

ONE LESS EGG TO FRY

IN THE SHADOWS OF BOSTON, LOVE IS A CRIME.

A PSYCHOLOGICAL THRILLER

Written by

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EXT. BOSTON SKYLINE - DAWN (1968)

The city never really sleeps—just pretends to.

A BELL TOLLS in the distance. Heavy. Ominous.

PULL DOWN onto a construction site—half-finished steel juts into the sky like broken ribs. The skeleton of a new Boston, built on backroom deals and bribes.

FRANK CALLAHAN (37) stands at the edge of the site, a cigarette burning in his fingers. A bulldozer of a man, broad shoulders, heavy coat. Built to withstand storms. But there's something beneath the surface— a crack forming in the foundation. His eyes scan the city as if waiting for an answer.

Behind him, a WORKER calls out—

WORKER

Hey, Frank! You comin' to mass or what?

Frank hesitates. He exhales smoke.

FRANK

Yeah. Yeah, I'll be there.

He flicks the cigarette, ash spiraling down, caught in the wind.

But as he turns away, another man lurks by the site trailer—JIMMY DOLAN (28), fresh-faced, too clean for this business. New city inspector.

Jimmy gives Frank a tight, unreadable nod. Frank returns it. But his fingers tighten in his coat pocket.

ASH HITS THE GROUND—MATCH CUT TO—

A SWINGING INCENSE BURNER.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MORNING MASS

Smoke curls upward, filling the church with ritual and weight. The priest's voice drones over the congregation.

Frank sits stiffly beside his wife, SUSAN (40)—a woman who should've been a Kennedy widow by now. Regal, sharp, but watching.

Their restless son, PAUL (6), leans against Frank's arm. Frank crosses himself—mechanically, a habit, no meaning.

The PRIEST continues—

PRIEST (O.S.)
 The Lord sees all. The Lord knows
 our sins before we even confess
 them.

Frank's jaw tightens. A muscle twitches in his cheek.

The donation basket is passed down the pew. Susan takes the envelope from her purse— slips in crisp, folded bills.

Frank watches. His money. His kickbacks. Susan knows. She doesn't say a word.

PRIEST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 And yet, He still loves. But only
 if we repent.

Frank exhales. Eyes forward.

FRANK
 Not today.

MATCH CUT TO—

A STACK OF CASH slamming onto the desk.

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - LATER

The same crisp, folded bills Susan just slipped into the donation basket—now bundled in rubber bands, unholy, undeniable.

Across from Frank sits MARTY CARBONE (50s)—developer, old-school gangster, a man who's never worked a day in his life but owns half of Boston's skyline.

MARTY
 (cool)
 Jimmy Dolan won't play ball.

Frank lights a cigarette.

FRANK
 New kid. He'll learn.

MARTY
 Or he won't. And then what?

Frank doesn't answer. The silence weighs. Marty leans in.

MARTY (CONT'D)
You let this kid blow the whistle?
We all go down.

Frank flicks ash into the tray. He already knows.

MATCH CUT TO—

A cigarette smolders in an ashtray.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - 2PM

A dead hour. The kind of bar where time stopped moving decades ago.

Low light. The smell of old whiskey and older sins.

Frank sits at the bar. A full shot of whiskey in front of him. His coat still on, collar up. A man who doesn't wait—only watches.

Liam O'Malley (50) the Irish Mob Boss sits a stool away.

LIAM
You gonna take care of this mess
with Dolan?

Frank doesn't answer. He doesn't need to.

JOAN (50s), the bartender, tough as rusted nails, wipes down the counter with the same rag she's used all week.

In the background, two thugs sit in silence, just enough muscle to convince anyone of anything.

The door swings open.

Jimmy Dolan a big shot in his own head, walks in like he owns the place. He doesn't.

Frank doesn't turn.

He nods at Joan. She pours another shot.

Jimmy slides onto the stool next to him. He sees the glass, smirks, and pushes it aside.

JIMMY
Frank, I can't be bought.

Frank flicks ash from his cigarette.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I know you think you run things,
but that ship has sailed. Get your
team in line, play by the law, or
there'll be problems.

Frank finally looks at him. Still. Measured. Unbothered.

Then, dryly, deadly—

FRANK

So you can't be bought... or is it
won't be bought?

Jimmy holds his ground, leans in—a kid who still thinks he's
the one calling shots.

Frank smirks. Slowly, lightly, he taps Jimmy's cheek.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Everyone, Jimmy-boy, has a price.

Silence.

Behind them, one of the thugs moves to the door.

CLICK.

The lock slides into place. Jimmy hears it. Feels it. Sweat
forms at his temple.

Frank finally stands. Towers over him. He leans in close,
voice mocking, casual, cold.

FRANK

Can't. Won't. Would. Could. It's
all the same.

He grabs Jimmy by the back of the neck. Not rough. Not yet.

FRANK (CONT'D)

See, I hire to attitude. Train to
skill. But I don't train cowards.

He lets go. Finger-taps Jimmy's chest. Then his cheek. The
patrons step forward.

Jimmy swallows hard. Real fear was setting in.

FRANK (CONT'D)

And Jimmy-boy... you got neither
attitude nor skill that's of any
value to me.

A THUG GRABS JIMMY.

One takes his arms behind his back.

The other locks an arm around his throat.

Jimmy struggles—but it's too late.

JIMMY

No, no, Frank—c'mon, I can learn, I
can change—

Frank barely acknowledges it.

He picks up a knife from the bar. One sharp, quick move—he
sinks it into Jimmy's gut.

Jimmy GASPS—eyes wide, body stiff.

Frank leans in. Quiet. Final.

FRANK

No, you won't. You'd always be a
problem.

He yanks the blade back. Blood seeps through Jimmy's coat.

Jimmy's legs give out. Frank nods.

CRACK.

A thug snaps Jimmy's neck. His body drops like a bag of
bricks.

FRANK

(cold, no feeling)
Problem solved.

Silence.

Frank steps behind the bar, grabs a rag, and wipes the blade
clean.

He nods at Joan.

FRANK (CALM, EVEN) (CONT'D)

Joanie—give us a round. Then we'll
clean up.

Glasses clink. A slow fifteen seconds of whiskey.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Ok, back to work.

Then—the cleanup. The body. Bagged. Loaded into the trunk.
The floor mopped. The blood erased. The trunk slams shut.

MATCH CUT TO—

EXT. ABANDONED QUARRY - NIGHT

A black sedan idles near the edge. The trunk opens. Tail
lights glow red. Hands grip the bag.

A HEAVE-HO—

SPLASH. The water swallows Jimmy whole.

ANGLE UP—

Frank watches. Expression unreadable. He flicks his cigarette
into the quarry.

FRANK
(dry, unimpressed)
Yep. No value to me, kid.

ROLL THE OPENING CREDITS HERE

CREDITS ROLL
OVER:

SLOW, CINEMATIC SHOTS — LIKE BIBLE VERSES IN NOIR:

Black sedan driving back through wet Boston streets

A rag tossed into a trash bin behind the bar

Joan locking up, flipping the "Closed" sign

Sean in a mirror, buttoning a shirt, haunted eyes

Susan, lipstick to mouth, perfect and empty

Paul, asleep, unaware the world is about to crack

Liam, in shadow, watching

A firework test launch — silent, slow motion

All scored to something chilling and unexpected: A stripped-down acoustic version of a 1950s love song – maybe “Where or When” or “Smoke Gets in Your Eyes”

☠ CREDITS END
ON:

A final image:

Still. Heavy. The quarry water now calm. As if nothing ever happened. The rippled water melds into sheets on a bed.

Then–

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM

The next morning. Sun pouring through. Little feet tip toeing to the bed where Frank is “asleep” As Paul is “sneaking” up on Frank he opens an eye (this is all a game).

Paul climbs up on the bed.

PAUL
(whisper)
Daddy...Daddy. Wake up.

No movement from Frank.

THEN. Frank ROARS and engulfs Paul. Paulie giggles with delight.

FRANK
Who woke up the Big, Bad Wolf!

MATCH CUT TO–

A highball glass. Ice clinking. Swirled slow. Music drifts in–The Rolling Stones, “Sympathy for the Devil.”

NEON BUZZES– A SIGN FLICKERS: O'MALLEY'S BAR.

The TV hums in the background–news reports bleeding into the smoke-heavy air.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)
"In Vietnam, the Tet Offensive
rages on, with heavy losses
reported..."

A bartender switches the channel.

NEW TV CHANNEL (V.O.)
 "Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
 Delivered a speech in Memphis just
 hours before his assassination
 tonight..."

Silence.

Someone mutters "Son of a bitch." Someone else shakes their head. The moment hangs in the air, heavy—but no one says a damn thing.

CLOSE ON the highball glass again—ice shifting, melting.

SEAN O'CONNELL (late 20s, sharp, calculating) swirls his whiskey.

LIAM (50s, patriarch, cold and amused) sits nearby, nursing his scotch, an empire in his gaze.

LIAM
 Y'know, Sean... you don't date much.

Sean smirks, tapping his glass lightly against the bar before taking a sip.

SEAN
 Maybe I'm married to the job.

Liam watches him. Sean doesn't blink.

The BOYS chuckle—but there's something unspoken now. A slow awareness creeping in.

Jagger's voice slithers through the speakers—

JAGGER V.O.
 "Please allow me to introduce
 myself..."

Sean downs his whiskey. Liam's gaze lingers.

MATCH CUT TO—

BREATH IN THE COLD NIGHT AIR.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Boston after dark. The city hums with unseen sins. A streetlight flickers, casting long shadows.

Frank exhales, cigarette smoke curling in the cold.

A shadow moves. Sean steps into the dim light. Dark. Sleek. Dangerous.

The silence stretches. A tension that isn't new—just finally unbearable.

SEAN
(low)
Didn't think you'd show.

Frank scoffs. Looks away.

Sean steps closer. Close enough that Frank can smell the whiskey on his breath.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(sharp, sarcastic)
You go to confession today?

Frank doesn't answer.

Sean leans in, voice barely above a whisper—

SEAN (CONT'D)
Bet the priest didn't hear about
this.

SNAP—

Frank GRABS Sean's collar, SHOVES him against the brick wall. For a second it looks like a fight.

Then— Frank kisses him. Hard. Desperate.

Sean lets it happen. Then pulls back— grinning. Breathless. Cocky.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(smirking, low)
Good. Thought you forgot how.

A CAR ENGINE ROARS.

Frank tenses. Sean smirks.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(teasing)
Relax. Not the cops. Not your wife.

Frank doesn't answer. He turns to leave and Sean grabs his hand and pulls him back in for a kiss, then he eases him back. They lock eyes.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Someday, Frank Callahan. You won't
let go.

Frank turns and walks, he doesn't turn back.

Sean watches. He knows. He brushes his thumb against his lips and savors the taste. Then, finally—

SEAN (CONT'D)
(to himself)
Someday.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank parks in the driveway. Sits there, engine running. Inside—Susan's silhouette through the window. Waiting. Frank watches her.

A moment. Then—he shuts off the engine. He walks to the front door.

Pauses. Then steps inside.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Susan is already in bed, reading. A poised, controlled figure.

Frank enters, loosens his tie. He moves to the dresser. Removes his wedding ring.

SUSAN
You're late.

Frank doesn't answer immediately.

FRANK
Had a long day.

She turns the page of her book.

SUSAN
Where were you?

Frank pauses. Looks at her. A test. She knows. She always knows. Then—he exhales. Smiles, easy.

FRANK

Out.

Susan holds his gaze. Unblinking.

Frank crawls into bed after the alley with Sean. Susan can smell the scent of Sean on Frank.

SUSAN

(casual but sharp as a
blade)

Is that a new aftershave, Frank?

(beat, turning a page)

I always hated how Sean smelled.

Low and distant.

FRANK

Yeah.

Susan inhales. Breathes him in. Sean is still on him.

SUSAN

I wish you could just be happy,
Frank.

Frank stares at the ceiling. Doesn't answer right away.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FRANK'S MIND - DRIFTING

SEAN V.O

Someday Frank Callahan...

FLASH: FRANK AT THE CONSTRUCTION SITE - CUTTING CORNERS
(MORNING, 1968)

Frank shakes hands with a greasy contractor—backroom deals,
stolen materials, paid-off inspectors.

Gallagher the cop is in the distance, watching. But doesn't
approach—yet.

Frank pockets an envelope of cash. Pays off his "crew."

He glances over his shoulder. Paranoia creeping in.

DISSOLVE TO—

FLASH: SEAN AT THE BAR - A BEER AND A THOUSAND UNSAID THINGS
(LATE NIGHT, 1968)

Frank and Sean sit at a bar—silent, heavy. Sean slides a beer toward Frank. Frank takes it but doesn't drink right away.

Sean watches him. Finally—

SEAN
(quiet, firm)
You should leave Boston, Frankie.

Frank smirks. Laughs.

FRANK
(low, dry)
Yeah? You got a train ticket for me?
(he chuckles, but it's empty)
I've been riding the same one-way track my whole damn life.

Sean doesn't laugh. Just stares. Frank sips his beer—long, slow. He knows Sean is right. He won't do it.

DISSOLVE TO—

FLASH: FRANK FINDS A NOTE UNDER HIS WINDSHIELD - GALLAGHER IS COMING

A scrap of paper tucked under his windshield wiper. Four words, written in heavy ink: "Meet me. No cops." - Gallagher.

Frank stares at it. He folds it. Lights a cigarette. He burns the note. Holds it while it burns then tosses it on the ground. He knows. It's time.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE BREAKING POINT - FRANK'S CHILDHOOD FLASHBACK

VO
(soft, calm, reverent)
"Our Father, who art in Heaven..."

FLASH: INT. KITCHEN - 1940 - NIGHT

CRACK. A chair scrapes. A plate shatters. Frank (10) frozen at the table. His father looms.

FRANK'S FATHER
If you'd just listen the first
time, I wouldn't have to do this.

VO
"...Hallowed be Thy Name..."

His mother kneels. Silent. Gathering shards. Frank watches.
Doesn't move. Father to young Frank:

FRANK'S FATHER
Don't just sit there like a girl.
You got something to say?

Frank opens his mouth. Closes it.

VO
"Thy Kingdom come..."

SMACK. FRANK HITS THE FLOOR.

VO (CONT'D)
"...Thy will be done..."

FRANK'S FATHER
You better not grow up to be some
kind of sissy. Not in my house.

His mother touches Frank's cheek-tender. Trembling.

VO
"...on Earth as it is in Heaven."

EXT. CEMETERY - 1941 - WINTER

CATHERINE CALLAHAN'S GRAVE. A priest mumbles in Latin.

VO
(overlying the Latin)
"Give us this day our daily bread..."

