

WICKED CYCLES

Written by

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Note: CUT TO: represents Billy's blackouts. We blackout with him.

**OVER BLACK:**

*"Twice a month is our side of the deal. We do that, we get an afterlife with no restrictions, ya understand? No type of moral commitment. Who wouldn't want that?"-- Jacob, somewhere down the line.*

OPEN ON:

INT. JENNY'S BATHROOM - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 2009

PATRICK (11) stares at his reflection. The dress he displays, a used item of his sisters, isn't exactly a tailored fit.

His weak smile embodies a cloistered happiness. The door is suddenly RIPPED open by BRAD (40), father of the imbalanced.

Patrick stiffens. Immediate regret.

BRAD

Alright, enough with this Jenny  
shit--

Brad grabs a handful of Patrick's hair and shoves his face inches away from the mirror. Eyes fastened, tears cascade down the boy's cheeks.

BRAD (CONT'D)

You look at yourself and you tell  
me what you see! Boy OR fucking  
girl?!

Tightening his grip;

BRAD (CONT'D)

Huh?!

Patrick opens his eyes.

PATRICK

Boy!

EXT. OUT FRONT - JENNY'S MOBILE HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Brad thrusts the dress-displaying Patrick through the front door. Mobile homes surround them.

BRAD

You go take a walk and see the  
looks you get. Might snap you into  
reality.

With his eyes, Patrick supplicates.

BRAD (CONT'D)

No, go on, I told ya time and time  
again now.

Patrick tromps down the steps.

## WICKED CYCLES

FADE IN

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY - 2008

The heat is evident. BILLY (22), on the outskirts of his assigned duty, removes his hard hat to wipe away some wetness.

JIM (45) and MITCH (40), work mates, stand hip deep in the ground, heaving out dirt by means of a shovel. Welcoming some assistance;

MITCH

Care to help us here?

Billy emits his frustration through a dead-tired exhale, fixes the protectant back on his head.

EXT. HOMING COMPLEX - NIGHT - LATER

An aged sedan parallel parks outside a crummy block of row homes. Billy exits, en route a concrete segment of steps.

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

It's quiet. RACHAEL (23) sits on their hand-me-down sofa, hands resting across her lap. A wooden, almost juvenile rosary hangs around her neck.

The connected kitchenette would be a tight squeeze for anything above two people. The stump of a hallway escorts to a bedroom-bathroom combo.

Billy enters from the front door.

RACHAEL

Hey, baby.

BILLY

Hey.

The television is off.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Did you give them a call?

RACHAEL  
I did. It will be turned on the second after it's paid.

BILLY  
What about the two week delay thing?

RACHAEL  
Guy said they don't offer it anymore.

His drained body unloads down next to her.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
This sucks, monkey.

BILLY  
It'll be alright, sweets. Friday's pay day and before you know it you'll be watching whatever you please.

She smiles. May have been the first all day.

RACHAEL  
Usually it's me with the pep talks.

BILLY  
I got a few in me. But, I thought this would be the case so I stopped and got tonights entertainment-

Billy stands and, from his rugged jean pocket, withdraws a deck of cards. Rachael's gaiety can't be contained.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

Billy and Mitch, now shoulder deep in the earth, shovel and haul the dirt above them. The sun doesn't care how deep the men go; its vicious rays continue to lash them.

Billy gives his tool a steadying plant.

BILLY  
This is ridiculous. Fucking 100 degrees out and they got us doing prison work.

Still shoveling;

MITCH

Yeah, your bitching doesn't do much to solve it.

Billy takes a breather. Clasps the wooden handle.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONSTRUCTION COMPANY - LATER

The workers unload for the day. Billy changes from boots to sneakers. TIM (45), the boss, enters.

TIM

Bill, can I talk to ya for a minute?

BILLY

Yeah, what's up?

TIM

Just come into my office.

BILLY

Uh, yeah, yeah.

Tim nods and walks off. Billy stays put, lacing up his shoe.

INT. OFFICE - CONSTRUCTION COMPANY - MOMENTS LATER

Billy and Tim sit across from one another.

TIM

I hope you don't think I get satisfaction from this, but times are tough and-- quite frankly, we have too many here as it is.

BILLY

Tim, please, you do not understand how much I need this job. I know I'm new and still learning but if you just give me some time-- I can be great.

TIM

I don't doubt that for a second. But, our budget is the tightest it's been in nearly a decade---

Billy listens to Tim's passive tangent.

INT. BOY'S BEDROOM - DAY - 1992

BILLY, AGE 6, his mother DIANE (20) and FRANK (50) are in the boys bedroom, one that's decked out in hot wheels and cowboy posters.

Diane, aspiring to avert a breakdown, frantically shoves clothes into a trash bag.

FRANK  
YOU ARE NOTHING WITHOUT ME! YOU  
WERE SHIT WHEN WE--

DIANE  
Frank, please-

FRANK  
NO! DON'T FUCKING TELL ME "PLEASE"--

The young boy scrutinizes the miserable drunk.

EXT. OUT FRONT - FRANK'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Hasting down the prolonged driveway is puffy-eyed Diane and a hand holding Billy. Frank stands on his capacious front porch. A constituent of the upper middle class.

FRANK  
Yeah, keep walking!!! Drive MY car  
that I paid for to that slut you  
call a sister! Hey, good luck Bill!  
I hope-

As Billy's eyesight modifies backward--

DIANE  
Billy, no.

His compliance is instant. The rubber-necking neighbors listen to the venom spewing out of Franks blower and observe the mother and son pile into a coupe.

TIM (V.O)  
I'm glad we're on the same page.  
It's never something I enjoy doing,  
but sometimes, it has to happen.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - CONSTRUCTION COMPANY - 2008

His peers unobtrusively monitor Billy as he, fit to be tied, clears out his locker.

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Rachael paces. On the contrary, Billy, bordering phlegmatic, sits on the couch.

BILLY

He said they're bleeding money and that there's too many people as it is.

RACHAEL

Did you try and convince him otherwise?

BILLY

Yeah, Rachael! What do you think, I welcomed my firing with open arms when we can't even watch TV? I said all I could but, I mean, he made his decision.

Rachael's thumb brushes her symbolic accessory. She respites.

RACHAEL

These things happen. It wouldn't happen if it weren't supposed to. We'll be alright.

BILLY

That's what I was trying to say! I wasn't trying to be rude but I work best with my back against the wall and you know that. By this weekend, I will have something.

A smile, albeit staid, strengthens her countenance.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Right?

RACHAEL

Yes.

BILLY

Good.

Rachael has a calmed seat on the couch.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - LATER

On their twin sized bed, Billy removes his socks as Rachael pages through a paperback.

BILLY  
Still working on that, huh?

RACHAEL  
Okay, for the hundredth time, this is a slow burn. I take my time with the slow-burns.

BILLY  
Oh, because they're just so interesting, right?

RACHAEL  
Sometimes I wish you'd be quiet.

BILLY  
No you don't. Goodnight!

Both smile. Their optimism is quite prominent considering the circumstance. She puts the literature on hold as Billy's compressed body rotates to its side. Kissing his cheek;

RACHAEL  
Goodnight, baby.

Billy rests his eyes. Rachael's reading maintains. All is well.

INT./EXT. - PARKING LOT - O'BRIANS - MORNING

Through the partially cracked windshield, Billy surveys his ladylove accessing her workplace. A local but pivotal fast food joint.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CLEANERS - LATER

A "NOW HIRING APPLY WITHIN" banner hangs across the window of Billy's on-foot destination.

LORI (40), standing outside of the entrance, speaks on her now obsolete cell phone and drags her morning cigarette.

LORI  
I'll be there at 4:00 on-the-dot,  
okay, sweetie?

Billy peruses her with irrepressible familiarity...

INT. BILLY'S BEDROOM - MOBILE HOME - MORNING - 1994

Billy, age 8, sits on a tiny bed that's too big for the room itself. Diane, sporting a janitorial jumpsuit, is knelt in front of him. She strokes his hair.

DIANE

We're gonna be here for six months, tops.

BILLY

I know, mommy.

DIANE

I know you know, sweetie. Leaving you all alone just scares me and you know that. You're gonna stay tough for me, right?

BILLY

For the millionth time, yes. I'm just gonna watch TV and stuff.

DIANE

That sounds like a great idea. I will be saving every penny and before you know it we'll be out of here and you'll be enrolled in school.

Like many adolescent and their mother, Billy smiles, believing much of what he's fed. Childish ignorance is sweet.

DIANE (CONT'D)

But, until then, what are you gonna do?

BILLY

Stay inside.

DIANE

Stay inside until...

BILLY

Until you're home at five-thirty, sometimes six.

DIANE

Correct. And what else?

Grows dubious.

DIANE (CONT'D)

*If I am not home and someone  
knocks, do NOT answer. If it's  
important, they'll come back later.*

BILLY

*Yeah, that's right. I'm sorry I  
forgot.*

DIANE

*You don't need to apologize,  
precious. Come here.*

*Diane hugs him tight.*

INT. DELI - DAY - 2008

Billy and THOMAS (25), employee of mentioned deli, stand divided by a meat and cheese showcase.

BILLY

Okay, so it's all online?

THOMAS

Yup! I'd give it a couple days and then call. Unless she calls you first, that is.

BILLY

Alright. Thanks buddy.

THOMAS

No problem at all!

Billy walks off.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONVENIENCE STORE - LATER

After manually locking the sedan, Billy detects, located on the outdoor bench, TROY (6), a little rugrat who sits all alone.

Billy enters the store, opting out of a vocal evaluation.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1996

*Billy, his 10th birthday just around the corner, sits on the trailer's paltry front porch. His legs oscillate, his focal point fixated on the wooden floor panels.*

MOMENTS LATER:

*Adjacent to his trailer, Billy tosses pebbles into a muddy puddle.*

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - DAY - 2008

Billy is next up in line.

JAMES (36) exits the store with a single item. His knee caps are greeted by one of Troy's ferocious hugs.

Billy watches through the window, a piteous yet callow jealousy in his eyes. JARED (27), the cashier;

JARED  
This everything for ya?

BILLY  
Uh, yeah. That's it.

Jared scans Billy's snack.

INT. GROCERY STORE - LATER

Pen in hand, Billy fulfills an application. Close by stands LEONARD (35). He gives it one last skim and hands it over.

LEONARD  
I'll pass this onto my manager then.

BILLY  
Okay. You might not know this but how desperate would you say you guys are? For people.

LEONARD  
I'm gonna keep it real with you, I don't even know why the sign's up.

BILLY  
So I shouldn't expect a call then?

LEONARD  
You just call the store in a couple of days.

Billy exits without enthusiasm.

EXT. OUT FRONT - GROCERY STORE - A MOMENT LATER

Exasperation swelling, Billy rests his back against the closed door.

His peripheral detects an existent; A squirrel picks at scraps that didn't quite make it inside the trash bin. Billy looks off, the sight generating a churn of his stomach.

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1997

A squirrel corpse, paws mutilated, its neck distorted, is affixed to a tree from the help of a five inch nail.

Billy, a newly 11, inspects the animal, undisturbed and inquisitive. Interrupting his wonderment;

MALE VOICE (O.S)  
What're you doing out here by  
yourself, kid?

Billy turns around.

Standing close is JACOB (15, lanky, long hair, the questioning MALE VOICE), PAUL (13, heavysset and raspy, interchanges the same two outfits) and TRISHA (15, shot-out but lovable, "girlfriend" of Jacob).

Billy is stricken wordless.

MOMENTS LATER:

The four of them trot through the woods.

JACOB  
So, it's just you and mommy, huh?

BILLY  
Yeah.

JACOB  
Do you get bored a lot?

BILLY  
Yeah, I mean, I don't know. I  
guess.

PAUL  
This park is boring as shit. No  
need to sugar coat it.

Chortles.

JACOB  
If you're down to chill with us,  
you can.

BILLY  
Us? Like, me, with you guys?

JACOB  
Yeah, dummy.

TRISHA  
Staying cooped up in there will  
drive you insane.

PAUL  
She's not lying.

Trisha sparks a stubby cigarette.

BILLY  
I'd have to talk to my mom first  
but I don't see why not!

JACOB  
Dope.

Billy whips a stick into the forest.

BILLY  
So, what do you, like, do for fun?

TRISHA  
Broad question.

JACOB  
Yeah, I wouldn't know where to  
start. Different shit every day, ya  
understand?

