setback. I just had to call and express my admiration. I'm sorry I had to hurt you today, but I didn't have a choice. You will accept my apology, won't you?

Mills says nothing, containing his anger.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)

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

John Doe hangs up. Mills puts down the phone.

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

Mills and Somerset stand in the dark, watching the continuous loop projector's strange images of Heaven and Hell.

MILLS

You were right.

Somerset looks at Mills.

MILLS

He's preaching.

SOMERSET

(nods)

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

The door opens and light bursts in. The captain stands there, looking them over.

CAPTAIN

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

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

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

SOMERSET

(into phone)

Hello.

TRACY (v.o.)
(from phone)
Hello, William? It's Tracy.

SOMERSET
(into phone)
Tracy, is everything alright?

TRACY (v.o.)
Yes, yes, everything's fine.

SOMERSET
Where's David?

TRACY (v.o.)
He's in the shower, in the other room. I'm
sorry to call like this.

SOMERSET
It's alright, I guess.

TRACY (v.o.)
I, um... I need to talk to you. I need to
talk to someone. Can you meet me
somewhere... maybe tomorrow morning?

SOMERSET
I really don't understand.

TRACY (v.o.)
I feel stupid, but you're the only person I
know here. There's no one else...

SOMERSET
I just...

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

SOMERSET
I don't know, with this case.

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

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

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

FRIDAY

INT. COFFEE CAFE -- MORNING

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

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

It's a hard place.

TRACY

I don't sleep very well.

Somerset is trying to be understanding, but sneaks a look at his watch.

SOMERSET

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

TRACY

I'm sorry, I only...

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

TRACY

Perfect example.

SOMERSET

You have to put blinders on sometimes. Most times.

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

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

TRACY

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

(pause)

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

SOMERSET

He mentioned it.

Tracy seems very upset, near tears.

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

You should look into private schools.

TRACY

I don't know...

Tracy looks up, wipes at her eyes.

SOMERSET

What's really bothering you?

Tracy bites her lip.

TRACY

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

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

SOMERSET

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

TRACY

I hate this city.

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

SOMERSET

If you're thinking...

(pause)

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

Tracy looks at Somerset.

SOMERSET

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

(pause)

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

TRACY

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

SOMERSET

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

Somerset reaches and takes Tracy's hand.

SOMERSET

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

(pause)

The relationship will wither and die.

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

SOMERSET

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

There are tears in Somerset's eyes.

SOMERSET

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

He smiles again, wipes his own tears.

TRACY

William...

Somerset's beeper begins BEEPING. He takes it out and stands,

wanting to leave. Tracy gets up and kisses him on the cheek.

TRACY

Thank you.

Somerset starts to back away.

TRACY

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

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

INT. WILD BILL'S LEATHER SHOP -- DAY

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

WILD BILL

Yeah, he picked it up last night.

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

MILLS

This was definitely him?

Mills points to the rendering of John Doe he holds.

WILD BILL

Yeah, John Doe. Easy name to remember.

SOMERSET

What was this job you did for him?

WILD BILL

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

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

WILD BILL

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

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

MILLS

Oh... give me a break.

WILD BILL

I think I undercharged him.

SOMERSET

(looks at photo)

You built this for him? You build this?

WILD BILL

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

A POLICEMAN enters the store.

POLICEMAN

Detectives... we have a situation.

Mills and Somerset follow the cop out.

WILD BILL

Hey, my picture... !

Wild Bill watches them go, scratches his thick scar.

WILD BILL

Fucking pigs.

EXT. THE HOT HOUSE MASSAGE PARLOUR -- DAY

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

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

INT. THE HOT HOUSE, RECEPTION AREA -- DAY

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

BALD MAN

Just wait! Just wait!

One cop pounds his nightstick against the glass.

COP

Get out of the fucking booth!

BALD MAN

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

INT. THE HOT HOUSE, CORRIDORS -- DAY

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

THIRD COP

I don't want to go in there again.

INT. RED ROOM -- DAY

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

CRAZED MAN

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

SECOND ATTENDANT

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

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

Mills and Somerset move towards the covered body.

FIRST ATTENDANT

(to Mills and Somerset)

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

CRAZED MAN

He had a gun! He made me do it!

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

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

SECOND ATTENDANT

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

CRAZED MAN

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

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

CRAZED MAN

Get it off... oh, God!

SWEATING COP

(to Mills and Somerset)

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

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

SWEATING COP

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

Mills turns to the cop.

MILLS

We've already seen it!

INT. SANATORIUM, WHITE ROOM -- DAY

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

CRAZED MAN

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

SOMERSET

Where was the girl?

CRAZED MAN

What? What?

SOMERSET

Where was the prostitute? Where was she?

The crazed man leans forward in his chair.

CRAZED MAN

She was... she was on the bed. She was

just sitting on the bed.

SOMERSET

Who tied her down? You or him?

CRAZED MAN

He had a gun. He had a gun... and he made it happen. He made me do it!

(sobbing)

He made me put that... that thing on. Oh, Christ! He made me wear it... and... and he told me to fuck her. He had the gun in my mouth.

The man slides to the floor and hides his face in his hands.

CRAZED MAN

The gun was in my throat!

Somerset looks up at the mirror in his room. He stands and picks up the Polaroids as two men in institutional uniforms enter to collect the crazed man from the floor.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, INTERROGATION ROOM -- DAY

Mills stands in this dirty room with the dirty, bald man from The Hot House's reception area booth.

MILLS

You didn't hear any screams? Nothing? You didn't notice when this man walked in with a package under his arm?!

BALD MAN

No, I didn't.

MILLS

You didn't notice anything wrong? Nothing seemed strange to you?

BALD MAN

Everybody who goes in there has a package under his arm. Some guys are carrying suitcases full of stuff. And, screams? There're screams coming out of there everyday. It goes with the territory, little boy!

MILLS

You like what you do for a living? You like the things you see?

The bald man smiles strangely.

BALD MAN

No. No, I don't. But, that's life.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, SOMERSET'S OFFICE -- EARLY EVENING

The blackboard:

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---|----------|
| 1 | gluttony (x) | 5 | wrath |
| 2 | greed (x) | 6 | pride |
| 3 | sloth (x) | 7 | lust (x) |
| 4 | envy | | |

Somerset and Mills are shell-shocked, silent, seated at their desks. Somerset is looking at the blackboard. Mills is looking at the billboard out the window.