Young Frank, 11, in a coat too big. Fists clenched.

VO (CONT'D)
"...and forgive us our trespasses..."

FRANK FATHER
No tears, Frankie. Men don't cry.

VO
(broken now)
"...as we forgive those who trespass
against us..."

Frank is stiff. Doesn't move.

VO (CONT'D)
 (final, echoing into
 silence)
 "...And lead us not into temptation...
 but deliver us from evil."

FRANK FATHER
 (low, firm)
 Fine woman. Fine woman.

A pause. Then, quiet but final— Frank doesn't move. Doesn't blink. Doesn't breathe.

His fists slowly unclench. We see it now—deep, crescent-shaped nail marks in his palms.

FRANK'S MOTHER V.O.
 (ghostly, distant)
 It's okay to love, Frankie. Even if
 they don't.

He turns to his father. A pause. A beat too long.

FRANK (V.O.) (ADULT)
 (flat, scarred, exact)
 That's when I knew. You could love
 someone, and still kill the best
 parts of them.

Fade to black.

YOUNG FRANK (V.O.)
 (quiet, small)
 I made myself small. I never cried
 again.

ADULT FRANK (V.O.)
 (flat, scarred)
 Until I met him.

BLACK SCREEN.

The faint clink of a chain. A low, metallic swing. Breath. Thick. Waiting. A wisp of smoke curls into frame—floating, sacred. No source. Just air, ritual, memory.

THE SMOKE SHIFTS—SLOWLY MORPHS— FROM INCENSE TO COLD BREATH.
 A VAPOR CLOUD IN THE NIGHT.

We're close. Too close. Not sure where we are—just brick wall. Boots. Tug. Breath. Zipper. Grip. Teeth.

Breaths tangle. Animal. Hot. Alive. Then— Sean leans in. Teeth bared. A challenge.

SEAN
(low, deadly whisper)
Say it, Frankie.

Frank's pulse slams against his ribs. His fingers tighten. A long, dangerous pause.

Then—Frank jerks his head to the side. Refuses. Sean's jaw tightens. His breath shudders.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(cold, low)
That's what I thought.
(beat, then with quiet threat)
One day, Frankie... you won't get to refuse.

Sean pulls back. Leaves him standing there. His footsteps echo. The space grows colder. Empty.

VO
(soft, resigned)
"...Amen."

But it doesn't end. The word lingers. Echoes. Mutates.

VO (CONT'D)
(echoing, twisted)
"...Amen... men... men..."

SILENCE. Breathless. Sacred. We sit in it.

Then—

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (1968, PRESENT DAY)

SMASH CUT TO—

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT (1968, PRESENT DAY)

Frank stirs in sleep. Restless.

FRANK
(softly, in a fog)
Don't go.
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
 (beat)
 Sean... please don't go.

His eyes snap open. Gasp. Stillness. Sweat. The night wraps around him like memory.

Susan's hand is on Frank's arm. But it doesn't feel like Susan's hand. It feels like his mother's hand from that night.

SUSAN
 Frank. (beat holding it together)
 Honey, I am right here.

Frank flinches. His breath shaky. Susan sees it. Feels it. But doesn't say a word. Frank exhales. Tries to settle. Tries to push it down.

SOUND BRIDGE - FOCUS ON FRANK'S EYES IN THE DARK

- The sound of breathing.

- Two men. - Excited.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON - LATE AFTERNOON

A quiet street. Faint wind. Distant city hum. Something uneasy in the air.

A six-year-old boy, PAUL, chases a collie. His tiny sneakers slap against the pavement.

PAUL
 (laughing, breathless)
 Hey, doggie!

The dog keeps moving. Fast. Just out of reach. Paul giggles and runs faster.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Here, doggie!

FROM THE
 SHADOWS:

SEAN watches. Dark. Ominous. Unreadable. The glow of his cigarette flickers as he takes a slow drag.

The kid moves. Sean moves.

Paul rounds the corner- Sean flicks his cigarette.

The dog turns into an alley.

Paul slows. He peers into the dim space between the buildings. A little nervous now. The world looks big.

PAUL (CONT'D)
What up, doggie?

BEHIND HIM—SEAN MOVES FASTER.

Paul takes a step forward. Sean closes in. Paul hesitates.

PAUL
Doggie?

Nothing. The alley stretches, dark and empty.

Paul takes another step inside. The world feels too big. The shadows too long.

SNAP.

Paul FREEZES.

SEAN—SUDDENLY BEHIND HIM.

A WHISPER:

SEAN
(low, teasing, but sharp
as a knife)
Damn, kid.

PAUL WHIPS AROUND—

SEAN GRABS HIM.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(sinister)
GOTCHA, KID!

PAUL SCREAMS—

Then—Sean swings him up—flips him mid-air—catches him.

PAUL ERUPTS INTO LAUGHTER.

He throws his arms up in victory!

PAUL
SEAN! YEAH!

Sean laughs, ruffles the kid's hair.

SEAN
(mock-stern, fatherly)
Paulie, you don't go chasing after
dogs. You gotta be smart.

Paul nods fast, eager to please.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(points)
Look around. Tell me what you see.

Paul spins on his heel. Does an exaggerated "spy check."

PAUL
(grinning, full-on
detective mode)
Like this, Sean?

Sean gives a hard look. Doesn't crack a smile. Then—he does
it better. Sharper. Faster. Cleaner.

SEAN
No—like this.

Paul watches, wide-eyed. Impressed. Then—both burst into
laughter. Sean tosses an arm around Paul's shoulder.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DINNER TABLE - NIGHT

Paul, full of ice cream and pride, kicks his feet under the
table. The light is low. The tension is not.

Susan serves dinner—elegant, precise. Frank watches Paul—his
son, his legacy, his warning.

VO (CHILDLIKE, GHOSTLY)
Bless us, O Lord...

Paul grins.

PAUL
Sean says I gotta be smart.

Frank freezes. Just for a second. A flicker. But Susan clocks
it.

VO (CALM, REVERENT)
...and these, Your gifts...

PAUL
 (innocent, proud)
 He says you always gotta know who's
 around.

Frank stabs his fork into his steak. Too hard. Too fast. The sound is sharp, final.

VO
 ...which we are about to receive...

Susan's eyes narrow. But her voice stays calm:

SUSAN
 (gentle, watching)
 Paulie, eat.

Paul shrugs. Digs in. Frank doesn't.

VO
 ...from Your bounty...

Frank stares at the plate. At the knife.

VO (BARELY A WHISPER NOW) (CONT'D)
 ...through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

The silence is dense. The air too still. Something unspoken sits between them, hot and growing.

Words behind the words. An Irish-Catholic curse of silence.

They hung in kitchens and dinner tables like wallpaper.

Frank looks around the modest dining room. The wallpaper—floral, faded, flawless.

A framed photo: Frank, Susan, and Paulie. All smiles. Frozen in time. Of course it's perfect.

HE STABS HIS RARE LONDON BROIL. BLOOD SEEPS INTO THE MASHED POTATOES—PINK, SPREADING.

Frank exhales. Long. Tight. Like holding back a scream through his teeth.

FRANK
 (a muttered rasp)
 Fucking perfect.

THE BLOOD SPREADS. WE PUSH IN. CLOSER. CLOSER.

DISSOLVE TO:

BLACK AND WHITE.

The blood and mash become a fog curling over dead leaves.

VOICES linger like ghosts—

PAUL (O.S.)
(muffled, distant)
Hahaha! Sean! Sean, look!

SUSAN (O.S.)
Paulie, thirty minutes then bath
time...

EXT. BOSTON COMMON - EARLY DAWN (1698) - BLACK & WHITE

Fog coils through the skeletal trees. The city is still half-asleep, caught between last night's sins and today's expectations.

Horse hooves clop faintly in the distance. A hanging tree waits in silhouette.

And in the fog—barely visible—a boy watches. Silent. Hidden. Terrified.

A solitary FIGURE kneels at the foot of the Robert Gould Shaw Memorial—a monument to a different war, different battles, but the same ghosts.

FRANK CALLAHAN (39), his coat pulled tight, fingers working a set of ROSARY BEADS. A priest walking by stops hears Frank saying the Rosary.

Frank's lips move—whispers lost to the haze of dawn.

FRANK (WHISPERING)
Hail Mary, full of grace...

His hands tremble. He grips tighter.

FRANK (CONT'D)
... the Lord is with thee...

The city stirs around him—the distant screech of a bus braking, a paperboy calling out headlines from a stack of fresh ink.

PAPERBOY (O.S.)
"Four dead in Ohio! The President
says law and order is the way
forward—"

The rosary beads slide between Frank's fingers.

FRANK

Blessed art thou among women...

Headlines bleed into the air—

RADIO NEWSCAST (O.S.) (ECHOING, WARPED)

"Nixon calls protesters 'bums.'

'Love is free at Woodstock.'

'The war is still unwinnable.'

'The body count is high today...'"

CLOSE ON FRANK'S FACE.

Frank's breathing sharpens. His fingers grip so hard, the rosary snaps.

Beads scatter onto the wet pavement. The beads hit the ground like bullet casings—echoing past violence, future consequences. Frank stares down at them. His breath visible in the cold.

One breath. Two.

Then — barely audible:

FRANK

(to no one)

Didn't work this time, Ma.

SMASH CUT TO:

COLOR.

A HARSH WIND WHIPS THROUGH THE TREES.

Frank lifts his head. A shadow moves. Gallagher.

Heavy footsteps. A worn leather coat.

DETECTIVE PATRICK GALLAGHER (40s) steps out of the morning fog like judgment in shoe leather. No greeting. No warmth.

GALLAGHER

Jimmy's gone missing.

Beat.

Frank tilts his head, like he didn't quite hear. But he did.

GALLAGHER (FIRMER) (CONT'D)
You wouldn't know anything about
that, would you?

Frank lets out a slow breath, then grins, all easy charm and smoke.

FRANK
(dry, casual, the devil in
a Sunday suit)
Paddy, you're my boy. If I knew,
I'd tell you quick as I say, 'Hail
Mary, full of grace.'

A BEAT.

Gallagher studies him. A pause. Then—he exhales. Gallagher turns away. Starts walking.

Frank follows.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

The city noise dulls. The world hushes.

COLOR BEGINS TO DRAIN.

Walls rise tight and grimy—built for sins no one confesses. The alley swallows them whole.

FOOTSTEPS. Slow. Purposeful.

Gallagher stops. So does Frank. They don't look at each other. They don't need to.

THE CAMERA DROPS TO THEIR FEET.

Boots shift.

A belt buckle clinks.

A zipper. Slow. Deliberate.

Back pressing against brick.

The drag of fabric. Fingers gripping. Holding.

A sharp inhale. A rough exhale.

Frank steps in. Closer. Gallagher lets him.

"White Rabbit" creeps in—low, eerie, curling like smoke.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - FADE TO COLOR AGAIN

The Gallagher steps back. Adjusts his belt.

Frank leans against the wall, head tilted back, eyes closed.

Breathes in. Breathes out.

A long beat.

The Gallagher turns, walks away. Doesn't look back.

Frank doesn't move. His fingers press against the damp brick.

The music swells—White Rabbit still echoing in his head.

A single rosary bead rolls by his foot. He doesn't pick it up.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN: 1964 - FLASHBACK (BLACK & WHITE, SUPER 8 STYLE)

INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

A small, dimly lit room. A radio hums in the background—The Beatles' "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

FRANK (33) and SEAN (29) sit shirtless, a BOTTLE of whiskey between them.

Their forearms rest side by side on the wooden table.

Between them—a TATTOO GUN.

A rough hand-drawn design on a napkin:

Two sparrows in flight, wings spread, forever chasing but never caged.

A beat. Then—Sean takes the needle first.

FADE TO COLOR -
1965

JUMP CUT

-Frank and Sean burst out of the tattoo parlor, sleeves rolled up, laughing and showing off their fresh ink.

-Neon lights reflect on their skin.

FAST CUT 30 SECONDS

-They dodge traffic, racing across a busy intersection, their world electric.

JUKEBOX SPINS

-Inside a packed diner, a hand slaps a quarter into a jukebox—The Rolling Stones' "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" kicks in, flooding the scene with sound.

DANCING FEET

-A crowded club, go-go dancers in white boots kicking high, strobe lights flashing over their grinning faces.

BEERS CLINK

-Sean tilts his head back, chugging a beer as Frank toasts with a wild grin.

CIGARETTE LIGHTER FLARES

-A match strikes, flame catching, smoke curling as they lean coolly against a wall, rebels in their prime.

DRAG RACE FLASH

-A souped-up '65 Mustang peels out at a red light, burning rubber—Sean and Frank cheer wildly.

POLICE SIREN BLIP

-They duck into a side alley, breathless, laughing, hearts pounding.

FINAL IMAGE

-Freeze-frame on their tattoos, still raw, their mark on the world permanent.

SIREN BLARES—HARSH, PIERCING.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S BATHROOM - PRESENT DAY (1968, COLOR)

Frank's hand grips the sink. Knuckles white. Veins in his forearm bulging.

CLOSE-UP—THE TATTOO ON HIS ARM.

Faded, but still there. Ghosts inked into his skin.

WATER DRIPS FROM THE FAUCET.

One drop. Two. A slow, steady rhythm—like a ticking clock.

FRANK STARES INTO THE MIRROR.

Eyes bloodshot. Haunted. He presses his hand against the glass, jaw clenched.

SFX: A DISTANT ECHO OF SEAN'S VOICE—SOMEWHERE IN THE BACK OF HIS MIND. "I ALREADY GOT YOU."

Frank turns sharply—like he can shake it off. Reaches for a cigarette. Strikes a match.

Inhales deep. Smoke curls. The past lingers. He exhales.

INT. FRANK'S HOME - NIGHT

Susan sits at the vanity, brushing her hair.

Frank, sleeves rolled down, covers the tattoo as he buttons his shirt.

ON THE RADIO:

- Vietnam escalates.
- Malcolm X is assassinated.
- Gay rights activists march in Philadelphia.

SUSAN (CASUAL, SHARP)
You've been different lately.

Frank pauses. Looks at her in the mirror.

FRANK
Work's been long.

Susan turns. Looks at his arm. She reaches out. He tenses, barely.

A beat. Then - She smooths his cuff. A slow, deliberate gesture. A beat. Then-

SUSAN
Some things never change, Frank.

She smiles-but it doesn't reach her eyes. Frank swallows hard.

INT. O'MALLEY'S - NIGHT

Sean sits with his Irish Mafia "brothers." One of them notices the tattoo.

THUG (GRINNING)
Didn't take you for the sentimental type.

Sean smirks.

SEAN
To things that never change.

Beat.

Liam looks at Sean's tattoo. Sean sees him looking - and subtly shifts his arm, showing it even more. Proud. Defiant. A non-spoken "fuck you."