BILLY  
Yeah.

PAUL  
You got any stuffed animals you  
don't want?

BILLY  
Me? Oh yeah, I got a whole bunch.

PAUL  
Let's show him some fun.

The trio turns around, heading back for the park. Billy follows with indubitable agog.

EXT. PARKING LOT - PHARMACY - DAY - 2008

Billy exits, application in one hand and a bag of purchases in the other.

IN CAR:

Billy cracks open his water, twists the lid off of some over-the-counter headache relief pills. He swallows two.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

ALEC (23) loads his pick-up truck. The back of his t-shirt reads TRANQUIL REMODELING.

In rolls a familiar four-door. Alec puts the loading on hold and approaches the parking car with a smile and minor incredulity. Billy exits.

ALEC  
Is that Billy Parkins?

BILLY  
In the flesh.

They share a hug.

ALEC  
God damn, how've you been, man?  
Been a little bit.

BILLY  
It really has. But, I've been  
alright. Me and Rachael, we got an  
actual place and shit so we're  
just, living the dream I guess.

ALEC  
Fuck, that's right! Someone told me  
you guys got an apartment and it  
made me happy.

BILLY  
Thank you. Made me pretty happy  
too.

Alec chuckles.

ALEC  
So what's up, dude? What brings you  
out here?

BILLY

Uh, yeah, It's a bit embarrassing but I lost my job yesterday and Alec... It's not good. Our cables shut off. In what you do I know I don't have the most experience or but if I could get on something even if it's just a day--

ALEC

Bill, I'm gonna keep it real with you. I file for bankruptcy next Tuesday.

BILLY

Shit, really?

ALEC

I let three of my best guys go last month. Fuck no I didn't wanna do that but-- just couldn't afford it. That's how it is right now.

BILLY

Fuck, that's crazy. I can't even imagine. You'll be alright, though. You've always found your way arou-

ALEC

SHIT! Hold up--

Reaching into his trucks messy cab, Alec grabs the clipboard. Scribbling;

ALEC (CONT'D)

You know Medical Logistics?

BILLY

Uh, not off hand, no.

Alec tears the sheet out and proffers it to the unemployed.

ALEC

Go to this website and apply. Mark's the manager, dude fucking loves me. I did his basement a while back so put me down as a reference. I know they need people.

BILLY

Dude, yes, thank you so much.

ALEC

You don't gotta thank me. I get it.  
I'm always happy to help an old  
friend.

BILLY

Thank you. Seriously. And I know  
you'll get through all the  
bankruptcy shit. Soon enough I'll  
be seeing Oasis billboards.

ALEC

Yeah, let's hope.

They hug once more.

ALEC (CONT'D)

You gotta start showing that face  
more!

BILLY

I'll see what I can do.

Alec starts re-loading his pick up as Billy ignites his  
vehicle.

A MOMENT LATER:

Billy's sedan commits to the neighborhoods stop sign. Close  
by, a group of children light a set of JOLTING fireworks. His  
eyes dart over to the youngsters.

*EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1997*

*POP! An M-80, duct taped around a ratty teddy bear, tears it  
to thick shreds. Billy is beaming with tender excitement.*

BILLY

*Wow... where did you guys find  
them?*

JACOB

*Paulie here makes 'em.*

*Billy inspects the makeshift bomb with blunder after Paul  
tosses him one.*

JACOB (CONT'D)

*Pretty dope, right?*

BILLY

*Yeah, really dope.*

*Billy's "dope" was quite artificial. That delights Jacob.*

INT. SANDWICH SHOP - DAY - 2008

GLORIA (48) and Billy sit across from one another. The former skims the applicants information.

GLORIA  
So primarily you wanna drive?

BILLY  
Yeah but at the moment I'm kinda open to whatever.

GLORIA  
You said you have your own form of transportation?

BILLY  
I do! Yeah, my own car.

GLORIA  
Fully insured?

BILLY  
Mhm.

GLORIA  
Would you be able to start today?

BILLY  
Uh- wow, yes, yes, definitely.

GLORIA  
Good because, yet-again, we got another no-call, no-show. All I need is your social and your license number and we'll get you on the road. Safe to assume you have a GPS?

BILLY  
Um, you said license number, you mean drivers?

GLORIA  
Yes.

BILLY  
Uhm...

Billy pats his pockets.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
It's in my center console, give me  
one second.

He exits the parlor.

EXT. SHOPPING CENTER - NIGHT - LATER

Billy, wielding a folder of applications, pushes quarters  
into the slot of an archaic pay phone. He dials.

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - SAME

Rachael practices yoga. The tranquility is punctured by the  
ringing of their landline. Rachael arises and answers.

The following conversation cuts back and fourth between the  
two.

RACHAEL  
Hello?

BILLY  
Hey, sweets. It's me.

RACHAEL  
Oh, hey, what phone are you using?

BILLY  
A pay phone, believe it or not.

RACHAEL  
Okay, that means a shower as soon  
as you're home. When will that be?

BILLY  
Another hour or so. There's a few  
more places I'm gonna try.

RACHAEL  
Just come home, monkey. It's past  
nine and I know you don't like  
being out too late--

Billy listens.

EXT. MOBILE HOMES - NIGHT - 1997

*Billy runs through the dimly lit home hub, an evening of  
dismembering teddy bears discontinued.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOBILE HOME - A MOMENT LATER

He enters. Diane POPS off of the couch, distress centered on her face.

DIANE

William, where the hell were you?!  
You had me worried SICK! Are you  
out of your mind?

She kneels down in front of him, gripping his shoulders with solidity.

BILLY

I'm sorry, Mom! I was hanging out  
with some friends.

DIANE

Friends? What friends?

BILLY

Just some friends I met outside  
today!

DIANE

Billy, you can't go outside! You  
can't just run off like that! I had  
no idea where you were, I called  
the police! And who are these  
friends? How could you just forget  
what we talked about "a million"  
times?!

BILLY

I really didn't mean to scare you,  
Mom! I swear. I was just bored and  
wanted-- fresh air.

DIANE

You didn't mean to scare me, but  
you did. No more of this. Okay?  
When I am not here, you do not  
leave. I can not believe I have to  
reinforce this.

BILLY

OK.

DIANE

Do you understand me?

BILLY

Yes!

DIANE

Good... good.

*Diane pulls him close. The smell of mother nature and gun powder garners a trivial retraction.*

DIANE (CONT'D)

*Hop in the shower. I gotta call the station back and let them know you were just--being a boy, I guess.*

BILLY

Okay!

*Billy runs off. Diane stands. A meditative breath.*

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - MORNING - 2008

Billy lounges in bed as Rachael readies herself for the days work.

BILLY

Have I told you how adorable that uniform is?

RACHAEL

You have but I certainly don't get tired of hearing it.

BILLY

It's adorable.

With pride and a smile, Rachael holds out her metallic name tag. It reads her name and under it MANAGER.

BILLY (CONT'D)

I still can't get over it. Would you do me a favor real quick, baby?

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - A MOMENT LATER

Rachael sorts through an assortment of over the counter medicine.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Two relievers are swallowed by the requesting individual.

RACHAEL

Becky is outside. Good luck today, baby. I hope you feel better. Try to clean up a bit if you can.

BILLY

Will do. Thanks, angel.

They kiss.

INT. CORNER STORE - MORNING - LATER

Billy awaits his purchase. In front of him is ERICA (30) and her son MASON (7). Erica's offspring grips a candy bar.

MASON

Please! Please, just this!

Erica places items on the counter, doing her best to ignore the nagging.

MASON (CONT'D)

I'll give you a back rub, mommy!  
Please. And, I have those quarters  
in my room-

ERICA

Fine, put it up there.

With rapid glee, Mason places it alongside the milk and eggs. Billy doesn't care for the mothers compliance.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1997

*Billy toys with a rubix cube. Approaching in the humid distance is Jacob, Trisha and Paul. Billy sees and hustles inside.*

*MOMENTS LATER:*

*Jacob knocks on Billy's front door. Paul and Trisha stand out on the fringes.*

JACOB

*Come on, dude! We're bored as shit,  
just like you.*

*Response-less. Jacob signals to Paul.*

JACOB (CONT'D)

*We brought you a present!*

*Paul tugs a dirty sock from his denim pocket. From it, he obtains an infamous m-80.*

*JACOB (CONT'D)*  
*Here, I'll give you a hint.*

*Paul lights it with his zippo, tosses it ahead. It BURSTS.*

INT./EXT. - PARKED CAR - DAY - 2008

Rain wallops the closed windows. Billy massages the back of his aching head. Two over-the-counters sit on the dash.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

SHERRY (70), surrounded by written works, sits behind the check-out desk. Billy enters, dampened.

SHERRY  
Hi!

BILLY  
How're you doing?

Billy hands her some dollar bills.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
An hour of computer time, please.

SHERRY  
Certainly.

MOMENTS LATER:

Seated at the dated mechanism, Billy applies for jobs. At the end of the fiction aisle, a pale old man flagrantly stares.

Billy amiably turns around. Every seat is unoccupied.

Re-facing forward and the old man is gone. Billy's temptation to search is genuine, but he does what's right; continues applying.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1997

*Jacob's thin shadow casts over the impressionable Billy.*

*JACOB*  
*We'll have you back by 4:30, an hour before she gets home. What's the worst that can happen?*

*Billy allows the plan some rumination.*

*I/E. PARKED CAR - FAST FOOD JOINT - DAY - 2008*

*Billy eats a processed meal, his window opened. The once substantial storm has now eased into a thick, dreamy mist.*

*A car rolls up next to him, BLASTING a familiar-sounding classic rock song. A song that takes Billy back.*

*His chewing halts.*

*EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 1999*

*Billy, the raw age of 13, Jacob, Trisha and Paul are sprawled out on a piece of flatland. Cheap lawn chairs, a cooler, a table and a boombox are some of the attachments. This is their "clubhouse".*

*The boombox plays that same classic rock song.*

*Paul breaks up weed on the beat-up table. Some type of pill sits near his elbow. Jacob, shirtless, and Trisha make out on a beach towel.*

*Billy's amorous mind can't avoid Trisha's cleavage.*

*Jacob stands, Billy crosses his legs. Jacob snags a beer from the cooler. The better part of his stomach is taken up by a tattoo.*

*A tattoo of the leviathan cross.*

*BILLY*

*Yo, I've been meaning to ask, what is this?*

*Billy refers his own stomach.*

*JACOB*

*This? This is a symbol.*

*Jacob cracks his beverage, sits on a lawn chair.*

*BILLY*

*I noticed it on you and Trish but, I don't know, didn't ask.*

*JACOB*

*Paulie's got one, too.*

*Paul, struggling to roll a joint;*

PAUL  
Give me a minute.

BILLY  
Why do you have it?

JACOB  
It's what we believe in.

BILLY  
And what's that?

*Jacob and Paul share a glimpse.*

JACOB  
It's funny you ask, we actually planned on showing you. We all talked it over and agree that you've earned it.

BILLY  
How would you show me?

JACOB  
I don't know about "how" but I can tell you when. The 15th of this month. Would you be into that?

*Billy nods.*

INT. OFFICE - DAY - 2008

LAURA (45) and Billy sit in her cluttered but air conditioned sanctuary. She types.

BILLY  
I just wanted an application, I didn't expect a mini interview. Would've dressed a little nicer.

Billy's joke doesn't amass any feedback. When she decides to stop typing;

LAURA  
As I said, we do need people, customer service specifically, but it's the whole education thing--

BILLY  
-Yeah, I figured--

LAURA

Almost everyone here has an associates. Good percentage have their bachelors. I'm sorry but-- without even a GED, I or any of our subsidiaries won't be able to help you out.

BILLY

I totally understand. Thanks for even talking with me, like I said, I wasn't expecting it.

They shake hands.

LAURA

I'm happy to do it. Tell ya what, you get that GED and I'll see what I can do.

BILLY

Sounds good.

He exits.

INT./EXT. - TRAVELING CAR - ROAD - NIGHT - LATER

Billy's car rolls through an empty road. The headlights seep into the darkness as talk radio plays at a comforting level.

Billy's awareness detracts from his steering and proceeds to a phantasmagoria of horror and heartbreak:

A young boy, no older than six, paces down the road with a hitchhiking thumb out. The young figment is bedaubed with a transparent, marmalade-textured slime.

