

ONE LESS EGG TO FRY

Written by

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WINTER 1969 → JULY 4, 1970

BLACK.

ON SCREEN: WINTER 1969

Tattoo gun BUZZING. Wind. Snow.

A match STRIKES. For a flash of light – A cracked porcelain statue of ST. FRANCIS.

Dark again.

EXT. CALLAHAN CONSTRUCTION TRAILER – NIGHT

Floodlight hum. Snow drifting sideways.

THUMP.

Another THUMP.

Inside the frosted trailer window – shadows jerk violently.

CONGREGATION (V.O.)
Lord, make me an instrument of your
peace.

The door BURSTS open.

FRANK CALLAHAN (37) drags MR. FLANNIGAN out by the collar.
Bloody knuckles. Steam in the air.

FRANK
You chose to pay God instead of me.
You paid the wrong man.

He hits him again.

MRS. FLANNIGAN
Frank, please—

He backhands her. She falls.

CONGREGATION (V.O.)
Where there is hatred, let me sow
love.

In the shadows –

SEAN O'CONNELL.

Arms crossed. Watching.

Not flinching. But not approving.

SEAN

Enough.

Frank doesn't turn.

Sean steps forward. Grabs Frank's wrist mid-swing.

Firm. Not violent. Not dramatic. Just control.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Okay. Enough.

Beat.

Frank looks at him.

FRANK

Don't.

SEAN

Then don't make me.

For a second – we don't know who's in charge.

Frank pulls his arm free. Breathing hard.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Flannigan... pay him.

Blood-stained bills hit the desk. Frank peels off one hundred. Slips it into Mrs. Flannigan's coat pocket.

FRANK

For the dress.

The Flannigan's leave.

CONGREGATION (V.O.)

For it is in giving that we
receive—

Frank exhales.

It doesn't land.

Sean watches him.

Unsettled.

Steps closer. Low.

SEAN
Francis... we need to talk about
getting out.

Frank doesn't respond.

Sean drops his cigarette into snow.

Crush.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

ONE LESS EGG TO FRY

INT. FOUR SEASONS LOUNGE - SAME NIGHT

Old money hush. Velvet. Scotch.

SUSAN CALLAHAN sits across from LIAM O'MALLEY.

Perfect posture. Ice in her glass.

LIAM
What do you need from me, Susan?

SUSAN
You run this city.

LIAM
We call ourselves Winter Hill.

SUSAN
(smiles faintly)
Boys love names.

Beat.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Frank's made choices.
I want to make sure he pays for
them.

Liam studies her.

He understands.

LIAM
That can be arranged.

Susan lifts her glass.

SUSAN
Till death do us part.

CUT TO BLACK.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

Noise Makers. Streamers.

Party hats.

Crowded. Sweat. Whiskey.

Frank pushes through.

Sean sees him.

Beat.

Frank rolls up his sleeve. Bruised knuckles.

Sean rolls up his own sleeve.

The swallow tattoo. Fresh. Red.

Frank's eyes drop.

Recognition.

SEAN
Didn't take you for reckless.

Frank exhales.

They step outside.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Steam curls. Fireworks distant.

Sean presses Frank to the brick.

Close. Breath mixing.

Frank shakes.

FRANK

I'm sorry.

Sean holds his face. Steady.

SEAN

I know.

Fireworks explode overhead.

Red. Gold. White.

For a flash – we see them in full.

Alive.

Dark again.

BOOM.

EXT. BOSTON SKYLINE - DAWN

Steel bones of a half-built building.

FRANK (V.O.)

Boston. The city never really
sleeps...just pretends to.

A worker calls out:

WORKER

You comin' to Mass or what?

Frank hesitates.

FRANK

Yeah.

He flicks ash.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MORNING MASS

Smoke curls upward.

Frank beside Susan. Paul leaning into him.

PRIEST (O.S.)

The Lord sees all.

Frank's jaw tightens.

Donation basket.

Susan slips in crisp bills.

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

Frank barely whispers:

FRANK
Not today.

Frank steps out of the pew.

At the back of the church -

Gallagher, Boston Police.

Hat in hand. No badge visible.

He doesn't smile.

GALLAGHER
You always skip confession...
or just when it counts?

Frank stops.

Beat.

FRANK
You stalking me now?

GALLAGHER
Just attending Mass.
Trying to keep the city clean.

He looks toward the altar.

Then back to Frank.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
Hard to do that when people
disappear.

Frank doesn't respond.

MATCH CUT TO:

STACK OF CASH slamming onto a desk.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - 2PM

Low light. Quiet for this hour.

Frank sits at the bar. Coat still on. Whiskey untouched.

Jimmy slides onto the stool beside him.

JIMMY

Frank, I can't be bought.

Frank doesn't look at him.

FRANK

Can't or won't?

Beat.

JIMMY

You get your team in line. Play by
the law. Or there'll be problems.

Frank slowly turns.

Studies him.

Not angry.

Just... measuring.

FRANK

You new at this?

Jimmy bristles.

JIMMY

I know how this works.

Frank nods once.

Behind them—

CLICK.

The lock slides into place.

Jimmy hears it.

Frank stands.

Not loud.

Not sudden.

Just stands.

The room feels smaller.

Frank places his hand lightly on the back of Jimmy's neck.

Almost friendly.

FRANK

You don't.

He leans in.

Whispers:

FRANK (CONT'D)

You're not the problem.

Beat.

Jimmy swallows.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You're the warning.

Knife.

In.

Clean.

Jimmy gasps – shocked more than screaming.

Frank doesn't look away.

He holds eye contact while Jimmy realizes he's dying.

Then–

Frank pulls the blade free.

Jimmy collapses.

Silence.

No music.

No celebration.

Frank sets the knife down.

LIAM

That's how this city gets built.

Frank wipes the blade.

FRANK
Wrap him.

EXT. ABANDONED QUARRY - NIGHT

"Love Is Blue" - distant, hollow.

Trunk opens.

Breath in the cold.

Bag lifted.

Heave.

Splash.

Water swallows.

Frank watches.

Too long.

Cigarette flick.

Nothing said.

MONTAGE

Family photo.

Sean in mirror.

Susan lipstick.

Paul asleep.

Liam watching.

Quarry water.

Ripples flatten.

Black.

That black becomes silk.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Susan's back.

Frank beside her.

Miles apart.

INT. BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Sunlight slices in.

Little feet.

PAUL
(whisper)
Daddy...

No response.

Frank suddenly lunges.

FRANK
Who woke up the Big Bad Wolf?

PAUL
Meeeeeeeeeeeeee!

Paul SCREAMS laughing.

Joy.

Pure.

MATCH CUT TO:

A highball glass. Ice clinks. Swirls.

NEON BUZZES.

Bar sounds.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

TV in the background:

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)
"In Vietnam, the war rages on"

Channel switches.

TV ANCHOR (V.O.)

"Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave a speech in Memphis—just hours before his assassination tonight..."

Silence. A low mutter: "Son of a bitch."

Whiskey.

Second-hand smoke swirls.

Darts fly to the board.

CLOSE ON the highball glass — melting ice.

Sean swirls his whiskey.

Callaghan walks in.

CALLAGHAN

Liam, you see Frankie? His name came across my desk.

Liam looks at Sean. No response. Liam shakes his head "no."

CALLAGHAN (CONT'D)

I'll be in the area.

Callaghan heads out.

LIAM (50s, kingmaker, watching) nurses his scotch.

LIAM

Y'know, Sean...
You don't date much.

Sean smirks.

SEAN

Maybe I'm married to the job.

Sean heads out the back door.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ALLEY — NIGHT

Boston's shadows.

A streetlamp flickers.

Frank smokes. Alone.

Then—Sean steps from the dark.

Lean.

Dangerous.

Charged.

SEAN
Didn't think you'd show.

Frank shrugs. Looks away.

Sean gets close.

SEAN (CONT'D)
(low)
You go to confession today?

Frank says nothing.

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

Frank grabs Sean, slams him against the brick wall—

A second of tension—

Then a kiss.

Hard.

Desperate.

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

A car engine ROARS nearby. Frank tenses.

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

Frank pulls away. Turns to leave.

Sean grabs his hand. Pulls him back.

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

Eyes unreadable.

Turns.

Walks.

Callaghan and Frank collide.

FRANK
Jesus, you got nothing to do?

CALLAGHAN
Jimmy Dolan.

Frank walks.

Callaghan looks at Sean.

CALLAGHAN (CONT'D)
Do you know anything?