LIAM
(quiet, unreadable)
Aye. And things that do.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Frank sits on the edge of the bed. Window open. Cold air creeping in. Silence.

He rolls up his sleeve. Stares at the faded tattoo. Fingers it like a wound that never healed.

In the doorway - SUSAN. Unnoticed by Frank. She watches, cold, still. A Kennedy who knows everything - and says nothing.

The silence thickens.

A sound rises – soft, distant.

A HEARTBEAT.

FRANK
(soft)
I already got you.

THE HEARTBEAT POUNDS LOUDER.

Frank's fingers tremble slightly on the tattoo. His breath catches.

CLOSE ON FRANK'S EYES.

They close. A beat.

Then—open again.

THE HEARTBEAT MORPHS – INTO A JACKHAMMER.

SMASH CUT TO:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE – DAY – 1969

Steel bones of a half-built building stretch into the sky.

Frank stands beneath it all – sweating under the sun. He wipes his brow. Looks up.

Frank pulls a cigarette from behind his ear. Lights it. Inhales deep. The world roars around him.

He pulls out a flip phone. Dials.

SPLIT SCREEN:

INT. BAR – DAY / EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE – CONTINUOUS – SPLIT SCREEN

LEFT SIDE: BAR

Sean leans on the bar, rolling a glass of whiskey between his fingers.

The place is loud – jukebox, laughter, clinking glasses.

A flip phone rings beside him. He answers, lazy cool.

SEAN
Go for O'Connell.

RIGHT SIDE: CONSTRUCTION SITE

Frank stands surrounded by chaos – jackhammers, shouting, metal screeching. Mid-stride, shouting into the phone.

FRANK
(gruff, over the noise)
I'm in a bind. Can you grab Paulie?
Just hang out with him—an hour,
tops.

Sean leans in, squinting. Can't quite hear. Frank repeats, louder.

SEAN
What?

FRANK
Paulie! I need a hand – just an
hour!

Sean straightens. Calm, but something shifts. Not irritation – concern. Love, unspoken.

SEAN
(firm, but soft)
Hold on. Hold the fuck on. Let me
step outside.

LEFT SIDE: Sean pushes through the crowd, exits to sunlight and silence.

Bar noise fades. He presses the phone tighter. Tone drops – real now.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(mocking)
Pick up Paulie? I got him. But I'm
not signing up to be his dad.

FRANK
(laughs)
You? A father? Piss off.

SEAN
One hour. Don't make me read to
him. I don't tell good bedtime
stories.

FRANK
(laughing, that Boston
rasp)
Fuuuuuuck you.

They both laugh – the kind that only comes from years of shared ghosts.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. PARK – LATE AFTERNOON

Stillness. The hum of distant traffic. A bird lands, hops. Everything feels like it's waiting for something.

A BASEBALL arcs through the air – wobbly, unsure.

Paul tries to catch it – misses. It thuds softly in the grass.

He walks over. Picks it up. Stares at it like it betrayed him. A quiet kind of heartbreak only a kid can feel.

PAUL
(soft, uncertain)
I don't know how.

Sean kneels beside him. Eye-level. No lecture. No pressure. Just steady. Sean stands.

SEAN
One sec, Paulie.

He opens the trunk. Digs. Pulls out a smaller glove – worn, soft, broken in. Tosses the glove to Paulie, gently.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Try this one.

Paul slides it on. Wiggles his fingers. Feels the weight of it. Like it was waiting for him.

Sean steps back. Lobs the ball again – softer this time. Paul flinches—then catches it. Barely.

They freeze. Then:

Laughter. Warm. Real. A boy and the closest thing he'll ever have to a father. The rhythm begins:

Ball. Glove. Ball. Glove.

The sound of childhood. The sun lowers. Shadows stretch. The world doesn't need to speak. This is it.

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK TO THE SUNLIGHT SKY.

EXT. PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Catch continues - ball, glove, ball, glove. Sunlight filters through the trees.

Sean and Paulie are locked in rhythm.

Across the field - FRANK approaches. Still in his work clothes. Tie loosened. Shirt sleeves rolled.

Watching them. Not jealous. Not angry. Just... unsure. Like he walked in mid-scene and forgot his lines.

Paulie waves.

Sean jogs to the car, pulls out a glove.

Frank tousles Paulie's hair.

Sean tosses the glove to Frank - soft, easy.

Then jogs back ten yards.

A soft, generous arc - the ball flies to Frank.

He catches it. Pro.

PAUL
Nice, catch, Dad!

Frank rolls his shoulder. Loosens up.

A beat. Then - the game shifts. A three-way rhythm now. Ball flying between them. Laughter. Missed catches. Overthrows. Dramatic dives.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Bring on the heat!

Another toss - fast and wild from Paul.

FRANK
Jesus, the Sox are gonna lose with
a catch like that!

Laughter. Frank throws to Sean.

SEAN
Is that all you got?

This is memory in motion.

THE CAMERA WIDENS -

The three of them framed in golden light. The ball arcs again. And for one perfect moment - They're just a family.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dark. Flickering TV light. Riot footage blinks and burns across the screen: - Nixon at a podium: *"The silent majority will not stand for lawlessness." - Stonewall: fists raised, batons swinging, drag queens bleeding. - Vietnam: body bags, choppers, fire in the sky.

"Gimme Shelter" plays - warped, distant, raw.

In the dark: sounds of passion - urgent and imperfect: A sharp inhale. A whisper - *"Oh God"*. A boot slides across the floor. A whiskey glass clinks. A gulp. Heavy breathing. A low moan. A belt tossed.

They stumble into frame. Frank and Sean. Shirts half-on. Faces flushed. Hair a mess. Conquerors. Not in love - but cool with the conquest.

They collapse onto the couch. A moment of breath. Of muscle. Of memory.

Frank leans forward, lit by the riot. Sean watches him - eyes sharp. Tired.

SEAN
It's changing.

Frank doesn't blink.

SEAN (CONT'D)
It's changing, Frank.

Frank exhales. Jaw clenched.

FRANK
You don't get it.

SEAN
No?

Sean leans in – closer than comfort.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I got kicked out of my mother's
house for this. Got my ribs broken
in the back of a cop car. For this.

He grabs Frank's hand. Places it on his sparrow tattoo.

SEAN (CONT'D)
And you? You just fucking hide it.

Frank jerks away. Stands. Paces. Like the room's closing in.

FRANK
I've got a wife. A kid. A business.
You think I can march in the
streets? Raise a fist?
(beat)
You think the world's ready?

Sean laughs – sharp. Brutal.

SEAN
Ready?

He grins. There's blood in his teeth.

SEAN (CONT'D)
We're gonna make 'em ready.

Frank stops. Turns. Something breaks behind his eyes.

FRANK
Not all of us are looking for a
fight.

A long beat. Frank pacing. Sean breathing. The record spinning.

SEAN
Then what the fuck are you looking
for?

Frank doesn't answer. He just moves. Close. Closer.

A hand to the back of Sean's neck. Forehead to forehead. No kiss. No words. Just breath. Shared. Held.

For one second – they exist.

Then – Frank pulls back. Too fast. He was there. That's what makes it worse.

Sean watches him. The ghost of a smirk. But it's tired now.
Hollow.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(whispers)
One day, Frankie.

Frank exhales. Turns. Walks out. Sean doesn't stop him. Just sits in the quiet.

HARD CUT TO:

1969 - BLOOD IN THE BACK ROOM

INT. IRISH PUB - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

BLOOD DRIPS.

Concrete floor. Sean—on his knees. Lip split. Eye swelling. Cheek bone blooming purple. Breathing shallow. But still smirking.

LIAM (40s) towers over him. Hard Catholic. Old country. A man who sees shame as justice. Two goons in the shadows. Liam lights a cigarette. Stares down.

LIAM
Never took you for a fucking fairy,
Sean.

Sean spits blood.

SEAN
Never took you for a fucking
fascist, Liam.
(beat)
Yet—here we are.

CRACK.

A boot slams into his ribs. Sean folds. But doesn't cry out. Liam crouches. Blows smoke into Sean's face.

LIAM
You think I don't know?
(beat)

LIAM (CONT'D)
I knew your father.
Built an empire. Kept it clean.
(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)
And now look at you. A fucking
disgrace.

Sean laughs—wet, broken.

SEAN
Your hands aren't clean.
And neither are your knees.

The air shifts. Even the goons flinch.

Liam's face tightens. Liam grabs Sean's wrist. Yanks up his
sleeve. The sparrows. The ink. The shame.

LIAM
This? This won't save you. Not from
them. And sure as fuck not from me.

Liam nods. Another blow. Sean hits the floor hard. Liam steps
over him.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Last warning, boy. Cut it. Burn it.
End it.

Sean breathes. Bloody. Silent. Liam leans in. Sneering.
Cruel.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Your mother would be ashamed of
having a bugger for a son.
(beat) LIAM (LOW, VICIOUS)
I had her, you know. In the back of
this bar. Maybe more than once.
(beat) Christ, I hope you're not
mine. (leans in, whispering) God
save us from you people.

The bar is dead quiet. No one moves. No one meets Sean's
eyes. Liam adjusts his coat. Turns. He walks out. Like it's
over. But it's not.

SEAN EXPLODES.

Off the floor. Tackles Liam from behind—rage incarnate. They
crash into tables. Bottles shatter. Chairs topple. Men at the
bar watch. But no one moves.

Sean's fists— One. Two. Three— Into Liam's face.

He's pulled off. Dragged back. Bleeding. Still fighting.

Liam wipes his mouth. Smiles through the blood. Crouches down again—calm. Icy.

LIAM (COLD, FINAL)
 You'll die alone, Sean. And the
 world'll thank us for it.

EXT. CEMETERY - OVERCAST AFTERNOON

(Sean now, over the grave, full circle.)

Wind through the trees. Grey sky. A handful of worn headstones.

SEAN (now older, cleaner cut, sharper) stands over one. Hands in coat pockets. Still as hell.

THE HEADSTONE:

LIAM K. O'MALLEY

"Beloved Father. Faithful Servant."

1930-1970

Sean scoffs.

SEAN
 Beloved by who, Liam?

He lights a cigarette. Stares down at the grave.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 I should piss on it. But you don't
 deserve the water.

A long beat. The wind picks up. Crows shift in the distance.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 You were right about one thing,
 though.

He flicks ash. Doesn't blink.

THEN SMASH CUT BACK TO THE FIGHT

Sean stays on the floor. Breathing. Holding. Vibrating with rage.

SEAN
 I didn't die alone.

Liam turns. Walks off. Never looks back. He scans the room. No one will meet his gaze. Not one.

Sean gets up the Gladiator. He grabs his coat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 (quiet. daring. deadly)
 You want to come at me?
 (beat)

SEAN (CONT'D)
 I fucking dare you.

Silence. He walks out. The bar holds its breath. He never looks back.

SEAN (V.O., WHISPERED) (CONT'D)
 Never again.

CUT TO BLACK.

A single sound cuts the dark -

SOUND BRIDGE - A PHONE RINGING.

FADE IN:

INT. FRANK'S CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NEXT DAY - 10:00 A.M.

Blueprints for Boston City Hall spread across the table. Coffee cold. Stress baked into the walls.

The phone keeps ringing. Too long. Frank stares at it. Picks up.

FRANK
 Callahan.

DETECTIVE GALLAGHER (O.S.)
 Frankie.

FRANK
 (smells it)
 I smell a rat.

GALLAGHER (O.S.)
 You might want to slow down and hear this.

FRANK
 Paddy, I got a thousand things-

GALLAGHER (O.S.)

Sean.

A pause. Frank freezes mid-breath.

FRANK

What?

GALLAGHER (O.S.)

Liam.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON STREET - MINUTES LATER

A TRUCK BARRELS TO A STOP - tires screech. CAMERA POV: Waist down - the driver's door swings open.

BOOTS HIT PAVEMENT.

Door SLAMS shut. Someone shouts from a stoop:

GUY ON STOOP

Hey, you can't just paaahk there!

FRANK

(gruff, already walking)
Piss off.

INT. LIAM'S CLUB - NIGHT

Low hum. Smoke. Laughter undercut with menace. This is Liam's kingdom. Deals are whispered. Power wears a smirk.

The door SLAMS open -

FRANK PUSHES IN.

Coat soaked. Eyes locked.

Liam sits in his booth like a king. His boys - cigars, scotch, guns within reach.

LIAM

You look tense, Frank. Sit down.
Have a drink.

Frank grabs the glass. He hurls it -

SMASH.

Glass explodes against the wall. The room freezes.

FRANK
You think I don't know?

LIAM
(grinning)
I think you know exactly how things
work.

Frank's on him in a second. Grabs his collar. Yanks him
halfway across the table.

The boys rise. Hands hovering near steel. No one blinks.

FRANK
(low, dangerous)
Tell me why, Liam. Tell me why I
shouldn't put your teeth in the
back of your throat.

A pause. Liam doesn't flinch. Liam sits back down.

LIAM
(smooth)
You look tense, Frank. Maybe you're
holding onto something you don't
need anymore.

Frank's grip tightens. His jaw locks. Then—he says it.

FRANK
Keep your boys away from my Sean.

The room shatters. A twitch of shock. A subtle shift. A
silent recoil. Frank just stood naked in a room full of
wolves. Liam stares. The grin slips. Now cold. Now cruel.

LIAM
So there it is.
(beat)
All this time, Frankie... And you
never figured out which side you're
on.

Frank doesn't blink. He's past fear. His fist connects.

LIAM'S CHAIR FLIPS BACK.

BRAWL ERUPTS.

Fists. Bottles. Chaos. Men dive. Tables turn. It's all fire and fury now.

GALLAGHER BURSTS IN WITH TWO DETECTIVES.

GALLAGHER
(calm, lethal)
Frank. Let go.

Frank's knuckles – bloody. His breath – razor sharp.

Liam – grinning through the blood. Liam looks at Gallagher.

LIAM
(smug, low)
See, Frank? You're already one of us.
(beat)
Remember, Frankie, rewards are earned, not given.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gallagher shoves Frank against a brick wall.

GALLAGHER
(low, biting)
Walk away, Frank. Because next time? You're in the fucking trunk.

Frank spits blood. Smirks.

POV CLOSE UP OF FRANK RUBBING HIS BLOODY JAW.

FRANK
Next time, Paddy – So are you.

SMASH CUT TO:

SEAN RUBS HIS JAW - INT. DINER - NIGHT

A dingy diner, the kind that never closes. Neon buzzes. Coffee burns on the warmer. A jukebox plays something sad from ten years ago.

Sean sits alone. Ribs still healing under his coat. Cigarette burning, untouched.