The speed of the sedan grows laggard as the child becomes more of a shadow with each step.

Quickly enough, Billy develops heavy-foot.

BILLY

Nope. Not getting trapped. Not today.

Billy continues on to Rachael and their inflexible mattress.

Low and behold, that dreadful change of heart makes a triumphant return. Billy inches inside some driveway and reverses.

As he glides down the hill and back around the bend, Billy is encountered with road, encompassing trees, and the guard rail. The boy is gone.

He brakes. After some over-the-shoulder examination, Billy bangs out a dangerous U-Turn and speeds off.

INT./EXT. CAR - PARKING LOT - O'BRIANS - MORNING

Billy puts her in park as Rachael, assisted from the spotty mirror, applies lipstick. He scratches below his armpit.

RACHAEL

Make sure you stay by the phone!

BILLY

I'll try but they'll leave a message if I'm not there. If anyone does call, that is.

RACHAEL

Which they will. Here-

They kiss.

BILLY

Be here at 8?

RACHAEL

Yes please! Love you.

BILLY

Love you, too.

She exits.

INT./EXT. - MOVING CAR - HIGHWAY - LATER

Billy cruises.

RADIO PERSONALITY

Good morning, good morning every one! It is the fifteenth of July and although the sun is out---

Billy mutes the radio. For now, the engine purr will suffice.

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DUSK - 1999

Paul lays a battered raccoon on the moistened ground. Around it stands the proud Jacob, Trisha and a benighted Billy. The creatures breathing, although light, has yet to cease.

JACOB  
Good work, Paul. Bag.

Paul grabs the burlap sack from his pocket and hands it to Jacob.

BILLY  
What's in there?

JACOB  
Silence, remember?

Billy abides.

From the sack, Jacob withdraws a gasoline-filled water bottle. Once uncapped, the animal is saturated. The plastic is tossed aside.

With his dirtied palm, Jacob digs into the sack and pries out a handful of salt. He sprinkles it atop of the animal.

The leader drops the sack and extends out a waiting hand. No questions asked, Paul hands him his zippo.

Jacob commences the flame. He kneels down, his knees inches away from the carcass;

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Modum vitam aeternam.

Jacob places the flame onto the gasoline trail that, within seconds, reaches the animal. The flames reflect off of Billy's exposed vision.

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - DAY - 2008

Billy prepares himself cheap soup, giving his ribcage another scratch. The house phone begins to ring! Billy hustles to it.

BILLY  
Hello?--- Yes, this is him.--- I'm  
great, how are you doing?--- Yeah.--  
Yes, absolutely.---

Billy develops a glow.

BILLY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)  
 Yes, ten-o'clock sounds perfect! I  
 will be there.--- Okay.--- Alright--  
 sounds good, Mark.--- Bye.

Billy hangs up, clenching his fist and "WOO'ing" in excitement.

INT/EXT. - TRAVELING CAR - NIGHT - LATER

Billy drives, Rachael in passenger. The buoyancy is heightened but again, that damn itch.

RACHAEL  
 So, what will you be doing?

BILLY  
 Not sure! Oh and let's try to  
 remember I didn't get hired yet.

RACHAEL  
 You will, though. I know it. You  
 seeing Alec, him giving you the  
 number... it's all part of God's  
 plan.

BILLY  
 We'll see.

Both smile, one more authentic than the other.

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Steam permeates the condensed space. As the hot water runs, Billy sits on the toilet and rubs his aching cranium.

He stands up and removes his t-shirt. Utilizing the mirror, Billy discovers the source of his irritation;

His tattoo of the sacred Leviathan cross, located just below his armpit, is infested with puss-filled pimples. Thick, coarse hairs sprout from the repellent bumps.

Billy turns his back on himself. Genuine disbelief.

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 2000

*Billy lays on the ground as Paul applies the tattoo. The former bites on a used rag. Jacob and Trisha watch with pride.*

JACOB  
 Good shit, Bill. Taking it like a  
 champ.

*Suppressed from the rag;*

BILLY  
 Yeah, thanks.

*Paul continues.*

TRISHA  
 Bet you regret not taking one of  
 those things, huh?

*MOMENTS LATER:*

*With Trisha's tiny cosmetic mirror, Billy examines his fresh ink. Paul is pleased with the outcome.*

JACOB  
 Looks good. For life now, yeah?

*Billy continues to inspect.*

JACOB (CONT'D)  
 Right?

BILLY  
 Yeah, yeah, right.

JACOB  
 Good. Scared me for a second. Can't  
 have ya ending up like Mikey.

*Paul and Trisha covert their smiles.*

BILLY  
 Who's Mikey?

TRISHA  
 Good old Mikey Gauger.

BILLY  
 That doesn't help.

JACOB  
 Old friend. Used to live here back  
 in the day. We don't talk about him  
 too much.

*With reluctance, Billy reinstates the inspection of his tattoo.*

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - MORNING - 2008

The sun awakens Billy. His eyes adjust, and when they do, he LEAPS out of bed.

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - A MOMENT LATER

He removes his t-shirt and with the upmost hesitance, lifts his arm. The tattoo is nothing more than a little reddened.

INT. OFFICE - WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Billy sits across from MARK (50-55), the manager of Medical Logistics. The scraps of a hoagie sits on his desk.

MARK

Would you define yourself as hands on?

BILLY

I would, yeah.

MARK

I ask because this ain't a fast food joint. You can tell as soon as you step foot in here.

BILLY

Oh yeah, definitely. I think I'm a quick learner, so.

Mark scrolls through the potential-hires application.

MARK

You don't talk much.

BILLY

Um, I mean, I guess it depends on--

MARK

I'll just stop you right there because here, conversation ain't necessary.

BILLY

Good to know.

Mark inspects his screen.

MARK

What're you thinking, you wanna give it a shot?

BILLY

Um, wow, yes, absolutely-

Mark grabs folders from the inside of his desk, hands them to the still-processing Billy.

MARK

Fill out everything in that folder and drop it off tomorrow morning. How does a Tuesday orientation sound?

BILLY

That sounds great. I was not at all expecting this. Thank you so much for the opportunity, Mark. You won't regret it.

MARK

I hope you're right! Make sure to give the handbook a read.

BILLY

I will, definitely.

MARK

Now, I'm not supposed to ask this and for whatever reason they took it off the application but are you prescribed any medications?

BILLY

No, no, I'm not.

MARK

Nothing that can slow you down? Prevent you from doing certain duties?

BILLY

No. I don't take them and I have no desire to.

MARK

Well, you're a dying breed.

Billy nods. Well aware.

*INT. KITCHEN - MOBILE HOME - NIGHT - 2000*

*Diane, wearing her sole date-night outfit, sets a plate of spaghetti in front of her son. It could be the lighting, but old age seems to be groveling itself in with posthaste.*

BILLY  
Thanks, mom.

*Billy begins to dig in as his mother reaches into a tiny cabinet above the faucet. She grabs a pill bottle, pouring two sedatives into her hand. She pops them.*

BILLY (CONT'D)  
Hey, I thought what's-his-face was picking you up?

DIANE  
So did I.

*Diane returns the pills, begins to fix herself a plate.*

BILLY  
Shit, I remembered what I wanted to ask you. Do you know a "Mikey Gauger"?

DIANE  
Where did you hear that name?

BILLY  
On TV.

DIANE  
On TV?

BILLY  
Mhm.

DIANE  
Right.

*She sits down across her son, her wine glass pre-poured. It wasn't the lighting.*

DIANE (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I heard of him.

BILLY  
How?

DIANE  
I know him how everyone else around here knows him.

BILLY  
Which is?

DIANE  
Why else would you see him on TV?

BILLY

*Alright, I heard it wherever I heard it. I'm not fucking six anymore, I can handle it.*

*Diane looks at, no, watches her son. She shows her cigarette stained teeth with a grim smile.*

DIANE

*Ah, yes. I forgot you're such a well-off, established adult. Since you can handle it, after his family moved away, he slit his brothers throat and drowned his little sister. Now, he's rotting in a cell, just waiting to die.*

*Billy's fork is stationary.*

DIANE (CONT'D)

*In their bath tub, too. If you were wondering.*

BILLY

*I wasn't, thanks.*

*Diane sips. Content with herself.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - 2008

*Billy and Rachael laze. She cuts out coupons from a random circular. The cable has been paid.*

BILLY

*It's funny how you miss something so much and when you get it.. You wonder why you even missed it.*

RACHAEL

*Was thinking the same thing. You should see some of these babe, 8 oz steaks for three dollars.*

BILLY

*Too good to be true. My vote says expired. I'll be right back though, I forgot something in my car-*

*Billy exits.*

INT/EXT. PARKED CAR - HOMING COMPLEX - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Billy, sitting shotgun, opens the glovebox. As he goes for the headache meds, he perceives quite the delusion;

About forty yards off, illuminated by only a desultory street lamp, is a man's anomalously tall silhouette. The shadowy figure tethers a cat, and they seem to be watching.

Stepping out of the car, Billy waves with zero gumption. The shadow decides to walk off and become one with the darkness.

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 2000

*An aged cat, her neck downright maimed, lays on a patch of grass. Billy is crouched next to it, disengaging one of its paws from a mouse trap. The group stands behind him.*

JACOB

*When you're ready, Bill.*

*Paul hands Billy the hammer and nail... A deep breath... The first time is always the hardest.*

*Another deep breath...*

JACOB (CONT'D)

*Modum vitam aeternam.*

*Billy's wobbly hand raises the hammer. Some seconds pass until Billy yelps and on the tools bone snapping WHACK--*

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING - 2008

Billy gallops through the massive workplace. People push carts and fold cardboard boxes. The primary noise derives from the beeping of numerous forklifts.

INT. OFFICE - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Billy knocks and enters to a seated Mark.

MARK

Bill! How're you doing?

BILLY

I'm great! I got all the papers here and I'm looking forward to tomorrow.

MARK

Good. Go through the handbook at all?

BILLY

Yup!

MARK

That's what I like to hear. 8:00 tomorrow.

BILLY

See ya then!

Billy exits.

INT/EXT. TRAVELING CAR - ROAD - DAY

Windows down, Billy drives. The cool wind merges through his opened palm. Abruptly, his vision is hampered by flashing lights.

In his rearview; a cop.

BILLY

Fuck.

Billy's heart rate raises as the sedans speed does the opposite. Both him and the cop come to a curbside halt.

BILLY (CONT'D)

You're alright, you're alright,  
you're fine, relax.

All that's left to do is wait.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY - 2001

At 13, Billy puts a joint to his lips. He takes an amateur pull.

TRISHA

That's why you're not getting high.  
Here-

Trisha takes the joint.

TRISHA (CONT'D)

Shotgun.

Jacob sparks a cigarette.

PAUL

Hey-oh!

BILLY

What's that?

TRISHA

I'm going to blow the smoke into your mouth, and when I do, suck in. Hard. Like you were just drowning or something.

BILLY

Uh, okay.

Trisha hits it, holding the thick smoke in her mouth. Billy's mouth is much too dilated.

JACOB

Not so wide buddy, like this--

Jacob demonstrates. Trisha grabs the back of Billy's scruffy hair and plants her lips onto his. His first kiss.

She exhales into his throat.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Now, suck in.

Billy does as he's instructed and a precipitated coughing fit promptly follows. The group laughs.

BILLY

Ho--Ho---Ho-Holy---Holy---

TRISHA

That's how you get high.

Hack after hack, Billy merges into a state of composition.

BILLY

Fuck, that's intense.

PAUL

Yeah, clearly.

Paul points at Billy's crotch, where a bulge of unawareness hikes up his basketball shorts. Billy reaches in his pocket, a useless attempt to conceal what is now public knowledge.

BILLY

Alright, y'all can fuck off!

JACOB  
Happens to the best of us.

VOICE (O.S)  
Guys having a little fun?

Said fun ceases when the boys in blue enter the picture.  
OFFICER BENJAMIN (45) and his partner OFFICER WENTZ (30).

JACOB  
Yeah, we're just hanging out,  
officer.

OFFICER WENTZ  
Right. Just hanging out.

OFFICER BENJAMIN  
We certainly smelled something  
funny around here... Oh, look at  
that!

Officer Benjamin, a bit on the heavier side, kneels down and  
scoops up the freshly-dropped roach.

OFFICER BENJAMIN (CONT'D)  
This could be the source... wait,  
let me guess, it's not yours.