No response from Sean.

CALLAGHAN (CONT'D)
Another live one.

Callaghan leaves.

SEAN
(to himself)
Someday.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank idles in the driveway.

Engine running.

Headlights cut the cold.

In the window: Susan's silhouette.

Watching.

He kills the engine. Silence. Steps to the door.

Pauses.

Goes in.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Susan's in bed, book in hand. Perfect posture.

Frank enters. Loosens his tie. Drops his wedding ring on the dresser.

SUSAN
You're late.

FRANK
Long day.

She turns a page. Calm.

SUSAN
Is that a new aftershave?

Frank doesn't answer.

A beat.

She inhales lightly. Not exaggerated. Just enough.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Men who think they're careful
usually aren't.
(beat)

He slides into bed.

Stares at the ceiling.

From somewhere - faint, Dusty Springfield's "The Look of Love" drifts in. A needle catching vinyl.

Frank smokes in bed.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank jerks awake. Sweat.

FRANK
(soft)
Don't go.

Susan's hand rests on him.

SUSAN
Honey, I'm right here.

SOUND BRIDGE: His breath in the dark.

INT. DINER - MORNING

Dusty swells, warm and dangerous. Waitress brings coffee.

Sean sits in a booth. Same one as always. Coffee, half-drunk.

A NAPKIN in front of him.

He clicks a pen. Writes in block letters:

THE PRICE YOU PAY.

Underneath:

London.

Berlin.

L.A.

WAITRESS

Rough night?

Sean smiles. Barely.

SEAN

Call it a decade.

Dusty swells.

Sean writes:

L.A. - crosses it out.

Montreal - crosses it out.

Dublin - presses harder. Crosses it twice.

London - circles it.

Under it: Why not?

Frank enters sits.

Frank watches. Says nothing.

FRANK

What's this?

SEAN

Places nobody knows us.

Beat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Places we don't have to whisper.

Frank doesn't touch the napkin.

SEAN (CONT'D)
London's far enough.

OFFICER MURPHY enters. Uniform. Not aggressive. Just observant.

He scans. Sees Frank at the door.

MURPHY
Morning, Callahan.

Frank freezes a fraction.

FRANK
You get lost?

Murphy doesn't smile.

MURPHY
Following up on Jimmy Dolan.
Last note in his office said he was
meeting you at O'Malley's.

Silence.

Sean doesn't move.

Frank shrugs.

FRANK
Jimmy meets a lot of people.

MURPHY
Not anymore he doesn't.

Beat.

Now the diner feels smaller.

Murphy studies Sean.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
I'll be seeing you.

He leaves.

SEAN
(whispers)
Jesus, Frank.

FRANK

No. No. I'm not that kind of guy.

Frank takes it out.

Holds it.

Almost pulls it back.

Then sets it down. A train ticket.

SEAN

What about you?

Frank's jaw tightens. Swallows the truth.

FRANK

I'll figure it out.

SEAN

What about us?

Frank rolls up his sleeve. The faded tattoo. Sean rolls up his own - the match. They lock eyes. Time freezes.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Say it.

Frank opens his mouth - nothing.

FRANK

Just take the ticket.

Sean leans in, voice low.

SEAN

You need me here.

FRANK

I know.

Frank holds Sean's gaze.

SEAN

I have a plan. It will work.

Frank looks at the napkin of cities.

They laugh - small, raw. Sean folds the ticket and the napkin together, like something worth keeping. Slips them both into Frank's coat pocket.

Frank's jaw clenches. He turns away.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You don't have to be afraid of
this.

Frank stands. Moves to the door.

His hand hits the handle – a pause.

Then he's gone.

Sean looks at the EXIT sign.

THUMP. THUMP. His own heartbeat.

The red sign blurs.

MATCH CUT TO: RED.

A heart-shaped box of chocolates opens.

The warped vinyl hiss of Dusty slows... ..then the pop of a
live mic.

A 70's elegant cover band slides in – gentle organ, brushed
drums. "Roses are red, my love..."

INT. FOUR SEASONS

Red Roses everywhere.

Hearts.

Love in the air.

Low light. Leather booths.

Susan alone. Black silk. Controlled.

She signals the bartender.

A drink slides down.

Sean takes it.

He crosses. Sits opposite.

Jacket opens slightly.

Holster visible.

She notices.

SUSAN
This arrangement... isn't
sustainable.

Bathroom tile.

Susan's hand gripping a sink.

Clover tattoo visible on the man's back.

Breath against her neck.

SEAN
Funny. He keeps finding his way
back here.

New Year's Eve.

Frank & Sean in the alley.

Bricks.

Backs.

Breath.

SUSAN
Men don't leave what they need.

Susan's face in half-dark.

A whispered: "Just once." A door closing softly.

SEAN
Frank doesn't know.

Susan doesn't blink.

SEAN (CONT'D)
But I do.

Hospital room.

A newborn crying.

Sean standing in a hallway.

Frank holding the baby.

Susan looks out to Sean.

SUSAN
Boston's small. Irish blood runs
everywhere.

Paul at 3 years old.

Laughing.

Same crooked grin as Sean.

Frank watching him.

Something doesn't sit right.

SEAN
Not everywhere.

Beat.

A plate SMASHES somewhere in the bar.

Neither reacts.

SUSAN
I don't remember details.
Wine spilled on sheets.
Their bodies collide.
Sean picks up Susan., They fall on a bed.
Sean's swallow tattoo.
Susan in bed with Frank. Frank's Swallow tattoo.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You'd think I would.

She leans back.

Faint smile.

A pregnancy test.

Two lines.

Her breath catching.

Cut.

Silence.

She lifts her drink.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Once you crack an egg—
—it's cracked.

She stands.

Leaves.

Sean sits there.

Condensation slides down the glass.

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS FRANK ARRIVES

Frank walks in.

The band is playing "Roses Are Red."

He is expecting Susan.

Instead, Sean is waiting at the table.

He smiles.

FRANK
God I love that song, haven't heard
it in years.

SEAN (SMOOTH, EVEN)
Sit down, Francis.

Frank slides into the booth.

CUT TO: OUTSIDE THE RESTAURANT.

The Lincoln Continental is parked across the street.

Two men inside.

Ben. Brendan.

Watching.

INT. THE RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Sean rolls up his sleeve. Two sparrows.

Frank mirrors him.

Same ink.

From the shadows: two men step inside. Watch.

Sean locks Frank's hand across the table.

A waitress glances.

Sean stares until she looks away.

Frank's jaw tightens.

Sean's thumb presses into Frank's pulse.

SEAN
You don't belong to her.
(Beat.)
You never did.

Sean releases him.

INT. BACKROOM

SUSAN / LIAM

Shadows. Whiskey.

An envelope slides across the table.

Liam's hand gestures: a command.

Susan nods. Silence.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

FRANK / SEAN

Door SLAMS. Shirts Rip. Frank's back hits the bed.

Mouths meet—

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE

PAUL - HOME

Babysitter tucks him in. Plush hammer in his hands.

A tinny music box in the room picks out a few warped notes —
"Roses Are Red", barely recognizable.

PAUL
G'night, Daddy.

INT. CAR

THE MEN IN THE CONTINENTAL

Cigarette burns. Radio static.

Ben and Brendan – watching. Waiting.

Somewhere in the static: the song again, ghostlike, like it's been playing all night.

Gloved hands cock a pistol.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Frank and Sean stare at the ceiling.

Skin cooling. Breath slowing.

SEAN
Saints. Sinners. Sparrows.

FRANK
Save it for confession.

White sheets. Two silhouettes.

Breath.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. SUSAN'S CAR

Still. Engine off.

Silence.

Her reflection in the rearview, eyes forward.

The Virgin Mary statue trembles slightly on the dash.

Poised.

A tear slips down her cheek.

No reaction.

DISSOLVE TO:

Light slices across the Virgin's face.

The same line splits Susan's reflection.

Then—

Susan.

Hand tight on the gearshift.

A whispered note of "Ave Maria".

Cut to black.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON - LATE AFTERNOON

A quiet street.

Faint wind.

Distant city hum.

A payphone rings once before Sean answers.

SEAN

I'll take care of it.

My way.

(beat)

No one else touches this.

CLICK.

The receiver swings, clattering.

Sean exhales slow — eyes locked ahead.

Across the street — A MAN in a gray coat exits a liquor store. Late 30s. Nervous. Glances over his shoulder.

Sean watches him.

The MAN lights a cigarette. Walks.