INT. SPORTS BAR -- NIGHT

Somerset and Mills sit with a full pitcher of beer. The jukebox plays for the other customers. The walls of the bar are covered with trophies, plaques and other victory symbols.

SOMERSET

The irony is, after a day of the type of work he did, he'd come home and read me these morbid crime stories. Murders in the Rue Morgue. Le Fanu's Green Tea. My mother would give him hell because he was keeping me up till all hours.

MILLS

Sounds like a father who wanted his son to follow in his footsteps.

SOMERSET

One birthday he gave me this brand new hardcover book, "The Century of the Detective," by Jurgen Thorwald. It traced the history of deduction as a science, and it sealed my fate, because it was real, not fiction. And, that a drop of blood or a piece of hair could solve a crime... it was incredible to me.

Somerset drinks, then pours more beer.

SOMERSET

You know... there's not going to be a happy ending to this. It's not possible anymore.

MILLS

If we get him, I'll be happy enough.

SOMERSET

No. Face it now. Stop thinking it's good guys against bad guys.

MILLS

How can you say that? Especially after today?

SOMERSET

Don't try to focus on things as black and white, because you'll go blind. There's no winning and losing here.

MILLS

You're the oldest man I know, Somerset.

SOMERSET

You tell me, then... you walk into an apartment, and a man has beaten his wife to death, or the wife murdered the husband, and you have to wash the blood off their children. You put the killer in jail. Who won?

MILLS

You do your job...

SOMERSET

Where's the victory?

MILLS

You follow the law and do the best you can. It's all there.

SOMERSET

Just know that in this case there's not going to be any satisfaction. If we caught John Doe and he were the devil himself, if it turned out he were actually Satan, then, that might live up to our expectations. No human being could do these things, right? But, this is not the devil. It's just a man.

MILLS

Why don't you shut the fuck up for a while? You bitch and complain... if I thought like you, I would have slit my wrist already.

Somerset sits back, looking at Mills.

MILLS

You think you're preparing me for the hard times ahead? You think you're toughening me up? Well, you're not! You're quitting, fine... but I'm staying.

SOMERSET

People don't want a champion. They just want to keep playing the lottery and eating hamburgers.

MILLS

What the fuck is wrong with you? What burnt you out?

SOMERSET

It wasn't one thing, if that's what you mean. I just... I can't live here anymore. I can't live where stupidity is embraced and nurtured as if it were a virtue.

MILLS

Oh, you're so much better than everyone, right? No one's worthy of you.

SOMERSET

Wrong! I sympathize completely, because if you can't win... then, if you don't ignore everything and everyone around you, you... you become like John Doe. It's easier to beat a child than it is to raise it, because it takes so much work to love. You just have to make sure you don't stop to think about the abuse, and the damage, because you'll risk being sad. Keep ignoring.

MILLS

You're talking about people who are mentally ill. You're...

SOMERSET

No I'm not! I'm talking about common, everyday life here. If you let yourself worry about one thing, you'll worry about the next, and the next, and it never ends. In this place, ignorance isn't just bliss, it's a matter of survival.

MILLS

Listen to yourself. You say, "the problem with people is they don't care, so I don't care about people." But, you're already here. You've been here a long time. So,

there's a part of you that knows, even if everything you say is true, none of it matters.

SOMERSET

That part of me is dead.

Mills stands.

MILLS

You want me to agree with you: "Yeah, you're right, Somerset. This is a fucked place. Let's go live in a fucking log cabin." Well, I don't agree with you. You're giving up, and it makes me sick, because you're the best I've ever seen.

Mills throws some money on the table.

MILLS

Thanks for the beer.

Mills leaves, other patrons watching him.

Somerset takes out a cigarette and goes to light it. The lighter will not light, and when it does, Somerset's hand is trembling.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Mills comes quietly into the dark bedroom. Tracy is asleep on the bed. Mills takes off his suit jacket, puts it down. He sits on a chair and unties one shoe, takes it off, then looks at Tracy. Looks at her a long moment.

He puts the shoe on the floor and goes to get on the bed. He kisses his wife's forehead, kisses her cheek, then wraps his arms under and around her. He holds her tight, kisses her again. Tracy stirs.

TRACY

Honey?

Mills runs his fingers along her face.

MILLS

I love you.

Mills holds her tighter. She wraps her arms around him. They lie together, clinging, holding tighter still.

INT. MILLS' APARTMENT BUILDING/STREET -- NIGHT

Through the window of the apartment, we can see Tracy and Mills

on the bed. CAMERA MOVES from this window, to the street.

CAMERA CONTINUES down the night street, to a car far from Mills' building. Inside the car, John Doe sits, looking up at Mills' window. Doe looks as plain as white bread. He adjusts his thick glasses, sips from a coffee cup.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Somerset is in bed. The metronome is sounding; tick... tick... tick... The SOUNDS of the CITY are LOUD.

Somerset closes his eyes, concentrating on the metronome. Tick... tick... tick... TWO MEN are HEARD from outside, YELLING at each other. Somerset rolls over, restless. Tick... tick... tick...

GLASS is HEARD SHATTERING. Somerset opens his eyes. MORE GLASS, bottles being smashed. Somerset sits up. He reaches over, grabs the metronome and throws it against the wall.

INT. SOMERSET'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM -- LATER NIGHT

THWACK. Somerset's switchblade hits the dartboard on the wall and the blade embeds.

Somerset crosses the room, still dressed for bed. He is tense. He takes the switchblade from the dartboard, paces back across the room, turns, holds the blade, then throws. The blade sticks.

Somerset paces back to the dartboard, pulls the blade, paces back, throws the knife. THWACK. He goes to the board, gets the blade, paces, turns, throws. THWACK.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

SATURDAY

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- DAY

A clock on the wall says 12:30.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, ROOM TWO -- DAY

Three deputy detectives are reading John Doe's notebooks. PHONE RINGS from the other room.

INT. JOHN DOE'S APARTMENT, MAIN ROOM -- DAY

One deputy enters. He goes to the phone near the bed. The phone's been hooked into recording device with a speaker and tracing equipment. The deputy turns everything on, answers.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)
(through speaker)
I've gone and done it again.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT, BATHROOM -- DAY

Somerset is looking around this femininely decorated bathroom with a forensic, GIL. Both wear rubber gloves.