JACOB  
Okay, did you really need to bring  
the fucking dogs out?

Jacob points past the officers. Both cops turn to see the  
animals, ones of which are not present.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
LET'S GO!

The group vamooses away from the tracks.

OFFICER WENTZ  
HEY!

The cops partake in an on-foot chase through the woods. Paul  
and Trisha break off from Billy and Jacob. Wentz goes for  
them.

BILLY  
Where are they going?!?!

JACOB  
Doesn't matter DO NOT SLOW DOWN!

Officer Benjamin is winded.

OFFICER BENJAMIN  
 Stop right now or I will SHOOT you!

BILLY  
 Jake, he's gonna fucking shoot us!  
 Please, can we just stop?

JACOB  
 He's not gonna fucking shoot us,  
 come on!

Officer Benjamin halts, whips the pistol out of his holster.  
 He points it at the two sprinting criminals.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
 LEFT!

Jacob and Billy BANG a left, exiting the officer's vision.

OFFICER BENJAMIN  
 God fucking Damn it!

Trigger itchin' Benjamin catches his breath, shoving the  
 pistol back where it belongs.

EXT. PATCH OF WOODS - DAY - LATER - 2001

No society in sight. Billy and Jacob sit on a thick log.  
 Jacob sparks a cigarette.

BILLY  
 How much longer until we leave?

JACOB  
 Cops around here got nothing better  
 to do so they'll be looking for a  
 little bit. They'll go home at some  
 point, ya understand? They gotta  
 get home to their wives they don't  
 fuck.

BILLY  
 God damn it, my mom's gonna bitch so  
 hard.

JACOB  
 Shit happens. Be grateful someone's  
 there to bitch.

Jacob takes a pull.

BILLY  
 Can I ask you something?

JACOB  
Of course.

BILLY  
Have you ever came in a girls'  
mouth?

Jacob can't help but laugh.

JACOB  
I have.

BILLY  
What's it like?

JACOB  
I don't know, kinda hard to put  
into words. "Awesome as hell,"  
maybe?

BILLY  
Yeah.

JACOB  
You never have?

Embarrassed;

BILLY  
No.

JACOB  
Well, we gotta change that.

BILLY  
What do you mean?

Jacob takes another drag.

JACOB  
Your mom still taking those things?

BILLY  
I think she's been laying off them  
a bit.

Jacob calls bullshit.

JACOB  
Dog, last night when I passed your  
place and she was dipped out on the  
front porch.

Billy becomes shamefaced.

JACOB (CONT'D)

And there's nothing wrong with that. We've all dealt with it, Paulie the most. But, I'll say this, if you hook Trish up with a couple, she'd do that for you.

BILLY

What? Would she really?

JACOB

Absolutely. I'll leave out the details but I've seen her do a lot worse.

BILLY

But, I don't get, why?

TRISHA

Bitch was a dooper baby, ya understand? Addiction is in her blood. Always needs a fix.

BILLY

Isn't-- Wouldn't that be, like, weird to you?

JACOB

Shit like that doesn't phase me. At the end of the day, she ain't going anywhere. Believe me brother, she knows better.

BILLY

I don't wanna get in trouble, though.

JACOB

Those things... they mess with your mind a bit. Make you forget shit. And if your mom doesn't see you take them, you didn't take them. Make sense?

BILLY

Yeah. You're not, y'know, fucking with me, are you?

JACOB

I wouldn't just make this up. But, I mean, I can't prove it so you'll have to find out for yourself.

*Billy considers the possibilities and the alternatives. Jacob exhales some of his literal poison.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - DAY - 2008

Billy and Rachael can't seem to undergo prosperity. The latter is astonished as she reads the ticket.

BILLY

He's not pressing charges since it's the first offense. That's probably why it's so much.

RACHAEL

How do you know he wasn't lying?

BILLY

He could be lying, yeah, I don't know. I think if he wanted to press charges, I'd be in a holding cell right now.

RACHAEL

They have to offer a payment plan or something, right?

BILLY

They do. I asked him.

RACHAEL

Were you speeding?

BILLY

No. It says right on there, cracked windshield, driving without a license.

RACHAEL

I knew we should have gotten it fixed.

Some stressful silence.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)

Over half a thousand dollars for a ticket. Huh.

BILLY

Yup. Thought luck was on our side there for a second.

They remain.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - MORNING

Draped in an oversized sweater, Rachael egresses from the bedroom. At the end of the hallway, she stiffens.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - A MOMENT LATER

Rachael shakes her sleeping boyfriend.

RACHAEL

Billy!

His eyes peel open.

BILLY

W-what the hell, what?

RACHAEL

I don't know, just, please come look.

Billy, half-asleep, wobbles out of bed.

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The kitchenette is an interior decorator's worst nightmare. Food, ranging from leftovers to juice to an opened can of mayo, coats the floor and walls.

Rachael cries. Billy is perplexed...

RACHAEL

We must have left the door unlocked or something.

BILLY

Yeah...

She takes a step inward.

RACHAEL

I checked everywhere and nothing is missing. I don't think anything was stolen. I don't get who would do such a thing.

Billy listens...

*INSERT: A QUICK SHOT of Billy, reaching into a bowl of cold spaghetti and throwing it at the walls.*

... and realizes.

BILLY

I can't believe it.

RACHAEL

I guess we should call the police--

BILLY

I don't think we have to do that.

RACHAEL

Are you serious?

BILLY

I didn't think it was important but last night on my way in I saw some homeless dude down the road and yes, I forgot to lock the door.

RACHAEL

That is the perfect reason to call the police.

BILLY

We just got that ticket, Rachael. Do you think we need to get any more involved with the law? You gotta think, I'm still gonna be driving.

RACHAEL

Billy, how are you so unconcerned? Someone broke into our home and burglarized--

BILLY

Because I know what happened. Please, baby, I start my job in two hours, let's just clean this up, make sure all our stuff is here, and from here on out, I'll remember to lock the door.

Rachael gives him a personal and peculiar look, until the kitchen procures her. It's nauseating.

INT. PARKED CAR - WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Engine silent, Billy stares at the industrialized warehouse. He stretches his neck, rubs behind his ear lobes. With coffee, he swallows two over-the-counters.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING - LATER

A group of people, Billy included, stand at their individual computer station. Each station is cemented to the same roaring conveyor belt. This is Shipping. GREG (28) explains;

GREG

Boxes come down the belt, grab one and scan the label on it. Once that is done, hit F4 and a label will print from here. Slap the label somewhere on the box and send it on its way.

BILLY

Easy enough.

Greg barely smiles.

HOURS LATER:

Billy does as he was instructed. He takes a moment to examine his surroundings. LOUISE (40), modeling large sunglasses, dips in and out. Has to be on something.

Billy looks at her-- "How in the hell is she still employed?"

EXT. LOT - MOBILE HOMES - NIGHT - 2001

*Billy jogs toward his house. The police must have called it a night.*

BILLY

*(to himself) Mom, it won't happen again, I promise, I got lost and didn't know where to go--*

*Billy enters.*

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOBILE HOME - NIGHT - A MOMENT LATER

*Billy could have stayed out all night. Diane is slumped on the couch, the blankets corner dipping into her unfinished wine glass. On the table rests a pill bottle.*

*Billy takes a silent step closer.*

BILLY

*Mom?*

*Nothing but a deep snore. Billy's daring eyes look to the pill bottle. He shouldn't. He can't. But, by God or whoever, he feels like he needs to.*

*He grabs it. Challenge included, he twists the lid off. With his pointer and middle, three pills are withdrawn. Billy recaps the bottle and places it back where he found it.*

EXT. CLUBHOUSE - SURROUNDING WOODS - DAY - 2001

*Loud music slaps through the boombox. Jacob and Paul chug a beer. Trisha, seated close by, gnaws at her thumbnail.*

*Jacob drops the can, deeming himself the victor. Paul drops his a few seconds after.*

TRISHA

*Is he coming?*

JACOB

*Chill, tweaker. I told him to meet us here and has he once let us down?*

TRISHA

*Don't call me that.*

PAUL

*Yeah, dude, out of line. It's "pedophile".*

*Jacob howls.*

TRISHA

*Seriously, shut the fuck up. Both of you. Annoying as shit.*

*Light footsteps rummage in the distance and out emerges Little Bill. Trisha stands. Indifferent, as if his arrival were nugatory.*

BILLY

*Sup, everybody?*

JACOB

*There's the boy! Didn't come empty handed, did ya?*

BILLY

*I did not.*

*They stand in a lackluster circle. Billy tugs a very large plastic bag from his waist band. The stolen pills are tucked in a corner.*

BILLY (CONT'D)

*Here, I'm not--*

*Without any given consent, Trisha snatches the bag from him. She pulls one out and inspects the letter/number combination.*

TRISHA

*Damn, your mom is getting the goodies. Look-*

*Jacob and Paul are impressed. Billy's streak of naivety is continued.*

JACOB

*Bill and I are splitting one.*

TRISHA

*Come on, really?*

BILLY

*Yeah, it's fine, I don't want one.*

*With a single finger, Jacob silences his protege. Jacob's eyes latch onto his girl-toys.*

JACOB

*That's not a problem, is it?*

*Trisha would love to scream "FUCK YOU," while ripping his hair out, but she is too familiar of the repercussions. Cracking a faux smile;*

TRISHA

*Not at all.*

*Trisha hands Jacob one third of the pharmaceuticals. He cracks it in two, offering a half to Billy.*

BILLY

*Really, I'm cool. Thank you though.*

JACOB

*Come here a second.*

*Jacob walks off, Billy follows.*

A MOMENT LATER:

*They stand along a thick tree.*

JACOB (CONT'D)

*I mean, it's kinda embarrassing if you don't.*

BILLY

*How would it help?*

JACOB

*I don't know the science, I just know from experience. Even a half will make you last ten times longer. I'm trying to help you out, ya understand-*

BILLY

*-No, I trust you and I know you wouldn't steer me wrong but what-- I don't know, what if it stops my heart or some shit?*

JACOB

*Come on, Bill. Your mom has been taking these for how long now? And she's fine, right?*

*Billy looks off. "Fine".*

BILLY

*You sure it will work?*

JACOB

*Positive.*

BILLY

*Alright. Okay. Just this once.*

*Jacob grins.*

JACOB

*Just this once.*

*HOURS LATER:*

*Now NIGHT, the group sit around their makeshift fire pit. A pint of cheap vodka is passed amongst them.*

*Trisha takes a shot. She turns to the slack-jawed Billy, his slurred speech barely comprehensible;*

TRISHA

*Another?*

BILLY

Uhm...

*Billy looks to Jacob. Through the flames, the leader gives a nod of approval.*

BILLY (CONT'D)

Uh- yeah, sure.

*Billy grabs the plastic and takes a long sip, bigger than he himself anticipated. Disgusted;*

BILLY (CONT'D)

Drink, I need a drink-

PAUL

There's a juice thing in the cooler.

*Billy plods toward the ice box. Feet away, Jacob gives the skin-scratching Trisha a nod of confirmation.*

*Sh takes a breath. Watching Billy chug the artificial fruit juice. His tastebuds cleansed of the liquor.*

*Trisha stands from her chair.*

TRISHA

I gotta pee. Wanna come with?

*Jacob and Paul smile at a flummoxed Billy.*

BILLY

Uh, yeah, sure!

TRISHA

Let's go.

*Trisha, metaphorical weights around her legs, begins her venture into the woods. Billy follows.*

*Jacob and Paul watch the two amalgamate one with mother nature...*

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - 2008

*Billy, reading numbers off a sticky-note, uses the archaic machine to clock out. Mark stands close.*

MARK

What'd you think, Bill?

BILLY

It's great! Not bad at all. Got it down pat, I think.

MARK

Good to hear.

Billy tears away his time sheet.

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy enters to a mopping Rachael. Spotless is in close range of achievability.

BILLY

Wow, look at you!

RACHAEL

Yup. Took a while, but it's just about done. I searched every inch and, from what I saw, nothing was stolen.

BILLY

Not like we have much to steal. So, no police?

RACHAEL

Not this time, no.

BILLY

It was the smart thing to do. Looks great, babe. I'm gonna hop in the shower.

He exits.

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - HOURS LATER

Billy, kneeling in front of the toilet, vomits. Rachael, holding a cup of water, rubs his back.

