

STONE'S THUNDER

Written by  
Owen Maxwell

49 Grove Street  
Clinton, MA  
01510  
(978)660-4577  
omaxwell111@gmail.com

WGA# 1507183

FADE IN:

EXT. BOSTON (MA) - CITYSCAPE - DAWN

The city of BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS lies asleep in the quiet purgatory between night and morning. The jagged skyline is dark and dreary, unwelcoming in the dim morning light.

ART (V.O.)

Looking back on it all now, I can honestly say, with both regret and certainty, that I never really knew my father.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON (MA) - NEIGHBORHOOD (CONTINUOUS)

Like the rest of the city, a working-class neighborhood lies silent in the early morning hours. Modest row-houses line the narrow street. The brown-brick homes are small and simple. Their front walkways are cracked and dirty.

A BOY walks up the street, pitching newspapers onto little crooked porches, as the sun creeps over the horizon.

ART (V.O.)

In my defense, the old man never made it easy on me -- we lived on opposite coasts, separated by the entire continental United States; a world apart from one another. The little time we did spend together was anything but enlightening.

EXT. SOUTH BOSTON (MA) - CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

The sun has risen, peeking over the skeletal foundation of a half-constructed building. The building sits in a deserted lot, on a gloomy street.

The block appears to have once been a booming industrial strip, but now the unused structures slouch in disrepair.

ART (V.O.)

Tom McNally was a human iceberg; the ominous peak of a mountain you never saw. A man of few words and almost zero outward emotion...

PICKUP TRUCKS ROLL into the lot and park.

A CONSTRUCTION CREW emerges from the different trucks. They are a hardened bunch of honest, blue-collar laborers.

ART (V.O. CONT'D)  
 ...An insoluble riddle, wrapped in  
 ignominy and shrouded in secrecy.

A FOREMAN emerges from one of the trucks. He retrieves a clipboard from the truck's cab and begins looking it over.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - BUILDING - MORNING

The Foreman walks alone, along the base of a building. The morning sun is bright. He cups a hand over his eyes, as he tries to read his clipboard.

He moves under the shade of a scaffolding rig -- a large metal lattice that climbs up along the face of the four-story building. He lowers his clipboard, blinking as his eyes adjust to the new light.

The Foreman spots something lying on the ground ahead of him. He walks toward it, trying to make out what it is...

He STOPS DEAD in his tracks.

ART (V.O.)  
 And the worst part about not being  
 able to solve that riddle -- was  
 the day I learned I never would.

A BODY lies lifeless, a few yard from The Foreman's feet.

EXT. SEATTLE (WA) - AIRPORT DROP OFF - MORNING

It is a beautiful spring morning, outside SEA-TAC INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. Sunlight glimmers off car windows as they pass. Passengers bustle by with carry-on bags, hurrying to make their flights.

A YOUNG MAN stands on the curb, amidst the chaos. Two bulging suitcases lay at his feet... ARTHUR "ART" McNALLY (mid20s) is tall and imperially slim; meticulously groomed and dressed, almost to the point of distraction... He seems upset.

A WOMAN emerges from a Mercedes, idling alongside the curb, and steps onto the sidewalk next to Art... LOIS (late40s) is a tall, striking woman; graceful and refined.

She flashes her son a small, sympathetic smile.

LOIS  
Is Charlie still picking you up  
from Logan?

ART  
As far as I know.

Lois taps one of Art's suitcases with the tip of her toe.

LOIS  
You sure are bringing a lot of  
stuff with you.

ART  
I'm probably going to be out there  
a while -- somebody has to sort out  
all of dad's stuff.  
(beat, frowns)  
You know, this would be a lot  
easier if you'd just come with me.

Lois seems hesitant.

LOIS  
Arthur, your father and I... Tom  
was a good man, but he...  
(gathers herself)  
This is something that you need to  
do alone. It's best that I just  
stay here.

Art shakes his head indignantly. He snatches his bags and  
marches into the terminal. Lois watches her son leave, no  
longer able to hide the concern painted across her face.

INT. LOGAN AIRPORT (MA) - BAGGAGE CLAIM - NIGHT

The baggage claim is mobbed with people. A MAN stands off to  
the side, scanning the crowd for someone... CHARLIE (50s) is  
a scruffy little man, with 'working-class townie' written all  
over him. He holds up a SIGN that reads: "AUTHOR MCNALLY".

Someone taps Charlie on the shoulder. He turns around to find  
Art standing behind him. Art motions at Charlie's sign.

ART  
I see your spelling hasn't gotten  
any better -- unless you're waiting  
for some writer named McNally?

Charlie looks down and realizes his mistake. He chuckles.

CHARLIE

Nope. Don't know no writers named McNally -- just a smartass kid.

Art and Charlie smile at one another.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

You shot up a couple feet since the last time I seen ya -- what's it been now, ten years?

ART

Maybe more.

Charlie nods. He takes one of Art's suitcases from him.

CHARLIE

Well, c'mon, I bet you're tired. Let's get outta this hot fucking airport and into a cool bar, huh?

INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

The tiny pub is all but empty. NEON SIGNS HUM in the window. A few Regulars nurse beers at a sticky counter, while A LARGE BARTENDER wipes down mugs behind the bar.

Art and Charlie sit at a side table, away from everybody else, catching up over a couple bottles of beer.

CHARLIE

Cops think he musta been up on the scaffolding and lost his footing. They say it looks like he musta fell the full four stories.

ART

No one saw it happen?

CHARLIE

Everybody was gone by then. We had a busy day down the shop, so Tommy didn't get onsite 'til late. No one found him 'til the next morning.

Art frowns.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

How's your mother holding up?

ART

She's doing alright.

CHARLIE  
She likes it out there in Seattle?

ART  
I guess so.

CHARLIE  
What's the new husband like?

ART  
Dave? ...He's ok.

CHARLIE  
Your father was saying you moved  
back in with them, or something?

ART  
Just for a little while...

Art seems embarrassed. Charlie changes the subject.

CHARLIE  
You get a chance to talk to your  
father's attorney at all?

ART  
Briefly.

CHARLIE  
Yeah? What'd he have to say?

ART  
Well, apparently, my dad left me  
everything in his will... But I  
don't have any use for his tools,  
or the shop, or anything... So if  
you want, I'd rather just sign all  
that stuff over to you.

Charlie smiles and pulls a cigarette from his shirt pocket.

CHARLIE  
Well, you got your daddy's heart,  
that's for damn sure.

ART  
Uh, Charlie... I don't think you're  
allowed to smoke in here...

CHARLIE  
I know the owner...

Art shrugs, as Charlie lights his cigarette.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I bet you're smart like your old man, too, huh? Tommy was a helluva smart guy. Always reading. I can remember this one time he --

BARTENDER

(interrupting)

Charlie! How many times I gotta tell ya -- no smoking inside the bar, goddamnit!

Art and Charlie turn around to see the Bartender scowling at them from across the room... Art smirks at him.

ART

I thought you knew the owner?

CHARLIE

I do... I don't know who that big motherfucker is.

Charlie waves apologetically and rubs his cigarette out.

ART

Anyway, Mr. O'Neill said we could stop by tomorrow, and I can sign everything over to you then.

Charlie frowns. He seems reluctant to tell Art something.

CHARLIE

I appreciate you thinking of me, kid, but I'm afraid I'm gonna have to pass on your offer.

ART

What? Why?

CHARLIE

Aw, I'm getting outta here. I got a cousin down Charlotte, who's been holding a job for me for a while now... And after all this, I think it's 'bout time I make that move.

(frowns)

There's nothing here for me no more. Nothing but ghosts and bad memories.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - NIGHT

Art and Charlie rattle down the road in a rickety jalopy. The streets outside are dark. Charlie smokes a cigarette as he drives. CLASSIC ROCK CRACKLES through the blown speakers.

Art stares out the side window...

ART'S POV

The city outside has been crippled by recession. The houses slouch in disrepair. The streets are lined with potholes and littered with cigarette butts... It's a depressing scene.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT (LATER)

Art stands alone, at the bottom of Tom's driveway.

The property lays dark. A little garage sits at the end of the driveway, tucked behind a modest two-story home. An old pickup truck is parked out front. "MCNALLY BROS WELDING" is scrawled across its side in red paint.

Art smiles, as he looks the place over.

INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - MORNING

Art sits at a desk amidst a chaotic office. Diplomas hang crooked on the wall. Books spill off the sides of a bookshelf. Folders poke out of an overstuffed filing cabinet.

Like his office, COREY O'NEILL (60s) epitomizes small-time, defense attorney. He is high-strung and over-worked.

COREY

So you wanna sell the place?

Grey hairs bob atop Corey's swollen head, as he tries to sort through a stack of papers strewn across his desk.

ART

Yeah. I thought that --

COREY

(cutting him off)

'Cause I know a couple people we can talk to... Cheap, too. Won't hold us over a barrel.

ART

Alright. That sounds --



COREY

I'm not gonna sit here and lie to you, though, kid -- economy's shit right now. Even if we put it on the market at a good price, it's still gonna take some time to sell.

ART

That's fine. I'm in no hurry.

COREY

Oh, which reminds me...

Corey slides a piece of paper across the desk at Art.

COREY (CONT'D)

I heard back from the parole board up at Concord.

Art picks up the sheet and looks it over... "REQUEST DENIED" is printed across the top in red ink... Art frowns.

ART

They must take drunk driving pretty seriously around here, huh?

COREY

How do you figure that?

ART

I don't know. I just didn't think it'd be a big deal to let a guy serving time for a DUI to --

COREY

(interrupting)

Wait... Who are we talking about?

Art seems confused by the question.

ART

My Uncle Rick...

COREY

Your Uncle Rick??

Corey stops shuffling papers and stares at Art.

COREY (CONT'D)

You think your Uncle is serving ten years for a DUI??

ART

Well, it was his third one, right?

COREY

Shit, I don't care if it was his thirtieth one -- ten years?!

ART

That's what I was told.

Corey shrugs and goes back to sorting his documents.

COREY

Well, then I guess you were told wrong.

ART

What's he in there for then?

COREY

For trafficking. Staties caught Rick out on I-90 with two kilos of Meth stashed in his truck...

ART

Trafficking?!

Art's face drops. Corey chuckles and nods.

COREY

I swear that crazy bastard was trying to work me into an early grave. Between him and Tommy...

(rubs head)

Well, let's just say the McNally Brothers are the reason I've got a BMW in my garage, and all these grey hairs on my fucking head!

Art can't believe what he's hearing.

ART

You defended my father a lot, too?

COREY

Never for anything like your bone-head uncle, but yeah, Tommy got in his fair share of trouble over the years.

(shrugs)

That kind of thing was just sort of inevitable with the kind of company the two of them kept.

Art is dumbfounded. He shakes his head in disbelief. Corey finishes shuffling his papers and turns back to face Art.

COREY (CONT'D)

So, have you got all the funeral arrangements lined up, yet?

ART

Huh? Oh... No. Not all of them.

(gathers himself)

I have to stop at a funeral parlor on Crescent street after this...

COREY

Loughlin Funeral Home. They did my brother's service a few years back. They'll do a good job... Cheap, too. Won't hold you over a barrel.

INT. LOUGHLIN FUNERAL HOME - BASEMENT - DAY

Art walks across a darkened room, toward a mortician's table. A single light hangs above the steel table, casting an eerie spotlight onto a CORPSE dressed in a black suit.

Art frowns as he approaches.

INT. CHURCH - PULPIT - MORNING

The church's stained glass windows glow softly in the grey morning light. Art stands at a podium above Tom's closed casket, facing a full house... The pews are packed with Mourners who have come to pay their final respects.

ART

Tom McNally once told me, 'a man's friendships are the best measure of his worth.' And looking around here today, I can see that my father was far wealthier than his bank account would ever let on.

Mourners chuckle softly from the crowd.

ART (CONT'D)

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Arthur McNally -- Tom McNally was my father. And even though we didn't see each other as much as we would've liked, he was as good a father to me, as he was a friend and neighbor to all of you.

A handful of CONSPICUOUS MEN, stand along the back wall. They are an intimidating group.

Burly men with shaved heads and bushy beards. They all wear dark shirts covered by black leather vests... Art eyes them guardedly as he continues.

ART (CONT'D)  
I'd like to end today, by reading  
an except from one of my father's  
favorite poems...

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - FUNERAL PROCESSION - DAY

A line of cars follow a black hearse across town.

THIRTY MOTORCYCLES RUMBLE from the back of the procession.  
The Bikers all ride in a tight, double-line formation.

ART (V.O.)  
'If you can walk with crowds and  
keep your virtue...

EXT. CEMETERY - GRAVESITE - DAY (LATER)

The sky hangs dark and brooding. A Priest mutters a few words over Tom's casket, as it is lowered into the ground. Art and the other Mourners watch in somber silence. The Bikers stand at the back of the crowd in militant reserve.

ART (V.O.)  
'Or talk with kings, nor lose the  
common touch...

LATER

The service has ended. The Mourners begin to depart.

Art stands by Tom's headstone, watching the Bikers as they leave... Each man picks up a handful of dirt and tosses it into the grave as they walk by... No one says a word to Art.

ART (V.O.)  
'If neither foes, nor loving  
friends can hurt you...

One Biker breaks away from the group... JAKE "SULLY" SULLIVAN (20s) is a burly kid, with a thick beard and an armful of tattoos. He approaches and shakes Art's hand; offering him no more than a sympathetic nod, before turning and leaving.

ART (V.O.)  
'And all men count with you, but  
none too much...

Art notices the back of Sully's LEATHER VEST, as he leaves...

INSERT: LEATHER VEST

A CREST -- depicting a screaming skull, emerging from dark storm clouds -- is sewn into the center of the vest. Above it is a PATCH that reads: "ROLLING THUNDER M.C." Beneath the crest is another PATCH that reads: "MASSACHUSETTS"

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The church lays dark. The pews are all empty. Art walks down the center aisle, making his way toward a row of PRAYER CANDLES that FLICKER from the front of the abbey.

ART (V.O.)

'If you can fill the unforgiving minute, with sixty seconds worth of distance run...

Art selects an unlit candle from the row. He lights it and kneels to pray in front of the flickering vigil.

ART (V.O.)

'Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it... And which is more, you'll be a man, my son.'

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MORNING

Art stands outside a rundown tenement building, watching as Charlie finishes packing his car. The tiny jalopy is packed tight with every possession it can carry.

Charlie SLAMS the TRUNK shut. He lights himself a cigarette and steps up onto the curb alongside Art.

CHARLIE

Well, I guess that's it...

Art nods passively. Charlie can tell his mind is elsewhere.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Something on your mind, kid?

ART

Chuck, who were those guys at my father's funeral the other day?

CHARLIE

Which ones?

ART

The ones on the bikes.

CHARLIE

Eh, just a couple guys your old man used to pal around with...

ART

The backs of their jackets said 'Rolling Thunder' on them.

CHARLIE

You know what that is, don'tcha?

ART

Yeah... But I haven't heard good things about them.

Charlie shrugs.

CHARLIE

Yeah, well, you can't believe everything you hear, right?  
(flicks cigarette away)  
Well, I should probably get going.  
Still got a long drive ahead of me.

Art nods, but motions for Charlie to wait... He digs into his hip pocket and pulls out a WAD of CASH. He tries handing some of the money to Charlie.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What's all this??

ART

I sold the old work truck. This is your share of the money.

Charlie shakes his head and pushes the money away.

CHARLIE

You hold onto that. Your family has done enough for me already.  
(smiles at Art)  
C'mon, I'll give you a ride home...

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAWN

Art stands on the front porch, talking with a REAL ESTATE AGENT. The sun is barely up, but the Agent is all business. He hands Art a 'FOR SALE' SIGN and motions back at the overgrown lawn.

AGENT

And for Chrissake, clean the place  
up a bit, will ya?

Art yawns in agreement.

SERIES OF SHOTS - AROUND FRONT YARD

- Art pushes a lawnmower across the overgrown lawn...
- He rakes the grass clippings into a barrel...
- He brushes all the dirt out of the driveway...
- He BANGS the 'FOR SALE' sign into the edge of the yard.