At the sink, objects covered in blood: a pair of scissors, a hypodermic needle, first-aid tape and gauze bandages, a bottle of anesthetic, a straight razor and a tube of super glue.

GIL

He really did a number on her, didn't he?

Gil opens the plastic shower curtain and looks into the tub. The tub and shower wall are splattered with blood. The tub has a few inches of water in it. The water is cloudy red. A few bits of tape and gauze float in it. Gil jiggles the drain's knob. Some bubbles pop up from the clogged drain.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT, BEDROOM -- DAY

PRIDE is written in lipstick on a full length mirror. Below that: I DID NOT KILL HER. SHE WAS GIVEN A CHOICE.

Mills and Dr. O'Neill are in the room. O'Neill goes through his black bag. They're by a bed where a WOMAN lies dead under a blanket. The woman's head is sloppily bandaged with heavy white gauze and tape. The gauze is stained by spots of blood. Only the eyes and mouth have been left uncovered. A zoo's worth of stuffed animals have been placed across the bed. The woman holds a stuffed unicorn.

Somerset enters from the bathroom as Mills reaches to take the unicorn from the woman's grasp. There is a cordless phone in her left hand, and her hand clings to it.

Her right hand holds a bottle of prescription pills. Mills tries to open the fingers of this hand with a tongue depressor, but they are super-glued to the bottle. Mills turns the woman's hand slightly so two red pills roll out onto the blanket.

SOMERSET

Sleeping pills.

Mills examines the left hand. The phone is glued into it.

O'Neill steps up, holding a thin pair of silver scissors. He leans to slide the scissors under the woman's bandage mask, starts cutting.

Somerset goes to a dresser where the woman's purse sits open. He takes out the driver's license and looks at the photo. The woman in the picture is stunningly beautiful.

SOMERSET

You see what he did?

Mills is watching the doctor work.

MILLS

He cut her up and dressed the wounds.

SOMERSET

(holds up his left hand)

Call for help, and you'll live. But, you'll be disfigured.

(raises right hand)

Or, put yourself out of your misery.

O'Neill removes the bandages. Mills looks away. We do not see. O'Neill looks to the detectives.

O'NEILL

He cut off her nose to spite her face, and he did it very recently.

EXT. CITY STREET -- DAY

Mills' car pulls up in front of the precinct house. Mills and Somerset get out. They wade through cars towards the old precinct house building.

SOMERSET

I've decided to stay on this, till it's over. Till it's either done or we can both see it's never going to finish.

Mills remains impassive.

MILLS

Oh, you want to stay now?

SOMERSET

One of two things will happen. We're either going to get John Doe, or he'll finish his series of seven, and this case will go on for years.

MILLS

You think you're doing me a big favor by staying?

SOMERSET

I'm requesting you keep me on as your partner a few more days. You'd be doing me the favor.

Mills walks on.

MILLS

You knew I'd say yes.

SOMERSET

No, actually, I wasn't sure at all.

Somerset and Mills climb the steps of the precinct house. Behind them, in the street, John Doe's car pulls up and parks.

Cars behind begin BEEPING. People behind begin cursing and screaming for him to move.

John Doe steps out, his brown work boots, pants and shirttails are splattered with blood.

He walks towards the precinct house, hands in his pockets, like he's out for a stroll. People on the sidewalk stop on seeing him, avoid him.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, RECEIVING LOBBY -- DAY

Mills and Somerset walk past booking cubicles and benches of handcuffed low-lives. Junkies are being led through by uniformed cops. The place is swimming with activity. The two detectives head to the wide duty desk at the end of the room.

SOMERSET

As soon as this is over, I'm gone.

MILLS

Big surprise.

They pass through a gate and Somerset goes towards a staircase leading upstairs. Mills stops at the duty desk. Other cops are vying for the DUTY SERGEANT'S attention.

MILLS

Mills and Somerset are on the premises.

SERGEANT

Wonder-fucking-ful.

Another PLAIN CLOTHES COP behind the duty desk leans over to hold out a few phone-message note to Mills.

PLAIN CLOTHES COP

Your wife called this morning. Do us a

favor and get yourself an answering
machine, how bout it?

Mills nods and wave dismissively, pocketing the messages without
looking at them and walking to follow Somerset.

JOHN DOE (o.s.)

Detective.

Mills heads toward the stairs.

JOHN DOE (o.s.)

Detective!

Mills looks back... stops.

John Doe stands inside the precinct house doors. He gives a very
slight smile.

JOHN DOE

I know you.

Somerset stops, looks back down the stairs.

Mills is staring at Doe, not comprehending.

Doe holds up his arms as if to say, "Presto, here I am." All
eyes go to the blood-soaked figure of John Doe. There comes a
sudden, near-silence in the room.

One UNIFORMED COP takes out his gun, points it at John Doe.

UNIFORMED COP

It's him!

Several other cops drop what they're doing and draw weapons.

Mills, still off balance, takes out his own gun, walking back
through the gate. He points the gun at John Doe.

MILLS

Get down. Get down on the floor.

Cops move slowly in on Doe from all sides.

ANOTHER COP

You heard him, fuckface. Get down!

Somerset comes back through the gate.

SOMERSET

Be careful!

John Doe gets down on his knees, hands in the air. Mills, pulse pounding, steps up, gun in both hands. Not too close.

MILLS

Down! Face on the floor!

ONE COP comes from behind and nudges Doe with his foot.

ONE COP

Spread your legs and get your hands out in front of you!

John Doe lies on his stomach, obeying. Mills comes up and puts his gun right against Doe's head.

MILLS

Don't move. Don't move an inch.

One cop begins frisking Doe. Another comes to put on cuffs.

Somerset comes to Mills' side.

SOMERSET

I don't believe it.

JOHN DOE

(to Somerset)

Hello.

The cop putting on the handcuffs looks up at Somerset and Mills.

COP

What the fuck is this... ?

The cop holds up Doe's cuffed hands. Doe winces. Every single one of Doe's fingers has a bandage wrapped around it.

John Doe tries to muster a smile, his face pressed against the floor, glasses askew, gun at his temple.