RACHAEL

Get it all out, baby.

In between the wave of digested food;

BILLY

Rachael, please, just go.

RACHAEL

Are you sure?

BILLY

Yes.

Rachael sets the drink on the counter. With dubiety, she leaves her bathroom.

MOMENTS LATER:

Billy sits, his back against the bathtub. Somewhat collected. he uses the toilet to stand up and when Billy does;

His reflection is Frank. Although well-dressed, his appearance is the genesis of a cadaver. He wields that classic glass of scotch.

Billy is stuck in an aberrant state of fear and confusion.

FRANK

How many times I gotta tell ya,  
stop calling me that?

Billy, unconvinced, toils out of the mirrors frame.

INT/EXT. - PARKED CAR - MORNING

The couple waits for the bus. Billy is patently indisposed.

RACHAEL

Are you sure you should go in?

BILLY

Call out on my second day.  
Excellent idea.

RACHAEL

You're obviously sick--

BILLY

Rachael, we need the money. I'm not  
dead, I'm not disabled. I'm fine.

The bus approaches.

RACHAEL

Sorry for caring.

Rachael opens the passenger side door-

BILLY

Okay, don't be like that--

And slams it. She departs.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
God damnit.

The sedan moves from park to reverse.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Billy works. He sniffles back some snot. Mark approaches.

MARK  
You know, I read this funny article  
the other day. It said that even if  
you force a smile it can make you a  
bit happier.

BILLY  
I didn't know that. Noted.

Billy continues scanning. Mark, a dumb grin on his face,  
waits. Billy confides with a bogus grin.

FRANK  
There we go!

Frank claps and walks off. Billy's facade of affability  
slopes into oblivion.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy's crunched body lays in the hot bathtub, a warm rag  
covering his face. Rachael sits on the toilet.

RACHAEL  
I'm just thankful you didn't hit  
your head on anything.

Silent.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
What were you doing before you  
passed out?

BILLY  
I told you. Last thing I remember  
was clocking out.

RACHAEL  
Are you drinking enough water?  
Maybe you're dehydrated? I can't  
think of anything else, really.

Billy doesn't respond.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
Is everything alright, baby?

BILLY  
Rachael, please, I'm sorry if I  
don't feel like talking but I have  
a severe fucking headache.

Rachael, wanting to persist, doesn't. She exits the bathroom.

INT/EXT. - PARKED CAR - O'BRIANS - MORNING

Billy pulls into a parking spot. Billy coughs, still ailing.

RACHAEL  
Billy, you need to go to the  
doctor. I would like to think that  
your boss understands people get  
sick.

BILLY  
Like you said, I'll drink more  
water. I'm fine.

Rachael sighs.

RACHAEL  
Becky is bringing me home at 3:00  
so I'll see you tonight.

BILLY  
Okay.

Rachael exits.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Billy sends packages down the conveyor belt. He repeats,  
repeats, repeats, repeats until the belt comes to an  
obnoxious halt.

BILLY  
Fucker!

Billy's palms shield his ears, a pathetic attempt to retract  
internal pain. GEORGE (30), along with others, observe him.  
George's sympathy outweighs any other emotion.

Billy stretches his neck, opens his eyes. Everyone decides to  
proceed in their activities.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

On the bench, Billy rests. George comes out, popping a cigarette in his mouth.

GEORGE  
Yo, you feeling alright?

Caught off-guard by the slight compassion;

BILLY  
Oh, yeah. Yeah, I'm cool. Just a headache.

George sparks his cigarette.

GEORGE  
You get them often?

BILLY  
Lately, yeah. Not sure why. Stress, I'm thinking.

GEORGE  
I got something you might be interested in.

Their eyes meet.

EXT. BEHIND THE WAREHOUSE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

George pulls a pill bottle out of his trouser pocket, begins to twist the cap off.

BILLY  
Oh, uhm, yeah, I don't know about all that--

GEORGE  
You're stressed, right?

BILLY  
I am and I know how they work but...I don't got cash on me or anything, so.

GEORGE  
Did you hear me ask for money?

Billy concedes. No entreaty for payment. George allocates his clammy palm.

BILLY  
What is it exactly?

GEORGE  
It'll chill you out a bit. You'll  
be good, don't worry.

Billy toys with it. His following move is integral... and he goes for the dry swallow.

BILLY  
It's been a while.

The two men begin to walk.

*EXT. CLUBHOUSE - SURROUNDING WOODS - DAY - 2003*

*Billy, at the peak of puberty, smokes a cigarette, more or less preferring the image rather than taste. Jacob and Paul come trotting in, the latter pushing a new (stolen) bike.*

BILLY  
What's that?

JACOB  
It's for you. For your birthday.

*Paul and Jacob stand in front of Billy, orange BMX bike in their grasp.*

BILLY  
Are you serious?

JACOB  
Absolutely. Birthday or not, you  
earned it.

*Billy advances, awaiting a "just kidding" that never comes. He sits on it, filled with a foreign gratitude.*

BILLY  
This is so sick... Thank you so  
much. Seriously. You didn't need to  
do this.

JACOB  
Don't thank us. We're a family.  
Come here-

*The predator hugs his prey. Paul gives him a one-armed one as well.*

JACOB (CONT'D)

*Trisha gave you your present,  
right?*

*Trisha nods with displeasure but, nonetheless, a smile.*

BILLY

*Where did you get this?*

PAUL

*We, uh, bought it off my uncle.*

BILLY

*Dope. Best part is, I don't have to  
walk home for the party favors.*

*The trio peep one another with adoration.*

JACOB

*Good shit. Hurry back before it  
gets dark.*

**MOMENTS LATER:**

*Billy bikes through the woods, harnessing his strength as the  
wheels tear through the mud.*

**INT. BILLY'S BEDROOM - MOBILE HOME - DAY - MOMENTS LATER**

*Billy sits on the edge of his bed. Scared. Diane, wearing her  
work jumpsuit, enters. Billy sees what's in her hand.*

BILLY

*What do you wanna talk about, Mom?*

*Diane holds out the empty pill bottle.*

DIANE

*Why is this empty?*

BILLY

*I don't know. Did you take all of  
them?*

DIANE

*Don't pull that shit with me,  
Billy. A week and a half ago, there  
were nine in here. Nine. Not seven,  
not fucking five, nine. Why is it  
empty?*

BILLY

*Mom, I don't fucking know! I-*

DIANE

*Oh yeah BULLSHIT!! YOU THINK I'M  
FUCKING STUPID? YOU THINK I DON'T  
KNOW WHAT YOU DO?! HANDING THESE  
OUT LIKE CANDY TO YOUR JUNKIE  
FUCKING FRIENDS?!*

*Billy doesn't move.*

DIANE (CONT'D)

*ANSWER ME!*

BILLY

*I didn't do anything! And Mom, if I  
ever went to school I wouldn't have  
to hang out with "junkies".*

DIANE

*Oh, is that so? Well guess what,  
buddy? We had it good once but now  
we're stuck in shit. And as long as  
I'm here, you're stuck in it with  
me. That will never change. Do you  
understand?*

*Billy nods. A quiver of the lip.*

DIANE (CONT'D)

*Would you look at that? Big tough  
guy can shed some tears. Grow up,  
Billy. And STAY THE FUCK OUT OF MY  
CABINET!*

*Diane chucks the empty bottle at Billy's wall, SLAMMING the  
door behind her. Billy remains at the edge of his bed.*

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - 2008

*Billy does his job with a rescinded sense of bliss. George  
passes by, questions with an "OK" hand gesture. Billy  
responds with a thumbs up.*

MOMENTS LATER:

*Yet again under Mark's close vision, people clock out. Billy  
punches his number.*

MARK

*Good work today, Bill.*

BILLY

*Hey, thanks, Boss.*

Billy rips away his time sheet. He exits, high and pain-free.

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Rachael sprays and wipes their table down. Billy enters.

BILLY  
Hey, beautiful.

RACHAEL  
Hi. How are you feeling?

BILLY  
Much better now. Listen, I've been  
such an asshole and it's all I  
could think about after I dropped  
you off. I'm sorry.

Billy pulls Rachael close and plants a kiss on her lips.  
Baffled;

RACHAEL  
Tell me you scratched off a lottery  
ticket for 564 dollars.

BILLY  
No, I wish, no, It's-- just, from  
that to the homeless dude, all this  
shit's been happening and the  
stress got to me. You were trying  
to help and I'm sorry I couldn't  
see that.

RACHAEL  
You're fine, baby. No apology  
necessary. Here-

Rachael kisses him back and returns to her self-assigned  
task.

BILLY  
You should come to bed with me.

RACHAEL  
Oh, I was still gonna vacuum and-

BILLY  
Place looks great, babe. Always  
does, come on.

She never believes that.

RACHAEL

Alright, well, for one that's not true and two--

BILLY

Two is that you should come with me.

RACHAEL

Someone is awfully affection deprived...

BILLY

Yeah, I am. You can leave as soon as I pass out but, until then, let's walk.

RACHAEL

Alright, crazy boy. Let's go.

Billy grabs Rachael's hand and both enter their room.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

They cuddle. Stare at the ceiling. He strokes her hair.

BILLY

Do you think I should I open up more?

RACHAEL

You know how I feel about it. When we were younger, I wanted you to but as we matured I realized... No human has an obligation to know anything.

Hard to tell if Billy is listening.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)

Everyone needs to confide at some point. As long as you keep God in your heart, you will always have someone--

BILLY

It's just- Rachael, I don't think you get how important you are to me. My mom, sure, but, mainly, if it weren't for you--- I don't know where I'd be.

Rachael grows humbled. She snuggles closer. Billy thinks.

*EXT. FRONT PORCH - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 2003*

*Dressed in an ill fitting garb of a button down and khaki pants, Billy hops on his day-old bike and pedals off.*

*INT. GAS STATION - DAY - MOMENTS LATER*

*DING!*

*The sweaty kid enters. ALAN (60) stands behind the register. He flips through the most recent issue of an automobile magazine.*

*With solicitude;*

*ALAN*  
*How's it going?*

*BILLY*  
*Good. Are you guys hiring?*

*EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER*

*Billy bikes into the parking lot of a local fast food joint; O'BRIANS. He parks outside of the door and heads inside.*

*INT. O'BRIANS - DAY - MOMENTS LATER*

*Billy enters, immediately caught off guard when he sees the cashier. Her hair tied back, a collared red polo and a cute visor to match. A young Rachael, that same rosary still visible.*

*Billy stands behind an obese couple. Close by, Alec hands out a milkshake. The couple takes their receipt and walks off.*

*RACHAEL*  
*Hi. Welcome to O'brians!*

*Billy blushes.*

*BILLY*  
*Hi. Uh, I, um, yeah, I just have a question.*

*RACHAEL*  
*And what's that?*

*BILLY*  
*Are, um, are you guys hiring?*

RACHAEL  
Depends. How old are you?

BILLY  
I'm sixteen.

*To Rachael, Billy's diffidence is infectious.*

RACHAEL  
Perfect. Hold on one second.

*Rachael walks off. Billy takes a deep breath. Be cool.*

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING - 2008

Billy works. Pace is dawdling. He massages the back of his head. His energy shifts when George exits with an unlit cigarette in his mouth.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF WAREHOUSE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

George smokes. Billy steps out.

GEORGE  
'sup, chief?

BILLY  
Same old shit.

Billy sits next to him.

GEORGE  
Feeling alright yesterday?

BILLY  
Hell yeah, I was.

GEORGE  
Things are dope, right?

BILLY  
Yeah.. Yeah, man. I don't know if you sell or whatever and this really isn't in the budget but does 20 bucks get me anything?

With a sly grin, George exhales some smoke.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - DAY - 2003

Billy bikes through the park. The triumvirate stand near his trailer.

BILLY

Yo!

Billy rides to them, braking his bicycle.

JACOB

Yo, what happened last night?

BILLY

My mom, dude. Straight spazzed.

JACOB

About what?

BILLY

Her meds, bro. I can't be doing that anymore. She's never yelled like that, ever.

They aren't thrilled.

TRISHA

You can't do it one more time?  
Because my back is-

BILLY

I'm sorry, I really can't.

JACOB

What are you dressed all nice for?

BILLY

I've been applying to jobs all day.

Billy grabs a folder from his back pack. The three seem to be in the presence of a stranger. Paging through the folder;

BILLY (CONT'D)

See?