INT. TOM'S GARAGE - DAY (LATER)

Art enters and FLIPS ON a LIGHT SWITCH... BULBS TICK and FLICKER as they come to life, reviving the darkened workshop with clean, white light.

Art drops his yard tools by the door and starts to walk around the room... He runs his hands nostalgically over the different tools and work benches. He notices an amorphous object in the corner, covered by a large white sheet.

Art walks over and pulls the sheet back, revealing Tom's HARLEY DAVIDSON MOTORCYCLE. The pearl paint and chrome engine glisten under the garage lights.

Art smiles and takes a seat on the bike.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - AFTERNOON

The sun has just started to set, as Art walks home through the neighborhood. He carries a grocery bag under his arm. The sidewalk is surprisingly empty. The street seems eerily calm.

Suddenly, a pair of FOOTSTEPS TROT up behind Art.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Hey, buddy! Hold up a minute! You  
dropped something!

Art stops and turns back toward the voice.

A FIST SLAMS against Art's chin!

Art crumples to the ground, scattering his groceries across the sidewalk.

He rolls over, to find TWO JUNKIES standing over him. The mangy duo eye Art like a pair of hungry vultures.

JUNKY#1  
Where's the money, kid?

ART  
What?? What money??

Art tries to get up, but Junky#1 shoves him back down.

JUNKY#1  
Your money. Hand it over.

ART  
But I don't have any money!

JUNKY#2  
He's got money. I seen him flashing  
a knot around down the store...

Art tries to get up and run, but Junky#1 knocks him back to the ground... The two Junkies descend down on Art, stomping and beating him viciously. Art does his best to cover up...

A MOTORCYCLE ROARS PAST. BRAKES GRIND and TIRES SCREECH.

Fists continue to rain down on Art. Boot heels CRACK his HEAD against the pavement... He begins to lose consciousness.

FOOTSTEPS CLICK toward the scuffle...

There is a LOUD SMACK, followed by a distinctive CRUNCH...

The Junkies' attack suddenly ceases.

A SHADOW passes over Art's body. He untucks his head...

ART'S POV

Junky#2 lays sprawled out across the sidewalk beside him. Blood pours from the man's busted nose. Junky#1 backs away slowly, his eyes wide with fear.

BACK TO SCENE

A LARGE MAN steps over Art... KEVIN STONE (40s) is a hulking beast, with short grey hair. Every inch of his rugged frame pulses with knotty muscle, as he stalks toward Junky#1.

Junky#1 turns to run, but Stone grabs him around the collar and YANKS him back...



Stone CLAMPS his massive paws around Junky#1's throat, lifting him into the air by his neck.

STONE

I thought I told you dope-heads to stay the fuck off my block??

Junky#1's eyes bulge. He kicks and gurgles helplessly.

STONE (CONT'D)

This is your last warning -- don't let me catch either one of you out here, again.

Stone releases Junky#1... Junky#1 sputters for air, as he helps Junky#2 to his feet and the two scurry away.

Without saying a word to Art, Stone turns and gets back on his bike. He FIRES IT UP and ROARS AWAY down the street.

Art is left in a daze on the empty sidewalk. Blood trickles down his face. He gets to his feet, but sways uneasily.

Suddenly, a PICKUP TRUCK pulls up alongside him...

SULLY (O.S.)

McNally? You alright, kid??

Art looks up to see Sully emerging from the pickup truck with another MAN... MUDDY MEYERS (40s) is a greasy little wretch with leathery skin... The two help steady Art on his feet.

SULLY (CONT'D)

The hell happened to you?!

ART

(still dazed)

I was just walking down the street, when these two guys attacked me...

SULLY

They jumped you? What'd they want?

ART

My money -- they wanted my money.

Sully nods. He already knows the whole story.

SULLY

Fucking junkies, man...

(spits)

They'd bottle their own mother for a fucking nickel.

Art extends Sully a shaky hand.

ART

We met at my father's funeral, but  
I never got your name...

Sully smiles and shakes Art's hand.

SULLY

Jake Sullivan...  
(nods to Art)  
Mud, this is Tommy's kid.

Muddy flashes Art a yellow grin and latches onto his hand.

MUDDY

Sorry for your loss, bud...

SULLY

Did somebody scare those guys off?

ART

Yeah...

MUDDY

I bet it was Stone.

ART

Who?

SULLY

Kevin Stone -- he's our boss.

ART

I don't know. He was a big guy.  
Black shirt, motorcycle...

SULLY

Sounds like him.

MUDDY

He rough 'em up good?

Art nods solemnly. Muddy cracks a sadistic grin.

SULLY

I swear that guy likes fighting  
more than he likes breathing...

ART

Can you take me to see him?

Sully doesn't respond. He seems uneasy about the request.

ART (CONT'D)

I just want to thank him.

SULLY

I wouldn't worry about it, bud.  
Plus, I don't even know where he's  
at right now...

MUDDY

He told me he was stopping down to  
Randy's after work.

Sully shoots Muddy an anxious side glance. Muddy shrugs.

ART

Who's Randy?

INT. RANDY'S BAR - BARROOM - NIGHT

A NEON SIGN that reads "RANDY'S" hangs above a warped counter  
at the back of a seedy bar. The overhead lights glow a sour  
yellow, casting a dank aura over the dingy barroom.

Patrons wear ragged jeans and sleeveless tee's, showcasing  
husky arms and poorly inked tattoos. Some shoot pool at the  
different tables scattered throughout the room. Others crowd  
around the counter to play KENO as they drink.

The Bartender, CHUBBS (50s), sits on a beer cooler, watching  
TV rather than pay attention to his customers.

Stone sits at the end of the counter, peevishly rocking an  
empty beer bottle back and forth, as he watches Chubbs.

STONE

Chubbs, what do I pay you for?

CHUBB

Well, uh, you pay me to --

STONE

(cutting him off)

I pay you tend bar and keep the  
place clean. That's it. It's not a  
difficult job... And yet, here I  
am, sitting at a sticky counter,  
nursing an empty beer, while you  
lay around on your fat ass,  
watching the Red Sox game.

(snarling)

So tell me, Chubbs, what the fuck  
do I pay you for??

Chubbs quickly gets to his feet. He CRACKS Stone a fresh beer and walks it over to him. He nods apologetically and turns to walk away... Stone holds up his empty beer bottle.

STONE (CONT'D)

You're not gonna take my empty?

Chubbs goes to take the bottle. Stone holds onto it firmly.

STONE (CONT'D)

I'm already losing a good foreman today -- don't make me have to lose a shitty bartender on top of it.

Chubbs' face goes pale. He immediately pulls out a wet rag and starts wiping down the bar. Stone smiles at him.

Art and Sully appear behind Stone.

SULLY

Stone, this is Art McNally. He wanted to come by and thank you for helping him out earlier.

Art extends Stone a handshake... Stone ignores it.

ART

I'm Tom McNally's son.

STONE

That, is what we call ambiguous grammar, my friend. Tom McNally is dead. Hence, you were his son.

(shrugs)

You're nobody's son, now -- you're either a bastard or an orphan.

Two MEN suddenly appear alongside Art and Sully... GRUBBERS (40s) is a wiry thug, with the hardened look of a career criminal... JEFF REICHLIN (30s) is a strapping redhead with rugged features... Stone turns and smiles at the two.

STONE (CONT'D)

Mr. Grubbers, I need you two to handle something for me.

GRUBBERS

Name it.

STONE

I want you to go find Hennessey and tell that shiesty cock-sucker his services are no longer required.

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

I'm making you foreman on our new project next week.

GRUBBERS

Sounds good to me.

STONE

And you... I forgot your name.

JEFF

It's Jeff. Jeff Reichlen.

STONE

Reichlen, huh? -- That's funny, you look more like an O'Brien to me.

JEFF

Yeah, well, I'm not.

STONE

Well you don't think you are, anyway. But for all you know, your mother had a big, Irish milkman.

Stone and Grubbers chuckle at the jab... Jeff is not amused. He clenches his fists... Stone smiles at his displeasure.

STONE (CONT'D)

Refresh my memory. Where are you from again, Jeff?

JEFF

Allentown. My uncle sent me up here because --

STONE

(interrupting)

Because you got in some trouble down there, right?

Jeff goes quiet. His silence only confirms his guilt.

STONE (CONT'D)

I hear you pissed off the wrong kind of people down in Philly, and now I'm stuck baby-sitting, because you need a place to hide out.

JEFF

My uncle made me come here. I don't hide from anyone.

Jeff's expression is firm. Stone nods.

STONE

Well, that's good to know. I can always use a man like you.

(smiles)

With Mr. Grubbers' promotion, I'll move you off the ground, and up onto the scaffolding crew.

JEFF

That's not what I signed up for.

STONE

It doesn't matter. It'll be a nice little pay increase, so consider yourself lucky...

JEFF

No. It does matter. I didn't sign up for that. I don't like heights.

STONE

This isn't a negotiation, son. It's me giving you an order.

(sternly)

So you'll either be up on that rig come Monday morning, or you'll be back in Allentown tonight.

Jeff's eyes narrow. Stone stares back at him with icy calm.

JEFF

That's not what I --

Stone LUNGES FORWARD and BURIES a FIST into Jeff's stomach... The blow doubles Jeff over, dropping him to his knees. Stone gets up and stands over him, twitching with rage.

STONE

I don't care what you signed up for! When I give an order you fucking follow it! You hear me??

Jeff nods, clutching his gut in pain. Stone sneers at him.

STONE (CONT'D)

Grubbers, get him outta my sight. Go pay Mr. Hennessey a visit.

Grubbers helps Jeff to his feet and escorts him out of the bar... Stone sits down and turns his attention back to Art.

STONE (CONT'D)

So, McNally, you want a job?

Art's mouth hangs open. He fumbles nervously over his words.

ART

A job?? Well, I... No... No thank you... I don't need a job...

STONE

What do you mean 'you don't need a job'? How do you expect to put food on your table?

ART

Well, my father left me some money when he passed... And my stepfather does pretty well for himself... So I just... Well, I just...

STONE

Don't work?

(scornful chuckle)

You stand on a dead man's legs and eat off a rich man's plate.

Art blushes.

ART

I've had a job before, it's just --

STONE

(interrupting)

Let me see your hands...

Stone grabs Art by his wrists and pulls him close.

STONE (CONT'D)

I always said, you can tell a lot by a man's hands.

(studying Art's palms)

Take your father for instance...

Tommy was a self-made man. The guy had arms like axe-handles; fists like fucking typewriters.

Stone frowns at the quality of Art's hands.

STONE (CONT'D)

I wonder how he must've felt about you? -- His only son, having the hands of a prom queen, and the work ethic of a nigger.

Art's eyes narrow. He YANKS his HANDS back and glares at Stone with red, hot indignation.

ART

My father was always proud of me.

Stone chuckles, surprised by Art's sudden show of passion.

STONE

I'm sure he was...

Stone gets to his feet and extends Art a handshake.

STONE (CONT'D)

I'm offering you something that most of the scabs in this town would kill for... Stay on and work the summer for me. Toughen those hands up and put some hard-earned money in your pocket.

Art hesitates as he studies Stone's large, meaty palm. He looks around the room, unsure of what to do.

STONE (CONT'D)

Make your old man proud.

Art locks eyes with Stone... Stone flashes him a toothy, crocodile grin... Art nods and shakes his hand.

STONE (CONT'D)

I'll have Muddy swing by and pick you up for work Monday morning. Be ready to go by 6:00AM sharp.

Art nods. He and Sully turn and exit across the barroom.

INT. SULLY'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Art and Sully ride back from the bar. The streets outside are dark. Art stares out the side window, deep in thought. Sully glances over at him, uncomfortable in the silence.

SULLY

You're the one who wanted to meet the guy...

ART

How did he know my father?

SULLY

How?? -- Stone's president of the South Boston chapter.

ART

President of what?



Sully seems confused by the question.

SULLY

What do you mean 'of what'? -- Of  
the Rolling Thunder...

Sully nods at a FUNERAL CARD dangling from his mirror...

INSERT: FUNERAL CARD

A BEARDED MAN, who looks like an older version of Sully, is featured on the front of the card. It reads: "IN LOVING MEMORY OF A FALLEN BROTHER. JACOB "BIG SULLY" SULLIVAN, 1958-2003. ROLLING THUNDER M.C. BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS."

BACK TO SCENE

SULLY (CONT'D)

My old man was a second generation  
Roller, just like yours.

ART

Like mine?

Sully nods... Art's face drops. He finally understands.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A beside lamp casts an ominous glow over the naked bedroom. The tiny room contains only the essentials -- bed, bureau, closet -- nothing more.

Art paces the room with a phone pressed against his ear.

ART

Why didn't you ever tell me??

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. LOIS' KITCHEN (WA) - AFTERNOON

The large kitchen is decorated wall to wall with nearly every modern appliances. In the background, an open window gives way to a stunning bayside view.

Lois paces the marble floor in a similar fashion.

LOIS

I thought you knew...

ART

How was I supposed to know something like that??

LOIS

I assumed he told you.

ART

Told me?? -- The man barely spoke to me! He wouldn't even fly out for my college graduation!

LOIS

Your father had his reasons...

Art sighs to himself.

ART

He was ashamed of me.

LOIS

No, your father was never ashamed of you. Tom kept his distance, because he thought it was best.

Art falls silent... Lois frowns.

LOIS (CONT'D)

When are you coming home?

ART

(indignantly)

What -- to live with you and Dave?

LOIS

Oh, stop. It's only temporary. You'll find another job.

Art picks up a FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH off Tom's bureau...

INSERT: PHOTOGRAPH

The photo is nearly twenty years old. The edges are bent and faded. The snapshot depicts a MAN, helping his young son steer a tiny tricycle... TOM McNALLY (20s) looks like a more rugged version of Art; a sturdy man with long blonde hair and a neatly trimmed beard... Both father and son smile broadly.

BACK TO SCENE

Art runs his thumb over the top of the frame.

ART  
I already have...

LOIS  
What are you talking about?

ART  
I took a job working construction  
for one of dad's friends.

LOIS  
Working construction? -- You??

ART  
Just until the house sells...

Art places the photograph back on the dresser. He steps back and takes another long, hard look at it.

ART (CONT'D)  
Besides, there are still some  
things I need to wrap up, here.

CUT TO:

INT. CONCORD STATE PENITENTIARY - MORNING

Art walks through a metal detector in the prison lobby. The DETECTOR BEEPS WILDLY. A Corrections Officer motions for Art to step to the side of the machine.

OFFICER#1  
Raise your arms...

Art raises his arms, as the Officer begins to pat him down.

INT. VISITATION ROOM

RICK McNALLY (40s) sits at a steel table. Other Inmates huddle around nearby tables, speaking with visitors in hushed voices. Barred windows line the far wall of the room, speckling the cement floor with thin slivers of daylight.

Rick wears a tan, prison-issued jumpsuit with the sleeves rolled up. His pale forearms are thick with muscle and faded tattoos. His face is stern and hardened.

A SECURITY DOOR BUZZES. Rick gets to his feet, as Art is led into the room by a Corrections Officer.

OFFICER#2  
You got a visitor, Rick.

The Officer turns and exits. Art and Rick stand facing one another. Rick smiles as he looks Art over.

RICK  
Well... Puberty really kicked the  
shit outta you, huh?

Art forces a smile.

ART  
How you doing, Uncle Rick?

RICK  
How am I doing?? -- I'm in prison,  
Artie.

Rick chuckles, but stops when he sees that Art isn't.

ART  
We need to talk.

RICK  
Yeah, I thought we might...

LATER

Art leans across the table, listening intently to Rick. His deep voice is muffled to a low whisper.

RICK  
When your Grampy came back from  
'Nam, he wasn't the same as when he  
went in... He drank a lot more;  
stayed down the bars later; had a  
hard time keeping a job, and an  
even harder time staying outta  
trouble... Most people around town  
didn't like what he'd become.  
(shrugs)  
I don't know what they expected.  
You can't just pluck John Rambo up  
outta the shit, and expect him to  
go back to being Ward Cleaver over  
night -- it don't work like that.