JOHN DOE

(to Mills)

I want to speak to my lawyer.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, OBSERVATION ROOM -- DAY

Mills holds a fingerprint card. The black ink prints are just useless blobs, smeared with blood.

Mills, Somerset and the Captain stand in darkness. Mills looks up from the print card through a two-way mirror into an interrogation room.

In the interrogation room, John Doe sits, handcuffed to the wall. This is not some superhuman serial killer.

He looks more like an eccentric college professor, not seething with anger, but looking around with calm, almost lazy eyes. The lawyer, MARK SWARR, sits taking notes and talking with Doe.

CAPTAIN

He cuts off the skin if his fingertips. That's why we can't find a single usable print in the apartment. He's been doing it for quite a while. Keeps cutting before the papillary line can grow back.

MILLS

What about the trace on his bank account and the guns? There must be something to connect him with a past.

CAPTAIN

So far it's all dead ends. No credit history. No employment history. His bank account's only five years old and it started as cash. We're even trying to trace his furniture, but for now all we know is he's independently wealthy, well educated and totally insane. We may never know how he got that way.

SOMERSET

Because he is John Doe, by choice.

MILLS

When do we get to question him?

CAPTAIN

You don't. It goes to court now.

MILLS

He wouldn't just turn himself in. It doesn't make any sense.

Somerset moves from the window, crossing the room to sit.

CAPTAIN

Well, there he sits. It's not supposed to make sense.

SOMERSET

He's not finished.

MILLS

He's pissing in our faces again and we're

just taking it.

CAPTAIN

You're wound too tight, Mills. Let it go.

The captain walks. Mills is furious. He presses his fingers against the two-way-mirror, pushes to crack his knuckles loudly.

MILLS

(to Somerset)

You know he's fucking us.

SOMERSET

You and I are, probably for the first time ever, in total agreement. He wouldn't just stop.

MILLS

Well... what the fuck, man?

SOMERSET

He's only two murders away from finishing his masterpiece, right? Can you even conceive of what's going to happen next? I mean, can you even imagine how he'll try to finish it?

Mills looks in at John Doe. Somerset comes to stand beside.

MILLS

No.

SOMERSET

I can tell you this. I recognize his lawyer. His name's Mark Swarr.

Mills looks at Somerset.

SOMERSET

He's the one who got Victor out.

(pause)

We'll wait for John Doe's plea.

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

Mills is at the desk, feet up. He stares at the blackboard.

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---|-----------|
| 1 | gluttony (x) | 5 | wrath |
| 2 | greed (x) | 6 | pride (x) |
| 3 | sloth (x) | 7 | lust (x) |
| 4 | envy | | |

Clock on the wall says 4:45. Somerset is packing books into

boxes, preparing for his eventual departure.

The captain steps into the office and clears his throat, looking like there is something making him very unhappy.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, CAPTAIN'S OFFICE -- DAY

Mills and Somerset stand together. The captain is behind his desk with Martin Talbot, the D.A., seated in front of him. Mark Swarr is addressing them all, seems nervous but in control.

SWARR

My client says there are two more bodies... two more victims, hidden away. He will take Detectives Mills and Somerset to these bodies, but only Detectives Mills and Somerset. Only at six o'clock today.

Talbot wipes his moist brow with a handkerchief.

TALBOT

Oh, Christ.

MILLS

Why us?

SWARR

He says he admires you.

SOMERSET

(to captain)

This is all part of his game plan.

SWARR

My client claims that if the detectives do not accept this offer, these two bodies will never be found.

CAPTAIN

Frankly, counselor, I'm inclined to let them rot.

TALBOT

We don't make deals, Mr. Swarr.

Mills gets in Swarr's face.

MILLS

How is it working for a scumbag like this? You proud of yourself?

CAPTAIN

Ease back, Mills.

SWARR

I'm required by law to serve my clients to the best of my ability, and to serve their best interests.

Mills back off.

CAPTAIN

Well, we're going to have to pass.

SWARR

My client... he also wishes to inform you, if you do not accept, he will plead insanity, across the board.

TALBOT

(to no one in particular)

Let him try! I'd like to see him try!

SWARR

Come now, Martin. We all know, with the extreme nature of these crimes, I could get him off with such a plea.

Talbot considers this, wringing the handkerchief in his hands. Mills looks at Somerset. Somerset looks at him.

TALBOT

I'm not letting this conviction slide, I can tell you that right here and right now!

SWARR

He says, if you accept, under his specific conditions, he will sign a full confession and plead guilty... right here, right now.

Talbot glares at Swarr.

CAPTAIN

(to Mills)

What do you think?

MILLS

I'm in.

SWARR

It has to be both of you.

SOMERSET

If he were to claim insanity, this conversation is admissible. The fact that he's blackmailing us with his plea...

SWARR

And, my client reminds you, two more are dead. The press would have a field day if they found out the police didn't seem too concerned about finding them... giving them a proper burial.

SOMERSET

If there really are two more dead.

The captain picks up a sheet from his desk.

CAPTAIN

The lab report came up from downtown, They did a quickie on Doe's clothing and fingernails. They found blood from Doe, from him cutting his own fingers... there was blood from the woman whose face he cut off, and blood from a third party. As yet unidentified.

TALBOT

(to Somerset)

You would be escorting an unarmed man.

Somerset thinks it over. He looks to Mills.

MILLS

Let's finish it.

Somerset looks at the floor, then at Swarr.

SOMERSET

(to the captain)

Well... get the fucking lawyer out of the room and we can talk about how this whole thing's going to go down.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, BATHROOM/LOCKER ROOM -- DAY

Somerset's hand reaches to the sink to pick up a razor.

Somerset and Mills are at the sinks, looking at themselves in mirrors, shirtless. They have shaving cream spread across their chests. Somerset flicks his cigarette in the sink, then brings the razor up to start shaving the hair off his chest. Mills is already doing the same.

SOMERSET

If John Doe's head splits open and a U.F.O. flies out, I want you to have expected it.

MILLS

I will.

They continue shaving.

MILLS

If I were to accidentally cut off one of my nipple, would that be covered by workman's compensation?

Somerset smiles just slightly.

SOMERSET

I suppose so.

(pause)

If you were man enough to actually file the claim, I'd buy you a new one out of my own pocket.

Mills finishes shaving, washes and wipes his chest off with a towel. He turns dead serious.