JACOB

What do you need a job for?

BILLY

I don't know, I mean- same reason any body gets one.

They await an answer-- "Which is?"

BILLY (CONT'D)

Money...

JACOB

Money for what?

BILLY

Just to, I don't know dude, Buy  
shit. I don't understand the big  
deal.

JACOB

Of course you don't.

An awkward silence lathers itself across the group. Billy  
begins to walk his bike past them.

BILLY

Alright, I'm heading inside, then.

JACOB

So, what? You're ditching us again?

BILLY

I didn't ditch you guys, I couldn't  
fucking leave. Do you wanna  
hangout?

JACOB

Do you?

BILLY

I do but it seems like y'all don't.

JACOB

Well, we do. Park the bike and meet  
us at the club house.

Billy, feeling an unwarranted sense of guilt, watches the  
group walk off.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - 2008

Billy fills a cup from the water jug. His eyes are bloodshot,  
his pain alleviated. From behind;

MARK

Big Bill.

BILLY

Mark, hey, how're you doing?

MARK

Can you ever really complain?

BILLY

I try not to.

Mark chuckles.

MARK

Yeah. Quick thing, though; policy doesn't embrace guzzling down water on company time. It was disclosed in the handbook. You said you went over it, correct?

BILLY

Oh yeah, I did, I was just getting a quick drink.

MARK

Ehhhhh, I saw you staring off a bit. Let's get back out there, shall we?

Billy grins, crushes his cup, tosses it in the trash.

BILLY

Right.

Mark, strapped with the cliché "I'm your boss" smirk, watches his worker return to his station.

EXT. HOMING COMPLEX - NIGHT - LATER

Billy parallel parks. The car shuts off.

IN CAR: Billy pulls three white pills from his shirt pocket. Drops them in the center console.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy and Rachael play an enthralling board game.

RACHAEL

I'm glad you're feeling better. With how our luck's been, I'll be getting it next.

BILLY

I think you'll be alright.

RACHAEL

You puking the other night, you know what it had me thinking about?

BILLY

What's that?

RACHAEL

Our first date.

BILLY

The movie we snuck into? Lacking Love 3D or whatever?

RACHAEL

No, the quarry! When you got all sweaty on me.

BILLY

Oh, yeah, that was-- just something with my mom.

Rachael moves a game piece.

RACHAEL

Could've figured that.

Billy debates, amongst other things, his move on the board.

*EXT. QUARRY - NIGHT - 2004*

*Billy and Rachael canter through a shaded trail. Encircling them are rocks the size of boulders. They elect to hop on them.*

*BILLY*

*These are the biggest rocks I've ever seen.*

*RACHAEL*

*Pretty intense, right? My Aunt and her friends used to get drunk here until the cops started coming.*

*BILLY*

*Yeah, that sounds like the cops.*

*RACHAEL*

*Never had to deal with them, thankfully. My parents would kill me. They literally think I'm at band practice right now.*

Billy laughs.

BILLY  
That's awesome.

On a certain rock, they sit next to one another and absorb the sunset.

RACHAEL  
Pretty, isn't it?

BILLY  
It is. Makes me realize how tiny we are.

RACHAEL  
Mhm. Makes it all the better that I have off tomorrow.

BILLY  
What's tomorrow?

RACHAEL  
The 16th.

BILLY  
Wish I could say the same.

RACHAEL  
Sucks for you!

Both smile. Their first "date" sure is a good one. Until, it hits him.

BILLY  
Wait... wait, tomorrow is the 16th?

RACHAEL  
It is!

BILLY  
So, it's the 15th right now?

RACHAEL  
I'm gonna go out on a whim here and guess that you've never seen a calendar.

Billy isn't laughing.

BILLY  
I'm sorry, I need to go home. I didn't realize what day it was. Can we leave, please?

RACHAEL

Yes, is everything okay?

BILLY

Honestly, no. I need to go like,  
right now. I'm so sorry.

*Billy is power walking down the trail before Rachael is even off the rock.*

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - NIGHT - LATER

*Billy full out sprints through the woods. At last, only twenty yards off are three silhouettes.*

BILLY

Yo!

*He reaches them, his run desisting before the dead dog that lay below.*

JACOB

Where have you been?

BILLY

I'm so sorry, I just got off.

JACOB

Wearing that?

BILLY

Yeah, it was a casual day-

PAUL

Oh, bullshit-

BILLY

It was a casual day, my managers-

PAUL

What the fuck kind of fast food  
joint has a casual day?

JACOB

PAULIE!

Silence.

BILLY

Again, my managers were testing out  
a casual day and I had to stay  
late. But I'm here and I'm ready to  
rock.

*They stare at the sweaty, winded teen. Their expectance is higher.*

JACOB  
*This can't happen again.*

BILLY  
*It won't.*

*Billy steps in line. Trisha, nail in one hand and hammer in the other, steps forward.*

INT./EXT. - PARKED CAR - MORNING - 2008

The couple kisses as the roaring bus approaches its stop.

BILLY  
Have a good day, baby.

RACHAEL  
You too. 9:00

BILLY  
I'll be here.

She exits.

INT/EXT. - PARKED CAR - CONVENIENCE STORE - MORNING - LATER

Engine readied, Billy reaches into the center console and obtains his non-prescribed pill. He chases it with a cup of joe.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

Billy rips away his time sheet.

EXT. HOMING COMPLEX - NIGHT - LATER

Billy and Rachael head for the front door.

BILLY  
Ah, shit- forgot something.

Billy turns around, Rachael continues on.

IN CAR:

Billy breaks one of the pills in half, and as he places it on his tongue-

INT. PARKED CAR - FOLLOWING MORNING

Billy, dressed for work, swallows a full pill.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING - LATER

Billy prints and slaps labels onto boxes. His focus is hazy at best, and it doesn't help that he's looking for you-know-who.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

On his cell, George chats with his girlfriend. Billy comes from inside, both smile like giddy children.

GEORGE

Let me call you back, baby.

He closes the phone.

BILLY

Sup, boss.

GEORGE

You look like you're feeling alright.

Billy takes a seat next to him.

BILLY

I am and you know I wouldn't mind feeling better. What you got for me?

GEORGE

Dry until the 12th of next month.

BILLY

Dry?

GEORGE

The 12th of next month is when my script comes in. Dry meaning I don't have any.

BILLY

Oh.

George sparks a cigarette.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Alright, all good, I don't need 'em  
anyway. I'm gonna head back in.

GEORGE

Alright, buddy.

Billy re-enters the warehouse.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Boxes pass through Billy's grip. His mood shift is visible.  
From behind;

MARK

Everything alright, Billy?

BILLY

Yeah, I'm fine. Just didn't sleep  
much last night.

MARK

Then I hope you don't mind me  
requesting your 8 hours. I've said  
it before and I have no issue  
saying it again; Monday to Friday,  
I want everyone here with the best  
attitude possible.

Billy faces his boss.

BILLY

I understand that Mark but people  
have bad days, y'know? A day when  
you're just not feeling it? And,  
unfortunately, for me, that's right  
now. But I'm here, right? I didn't  
take a sick day. I'm doing my job  
so let's just leave it at that.

Mark is taken aback. He decides to harness his superiorism.  
Reaching into his wallet;

MARK

Why don't you clock out and go get  
us all a couple pizzas?

BILLY

I need the money, Mark.

MARK

Well, right now you don't have the best attitude possible. If anything can cure a negative attitude, as far as I'm concerned, it's pizza.

Billy, jaw clenching, stays put. Mark holds out a hundred dollar bill.

MARK (CONT'D)

I insist.

Billy snatches the bill away.

*INT. KITCHEN - MOBILE HOME - NIGHT - 2005*

*Billy stands in front of the rotating microwave. Missing his girl.*

*From down the hall, a CRASH! No reaction from Bill.*

DIANE (O.S)

Uhhhh.... Uhhhh.... GodddDDD  
DAMNITT!

*Another SMASH against the wall.*

DIANE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

BILLY!

BILLY

What?

DIANE (O.S.)

Get in here, NOW.

*Billy trudges to her bedroom. He enters to an unrecognizable Diane. Her cheeks are sunken in and her thinning gray hair coincides with her brittle body.*

BILLY

What?

*Diane reaches into her night stand and yanks out some crumbled cash.*

DIANE

Go get me pizza.

BILLY

*I'm about to leave. I have a TV dinner in the microwave, can you just have that?*

DIANE

*Going to that bitch's house?*

*He bites his tongue.*

BILLY

*Rachael, yes.*

DIANE

*Huh... imagine that. My own son values another girl more than his mother. Crazy.*

*This is routine.*

BILLY

*I mean, I don't really have time.*

DIANE

*Oh, too grown for the sob story? Fine. Go. Go stay wherever it is that you do and don't even bother coming back.*

*Billy stares at his mother. For the first time, an authentic confidence builds inside of him.*

BILLY

*Fine. Say no more.*

*He kneels down and scoops up the bills..*

BILLY (CONT'D)

*I'm gone.*

*Billy exits. Shoving the bills in his pocket, he storms into his bedroom. He reaches under his bed and procures that same juvenile back pack. Marching down the hallway;*

DIANE (O.S.)

*YOU THINK YOU CAN LIVE WITHOUT ME?!*

*He rips open his drawers, holding back tears as he stuffs the bag with whatever clothes can fit. Diane enters and SLAPS her son as he shoves his velcro wallet into a pocket.*

DIANE (CONT'D)  
 YOU FUCKING UNGRATEFUL LITTLE DRUG  
 ADDICT, DON'T COME KNOCKING TWO  
 MONTHS FROM NOW---

Diane continues on as Billy leaves his childhood room without a last look. Bag around his back, through the front door he exits.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - MOBILE HOME - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Billy hops down the front steps. He gets on that same BMX bike, the size difference almost laughable.

JACOB (O.S)  
 Yo!

Jacob stands on the outskirts of the woods, about twenty-five feet off. All alone. Wiping away tears;

BILLY  
 Hey, can't talk right now.

JACOB  
 Where are you headed?

BILLY  
 I'm going to Rachael's.

JACOB  
 Your mom's got a point, y'know.

Billy stops.

BILLY  
 What?

JACOB  
 Those who came first should come first.

BILLY  
 You're wrong.

JACOB  
 Excuse me?

BILLY  
 YOU ARE WRONG! All of you, everyone in this stupid fucking park, are wrong. Twisted a-and misguided and wrong.

*Jacob smiles.*

JACOB  
*It's the 29th, William.*

*Billy keeps walking.*

JACOB (CONT'D)  
*Are you gonna make it tomorrow?*

BILLY  
*Absolutely fucking not.*

JACOB  
*Oh. Alright. Your choice.*

*Jacob blends into the woods.*

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - 2008

A line of employees are done for the day. Billy punches in his code. Mark stands close, watching his employees.

MARK  
 Again, everybody, you can thank Billy here for going out and and getting us lunch today.

SOME  
 Thanks--Thank you.

Billy tears away his time sheet.

BILLY  
 Yup.

Exits.

INT. PARKED CAR - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Billy swallows some over the counters.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy lays on his side, showered and under the covers. The light is on, the fan spins. He thinks. Wonders. After a long shift, Rachael enters. His eyes close.

RACHAEL  
 Billy?

No answer. Must be asleep.

*INT. O'BRIANS - NIGHT - 2005*

*Rachael, now with a yellow polo, applies hand sanitizer. Billy, fresh after his spontaneous evacuation, arrives. His eyes puffed from tears and his face reflective from sweat.*

*RACHAEL*

*Billy.*

*BILLY*

*Hey-- hi. I need to talk to you.  
Outside. Please.*

*Without a second thought, Rachael leaves the counter unattended.*

*INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING - 2008*

*6:59 transitions to 7:00. Billy's obnoxious alarm goes off. He angrily gets out from the covers and SLAPS it to silence.*

*BILLY*

*- the fuck up.*

*Rachael, half-asleep, looks at her boyfriend;*

*RACHAEL*

*What's wrong with you?*

*With introspection, Billy takes a solid look at her. He throws the covers off of himself and exits the bedroom.*

*INT. OFFICE - WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER*

*Billy opens the door, where Mark is seated behind his computer.*

*BILLY*

*Cool if I take my lunch now?*

*MARK*

*Do what you need to.*

*Billy exits.*

INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY - LATER

Billy passes mitts, gloves, practice helmets, until he finally found what he was looking for. A wide variety of baseball bats. He grabs one, testing the sturdiness against his palm.