Art nods as if he understands. Rick can tell he doesn't.

RICK (CONT'D)  
Anyway, your Grampy fit in with the  
guys from the Thunder. Most of 'em  
were vets, like him -- guys who had  
come back from the war and had  
trouble settling back in.

ART

What about the others?

Rick is silent for a moment.

RICK

The others were outlaws -- men who never fit in to begin with.

(shrugs)

But all of 'em -- good, bad, or ugly -- looked out for each other. The Thunder took your Grampy in when no one else would. They helped him remember who he was, while the rest of the country was trying to forget he ever existed. The Rolling Thunder was a brotherhood, and despite what most people will tell ya, it was a beautiful thing.

ART

Then why didn't my dad ever tell me about it?

RICK

Because believe it or not, this ain't a lifestyle most fathers want for their sons.

ART

Grampy seemed to think it was alright for you guys.

RICK

Yeah, and look where it got me...

Rick motions around at the dreary prison walls surrounding them... Art frowns. Rick reaches across the table and places a tender hand on his nephew's shoulder.

RICK (CONT'D)

Listen, your father loved you, kid. Anything he kept from you, he did for your own good.

ART

Yeah? -- Like telling me you were in here for a DUI?

Rick cracks a weary grin.

RICK

Would you have ever come back here if you knew the truth?

A SECURITY DOOR BUZZES... Officer#2 reenters. He motions to Rick that his time is up. Rick nods and stands up.

RICK (CONT'D)  
When you heading home?

ART  
I don't know, yet.

Rick looks back over his shoulder at Officer#2. He flashes Art a sad, little smile.

RICK  
Yeah. Me neither...

Officer#2 walks over and takes Rick by the arm. Rick nods to Art, before being escorted out of the room by Officer#2. The SECURITY DOOR SLAMS and LOCKS behind them.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Art sits at the edge of Tom's bed, studying the photograph of him and his father. He sighs and places the photo on top of the nightstand... He reaches over and TURNS OFF the lamp.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - DAWN (NEXT MORNING)

The room is quiet. Art lies asleep in bed... He is suddenly jarred awake by the furious HONKING of a CARHORN, outside.

Art shoots awake. He turns and looks at the beside clock.

ART  
Shit!

EXT. WORKSITE - MORNING

Streaks of sunlight have just started to crack the dawn sky.

An old brick BUILDING slouches at the front of a gravel lot. The dilapidated structure is a majestic relic; six-stories of formidable brick and mortar. A SCAFFOLDING RIG climbs up the face of the building. A dumpster is pressed against its rear.

The lot is surrounded on all sides by a chain-link fence. A make-shift tent and a couple porta-potties sit in a paved parking lot to its right.

Stone stands at the base of the building, addressing Jeff, Sully, Grubbers, and the rest of his gruff, twenty-man Crew.

STONE

This is a simple renovation, boys.  
We need to gut this slut -- strip  
her down and turn her out, before  
the end of September.

EXT. PARKING LOT (MEANWHILE)

Art and Muddy emerge from a pickup trucks. Muddy begins to  
hurry toward the worksite, looming in the foreground.

MUDDY

Hurry up, we're late!

Art starts to jog after him, but slows when he notices a  
YOUNG WOMAN opening a Cantina Truck across the parking lot...

ART'S POV

REINA DePAZ (20s) is striking. She has a slim build and dark  
curly hair, complimented by perfect olive skin. Her dainty  
arms shake as she unlocks the window of her truck.

BACK TO SCENE

Art stops and gawks at her, dumbfounded by her beauty.

MUDDY (CONT'D)

You hear what I said?? If you're  
late, it's gonna be both our asses!

EXT. WORKSITE (CONTINUOUS)

Muddy inserts himself discreetly into the crowd, as Stone  
continues his speech.

STONE

We don't get paid 'til we complete  
a stage, so if you gentlemen got  
any plans of getting lit or laid  
this weekend, you better work  
quick. As a team, we're only as  
strong as our weakest link...

Art trots up to the group. Stone notices him right away.

STONE (CONT'D)

But lucky for us, weak links don't  
last too long around here.

Some of the Crew turn around to look at Art. They grunt at his tardiness... Art looks down, embarrassed.

STONE (CONT'D)

Now, we're gonna split up into two teams. Team One will be doing demo inside, while Team Two restores brick up on the scaffolding. We got any questions?

The Crew shake their heads. Art raises his hand...

ART

What team am I on?

STONE

You, Mr. McNally, aren't on either team. You'll be on the ground with Muddy, clearing the site while the rest of us work.

Some of the Crew chuckle. Muddy shakes his head, annoyed.

STONE (CONT'D)

Alright, let's get to it.

The Crew begins to disperse. Art looks around, unsure of what to do... None of the Crew seem interested in helping him. Jeff sees Art and takes pity on him. He walks over and extends Art a handshake.

JEFF

Jeff Reichlen.

Art smiles and shakes Jeff's hand.

ART

Art McNally. We kinda met the other day when --

JEFF

I got hit in the gut?

Art nods sheepishly. Jeff shrugs it off.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Don't let any of these guys get to you -- being on the ground is cake. All you gotta do is go around and pick up any of the shit that comes down off the side.

(motions at scaffolding)

The only part that sucks is having to work with...



Muddy steps in and interrupts their conversation, by shoving a large, steel rake into Art's hands.

MUDDY

You better not slow me down, kid. I need this fucking job!

Muddy glowers at him, before marching toward the base of the building... Jeff chuckles and pats Art on the back.

JEFF

Oh, and one more thing...  
(tapping head)  
Don't forget your hardhat.

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND (LATER)

Art and Muddy stand at the base of the building, watching debris rain down from either end. Rotted wood flies out the back windows, missing the dumpster it was intended for. Brick rains down from the scaffolding rig... Muddy shakes his head.

MUDDY

Sloppy fuckers.  
(sighs)  
Well, c'mon, let's get to it.

Muddy puts on a dusk-mask and motions for Art to follow him.

SERIES OF SHOTS - AROUND WORKSITE

-- Jeff and the Scaffolding Crew stand along the edge of the rig, using chisels to chip old brick off the exterior walls.

-- Art and Muddy rake around the base of the scaffolding rig, as brick rains down around them. A chunk of BRICK BOUNCES off Art's hardhat, startling him... Muddy rolls his eyes.

-- Art's ARMS TREMBLE, as he struggles to load a shovelful of brick into a wheelbarrow.

-- Art struggles to push a wheelbarrow, full of brick, around the base of the building... Muddy shakes his head in disgust.

-- Sully and the Interior Crew use sledgehammers to tear down walls inside the building. Some of the Crew throw chunks of the rotted debris out the back windows.

-- Art uses a shovel to delicately toss spilled debris into the dumpster... Muddy rushes around, picking up the refuse with his bare hands. He scowls at Art.

INT. WORKSITE - BREAK TENT - AFTERNOON

The Crew assemble under the shade of a make-shift tent, after a hard day's work. They sit on overturned buckets, smoking butts and sipping on cans of beer, as they unwind.

Art sits away from the group, examining the OPEN BLISTERS that cover his hands... Muddy looks over and jeers at him.

MUDDY

We didn't work ya too hard, did we, princess?

Some of the Crew snicker. Art blushes.

JEFF

Hey Mud, how 'bout you leave the kid alone, huh?

MUDDY

The fuck do you care?

JEFF

I care, because every time you open your mouth, I get a whiff of your awful fucking breath -- you smell like hot shit on a cold day.

The Crew ERUPTS in laughter. Muddy glares at Jeff.

MUDDY

At least my mother wasn't some fucking trollop -- she musta not known which dick knocked her up, 'cause you're about as German as a set of bagpipes!

Jeff gets to his feet, ticking with rage.

JEFF

That was your one pass with me, Muddy! If my mother's name ever comes out your mouth again, I'll fucking kill you!

STONE (O.S.)

The only person who'll be doing any killing around here is me...

Stone enters the tent. The Crew all turn to face him, except Jeff, who keeps his fiery gaze fixed on Muddy.

STONE (CONT'D)

When this job is done, you mutts  
can slit each other's throats and  
bathe in the blood, for all I care.  
But until then, I need every man  
healthy -- so no fighting.

(turns to Jeff)

Do I make myself clear?

JEFF

(glaring at Muddy)

Crystal.

Jeff sits back down... Stone nods and walks toward one of the coolers. He notices Art cradling his raw hands.

STONE

Ah, I see those hands are coming  
along nicely...

Stone reaches forward and grabs Art's hands. Art winces in pain. Stone smiles at his discomfort.

STONE (CONT'D)

Pain is good a thing -- it reminds  
us that we're alive.

(examining Art's palms)

Over the next couple of weeks, all  
this soft, pink skin will get torn  
off. The blisters will heal and  
reopen a dozen times, and it'll be  
excruciating -- you won't even want  
to hold your dick to piss. But with  
time, your body will learn to  
adapt, and these open sores will  
steel over with brutal callouses  
that feel nothing.

(smiles)

'In the natural world, it isn't the  
strongest that survives, no the  
most intelligent, it's the...?'

ART

(in pain)

'...Most adaptable to change.'

Stone smiles and nods, releasing Art's hands.

STONE

Charles Darwin -- one of my  
favorites.

The Crew begin to gather their things and depart. Art gets up to follow them, but Stone stops him.

STONE (CONT'D)

You know Darwin?

ART

I did a paper on him in college.

STONE

You went to college? What'd you study?

ART

Uh, Philosophy, with a minor in --

STONE

Philosophy, huh?? No shit...

(smiles broadly)

How 'bout you stop down to Randy's later, so you and me can talk about this some more.

ART

Oh. Well. I'd love to, but --

STONE

That wasn't a question, Art. I'll see you down there around 9:00.

Stone turns and exits... Art shrugs, unsure what to think.

INT. RANDY'S BAR - NIGHT

The foggy barroom is packed. Men squeeze around the counter, fighting to order drinks. Chubbs struggles to keep up, as men bark drink orders at him... Jeff and Sully sit at the end of the bar, watching the Red Sox game on TV.

JEFF

Goddamn I miss the Phillies...

SULLY

Aw, fuck you. The Phillies suck.

Art appears alongside them, changed and showered. He holds a motorcycle helmet under his right arm.

JEFF

Hey, McHamburger Hands! When'd you get here?

ART

Just now...

(holds up helmet)

I took the bike down.

SULLY

You know you need a license to ride that thing, right?

ART

I've got a bike back home.

SULLY

No shit, huh? -- What do you ride?

ART

Just a little Suzuki 1200.

JEFF

Aw, don't say that...

SULLY

You ride a Jap bike?!

JEFF

Actually, now that you mention it, I can see you scooting around on a cute, little rice-rocket.

Jeff and Sully chuckle. Art smiles in spite of himself.

ART

You guys seen Stone around?

SULLY

Na. You might wanna check the office, though...

Sully motions at a DOOR behind the bar marked: "PRIVATE".

JEFF

Why you looking for Stone?

ART

He wants to talk to me about books or something...

SULLY

Book, huh? -- Good luck with that.

Art shrugs and makes his way around the bar, toward the office door... Jeff watches him go.

JEFF

What books are they talking about?

SULLY

Who cares? Books are gay.

JEFF

Spoken like a true genius, there  
Sullivan...

INT. OFFICE

The overhead lights glow brightly, as Art studies a framed PHOTOGRAPH on the office wall...

INSERT: PHOTOGRAPH

The photo is over a decade old... Stone, Tom, Big Sully, Rick, and a handful of other Rolling Thunder Members, smile proudly, as they display their Rolling Thunder vests.

BACK TO SCENE

Art smiles at the photograph and continues to look around. Rolling Thunder decor dominates the large office -- framed mug shots and club photos take up most of the wall space. Art stops and studies a MURAL painted on one of the walls...

INSERT: MURAL

A large, Rolling Thunder Insignia has been painted across the wall in dark paint. Above it, someone has written the CREDO: "TO REIGN IS WORTH AMBITION. IT IS BETTER TO REIGN IN HELL THAN SERVE IN HEAVEN!"

BACK TO SCENE

Art walks toward a desk at the back of the office. He notices a BOOK lying on the desktop. He picks it up and studies the cover... "THE ANTI-CHRIST" by FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE.

STONE (O.S.)

My Bible...

Art looks up to see Stone standing in the doorway.

STONE (CONT'D)

You ever read any Nietzsche?

ART

Some.

STONE

What'd you think?

ART

He was a little too cynical for me.

STONE

That's a common mistake, confusing realism for cynicism.

Stone enters and walks over to a bookcase, pressed against the back wall. He opens a cigar box and selects himself a cigar. He lights it, before taking a seat behind his desk.

STONE (CONT'D)

I assume you read mostly Rationalists in school, huh? Lots of Descartes; lots of Berkeley...

ART

For the most part.

STONE

And do you believe in all that?

ART

In what? -- Rationalism?

STONE

Rationalism. Spirituality. Whatever you wanna call it.

Art thinks for a minute. He shrugs and nods.

ART

I guess I like to think there's something bigger out there -- some uniting force that gives our lives some sort of meaning.

Stone nods thoughtfully as he puffs on his cigar.

STONE

I suppose everyman is entitled to his own opinion -- no matter how ridiculous it might be.

ART

I take it you're not a big church-going guy...

STONE

I'm at Mass every Sunday.

Art starts to chuckle, but stops when he sees that Stone is serious... Stone flashes him a wry smile.

STONE (CONT'D)

Don't get me wrong, I don't believe in any of it. Religion is a crock. People will believe anything to keep from facing a hard truth.

ART

And that is?

STONE

That there is no God.

Art raises a skeptical eyebrow.

ART

No? -- then what is there?

STONE

There's just us. An entire planet of accidental bacteria, twitching and squirming until we eventually stop moving. The big eat the little; the strong eat the weak, and that's all there is to it. Natural Selection. Nothing more.

ART

Sounds pretty pessimistic...

STONE

There you go, confusing realism for cynicism, again.

Stone smiles triumphantly.

ART

So why attend Mass every week?

STONE

People see me going in and out of church every Sunday and they assume I'm a good guy. Suddenly, they've got no problem hiring me, and my crew of ex-cons, to come in and finish building their kids' elementary school.

(guilty smile)

Pretending to be Catholic is just good for business.

ART

I don't know -- sounds like good Christian thinking to me...



Stone chuckles heartily. Art smiles.

STONE

You know, you remind me a lot of  
your old man...

(sentimental beat)

C'mon. Sit down. Stay a while.

Art pulls up a chair. Stone smiles, happy for the company.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CANTINA TRUCK - MORNING

Art, Jeff, and Sully stand with some of the Crew around the Cantina Truck, waiting for breakfast.

EGGS SIZZLE on a griddle inside the little trailer. COFFEE POTS GURGLE under a percolator. Plastic utensils and paper cups line the serving window. A SIGN that reads: "NO HABLO INGLES" hangs above it.

Grubbers hangs by the window, leering suggestively at Reina, as she works... Reina shovels a couple eggs onto a plate and turns to face Grubbers, as he continues to eye her bawdily.

REINA

(in Spanish)

Enjoying the view, asshole?

Jeff turns and whispers to Sully.

JEFF

I wonder what she's saying to him?

SULLY

Shit, I don't know -- but she could  
tell me it all day.

Reina tosses the plate in front of Grubbers.

REINA

(in Spanish)

Don't choke.

Art chuckles. Jeff and Sully look at him suspiciously.

JEFF

You speak Spanish, Artie?

ART

A little bit. I took a couple  
semesters in college.

SULLY

You should try talking to her...

JEFF

He won't.

ART

Oh I won't, huh?

Art flashes Jeff a confident smile. He approaches the window and smiles at Reina... She seems less than impressed.

ART (CONT'D)

What's good today?

Reina acts like she doesn't understand.

ART (CONT'D)

What's good to eat?

Reina points to the sign... "NO HABLO INGLES"... Art nods.

ART (CONT'D)

(in Spanish)

Ok, but what if I speak Spanish?

Reina shrugs, unimpressed.

REINA

(in Spanish)

You might be able to speak Spanish,  
but you clearly don't understand  
the sign... Now what do you want?