Sean steps off the curb.

A COLLIE bursts into frame, joyous.

O.S. BOY'S VOICE

Hey, doggie!

Paul races after it.

The gray coat man turns the corner.

Sean stops.

Sean watches.

He looks at Paul.

Then the corner.

Choice.

SEAN
(to himself)
Damn kid.

Paul disappears into the alley.

Sean moves.

EXT. THE ALLEY

PAUL
What up, doggie?

Silent.

Closer.

Heartbeat pulses. Little breath breathing.

Paul steps inside. The shadows swallow him.

A drip of water echoes.

A SNAP somewhere deep in the alley.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Doggie?

Gray coat stops.

Sean stops.

All three in the same space now.

Gray coat turns – startled.

Sees Sean.

Then sees Paul.

Sean's eyes sharpen.

Controlled.

Now there's a child in it.

Sean moves first -

Paul squints into dark.

Behind him - a shape shifts.

We don't see Sean's face yet.

Footstep.

Paul turns-

A hand grabs him.

SEAN
(snarling mock-threat)
GOTCHA! You're mine!

Paul SCREAMS-

Then Sean swings him up, flips him mid-air- CATCHES him.

Paul bursts into wild laughter. Throws his arms up like a champ.

PAUL
SEAN! YEAH!

Sean laughs, ruffles his hair.

Sean Looks back the MAN is crossing the street.

SEAN
(mock-stern)
Paulie... you don't go chasing after
dogs.
(beat)
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.

Gray coat steps back. Confused.

Sean smiles like this is normal.

But his eyes never leave gray coat.

The tension is surgical.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Go home.

PAUL
But—

SEAN
Now.

Paul hesitates.

Sean softens just enough.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I'll be there.

Paul runs off.

We stay in the alley.

Gray coat starts walking again.

Sean waits.

Counts to three.

Then follows.

Back toward the corner.

SFX: A scuffle. A body hitting brick. A dog barking in the distance.

Cut to Sean emerging alone.

He adjusts his cuff.

Blood on his knuckles.

Takes out a handkerchief and wipes off the blood.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - DINNER TABLE - NIGHT

Paul kicks his feet under the table. The light is low. The tension is not.

Susan serves dinner—elegant, precise. Frank watches Paul.

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

Paul grins.

PAUL
Sean says I gotta be smart.

Frank freezes. A flicker.

He looks at Susan.

She is already looking at him.

No accusation.

No raised eyebrow.

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

SUSAN
(casual, but sharp)
When did you see Sean?

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

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

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.

Frank looks around the modest dining room.

The wallpaper—floral, faded, flawless.

A framed photo: Frank, Susan, and Paulie.

All smiles. Frozen in time.

He stabs his rare London Broil. Blood seeps into the mashed potatoes.

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

SUSAN
(watching Frank, deadpan)
You want that cooked more?

FRANK
(cold)
It's fine.

Blood still spreading.

Pink into white.

BLACK & WHITE.

Fog.

The faint sound of Sean's laughter.

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

EXT. BOSTON COMMON - EARLY DAWN BLACK & WHITE

Fog curls low.

Horse hooves echo faintly in the distance.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR

Liquor comes in back door.

Drugs leave back door.

Sean exchanges cash. Pockets some heads to the safe.

Opens the safe.

Sean opens the safe.

It's stuffed. Stacks pressed against the door.

He hesitates.

It's more than usual.

LIAM

July's going to be heavy.
You ever see that much cash in one
room before?

He closes it slowly.

LIAM (CONT'D)

All good?

Sean closes the safe. Doesn't look at Liam

SEAN

All set boss.

COLOR COMES BACK

LIAM

You know I wouldn't mind a little
skim-off-the-top, Sean.

Sean doesn't turn.

LIAM (CONT'D)

Stick around.
July's going to be busy. Casino
Night July 5th.

Liam exits.

INT. EMPTY CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Harsh angles of Christ on the Cross.

The Virgin Mary in shadow.

Frank is in the pew.

Coat pulled close.

Eyes red-rimmed.

His lips barely part. Each word catches on breath.

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

Beads slide through his fingers - then cinch in his fist,
cutting into skin.

A priest passes. Slows. Moves on.

No judgment.

No commentary.

Frank is alone.

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

FRANK (HARDER) (CONT'D)
Blessed art thou among women...

INT. CONFESSIONAL

A single shaft of light slices the screen. The mesh glows. No
priest. Only Frank.

FRANK (V.O.)
...and blessed is the fruit of thy
womb, Jesus...

Silence. Then-

SEAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
That's not gonna save you, Francis.

Frank flinches. Breath fogs the mesh. Empty.

SMASH CUT TO - DARK ALLEY - NIGHT

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

Sean leans in, kisses the sweat from Frank's brow.

Low, urgent breathing.

SEAN
(to Frank)
If we go... we don't look back.

Frank turns to leave.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT

Bright. Too bright.

Susan behind the wheel. Pillbox hat. Gloves. Perfect.

The engine hums.

Paul sings softly from the back seat. "Aaaaave Mariiiiiiia..."
Frank sits beside her. Immaculate suit. Rigid.

Across the street -

A Lincoln Continental.

Window cracked.

Smoke curling out.

"Ave Maria" begins to swell—not heavenly, but echoing, warped, underwater.

Susan parks. Frank steps out. Paul (8) appears beside him—tiny, radiant in a miniature white suit.

Frank kneels, adjusts Paul's collar.

Across the street: That Lincoln.

Engine off. Window cracked. Smoke like a serpent.

INT. CHURCH - MONTAGE BEGINS

White everywhere.

Shoes shuffle. Choir sways. Incense floats like fog.

Paul kneels. Mouth open. Trusting.

The Host placed on his tongue.

Across the aisle –

Sean watches.

Not with romance.

Not with guilt.

With resolve.

CUT TO:

Outside – the Lincoln Continental. Window cracked. Smoke curling.

CUT BACK:

Frank whispers a prayer.

Susan stares straight ahead.

Paul smiles, holy and small.

Sean's jaw tightens. Watching the boy.

Sean's knuckles – faint bruises.

Frank's wedding ring catching light.

The Lincoln outside. Still there.

Paul swallows the Host.

Amen.

EXT. CHURCH STEPS – AFTER MASS

Sunlight. Applause. Cameras. Paul glowing in white.

Frank and Sean share a look – soft, private.

Susan appears between them like she was always there.

SUSAN
Beautiful ceremony.

SEAN
He did good.

SUSAN
He did.

A photographer calls:

PHOTOGRAPHER
Callahan family!

Frank gestures to Sean.

FRANK
He's with us.

Half a second too fast.

Susan clocks it. She brushes lint off Frank's shoulder.
Ownership disguised as affection.

Sean steps in.

FLASH.

FREEZE FRAME:

Paul glowing.

Susan immaculate.

Frank fractured.

Sean just behind his shoulder.

Not in front. Not beside. Behind.

Susan sees it too.

She smooths Paul's jacket.

SUSAN
Stand tall. Don't lean.

Paul runs off.

Susan watches him go.

Sean steps beside her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
You coming by after?

SEAN
If I'm invited.

SUSAN
(smiles)
You always are.
(beat)
You're practically family.

Sean looks at her.

A beat too long.

SEAN
Careful with that word.

Silence.

She doesn't blink.

SUSAN
You're exactly where you're
supposed to be. On the edge.

Beat.

SEAN
He's got my eyes.

She walks away.

Sean watches Paul across the yard.

Church bells toll.

On the curb, a GIRL strums "Yesterday." Off-key. Unbothered.

Sean glances. She keeps playing.

Paul barrels back.

PAUL
Sean!

Sean crouches - eye level.

SEAN
Ice cream?

Paul explodes with joy.

Sean lifts him.

Frank doesn't move.

Cut.

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.

SUSAN enters.

Composed.

The panel slides open.

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

SUSAN
I don't feel peace, Father.

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.)
You sound troubled.
As Saint Francis reminds us - "Make
me a channel of your peace."

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

Silence.

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.

Eyes shut. Lips tight. But she doesn't respond.

She exits the confessional.

INT. CHURCH

She steps out into the vast silence of the church.

Her shadow long. Her spine straight. Something is clenched in her fist.

She walks down the center aisle.

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.)
 (softly, beginning the
 prayer)
 Hail Mary, full of grace...

Susan keeps walking. Faster now.

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 ...the Lord is with thee...

She doesn't kneel. Doesn't genuflect. Doesn't look back.