INT/EXT. PARKED CAR - WAREHOUSE - DAY - LATER

Billy swallows three of his over the counter meds.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT - LATER

He tears away his time sheet. Mark watches the new-hire trot lug toward the exit.

INT./EXT. TRAVELING CAR - ROAD - NIGHT - LATER

Billy drives. Windows are up, radio is off. The only sound is a soothing, elongated inhale through his nose. That is until a deer sprints into the road and Billy's front end SMASHES into it.

The deer skids about ten feet down the road. Billy is unscathed.

BILLY

No! No! No! Fuck! God fucking  
damnit!

He storms out of the vehicle and apprehensively examines the damage. The front end is totaled. In the distance, the deer's neck and spine are completely obliterated.

Billy stands in place.

Out of no where; both the totaled car and the driver are illuminated by a set of artificial lights. Billy whips around to a

HONKKKKKKK!

An impatient driver waits behind the once trustworthy sedan. Stepping away from his car;

BILLY (CONT'D)

Go around me, asshole!

The driver does as he's told. Timid, he refocuses on the accident. Billy halts when he discovers the deer is gone.

Billy turns to the sedan; no damage. Just a parked vehicle in the middle of an obscure road. His breathing becomes heavy, his fists clench and he lets out a vicious SCREAM.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Rachael reads a novel. Billy's face is shoved into his pillow.

RACHAEL  
Maybe you're breathing in something  
that you shouldn't.

BILLY  
I don't think that's it.

RACHAEL  
Could be.

BILLY  
I don't work in a coal mine.

Rachael conceals a rebuttal, turns a page.

HOURS LATER:

They sleep. Billy wakes, groaning as he stands from the bed. He heads toward the:

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT

And turns the light on. Billy is greeted by the corpses of DUSTIN GAUGER (7) and ADDIE GAUGER (13). Dustin stands, skin sagging down his face with a sloppy slash across his throat.

Addie, face down, floats in the blackened bathtub.

Fear stricken Billy is momentarily immovable.

BILLY  
W---wh---

DUSTIN GAUGER  
You're not gonna hurt me too, are  
you?

BILLY  
Racha---Rach--

Billy takes two steps back and collapses into the hallway.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER

Billy rests on the hospital bed. Rachael sits in the tiny seat next to it, gripping his hand as she fights off the powering urge to sleep.

DR. MALCOLM (50) enters.

DR. MALCOLM  
How's everyone holding up?

BOTH  
Good--alright.

DR. MALCOLM  
Good to hear. Now, I don't mean to impose but Rachael, would you mind taking a step outside for just a moment?

Time freezes.

DR. MALCOLM (CONT'D)  
It's nothing to fret about. I just need to speak with Billy for a moment, in private.

RACHAEL  
Uh.. ye, yeah. Okay.

Rachael arises, planting a quick kiss on Billy's forehead. She leaves, closing the door behind her.

BILLY  
What's wrong?

DR. MALCOLM  
That's what I wanted to discuss. We got the results back from both the MRI and the brain scan and, physically, from what we can see... nothing is wrong.

BILLY  
Oh, um, yeah, I don't think that's right.

DR. MALCOLM  
Patients come in with these same symptoms and within hours we get a diagnosis but... everything seems, again, physically, to be fine.

BILLY

Okay... But, it's not. What am I supposed to do?

DR. MALCOLM

I have set up a meeting with an excellent psychiatrist. I believe it could be very beneficial.

BILLY

I've never done something like that before.

DR. MALCOLM

I understand it can be intimidating. That's why I asked Rachael to step out. It's no one's choice but your own. All I can do is embrace it.

Billy nods, understanding even if he doesn't want to.

I/E. MOVING CAR - HIGHWAY - EARLY MORNING

Rachael and Billy head home after hours in the ER.

RACHAEL

I think it can be a good thing. I do.

BILLY

Oh yeah, some prick trying to piece me together like I'm some sort of puzzle. That'll be fun.

RACHAEL

Billy, please, just calm down. You won't know until you try, right? Maybe you two will hit it off.

Billy doesn't believe that. His gaze seeps through the window.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Billy works. He peers at the industrial sized clock posted on the wall: 12:34 PM. He logs out of his computer and heads toward the office.

INT. OFFICE - WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Billy enters to Mark speaking with an interviewee. Agitated from the interruption;

MARK

Bill, what do you need?

BILLY

Oh, umm, you told me to let you know before I leave so I'm about to clock out.

MARK

You don't need to tell me, you're a big boy. Just go.

Billy, wanting to say more, doesn't. He exits the office.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Billy sits with OWEN (55) in a very elegant office.

OWEN

Nothing has been said?

BILLY

No.

OWEN

No phone calls?

BILLY

No.

OWEN

Why not?

BILLY

That's a part of my life I've been trying to leave behind.

OWEN

She raised you, correct?

BILLY

I grew up in her house.

OWEN

When was the last time you went to see her?

Billy takes a breath.

*INT. SINGLE ROOM APARTMENT - DAY - 2007*

*Rachael and Billy lay on her twin mattress. The "apartment" is the size of an ice cream truck.*

*BILLY*

*I gotta go get the rest of my stuff.*

*RACHAEL*

*At your Moms?*

*BILLY*

*Yeah.*

*RACHAEL*

*Who's taking you?*

*BILLY*

*I wanna walk.*

*RACHAEL*

*Billy, that's so far.*

*BILLY*

*Nothing I haven't done before. I'll be alright, monkey.*

*RACHAEL*

*If you say so!*

*They share a kiss.*

*MOMENTS LATER:*

*Billy walks. He watches the passing cars.*

*MOMENTS LATER:*

*Billy crosses a road, acknowledging the nice driver who authorized his passing.*

*EXT. MOBILE HOMES - NIGHT - LATER*

*Billy walks through the park, passing some newly placed trailers. About thirty yards ahead is the home of his childhood and adolescence.*

*The HOWL of a wolf brings Billy to a stand still. His vision gazes looks into the patch of moonlit trees.*

*BILLY*

*Huh.*

Billy awaits another howl until, about ten feet to his right, QUICK and LOUD fire works begin to pop off. Billy jumps from the noise, turning to gain a look at the light show.

Before Billy can process who, what, or why, a rock materializes through the fireworks and STRIKES him in his mouth.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Ah, FUCK!

Hands to his bleeding mouth, Billy retreats backward. Jacob and Paul rush out from behind the fire works, one of them WHACKING Billy with a sock full of quarters. He drops to the ground.

PAUL

Little Bitch!!

Jacob and Paul continue to pummel Billy. His eyes are already bruising, all parts of his face oozing blood.

BILLY

P-please, stop!

PAUL

Fucking faggot!!

A few more whacks until Billy is nearly out cold. Jacob backs off as Paul drops the sock, kicking Billy in the ribs and stomach.

JACOB

It's alright... nah, it's alright.  
He'll get his.

The finalization of Billy's consciousness comes from Paul STOMPING on his face.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Yo, are you fucking deaf?!

Paul retrogrades as Jacob kneels down and clutches a fistful of Billy's hair. Pulling his ear close;

JACOB (CONT'D)

You're never gonna get rid of us.

Jacob lets go, letting Billy's head slap onto the grass. Jacob and Paul disperse into the night.

Billy lays alone, his eyes grossly swollen, his crooked nose an opening for flowing blood, his lips fattened like a thanksgiving turkey.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY - 2008

The session, continued.

BILLY

I'd rather not speak on that.

OWEN

Fair enough.

Owen jots something into his notebook.

OWEN (CONT'D)

Maybe you need to see her. Have you ever thought of that?

BILLY

What do you mean?

OWEN

That's your mother. Despite whatever has happened, you still care. Even if you wanna believe you don't.

Billy listens.

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy swallows four of his headache pills.

RACHAEL

Something about it doesn't sit well with me.

BILLY

I didn't say I'm visiting her. I said he suggested it. That's it.

RACHAEL

Yeah, I know, but this man has no idea what she put you through or how she can be. Last time you went to see her, one of her drunken boyfriends decided to beat you up. Did you tell him that?

BILLY

No, Rachael. I didn't. You said it yourself, no one has an obligation to know anything about me. At least he's trying to help.

Rachael stares at him.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
What are you looking at?

RACHAEL  
Can you sit down, please?

BILLY  
Why?

RACHAEL  
Billy, please. Just sit with me.

Not without internal debate, Billy sits across from Rachael. She lays her hands out, waiting for them to be held.

Soon enough, they lock.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
I'm worried about you, Billy.

BILLY  
You don't need to be. I'm okay.

RACHAEL  
No, you're not. You're not okay.  
Something is wrong, something is  
bothering you-

Pulling his hands away;

BILLY  
Alright, don't start th-

RACHAEL  
- something is bothering you, and I  
need to talk about it.

Billy begins to chuckle.

BILLY  
Alright, Rachael. This place  
bothers me. This dirty, shit hole  
of a home.

That hurt.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
I'm sick of this day to day and I'm  
sick of doing bullshit work just so  
we can fucking watch TV.

Rachael does her best to hold back streaming tears.

RACHAEL

And hey-- I-- I understand that,  
but you need to understand that I  
am here with you. Every day. When  
you suffer, I suffer.

BILLY

I'm not suffering, Rachael! I don't  
 know why you insist otherwise, I'm  
 fine.

RACHAEL

I insist otherwise because I know  
 you're lying! We've been together  
 for years, Billy. Something is  
 wrong here, something real-- and  
 I'm just kept in the dark.

BILLY

I'm not doing this.

RACHAEL

Billy, please, I need-

BILLY

Stop.

Billy enters their shared bedroom, closing the door behind  
 him. Rachael cries.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Billy clocks in, ripping away his time sheet.

MOMENTS LATER:

Billy treads down an aisle of high stacked of boxes. GLEN, an  
 older co-worker, stands on a ladder, reaching for a box.

GLEN

Hey, buddy!

Billy turns to the old timer.

BILLY

Yeah?

GLEN

You mind helping me grab this?

BILLY

Yeah, sure.

Billy walks toward the ladder as Glen proceeds down the rickety contraption.

GLEN  
Body ain't meant for this shit  
anymore.

BILLY  
Yeah.

GLEN  
I wish it were, let me tell ya.

Glen makes it to the ground. Billy takes the first step up.

GLEN (CONT'D)  
Friendly word of advice? Don't  
smoke.

BILLY  
Happy to say I quit years back.

GLEN  
Good to hear. It's that top one,  
should say 2-8-0-3.

Billy, now at the top of the ladder, sorts through the stack of boxes as he looks for that four digit code.

BILLY  
2803, you say?

GLEN  
Yes.

Billy grabs a box the size of a VHS player and sees the four digit code- 2803.

BILLY  
Got it.

MARK (O.S)  
BILLY!

Billy's vision jets toward the end of the aisle where Mark stands.

BILLY  
What's up?

MARK

Shipping is backed up to shit! Who gave you permission to come help old Glen here? Last I checked, you were not hired for Picking.

BILLY

I was just taking a piss and he asked if I could get this box for-

MARK

God Damnit kid, I'm tired of the excuses! How much longer do you expect me to put up with this? I mean, Christ, is this job that hard?

Billy's rage has reached its boiling point. His teeth grind together as his heavy feet clammer down the ladder.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - APARTMENT - DAY - LATER

Rachael folds laundry. Her attention switches when she hears the front door being opened.

Billy enters.

RACHAEL

What are you doing home?

BILLY

Shipping got a half day.

RACHAEL

Oh.

Billy sits at the kitchen table, away.

BILLY

I have off tomorrow.

RACHAEL

Oh, really?

BILLY

Some new shippers are being trained so a few of us don't have to come in.

RACHAEL

That's good! Gives you a day to rest up.

BILLY

Also means a lower paycheck.

Rachael enters the kitchen. The idea of communication is as enticing as it is frightening. She notices something on her boyfriend's hand; his pointer and middle knuckles are bruised.

RACHAEL

What happened to your hand?

BILLY

This ladder closed on me.

RACHAEL

Wow, that must have hurt.

A moment.

BILLY

I know you'll be upset if I don't apologize so--

RACHAEL

I don't want your sorry's. I just want one thing.

Billy awaits her aforementioned thing.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)

Lunch. Tomorrow. I don't go in until 4:00.