ART

(in Spanish)

Uh, just a couple of eggs...

Reina scribbles down Art's order and returns to the griddle... Art turns back to face Jeff and Sully, defeated.

JEFF

Shit, I don't need to know Spanish  
to know what she just told ya!

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND - AFTERNOON

The afternoon sun is sweltering. Art and Muddy rake brick from under the scaffolding, drenched in sweat. Art stops to shake his aching hands... His palms are stained with blood.

MUDDY

Aw, quit bitching about your hands!

Stone approaches the two, shirtless. His upper body is thick with muscle. A lone TATTOO across his chest reads: "HEART OF STONE". He nods to Art.

STONE

Art, take a break. Come walk with me for a minute.

Art gladly stops working. He drops his rake and walks over toward Stone... Muddy also stops to take a break.

STONE (CONT'D)

Is your name Art?

Muddy frowns and goes back to work.

EXT. AROUND WORKSITE (CONTINUOUS)

Art and Stone walk the premises in silence. Stone chews on a cigar, as he keeps a watchful eye over his Crew's progress.

ART

Did you ever want more than this?

Stone smiles at the question.

STONE

You think this kind of work is beneath me, just because I've read a couple books?

ART

No. I'm just asking.

STONE

(shrugs)

I never had a say in the matter. I was born into this.

ART

So? -- Plenty of men have come from humble beginnings and gone on to do great things...

STONE

And for every one that succeeds, there are hundreds who have tried and failed... Some men were just born to toil, and I'm one of them.

ART

I don't know -- I think you're selling yourself short.

Stone shakes his head. He stops and turns to face Art.

STONE

When I was about your age, I killed  
a man in a bar fight, out near  
Worcester -- beat him to death with  
my own two hands.

Art falls silent.

STONE (CONT'D)

Charges ended up getting dropped  
down to manslaughter, but I still  
served five years inside for it.

(face hardens)

Prison will do one of two things to  
a man -- it'll either break him, or  
make him stronger. While other guys  
sat around, wallowing in their own  
self-pity, I spent my time reading.  
I plowed through every book I could  
lay my hands on.

(smiles, taps head)

That's how I became the man that  
stands before you. My intelligence  
was never innate -- it was a  
necessary adaptation.

Art is awed by Stone's story.

ART

What'd he do -- the man you killed?

STONE

To be honest, I don't really  
remember...

Stone frowns. He looks down at his hands, remorsefully.

STONE (CONT'D)

I've got this violence inside me,  
Art -- it's an evil I can't seem to  
control or explain. Brutality is  
just in my bones; it's in my blood.  
And the older I get, the more I  
realize, there's no changing it.

INT. BREAK TENT (LATER)

Art enters and starts gathering up his things. The sun has  
started to set. Most of the Crew has already left. Art turns  
to leave, but Jeff calls after him.

JEFF

Hey Artie, where you off to?

ART

Just going home.

JEFF

Yeah? You doing anything tomorrow?

ART

No. Not really.

JEFF

Me and Sully were thinking about taking a ride up to New Hampshire. You wanna tag along?

ART

Yeah, definitely.

Jeff flashes him a wry grin.

JEFF

You think you can keep up, without your little crotch-rocket?

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

THREE MOTORCYCLES ROAR down a quiet New Hampshire roadway in a tight, triangle formation. The midday sun gleams off the bikes, as they hug the winding woodland road.

Sully rides at the front of the pack. Art and Jeff cruise behind him, side by side. Jeff and Sully each wear black Rolling Thunder Vests... Unlike Sully's Vest, Jeff's BOTTOM PATCH reads: "PENNSYLVANIA".

Art wears a brown bomber jacket. His white UNDERSHIRT FLAPS against his body as he rides. He grins, savoring the thrill of the ride. He looks over at Jeff who grins back at him.

JEFF

This is what it's all about, kid!

Art smiles in agreement.

Jeff REVS his THROTTLE and ROARS ahead, pushing his bike to the limit... Art and Sully match him, as the three race headlong over the coming horizon.

EXT. RIVERSIDE BAR - DECK - AFTERNOON (LATER)

The afternoon sun hangs low and warm. Art, Jeff, and Sully sit at a patio table, sharing a pitcher of beer. A LAZY RIVER GURGLES beneath their feet. The deck is packed with people.

Art and Jeff watch in disgust, as Sully picks through a plate of soggy nachos, cramming greasy chips into his mouth.

JEFF

Jesus, kid...

Sully shrugs. He grabs the pitcher of beer and dumps what's left into his mug... He shakes the empty pitcher.

SULLY

We need more beer...

JEFF

Yeah, and it's your turn to buy.

SULLY

Fine. I gotta piss, anyway...

Sully gets up from the table and heads toward the bar. Jeff turns and notices Art admiring his vest.

JEFF

You checking out my cut?

Art nods. Jeff smiles proudly.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You like it, huh?

ART

It's pretty cool.

JEFF

You ever think about getting one of your own?

ART

Me?? -- Na.

JEFF

Why not? Your old man was a Roller, wasn't he?

ART

I guess so... But I doubt my mother would be too happy if I joined.

Jeff shrugs in agreement.

ART (CONT'D)

What about you? What does your mother think about all this?

JEFF

My mother's been dead almost fifteen years, now.

ART

Oh. Shit. I'm sorry, man...

JEFF

Don't be. You didn't kill her.

Art nods... The two sit in an uncomfortable silence.

ART

So... Why did you join?

JEFF

Well, after my mom died, the State sent me to live with my Uncle Don out in Allentown -- he runs a charter down there.

ART

And he made you join?

JEFF

No. He never really pushed me one way or the other. But I grew up around it, ya know?

(shrugs)

I never knew my old man; don't know if I've got any brothers or sisters anywhere, so the club became like my family. They're the only people who care whether I'm alive, or dead in a gutter somewhere.

(smiles)

And at the end of the day, that's all anybody every really wants, right? -- a family.

Art smiles and nods in agreement... But Their conversation is suddenly interrupted by a LOUD SHRIEK.

Art and Jeff turn to see Sully standing at the edge of the deck, pissing into the river. People back away, murmuring in disgust... Sully grins and waves to Art and Jeff.

SULLY

Artie! This is what our Founding Fathers called a Boston Pee Party!

EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK (LATER)

The dusk sky has started to turn a palatial purple, as the three ride home down the secluded back roads. Art rides at the rear of the group, watching Jeff and Sully glide across the road with gregarious ease, like a pair of brothers.

Art smiles as he watches them.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Art stands in the doorway. The office air hangs thick with cigar smoke. Stone reads at his desk, a stogie pursed between his lips... He smiles, but doesn't look up from his book.

STONE

So you want in?

Art enters and takes a seat across from Stone.

ART

I figure, this club meant a lot to my family, and I think it's only right that I should want to follow in my father's footsteps.

STONE

Well, that's all well and good, Artie, but I'm afraid it doesn't work like that...

(lowers book)

You don't ask us. We ask you.

ART

I just thought with my family's history you would --

STONE

This isn't Harvard, son. I could care less who your father was. I need to know that I can trust you.

ART

You don't trust me?

STONE

I don't trust anyone.

Art looks betrayed.

ART

But my father... My grandfather...



STONE  
 Holds no relevance here.

ART  
 That's not fair.

STONE  
 Life isn't fair.

ART  
 You know what I mean -- that's not right.

STONE  
 'Right and wrong are both subject to interpretation -- whichever interpretation prevails is usually a function of power, not truth.'  
 (taps Nietzsche book)  
 Friedrich Nietzsche.

ART  
 So just because you're stronger than me, you think you're always going to be right??

STONE  
 Might makes right, son. Nothing else.

Art scoffs at the statement, shaking his head in disgust.

ART  
 That's the most ignorant thing I've ever heard...

STONE  
 Come prove me wrong, then.

Anger rattles in Stone's voice. Art falls silent.

STONE (CONT'D)  
 That's what I thought...  
 (opens book)  
 You've had enough free meals for one lifetime -- if you want into this club, you're gonna have to earn it, yourself. End of story.

Stone motions for Art to leave and goes back to his reading.

MONTAGE - AROUND WORKSITE (ENSUING WEEKS)

-- Art rakes up brick from under the scaffolding. A pair of heavy work gloves cover his raw hands. He works with a renewed vigor, determined to prove his worth.

-- Art's arms shake as he loads brick into a wheelbarrow. The work is hard and tiresome, but Art refuses to quit.

-- Art pushes a full wheelbarrow around the building. His arms tremble. He drips with sweat. But he doesn't stop.

-- Art rushes around, shoveling debris into the dumpster at a ferocious pace... Muddy watches, surprised by Art's efforts.

## EXT. WORKSITE - PORTA POTTIES - AFTERNOON

Art and Sully have bypassed the lines for the Porta Potties. The two stand behind them, pissing on the nearby fence.

Art notices FOUR MEN sitting under the break tent...

## ART'S POV

BIG ROB, LEACH, and JUNIOR sit in a circle, playing cards on a beer cooler... All three are large, brawny men in their mid to late 30s. They sport bushy beards and bright tattoos.

Another MAN sits away from the three, smoking a cigarette as he watches them... SMOKE (50s) is tall and wiry, covered in faded green ink. His solemn reserve is eerily intimidating.

## BACK TO SCENE

ART

Hey Sully, who are those guys?

Sully looks over at the four men.

SULLY

Those are the Horsemen. They're on Stone's other payroll.

ART

What are they doing here?

SULLY

'Cause you can't claim muling or enforcing on your W-2's...

Sully motions at the different men.

SULLY (CONT'D)

The one on the left, that's Big Rob. Next to him is Leach, and next to him is Junior.

ART

Who's the guy at the end?

SULLY

That's Smoke. He's the club's Sergeant at Arm. He don't say too much, but it's always the quiet ones you gotta look out for...

Art nods as he looks Smoke over.

SULLY (CONT'D)

The Horsemen handle any of the club's major problems -- so don't fuck around with any of 'em.

ART

I won't.

EXT. NORTHBOUND HIGHWAY - DAY

The entire Rolling Thunder Motorcycle Club ROARS North. All thirty men wear Rolling Thunder Vests as they ride. The procession is a daunting spectacle -- a giant, metal snake, gliding down the thruway.

EXT. LACONIA (NH) - AFTERNOON (LATER)

The small New Hampshire town has been turned out for its annual Bike Week. The streets are packed with Bikers. A BANNER that reads: "WELCOME BIKERS TO LACONIA BIKE WEEK!" hangs over the bustling, neon-soaked strip.

The Rolling Thunder MC rolls down Main Street. All thirty Members ride shoulder-to-shoulder, tire-to-tire, in a tight double-file line... Stone rides at the front of the pack.

People on the sidewalk stop and stare as the club rides by.

EXT. BIKER BAR (LATER)

The Rolling Thunder's motorcycles are parked in a neat row, outside a local bar. The parking lot is packed with bikes and other bikers... It's a chaotic scene.

Stone stands outside with Art, holding a large, utility FLASHLIGHT in his hands. He motions at the row of bikes.

STONE

You keep watch over the bikes. If anybody comes near them, you hit 'em with the spotlight...  
 (flicks on flashlight)  
 And if anybody touches 'em, you crack their fucking head open.

Stone SMACKS the BUTT of the flashlight against his palm.

LATER

The lot lays dark. LOUD MUSIC pours out of the bar, as Art stands guard over the bikes... A DRUNK suddenly stumbles out and makes his way toward the row of motorcycles.

Art steps in front of the man, blocking his path.

ART

Sorry bud, but you're going to have to keep clear of these bikes.

DRUNK

Get the fuck outta my way!

The Drunk is a large man, nearly double Art's size. He tries to push past him, but Art puts the butt of the flashlight into the man's chest, not allowing him to pass.

ART

I'm sorry, but you're going to have to walk around.

DRUNK

Yeah?? -- you gonna make me?!

SMOKE (O.S.)

If he don't, I will.

The Drunk turns to see Smoke standing behind him. Smoke pulls back his vest, revealing a PISTOL tucked in his waistline. The Drunk raises his hands, and walks around the row.

Smoke nods to Art. Art nods back. Smoke heads back inside.

MONTAGE - AROUND WORKSITE (ENSUING WEEKS)

-- Art's hands have started to toughen over. He rakes up brick as a furious rate... Muddy struggles to keep pace.

-- Art shovels loads of brick into the wheelbarrow. His arms no longer shake, but PULSE with newly formed muscle.

-- Muddy struggles to push a wheelbarrow, filled to the brim with brick... Art pushes him aside and takes over, hauling the heavy load around the building with ease.

-- Art rushes around, tossing debris into the dumpster with his bare hands... Muddy works like a madman, heaving and panting, as he tries to keep up with Art.

EXT. PARKING LOT - EVENING

The sun has started to set over the worksite. Art sits on his bike, waving to the Crew as they pull out of the lot. He waits until everyone is out of sight and hops off his bike.

Art walks across the lot to the Cantina truck, just as Reina has started closing it down for the day.

ART

Hey.

Reina rolls her eyes and continues shutting down.

ART (CONT'D)

You closing down?

Reina points to the sign... "NO HABLO INGLES"

ART (CONT'D)

That sign must really come in handy, huh?

REINA

(in Spanish)

You just don't get it, do you?

ART

Oh, I get it -- I just don't give up easily.

(in Spanish)

I'll see you tomorrow.

Art flashes Reina a playful smile, before turning and walking away... Reina picks her head up to watch him go. She cracks a little smile to herself, as she watches Art walk away.

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

Art and Stone file into Mass with the rest of the Sunday Congregation. Sunlight illuminates the stained glass that line the abbey walls. A CHOIR HUMS a hymn from the front.

Art starts to move toward the front of the room, but Stone stops him... He motions to an empty pew in the very back.

STONE

I like to sit in the back...

Art shrugs and takes a seat.

LATER

The Priest motions for the Congregation to bow their heads.

PRIEST

Let us, pray...

Art does like everyone else, folding his hands and bowing his head in silent prayer... After a moment or two, he cracks an eyelid and looks over at Stone, sitting beside him...

Stone kneels like everyone else, but does not pray. Instead, he watches the rest of the parishioners, as they pray.

INT. STONE'S TRUCK (LATER)

Art and Stone drive home in silence. The sun catches the outline of a cross, hanging from Stone's rearview mirror, casting a t-shaped shadow across the seat.

ART

What do you think about, when everyone else is praying?

STONE

I don't really...

The silence continues. Stone sighs.

STONE (CONT'D)

I pity them.

(beat)

Week in and week out, I watch them sit there, begging mercy off a God that doesn't exist. They pray for things they'll never get; miracles they'll never see...

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

And yet still, somehow, they're happy -- they're content just living a lie.

ART

Faith gives people hope. Hope is a good thing...

STONE

Not if it's false hope.

(annoyed)

They can't see the futility in it all, and it makes me mad. It makes me hate them. It makes me wish I didn't know everything I did, and could just be happy, like them.

ART

But that's the thing -- you don't know everything. No one truly knows anything for certain.

STONE

I know you shouldn't waste your time praying for things that won't come... I know that for certain.

Stone pulls the truck over in front of an old shop on the corner of Main Street... "TULLY'S BARBERSHOP" is painted across the storefront window... Art looks the place over.

ART

What are we doing here?

STONE

Paying dues...

(nods at shop)

The Catholics may run the church, but in this town, the Irish are the true Papacy.

INT. TULLY'S BARBERSHOP - DAY

The tiny barbershop is dark and old-fashioned.

An IRISH FLAG hangs on a wall, above a half-dozen foldout chairs... MURPHY (50s) sits in one of the chairs, flipping through a newspaper. He is stocky, tough-looking Mick.

TULLY (60s) putter around a barber's chair, trimming a Young Boy's hair... He has a full-head of white hair and muscular arms covered in faded tattoos, most with Irish connotation.

BELLS JINGLE, as Stone and Art enter.

Murphy looks up from his newspaper. He glares suspiciously at Art and starts to get up...

STONE

No need to get up, Murph, the kid's with me. Go back to reading the funny pages.

Murphy scowls at Stone and reopens his paper.