MILLS

Listen, Somerset... I uh...

Mills pauses, sighs. Somerset stops shaving and looks at him.

SOMERSET

What is it?

MILLS

Well, I have to tell you...

(pause)

I think I've fallen in love with you.

SOMERSET

(shakes his head)

Slut.

MILLS

(laughs, walking out)

Kiss me on the lips.

SOMERSET

(still shaving)

Give me a break.

INT. PRECINCT HOUSE, READY ROOM -- DAY

Somerset and Mills have their shirts open. A female technician tapes a small radio transmitter and microphone to Mills' chest. Somerset is already wired up, pressing the adhesive to make sure it'll hold.

The technician finishes prepping Mills. Somerset buttons up his shirt. The technician packs up her kit, leaving. The room is quiet. Somerset picks up his bullet-proof vest, slides into it.

Mills looks at his watch. He puts on his own vest, fastening it tight. He looks at Somerset.

Somerset takes out a roll of antacids and pops a few.

Mills holds out his hand and waits for an antacid. Somerset looks at him, flicks a few into Mills' palm. Mills chews them.

SOMERSET

Stay as cold as ice.

Somerset picks up his gun off a chair. Mills picks up his gun. They both check them out and close them up. They lay the guns in holsters at the small of their backs.

They look at each other. Somerset holds out his hand. Mills shakes it.

INT. CITY STREET, PRECINCT HOUSE FRONT -- DAY

The street is full of shadows as the sun is falling low. At the front of the precinct house, a throng of reporters shifts anxiously. A line of policemen holds them back.

Martin Talbot steps out of the precinct house, cops on either side of him. The press swarm lurches forward, flashbulbs exploding. Talbot holds out his hands, preparing to speak.

EXT. CITY STREET, PRECINCT HOUSE REAR -- DAY

At the rear of the precinct house, Somerset's car pulls out of the fenced in parking lot. The car speeds up on the street and turns a corner, heading into the grim city.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP -- DAY

California is dressed in full battle gear, looking through binoculars to the city below. The wind blows hard.

A PILOT, holding two helmets, comes up behind California. A sleek police helicopter sits on the roof's helipad.

CALIFORNIA

Is this wind going to hurt us?

PILOT

Just makes the ride more fun.

The cocky pilot grins.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

Somerset is at the wheel. Mills is in the passenger's seat, looking back at John Doe through protective wire mesh. Doe's in the back seat. His handcuffs are attached to ankle cuffs by a length of chain. He is dressed in gray pants and a gray shirt, looking out the window, sweaty but placid.

SOMERSET

Who are you, John? Who are you really?

John Doe looks to Somerset's eyes in the rearview mirror.

JOHN DOE

What do you mean?

SOMERSET

I mean, at this point, what would it hurt if you told us a little about yourself?

JOHN DOE

(pause)

It doesn't matter who I am. Who I am means absolutely nothing.

(looking out, to Somerset)

You need to turn left here... at the traffic light.

MILLS

Where we headed?

JOHN DOE

You'll see.

Mills looks at Doe for a long time in silence.

MILLS

We're not just going to pick up two more bodies, are we, Johnny? That wouldn't be... shocking enough. Wouldn't keep you on the front page of the newspapers.

JOHN DOE

Wanting people to pay attention, you can't just tap them on the shoulder. You have to hit them in the head with a sledgehammer. Then, you have their strict attention.

MILLS

What makes you so special that people should pay attention?

JOHN DOE

Not me. I'm not special. I'm not exceptional.

(pause)

This is, though. What I'm doing.

MILLS

I hate to burst your bubble, but other than the fact that you're especially sadistic, there's nothing unusual about these precious murders of yours.

JOHN DOE

You know that's not true.

MILLS

In two months, no one's going to even remember this happened.

Doe looks down for a moment, then looks up, almost shyly.

JOHN DOE

You can't see the whole... the whole complete act yet. Not yet. But, when this is done, it's going to be... so... so...

MILLS

Spit it out.

JOHN DOE

It's going to be flawless. People will barely be able to comprehend it. It will seem almost surreal... but it will have a tangible reality, so they won't be able to deny it.

Doe looks down, licking his lips. He clenches his hands into fists, digging his bandaged fingertips into his sweaty palms.

JOHN DOE

I can't wait for you to see. I can't wait...

(pause, looks to Mills)

It's really going to be something.

MILLS

Well, I'll be standing beside you the whole time, so you be sure to let me know when this whole, complete reality thing is done. Wouldn't want to miss it.

JOHN DOE

Oh, don't worry. You won't...

INT, POLICE HELICOPTER -- DAY

The helicopter is in flight above the city. California is strapped in, hanging out the door. He holds a high powered automatic rifle, wears goggles and a helmet/headset.

JOHN DOE (v.o.)
(through headset)
... you won't miss a thing.

Two other armed cops sit in the belly of the chopper. California leans in and looks up towards the pilot.

CALIFORNIA
(into helmet microphone)
Head over the bridge and keep them in sight. Just keep your distance.

The pilot looks back and nods.

EXT. CITY SKY -- DAY

The chopper dips, flying like a bullet over the polluted city, heading towards the setting sun.

EXT. CITY STREETS -- DAY

Somerset's car moves along a highway at river's edge. Heading for a huge suspension bridge filled with speeding traffic ahead.

INT. SOMERSET'S CAR -- DAY

John Doe has his head against the window, looking up at the bridge, excited. He sits back, glances out the back window, then faces front, bites his lip, fidgety, like a kid on Christmas Eve.

Somerset's watching him through the rearview mirror.

SOMERSET
What's so exciting?

JOHN DOE
It's not too far away now.

[page 106. missing from script]

JOHN DOE
(long pause)
I... I doubt I enjoyed it any more than...

Detective Mills would enjoy some time alone with me in a room without windows.

(looks to Mills)

Isn't that true? How happy would it make you to hurt me, with impunity?

MILLS

(coy mocking)

Now... I wouldn't do something like that, Johnny. I like you. I like you a lot.

JOHN DOE

You wouldn't because you know there are consequences. It's in those eyes of yours, though... nothing wrong with a man taking pleasure in his work.

(pause, shakes his head)

I won't deny my own personal desire to turn each sin against the sinner. I only took their sins to logical conclusions.