A napkin lies on the table. Names scribbled. Some scratched out.

SEAN

L.A. (crossed out) – “Not far enough.”

Montreal (crossed out) – “Neither of us speaks French.”

Dublin (double crossed out) – “Fuck no.”

London... He pauses. Circles it.

He stares at it a second longer, then flips it over and writes: “Why not?”

The bell above the door jingles.

Frank walks in – bruised, battered, jacket torn. One eye swollen. A cut across his cheek. He walks like a man who got the truth beaten into him and still didn’t give it up.

Sean looks up.

SEAN (CONT’D)

What the hell happened to you?

Frank eases into the booth. Winces. Rubs his jaw.

FRANK

Cat fight.

Sean smirks. But there’s something deeper behind it.

SEAN

Must’ve been one hell of a cat.

Frank shrugs. Sips the stale coffee already waiting for him.

FRANK

Fuck me. You should see the other guy.

Sean studies him. A long beat. The look on Sean’s face changes – A quiet kind of knowing. Frank doesn’t say it. He never will. But it’s there.

Sean breaks the moment. Picks up the napkin.

SEAN

Okay, so hear me out.
London. Think about it—no one knows
us, English-speaking, legal
drinking age is lower. We could
find work, live small. Simple.
Nobody watching. Nobody chasing.

Doesn't respond. Doesn't nod.

SEAN (CONT'D)

We gotta go soon.

FRANK

(quiet)
Where?

SEAN

Anywhere they ain't waiting with a
bat.

Frank snorts. Then — smiles. Just barely.

FRANK

Add it to the list.

The jukebox switches tracks. Something old. Melancholy. The
two men sit. In pain. In silence.

FRANK REACHES INTO HIS COAT.

Pulls out the train ticket. Sets it on the table. Between
them. Like a goddamn funeral card. Sean looks.

SEAN

(quietly)
Frankie... what about you?

Frank's fingers curl against the Formica. A tremor in his
jaw. He swallows it.

FRANK

Don't worry.

Beat. Sean flicks ash into the saucer. Eyes up. Holding
Frank's.

SEAN

What about us?

A DEAD. FUCKING. BEAT.

This is it. He could say it. Right here. Right now.

Then— Frank rolls up his sleeve. The tattoo. Faded. Still there. Sean stares. Rolls up his own. The match. The memory. The meaning. They lock eyes. Time freezes.

SEAN

What? Say it, Frank. Just say it.

Frank breathes. Eyes glassy. Mouth opens— Nothing. Sean looks away. Then back.

FRANK

Just take the ticket.

Sean leans forward. Voice low. Cutting.

SEAN

You need me. Here. I can feel it.

(beat)

You are better with me than without me.

Frank's hands—fists now. White knuckles. A man barely holding the dam. He can't look at Sean. Can't breathe with him this close.

FRANK

Then you're a dead man.

Sean finally sees it. All of it. And smiles—slow. Hollow. Not mocking.

SEAN

You keep telling me to run.
But what the fuck are you running from?

Frank doesn't answer. He can't.

Sean picks up the ticket. Folds it. Slips it into Frank's coat pocket.

SEAN (LOW) (CONT'D)

Maybe I should be buying one for you. Let's both go.

FREEZE.

For one second— They believe it. Both of them. The world outside could disappear. Then— Frank stands. Can't look at him. Just walks out.

Sean doesn't follow. Just watches. He looks down. The napkin still on the table. **London.** Circled. Still there.

He reaches for his pen. Hesitates. A breath. A blink. Then—
He doesn't cross it out.

FADE TO:

INT. DINER - LATER

The booth is empty now. Coffee cups cold. A plate half-cleared. The waitress clears the table. Reaches for the napkin.

She pauses. Reads it. **"London. New Orleans. Santa Fe. Dublin."** A smile flickers. Not big. Just real. She folds the napkin carefully. Slides it into her pocket. And walks away.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - HALLOWEEN EVE, 1969

A hairbrush drags through dark hair. Slow. Precise. Ritual.

SUSAN (41) sits at her vanity. Regal. Perfect. In the lamplight, she looks like a portrait—a woman moments before turning to stone.

Behind her— FRANK (39) at the dresser, rolling down his sleeves.

A practiced intimacy. Quiet. Choreographed. Susan watches him in the mirror.

SUSAN

You always roll them down and
button them.

Frank, you're the Huntsman. You've got a strong build. Show it. Frank freezes. A beat too long. Then—keeps buttoning.

FRANK

What?

Susan sets the brush down. Rises. Deliberate.

SUSAN

Even in the summer. You always roll
them down before you leave.

She crosses to him. Slow. Controlled. Rolls up his sleeve herself. She pauses. Smiles. Too sweet.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Wait here.

She exits.

Frank exhales—tight, coiled.

Then— She returns. With a pair of shears.

Frank stiffens. Jaw clenches. A flicker of something dark behind his eyes.

Susan laughs. Light. Too light.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Oh, Frank... You think I'd stab you?
 (smiles, soft and
 dangerous)
 Break a commandment for you?

SNIP.

Shears cut clean. Fabric falls. Now his arms are bare. Carved. Tense. Exposed. She tilts her head. Studies him. Not admiring—assessing.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Now that's my Huntsman.
 (A beat.)
 But the thing about hunters is...
 they always think they're in
 control.

Frank says nothing.

Susan gives one small, final look — not back at Frank, but into the mirror. Just a glance.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Father Daniel says he hasn't seen
 you at confession lately.

Frank stays still.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Guess you've been an angel.

She brushes past him. Fingers graze his wrist. Frank tenses. She stops. Lingers. Leans in. A whisper. A bullet.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Who is she?

She doesn't wait. Opens the closet. Pulls out her Snow White dress. Black, red, velvet, and vengeance. She doesn't look back.

FADE IN:
HALLOWEEN NIGHT,
1969

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - NIGHT

Jack-o'-lanterns flicker. Children in plastic masks scream "Trick or treat!"

Couples float by in costume:

Marilyn & JFK

Nixon & a soldier

Two girls holding hands, glitter peace signs painted on their cheeks

Through it all- A perfect little family:

SUSAN - Snow White. Not the Disney kind. This one has steel in her spine and blood on her lips.

FRANK - The Huntsman. Leather belt, axe slung low, sleeves rolled-no place left to hide.

PAUL (7) - Sleepy the Dwarf. Already dozing in Frank's arms.

The picture of perfection. Until-

SUSAN
(flat, cutting)
Who is she?

Frank doesn't blink. They pass a group of witches. A Harvard girl holds hands with her girlfriend.

Susan sees. So does Frank.

Frank adjusts Paul. Keeps walking. Prince Charming and Sleeping Beauty walk by hand-in-hand. So much in love. They both see the couple.

Beat.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(soft, brutal)
What does she give you that I
can't?

He walks on. They pass a drunken Elvis. A man in a wolf mask chugs from a flask.

Susan's voice stays quiet. Even.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I'm not a fool.

Frank exhales. Long. Heavy. They cross the street. Home in sight.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We are not getting divorced.

Frank says nothing. She steps closer. Lowers her voice.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We were raised Catholic.
(beat)
So straighten up. Clean up this mess.

His hand slips from Paul's back... rests briefly on the axe handle. Just a flicker. Just enough

For a flicker— He is the Huntsman. And she? The queen with poison on her tongue.

But he says nothing. They reach the brownstone.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The front door clicks shut. Susan takes Paul, his head limp on her shoulder. She turns. No glance at Frank.

SUSAN
(soft, motherly)
Time for bed, sweetheart.

They disappear down the hall. Frank stands in the dark. Alone.

A long beat. He walks to the living room. Sets the axe down—heavy on the hardwood. Turns on the radio.

Static—then—

♪ "Sugar, Sugar" by The Archie's. Too sweet. Too fake. A love song from a plastic world.

Frank rubs the sparrow tattoo. Freedom. Love. Escape.

His hand tightens. Rubs harder. Like he could erase it.

But it won't fade. And neither will he. He leans back. Eyes on the ceiling. Smoke in his throat. A song in his ears. A war in his chest. He doesn't move. He doesn't break.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LATE NIGHT

The city sprawls below. Black brick. Neon veins. Smokestacks claw the sky. Wind howls like a warning.

In the shadows— Two men linger. Liam's boys. Watching.

A boot on the ledge.

Echoes of "The Lord's Prayer." Muffled. Overlapping. Swallowed in static.

Then— A new sound.

"Leaving on a Jet Plane" by Peter, Paul & Mary. Warped. Melancholy. Playing somewhere far off.

Pull back:

FRANK stands at the edge. Cigarette burning. Whiskey bottle dangling.

Coat sleeve rolled up. The sparrow tattoo in moonlight— A ghost of something that never made it free.

SEAN stands behind him. Arms crossed. Ribs still sore. Tough guy face, but there's fear behind it.

SEAN

You're my angel. Maybe my devil.
But I don't see any wings.

Frank doesn't flinch.

FRANK

I don't fly.
(beat)
I fall.

Sean exhales. Takes a step closer.

SEAN

You look like a man about to do
something stupid.

Frank turns. His eyes—dead stars. He steps off the ledge. Now inches from Sean. Breath mingles in the cold.

FRANK

You wanna see who I really am?

SEAN

Yeah, Frank. I fucking do.

A beat.

Frank grabs Sean's collar. Kisses him. Not gentle. Not sweet. It's violent. Brutal. Starved. Sean lets it happen. For a moment. Then—shoves him.

Hard. Frank stumbles. Laughs. But it's empty.

FRANK

Now you push me? After all those nights? All those fucking silences?

Sean steps forward. Fury rising. He nods at Frank's tattoo. Rolls up his own sleeve. A match. Grabs Frank's wrist. Over the sparrow.

SEAN

Say it then, Frankie.

Frank's lips part. Nothing. Sean shakes his head. Steps back.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Yeah. That's what I thought.

Frank exhales. Breath clouds in the air. He hurls the whiskey bottle.

SMASH. THE SOUND ECHOES TOO LONG.

Glass explodes on concrete. Sean flinches. Barely.

Frank presses fists to his temples— Like he could crush the truth out of his skull.

Sean watches. Calm now. Cold.

SEAN (CONT'D)

I got jumped because of you.

(beat)

They made sure I'd remember.

He nods at the tattoo.

FRANK
You think I don't feel it?
You think I don't wake up every
morning knowing I've got a son who
deserves better?

Sean flinches. Frank sees it. Steps closer.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You wanna know who I really am?
(beat)
I'm the man who never should've met
you. The man who never should've
let this happen.

SEAN
You blaming me now?

FRANK
(whispers)
I blame you for everything.

Beat.

Sean nods. A decision clicks into place.

SEAN
You know what, Frankie?
Mr. Frank Callahan?

(beat)

Fuck you.

He walks past him. Shoulder slams hard. Keeps walking.
Doesn't turn around. Frank watches him go. The wind screams.
Frank turns. Looks down at the city.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - LATE NIGHT

Frank walks in. Past midnight. Only shadows drinking now.

FRANK
(low)
Whiskey.

BARTENDER
Frankie... You look like hell.

Frank knocks it back. Slaps down a \$5 bill. Heads for the
door.

EXT. O'MALLEY'S - CONTINUOUS

Frank steps outside. Lights a smoke. Across the street— A man leans on a lamppost.

The same Lincoln Continental parked beside him. A shadow watching.

The smoke curls up like a ghost. He flicks the butt. Walks into the dark.

FADE IN: NEW
YEAR'S EVE, 1969

MONTAGE - QUICK CUTS OF THE WORLD

Flashing images, ticking time bomb of the decade ahead.

-TV SCREEN:

-Nixon's face. "The war must be won."

-The Stonewall Riots. "We're here, we're queer—get used to it!"

-The draft lottery. A birthday is pulled. Someone's life ends.

-Woodstock crowds, tripping, screaming, free.

-Manson girls smiling, handcuffed.

• RADIO
BROADCASTS
OVERLAPPING:

-“Altamont ends in disaster—violence at the hands of the Hell's Angels...”

-“Half a million protestors flood D.C. Against Vietnam...”

-“Gay liberation marches spread from coast to coast...”

-The clock ticks closer to midnight.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - EVENING NEW YEAR'S EVE

The Christmas lights flicker. The air is thick—like something is waiting to snap.

Frank knots his tie. His reflection stares back at him. Unreadable.

Susan lingers in the doorway. One hand on the frame, the other loosely wrapped around a whiskey glass.

SUSAN (SMOOTH, DETACHED)
I've got a headache.

Frank stops. Looks at her. Pauses.

FRANK
I can stay.

A beat too long. Susan sips her drink.

SUSAN (WATCHING HIM, RAZOR-THIN SMILE)
Go. Celebrate.
(beat)
And get your act together for the
new decade.

Frank nods. A slow inhale.

SUSAN (SOFT, KNOWING) (CONT'D)
Happy New Year, Frank.

Frank Leaves.

INT. HOTEL THE FOUR SEASONS LOUNGE - NIGHT (MEANWHILE... SUSAN ISN'T RESTING.)

A quiet bar-classy, discreet. The kind of place where business gets done behind silk curtains.

Susan sits alone, her glass of wine untouched.

Across from her-LIAM (50s, kingmaker, snake in a tailored suit). He swirls his drink. A slow, amused gaze.

LIAM (CALM, CASUAL)
So what do you need from me, Susan?

Susan exhales, sets her glass down. A queen ready to make her first move.

SUSAN (SILK, STEEL UNDERNEATH)
Options.

Liam smirks. That's an answer he likes.

LIAM
Well now, sweetheart... let's see
what we can do.

HARD CUT

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

Packed. Loud. The place hums with booze, laughter, and Irish folk music. Frank pushes through the crowd. Hits the bar.

FRANK
(low, curt)
Whiskey.

A deep inhale. And then—a presence beside him. He doesn't realize it at first. But then—a shift. The weight of an old ghost.

SEAN
*No words. No gestures. Just two
men, side by side.*

The bartender sets down Frank's drink.

Frank pushes up his sleeves. The sparrow tattoo gleams in the dim light. Sean sees it. Doesn't move. Then—he does.

The same tattoo. Marked, but not erased. The song fades. Silence. A long, aching beat.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT (SILK, SHADOWS,
COLD CALCULATIONS)

CHAMPAGNE BUBBLES RISE.

Susan lifts a glass. So does Liam. A toast—to something unspoken. Their eyes lock over the rim.

LIAM (LOW, AMUSED)
New decade. New rules.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

The music and crowd are deafening, then go muted. We hear only the heavy breathing and hearts pound of Frank and Sean.

Sean doesn't speak. He grabs Frank by the collar— And they disappear into the dark.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

A slow sip of champagne. LIAM leans in. Eyes sharp, lips curling.