TULLY

Yer early Stone...

STONE

I'm on time, Tully.

Tully finishes trimming the Boy's hair. He takes a cloth and gently wipes off the Boy's neck and shoulders.

TULLY

Yer all set, boy-o! Get a sucker from yer Uncle Murph and go watch yer cartoons in the office. Grampy needs to talk to these fellas fer a minute, ok?

The Boy nods. He grabs his treat from Murphy and disappears into the back office... Tully turns to face Stone.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Well, what'cha got fer me?

Stone removes a crumpled paper bag from inside his vest.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Give it to Murph.

Stone hands the bag to Art, who walks it over to Murphy. Murphy takes the bag and pulls out a stack of money, which he immediately begins counting... Tully looks Art over.

TULLY (CONT'D)

Who's this ya got with ya?

STONE

A friend of the club.

TULLY

Yer friend got a name?

STONE

Art McNally.



Tully looks at Art more closely.

TULLY  
You related to Fran McNally?

ART  
He was my grandfather.

TULLY  
So yer Tommy's boy?

Art nods.

TULLY (CONT'D)  
My condolences. Yer father was one  
of the good ones -- tough as a  
crooked nail.  
(nods at Stone)  
I doubt he'd be too pleased to see  
you'd fallen in with the likes --

STONE  
(interrupting)  
Tully, I've got shit to do today.  
Are we good?

Tully looks over at Murphy... Murphy nods.

TULLY  
Look like yer good to go...

STONE  
Then we're gone.

Stone turns and heads toward the exit, with Art in tow.

TULLY  
Heard yer having some trouble...

STONE  
Yeah? Who told you that?

TULLY  
Oh, me and Murph got our sources...

STONE  
Yeah, well, I'll have to let you  
fill me in sometime...

TULLY  
Heard the Forty Thieves are looking  
to move into town -- heard they got  
plans of muscling you out.

Stone stops by the door. He turns to face Tully.

STONE

No one muscles me, Tully -- you know that.

TULLY

Well, I sure hope not. 'Cause I'd sure hate to have to take our business elsewhere.

Tully smiles at Stone... Stone clenches his fists. He rips the door open and storms out. Art follows after him.

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND - DAY

Stone stalks around the worksite, anxiously chewing on the end of a cigar. He seems more tense than usual. Grubbers approaches to ask Stone a question.

GRUBBERS

Hey, quick question...

STONE

What? -- what do you want??

GRUBBERS

I was wondering if I could take a couple guys off Sully's crew to help finish the outside.

STONE

No.

GRUBBERS

But we need --

STONE

I said no, goddamnit!

(snarling)

If you can't get your crew in line, then I'll just have to demote you, and name Sully foreman! How's that sound?

Grubbers is taken aback by Stone's sudden outburst.

GRUBBERS

No. I can handle it. Forget I asked...

Stone sneers at him. Grubbers turns and walks away.

EXT. SCAFFOLDING RIG (LATER)

Grubbers stands at the end of the rig, watching his Crew as they chip away brick and reapply mortar to the side of the building... He notices Jeff working slower than the rest.

A Mason climbs down from an upper platform and stops to talk with Grubbers. He carries a large, gas-powered saw.

MASON

I finished smoothing down that pillar. You need anything else?

GRUBBERS

No. You're fine. Get outta here.

The Mason leaves... Grubbers continues to glare at Jeff.

GRUBBERS (CONT'D)

Reichlen, the fuck's taking you so long? We're on a deadline here!

Jeff pretends he doesn't hear Grubbers and keeps working.

GRUBBERS (CONT'D)

You hear me talking to you?! You've been on that same fucking section all day!

The Crew stop and look over at Jeff... He continues working... Infuriated, Grubbers marches over to him.

GRUBBERS (CONT'D)

Hey! You answer me when I fucking talk to you!

JEFF

Get fucked.

GRUBBERS

What'd you just say to me?!

JEFF

You heard me...

Jeff turns to face Grubbers.

JEFF (CONT'D)

And if you wanna make something of it, step up.

Grubbers is furious, but doesn't do anything... Jeff nods and goes back to work... Grubbers storms off.

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND - AFTERNOON (LATER)

The sun hangs low in the sky. The work day is over. The Crew begins to disperse, making their way out of the building and off the scaffolding, heading toward the parking lot.

Stone stands at the foot of the building, assessing his team's progress... He notices a large stone PILLAR, along the eastern edge of the roof, has been cut uneven.

STONE  
Everybody freeze!

The Crew all stop.

STONE (CONT'D)  
Grubbers, get over here!

Grubbers emerges from the group and walks over to Stone.

STONE (CONT'D)  
What's wrong with this picture??

GRUBBERS  
I don't know -- maybe that right pillar is a little crooked...

STONE  
A little crooked?? -- it's completely fucking lopsided! Where's that goddamn mason?

GRUBBERS  
I sent him home...

STONE  
You sent him home?!

GRUBBERS  
He said we were all done...

STONE  
(motion at pillar)  
Does that look 'all done' to you?!

GRUBBERS  
It was hard to judge from up there... But fine, I'll just call and get him back here...

STONE  
We don't have time for all that! You're gonna have to send someone up there to finish the job.

Grubbers looks up at the daunting task. He thinks for a moment... His lips curl into a sinister grin.

GRUBBERS

Reichlen! Get up here!

Jeff emerges from the crowd and walks over to them.

STONE

Jeff, go get the stone-saw out of my truck, and go finish smoothing down that right pillar...

Stone motions up at the pillar, a full six-stories above the ground... Jeff looks up and shakes his head.

JEFF

Fuck that! I'm not going up there.

Stone GRABS Jeff by his shirt collar and snarls in his face.

STONE

I swear to God, if you question another one of my orders, I will bury you under this fucking building, you hear me?!  
(shoves Jeff free)  
Now do your fucking job!

Jeff grumbles and trudges over to Stone's truck. He pulls the Stone-saw from the bed -- the massive machine looks like a chainsaw on steroids -- and makes the treacherous, six-story climb to the top of the scaffolding rig.

Jeff FIRES UP the STONE-SAW... The RIG RATTLES beneath him...

Sully rushes over to Stone and Grubbers.

SULLY

What's Jeff doing up there?

STONE

He's evening out that pillar so we can get paid tomorrow.

SULLY

He doesn't have the experience to do something like that!

STONE

And how does one gain experience, Sully? -- by doing.

GRUBBERS

This'll teach the little prick to  
act like he knows everything...

Sully turns and glares at Grubbers.

SULLY

You're the one who sent the mason  
home -- you should be up there  
doing this!

GRUBBERS

Get outta my face, or --

SULLY

Or what?!

STONE

Sully, that's enough... Get back in  
line with the rest of the men.

Sully continues to eye Grubbers, but does as he's told.

The Crew watch, as Jeff struggles to control the massive saw  
atop the shaky rig. The BLADE BUCKS and SQUEALS against the  
pillar... Jeff nearly loses his balance several times.

Smoke walks over to speak with Stone discreetly.

SMOKE

Alright. You proved your point. Get  
him down from there. Send Sully or  
Grubbers up to finish the rest.

STONE

I ordered Mr. Reichlen to do a job,  
and he's gonna do it.

SMOKE

If that thing bucks right, he's  
gonna fall off the side. Then  
where'll we be?

STONE

We'll be right here.

SMOKE

I promised Jeff's uncle we'd keep  
him safe.

STONE

I don't care what you promised.  
While he's here, he's my man, and  
I'll do whatever I want with him.

SMOKE

But his uncle is --

STONE

I'll smear his brains across the  
fucking sidewalk if I feel like it,  
and no one is gonna tell me  
otherwise!

Stone turns and glares at Smoke dominantly... Smoke relents  
and falls back in line, to watch with the rest of the Crew.

The SAW continues to BUCK and HISS against the pillar. Jeff's  
whole body shakes, as he tries to maintain his balance. He  
works the blade along the pillar, until it's finally even.

Jeff KILLS the engine... His face is damp and pale with fear.

STONE (CONT'D)

That'll do, Mr. Reichlen!

INT. BREAK TENT (LATER)

The Crew sit around, drinking in silence. Jeff's hands still  
shake from the trying ordeal... He curses in anger.

JEFF

I swear that motherfucker is trying  
to kill me!

SULLY

It was all Grubbers' fault...

JEFF

Fuck that! Stone has the final say  
in everything. He could've sent  
someone else up there, but he  
didn't 'cause he's a fucking  
asshole!

MUDDY

Hey! Watch what you say about the  
boss, you ungrateful little shit!

JEFF

Get fucked, Muddy!

Grubbers enters the tent... He sneers smugly at Jeff.

GRUBBERS

I guess that'll teach ya...

Jeff starts to get up, but Sully beats him to it. Sully stands up and gets in Grubbers' face.

SULLY

The fuck is your problem, man?!

GRUBBERS

You! You're my problem! You're trying to take my job as foreman!

SULLY

I don't want your shitty job!

GRUBBERS

Fuck you, you don't!

SULLY

Say 'fuck you' to me again, and see if I don't stomp all your goddamn teeth in.

GRUBBERS

Fuck. You. Try it.

Stone enters the tent with Leach, Rob and Junior. He spots Sully and Grubbers, squaring up to fight.

STONE

Sullivan, what'd I just tell you?!

SULLY

What?!

STONE

I gave a specific order -- I said 'no fighting' and here you are, picking a fucking fight!

SULLY

I didn't pick shit! It's this motherfucker over here --

STONE

(cutting him off)  
I've heard enough!

SULLY

But you're not even listening!

Stone snaps... He SLUGS Sully across the face, BUSTING his NOSE... Sully drops to the ground hard.

STONE

I don't need to listen!



Art and Jeff stand up to defend Sully... Leach, Rob, and Junior step forward ready to scrap... Art and Jeff back down.

STONE (CONT'D)

From here on out, there will be no further insolence! When I give an order, it'll be fucking followed, or there'll be hell to pay!

Stone SPITS on the ground. He turns and exits the tent with Leach, Rob, Junior and Grubbers... Jeff and Art walk over and help Sully to his feet. His nose bleeds profusely.

JEFF

Shit, that nose is leaking. Art, go grab him some ice, will ya?

Art nods and hurries out of the tent.

LATER

The Crew have all left... Sully tilts his head back, while Jeff presses a shirt against his gushing nose.

JEFF

I hope you don't give me AIDS...

SULLY

Don't worry -- it's not like you can catch AIDS twice.

Jeff and Sully chuckle... Just then, Art returns with Reina. She carries a little baggy of ice in her hand.

REINA

(in Spanish)

Tell your friend to keep his head forward, and to press the ice across the bridge of his nose.

ART

Sully, lean forward and put this on top of your nose...

Reina hands Sully the ice and frowns at his crooked nose.

REINA

(in Spanish)

His nose is broken.

ART

I think your nose is broken, bud.

SULLY  
 (sarcastically)  
 Thanks for the update...

JEFF  
 Well, I guess let's get him up and  
 take him to the ER...

Art and Jeff help Sully to his feet.

EXT. PARKING LOT (CONTINUOUS)

Reina walks back toward the Cantina Truck to finish closing  
 up. Art jogs up behind her...

ART  
 (in Spanish)  
 Hey... Wait...

Reina stop and turns back to face Art.

ART (CONT'D)  
 (in Spanish)  
 I never got to thank you...

REINA  
 (in Spanish)  
 It's no problem.

ART  
 (in Spanish)  
 I never got your name either.

REINA  
 (in Spanish)  
 Reina -- Reina Depaz.

Reina extends Art a dainty hand. Art shakes it.

ART  
 Art McNally.

REINA  
 (in Spanish)  
 Well, Art, I'm sure I'll see you  
 and your friends tomorrow...

ART  
 (in Spanish)  
 Is there anyway I could see you  
 before then?

Reina raises a suspicious eyebrow.

REINA  
 (in Spanish)  
 Are you asking me out on a date?

ART  
 (in Spanish)  
 Only if you're going to say yes.  
 (smiles)  
 Are you free around 8:00?

Reina smiles. She thinks for a minute and shrugs. She takes a pen from behind her ear and writes her number on Art's palm.

REINA  
 9:00 works better for me...

Art's mouth drops... Reina winks at him and walks away.

REINA (CONT'D)  
 That sign really does come in handy, sometimes.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - EVENING

Art and Jeff help Sully fill out a waiver at the front desk. MONITORS TICK and BEEP from behind a closed door. A Nurse eyes the three guardedly, as she studies Sully's nose.

NURSE  
 Wait, so what happened to him?

JEFF  
 He fell down some stairs.

NURSE  
 (skeptically)  
 Some stairs, huh?

SULLY  
 Yeah. I think I need some oxy's...

The Nurse rolls her eyes.

NURSE  
 Someone will be with you shortly.

LATER

The Nurse flips through a magazine, while Art and Jeff sit around, waiting for Sully to finish up. The waiting room is all but empty... Jeff leans in to talk with Art.

JEFF

I hear you're looking into becoming  
a Prospect for the club.

ART

I was thinking about it.

JEFF

Why the change of heart?

ART

I don't know -- does it matter?

JEFF

I just wanna make sure you're  
joining for the right reasons.

ART

What's that supposed to mean?

JEFF

I just noticed you've been hanging  
around Stone a lot, lately...

ART

So?

JEFF

So, Stone's not someone you wanna  
be like.

ART

I'm nothing like him.

Jeff raises a skeptical eyebrow. Art shakes his head.

ART (CONT'D)

I can't help if the guy likes  
talking to me. He just wants  
someone to listen to him...

JEFF

And that's fine -- just don't  
listen to close, alright?

Art shrugs in agreement.

JEFF (CONT'D)

Stone's not like you and me -- he  
doesn't care about anybody.

ART

I know how he is...

JEFF

Then you know you can never trust a  
guy like that.

Sully emerges from a back room, interrupting their  
conversation. His nose is taped up. His eyes are black and  
swollen... Art and Jeff get up to greet him.

JEFF (CONT'D)

How you feeling, big guy?

SULLY

Like someone just broke my fucking  
nose... How you feeling?

JEFF

Shit, better than you, I guess!

Jeff chuckles and pats Sully on the back.

EXT. REINA'S HOUSE - DUSK

Art parks his bike in front of a quaint house in a nicer part  
of town... He walks across the front lawn, just as the sun  
has started to set. He reaches the front door and knocks...

Reina opens the door. She looks stunning.

ART

Wow. You look --

REINA

(interrupting)  
Is that your bike?

Art looks back at his motorcycle, parked along the curb.

ART

Yeah...

REINA

You don't have a car?

ART

I sold it.

REINA

Oh... Well...

ART

Don't worry -- I'm a safe driver...

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET

Art ROARS down the narrow street. Reina grimaces, holding onto his back for dear life... She looks petrified.

EXT. RESTAURANT - PATIO - NIGHT

Art and Reina sit at a table on the moonlight patio. Candles glow from around the restaurant, creating a romantic midsummer ambiance... Reina smiles at Art.

REINA

So you're from Seattle?

ART

I grew up there, but I was born out here. My mom moved us to Seattle when I was real young.

REINA

Why so far?

ART

I don't know. I guess she just wanted a fresh start...

Reina smiles and nods thoughtfully.

REINA

I can understand that.

ART

Yeah? You looking to get out of here, too?

REINA

Eventually. I just graduated in May, so I have to save up some money first.

ART

What'd you study?

REINA

I was a Bio Major. I planned on going to Med School right away, but I figure school will always be there, right? -- Now is the only time I can really go out and see the world.

ART

Sounds like a plan.

REINA

What about you -- what's your plan?

ART

I guess I don't really have one.

REINA

Well, why did you come back here?

Art hesitates.

ART

My father passed away.

REINA

Oh my God -- I'm so sorry!

ART

No, don't worry about it...

REINA

Were you two close?

Art thinks for a moment... He frowns.

ART

No.

A Waiter approaches, interrupting their conversation. Art turns his attention to the Waiter, but Reina keeps her eyes fixed on Art. She looks at him with genuine empathy.

EXT. REINA'S HOUSE - NIGHT (LATER)

The moon gleams brightly in the sky. A choir of CRICKETS CHIRP from the front lawn, as Art walks Reina to the door.