MILLS

You only killed a bunch of innocent people so you could get your rocks off. That's all.

JOHN DOE

Innocent? Is that supposed to be funny? Look at the people I killed. An obese man, a disgusting man who could barely stand up... who if you saw him on the street, you'd point so your friends could mock him along with you. Who if you saw him while you were eating, you wouldn't be able to finish your meal. After him I picked the lawyer. And, you both must have been secretly thanking me for that one. This was a man who dedicated his life to making money by lying with every breath he could muster... to keeping rapists and murderers on the streets.

MILLS

Murderers?

JOHN DOE

(ignoring)

A woman...

MILLS

Murderers like you?

JOHN DOE

(ignoring, louder)

A woman... so ugly on the inside that she couldn't bare to go on living if she couldn't be beautiful on the outside. A drug dealer... a drug dealing pederast, actually.

(laughs at that one)

And, don't forget the disease spreading whore. Only in a world this shitty could you even try to say these were innocent people and keep a straight face.

(getting worked up)

That's the point. You see a deadly sin on almost every street corner, and in every home, literally. And we tolerate it. Because it's common, it seems trivial, and we tolerate, all day long, morning, noon and night. Not anymore. I'm setting the example, and it's going to be puzzled over and studied and followed, from now on.

MILLS

Delusions of grandeur.

JOHN DOE

You should be thanking me.

MILLS

And, why is that?

JOHN DOE

You're going to be remembered, and it's all because of me. And, the only reason I'm here right now is because I wanted to be.

MILLS

We would have gotten you eventually.

JOHN DOE

Really? Just biding your time, then? Toying with me. Is that it? Letting five people die until you finally felt like going out and hauling me in?

Doe sits forward, slowly getting to Mills.

JOHN DOE

(angrily)

Tell me what it was that gave me away. What was the piece of evidence you were going to use against me right before I walked up to YOU and put my hands in the air.

MILLS

I seem to remember knocking on your door.

JOHN DOE

And, I remember breaking your nose.
(leans further forward)
You're only alive because I didn't kill you.

MILLS

Sit back.

John Doe doesn't sit back, staying very close to the wire mesh.

JOHN DOE

I spared you, and you're going to have to remember that every time you look in the mirror at that nose on your face for the rest of your life. Or, I should say, for the rest of what life I've allowed you to have.

Mills slams his fist against the mesh, fed up, furious.

MILLS

I said, sit back, freak. Sit back and shut your fucking mouth!

Die sits back, taking a deep breath and letting it out.

In the front seat, Somerset shoots a concerned glance at Mills, then looks up into the rearview mirror.

IN THE MIRROR: Doe, calm, gives Somerset a smile.

Doe then turns his attention back out the passenger window, watching the world pass by, his face pressed to the glass.

Mills sits forward in his seat, letting his anger come down. Doe keeps staring out the window. A long pause.

JOHN DOE

Don't ask me to pity the people I killed. I don't mourn them anymore than I mourn the thousands who died in Sodom and Gomorrah.

Mills almost lets this pass, but can't. Blunted anger:

MILLS

You fuck. You really think what you did was God's good work?

Pause. John Doe is pressing his forefinger into the tip of his thumb, causing blood to drip from under the bandage.

JOHN DOE

The Lord works in mysterious ways.

EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING

The helicopter flies over huge, blackened industrial parks, past smokestacks spewing soot. The sky is turning crimson.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

California leans way out looking back at the city.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset's car comes down this rocky, deserted strip, towards the industrial parks. The car tosses dirt into the air where it is captured on the wind.

EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING

The chopper roars, low, close to the stretch of industrial road. This is the only road through vast swampy fields. The industrial parks are far behind.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

California still leans out, gun poised, looks over the fields.

CALIFORNIA

There ain't no ambush out here. There ain't no fucking nothing out here.

PILOT (v.o.)

(through headset)

We got about two minutes before they come up behind us.

CALIFORNIA

Go high. Way up. In sixty seconds, cut to the west.

EXT. SKY -- EARLY EVENING

The chopper climbs, really moving.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset's car comes down the road, surrounded by marshlands.

The car slows, then stops. Mills gets out and goes to extract Doe. Somerset gets out, looking east to the industrial parks and city beyond. The sky is darkening.

Somerset walks and looks to the west. The sky is red. Very far away, a passenger train moves towards the hidden sun.

Somerset watches the train, walking to the edge of the roadway. He looks down and steps back from what he sees.

A dead dog lies in the weeds, old and moldering.

Somerset turns to the car, where John Doe stands with Mills. Doe points with his cuffed hands to the dog, grins.

JOHN DOE

I didn't do that.

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

The wind howls, pounding on John Doe as he walks through the swampy field. He walks slowly, encumbered by the deep muck and by the short chain between his ankles. Mills is with Doe, disgusted by the ooze covering his shoes and pants cuffs. He looks ahead, cautious. Somerset walks behind them.

Doe keeps looking back towards the car on the industrial road.

MILLS

What are you looking for?

Doe looks forward.

JOHN DOE

What time is it?

SOMERSET

Why?

Somerset looks at his watch. It's one minutes after seven.

JOHN DOE

I want to know.

Mills gives Doe a shove.

Somerset looks back towards the industrial road, worried.

MILLS

Just keep leading the way.

JOHN DOE

It's close.

SOMERSET

Mills!

Mills and Doe look back at Somerset. Somerset is facing the industrial road, pointing. A van is coming, dust flying.

Somerset looks at Mills. Mills looks at Somerset. They take out their guns. Somerset starts towards the road.

SOMERSET

Stay with him.

MILLS

Wait!

SOMERSET

There's no time to discuss it!

Somerset runs to head off the van.

John Doe begins walking to follow Somerset.

JOHN DOE

There he goes.

Mills levels his gun at John Doe's head.

EXT. MARSHLANDS, NEAR INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset runs, breathing hard, opening the top of his bullet-proof vest to speak into his hidden microphone.

SOMERSET

There's a van... coming down the industrial road. Coming from the east.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

The chopper is circling in the air, far from the marshlands with the sun behind it. Another cop is in the hatchway beside California, looking through binoculars.

SOMERSET (v.o.)

(from headset)

The van is coming from the east. I don't know what it is. Come around. Come around.

EXT. MARSHLANDS, NEAR INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset continues, charging through the mire.