SUSAN
 (defiant)
 Amen.

INT. NAVE - CONTINUOUS

At the Holy Water font, she opens her hand - The rosary.

She drops it in.

FATHER DANIEL (O.S.)
 Blessed art thou among women...

The rosary sinks.

The beads spin.

The ripple widens-

The circle becomes- a roulette wheel

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

Roulette wheel spinning.

FRANK and SEAN at the dartboard.

Sean lets fly - BULL'S-EYE

Frank lights up – the Irish grin wide and reckless.

He grabs Sean in a bear hug, spins him.

Silent.

SLOW MOTION

Sean tosses an arm on Frank's shoulders – a moment suspended in joy.

SMASH CUT BACK – FULL SOUND SLAMMING IN END SLOW MOTION

Darts thud.

Glasses clink.

Bar roar hits like a train.

Frank and Sean break apart, catching their breath–

INT. CHURCH – AISLE – NIGHT

Stained-glass saints watch from above.

The crooked crucifix hangs.

Candle smoke curls toward the ceiling, slow and suffocating.

Susan stands at the doors.

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

She turns. Walks into the night.

VOICES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(overlapping, rising)
Bless me, Father... Hail Mary... Our
Father...

DIVE INTO THE WATER–

INT. HOLY WATER FONT – SURREAL – CONTINUOUS

The rosary sinks. Silver glints. Beads drift like sins.

Whispers swirl – childlike, dangerous.

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

The water bubbles–

CAMERA RISES THROUGH–

EXT. PUBLIC PARK – DAY – CONTINUOUS

A water fountain. The world above.

A radio plays: "I've been changed... yes, really changed..."

Paul devours a chocolate cone. Shirt untucked. Legs swinging under the metal chair.

Chocolate is already melting too fast.

Across the patio –

Ben and Brenden.

Work boots. Short sleeves. Beer bottles are sweating in the heat.

They're not looking at Sean.

They're not looking at Paul.

But they're there.

Sean sits opposite Paul. Sunglasses on. Cigarette burning low.

He adjusts Paul's collar.

SEAN
Slow down. It's not running from you.

Paul grins.

Across the way –

Ben lights a cigarette.

Brenden glances once.

Sean catches it.

A flicker.

He takes off his sunglasses.

Studies them.

They look away.

Back to their beers.

Sean puts the glasses back on.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You ever wake up in the car and not
know where you are?

PAUL
(grinning)
All the time.

SEAN
That's 'cause you sleep like the
dead.

Paul laughs – doesn't hear the weight in it.

Chocolate smears across his cheek.

Sean leans forward. Spits lightly into a napkin. Wipes Paul's
face.

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

SEAN
Nobody faster.

PAUL
Daddy says you got chased a lot.
Cops.

Sean freezes just a fraction.

SEAN
Your daddy says a lotta things.

PAUL
Is it true?

Sean studies him. A beat too long.

SEAN
I was fast enough.

PAUL
Faster than him?

Sean smiles.

SEAN
Nobody's faster than your old man.

PAUL
That's what I thought.

Sean watches him lick the cone. Chocolate on his chin again.

Sean wipes it off.

Paul hands the cone, not yet finished, dripping with chocolate, to Sean.

Sean's eyebrows furrow. He takes.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Bet you're too old to catch me now.

Paul BOLTS.

Sean stands there. Cone in hand. Chocolate melting.

He watches Paul run.

The cone drips onto his fingers.

He looks down.

Toss the cone in the garbage.

Wipes his hands absently on his jeans.

Then—

SEAN
(smiles)
Little bastard..

Someone clicks off the radio.

And runs.

CALLAHAN HOUSE - THAT EVENING

The kitchen hums with quiet.

Susan moves effortlessly—chopping onions, stirring the pot.
She radiates control.

Paul 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.
Daddy doesn't laugh much at home.

Susan forces a smile.

SUSAN
Paulie, you know Daddy is busy.

Paul nods, accepting it. Keeps drawing. Then—

PAUL
Mommy, you like Daddy, right?

Susan stands still.

She moves to sit beside him.

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. That's why Mommy holds
your hand.

Paul nods, satisfied. Continues drawing.

PAUL
That's what I thought.
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.

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.

SUSAN

You should always smile as much as you can.

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. Sean and I found a seashell. He showed me how to hold it up and hear the ocean.

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.
Always in charge!

Susan laughs.

Hollow. She pulls him into a hug, kisses his temple.

Paul pulls something from his pocket.

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

He holds out a seashell. Susan takes it. Holds it to her ear.

A smile breaks – soft, surprised. A single tear escapes.

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

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

FADE IN:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - NIGHT

Steel bones claw into the night sky.

Floodlights hum.

Cigarette smoke drifts in the thick summer heat.

Sean zips up his jeans, stepping from the shadows.

Frank follows.

They walk in silence.

INT. CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NIGHT

Blueprints and getaway routes sprawl across a worktable.

The O'Malley job.

Frank lights a cigarette, gaze fixed on the half-built skyline.

A long beat. Smoke curls upward.

FRANK
(low)
So the Casino night.

SEAN
Then we're out.

Sean studies him now.

Beat.

FRANK
Susan's got the priest circling.
Says Paul needs structure.

He taps ash. Doesn't look at Sean.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Like I'm the loose beam in the
house.

Sean smirks.

SEAN
You are.

A beat.

FRANK
Maybe I'm tired of pretending.

Now Sean steps closer.

SEAN
You pretending right now?

Silence.

FRANK
She talks about salvation like it's
a mortgage plan.

Sean huffs a laugh.

SEAN
Yeah.
Well, I did use the Lord's name in
that alley 5 minutes ago.

He closes in – quiet, defiant.

SEAN (CONT'D)
If heaven looks like this, you and
me, I'll start saying my rosary.

Frank doesn't move.

Doesn't step back.

Frank holds his gaze. Doesn't pull away.

FADE IN:

INT. O'MALLEY'S BAR – NIGHT BLACK & WHITE

Liam and Gallagher talk low in the corner

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

"Nixon calls protesters 'bums.'

'Love is free at Woodstock.'

GALLAGHER
Frank is a problem. Questions are
coming up.

LIAM
Then handle it.

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

'The war is still unwinnable.'

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

GALLAGHER
Sean?

SMASH CUT TO COLOR:

INT. CALLAHAN CONSTRUCTION TRAILER

Frank is on the phone.

FRANK
(to the caller)
We are on track.
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)
I just need your payment now for
the workers. No I can't float you
any longer.

Gallagher steps in.

FRANK (CONT'D)
(to the caller)
City Commissioner? Jimmy Dolan?
Good luck. Look, I'll be by in an
hour for the payment.

Frank hangs up the phone.

Silence.

GALLAGHER
Jimmy Dolan still missing.

Frank lights a cigarette.

FRANK
City's full of drunks.

GALLAGHER
His wife says he doesn't drink.

Beat.

FRANK
You know Kathleen? Christ, she's a
drunk.

GALLAGHER
He was last seen at O'Malley's.

Frank exhales smoke in Gallagher's face.

FRANK
That so?

Gallagher studies him.

GALLAGHER
Funny thing about missing men.
They create paperwork.

He steps closer. Thumps on Frank's chest.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
I don't like paperwork.

Beat.

The first Communion photo is on Frank's desk: Frank, Susan, Paul and Sean.

He looks at Frank. Frank doesn't say a word.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
I don't want your name on anything,
Frank.

Frank smirks.

FRANK
Then stop looking.

Gallagher holds him there.

Frank grins, all Sunday-suit devil.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Paddy, you're my boy.
If I knew, I'd be on my knees quick
as I say, Hail Mary, full of grace.

GALLAGHER
Follow me.

Gallagher studies him. Then turns, walking. Frank follows.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

City noise dulls.

Back meets brick.

GALLAGHER
Jimmy trusted you.

Frank holds his stare.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
He noticed things.

Beat.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
You and O'Connell.
Working late.

Frank says nothing.

Gallagher steps closer.

Not rushed.

Not heated.

Measured.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
You're getting heat at the
precinct.

A long beat.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
But I can make it disappear.

The implication hangs.

Gallagher reaches up – adjusts Frank's collar.

Too intimate.

FRANK
What are we doing?

GALLAGHER
Ensuring cooperation.

Breathing gets more controlled.

Beat.

The air tightens.

Gallagher steps in.

Frank doesn't step back.

COLOR FADES TO
GREY

Fog and smoke curl.

Gallagher studies him – reading every twitch.