ART

Well, here we are...

REINA

Here we are.

ART

I had a good time tonight.

REINA

Me too.

The two stand facing each other in an awkward silence.

ART

I should probably get going...

Art turns to leave, but Reina stops him... She leans in and lays a tender kiss on his lips... Art smiles broadly.

ART (CONT'D)

So does that mean I can see you again?

REINA

(in Spanish)

The sooner the better.

Reina smiles and heads inside her house.

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND - AFTERNOON

Art and Muddy rake up brick, under the heat of the midday sun. Art works with his shirt off. His body has tanned and muscled over from the months of hard labor.

Stone pulls up alongside them in his truck.

STONE

I need you two to come pick up a backhoe with me. You can finish that shit up tomorrow...

Art and Muddy shrug. They toss their rakes into the bed of the truck and hop in the cab.

INT. STONE'S TRUCK (LATER)

The three ride across town in silence. Muddy sits in the backseat alone, while Stone drives. Art stares out the side window... Stone looks over at him and smiles.

STONE

You looked a little pale the other day, when Mr. Reichlen was up on the scaffolding.

ART

That's funny -- I thought you looked surprisingly calm...

STONE

Why wouldn't I be?

ART

He could have died.

STONE

I fail to see your point...



Art rolls his eyes.

STONE (CONT'D)

You think I should've been worried about Mr. Reichlen?

ART

Most people would have been.

STONE

Well, I'm afraid I'm going to have to disagree with you on that one, Art. In fact, I'd say there are more people who would've rather seen Jeff fall the other day.

ART

I doubt that.

STONE

I don't.

(shrugs)

There are fewer jobs out there than there are people; more hungry bellies than there is food to fill them. Jeff's death, however unfortunate, would've freed up room for the rest of us to live.

ART

I don't think Jeff would have looked at it that way.

STONE

At that point, he wouldn't care one way or the other.

ART

I think most people care whether they're dead or not.

STONE

Only while they're living.

Stone flashes Art a smug smile. Art snorts in disgust.

ART

You're fucked up, you know that?

STONE

I'm a Realist.

ART

You're an asshole.

STONE

Well, let's look at it from your perspective then -- if Jeff had died the other day, you believe that his immortal soul would ascend to some eternal playground. Now he's free to walk amongst clouds, and play harps all day, and fuck angels -- so why would you care if I killed him?

(chuckles)

Sounds to me liked I'd be doing Jeff a huge favor.

ART

You should've been a lawyer.

STONE

Shit, what I should've done is...

Stone stops mid-sentence. His eyes narrow, as he taps the truck's brakes and glares out the window at something...

STONE'S POV

FIVE MEN have parked their bikes in a neat row, outside a local Convenience Store. All Five Men wear LEATHER VESTS with an INSIGNIA of a SKULL WEARING A BANDANNA OVER ITS MOUTH. Their TOP PATCHES read: "FORTY THIEVES".

BACK TO SCENE

Stone RIPS the WHEEL and turns down an adjacent side street.

EXT. SIDE STREET (CONTINUOUS)

Stone parks and gets out. He walks around to the back of the truck. Art and Muddy get out and follow him.

ART

What are we doing?

STONE

Sending a message.

MUDDY

What about the backhoe?

STONE

Fuck the backhoe.

Stone opens the truck's tailgate and starts fishing through the tools in the back. He pulls out the two rakes and begins examining their weight in his hand... Muddy grows anxious.

MUDDY

We should go get the other guys...

STONE

There's no time for that.

Stone SNAPS the HEAD off one of the rakes, making a large wooden staff. He hands it to Art... Stone SNAPS the HEAD off the other rake and tucks it under his arm, as he begins rummaging through the bed for something else.

Art studies the rake handle warily.

ART

What am I supposed to do with this?

Stone pulls two DUST-MASKS from the truck bed. He smiles, as he hands one of the masks to Art.

STONE

Nature versus Nurture, son. It's time we see how much Tom McNally you've actually got in you...

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE - AFTERNOON

The parking lot is packed for the afternoon rush. Cars stream in and out of the tiny lot. People bustle by with shopping bags, as Muddy creeps toward the row of motorcycles.

Muddy stops alongside the row and looks around uneasily.

Muddy's hands shake, as he reaches over and eases the first bike off its kickstand. He swallows hard and HEAVES the BIKE OVER -- SLAMMING IT into the rest of the row...

All five MOTORCYCLES CRASH to ground like dominoes.

The busy lot falls silent.

An ANGRY ROAR emanates from inside the store...

Muddy turns and begins to flee the scene, as THIEVE#1 bursts out of the Convenience Store and takes chase after him...

THIEVE#2 and THIEVE#3 emerge and join in the chase.

ACROSS PARKING LOT (CONTINUOUS)

Muddy scrambles to outrun his three pursuers... He SHOVES people aside... KNOCKS shopping carts over... SLIDES across the hood of a moving car... Until he finally reaches the end of the lot and disappears down a side street.

Thieve#1 follows after him, hot on Muddy's tail.

Thieve#2 and Thieve#3 stop at the far edge of the lot.

BACK TO SCENE

A crowd has gathered to gossip around the overturned bikes.

THIEVE#4 and THIEVE#5 finally emerge from the store, carrying grocery bags under their arms. The two hurry over to the crowd, pushing people out of their way, so they can survey the damage to their beloved motorcycles.

EXT. ALLEY (MEANWHILE)

Art and Stone watch from shadows, hidden along the eastern edge of the Convenience Store. Each wears a dust-mask over his face and grips a rake handle in his hand.

Stone nods at Thieve#4 and Thieve#5 and motions for Art to follow him...

EXT. PARKING LOT (CONTINUOUS)

Stone moves toward the front of the crowd, gripping the rake handle tightly in his hand... Art trails behind him.

Stone lines up behind Thieve#4 and WINDS the ROD BACK.

He SWINGS IT forward with all his might... The ROD SPLINTERS across Thieve#4's skull... Thieve#4 GRUNTS and CRUMPLES to the ground... Blood begins pouring from the man's head.

A WOMAN SCREAMS in horror.

Thieve#5 spins around to see Stone looming behind him.

THIEVE#5

Oh, fuck...

(screaming)

It's a trap!!!

ACROSS PARKING LOT (MEANWHILE)

Thieve#2 and Thieve#3 hear the cry... They turn around and spot Stone, standing over their fallen comrade... The two take off in a dead sprint towards them.

BACK TO SCENE

Stone turns to see that Art hasn't moved on Thieve#5.

STONE

What're you waiting for?! Hit him!

Art doesn't budge. He stares down at Thieve#4 in shock.

Thieve#5 WHIPS OUT a KNIFE and SLASHES wildly at the air. Stone jumps back, narrowly avoiding a fatal swipe.

The crowd GASPS and backs up.

Art spots the knife and his instincts take hold... His eyes widen and muscles tense... He SWINGS his RAKE HANDLE with all his might, landing a direct blow across Thieve#5's chin...

Thieve#5 CRASHES to the ground, SPITTING UP BLOOD and TEETH.

Art stands over the fallen man, pulsing with a primal power he has never known... Stone smiles and pats him on the back.

STONE (CONT'D)

That'll do just fine...

Thieve#2 and Thieve#3 are almost upon them...

Stone turns to face the approaching men. He lowers his shoulder and charges at Thieve#2, TACKLING him to the ground like an NFL Linebacker... Stone gets on top of Thieve#2 and begins HAMMERING ON his FACE with his powerful fists.

Thieve#3 charges at Art, wielding a knife... Art SMASHES his RAKE HANDLE across Thieve#3's arm... Thieve#3 HOWLS and DROPS the KNIFE... He grabs onto Art's collar and DRAGS him to the ground... The two wrestle savagely on the sidewalk.

Thieve#3 pins Art on his stomach and WEDGES a FINGER in his mouth... He TUGS viciously on Art's CHEEK, trying to rip it open. Art thrashes frantically beneath him... Art BITES DOWN hard... Thieve#3 YELPS and YANKS his FINGER FREE.

Art ELBOWS him in the face and scrambles to his feet.

Art raises his dust-mask, and SPITS a CHUNK of Thieve#3's finger onto the sidewalk...

The CROWD GROANS in disgust.

Thieve#3 kneels on the ground, clutching his finger in pain. Art steps forward and BOOTS him across the face...

Thieve#3 FLOPS ONTO his BACK, unconscious.

Art gets on top of Thieve#3 and begins HITTING him in the face... Art is overtaken with rage -- he lets out all of his pent up aggression -- BOUNCING Thieve#3's HEAD off the pavement with each terrible blow.

The CROWD GASPS in horror.

Stone suddenly emerges from the crowd and YANKS Art OFF the unconscious man... Art SNARLS and tries to rip free of Stone's grasp, but Stone holds him firmly.

STONE (CONT'D)

You should be proud!

Stone grabs Art by the wrists, motioning at his hands.

STONE (CONT'D)

Two months ago these hands couldn't swat a fly, and now... Now they can crush a man!

Art looks down at his hands... His knuckles are red with Thieve#3's blood... He frowns, disgusted with himself.

STONE (CONT'D)

C'mon, the cops will be here any minute.

EXT. SIDE STREET (CONTINUOUS)

The street is deserted. Thieve#1 has Muddy pinned against the side of a parked car. Muddy whimpers in the man's grasp, as Thieve#1 threatens him at knifepoint.

THIEVE#1

I should gut you like a fucking fish, you little --

Stone SMACKS the KNIFE out of Thieve#1's hands and throws him in a headlock... Thieve#1 thrashes in Stone's grip.

STONE

What do you think you're doing, flying colors in my town?

THIEVE#1  
 (strangled)  
 Fuck... You...

Stone smiles. He WRENCHES Thieve#1's ARM BACK, until it BREAKS... Thieve#1 SCREAMS... Stone SHOVES him to the ground, where he lies writhing in pain.

STONE  
 You let all your little friends  
 know this is Thunder territory...

Stone removes his dust-mask and kneels down, so Thieve#1 can get a good look at his face.

STONE (CONT'D)  
 And if I ever catch any of you  
 monkeys in my jungle again, I'll  
 kill every last one of ya.

SIRENS WAIL in the distance.

Stone stands up and spits on Thieve#1, before turning and heading toward the truck with Art and Muddy.

INT. TOM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Art sits on a stool alongside the sink, as Reina examines the different marks on his face. She frowns and dabs a rag on a cut over Art's right eye... He winces.

REINA  
 I told you it would sting...

Art nods, as Reina continues dabbing at the different cuts.

REINA (CONT'D)  
 So what happened?

ART  
 I already told you...

REINA  
 I don't understand why you hang out  
 with those guys. You're nothing  
 like them -- they're criminals.

ART  
 They're not criminals...

REINA  
 They're in a gang!

ART  
It's not a gang.

Reina sighs, annoyed, and tosses the rag into the sink.

REINA  
I just don't get why you do it.

ART  
It's something that meant a lot to  
my father...

REINA  
You said he never even talked to  
you about it!

ART  
There's a lot we didn't talk about.

REINA  
Well don't you think he would have,  
if this was really something he  
wanted you to be a part of?

Art sighs and shakes his head.

ART  
My father and I didn't have the  
best relationship -- he had a hard  
time opening up to me.

Reina stops and listens.

ART (CONT'D)  
I feel like this club might be my  
only chance to actually connect  
with him on something -- and that's  
important to me.  
(frowns)  
I don't want to go through life not  
knowing who my father was.

Reina kneels down, placing a tender hand on Art's knee.

REINA  
Sometimes keeping things from the  
ones you love is harder than  
sharing them...

ART  
Reina, I don't --



REINA

And it seems to me, the only reason  
your father kept things from you,  
was because he wanted better for  
you -- because he loved you.

(smiles)

And that's more than most people  
know about their fathers.

Art cracks a slow smile.

ART

You're pretty smart, you know that?

REINA

(playful smile)

Yeah. I know.

Art pulls her in for a big hug.

EXT. RANDY'S BAR - NIGHT

The tiny parking lot is packed with motorcycles. The bikes  
glow under the orange street lights. Rolling Thunder Members  
spill out of the bar, laughing and shouting at one another.

Art parks his bike and walks up to the entrance. Smoke stands  
out front, nursing a cigarette... He nods to Art.

SMOKE

Heard you threw down for the club  
the other day.

ART

I was just doing what I was told.

Smoke nods.

SMOKE

That's how it all starts...

INT. RANDY'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

The barroom is more crowded than usual. Everyone inside wears  
Rolling Thunder Vests. MUSIC BLARES from the jukebox. The Men  
laugh and joke heartily with one another.

Art spots Jeff and Sully by the bar and approaches the two.

ART

Hey, what's going on?

The MUSIC suddenly STOPS.

STONE (O.S.)

Gentlemen! Our guest of honor has  
graced us with his presence...

The Men all turn and look at Art... They begin clapping.

Art turns to see Stone walking out from behind the bar. He smiles broadly at Art, holding something conspicuously behind his back... He motions for silence.

STONE (CONT'D)

As you all know, Arthur McNally, here, comes from a long line of Rollers... His grandfather, Fran 'Irish' McNally was one of the founding members of this charter. Both Fran's sons -- Art's father and uncle -- served as loyal members until their respective demise and incarceration...

The Men raise their drinks in toast, shouting "HERE, HERE!"

STONE (CONT'D)

But as you also know, admittance into the Rolling Thunder isn't inherited. Our patches are not birthmarks -- they're battle scars, earned through sacrifice and bloodshed in the name of this club!

The Men ERUPT in HOOTS and HOLLERS, raising their drinks with pride... Stone, again, motions for silence.

STONE (CONT'D)

Friday, Art proved himself worthy to prospect for this club... And with any luck, he will one day earn the rite to wear our colors with pride, like his father, and his father did before him...

Stone pulls a LEATHER VEST out from behind his back... It has a SINGLE PATCH across the bottom that reads: "PROSPECT".

STONE (CONT'D)

This vest carries a heavy weight, son -- by accepting this cut, you agree to live your life in accordance with our bylaws...

(MORE)

STONE (CONT'D)

You regard your club and your colors above all else, even your own well-being.

(holds out vest)

Do you think you can you abide by these few, simple rules?

ART

Yes, sir.

STONE

Then welcome to the Thunder, son!

Stone hands Art his cut. Art nods thankfully and slips it on. The ROOM ERUPTS in CHEERS. Stone smiles, but raises his hand for silence... The room falls quiet.

STONE (CONT'D)

I would also like to take this time to address an incident that occurred the other day...

Stone feigns a sympathetic smile at Sully.

STONE (CONT'D)

I realize I may have acted a tad hasty in disciplining Sully -- but I stand by my actions!

(shaking fist)

I was voted in as Club President, and have remained unchallenged for two terms now. When I give an order, it isn't a suggestion. As far as everyone here is concerned, it's the fucking law!

The Men all nod in agreement. Jeff scowls in disgust.

STONE (CONT'D)

And let me also make it clear that Sully wasn't singled out in any way. I wouldn't hesitate teaching any one of you the same lesson, if opportunity should arise...

JEFF

You should try teaching me a lesson then. See how that goes.

The Men turn and look at Jeff in shock... Stone smiles.

STONE

I don't think I heard you right, Jeff...

JEFF  
Yes you did.

Stone chuckles. He turns to address the quiet room.

STONE  
Remember I said this, boys -- pride  
always comes before the fall.

JEFF  
Then I guess it's just a matter of  
who falls first...

STONE  
And who stays down!

Jeff and Stone glare at one another from across the room. Neither man backs down. The room remains in a tense silence... Stone cracks an evil grin and looks away.

STONE (CONT'D)  
Enough of this shit... Chubbs, pour  
these bastards some shots. Drinks  
are on me tonight, boys!

Chubbs pulls out a bottle of whiskey and starts to fill a long line of shot glasses with booze. The Men CHEER and rush the bar, breaking the heavy tension in the barroom.

Jeff stays back, keeping a wary eye on Stone, as he fades back into the shadows.