LIAM (SOFT, SHARP)
Frank's been a problem. You? I
don't think you're problem at all.

SUSAN (SMILES, CONTROLLED)
Then you haven't been watching
close enough.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

The bar noise muffles behind them.

HARD CUT TO
SOUND ONLY:

BLURRED MOVEMENTS AS THE SOUNDS DESCRIBE ALL THE ACTION.

-The "1812 Overture roars"

-Frank's back hits the brick wall.

-Shoes scraping against concrete.

-A zipper undone.

-A coat slipping from shoulders.

-Breath. Staggered, rough, familiar.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

Susan sets down her glass. She leans in—just enough for Liam to know she's not afraid.

SUSAN (ALMOST A WHISPER)
You're going to help me clean this
up.

Liam tilts his head. Amused. Interested. Then—he nods.

LIAM
To cleaning up. For good.

Glasses clink.

HARD CUT TO
MIDNIGHT:

CROWD CHEERS. "HAPPY NEW YEAR, BOSTON!"

Frank gasps against the wall. Sean turns Frank to face the wall and rips down Frank's pants. FIREWORKS. Boom. Boom. Boom.

LIAM EXHALES SMOKE. LAUGHS.

A CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE POPS.

Susan smiles as the deal is sealed.

SUSAN

When it's over, make it clean. And
make him suffer.

LIAM

You always had a way of tidying up
loose ends.

SUSAN reaches into her bag. She slides an envelope across the table. Crisp. Thick. Deliberate. Her fingers linger on the paper. Soft. Steady. Final.

MATCH CUT TO:

SEAN'S THUMB brushing Frank's lips in the alley. Tender.
Bloody. Desperate.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

-Frank & Sean. Frank against the wall, raw and wrecked.

-Sean holding him—like he's trying to keep him from
shattering.

-Frank moans. Almost in tears.

FRANK

I'm sorry.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

Liam swirls his drink, deciding how to destroy him.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Sean's hands on Frank's face. Holding him up. Holding him together.

SEAN (WHISPERING)
Shhh... shhh.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

As Susan smirks. A silent queen making her final move.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Sean's lips near Frank's ear. A breath. A promise. A firm kiss.

SEAN
I got you, Frankie. I won't let
anything happen to you
(beat)
We're gonna get out of this. All
of us.

A car horn BLARES from the street. Reality crashes back.
Frank exhales sharply. Sean pulls back. Looks at him.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LOUNGE - NIGHT

Susan passes an envelope (with cash in it) to Liam. The have a deal.

LIAM
Boston's changing, Susan. Frank had
his chance.
(MORE)

LIAM (CONT'D)
 I've waited too long in his
 shadow—and shadows are for cowards.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Both men sweat soaked and love-soaked. Broken by their absence from each other. Shirts open in the cold Boston Night.

SEAN
 Meet me tomorrow.
 (pause)
 And don't fucking run this time.

Frank's hands slide down Sean's chest. His breath catches. Almost a sob. Almost a prayer. Sean doesn't let go. He holds him like he can stop fate itself.

FIREWORKS. LAST BOOM. CUT TO BLACK.

AFTERMATH - NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1970

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Sunlight cuts through the blinds like a scalpel. Frank lies on top of the covers. Fully clothed. Shoes on. His shirt is still open. One arm hangs off the bed. The radio hums in the background - a DJ half-asleep, half-mourning.

RADIO DJ (O.S.)
 "Welcome to the seventies, folks.
 Hope you didn't bet the house on
 love..."

Frank blinks. His face is wrecked. Not from the alley. From everything else. He sits up slow. Reaches for his shirt. Hesitates. Instead, he fingers the sparrow tattoo - and winces.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Sean sits in a booth. Same one as always. Coffee, half-drunk. Napkin. Pen. Waiting. He looks out the window. Hope fading. But not gone.

WAITRESS (O.S.)
 Rough night?

Sean smiles. Barely.

SEAN
Call it a decade.

INT. LIAM'S OFFICE - MORNING

Liam sits in the shadows. Cigar smoke. Velvet curtains drawn. Susan's envelope - now open - on the desk. Inside: photos. Documents. Frank's entire empire, exposed. Liam taps a photo of Sean.

He dials. Calm. Steady. Waiting.

GALLAGHER (O.S.)
Gallagher. Boston PD.

LIAM (SMIRKING)
Time to clean house, boys.

He leans back. Smoke curls from his mouth like a blessing turned curse.

LIAM (CONT'D)
(soft, final)
And let the blood rinse the floors
clean.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - LATER

Frank shaves. Slowly. Precisely. He cuts himself. Lets the blood run. Doesn't flinch.

In the mirror, he sees Paul - watching silently from the hallway. Frank sees Paul → winces → wipes the blood → rolls down the sleeve again. That sparrow goes back into hiding. One last lie. Frank wipes the blood.

Puts on a tie. The sparrow still visible beneath his rolled-up cuff.

EXT. ALLEY - MORNING

The alley from last night. Quiet now. No fireworks. No ghosts. Sean lights a cigarette. Still waiting.

He looks up. We hear a car pull in. A door slam.

SEAN (V.O.)
(soft, uncertain)
He won't come.

Beat. Footsteps. Sean turns.

Frank stands at the end of the alley. Still bruised. Still bleeding. But there. They don't run. They don't kiss.

They just stand. Sean reaches out a handshake. Let the handshake linger half a second too long – just enough that it means more. Frank pulls him in for a “Bro Hug” they hold for a beat.

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - DAY (JANUARY 1, 1970)

A gray morning. Fluorescent light buzzes. Rain patters against the roof like a second hand ticking.

Frank and Sean stand at the drafting table. Coffee. Cigarette. Hungover from everything.

They speak. We don't hear them.

Only the faint hum of the wind outside. And the soft clatter of a pencil rolling off the desk.

They talk. Frank points to blueprints. The stakes on the page. But the tension is between them.

Sean moves closer. The talking stops.

SFX: THE HUM OF FLUORESCENT LIGHTS. RAIN AGAINST THE TRAILER ROOF. ONE SOFT EXHALE FROM FRANK – LIKE AIR LEAVING A SEALED VAULT.

SEAN
(quiet, direct)
I got your six, Frankie.
Always did.

SFX: FRANK'S BREATH CATCHES. BARELY AUDIBLE – BUT IT'S EVERYTHING. FRANK EXHALES. THE REST OF THE WORLD FADES.

No more words needed. Frank's back hits the desk. Paper crunches beneath him. Sean grabs his shirt—rips it open. Buttons fly.

Frank gasps. But doesn't stop him.

SFX: THE FAINT SQUEAK OF A CHAIR SHIFTING. THE CLICK OF A BELT BUCKLE. NOTHING RUSHED. NOTHING LOUD. JUST INTIMATE VIOLENCE.

Sean drops to his knees.

FX: BOOTS THUDDING TO THE FLOOR, HEAVY WITH YEARS OF DENIAL. YANKS OFF FRANK'S BOOTS. HIS JEANS.

Frank sits—shirtless, in boxer briefs, breath ragged. Sean rises. SFX: Shirt ripping. Buttons scattering like shell casings.

The two of them now: Bare skin. Tension. No more lies.

SFX: Blueprint paper crinkling beneath Frank's back — like maps getting rewritten. Sean pushes Frank flat to the desk. Sheets and plans sticking to sweat.

Frank squirms, breath catching— A quiet smile. Sean leans in.

SEAN (WHISPERED) (CONT'D)
Don't fight this.

Frank doesn't. Not this time.

MATCH CUT TO:

RED.

SFX OFF SCREEN: The heavy breathing of Sean and Frank finally exhales, meld into the sound of cellophane crinkle.

CAMERA too close , then back up to reveal a heart-shaped box of chocolates being opened. Valentine's Day.

VALENTINE'S DAY - HIGH END BAR/RESTAURANT IN BOSTON

February 14, 1970

The Bar: A low-lit, classic Boston spot, leather booths, the kind of place where politicians and mobsters do business in plain sight. Susan sends a drink to Sean at the bar.

Sean looks over, cool. He takes the drink. He gets to the booth. Susan nods for him to sit. He does. As he does, he flashes the holster in his jacket. Susan is not impressed.

SUSAN
We both can't have him.

SEAN

So why does he keep coming back?

SUSAN

If he was really yours, why is he still mine?

SEAN

And if he was really yours, why are we having this conversation?

A pause. The tension is so tight you could slice it with a razor. Susan lifts her drink. A silent toast. Then she stands.

The conversation is over. She's already won—or so she thinks.

Sean doesn't move. Doesn't argue. He just watches her. Unshaken. Susan lifts her drink. Sips.

Then, as if it's just another piece of small talk, a quiet, effortless knife:

SUSAN

(cool, detached, eyes
sharp as glass)

Once you crack an egg, it's cracked.

She sets the glass down. No smirk. No pause. Just fact. And then she walks out the back.

INT. THE RESTAURANT CONTINUOUS FRANK ARRIVES

Frank walks in, expecting Susan. Instead, Sean is waiting at the table. The power is shifting before his eyes.

He smiles. A little dangerous. A little knowing.

SEAN (SMOOTH, EVEN)

Sit down, Frankie. I gotta fill you in. Rules just changed. Listen up.

CUT TO: OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT.

The Lincoln Continental is parked across the street.

Two men are inside. One speaks into a payphone. (We don't hear the words—just the visual.)

INT. THE RESTAURANT CONTINUOUS

Frank, always the one in control, hesitates. This moment is electric. He sits. But this time, Sean's leading.

SEAN

This on-again, off-again is taking its toll, Frank. We either stop—or we stop pretending.

FRANK

I lose control when I look in your eyes.

SEAN: (SMILES, KNOWING)

I know.

A beat. Then, Sean rolls up his sleeve. The tattoos. The sparrows—always chasing, never caged.

SEAN: (SOFT, BUT DEADLY SERIOUS) (CONT'D)

You remember why we got these?

Frank looks at it. At him. And then—he makes his choice. Frank rolls up his sleeve to bear the same tattoo.

TWO MEN STEP INSIDE AND FROM THE SHADOWS OBSERVE THE SCENE

Sean makes the move and reaches across the table and locks hands with Frank. A waitress passes by and she glances. Sean cast an eye at her and she then looks down. Sean is in charge.

Sean to Frank at the table:

SEAN

Susan thinks she's already won.

(beat)

Let's prove her wrong.

HARD CUT TO:

HARD CUT TO: FAST, VISCERAL INTERCUTTING — FOUR LIVES, ONE COLLISION COURSE

CUT 1 - SUSAN / LIAM - BACKROOM DEAL:

Shadows. Whiskey. One envelope. Liam's hand gestures: a command. Susan nods. No words. Just resolve.

CUT 2 - FRANK / SEAN - HOTEL ROOM:

Door SLAMS. Shirts RIP. Frank's back hits the bed. Sean's tattoo, lit like scripture. Their mouths meet. But we cut away—before the world changes.

CUT 3 - PAUL - HOME:

A babysitter tucks him in. Plush hammer in his hands. One sleepy whisper:

PAUL (SOFT)
G'night, Daddy.

CUT 4 - THE MEN IN THE CONTINENTAL:

Cigarette burns. Radio static.

Gloved hands cock a pistol.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - POST-INTIMACY.

Frank & Sean staring at the ceiling. Nothing said. Everything changed.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUSAN'S CAR - FEBRUARY 15 - DAY

Still. Composed. The Virgin Mary statue on the dash.

Susan sits behind the wheel. Calm. Lethal. The plan already in motion. The engine hums. The world waits.

Hold the frame. Let it ache.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO: THE TINY STATUE OF THE VIRGIN MARY.

MATCH CUT TO:

Then—very faint—"Ave Maria."

Hold the frame. Let it ache.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

A beat of silence. The engine hums beneath it all.

Then—FAINTLY—A distant version of "Ave Maria" begins to rise.

Not pure. Not holy. Ethereal. Ghostly. Like it's being played underwater.

SLOW DISSOLVE – THE SAME DASHBOARD.

But now–

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT – DAY – MAY 1970

SUNLIGHT.

Same car. Same angle. But time has passed. A season has changed. Susan sits in the same position. Now a vision of Jackie Kennedy:

- Pillbox hat.
- Light gloves.
- A powder-blue coat, or modest beige-conservative, poised.

She stares ahead. Graceful. Frozen. But the engine still hums.

O.S. From the back seat–

PAUL (O.S.)
(humming)
♪ "Aaaaave Mariiiiiia..." ♪

A child's voice. Sweet. Innocent.

Then–

A HAND appears on screen. A man's thigh. Frank's. In a crisp suit.

He's the passenger. Susan's driving. His leg rests heavy. Like something that doesn't move anymore.

FADE INTO:

MAY 1970 – FIRST COMMUNION MONTAGE

FADE IN: MAY 1970 – FIRST COMMUNION MONTAGE

"Ave Maria" (a haunting version–echoing, reverb-heavy) begins to swell, not angelic but ghostly.

EXT. CHURCH - MORNING

Susan parks the car. Frank gets out. Paul(8), in a miniature white suit beside him—radiant, nervous. Frank adjusts Paul's collar. His hands tremble.

Across the street—that same Lincoln Continental. Engine off. Window cracked. Smoke curls like a serpent.

Frank sees it. Nothing happens. Not yet.

INT. CHURCH - MONTAGE BEGINS

Quick, breathless flashes—sacred and profane:

The choir. White robes sway. Voices rise like incense. Something holy... or haunted.

The priest. Hands shaking slightly as he lifts the Eucharist. The body of Christ. Innocence. Guilt.

PAUL. On his knees. Mouth open. Host placed on his tongue. Holy water dripping down his chin.

SUSAN. Hands perfectly folded. Rosary beads match her pearl earrings. Smile like a crucifix—ornate, cold.

FRANK. Eyes closed. Lips moving. The sparrow tattoo just visible under his white shirt cuff.

SEAN. In the back. No tie. No pretense. His eyes locked on Paul—then Frank—then nothing.

DUALITY MONTAGE - VISUAL COLLISION (SPLIT SCREEN OR HARD CUTS)

LEFT: Church - light-stained, golden, pure

RIGHT: Flashbacks of Sean - bloodied, broken, beaten in a dark alley

Paul's lips stained with wine / Sean's lips split and bleeding.

White linen altar / dirty concrete sidewalk.

Choirboy sings / Echoes of slurs in Sean's memory.

Holy water flicked from silver / rain falling on Sean's back mid-beating.

Hands folded in prayer / fists clenched in survival.

CHURCH BELLS RING - REAL TIME RETURNS

Back in the pew- Susan smiles. She's won something, but no one knows what.

Frank shifts in the seat-he's sweating under his white collar. The tattoo pulses like a wound.

Sean slips out the back.