He reaches up – brushes imaginary lint from Frank's lapel.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
You're shaking.

Frank isn't.

Gallagher leans in.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - COLOR RETURNS

Gallagher adjusts his cufflinks.

Frank leans against the wall. Eyes closed. Afterburn still on his skin.

Frank lights a cigarette. Breathes in deep. Exhales slow.

GALLAGHER

Relax. I'm not the priest.

(beat)

But I do take confessions.

Frank's hands slide into his coat pockets. When they come out - the rosary's in them.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)

I won't tell Sean how you pray.

SNAP.

Beads scatter.

Frank stares at them. He bends down to pick them up.

GALLAGHER

Secrets have a price.

FRANK

Send me the bill.

GALLAGHER

If Jimmy Dolan shows up?

Frank stands back up, and the two lock eyes.

Gallagher walks off.

Thunder Cracks. Rain pours.

FRANK

(low)

You'll be the first to know.

Frank reaches into his breast pocket. Takes out the napkin and train ticket.

SEAN (V.O.)

London's far enough

Frank unfolds it. Same stain. Same ink.

The wind lifts the edges.

He folds it tight. Puts it away.

INT. FRANK'S BATHROOM

Frank grips the sink. Faded tattoo on his arm – ghosts inked into skin.

Lathers up. Razor glides – scruff falling away until the moustache is clean, Magnum P.I. sharp.

From nowhere –

GALLAGHER (V.O.)
Relax. I'm not the priest.

The razor slips – KNICK. A thin red cut blooms along his jaw.

Susan appears in the mirror.

SUSAN
You've been different lately.

She steps in close, cotton ball and alcohol in hand.

Presses it to his skin – sting.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
(laughs a touch)
Come now, afraid of a little *sting*?

Frank winces.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE – DAY

Frank – clean-shaven moustache catching the light – lights a cigarette, dials the office phone

A CONSTRUCTION JOE calls over the noise:

JOE
Callahan – big night? That shave's
for somebody.

Frank smirks faintly, says nothing.

Officers show up at the construction site.

Dust. Noise. Men watching.

Murphy steps through steel beams.

MURPHY
We need a word.

Frank looks around. Men staring. Reputation on the line.

This makes it public.

Embarrassing.

Threatening.

FRANK
Ok give me a moment.

SPLIT SCREEN:

LEFT – Sean at the bar, half a smile. Whiskey untouched.

Phone rings.

SEAN
O'Connell.

RIGHT – Frank, voice tight over machinery.

FRANK
I'm jammed up. Can you grab Paulie?
Just an hour.

SEAN
You want me to pick up your kid?

Beat.

FRANK
Just until I'm done.

SEAN
(mocking)
I didn't sign up to be his father.

FRANK
You? A father? Christ.

A beat.

SEAN
Then what?

FRANK
A surprise.

Sean's eyes narrow. He thinks.

SEAN
What's he like when he's tired?

Frank pauses.

Softens - almost unconsciously.

FRANK
He hums to himself.

SEAN
Just like you.

Cut to:

INT. POLICE CAR - ENGINE RUNNING.

Frank in the passenger seat. Windows up. Engine hum.

MURPHY
You got a boy, don't you?

Frank still.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
How old is he now?

FRANK
What's that got to do with Jimmy?

MURPHY
Nothing. Just making conversation.
But who mentioned Jimmy?

Frank exhales.

Beat.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Jimmy's last entry was you.

FRANK
Jimmy owed me money.

MURPHY
Jimmy owed a lot of people.

A beat. Murphy studies him.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
If you hear from him...
you call me.

He hands him a card.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
We've known each other a long time,
Frankie.
If you're in something you don't
want to be in... now's the time to
say so.

Frank says nothing.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
Next time I ask, it won't be
conversation.

FRANK
You get the steaks?

Murphy doesn't smile.

MURPHY
Tell Susan I said hello.

Frank gets out.

Murphy watches him walk away.

He drives off.

Murphy drives off.

GALLAGHER (V.O.)
Murphy, what's your 20?

Murphy glances in the rearview.

MURPHY
Just finished with Callahan.

A beat.

MURPHY (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Nothing to report.

Silence.

GALLAGHER (V.O.)
Copy that.

Murphy kills the radio.

Drives on.

EXT. PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Stillness. Distant traffic hum.

A baseball arcs - wobbly.

Paul reaches. Misses.

It lands softly in the grass.

He picks it up. Stares at it.

PAUL
I don't know how.

Sean kneels beside him.

SEAN
One sec, Paulie.

Sean trots to the car.

Sean opens the trunk. Pulls out a smaller glove - worn, broken in.

Tosses it gently.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Try this one.

Paul slips it on. Wiggles his fingers.

A black sedan rolls past.

Too slow.

Sean doesn't look.

Paul does.

PAUL
That car's been around before.

The car continues.

Then turns the corner.

Sean lobs the ball - softer.

Paul misses.

The ball rolls past him.

Paul freezes. Shame flickers across his face.

SEAN

Easy.

Sean walks over. Hands him the ball.

SEAN (CONT'D)

We miss. We throw again.

He steps back.

This time -

Paul catches it.

They freeze.

Then laugh.

Ball. Glove. Ball. Glove.

The sun lowers.

EXT. PARK - CONTINUOUS

Two Black girls jump rope, chanting.

Boys slap a handball against pavement.

Life is loud there.

Cut back - Paul and Sean in their quieter rhythm.

Across the field - Frank has been standing there awhile.

Work clothes. Sleeves rolled.

Watching.

Paul waves.

Sean jogs to the car. Pulls out a glove.

He looks at Frank. A beat.

Tosses it.

Frank catches it.

Pro.

Frank and Sean hold each other's eyes a second too long.

A look passes between them.

Frank rolls his shoulder.

The rhythm shifts – three now.

Ball flying. Overthrows. Dives. Laughter.

PAUL
Bring on the heat!

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

Sean fires one back harder.

SEAN
That all you got?

THE BALL arcs in golden light.

Hold.

CUT TO BLACK.

The jump rope chant continues.

INT. CAR – OUTSIDE CONVENIENCE STORE – LATE AFTERNOON

Paul asleep in the backseat. Sun cutting across his face.

A baseball rests beside him.

Frank and Sean step out of the car.

Sean hesitates.

Looks back at Paul.

FRANK
He's fine.

They head inside.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE

Through the store window – Sean keeps glancing at the car.

Frank grabs beer. A chocolate milk.

At the register:

SEAN

You sure?

FRANK

Parents leave their kids in the car
all the time.

Beat.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You gotta trust people, Sean.

Sean looks through the glass.

The car looks very small.

SEAN

Yeah.

But he doesn't mean it.

INT. THE FOUR SEASONS BAR - THAT NIGHT

Frank and Sean walk in. Both cool. Frank with the new
shave.

They sit at the bar. Frank nods to the bartender.

Two whiskeys. Two beers delivered.

Frank raises the shot.

Clink.

Swallow.

SEAN

Who are you trying to impress?

Sean nods to the new moustache.

FRANK

Just one person.

They drink the beer. Frank nods. Two more shots poured.

Gallagher enters.

Sean spies Gallagher. Frank has no reaction.

GALLAGHER

Is this a business meeting?

FRANK
Your point.

GALLAGHER
Still no leads on Dolan. You
didn't call, so I guess you had no
news. Sean, anything?

Sean looks ahead.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
You two talk to each other, or are
words not needed?

FRANK
Like I said, if I hear anything-

GALLAGHER
Don't get comfortable, Callahan.

Gallagher leaves.

SEAN
I never liked him.

FRANK
You want dinner?.

SEAN
Let's cut to the surprise.

The down the shots. Frank tosses a \$20 on the bar.

They head to the elevator.

Hit the UP.

Liam in the corner, unnoticed. Watches.

EXT. ROOM 1250 FOUR SEASON.

Frank takes out the key. His hands tremble.

Sean takes the key. Opens the door.

Door shuts. Silence. Then-

FRANK (O.S.)
Surprise.

Through the thin wall we hear:

A laugh.

A kiss.

A thud against drywall.

Then—

Elevator dings.

Down the hallway—

Liam stands at the far end.

He doesn't move.

He doesn't knock.

He just watches the door.

Cut to black.

INT. HOTEL ROOM 1250

TV flicker. Nixon's voice bleeding through.

FRANK and SEAN stumble into frame. Breathless. Half-dressed.

They collapse onto the bed.

Nixon: "The silent majority—"

SEAN
It's changing.