MONTAGE - ART'S JUSTIFICATION

A.) INT. RANDY'S BAR (PRESENT TIME)

Art crowds around the bar with the rest of the Men, throwing back shots like one of the guys. The other Members ruffle up his hair, toasting Art as a beloved younger brother.

REINA (V.O.)  
I guess I just don't see the appeal  
in it.

ART (V.O.)  
It's a lifestyle -- they're men who  
live life on their own terms...

## B.) EXT. NEW ENGLAND COUNTRYSIDE - AFTERNOON

Art, Jeff, and Sully ride their bikes down a winding woodland road, trailing a pack of other Rolling Thunder Members. The Men all laugh and joke around with one another as they ride.

ART (V.O.)

They're the closest thing we'll  
ever see to Vikings or Cowboys...

## C.) EXT. BIKER BAR - DAY

All thirty Members of the Rolling Thunder pose for a picture outside the bar. Art stands back with a camera, but the guys motion for Art to get in the picture. Art turns and hands the camera to a Passerby, and runs into the shot.

ART (V.O.)

The things that set them apart from  
the rest of society bring them  
closer together as a club. And I  
think that's a beautiful thing...

The Members put their arms around one another, as the Passerby counts down and takes the snapshot.

REINA (V.O.)

But they're dangerous. They're all  
violent men.

## D.) INT. BREAK TENT - AFTERNOON

Art, Jeff, Sully, and some Rolling Thunder Members play cards under the shade of the tent. They laugh and joke around with one another, after a hard day's work.

ART (V.O.)

Violence is a natural thing. All  
men are capable of it... It's the  
people with a capacity for evil  
that you have to worry about.

REINA (V.O.)

Do you know anyone like that?

Stone enters. The mood becomes suddenly tense. Stone circles the table, relishing in the fear he instills in other men.

E.) EXT. WOODS - DAY

Stone, Smoke, Leach, Rob and Junior stand outside a little TRAILER in a wooded area. Sunlight struggles to break through the leafy canopy... There isn't another person for miles.

ART (V.O.)  
Yeah, there's a few...

A BALD MAN emerges from the Trailer, holding a duffel bag. He hands the bag to Stone. Stone opens it... The duffel bag is lined with bags of Crystal Meth.

Stone hands the duffel bag back to Rob. Leach hands the Bald Man a backpack. The Bald Man reaches into the bag and pulls out a handful of money... He smiles and nods to Stone.

REINA (V.O.)  
Are you scared of them?

F.) INT. RANDY'S BAR (PRESENT TIME)

Stone sits in a darkened corner of the bar, watching his Men celebrate the way a wolf does sheep. Jeff and Sully drink on the opposite side of the room, watching everyone around them, unsure of who to trust.

ART (V.O.)  
Everybody's scared of them, even if they won't admit it.

Art sits at the bar drinking with the other Men.

He watches Grubbers and Muddy walk over and talk discreetly with Stone... Stone's eyes shift over to Jeff. He nods.

ART (V.O.)  
See, with your enemies, you know who they are and what they're about... But with guys like that, you never see them coming.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is dark. Art sits on the couch, basking in the white glow of the television set. Reina lies asleep, curled up against his chest. Art strokes her hair as she sleeps.

A CELL PHONE BUZZES atop the coffee table. Art reaches over and picks it up. He has a TEXT MESSAGE from Stone...

INSERT: TEXT MESSAGE

MEET ME DOWN THE OFFICE. NOW.

BACK TO SCENE

Art gets up carefully, without waking Reina. He grabs his keys off the coffee table and exits the room.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

Art sits across the desk from Stone. Stone reads his book under the hazy glow of a desk lamp, puffing on a lit cigar. He doesn't say a word... Art checks his watch, annoyed.

ART

Is there a specific reason why you called me down here?

STONE

I need a reason?

Stone continues reading. Art grumbles, watching Stone read his Nietzsche book with contempt.

ART

Nietzsche was a real miserable motherfucker, you know that?

STONE

I like him.

ART

You might like other stuff, too, if you ever gave something else a try. Why not try reading some Thomas Hobbes, or some Herbert Spencer, or something?

STONE

That preachy 'all men are created equal' bullshit? -- No thanks.

Art shakes his head, annoyed with Stone.

ART

For as smart as your are, sometimes you really don't know what the fuck you're talking about.

Stone sighs and tosses his book on the desktop.

STONE

Alright, well if you're so fucking smart, explain to me this -- if all men are truly created equal, then why is it that some men are born Greek statues -- big, tall, handsome bastards with defined muscles and chiseled features -- while others are born with cleft palates and crooked limbs?

ART

You can't seriously expect me to answer that. That's asking me to try and explain God's will...

STONE

Then that's your problem, right there! -- Thinking that God has a will; thinking that there's actually a reason for all this!

ART

I believe everything does happen for a reason...

Stone SLAMS his FIST against the desktop.

STONE

Then you should think God is a miserable motherfucker!

(low growl)

Do you think God plays favorites, Art? -- Do you think he likes you better than me??

ART

I never said that...

STONE

You implied it! -- Why else would He let you attend a prestigious college university, while I had to do all my studying out of second-hand books in the state pen?!

ART

You're not the only person who's ever had it tough. You just have to have faith that --

STONE

Faith?? I have to have faith?!



Stone SLAPS the cover of his Nietzsche book.

STONE (CONT'D)

'A casual stroll through an insane asylum will show you that faith, doesn't prove anything!'

Art huffs angrily. He's had enough.

ART

Listen, I'm trying to have a civilized conversation with you, but if you're just gonna get all worked up, I'm going to leave.

(annoyed)

You never take anything I say seriously -- you don't know anything about faith, you don't want to know anything about morality -- you just want to sit there and spit Nietzsche at me, until I can't take it anymore, and it's annoying! It's fucking ignorant is what it is!

Stone falls silent. He sits across the desk, jaw clenched and face red with rage... Art instantly regrets his outburst.

Stone tosses his cigar aside and scrambles around the desk at Art... Art tries to get to his feet, but Stone is already upon him... He grabs Art around the neck, and lifts him out of his chair, strangling him viciously with both hands.

STONE

(throttling Art)

Now where's your faith, you smug little bastard?!

Art KICKS and GURGLES helplessly.

STONE (CONT'D)

If you represent everything that's good in this world, and I'm all things evil, then why hasn't your God struck me down?! -- Why hasn't he rewarded your faith?!

(shaking Art)

Because it isn't real, Art! It isn't fucking real!

Art's face begins to purple over. His eyelids flicker, as his consciousness starts to fade.

STONE (CONT'D)

If there's no such thing as God,  
then your faith is false! It  
misleads you, just like every other  
human emotion! -- There's no such  
thing as love, only lust and  
competition! No right or wrong,  
just strength and weakness!

(pulls Art close)

And there is no such thing as  
morality. There is only fear. Fear  
is what keeps men from doing what  
they ought not. Fear, Artie. Fear  
is the mother of morality!

Art passes out.

OFFICE (MINUTES LATER)

Art comes to, several minutes later, sprawled across the  
office floor. Stone leans on his desk, watching Art, as he  
smokes a cigar... There's a KNOCK at the door.

The door opens. Jeff is led into the room by Rob and Leach.

STONE

Help Art up...

Rob and Leach lift Art up, holding him firmly by each arm.

Jeff stands alone in the center of the room. He tries to  
appear undaunted, as Stone eyes him like a hungry tiger.

STONE (CONT'D)

Mr. Reichlen, do you know why I've  
brought you in here?

Jeff glares at Stone, refusing to answer.

STONE (CONT'D)

You've made it clear, on several  
occasions, that you don't think I'm  
a very good leader...

JEFF

That's because you're not.

Stone chuckles and turns to Art.

STONE

Do you hear how he speaks to me,  
Art? It's almost like he's not  
afraid of me...

JEFF

I'm not afraid of you.

STONE

And therein lies the problem! A subordinate must fear his superior, or else there is no chain of command. If I allow one person to cast doubt on the way I do things, pretty soon everybody will be questioning my authority. And I can't have that, can I?

Jeff stands firm. He doesn't flinch.

JEFF

I know what you're gonna do, but I'm not afraid -- I'm not backing down from you.

STONE

Ah, a man of integrity! You have what some might call 'a strong moral courage'...

(smiles at Art)

Isn't that right, Art?

ART

He's a braver man than you.

STONE

Hmmmm. This may be true...

(evil grin)

But I'd rather be a living coward than a dead hero, any day!

Stone turns and SLUGS Jeff across the face... Jeff falls hard to the floor... He tries to get up, but Stone KICKS him in the gut, slamming Jeff's body against the desk.

Rob and Leach hold Art tight. He SCREAMS in anger.

The DESK LAMP ROCKS and FALLS off the desk. The BULB CRACKS, throwing the room into complete darkness...

The sound of FISTS SMACKING FLESH fill the darkness... SAVAGE GRUNTS and MUFFLED MOANS echo around the room... A BOOT HEEL CRACKS against someone's SKULL...

The office falls silent.

FOOTSTEPS CLICK toward the office door. The overhead light suddenly FLICKS ON, illuminating the darkened room.

A trail of BLOOD leads from the center of the office, over to the door. Stone stands in the doorway. Jeff's body lies limp at his feet... His face is mashed and bloody.

STONE (CONT'D)  
Where's your God now, Art?

INT. RANDY'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

The barroom is silent. The Men gather outside the office door, trying to hear what's happened.

The DOOR FLIES OPEN... The Men step aside, as Stone drags Jeff's unconscious body through the crowd, toward the exit.

STONE  
Everybody, outside, now!

EXT. RANDY'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Stone drags Jeff out the front door and across the moonlit parking lot. The Men pour out of the bar. They watch as Stone HURLS Jeff against his motorcycle, knocking it over. Jeff lays unconscious across his overturned bike.

Stone turns to face the Men, foaming with rage.

STONE  
Do you see him?! Do you all see  
what happens when you question my  
authority?!  
(pointing at crowd)  
If there's anyone else who wants to  
question the way I do things, now  
is the time to step forward!

Art bursts through the front door. He pushes his way through the crowd, ready to accept Stone's challenge, but Smoke grabs him before he can... Art struggles to break free.

SMOKE  
(whispering)  
No, son. Not now.

Smoke motions for Art to remain calm. Art does as he's told.

STONE  
No one?? -- You're just gonna stand  
there, while one of your brothers  
is beaten to a fucking pulp?!

The Men are quiet... Stone shakes his head in disgust.

STONE (CONT'D)

Well, if he's not worth saving,  
then he doesn't deserve to be a  
brother... Jeff Reichlen is hereby  
excommunicated from this club!

Stone pulls a large SERRATED KNIFE from the sheath on his  
belt... He flips the blade around in his hand and lifts Jeff  
up by the back of his vest... The Men hold their breath.

Stone takes the knife and begins SAWING off Jeff's PATCHES.

The Men all watch in somber silence... Except for Muddy.

MUDDY

Looks like that little mutt finally  
got what was coming to him...

Muddy turns to see Art glaring at him. He smirks in Art's  
face and spits on the ground at his feet.

Infuriated, Art snatches a BOTTLE from one of the Men and  
SMASHES it over Muddy's head... Muddy SQUEALS and falls to  
the ground... Art begins STOMPING him viciously.

ART

(stomping Muddy)  
You piece of shit! You fucking low-  
life cock-sucker! I'll kill you!

The Men struggle to pull Art off of Muddy.

Stone walks over to the scuffle, still brandishing the knife.  
He wags the blade in Art's face... Art stops thrashing.

STONE

That felt good, didn't it?

Art spits at the ground in disgust... Stone smiles at him.

STONE (CONT'D)

You think we're different, you and  
me... But we're not. We're the same  
creature -- we've got the same  
violence boiling up inside us, just  
waiting to get let out.

ART

Then you better hope that violence  
doesn't come for you, one day!

STONE

Oh, I'm sure it will -- and I'll be  
right here, waiting for it...

Stone raises his knife over Art's head... Art tenses... Stone smiles and taps Art's shoulder with the breadth of the blade.

STONE (CONT'D)  
 (low whisper)  
 Nothing like a mortal struggle to  
 make you appreciate every little  
 twitch and gurgle.

Art swallows hard... Stone sheaths his knife and pushes past him, making his way back into the bar.

INT. TOM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (LATER)

Reina lies asleep on the couch. The house lays dark and still. She is suddenly jarred awake by the BACKDOOR SLAMMING SHUT. Heavy FOOTSTEPS THUNDER down the hallway.

Reina sits up to see Art's feet disappear up the stairwell.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM

Art hovers over Tom's bureau. He flips on a lamp, casting an ominous glow over the darkened room. He slides open the top drawer and starts rummaging around for something...

Art removes a SHEATHED KNIFE. He unsheathes the blade and examines it -- running his finger down its jagged edge.

Reina stands in the doorway, watching him.

REINA  
 Art, what are you doing?

ART  
 He tried to kill Jeff tonight.

REINA  
 Who did?! -- Who hurt Jeff??

ART  
 He tried to kill Jeff, and now he's  
 going to try and kill me.

REINA  
 Art, who?! Who wants to hurt you?!

ART  
 Stone.

REINA  
 The man you work for??

ART

Kevin Stone is not a man...  
 (getting worked up)  
 Men feel remorse. They feel guilt.  
 They don't go around hurting and  
 killing for no fucking reason!

Art SLAMS the dresser with the BUTT of the knife... Reina  
 rushes across the room and hugs Art around the waist.

REINA

So just leave! Walk away!

ART

I can't...

REINA

Of course you can!

Art tries to push past Reina, but she holds him tight.

REINA (CONT'D)

I'll even go with you! We can leave  
 together -- we'll pack up all our  
 stuff and go someplace where nobody  
 knows us. We can start fresh!

ART

I'm not leaving.

REINA

Then what, Art?? -- What are you  
 going to do??

Art is silent... Reina grows worried.

REINA (CONT'D)

Art! Answer me! What are you going  
 to do?!

ART

I'm going to kill him.

Reina looks up at Art... His face is stone cold... She  
 shudders and begins to weep. Art sheathes the knife and clips  
 it to his belt. He pushes past Reina and exits the room.

EXT. WORKSITE - GROUND - MORNING

The air is hot and humid. Art and Muddy rake brick in tense  
 silence, glaring warily at one another. Muddy's head is taped  
 in gauze. Tom's knife hangs from Art's belt loop.

Someone suddenly TAPS Art on the shoulder. Art spins around quickly... Stone chuckles behind him... Art glares at him.

STONE

You're a little jumpy today!

ART

What do you want?

STONE

I've got good news -- there's an opening on the scaffolding crew and I'm here to offer you the job!

ART

No thanks.

Art turns to go back to work, but Stone snatches his rake.

STONE

That offer wasn't up for negotiation.

Art grumbles something under his breath. Stone steps forward, chest to chest with Art... His eyes glow with fury.

STONE (CONT'D)

After the whole incident with Mr. Reichlen, I thought you would've smartened up by now.

Art shrugs indignantly.

STONE (CONT'D)

But then again, I guess I have been taking it easy on you, huh?

ART

Yeah, you're a real pushover.

STONE

I'm serious.

ART

So am I.

Art continues to glare at Stone, refusing to concede to his will. Stone looks him over... He cracks an evil grin.

STONE

Come to think of it, I never did collect a carnal tax from you, did I?



ART

And this whole time I thought you  
kept me around for conversation.  
Now you want to fuck me, too?

STONE

No, son. Not you...

Stone looks out toward the Cantina Truck, sitting in the parking lot. His lips curl into a sinister grin. Art realizes what Stone's implying and his eyes widen with rage.

ART

If you go anywhere near her, I  
swear to God I'll --

STONE

Choose your next words carefully.  
(grave sincerity)  
'Cause if you threaten my life  
again, I'll have to hold you to it.

Art is silent. Stone nods dominantly, turns, and walks away.

EXT. WORKSITE - PARKING LOT - DUSK

The sun has started to set. Art stands by his bike, clipping on his helmet. Someone suddenly places a hand on his shoulder. Art spins around, brandishing his knife.

Smoke raises his hands and takes a step back.

SMOKE

Easy, son...

ART

What do you want?

SMOKE

I heard from Jeff's uncle.