Outside- the Lincoln is gone.

EXT. SIDEWALK - OUTSIDE THE CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Sean lights a cigarette. Watching the parishioners file out-white dresses, tight smiles, old money masks.

An older Irish woman crosses herself near him. Clutches her purse. Keeps walking.

SEAN (V.O., LOW, CALM)
This city'll bless you with one
hand... and bury you with the other.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - AFTER MASS

The Boston sun glares off the white marble steps. Families gather, chatting, taking pictures.

Frank stands in a loose circle of parents, shaking hands, nodding through conversations.

Susan stands nearby, graceful, the queen of the moment.

Then-Sean steps forward. Frank spots him instantly. The rest of the world fades. Frank takes a step closer. A charged silence.

FRANK (SOFT, HONEST)
I'm proud that you're here.

Sean's jaw tenses. A flicker of something unsaid.

SEAN
I'm still in the shadows...
(beat)
But I'm by your side.

THEIR CONVERSATION FADES TO MUTE.

• Frank nods, looks down, conflicted.

- Sean half-smirks, but it doesn't reach his eyes.
- Susan turns at that exact moment.

She watches them. Studies them. Sean says something. Frank laughs. A rare, real laugh. Sean relaxes for half a second.

Then—Susan moves. She walks over, slipping her arm into Frank's. Sean's smile flickers. A tiny wince. Susan sees it.

Frank looks down. He panics. Grasps for normal.

FRANK (TOO QUICK, TOO LOUD)
So... the Sox are gonna have a great
season.

The line falls flat. A beat of silence. Sean misses a step, then recovers. Half-hearted.

SEAN
Yeah. Great season.

Susan looks between them. Then—she lets go of Frank's arm. Steps past him. Toward Sean.

SUSAN (SMIRKING, BUT ICE-COLD)
Remember what I told you, Sean?
(beat)
Once you crack an egg...
(smiles sweeter)
It's cracked.

Frank tenses. He doesn't understand it. But Sean does. Susan holds Sean's gaze. Just a beat too long.

SUSAN (SOFT, SHARP) (CONT'D)
You're not the shadow anymore.
(beat)
You're the crack.

Sean doesn't blink. Doesn't speak. Then—Susan leans in, close enough for only him to hear.

SUSAN (DEADLY CALM) (CONT'D)
Frank always liked his love like
his lies— Easy. Impossible to keep.

She pulls back. Smiles like a weapon. And walks away.

SFX:

Church organ—final, trembling chord of "Ave Maria."

One bell toll. Then another. Twelve in all.

With the 10th beat... a cold, raw guitar strum.

A girl street singer begins "Yesterday." Her voice—scratchy, aching, beautiful in its brokenness.

We reveal her: Army boots. Stevie Nicks skirt. T-shirt: Make Love Not War.

She and Sean lock eyes. She winks. Nods. She knows. And somehow... she's part of this city too.

Frank watches her go, lost. Sean exhales slowly — masking the hit. He doesn't move.

Then—PAUL runs up.

PAUL
(pure joy)
Hey, Sean!

Sean's eyes well up—but this Irishman doesn't cry. He scoops Paul up, spins him, laughing.

SEAN
Hey Paulie, how about an ice cream?

Paul cheers. Frank watches them. Two people who love each other without complication. Without shame. The music swells from the girl on the bench.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. CHURCH - CONFESSIONAL - NIGHT

Candlelight flickers behind the latticework. The organ hums softly — "Faith of Our Fathers" — echoing through empty pews. A small crucifix hangs, crooked.

SUSAN enters. Slow. Measured. She kneels. Breath trembling.

The sliding panel opens.

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.)
Bless you, my child.

SUSAN
It's been... too long.
(beat)
I don't feel peace, Father.

FATHER DANIEL

You sound troubled. As Saint Francis reminds us: "Make me a channel of your peace."

SUSAN

I feel jealousy. (beat) I envy my own husband. I hate him... for the life he's building. (beat) With someone else.

A long pause. Eight seconds of holy stillness. Then—

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.)

We are not the judge.
Nor the executioner. That belongs to God alone. Let us pray to our Mother in Heaven.

Susan nods. Barely. Eyes shut tight.

INT. CHURCH - CONFESSIONAL - NIGHT (LATER)

Susan exits the booth. Walks out of the confessional. Her shadow long and unbroken. Purpose in her spine. Something clenched in her hand.

She's made peace. The dangerous kind.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT - SLOW MOTION / SILENCE

An accordion plays "Faith of Our Fathers." Slower. Off-key. Haunting.

Time dilates. FRANK and SEAN at the dartboard. Sean lets fly — BULL'S EYE.

Frank lights up — that Irish grin wide and reckless. He lifts Sean in a full bear-hug, spinning him.

Laughter. Mouths open. But we hear nothing. Just the soft hum of fate crawling through the air.

Sean clings to Frank's shoulders as they twirl — A moment suspended in joy. Innocent. Unaware.

SMASH CUT BACK:

INT. CHURCH - AISLE - NIGHT

Visuals swirl: Saints in glass. The crooked crucifix. The flickering flame. The organ hammers one final, trembling chord.

SUSAN walks down the center aisle. Steady. Solemn. Choir gone. Candles low. Only the echo of her heels. Her hand tightens around something. We don't see it yet.

VOICES (O.S.)
 (whispered, layered)
 Hail Mary, full of grace...
 Hail Mary, full of grace... Hail
 Mary, full of-

SILENCE.

Susan reaches the exit. A small font of Holy Water rests beside the doors, glinting faintly. She pauses. Opens her hand.

THE ROSARY.

Black beads. Silver crucifix. Still warm from her grip. She places it gently into the water. Lets it sink.

VOICES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (whisper)
 Bless me, Father.

She turns. Walks into the night.

VOICES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (soft, overlapping,
 rising)
 Bless me, Father...
 Hail Mary, full of grace... Our
 Father, who art in Heaven...

DIVE INTO THE WATER-

INT. HOLY WATER FONT - SURREAL - CONTINUOUS

The rosary and crucifix fall in slow motion. Silver glints. Beads scatter like sins. The whispers swirl louder, chaotic.

VOICES (V.O.)
 Bless me...
 Hail Mary... Our Father...

THE WATER BUBBLES— SOMETHING SHIFTS. THE CAMERA COMES UP THROUGH A WATER FOUNTAIN IN THE PARK.

And then—CUT THROUGH:

☞ "I don't know how to love him..." Simple. Raw. One voice.

EXT. ICE CREAM SHOP - AFTERNOON

A 20-something GIRL sits on the curb beside a striped ice cream stand. Tank top. Boots. A little mascara smudge. She's got that Miley-in-an-indie-film energy—gritty and glowing. She hums to herself, almost unaware she's singing.

☞ "...I've been changed, yes, really changed..."

Then she's gone—drifting into the background like she was never there.

A lazy Boston summer afternoon. The sun hangs high. The streets sticky with heat.

PAUL (8) sits at a table, legs swinging, a towering cone of chocolate ice cream in his hands.

Across from him, SEAN (30s) — relaxed, sunglasses on, a cigarette smoldering in the ashtray.

Paul licks his ice cream, eyes wide with admiration.

PAUL

Daddy says you used to be the fastest runner in all of Boston.

SEAN

(grinning)

Fastest in my whole neighborhood. Nobody could catch me.

PAUL (SERIOUS)

What about now? Could you still run fast?

Sean exhales, smirks.

SEAN

Depends on what I'm running from.

Paul thinks on this, like it's the most profound thing he's ever heard. Then—

PAUL
You and Daddy always talk about
running.

Sean looks at him now.

SEAN
(eyebrow raised)
Paulie have you been eavesdropping?

PAUL
(caught)
No, no...well sometimes I hear you
goes talking when you think I'm
asleep.

SEAN
(Stern but teasing)
Paulie...

PAUL (MATTER-OF-FACT)
But when we're all together, nobody
runs.

A beat. Sean nods, understanding more than he wants to admit.
Paul finishes his ice cream, gets up, brushes his hands off.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Come on, Sean, let's run!

Sean shakes his head, smirking.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Sean and Frank. Breathless. Pressed against brick. Slick with
sweat and fear.

FRANK
Come on, Sean... let's run!

His voice cracks - not with panic, but hope. A man trying to
outrun everything catching up to him.

SMASH BACK:

Sean still smirking.

SEAN

Paulie...I just bought these shoes.
They weren't made for racing.

SMASH CUT BACK:

INT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

Low, urgent breathing. We've dropped into the middle of something raw. A moment they shouldn't have had - or maybe the only one that was ever real.

SEAN

If we go...We don't look back.

Frank nods.

SMASH BACK:

Paul grabs Sean's hand, pulling him off the chair. Sean lets himself be pulled.

They take off down the sidewalk. Paul leading, barefoot joy in the heat. Sean behind him - reluctant, grinning, remembering.

CAMERA TRACKING WITH THEM

The world streaks past - storefronts, sunlight, soft blur of memory and motion.

☞ "I want him so... I love him... so..."

The GUITAR GIRL is still there - On the curb, strumming, singing, staring. A single line cuts through the noise:

☞ "I want him... so..."

Sean turns. Mid-run. Just for a second.

Their eyes meet. And she knows. She doesn't smile. Doesn't flinch. Just sings. Like she's always known. Like she saw the alley, the boy, the break.

Sean keeps running. But something in him stays behind.

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - THAT EVENING

The kitchen hums with quiet. The scent of simmering sauce fills the air-warm, maternal, ritual.

SUSAN moves effortlessly—chopping onions, stirring the pot. She radiates control. Grace. A Kennedy wife in her prime.

PAUL (8) sits at the table, small hands gripping a crayon. Lost in his own world, humming as he draws.

PAUL
(casual)
Mom, I like the way Daddy is when
he's around Sean.

Susan freezes. Just for half a second. But it's enough.

PAUL (CONT'D)
(still drawing)
Daddy laughs a lot when Sean is
around. That makes me laugh.
(beat)
Here, Daddy doesn't laugh much.

Susan forces a smile.

SUSAN
Paulie, you know Daddy is busy.
Lots on his mind.

Paul nods, accepting it. Keeps drawing. Then—

PAUL
Mommy, you like Daddy, right?

Susan's hands still. She recovers, moves to sit beside him—measured, soft.

SUSAN
Of course I do. Why do you ask?

Paul studies his drawing, thinking.

PAUL
Mommy, if you like someone... is it
okay to hold their hand?

Susan blinks. The air shifts. She smiles gently, stays calm.

SUSAN
Yes, Paulie. I like—
No, I love you. That's why Mommy
holds your hand.

Paul nods, satisfied.

PAUL
 That's what I thought.
 (beat)
 Then why don't you hold Daddy's
 hand?

Susan inhales. But Paul's already moved on—

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Sean holds Daddy's hand. And they
 both smile.
 (beat)
 They hold my hand too. And we all
 smile. That's okay, right?
 (innocent)
 I like smiling.

Susan's throat tightens. She reaches for his hand, holding
 it—gently, desperately.

SUSAN
 Yes, my love. You should always
 smile as much as you can.

A beat. Then—

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Now... let's see this wonderful
 drawing of yours.

She turns the page—freezes.

A beach scene. Crude but perfect. Sean. Frank. Paul. Holding
 hands. All smiling. Susan? Drawn far away. Small. Still.
 Expressionless.

Her perfect world just cracked.

PAUL
 That's me with Daddy and Sean at
 the beach!
 We were laughing and playing.
 (beat) Sean and I found a seashell.
 He showed me how to hold it up and
 hear the ocean. He said he loves
 that sound—and wanted me to hear it
 too.

Susan swallows.

SUSAN
 And Paulie... who is this?

She points to the small, distant figure.

PAUL
 (grinning)
 Oh, Mommy! That's you!

Susan studies it.

SUSAN
 I look sad?

PAUL
 (shakes head)
 No, Mommy. You look like you.
 (beat)
 Always in charge!

Susan laughs. Hollow. She pulls him into a hug, kisses his temple. A mother's hold. But something else too—quiet grief.

Paul pulls something from his pocket.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 Mommy, see if you can hear the ocean.

He holds out a seashell. A gift. Susan takes it. Holds it to her ear. Listens. She hears it.

A smile breaks. Soft. Surprised. A tear escapes—just one.

PAUL (CONT'D)
 (cheerful)
 See, Mommy? That seashell from Sean made you smile!

AND THEN—FLASH.

SUPER 8 MEMORY - 1961 - GRAINY - HAUNTED

☞ "Where or When" by Dion & The Belmonts hums in the distance.

A hotel room. Post-party haze. Younger Susan. Beautiful. Untouchable. Until now.

A man's hands on her waist. They dance. Slow. Not romantic. Intoxicating.

FLASH - Lips on her neck. FLASH - Her breath catches. FLASH - A hand slides to the small of her back. FLASH - She doesn't stop it.

SUSAN

Oh, Sean.

FLASH – Morning after. Lipstick smeared. Mirror reflection. Shame and something else.

SUSAN (V.O.)

It wasn't supposed to happen.

FLASH – A wedding ring slides on. FLASH – A pregnancy test. FLASH – Frank lifting her, beaming. FLASH – Her smile. But her eyes are haunted.

SUSAN (V.O.)

But it did.

BACK TO 1971 – INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE – NIGHT

Susan still holding the seashell. Eyes wide. Breath shallow.

FADE IN:

JUNE 1971 – A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE – NIGHT

The city's skeleton rises into the dark—an unfinished skyscraper, steel beams stretching like bones into the sky.

Sean steps out of the shadows, zipping up his jeans. FRANK follows, doing the same.

They move in silence beneath the hum of floodlights. Their shadows stretch long across dirt and steel. Cigarette smoke curls in the thick summer heat.

They step into the construction trailer.

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER – NIGHT

A large map is spread across a worktable. The O'Malley operation—blueprints, getaway routes. The plan for a clean escape. (The plan that won't happen.)

Sean leans against a steel beam, watching Frank instead of the map.

FRANK

(low, uncertain)

One last job.

Sean exhales smoke. No reaction.

SEAN
(measured, teasing)
You keep saying that, Frankie.
You got an addiction to last jobs.

Frank chuckles. It's hollow. He lights a cigarette, gaze fixed on the half-built skyline outside.

A long silence.

FRANK
(slow, hesitant)
What if this was the last one?

Sean watches him now. Carefully.

SEAN
What do you mean?

Frank shrugs. Taps his cigarette against the steel. Trying to act casual. Failing.

FRANK
(casual, but not really)
Me and Susan...

Maybe it's run its course. Maybe I finally cut the cord.

Sean doesn't flinch. But it hits him like a car crash in slow motion.

SEAN
Frankie... what are you saying?

A beat. Then Frank twists the knife. Susan already got to him.