SOMERSET

Just get ready for anything and wait for my signal. Wait for me.

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

Mills keeps the gun on John Doe, watches Somerset far off.

JOHN DOE

It's good we have some time to talk.

Doe starts walking again.

MILLS

Get down. Get down on your knees!

Mills grabs Doe and pushes Doe's knees out with his foot, making Doe kneel in the brown water.

Mills positions himself behind Doe so that Doe is between him and the road. Now, Mills can keep the gun on Mills and still watch Somerset.

EXT. MARSHLANDS, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset comes up on the road, near his car. He signals for the van to stop, then fires a warning shot in the air. The van is about one hundred yards away, still coming.

Somerset walks towards it, breathless, pointing his gun.

SOMERSET

Stop the van! Stop!

The van brakes, wheels sliding on the loose roadway. Stops. Somerset moves up to it, staying about ten feet away.

SOMERSET

Get out! Get out with your hands on your head! Do it now!

The driver of the van, a DELIVERYMAN, pushes the door open and slides out, slow, takes off his sunglasses.

DELIVERYMAN

Jesus Christ, man, don't shoot me!

SOMERSET

Turn around. Hands on your head!

DELIVERYMAN

What the hell's going on?

SOMERSET

Who are you? What are you doing out here?

DELIVERYMAN

I'm... I'm just delivering a package.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

California listens as the chopper spins over industrial parks.

DELIVERYMAN (v.o.)

(through headset)

It's just a package for this guy... David.
Detective David Mills.

CALIFORNIA

Motherfucker.

The pilot looks back at California.

PILOT

Let's do it.

CALIFORNIA

No! Wait for Somerset!

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

Mills and Doe can see Somerset keeping his distance from the deliveryman. The deliveryman moves to the back of the van and opens the van's rear door.

JOHN DOE

When I said I admired you... I meant what I
said. I do admire you.

Mills keeps his eyes on the van, but steps up to place his gun at the back of Doe's head. Pulls the hammer back.

MILLS

Shut up.

EXT. MARSHLANDS, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

The deliveryman takes a brown package, about a foot square, from the van.

DELIVERYMAN

This guy paid me five hundred bucks to
bring it out here. He wanted it here at
exactly seven o'clock.

SOMERSET

Put it down. Put it on the ground.

DELIVERYMAN

Okay...

He puts it on the road and backs away, holding up his hands.

Somerset glances into the field to see Doe on his knees with Mills behind him. Somerset looks at the package. Written on top: DETECTIVE DAVID MILLS -- HANDLE WITH CARE.

SOMERSET

(to deliveryman)

Go. Get out of here!

The deliveryman backs off, then scrambles into the van. Somerset pulls back his bullet-proof vest and speaks into the mic.

SOMERSET

There's a package here. It's from John Doe.

The van tears away. Somerset doesn't know what to do. He walks around the package, reholsters his gun.

SOMERSET

I don't know... I don't know...

He looks out towards Doe and Mills.

INT. HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

California waits, listening, looking into the blood-red sky.

SOMERSET (.o.)

(through headset)

I'm going to have to open it.

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

Mills watches Somerset kneel beside the package on the road.

JOHN DOE

I wish I could have been a normal man like you. I wish I could have a simple life.

MILLS

What the fuck is going on here?!

EXT. MARSHLANDS, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset pulls his switchblade, clicks it open.

He cuts across the top of the box, hands shaking, cuts quickly.

He pulls the box open, pulls at some bubble-wrap inside.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

The pilot grits his teeth.

PILOT
(into helmet mic)
Let's go!

CALIFORNIA
We are going to wait!

California listens.

SOMERSET (v.o.)
(through headset)
Oh, Christ... oh Christ...

EXT. MARSHLANDS, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset stumbles backwards, away from the open box. He is white as a sheet, eyes filled with numb fear. He leans against his car for support, wretches, sick, holds the back of his hand to his mouth.

SOMERSET
No...

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

Mills is watching Somerset, grabs John Doe by the shirt.

MILLS
Get up. Stand up! Let's go!

Doe stands, tries to walk. Mills is walking quickly, towards Somerset. Doe can't keep up.

JOHN DOE
You've made a good life for yourself...

MILLS
Shut up!

Doe falls and Mills starts dragging him through the reeds.

EXT. MARSHLANDS, INDUSTRIAL ROAD -- EARLY EVENING

Somerset wipes saliva from his lips and tears from his eyes. He takes a deep breath, looks to see Mills dragging Doe.

SOMERSET

Oh, fuck, no...

Somerset straightens, tries to pull himself together. He swallows, draws his gun.

SOMERSET

(into hidden mic)

Listen... listen to me. Whatever you do... don't come in here. Stay away. No matter what you hear, do not move in!

(starts towards Mills)

John Doe has the upper hand.

Somerset picks up his switchblade and flips the blade back in. He enters the marsh.

EXT. MARSHLANDS -- EARLY EVENING

Mills sees Somerset coming and pulls Doe so that Doe stands.

JOHN DOE

(quietly, watching)

Here he comes.

MILLS

(shouts to Somerset)

What the fuck is going on?

JOHN DOE

(to Mills)

I want you to know, I wish I could have lived like you do.

Somerset starts running towards Mills, mud splattering.

SOMERSET

Mills... put down your gun! Throw it away!

Mills leaves Doe behind, walks towards Somerset, gun down.

MILLS

What?

Somerset is fifty yards away and closing.

SOMERSET

Throw your gun down now!

MILLS

What are you talking about? What happened?

JOHN DOE

Are you listening to me, Detective Mills?

I'm trying to tell you how much I admire
you... and your pretty wife Tracy.

Mills freezes, turns to Doe. Doe smiles. Somerset is close.

SOMERSET

Throw your weapon, detective! Now!

MILLS

(to John Doe)

What did you say?

JOHN DOE

It's surprising how easily a member of the
press can purchase information from the men
in your precinct.

SOMERSET

David... please...

JOHN DOE

I visited your home this morning, after you
left.

Mills is filled with an aching terror.

JOHN DOE

I tried to play husband... tried to taste
the life of a simple man, but it didn't
work out. So, I took a souvenir.

Mills turns to look at Somerset with pleading eyes. Somerset
holds out his hand.

SOMERSET

Give me the gun.