FRANK
Everything always is.

SEAN
Not like this.

Beat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
They threw me out.
Put me in the back of a cruiser.
Cracked a rib for good measure.

He presses Frank's hand to the sparrow tattoo.

SEAN (CONT'D)
You don't bleed for something
optional.

Frank pulls his hand away.

FRANK
I've built something.

SEAN
So have I.

A beat.

FRANK
I've got a wife. A kid.

SEAN
You've got a fire.

Silence.

SEAN (LOWER) (CONT'D)
You just won't look at it.

They sit forehead to forehead.

Breathing.

SEAN (SOFT) (CONT'D)
When we get there it will be
different.

Frank pulls away first.

He heads to the bathroom.

The shower starts.

Sean stays on the bed.

On the TV – riot footage. Smoke. Sirens.

Nixon keeps talking.

Sean watches the screen.

Doesn't blink.

Cut.

NT. IRISH PUB – BACK ROOM – NIGHT

A match flares.

Light catches Sean on his knees.

Split lip. Swollen eye.

Concrete floor.

LIAM
Never took you for a fairy, Sean.

SEAN
Never took you for a coward.

CRACK – boot to ribs.

Sean folds. No sound.

LIAM
Your father built something.
You throw it away for what?

Sean spits blood.

SEAN
At least I'm not hiding.

LIAM
Your mother drank in this bar.
Cried in that corner.
(leans closer)
You think she'd recognize you now?

LIAM (CONT'D)
(low vicious)
What an Irish whore she was. I had
her, you know. In the back of this
bar. Maybe more than once. (beat)
Christ, I hope you're not mine.

Liam grabs Sean's wrist. Yanks up the sleeve. The sparrows.

Another blow. Sean hits the floor. Liam leans in – low,
vicious.

LIAM (CONT'D)
She'd be ashamed of having a bugger
for a son.

Liam turns to leave.

Sean EXPLODES – off the floor, tackles Liam from behind. They
crash into tables. Bottles shatter. Sean's fists pound – One.
Two. Three.

He's dragged off. Still fighting. Liam wipes his mouth.
Smiles through the blood.

Silence. The bar stills. Sean gets up, grabs his coat.

SEAN
Never again.

He walks out. Never looks back.

BLACK.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Small. Sparse.

A bed. A dresser. A suitcase already packed.

Sean wraps his ribs. Winces. Keeps going.

Two train tickets on the table.

He picks them up.

Studies them.

Doesn't smile.

Sets them down.

Lights a cigarette.

Silence.

He waits.

Nothing.

The cigarette burns.

Burns.

Burns.

The ember glows—

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S CONSTRUCTION TRAILER - NEXT DAY - 5:00 P.M.

A PHONE RINGS.

Blueprints spread across the desk.

Coffee gone cold.

The phone keeps ringing.
Frank stares at it.
Lets it ring one beat too long.
Then picks up.

FRANK
Callahan.

GALLAGHER (O.S.)
Frankie.

FRANK
(irritated)
What.

Beat.

GALLAGHER (O.S.)
It's Sean.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON STREET - MINUTES LATER

A truck screeches to a stop - tires smoke.

CAMERA POV - WAIST DOWN: DRIVER'S DOOR FLIES OPEN.

BOOTS HIT PAVEMENT.

Door SLAMS.

From a stoop-

GUY ON STOOP
Hey, you can't just paaahk there!

Frank, already moving-

FRANK
Piss off.

INT. LIAM'S CLUB - NIGHT

Smoke hangs.

Low laughter.

Eyes track the door.

Then—

DOOR BANGS OPEN.

Liam, black eye, reclines in his booth, flanked by muscle. Cigars. Scotch. Steel within reach.

LIAM
You look tense, Frank. Sit—

Frank grabs the nearest glass— SMASH — it explodes against the wall. The room freezes.

Frank crosses in two steps, hauls Liam halfway across the table by his collar.

The boys rise. Hands hover over guns. Nobody blinks.

FRANK
(low, lethal)
Tell me why I shouldn't scatter
your teeth across this table.

Liam doesn't flinch. Sits back slow. The grin creeps in — smooth, knowing.

LIAM
Maybe you're holding onto something
you don't need.

Frank's jaw tightens. Then—

FRANK
You touch Sean again, I bury you.

A ripple of shock. Wolves scent blood. Liam's grin dies — replaced by something colder.

LIAM
So there it is.

Frank's fist connects. Liam's chair goes over.

BRAWL ERUPTS

Chairs flip. Knuckles split.

Blood.

Then Gallagher enters.

GALLAGHER
(calm, razor sharp)
Frank. Let go.

Frank's knuckles drip. His breath is glass shards. Liam, grinning through blood, turns to Gallagher—

LIAM
See, Frank? You're already one of us.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - CONTINUOUS

Gallagher SLAMS Frank into brick.

GALLAGHER
(low)
You think this ends well for you?

Frank spits blood. Smirks.

FRANK
Next time, don't stand in my way.

GALLAGHER
Jimmy vanished. City Hall's asking questions. You don't see the noose yet — but it's there.

Frank bolts off the brick and knocks Gallagher well out of his way.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. DINER - NIGHT

Never closes. Neon buzzes. Coffee burns.

Sean sits alone. Cigarette burning. Untouched.

The bell JINGLES.

Frank limps in. Split cheek. Swollen eye.

Slides into the booth.

FRANK
Cat fight.

SEAN
Must've been feral.

Beat.

WAITRESS drops coffee. Ice.

Leaves.

Silence.

Frank presses ice to his face.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Will Paulie be ok with this?

Frank looks up now.

Sean pulls a napkin. Sketching.

Boxes. Arrows. A rectangle labeled: BASEMENT SAFE.

SEAN (LOW) (CONT'D)
July fourth. Liam's "Casino Night."
Five hundred grand. Maybe more. I
have the safe combo. In. Out. Eight
minutes.

Frank studies it.

FRANK
And then?

SEAN
We disappear in the noise. Logan by
midnight.

Beat.

FRANK
You sure?

SEAN
No.

Beat.

SEAN (CONT'D)
I'm done waiting.

Thunder cracks.

Rain slams the windows.

Frank looks at the napkin.

Long beat.

He folds it carefully.

Slips it into his coat.

FRANK
Once we walk -

SEAN
-we don't walk back.

They hold that.

Frank tosses cash down.

They step into the storm.

Hold on:

Two coffee cups. Steam fading.

Rain streaking neon red across the glass.

CUT.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - COSTUME PARTY

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

Susan sits at her vanity. Regal. Perfect. Lamplight catches the stillness in her face - a woman moments from turning to stone.

Behind her - Frank 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. Show
it.

Frank freezes - just a beat too long. Then buttons anyway.

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. Rolls a sleeve up herself. Pauses.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Wait here.

She leaves. Frank exhales – tight, coiled.

ANGLE – THE MIRROR

As he moves, a crucifix catches in the reflection – small, tarnished, nailed above the door. Below it, on the wall, a commemorative plate with JFK and Jackie frozen in their perfect pose.

A reminder: faith, country, and the marriage that never cracks.

Susan re-enters with the shears.

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

Susan's laugh is light – too light.

SUSAN

You think I'd stab you?

(smiles)

I'd have to answer for that.

(beat)

You already will.

Her fingers slide down his forearm – slow, deliberate – stopping on the sparrow tattoo.

She presses her thumb into it.

SUSAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)

...just not sure I'm ready for such a commitment as Hell.

SNIP. Fabric falls. His arms are bare now – carved, tense, exposed. She studies him. Not admiring – assessing.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Now that's my Huntsman.

(beat)

But hunters... they always think they're in control.

Frank says nothing.

One last glance – not at Frank, but into the mirror.

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 grazing his wrist. Frank
 tenses. She stops. Lingers. Leans in. A whisper. A bullet.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
 Frank... I know.
 (beat, almost kind)
 If you think he saves you...
 You're mistaken.

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

EXT. BOSTON STREETS - LATER THAT NIGHT - WALKING HOME

Susan - Snow White, steel in her spine, blood on her lips.
 Frank - the Huntsman. Leather belt, sleeves rolled - no place
 left to hide. Paul - already dozing in Frank's arms.

They pass the two girls holding hands.

Susan sees it.

Frank sees that she sees it.

The picture of perfection. Until-

SUSAN
 (flat, cutting)
 Break it off with Sean. Now.

Frank doesn't blink.

Frank adjusts Paul. Keeps walking.

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

They walks on.