FRANK
(dark, sour now)
She's got the priest lined up.
Gave me the whole speech—Paul needs
a "complete" home. Said God doesn't
believe in divorce. (beat) Like
God's paying my mortgage.

Sean scoffs. Bitter.

SEAN
Yeah, well...I don't think God was in
bed with us last night. Or in that
alley five minutes ago either. But
what do I know?

FRANK
 (grinning, low)
 Felt like heaven to me.

A pause. The grin fades. Frank's breathing shifts—he wants to say it. But the words won't come.

FRANK (CONT'D)
 Sean, I...

Nothing. He can't finish. But Sean already knows.

He steps in. Closer. No smirk. No swagger. Just truth.

Sean reaches out, grabs Frank's hand — firm, defiant, unshakable.

SEAN
 If heaven's like that—
 And it's you and me? Hail Mary,
 full of grace.

Frank holds his gaze. Doesn't pull away. Doesn't speak.

FADE IN:

JULY 1, 1971 - THREE DAYS BEFORE EVERYTHING FALLS APART

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

A sunlit office glows with the sheen of freedom—stacks of glossy brochures: Morocco, Bali, the French Riviera. A spinning globe turns lazily. The scent of fresh paper and perfume lingers in the air.

CONNIE (mid-30s) — blonde, playful, effortlessly charming — leans over the counter like it's her stage. She lights up when SEAN walks in.

CONNIE
 (grinning, teasing)
 Sean, how very nice to see you. Why
 don't you take a girl like me out
 on a date sometime?

Sean smirks, slick as always, but there's a flicker beneath it—something tight behind the eyes.

SEAN
 (deflecting, smoothing his
 hair)
 (MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)
Oh, Connie, I've been busy, you know.

CONNIE
(mock gasp, hand to chest)
Well, I'll let that slide this time... but I will be needing your number.

Sean chuckles, shifts his weight, scanning the brochures. He's stalling. SEAN Playin' bold, huh? Thought the guy was supposed to ask.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
(laughing, leaning in)
It's the '70s, Sean. A girl can take charge.

Sean exhales, nods. The light banter's slipping.

He leans on the counter.

SEAN
(flat, stripped)
I need to book a trip.

CONNIE
(excited, flipping open her planner)
Oh, are you finally running off somewhere? Morocco? Bali? South America?

SEAN
(quiet, firm)
London.

That catches her. She leans back, surprised.

CONNIE
God save the Queen. So you fancy a trip across the pond? Just you?

A beat. Sean hesitates. Then—

SEAN
(exhales, steady)
No. Three of us. Two adults. One kid.

A longer beat.

Connie's grin widens. She clasps her hands together like she's just found the center of the gossip galaxy.

CONNIE

Sean , you been holding out on me?
Oh, I must meet her. She must be
radiant. I hate her already.

Sean tries to smile, forces a laugh. But his eyes flick to
the door. He wants this done.

CONNIE (CONT'D)

(playful, leaning in)
Come on, tell me. What's her name?
What's she like? How long's this
been a thing? I need details.

Sean swallows. His jaw tightens. The silence stretches.

SEAN

(too fast, too flat)
Frank.

Connie blinks. It hits her mid-laugh. A beat.

CONNIE

Frank?

Sean stumbles.

SEAN

(covering)
I mean—Frankie. Frankie.
Big Sox fan. Loud. You know?

Connie studies him. Then smiles again—but it's softer now.

CONNIE

(smiling)
Well. You'll have to bring Frankie
around. I'd love to see the guy who
got you all twisted up.
(flipping through her
book)
When's the trip?

SEAN

(hurried)
July 5. First flight out.

CONNIE

(laughing, surprised)
That's in three days!

SEAN

Yeah. Three days. Three people.

She glances up at him again. Then—

CONNIE
 (smiling, shaking her
 head)
 I do like this whole impulsive
 thing you've got going.
 (flipping a page)
 Okay... return date?

A pause. Sean wasn't expecting that question.

His pulse ticks in his throat.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
 (waiting, pen ready)
 Sean?

SEAN
 (low, distant)
 One-way tickets.

A long beat. Connie leans back. Her smile fades just slightly. She sees it now—whatever this is... it's real.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

A shiny black Lincoln idles across the street. Windows up. Air conditioning humming. A bubble of quiet, insulated from the city's heat.

Inside: SUSAN — composed, sharp, eyes locked forward. Beside her, LIAM — early 40s, clean-cut, a fixer with Wall Street polish and barroom instincts. A driver waits silently in front.

They sit still. Watching.

Through the travel agency window: Sean stands at the counter with Connie, laughing a little, shifting his weight. He hands over cash. It's small talk.

But Susan reads it like scripture.

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

CONNIE
 (gentle)
 You're up to something.
 (beat)
 Well... your secret's safe with me.
 (MORE)

CONNIE (CONT'D)
 (beat, back to business)
 Diners? Mastercard?

SEAN
 (quiet. firm.)
 Cash.

He peels off crisp hundreds. Hands them over. Connie takes them slowly. Eyes never leaving him.

A long pause. No punchline. No comeback. Just that smell of perfume and ink.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 (finishes the transaction,
 pockets his receipt)
 He nods to Connie, turns toward the door.

SUSAN'S EYES STAY ON HIM. Calm. Cold.

Sean steps outside. Lights a cigarette. Walks down the sidewalk, casual but tight.

Susan watches every move – like she's memorizing his last day on earth. Then—she nods. Just once. Subtle. Precise.

LIAM
 (quiet, looking at her
 first, then Sean)
 Time to wrap this up.

Susan says nothing.

FADE IN:

EXT. BOSTON BAR - EARLY EVENING

SEAN sits with the boys. A pint in hand, but his eyes are somewhere else. Distant. Detached. Thinking.

SOMEONE (O.S.)
 Shots!

The bar rallies – voices rise, hands clap shoulders. Laughter swells. The noise of men trying to drown something.

Sean's pulled into it, smiling on autopilot. But he's not really there.

From across the room, LIAM enters. Cool. Controlled. Watching. Darts fly. Cheers echo. But Sean? Miles away.

Liam approaches, casual. Predator in plain clothes.

LIAM
So...You straighten yourself out yet?
Gonna end this embarrassment?

Sean turns. Eyes locked with Liam – inches away. Calm.
Coiled.

A beat. Then:

SEAN
(deadly)
Liam. Piss off.

He rises. Steps outside – into the thick, electric Boston
summer.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE BAR – CONTINUOUS

The world hums – air heavy, headlights low. Sean walks, fists
clenched, breath jagged.

He stops. Paces.

SEAN
(to himself)
I got to go through with this.

He pounds a fist into his palm. Once. Hard.

A rustle behind him. Sean spins – LIAM stands in the shadows.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(startled, breathless)
Christ.

A pause. Tension pulling like piano wire.

LIAM

(LOW, VOICE CURLING LIKE SMOKE)
Sean... What is it you think you have
to do?

Sean turns to him – eyes sharp, voice cold.

SEAN
(quiet, dark, final)
Like I said. Piss off.

He walks. Doesn't look back. Liam watches. Silent. Left in the heat. Alone.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN: 1971 - 4TH OF JULY MORNING

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

The house is quiet. Boston sleeps. But in the dim glow of dawn—we hear something we haven't heard before.

A GUITAR. Soft, deliberate plucking. Melancholy, intimate.

Frank sits alone, barefoot, in his undershirt, his acoustic guitar resting against his thigh. Fingers pressing into the strings—muscle memory from a life he never got to live.

Paul enters, sleepy-eyed, messy-haired. He stops in the doorway, wide-eyed.

PAUL
(excited)
Daddy, you never play your guitar anymore!

Frank looks up. Caught. A pause.

Frank exhales, nods for Paul to sit. Paul climbs up on the couch beside him.

FRANK (SOFT, HESITANT)
Alright, Paulie. Let me sing this one for you. It's kind of new... by a man named James Taylor. He goes by J.T.

PAUL (GRINNING)
Ooooooh, J.T.! That's a cool name!

Frank chuckles. Shakes his head. Paul tilts his head. Curious.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Daddy, you're cool. And you know what?

BEHIND THEM, SUSAN ENTERS THE FRAME.

She stands in the doorway, unseen. Listening. Holding onto the past.

PAUL (SOFT, HONEST) (CONT'D)
 Sean is cool. We are cool! I hope
 we're always cool!

Frank stops playing for just a second. The weight of it hits him. He looks at Paul, all wide-eyed wonderment. He almost says something.

But instead—he starts picking again. He plays. His voice is rough, hesitant. Then—he sings. "Fire and Rain"—but slower. More broken.

FRANK
 (he sings)
*"Just yesterday morning, they let
 me know you were gone..." "Susan, the
 plans they made put an end to you..."*

MONTAGE FLASHES—IN FRANK'S HEAD:

-The wedding night with Susan—he wanted to say I love you, but didn't.

-Sean, laughing, pulling him close—he wanted to say it, but couldn't.

-His father, a hardened Irish Catholic—Frank at 18, trying to prove something.

-Paul, as a baby, gripping his finger—Frank staring at him, knowing something was off, but pushing it down.

-Then—a darkness. A shot fired. Paul's body falling. Blood spreading in the alley.

-Frank's eyes snap open. Back to reality.

-The song ends. Silence.

PAUL JUMPS UP, CHEERING.

PAUL
 DADDY! That was AMAZING!

Susan claps. A soft, small moment. She's been crying. The Kennedy way—wiping the tears before they can be seen.

SUSAN (SOFT, NOSTALGIC)
 Wow, Frank... it's been a long time.

Paul runs over and HUGS Frank and the guitar.

PAUL

Maybe Sean could sing with you! He said you guys used to sing together. That would be COOL!

Frank freezes. The moment is too much. Tears slip down his face. Paul pulls back, confused, but smiling. Frank finally lets go.

He looks at Susan—a woman who already knows what's coming.

FRANK (SOFT, BREAKING)

I... I love you, Paul.

Paul doesn't miss a beat.

PAUL (GRINNING)

Daddy, you don't have to say that. I know it!

Frank laughs, shaky, wiping his face. He ruffles Paul's hair. Susan turns away. Hiding her emotions.

And then—Frank puts the guitar down. He won't play it again.

FADE OUT.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

A radio hums. Bacon sizzles. The smell of coffee in the air.

Frank, shirt unbuttoned, barefoot, relaxed, flips pancakes while Paul, now 9, drinks orange juice, swinging his legs under the chair. Frank hums "Fire & Rain" lightly.

Susan moves gracefully through the kitchen, a vision of effortless poise. She's putting on earrings, checking her reflection in the window.

A perfect family, a perfect moment. A lie.

THE PHONE RINGS.

Susan turns. Answers it.

SUSAN (BRIGHT, POLITE)

Hello?

A pause. Then—her smile fades.

Her fingers tighten around the phone cord.

LIAM (O.S.) (CALM, CONTROLLED)
We should talk.

Susan's jaw clenches. She glances at Frank. He's laughing with Paul.

SUSAN (QUIET, EVEN)
Where?

FRANK O.S
Come on Paulie. Time for the beach.

PAUL
Yeah!

HARD CUT: TWO SPLIT SCREENS BEGIN

LEFT SCREEN: DARK - SUSAN & LIAM MEETING

RIGHT SCREEN: LIGHT - FRANK, SEAN & PAUL AT THE BEACH

EXT. COASTAL ROAD - FRANK & PAUL DRIVING TO THE BEACH

Right Screen - Warm, Sunlit, Breezy

Frank drives. Paul sits in the passenger seat, feet on the dash, sunglasses too big for his face.

Paul laughs. A kid, free. Beside him, Sean. Relaxed, arm out the window. The world feels weightless.

The cars arrives at the beach they get out with a cooler, chairs towels. Paul starts to head to the beach.

SEAN
Stop there young man. Aren't you forgetting something?

PAUL
Dad, I am so little.

FRANK
What do we say?

PAUL
(slow and sad)
All for one...

SEAN

And..

SEAN, FRANK AND PAUL

(cheer)

ONE FOR ALL!

PAUL

I was just teasing you know, Sean.
I was going to help.

SEAN

Sure...Sure.

He picks up Paul and tosses him in the air and catches him.
They all laugh. They head to the beach.

CUT TO:

INT. DARKENED BACK ROOM - SUSAN & LIAM MEETING

LIAM

You know what you are asking of me?

SUSAN

Oh you are getting a conscious now?

They both laugh.

EXT. BOSTON BEACH - CONTINUOUS

PAUL

I bet I can outswim you today.

SEAN

Oh yeah? You been training?

PAUL (GRINNING)

Nope! But I got heart.

Frank smirks. Watches Sean watch Paul. Sean's eyebrow raises.
Paul sees that and laughs.

FRANK

Heart's good, Paulie. (beat) Just
don't let it get you in trouble.

A beat. Sean's smile falters. He looks out at the ocean.
Knows trouble is already here.

INT. DARKENED BACK ROOM - SUSAN & LIAM MEETING

A single candle lights the room. Liam's face moves in and out of shadow as he speaks, like he's slipping between priest and executioner.

Left Screen - Cold, Murky, Shadowed

Susan enters a dimly lit room in the back of an Irish pub.

Liam sits, calm, drinking whiskey. A couple of silent men stand behind him.

Susan, pristine white summer dress, red lipstick, the picture of an untouchable woman. She sits across from him. Unrushed. Controlled.

SUSAN

I assume you're not here to wish me
a happy Fourth of July.

Liam smiles. Leans forward.

LIAM

Your husband's in deep, Mrs.
Callahan.

Susan crosses her legs. Sips her drink. Unfazed.

SUSAN

Oh?

LIAM

We both know it. (beat) Just like
we both know who's got their claws
in him.

Susan's expression doesn't change.

But her fingers tighten just slightly around her glass.

Liam notices. Enjoys it.

LIAM (CONT'D)

That man your husband keeps
chasing? He's gonna lead him
straight to hell.

A long silence. Susan finally speaks. Measured. Unshaken.

SUSAN

Hell is a real place, Mr. O'Malley.

Liam chuckles.

LIAM
Oh, Mrs. Callahan. We live in it.

EXT. BEACH - FRANK, SEAN & PAUL

Right Screen - Golden Light, Ocean Waves, Pure Joy. Paul runs into the surf, kicking up water. Sean and Frank walk along the shore, side by side.

SEAN
You ever think about leaving?

Frank watches Paul.

FRANK
Every day.

Sean waits. Frank turns. Meets his eyes.

FRANK (CONT'D)
But it doesn't mean I will.

Sean looks away. Nods. He already knew the answer. Paul laughs, calling back to them.

PAUL (O.S.)
C'mon slowpokes!

They walk toward the water. Toward the moment right before it all slips away. Frank and Sean walk toward the water. Toward the moment before it's all gone.