BILLY

It's not in the budget, Rachael.

RACHAEL

I need you to answer in five seconds; when was the last time we went out?

Five seconds pass.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)

1:00 tomorrow. It's a date.

Billy employs a counterfeit smile. Rachael gives up, entering their bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - DAY

Rachael pulls a pretty but casual dress over her shoulders. Billy, dressed in a nice button down, pops his head in;

BILLY  
You almost ready?

RACHAEL  
Yup! Just a few more minutes.

Billy exits.

EXT. TABLES - RESTAURANT - DAY

Billy and Rachael opt to sit outside on this beautiful day. A few other tables are occupied. Billy gives his temples a rubbing.

RACHAEL  
You feeling alright?

BILLY  
Yeah, I'm fine.

RACHAEL  
Do you wanna leave?

BILLY  
No. Already ordered, so.

Rachael exhales. After some estranged silence, ANGIE (20) comes over with a tray of food.

ANGIE  
Alrighty guys! Rodeo burger?

RACHAEL  
That's me!

Rachael smiles at her delicious plate.

ANGIE  
And the sun-dried panini?

BILLY  
Right here.

Angie places the plate in front of Billy. A maggot plagued cat corpse lays across it. Billy surges from out of his chair, attracting the attention of fellow eaters.

RACHAEL

Billy!

Billy peers around, then back at his plate; an appetizing panini along with a side of fries.

ANGIE

Do you want me to take it back?

BILLY

No, no, that's fine. Thank you.

ANGIE

Are you sure?

BILLY

Yes.

Angie walks off, thinking she should do more but uncertain of what that "more" could be.

Billy's vacillation is palpable. An elderly couple moves away their table. Pulling out cash from her purse;

RACHAEL

Yeah, we should go.

Billy agrees without vocally responding.

EXT. PARKING LOT - WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Billy's sedan pulls into a parking spot.

IN CAR: Billy swallows a palmful of over-the-counters, chasing them back with water. He exits.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

As Billy promenades toward his station, his contemporaries feed him looks of repugnance.

The looks will not cease and Billy is now ten feet away from his department. Incognizant, he decides to take it up with the boss.

INT. OFFICE - WAREHOUSE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Mark types on his computer, a new pair of dark rimmed glasses somewhat covering a fresh black eye. Billy enters after a quick knock.

BILLY  
Hey, boss--

Mark JUMPS from his chair.

MARK  
What the fuck are you doing here?!

BILLY  
What do you--

MARK  
You have 30 seconds to get out of  
this building or I'm getting you  
out myself.

BILLY  
Mark, I don't understand--

MARK  
Go!

Mark SHOVES Billy against the closed door. Hard. He is not playing around. Billy, damn-near shaking, exits. Mark remains.

MARK (CONT'D)  
Little fucker.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF WAREHOUSE - MORNING - MOMENTS LATER

Billy exits his seemingly former workplace. Running hands of incertitude through his hair, he tries to remember. It may be blurry, but it hits him.

*INSERT: A QUICK SHOT of Glen attempting to hold Billy back as he repeatedly throws punches at Mark's face.*

Billy realizes.

BILLY  
No... No, no, no, no.

He wanders into the lot.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - DAY - LATER

Rachael rests her eyes. Billy opens the closed door and enters.

RACHAEL  
What're you doing home?

She can tell.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
Billy, what's wrong?

As he meanders toward the bed, he attempts to break the news in a sophisticated manner. He cries as soon as he sits.

BILLY  
I lost my job.

RACHAEL  
Oh... Oh, no, what happened?

Rachael puts her arm around him. Tears stream down his cheeks.

BILLY  
I don't know! That's the thing, I have no idea. He just told me to leave.

RACHAEL  
Hey, hey, you're alright. It's all part of the plan, remember? It took you less than a week to find this one. You'll find something better soon enough.

BILLY  
No...

Billy *cries*.

BILLY (CONT'D)  
No, I won't! I can't, I really can't-

RACHAEL  
Listen, Bi-

Billy LEAPS from the bed.

BILLY  
JESUS CHRIST, RACHAEL!

RACHAEL  
Billy!

BILLY

Look around!! How in the fuck can you just sit there and act like all is well and that this is part of some "plan"?! You have no idea what I am going through right now and--

RACHAEL

Because you don't talk! You don't tell me anything! How am I supposed to help when I have no idea what's happening with you?!

Dead air.

BILLY

Fuck this.

Billy storms off.

INT. BATHROOM - APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Billy stares at his reflection as the hot water runs. His eyes have a glaze of yellow, jaundice like.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - MORNING

Rachael buttons up her long sleeve, piercing her manager's name tag through the front pocket. Billy lays in bed, staring at the ceiling with torpor.

BILLY

I'm gonna go see my mom today.

Rachael brushes her hair.

BILLY (CONT'D)

Nothing to say on it?

RACHAEL

I've told you what I think. You have no interest in listening. Becky is picking me up and I'll find another ride home.

Rachael exits.

Billy continues to stare at the gyrating ceiling fan. The sound of his bedroom door closing is rather comforting.

EXT. HOMING COMPLEX - DAY - LATER

Billy walks to his parallel parked sedan. Once inside, he caresses the steering wheel before starting the engine.

INT. MOVING CAR - MID-DAY - LATER

Billy drives in silence.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy lays in his bed, showered with the blanket draped over him. In enters Rachael, her face a bit glossy from the grill grease.

RACHAEL

Hey.

BILLY

Hey.

Rachael sits at the end of the bed.

RACHAEL

How was your mom?

BILLY

I didn't go. Started to but I turned around.

RACHAEL

Really?

BILLY

Yeah. Not ready for it.

RACHAEL

That's good. Seriously, Billy-- I think you're doing the right thing.

BILLY

Thank you.

Rachael thinks of another safe question.

MORNING:

Billy sleeps, the morning sun breaking through the window blinds. Foot steps plod down the hallway and in enters Rachael.

RACHAEL  
Billy--- Billy!

He wakes, eyes crusty.

BILLY  
What?

RACHAEL  
Phone.

Rachael holds out the land line.

BILLY  
Who is it?

RACHAEL  
I don't know. Just asked for you.

Billy grabs the phone, Rachael exits.

BILLY  
Hello?

DET. STEWART (V.O.)  
Is this William Parkins?

BILLY  
Uh, yeah, who's this?

DET. STEWART (V.O.)  
This is Detective Stewart. Of the  
South Warrington Police Department.

Billy steps out of bed.

BILLY  
Oh, uh, what's going on?

He closes the bedroom door.

DET. STEWART (V.O.)  
Are you sitting down?

He isn't.

BILLY  
Yeah.

DET. STEWART (V.O.)  
Uhm, there's no easy way to say  
this. It's your mother. She was  
found dead this morning.

An earth shifting silence.

BILLY

How?

DET. STEWART (V.O)

Unfortunately, I can't disclose  
that over the phone but -

*INSERT: A QUICK SHOT of Diane, laying on the trailer's floor.  
Her face is CAVED IN and she rests in a puddle of her own  
blood.*

DET. STEWART (V.O.)

- if you would wanna come down to  
the station at some point we could  
fill you in on the details.

Billy realizes.

DET. STEWART (V.O.)

We understand if you need some  
time, though.

BILLY

Yeah, yeah, sorry, I, uh-- I'm  
gonna need a day or two.

DET. STEWART (V.O.)

Completely understand. I sincerely  
apologize for your loss and  
whenever you are ready to speak,  
someone will be here for you.

BILLY

Thank you.

DET. STEWART

No need to thank me, Bill. I'll see  
you soon.

Billy hangs up, setting the phone atop of his dresser drawer.

INT. KITCHEN - APARTMENT - MORNING - LATER

Rachael cooks at the stove. Billy enters.

RACHAEL

Who was that?

BILLY

It was Mark. I got my job back!

She doesn't exactly "buy" it.

RACHAEL  
Wow... really?

BILLY  
Yeah! I go in tomorrow. Same time  
as always.

RACHAEL  
That's great, Billy.

BILLY  
You don't seem too thrilled.

RACHAEL  
I am! I am. It's just, I don't  
know, weird.

BILLY  
What do you not believe me?

RACHAEL  
Did I once say that?

BILLY  
No, but I was hoping you'd be happy  
that we're dodging an eviction  
notice.

RACHAEL  
Okay, I didn't mean that. It's  
just, random.

BILLY  
I need some air.

Billy exits through the front door, leaving Rachael, as  
you've come to expect, all alone.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Owen scribbles something. Billy, appearing white and  
weightless, sits across from him. As he writes;

OWEN  
These will help you forget. Thus,  
helping you move on. Should help  
with the headaches too.

Owen tears it out. Billy grabs it from him.

INT/EXT. MOVING CAR - HIGHWAY - DAY - LATER

Billy drives.

He reaches into the center console and picks out the written prescription. He grins. Soon enough, chuckling.

His weird fit of laughter slowly transitions into a quick scream. That's followed by another hoarse, deep holler. Billy shrieks at the top of his lungs, smashing his fists and forehead on the steering wheel.

With heavy breaths, Billy tosses the crumbled prescription out of the window.

INT. BEDROOM - APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER

Billy stares up at the gyrating fan with torpor. The door is pushed open.

RACHAEL

Billy.

Giving her no visual attention;

BILLY

What?

RACHAEL

I need you to tell me what this is.

Billy looks at his girlfriend. Her shaky hands wield a dented and bloodied baseball bat.

BILLY

Why were you in my car?

RACHAEL

I was cleaning it for you, why was this in there?

BILLY

It was a prank. This dude put it on my car at work so I just put it in the trunk.

RACHAEL

On your first day back? No. No one pulls a prank like this. Stop lying to me. Why was this in your car?

Billy sits up, a catalyst for Rachael's grip to compress.

BILLY  
What else could it be?

RACHAEL  
That's what I need to know. I'm  
sorry but I refuse to believe that  
this was some prank.

BILLY  
Babe, are you crazy?

Rachael, her voice trembling;

RACHAEL  
I think you need to leave.

Billy stands, equal parts angry and non-threatening. Stepping  
back, Rachael raises the bat, ready to strike.

RACHAEL (CONT'D)  
Stay back!

BILLY  
Baby, please! It's me! Look at  
yourself--

CUT TO:

EXT. HOMING COMPLEX - DAY

OFFICER KIMBELL (30) POUNDS on Billy and Rachael's front  
door.

OFFICER KIMBELL  
Police! Anyone home?!

He continues knocking. The lack of answer strikes him with an  
idea. He looks to the left, then to the right. The street is  
unoccupied.

Kimbell pulls the pistol out of his holster and, with great  
force, KICKS below the door knob. The door swings open,  
smacking against the interior wall.

OFFICER KIMBELL (CONT'D)  
POLICE!

Nothing.

Kimbell takes a step inside. His vision leads the way, his  
pointer placed on the trigger. He continues.

OFFICER KIMBELL (CONT'D)  
Hello?! Police!-- Anyone home?!

Nothing. Barrel first, Kimbell peers into the kitchen. The silence is explained by an evocative and poignant canvas.

Rachael is propped against the refrigerator in a pool of her own blood. Her stomach and torso are riddled with countless stab wounds. The bat lay close by. Her limp palm managed to not let go of her rosary.

Feeling sick to his stomach;

OFFICER KIMBELL (CONT'D)  
Oh, Jesus Christ...

Officer Kimbell examines Rachael's corpse, which rests in the earliest stage of decay. He calls it in.

INT/EXT. - STAGNANT CAR - TOLL BOOTH - EARLY MORNING

MAYA (24) stands in the booth. A sedan inches in. As the driver rolls down his window, Maya notices half of Billy's face is covered by purple and black bruising.

MAYA  
Uh... that's gonna be 3.55

Billy hands her four bills.

BILLY  
You can keep the rest.

The transaction is complete. Billy drives off into the early morning sunset. Maya keeps an eye on the four-door, wondering where his destination may be.

FADE OUT.

OPEN ON:

EXT. SURROUNDING WOODS - MOBILE HOME - DAY - 2009

Patrick, minutes after the bigoted father sent him on an embarrassment course, slogs through the woods. He pulls one of the tight shoulder straps close and wipes away a tear.

JACOB (O.S.)  
Everything alright, miss?

Patrick suspends. He peers up, ill prepared and sheepish, but, for whatever reason, a bit hopeful.

HARD CUT TO:

**BLACK.**