A drunk in a rumpled suit stumbles past. Another man leans in
 a doorway, taking a long pull from a bottle.

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

Frank exhales – long, heavy. Home in sight.

They pass a church on the corner. Stained-glass windows glow faintly from within – a crucifix lit in blood-red and gold. The muffled sound of an organ leaks into the street.

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

Silence.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We were raised Catholic.
(beat)
So act like it.

Frank's hand slips from Paul's back... rests on the axe handle.

They reach the brownstone.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Door clicks shut. Susan takes Paul, head limp on her shoulder.

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

They disappear down the hall.

Frank stands in the dark.

He sets the axe down.

THUD.

The sound lingers in the hardwood.

He turns the radio dial.

Static.

"...protests continue in Washington--"

Static.

Then—"Sugar... ah honey honey..."

Bright. Innocent. Synthetic.
Frank leans back against the wall.
Smoke in his throat.
His hand drifts to his coat pocket.
He feels the napkin.
Doesn't pull it out.
The song continues.
He almost smiles.
Almost.
Cut to black.

EXT. ROOFTOP - LATE NIGHT

Hot summer air across the rooftop.
Frank stands near the edge. Not on it.
City lights below.
A cigarette burns low between his fingers.
Sean stands a few feet back.

SEAN

You gonna say something, or just
let the wind do it?

FRANK

What's left to say?

SEAN

You don't get to check out.

FRANK

Who said anything about checking
out?

Sean steps closer.

SEAN

You're not built for that.

FRANK

You don't know what I'm built for.

Beat.

SEAN
Francis I know you?

Frank turns now.

FRANK
Every time I look at Paul... I see
you. And I see me.
And I see what I did to him.

Silence.

SEAN
You didn't do anything to him.

FRANK
I did.

Beat.

FRANK (CONT'D)
I let myself want something. This.
You.

SEAN
Then want it.

FRANK
You don't get it.

SEAN
Then make me.

Long silence.

FRANK
(quiet)
I blame you for everything.

Sean nods once.

SEAN
Say that again?

Beat.

Sean turns to leave.

FRANK
You walk away now—

SEAN
I'm not walking away.
It's always you and me.
Right now, its all about you.
I need air.

FRANK
You got a whole rooftop.

He exits.

Frank stands alone.

Wind blows.

He looks at the city.

He just stands there.

Cut.

FADE OUT.

INT. SEAN'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

Dim. Still.

Cigarette butts in the ashtray.

Sean stands at the window.

Eyes bloodshot.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOSTON STREET

A Berklee student strums.

"The long and winding road..."

Sean listens. Moves on.

INT. TRAVEL AGENCY - DAY

CONNIE
London? Just you?

SEAN
Three. Two adults. One kid.

CONNIE
Return date?

SEAN
One way.

He pays in cash.

Across the street – a black Lincoln idles.

Inside: Susan. Liam.

Through the glass: Sean pockets his receipt.

Susan watches.

Still.

LIAM
We good?

Susan nods.

Once.

Sean steps outside. Lights a cigarette.

The Berkeley kid is still playing.

FADE IN:

EXT. BOSTON BAR – EARLY EVENING

Sean sits with a pint. Unfinished.

"Shots!" A glass is shoved into his hand.

He sets it down.

Across the room – Liam watches.

Later–

LIAM
You look busy.

SEAN
Liam.

Silence.

Sean stands. Walks out.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Summer heat.

Sean lights a cigarette.

SEAN
Three days.

He exhales.

In the window reflection - Liam behind him.

LIAM
Where you headed?

Sean doesn't turn.

SEAN
Not your concern.

LIAM
We got the Casino Night just around
the corner. I need my guy there.

SEAN
You guy?

He walks.

Liam stays where he is.

Watching.

FADE TO BLACK.

Susan dries a plate. Methodical.

FRANK grabs his coat.

SUSAN
Are you going somewhere?

Frank doesn't answer.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
I saw your suitcase in the spare
room.

Beat.

SUSAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
You packed your Old Spice.

That lands.

FRANK
It's work.

SUSAN
No.

Beat.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
It's somewhere.

Silence.

She keeps drying the same plate.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
Just don't make me lie to Paul.

She sets the plate down.

Doesn't look at him.

ON SCREEN: JULY 4, 1970

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Dim light.

A guitar. Soft. Careful.

Frank sits barefoot, undershirt, playing.

Paul appears in the doorway. Hair messy. Sleep still on him.

PAUL
Daddy? You still remember how?

Frank smiles - smaller than it used to be.

FRANK
Some things stick.

Paul climbs up beside him.

FRANK (CONT'D)
It's a new one.

He plays. Rough voice. Honest.

Behind them - Susan in the doorway. Still. Listening.

PAUL
Sean says you used to sing better
than him.

Frank falters – just a breath. Then keeps playing.

The song ends.

Quiet.

PAUL (CONT'D)
That was amazing.

He throws his arms around Frank.

Susan claps softly.

SUSAN
It's been a while.

They fold into a family hug.

Frank freezes in it. Like he doesn't deserve it.

He pulls back.

Looks at Paul.

FRANK
I love you.

Paul grins.

PAUL
I know, Daddy.

Susan turns away – just for a second. Collects herself.

Frank sets the guitar down.

His fingers linger on it.

Susan watches him.

He adjusts the tuning peg – unnecessarily.

He still doesn't look at her.

Morning light grows.

Cut.

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - KITCHEN

Bacon sizzles. Coffee pours.

Frank flips pancakes, humming softly.

Paul swings his legs under the chair.

Susan adjusts her earrings in the reflection of the window.

The phone rings.

Susan answers.

SUSAN

Hello?

Beat.

Her posture changes – almost imperceptibly.

LIAM (O.S.)

We should talk.

Susan glances at Frank and Paul.

SUSAN

Where?

Frank laughs with Paul in the background.

Susan listens.

Then:

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Alright.

She hangs up.

FRANK O.S

Come on Paulie. Time for the beach.

PAUL

Yeah!

INT. CAR

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.

Sean hands two envelopes to Frank.

Sean hands him the tickets.

Frank reads:

BOSTON → LONDON

July 5, 1970.

FRANK
You're serious.

SEAN
Always.

The cars arrives at the beach they get out with a cooler, chairs, and towels. Paul starts to run to the beach.

SEAN (CONT'D)
Stop there young man. Aren't you forgetting something?

PAUL
Dad, I am so little.

Sean looks at Frank like, "You better back me up."

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

Low lamp. No windows. Smoke suspended in stale air.

LIAM
Your husband's in deep.

SUSAN
He always is.

Liam studies her.

LIAM
The man he's running with...

He's planning something.

She doesn't react. That tells him enough.

LIAM (CONT'D)
You want this to end?

A long beat.

SUSAN
My son is not to be touched.

Liam leans back. Measures her.

LIAM
I'm not a monster.

Beat.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Your boy won't even know it happened.

A flicker. She hears protection. He means something else.

Silence stretches.

SUSAN
Till death do us part.

A breath.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
It's time.

Liam nods once.

LIAM
And the friend?

Now she looks at him directly.

No tremor.

SUSAN
No half measures.

LIAM
After tomorrow?

Silence.

Susan meets his eyes.

SUSAN
We'll see who's left standing..

Cut.

EXT. BOSTON BEACH - CONTINUOUS

PAUL
I bet I can outswim you!

SEAN
With those arms? Doubt it.

Frank watches.

FRANK
Heart's good. Just don't let it run
you.

Sean glances at him.

SEAN
It already does.

EXT. BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

Golden light. Waves folding in.

Paul runs into the surf - fearless. Laughing.

Frank and Sean walk behind him. Close. Not touching.

A long silence.

SEAN
It's not a plan anymore.

Frank keeps watching Paul.

FRANK
It's the last chance.

Sean studies him.

Paul turns, waving.

PAUL (O.S.)
You guys coming or what?!

Frank smiles.

Then back to Sean.

FRANK
Tomorrow, we're gone.

Sean exhales.

SEAN
Fish 'n' chips for dinner tomorrow.

Frank holds his gaze.

They walk toward Paul.

EXT. BOSTON ESPLANADE - NIGHT

Fireworks bloom over the Charles.

Paul stands between them, head tipped back, eyes wide.

Red. Gold. White.

He doesn't look down.

Frank lowers him from his shoulders.

PAUL
Whoa!

Paul stands between them.

Frank takes one hand. Sean takes the other.

BOOM.

FRANK
Let me ask you something.