FADE IN: JULY 4TH, 1971 - THE FINAL CELEBRATION

EXT. BOSTON ESPLANADE - NIGHT

Fireworks crack against the sky: reds, golds, and whites reflected in the Charles River. The city breathes. Music swells.

FRANK, SEAN, & PAUL - THE FINAL GLIMPSE OF PEACE

Paul sits on Frank's shoulders, small hands gripping onto his father's hair, his face lit up by the fireworks. His laughter cuts through the noise.

Sean stands beside them, arms crossed, cigarette hanging from his lips, watching them both—his family.

Frank shifts, looking up at Paul, smiling in a way we've barely seen. Sean catches it. That rare, unguarded joy.

For a second—just a second—he lets himself believe this could be real.

SUSAN - WATCHING FROM A DISTANCE

Champagne in hand. Still. Silent. Her eyes fixed on them.

She sees it all now — The lean of Frank's body toward Sean. The instinct. The gravity. The way Paul beams at Sean like a second sun.

Frank Callahan already left her. He just never said it out loud. And Sean ? He's already holding her place.

A crack forms in the champagne glass as her grip tightens.

EXT. BOSTON ESPLANADE - NIGHT

Then—Paul tugs on Frank's hair.

PAUL (EXCITED, POINTING UP)
Daddy, look! It's the big one!

They all look up. A firework explodes. A perfect bloom of white.

CROWD

Ohhh

Frank lifts Paul higher on his shoulders, but something shifts. He slowly lowers Paul back to the ground.

PAUL
(surprised)
I wanted to see—

FRANK
(quietly)
You'll see better from here, kiddo.

Frank kneels, straightens Paul's little jacket, then stands beside him. Paulie is on Frank's RIGHT SIDE.

Then he reaches down and takes Paul's hand.

Paul instinctively grabs it. Frank takes a hold os Sean's hand on his left. Sean barely looks at Frank and squeezes back.

Paul looks and smiles at them holding hands. Then with obvious simplicity.

PAUL
Wait! I should be in the middle.

Paulie goes between them and takes both of their hands, like that's the way it's supposed to be. He looks up at them both and smiles.

PAUL (CONT'D)
We're all cool!

BOOM!

The biggest yet. A crown of red and gold, lighting up the whole goddamn sky. The colors reflect in their eyes.

CROWD
Ohhhh...Ahhh...

FRANK
(low, hesitant)
Sean, can I ask you something?

Sean flicks his cigarette. Smirks.

SEAN
(teasing)
You want me to drive 'cause you want to drink more? Sure thing.

FRANK
No, I'm serious.

Sean studies him now. Feels the shift.

SEAN
If this is about confession, I'm not-

FRANK
(cutting in)
No. Now give me a break.

A beat. A hesitation. Then-

SEAN
(softer)
Frankie, what's the question?

Frank swallows. Then ,quiet, raw, the closest thing to an 'I love you' he'll ever say

FRANK

If anything were to happen to me, I
want you to take Paulie.

Silence. All sound fades. Freeze. Sean exhales. Then—with
confidence, with love, no hesitation.

SEAN

(steady, certain, forever)
Frankie, of course I will take
Paulie.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - NIGHT

Frank drives. Paul's asleep in the backseat — curled up,
blanket tucked around him, peaceful.

Sean lights a cigarette. Takes a long drag. Frank doesn't
look at him, but speaks:

FRANK

It's not too late, you know.

Sean turns. Studying Frank's profile. The way his knuckles
grip the wheel.

SEAN

It was always too late, Frankie.

Silence. Nothing left to say.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Frank enters. Quiet. Paul's asleep, the nightlight casting
soft stars across the ceiling.

Frank watches him for a long time. Then — he sits beside the
bed.

He just lays a hand on Paul's back — light, steady. Almost
afraid to wake him. Almost afraid to let go.

INT. SUSAN & FRANK'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Susan sits in bed. The house is quiet. She stares at the
ceiling.

A soft hum — the last notes of something we almost recognize
— drift in from the hallway.

Not the full song. Just a ghost. A memory. A chord that never fully resolves. She closes her eyes. Wipes a tear. The decision has been made.

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - NIGHT

A black sedan rolls through the empty streets.

Steam from the grates. Windows dark. Inside: LIAM. Calm. Focused. He opens a manila envelope.

ON PAPER:

SEAN O'CONNELL

PAUL CALLAHAN

He closes it. Nods to the driver. The car turns.

EXT. O'MALLEY'S - NIGHT

Empty. Abandoned. Except it isn't. A few men wait in the dark.

Weapons loaded. Quiet as concrete. The wind howls between the beams. A deal is about to be made. A man is about to be erased.

INT. PAUL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Frank still sits there.

Still watching Paul breathe.

He leans forward - kisses his son's head.

Lingers.

FRANK (WHISPERED)
I'll be right here.

He picks up Paulie in his arms. Takes a small backpack.

EXT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank places Paul gently into the car. Blanket. Teddy bear. Pillow.

He stands there for a moment watching his son sleep. From inside the house – Susan watches from the window. Still. Cold. Collected.

FINAL IMAGE:

The black sedan turns a corner.

Frank's car pulls away in the other direction. The lullaby fades. And the silence begins.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - SUSAN AT THE WINDOW

The house is still. Silent.

Susan stands by the window, her silhouette sharp against the dim glow of the Boston skyline.

She dials. Her fingers shake—just slightly.

The phone rings once. Twice.

She hesitates.

SUSAN (WHISPERING TO HERSELF)
Don't go, Frank.

A dial tone. Then silence.

EXT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

A streetlamp flickers. The bar's neon buzzes—half-dead, like the people inside.

Frank pulls up. The engine idles. A shadow moves.

Sean steps out, cigarette burning low, dressed in black. A sharp contrast to the golden glow of the bar's windows.

Sean pulls out a gun. Checks the chamber. The click echoes in the silence.

Frank watches him. Sean glances at the rearview mirror. Paul is asleep in the back, small, curled up. Frank hesitates.

Sean's voice, barely above a whisper:

SEAN
Jesus, Frank.

Frank tightens his grip on the wheel, jaw clenched.

FRANK

Let's go.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BASEMENT - THE HEIST

A room built for secrets. Damp stone walls, a single light swinging overhead. Shadows dance across stacks of cash.

Frank and Sean move fast. Silent. Efficient. A rhythm built on trust. They work like men who have done this before. Like men who know there won't be a next time.

Bags filled. Guns loaded.

They step outside. Breathing hard. For one moment— They almost made it.

Then— A COCKED GUN.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND O'MALLEY'S - NIGHT

Paul. Tied up. A gun to his head. LIAM stands there. Waiting.

His men form a wall between Sean and Frank—between them and everything they love. Liam grins.

LIAM

Took you long enough.

Frank sees Paul. His face goes white. Sean freezes. The gun in his hand shakes. Frank steps forward, but Sean grips his arm—stopping him.

FRANK (ROARING)

Let him go.

Liam tilts his head, feigning sympathy.

LIAM

You thought you could just walk away?

Frank's breathing turns shallow. The walls close in. Liam raises his hand. A nod.

GUNSHOT.

SPLIT SCREEN: PAUL FALLING / SUSAN ARRIVING

Paul is hit. His small body collapses. The ground drinks his blood.

Susan's car SCREECHES TO A STOP. She bursts out. Sees her son fall. Her face twists in horror.

FRANK'S RAGE / SEAN'S RECKONING

Frank loses it. Bare hands. No hesitation. He lunges at Liam, but the men close in.

Liam and his men open fire. Frank goes down. A bullet to the gut.

Sean rapid-fires.

Thugs drop like dominos. But it's too late. Sean points the gun at Liam. He fires. The gun is empty.

Liam turns. A last smile. He walks away.

Silence.

SPLIT SCREEN: FRANK & SEAN / PAUL & SUSAN

Susan crawls to Paul. Blood soaks her dress. Paul coughs, eyes fluttering.

PAUL (WHISPERING, WEAK SMILE)
I got heart, Mom.
(beat)Lots of heart...

Susan presses her hands to his chest. Holding. Rocking. Breaking.

HARD CUT TO SEAN/FRANK

Sean cradles Frank. Their blood mixing on the concrete. Frank blinks up at him, barely there. Sean's face is devastated, raw.

SEAN
Frank-

Frank struggles to speak, fingers gripping Sean's collar. His voice is weak, hoarse, final-

FRANK
 (weak, fingers gripping
 Sean's collar)
 You shoulda taken the train...
 (beat)
 Used that goddamn ticket.

His hand slips. He's gone.

SCREEN GOES BLACK.

A full beat of silence. Maybe two. Then -

COLD. SHARP. DEADLY.

☞ "One less bell to answer..."

Just her voice. No intro. No lead-in. Just loss. Just absence. Just the wound.

SUPER 8 FILM MONTAGE - FADED BLACK & WHITE MEMORIES

Frank as a kid. Running barefoot in Boston streets.

Frank at 16, strumming his folk guitar.

Frank in uniform, young, clean-cut, laughing.

Frank and Susan, wedding bells, champagne toasts.

Frank holding baby Paul for the first time.

Frank & Sean, in a stolen moment. A real smile. A love never meant to survive.

SONG BUILDS. HEARTBREAK SWELLS.

The reel slows. Flickers. Burns out.

FADE TO BLACK.
 END.

FADE TO BLACK.
 CREDITS ROLL.

37 seconds of silence.

FADE IN: 1992 - THE FINAL WORD

EXT. NEW ENGLAND CEMETERY - OVERCAST SKY

The sky is grey and endless. Rain drizzles, soaking into the earth. A cold New England morning.

Sean stands alone. Older. Wiser. More dangerous. His overcoat flutters in the wind, but he doesn't shiver. He never does.

Before him—four tombstones, lined in a row.

PAUL CALLAHAN 1962 - 1971 "He had heart."

FRANK CALLAHAN 1929 - 1971 "Some things never got said."

SUSAN CALLAHAN-O'MALLEY 1930 - 1992 "Love yourself. Everything else will leave you."

LIAM O'MALLEY 1928 - 1985 "God forgives. Men don't."

Sean reads them. One by one.

PAUL'S GRAVE - THE ONE THAT HURTS THE MOST

Sean stands longest at Paul's headstone. The smallest, the simplest. The one that should never have been written.

A long inhale. A slow, steady exhale. His face never cracks—but inside, it's already broken.

SEAN (SOFT, ALMOST TO HIMSELF)
 You never knew, did you? (beat,
 cigarette ember glowing in the cold
 air) Maybe that was for the best.

He reaches into his pocket. Leaves something at Paul's grave.

A seashell. (The one Paul gave Susan.)

A guitar pick. (Frank's music, left unfinished.)

Nothing. (Because some losses are too big for gestures.)

He steps back. Exhales slow. The wind moves through the trees, whispering in the silence.

FRANK'S GRAVE - THE MAN WHO COULDN'T SAY IT

Sean reads Frank's epitaph. A slow, bitter smirk forms.

FRANK CALLAHAN 1929 - 1971 "Some things never got said."

Sean lets out a quiet exhale that might have been a laugh.

SEAN (LOW, MURMURING)
No shit, Frankie.

SUSAN & LIAM - BURIED TOGETHER

Sean's eyes land on the last two tombstones. Side by side.

SUSAN CALLAHAN-O'Malley 1930 - 1992 "Love yourself. Everything else will leave you."

LIAM O'Malley 1928 - 1985 "God forgives. Men don't."

Sean smirks. Lights a cigarette.

SEAN (LOW, DARK AMUSEMENT)
Well, Susan... guess you really did
sleep with the devil.

A pause. A slow inhale of cold air. No sadness. No regret.
Just the bitter taste of survival.

He exhales smoke—long and slow, like a final goodbye.

SEAN (MURMURING) (CONT'D)
Til death do you part, huh? Guess
some vows do stick.

HE FLICKS HIS CIGARETTE ONTO LIAM'S GRAVE.

Turns. Walks away. Never looks back.

FADE TO BLACK.

CREDITS GO BACK TO ROLLING

43 SECONDS LATER - ON SCREEN: "2025"

-Whiskey glass. Cigarette. The tattoo visible. A breath.

-A 4X SPEED THROUGH OF:

- Sean and Frank in the alley;

-1st Communion;

-the two of them in bed laughing as they lay there;

-Fireworks and Sean, Paulie and Frank holding hands

-the gunshots, Paul goes down, Frank goes down. Sean's empty gun trying to kill Liam.

HARD CUT

FADE IN: A LAVISH, ULTRA-MODERN OFFICE.

Sean's office is golden-hour glass and steel, but his tattoo—his past—is still ink-black. The last tie to the world he built, bled for, burned down.

Mahogany. Floor-to-ceiling windows. Power.

A man's arm rests on a desk.

The forearm is aged, veined... but the tattoo remains.

-THE SPARROW TATTOO.

-Sean. Older. Wiser. More dangerous.

-Behind him—a wall of framed photographs.

-Sean shaking hands with Harvey Milk.

-Sean with Bill Clinton, 1996.

-Sean at a 2008 Obama fundraiser.

-Sean at a 2015 Pride Parade, smiling.

- Sean with LGBTQ+ leaders, activists, presidents, billionaires.

The old outlaw didn't disappear. He evolved.

Sean picks up a phone. Dials.

A dial tone. A click.

VOICE (O.S.) (CAUTIOUS, WAITING)
Who the hell are you?

Sean leans back. His voice like gravel and ghosts.

SEAN
The man you should've killed a long
time ago.

A beat. Calm. Steady. Eyes locked.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You tried to bury me.
You forgot I was a seed.

The voice stiffens.

VOICE (O.S.)
Yes, Sir. Let me get him for you.

A HOLD LINE. THEN—A SECOND VOICE COMES ON.

Rough. Dangerous. Familiar.

HUSKY VOICE (O.S.)
Is this the Big Bad Wolf?

Sean smirks. But it's cold. Wolfish.

SEAN (LOW, LETHAL)
We need to clean things up. (beat) I
don't like where this world is
heading.

He leans forward. His hand drifts across his desk.

A SINGLE PHOTOGRAPH.

Paul. A boy frozen in time. Sean's eyes linger. A final
truth, a final burden. It was always him.

FADE TO BLACK.

AS THE SCREEN HOLDS BLACK, JUST BEFORE THE MUSIC HITS:

A quiet inhale. A faint exhale of cigarette smoke.
Then—Sean's voice, low, final.

SEAN (V.O.)
(soft, deadly, inevitable)
One less egg to fry.

FINAL SONG: "NOBODY KNOWS YOU WHEN YOU'RE DOWN AND OUT" -
ERIC CLAPTON (Acoustic 1992)

TO BE CONTINUED...