JOHN DOE

Her pretty head.

MILLS

Somerset...

JOHN DOE

Because I envy your normal life. Envy is
my sin.

Somerset can't hold back tears.

Fury rises in Mill and he turns to level his gun at John Doe.

Somerset raises his gun and points it at Mills.

SOMERSET

No!

Mills sees Somerset's gun, raises his gun to Somerset.

MILLS

Tell me it's not true.

SOMERSET

I can't let you do this...

Mills steps forward, enraged.

MILLS

Put your gun down!!

SOMERSET

Don't do this... please...

MILLS

Put the gun down, Somerset!

A pause. Somerset's gun hand is trembling. The wind whips across them. The HELICOPTER can be HEARD distantly. Somerset throws his gun down.

SOMERSET

David, listen to me...

Mills goes to grab John Doe by the throat and puts the gun to Doe's forehead, blind with rage.

Somerset holds his hand behind his back, opens his switchblade.

SOMERSET

He wants this! He wants you to do it!

Doe is staring into Mills' eyes with wild expectation.

JOHN DOE

Kill me.

Doe lowers his head, waiting for execution.

Mills holds the gun at Doe's head, undecided, furious.

Somerset edges towards them.

MILLS

(looks to Somerset)

Stop it! You stay away!

Somerset moves the switchblade so he's holding it by the blade,

ready to throw, keeping it hidden.

SOMERSET

I can't let you do this!

Mills kicks Doe and throws him backwards on the ground. The HELICOPTER is CLOSER.

Mills stands over Doe and points the gun.

JOHN DOE

She begged for her life, and for the life
of your baby inside her.

Mills' face fills with confusion -- then a wave of horror.

Doe's eyes register shock.

JOHN DOE

You didn't know.

SOMERSET

NO!

Somerset brings his hand out to throw the blade, but Mills reacts to the movement, turns on Somerset and fires -- BLAM!

Somerset flies backwards in the air, bullet exploding into his shoulder, just above the bullet-proof vest's opening.

Somerset hits the ground, crying out, bloody, writhing.

Mills turns the gun on John Doe.

INT. POLICE HELICOPTER -- EARLY EVENING

The chopper is over the marshland. California is leaning out with his rifle. He cringes from the sounds as FROM HIS HEADSET is HEARD: BLAM -- BLAM -- BLAM -- BLAM -- BLAM.

INSERT -- TITLE CARD

TWO WEEKS LATER

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- DAY

Somerset sits in a wheelchair. He is dressed in a hospital gown. His upper chest and shoulder are wrapped in bandages. He stares out the window at the city's buildings.

CAPTAIN (o.s)

Hey there, Somerset.

Somerset turns to see the captain. Somerset looks weak, older.

SOMERSET

Hello.

The captain walks in, carrying something behind his back.

CAPTAIN

How you feeling?

SOMERSET

I can breathe without pain now, so I guess
I feel great.

Somerset musters a lame smile. The captain sits on the bed.

CAPTAIN

The guys at the precinct heard you're
getting out today. Anyway, we all chipped
in...

The captain takes a big tool belt full of tools from behind his back. He hands it over. Somerset looks at it and lays it on his lap. He smiles for real.

SOMERSET

Thank you. Tell them, thank you.

CAPTAIN

We figure you need all the tools you can
get to fix up that piece of shit you call a
house.

SOMERSET

Yeah, that's true.

Somerset continues examining the tools.

CAPTAIN

They're hoping you stop and say goodbye
before you go, but I told them not to
expect it.

SOMERSET

(not looking up)

It would be too hard.

The captain stands.

CAPTAIN

I have to get going, but... there is one
more thing.

Somerset looks up. The captain takes a letter from his pocket.

CAPTAIN

I don't know if you're going to want it.
It was down front. It's from Mills.

Somerset pauses, then puts out his hand to take it.

CAPTAIN

He's being arraigned tomorrow.

SOMERSET

I read about it in the paper.

Somerset just looks at the letter.

CAPTAIN

I guess... decide for yourself. I don't
know what it says. I'm going to go.

SOMERSET

I'll see you.

The captain nods and walks into the hall.

Somerset wheels back to the window. He looks at the letter.
Pause. He opens it. Unfolds the paper inside.

The note reads:

YOU WERE RIGHT. YOU WERE
RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING.

Somerset closes the note, upset.

INT. HOSPITAL, MAIN NURSES' STATION -- DAY

Somerset is in street clothes. He signs a form at the busy front
desk. A NURSE takes the form and hands Somerset a large manila
envelope.

NURSE

There you go, Mister Somerset.

"Mister" causes Somerset to look strangely at the nurse.

NURSE

Yes?

SOMERSET

Nothing.

EXT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Somerset comes down the stairs, slowly, tired. He holds the manila envelope and a small suitcase. The streets are busy with pedestrians and traffic.

He walks down the sidewalk.

He puts down the suitcase and opens the manila envelope to look inside. He sorts through the contents, takes out his keys and puts them in his pocket.

He reaches in the envelope again, and takes out the square of wallpaper with the pale, red rose on it. There is some dried blood on the paper. Somerset lays the envelope on the ground beside the suitcase.

He looks at the rose, tries to scratch off the blood.

He looks up, squinting from the sun, at the city bustling around him. At the tight canyon formed by the buildings.

At the cars, buses and taxis racing in the streets.

At a man, talking to himself, who lies on the sidewalk, surrounded by garbage.

At the people, miserable people, walking past him.

Somerset takes out the note from Mills: YOU WERE RIGHT. YOU WERE RIGHT ABOUT EVERYTHING.

A father passes by, holding his young son's hand. Somerset turns to watch them pass. The father reaches to pick the son up and carry him in his arms. The boy laughs and holds tight.

The father hugs his son to him, kisses him on the cheek. The boy returns the kiss with great affection.

Somerset watches them disappear in the mass of humanity. He looks back at the two papers in his hands. He lets out a sigh.

SOMERSET

(to himself)

Oh... man...

He sighs again, drained.

He puts the pale paper rose inside the note from Mills. He folds them together.

He tears them both up, into little pieces.

EXT. PRECINCT HOUSE -- DAY

Cars roll by in the street. Cops come and go.

Somerset walks up the stairs, into the precinct house. The doors shut behind him.

END