SEAN
If this is about confession—

FRANK
It's not.

Beat.

FRANK (CONT'D)
If things go sideways...

Sean goes still.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You take Paul.

SEAN
She'd never—

FRANK
You don't ask.
You go.

Sean studies him.

A firework explodes white above them.

SEAN
(he laughs to convince
himself)
Nothing's happening.

Beat.

FRANK
Just promise me.

Long silence.

SEAN
Yeah.

Another BOOM.

Paul squeezes both their hands.

Unaware.

The sky burns red and gold.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - NIGHT

Engine hum. City lights flicker across the windshield.

Paul asleep in the backseat - curled up, blanket tucked around him, peaceful.

Sean lights a cigarette. Takes a long drag.

FRANK

It's not too late, you know.

Sean studies him.

SEAN

For what?

Frank's grip tightens on the wheel.

FRANK

To turn around.

A beat.

Sean looks in the rearview mirror - at Paul.

SEAN

It was always too late, Frankie.

Frank swallows.

No argument.

He keeps driving.

INT. BLACK SEDAN - NIGHT

Steam drifting past the windows.

Liam opens the manila envelope.

Inside:

SEAN O'CONNELL.

PAUL CALLAHAN.

He studies Paul's photo a fraction longer.

Closes the envelope.

No expression.

LIAM
Take the back way.

The car turns.

EXT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Frank carries Paul - asleep - blanket tucked, teddy bear under his arm.

He opens the rear passenger door - the side facing away from the house.

He lays Paul down gently.

Kisses his forehead.

Closes the door.

He circles to the driver's side.

Across the street - a black sedan idles. Headlights off.

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - WINDOW

Susan stands in the dark.

From her POV:

She sees Frank's silhouette. She sees the driver's side door open. She sees him get in.

She cannot see the rear seat.

She sees the black sedan.

Her attention shifts to it.

The sedan slowly rolls forward.

Her eyes stay on the sedan.

Frank's car pulls away - unnoticed.

The black sedan turns the opposite direction.

Susan exhales.

Control restored.

She turns from the window.

INT. PAUL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Moonlight across the bed.

Blanket folded back.

Empty.

She stops.

She touches the pillow.

Still warm.

Her eyes flick - calculating.

Window. Street. The sedan.

Frank's car.

The direction it turned.

A flicker of dread.

She whispers:

SUSAN

No...

She moves fast now - Back to the window.

INT. CALLAHAN HOUSE - WINDOW

She looks out.

The street is empty.

The sedan gone.

Frank's car gone.

Her breath changes.

SUSAN

(under breath)

He doesn't know.

Now she runs.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Paul!

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Frank's car turns left.

The black sedan turns right.

EXT. O'MALLEY'S BAR - NIGHT

Streetlamp flickers. Neon buzz hums like a dying insect.

Frank pulls up. Engine idles.

FRANK

We head straight to Logan from
here. Backpack's in the trunk.

Sean clocks that. Small nod.

He steps out. Cigarette low. Dressed in black.

Checks the gun. Quiet click.

Frank looks in the rearview.

Paul asleep. Curled. Teddy bear under his chin.

Frank hesitates.

SEAN

He'll sleep through a hurricane.

Frank doesn't answer.

Sean walks back to the car. Checks the doors. Locked.

Hand rests on the roof a second.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Ten minutes.

FRANK

Five.

They move toward the bar.

Hold on the car.

Paul breathing softly.

INT. O'MALLEY'S BASEMENT

Damp stone walls, a single light swinging overhead.

Shadows dance across stacks of cash.

Frank and Sean move fast.

They move fast.

Bags fill.

They're out.

They step outside. Breathing hard. F

Then— A COCKED GUN.

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND O'MALLEY'S - NIGHT

Paul. Bound. Gun at his temple.

Frank and Sean stop.

Liam stands there. Calm.

Not wild. Not frantic.

Measured.

He looks at Frank first.

Then Sean.

Then—

A beat.

He looks past them.

Almost as if someone else is there.

We don't see Susan.

But we feel her.

Liam grins.

LIAM

Took you long enough.

Frank sees Paul.

A beat.

Everything drains.

FRANK (ROARING)
Let him go.

Liam tilts his head, feigning sympathy.

Headlights flood the alley.

A car door opens.

Susan steps out.

Sees him.

Stops.

Frank's breathing turns shallow. The walls close in.

Paul looks at Frank.

No words.

Just eye contact.

Then—

Liam raises his hand. A nod.

FRANK (CONT'D)
No—

Gallagher steps out of shadow.

Gun steady. No shaking.

GALLAGHER
You should've listened.

Frank stares. Realizes.

GALLAGHER (CONT'D)
I asked you once...
You think this ends well?

Beat.

Gunshot.

Frank's face.

Paul jerks – like he tripped. He doesn't even understand.

He hits the ground.

Silence.

Liam looks at Susan. He just holds his stare into her eyes.

Then–

He looks at Frank.

Bare hands.

No hesitation.

Frank lunges at Liam.

SFX: Scene sounds come back in.

Shouting.

Gunfire.

Chaos.

Then –

Smoke catches sunlight.

A casing spins.

Frank turns toward Sean –

Mid-turn –

Impact.

No slow motion.

No dramatic fall.

His legs just stop working.

Sean rapid-fires.

Callaghan drops.

Other thugs drop like dominoes.

Sean points the gun at Liam.

Click.

Click.

Click.

He keeps pulling the trigger.

Nothing.

Looks at Frank – bleeding.

The napkin in his hand.

Liam adjusts his cuff.

Looks at Susan.

A beat.

LIAM
(to Susan)
I said your boy wouldn't know it
happened.

Susan processes that.

Her lips part – but she says nothing.

Her hand reaches toward Liam – not in grief – in accusation.

He's already turned.

Walks.

His men fall in behind him.

No rush.

No shouting.

Just boots fading.

Cut to:

Paul's Teddy Bear lies in the dirt.

Susan crawls to Paul. Blood soaks her dress.

Paul coughs, eyes fluttering.

PAUL (WHISPERING, WEAK SMILE)
Da-

Susan presses her hands to his chest. Holding. Rocking.

SUSAN
(bleeding to the
background)
You are. Stay with me, Paulie.

Paul blinks.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We'll go to the beach in the
morning.

Paul smiles.

His eyes drift.

Susan keeps rocking him.

A beat too long.

Then—

Stillness.

SUSAN (CONT'D)
We'll find the white ones you like.

She wipes sand off his cheek. Even though there is no sand.

But Paul is already gone.

Sean cradles Frank. Blood mixing on the concrete. Frank
blinks up at him, barely there.

SEAN
Frank—

Frank tries to speak, but the words snag in his throat. His
fingers twitch at his coat pocket.

Sean notices — reaches in.

Frank collapsing.

Sean catches him.

Sleeves ride up in the struggle.

Both swallows visible in the same shot.

No comment. No hold. No music cue change.

Just there.

And then Frank's hand falls.
Pulling out the folded napkin.
Coffee-stained. Soft with wear.
He opens it: THE PRICE YOU PAY... LONDON. BERLIN. L.A.
Blood hits the paper.
Frank's lips move – barely.

FRANK
(weak)
You shoulda gone.

SILENCE

Susan is on the ground with Paul.
Sean is on the ground with Frank.
Then—
Sean looks up first.
Susan lifts her head.
She rises.
Her legs simply don't respond.
They see each other.
No nod. No tears shared. No forgiveness.
Hold it for one beat too long.
Small.
Late.
Alone.
Somewhere in the distance—
A church bell.
Single toll.
Smoke clearing.
Sirens in the distance.

He looks at: The napkin. The dead future. The empty gun.

Susan holding Paul.

Sean stands over Frank's body.

He takes the napkin of dream escape and puts it into his pocket.

He looks at Paul.

Then at Susan.

She is still rocking.

Still whispering to someone who isn't there.

Sean turns.

Walks.

Murphy's cruiser pulls up slow.

Murphy steps out.

Doesn't block him.

Doesn't draw a weapon.

MURPHY
You look like hell.

Sean doesn't answer.

Murphy studies him.

MURPHY (CONT'D)
They'll be looking for somebody to
blame.

Beat.

Sean looks at him.

Murphy gets back in the car.

Drives off.

Sean keeps walking.

He gets smaller.

Smaller.

Almost gone.

A church bell tolls.

Once.

Cut to black.

Silence.

Hold it.

Then – faintly –

“One less bell to answer. One less egg to fry.”

THE END