Art eyes him warily, before finally sheathing his knife.

ART

How is he?

SMOKE

Uncle said he's got a pretty nasty  
scar; lost most of the hearing in  
his right ear... But he's alive.

ART

Well, at least he's got that.

Art gets on his bike and FIRES IT UP. He tries to leave, but Smoke grabs hold of Art's handlebars... He scowls, motioning for Art to kill the engine... Art does.

SMOKE

The fuck's the matter with you?

ART

With me? -- Nothing.

SMOKE

Really? 'Cause if you ask me, it looks like someone's gone and put the fear of God in you.

ART

No. Not God. -- Someone's gone and put the fear of man in me.

SMOKE

Is that why you're carrying around that big, ugly knife?

Smoke motions at the knife... Art nods.

SMOKE (CONT'D)

Well, I'll tell you this -- that thing ain't gonna do you any good, if you're just gonna wait around for someone to make you use it.

ART

Is that a threat?

SMOKE

No. No threat. Just some friendly advice...

Smoke lets go of Art's handlebars and walks away.

MONTAGE - ART'S MISERY (ENSUING WEEKS)

A.) EXT. WORKSITE

-- Art hauls brick and mortar up the scaffolding rig. His expression is cold and distant. He stomps around like a caged beast. Tom's knife hangs from his belt loop.

-- Stone and Grubbers watch Art from a distance. Grubbers whispers something to Stone as they watch. Stone nods.

-- The Crew sit around eating lunch. Art walks by. He doesn't say a word to anyone. He sits by himself, keeping a watchful, paranoid eye on everyone. The Men whisper about him.

-- Reina watches Art from the Cantina Truck. She frowns.

B.) RANDY'S BAR

-- Art nurses a beer, keeping his back to the wall. Stone walks across the room and Art straightens up. He rests a wary hand on the handle of his knife, watching Stone like a hawk.

-- Stone notices Art. He smiles at his discomfort.

C.) INT. TOM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

-- Art teeters over the kitchen counter, pouring himself a stiff drink. He snatches the glass and throws the shot back.

-- Art pours himself another shot, and another, slamming back booze like it was water... Until he finally slumps over and passes out on the kitchen counter.

EXT. BREAK TENT - MORNING

The sky is grey and brooding. Art arrives to find the Crew standing around. Stone and Grubbers are no where to be seen. The Men grumble angrily with one another.

Art approaches Sully to see what's happening.

ART

Why isn't anybody working?

Sully looks Art over... He's grungy and reeks of booze.

SULLY

The fuck happened to you?

ART

C'mon, what's going on?

Sully's face hardens.

SULLY

Grubbers is dead.

ART

What?!

SULLY

Saturday, him and Stone took a ride up to Maine -- soon as they hit 95, some Forty Thieves pulled up behind 'em in a van, and shot 'em off their bikes.

ART

What about Stone?

SULLY

He took two to the back, but the lucky bastard was wearing a Kevlar under his cut, so all he did was hit and roll. He broke both his legs, but he's alive.

Art nods. He shrugs callously.

ART

So no work?

SULLY

(taken aback)  
Yeah... No work.

Art turns and walks away.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DAY

The midday sky is still grey. Smoke lingers on the front steps, waiting for Art to return home. He watches as Art pulls into the driveway and parks.

The two lock eyes. Art marches toward him.

ART

You here to offer me some more advice?

Smoke shakes his head.

SMOKE

Stone got moved home this morning.

ART

Tell him my sympathy card is in the mail.

SMOKE

I thought you might wanna see him.

ART

Yeah, well I don't.

Art walks past Smoke and starts to head inside.

SMOKE

What're you gonna do now?

ART

Well, it's really none of your business, but the house just sold, and with Stone out of commission, I was thinking now is probably a good time for me to get out of here.

SMOKE

That's not gonna solve anything.

ART

It'll solve plenty.

SMOKE

You'll still have a score to settle...

Art whips around to face Smoke.

ART

That shit between Jeff and Stone is Jeff's problem -- not mine!

SMOKE

I'm not talking about Jeff.

ART

Then what are you talking about?!

SMOKE

I think you know what I'm talking about -- I think you've known it all along...

Art doesn't say a word. He looks long and hard at Smoke.

SMOKE (CONT'D)

A few months back, Stone and your old man got into it a little bit. Tommy didn't like the direction Stone was taking the club, and he let everybody know it. Neither guy would back down, and pretty soon, it looked like their beef was gonna break up the club... So Stone asked me to take care of it.

(MORE)

SMOKE (CONT'D)

(frowns)

Now, I refused, but a week later,  
Tommy was dead all the same.

Art's swallows hard. His whole body trembles. He lowers his head, at a total loss for words... Smoke pats him on the back, his hard face showing a trace of remorse.

SMOKE (CONT'D)

Do whatever you gotta do, kid. No  
one's gonna miss the guy.

INT. CONCORD PRISON - VISITATION ROOM - AFTERNOON

Rick sits alone at one of the tables. The room is dark. Storm clouds hang heavy outside the prison's barred windows.

A SECURITY DOOR BUZZES... Art is let in. He's not the same person who came to visit Rick months before -- his hair is long and greasy; his eyes are wild -- he looks awful.

RICK

Your father's probably rolling over  
in his grave right now...

ART

He killed him, Uncle Rick!

(distraught)

Stone wanted him dead and now he's  
dead. He killed my father -- Kevin  
Stone murdered my father!

Some of the other Inmates look over at Art. Rick raises a finger to his lips and motions for Art to take a seat. Art sits down heavily. He fights to hold back tears.

ART (CONT'D)

Smoke said --

RICK

I know what Smoke said.

ART

Then you know he did it! You know  
Stone is the person responsible for  
all this!

RICK

No, Artie, they all are.

ART

But Stone --

RICK

Stone may have been the one to get his hands dirty, but every man in that club is responsible for what happened to Tommy. Every guy who looked the other way, or didn't have the balls to speak up, when Stone did wrong by the club, they're all to blame for your father's death.

ART

Then what am I supposed to do?! How do I make this right?!

RICK

You can't...

Art SLAMS his FIST against the tabletop.

ART

Then at least I'll make it even!

RICK

Listen, I know you're hurting right now, Artie, but you gotta be smart.  
(shakes head)  
There's no honor in doing what you're thinking about doing.

ART

You think I give a fuck about honor anymore, Uncle Rick?! This man killed my father! A guy like Kevin Stone has no honor!

Rick GRABS Art by his wrists and PULLS him close.

RICK

And that's exactly why you should!  
(whispering)  
Because you're starting to act less and less like my brother, and more like the man who killed him.

Art falls silent.

EXT. CONCORD PRISON - PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Dark storm clouds hang over the solemn brick and barbwire of Concord Prison. Art digs a cellphone from his pocket. He dials a number and puts the phone to his ear.

ART

Hey, it's me... Were you serious  
when you said you'd go with me?

(beat)

Can you be ready to go by tomorrow?

(beat)

Alright, come by tonight. We'll  
leave in the morning.

(beat)

I love you, too.

INT. TULLY'S BARBERSHOP - EVENING

Orange sunlight pours in through the shop windows. Tully stands by a barber's chair, cleaning his instruments. Murphy reads a newspaper in his usual seat.

BELLS JINGLE as the front door opens.

Murphy glances up from his paper... Smoke enters, followed by Leach, Rob, and Junior. All four men are dressed in black.

Smoke hands Murphy a thick ENVELOPE. Murphy nods and tucks the envelope in his coat pocket. He reaches beneath his chair, and slides out a DUFFEL BAG. Smoke picks up the heavy bag and hands it back to Rob.

Leach, Rob, and Junior turn and exit the shop.

Smoke turns to face Tully.

TULLY

I don't want none of this spilling  
back into my town.

SMOKE

It'll all be over tonight.

TULLY

And Stone?

SMOKE

He'll be taken care of.

Tully nods. Smoke turns and exits.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - DUSK

The sun has started to set. The house lays dark, except for the faint glow of a second-story window. The 'FOR SALE' SIGN has a "SOLD" sticker slapped across the front of it.



Art pulls into the driveway on his motorcycle and parks.

INTERCUT: EXT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE - DUSK

A cement Clubhouse sits in a dirt lot, on a deserted street. A dozen motorcycles are parked out front. A NEON SIGN BLINKS from atop the roof. The block is deathly still. Not even the street lights dare work.

A black VAN creeps by with its lights off and parks.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Art sits on his bike, watching the sun set behind Tom's house... He UNBUCKLES his HELMET.

INTERCUT: INT. VAN (CONTINUOUS)

Smoke checks out the back window of the Van. The sun has set... He TIES a BLACK BANDANA over his face.

Rob, Leach, and Junior all do the same.

The four sit in the back of the darkened Van. The duffel bag from Tully's Shop lays empty at their feet. Junior and Rob each hold a shotgun across their lap. Leach readjusts his grip on an Uzi.

Smoke looks up and DRAGS a THUMB across his throat.

EXT. TOM'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Art stands at the front door, under the clean WHITE GLOW of the PORCH LIGHT. He removes a HOUSE KEY from his pocket.

Art inserts the key and EASES the front DOOR OPEN.

INTERCUT: EXT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Smoke stands at the front door, under the OMINOUS RED of the NEON SIGN. He pulls TWO PISTOLS from his waistband and COCKS EACH GUN back.

Smoke takes a deep breath and KICKS the front DOOR IN.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Reina kneels on the floor, packing boxes. A MAN'S SHADOW suddenly appears across the floorboards. Reina turns and looks toward the doorway. She smiles.

INTERCUT: INT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

A DOZEN FORTY THIEVES sit inside the smoky Clubhouse. Some play cards at a table near the front. Others toss darts in the corner, or drink at a crooked bar along the back wall.

The front DOOR FLIES OPEN... A MAN'S SHADOW appears across the barroom floor. All twelve Men turn and look toward the open doorway. Their mouths drop. Nobody moves.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Art smiles at Reina from the doorway. He enters.

INTERCUT: INT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Smoke emerges from the darkened doorway, face covered and both pistols raised... He OPENS FIRE on the stunned men.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Art and Reina assemble cardboard moving boxes. They TOSS the completed BOXES into the center of the room.

INTERCUT: INT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

The Clubhouse has erupted in pandemonium. Smoke moves across the room, FIRING ROUNDS at the Thieves, as they FLIP TABLES and DIVE for cover.

Leach enters, following in Smoke's wake. He SPRAYS his UZI into the crowd of Forty Thieves.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE - BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

The dresser drawers are all pulled out and empty. Art walks across the bedroom carrying a brown moving box.

INTERCUT: INT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Thieve#1 runs along the back wall, using the bar for cover. BULLETS RIP through the air above him, as he scurries toward a back door... He reaches the door and YANKS IT open...

He is greeted by a SHOTGUN BLAST to the chest.

Rob and Junior BURST in through the open door and begin PUMPING SLUGS into the last of the fleeing men.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Art and Reina stand in the middle of the bedroom, surveying all they have accomplished. Packed boxes lie all around them. The walls have been stripped. The floor is bare.

Art looks around and frowns at the scene.

INTERCUT: INT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Smoke, Rob, Junior and Leach stand in the middle of the Clubhouse, surveying the destruction. Bodies lie all around them. The walls are riddled with bulletholes. The floor is soaked in blood.

Smoke looks around and lights himself a cigarette.

LEACH

Now what, chief?

SMOKE

Burn it.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

Reina looks up and notices Art frowning. She puts her arm around his waist and kisses him softly on the cheek. Art smiles. He bends down and kisses her tenderly on the lips. They look deep into each other's eyes and begin kissing...

Reina takes off Art's shirt, before doing the same. The two fall onto the bed together. They struggle to disrobe as they continue kissing passionately.

INTERCUT: EXT. FORTY THIEVES' CLUBHOUSE (CONTINUOUS)

Leach holds a full GAS CAN. A damp rag hangs out of its open mouth. He FLICKS OPEN a LIGHTER and LIGHTS the RAG.

The rag immediately catches fire. Leach HURLS the FLAMING GAS CAN in through the open doorway of the Clubhouse...

The Clubhouse ERUPTS in FLAMES.

INT. TOM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Reina lies asleep in bed. The room is all packed. Everything is ready to go. Art stands in the corner of the moonlit room, over his father's bureau. He holds the knife in his hand.

Art SLIDES the BLADE OUT of its sheath and examines it. He looks up and catches his reflection in the mirror above the bureau. His face hardens. He knows what he must do.

Art JAMS the KNIFE back into its sheath.

INT. STONE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

A TV CHATTERS in the background. Rob and Junior lounge on the living room sofa, shotguns lain across both their laps. They chuckle at a program on the television set.

Smoke stands at the edge of the darkened room, keeping a watchful eye out a large bay window...

SMOKE'S POV

Leach and two Rolling Thunder Members stand guard on Stone's front porch, automatic rifles tucked discreetly by their sides. The morning sky is grey. The street is quiet.

A MOTORCYCLE ROARS in the distance.

The two Members begin to raise their rifles. Leach leans over the railing to see who is approaching...

BACK TO SCENE

Smoke smiles, as Arts pull into the driveway and parks.

INT. STONE'S BEDROOM

The large bedroom is mundane. It lacks any real character or charm. Grey light filters in through a set of windows along the far wall. Stone lies in bed watching TV. Both of his legs are in casts. His right leg hangs elevated in a sling.

There is a KNOCK at the door...

Smoke leads Art in. Stone turns to face the two. His eyelids droop from the effects of too many painkillers.

STONE

Artie -- come in, come in!

Smoke exits, leaving Art and Stone alone in the room.

STONE (CONT'D)

I'm actually glad to see you...

Art doesn't say a word. He walks over to the far windows and CLOSES the BLINDS. Stone squints in the dim light.

STONE (CONT'D)

I've been stuck in bed for three days now. My brain's turning to mush, watching this goddamn idiot-box all day...

Art still doesn't respond. He walks over to the bedroom door and LOCKS IT. He grabs a TV remote off the nightstand and TURNS the VOLUME ALL THE WAY UP.

STONE (CONT'D)

What the hell are you doing?

ART

I want answers.

Art pulls a chair alongside Stone's bed. He takes a seat and UNSHEATHES his KNIFE, laying it across his lap.

ART (CONT'D)

Did you kill my father?

Stone looks at the blade and smiles.

STONE

What's the knife for?

ART

Answer the question.

STONE

You gonna stab me, Art?

ART

Answer the fucking question!

Stone chuckles, undaunted by Art's threat.

STONE

You think you've got what it takes  
to stick me with that knife?

ART

I don't know. We'll find out.

STONE

Well you had better know, son!  
There's no tougher way to kill a  
man than with a knife...

Stone sits up straight, smiling confidently at Art.

STONE (CONT'D)

It's not impersonal, like with a  
gun or a bomb -- you gotta be there  
the entire time. You gotta get up  
nice and close; right on top of  
your victim, when you jam that  
blade into the soft part of his  
belly...

Stone JAMS an IMAGINARY KNIFE into his own gut.

STONE (CONT'D)

You gotta be able to stand there,  
while his face pales over, and his  
eyes roll into the back of his  
head, and all that hot soupy life  
pours out the hole in his gut, and  
all over your nice, clean boots.

(low chuckle)

Then, when the bastard's sputtering  
for air -- drowning in a sea of his  
own blood -- you gotta give that  
handle a good twist...

Stone WRENCHES the HANDLE of his imaginary knife.

STONE (CONT'D)

To make sure that wound is good and  
deep -- and there's no coming back  
from the hell you've sent him to.

Art looks down at the knife. He frowns.

STONE (CONT'D)

You think you can do all that,  
Artie? You think you got what it  
takes to take a life?

ART

No... No I don't.

STONE

That's right. You don't. Because you're weak -- you're not strong like me!

ART

Strength has nothing to do with it.

STONE

Strength's got everything to do with it!

Art shakes his head.

ART

It's not about strength -- it's about integrity. It's knowing the value of another man's life, and knowing that all the hate I've got in my heart, isn't worth killing someone over.

STONE

Then you've learned nothing!

ART

No... I've learned everything.

Art gets up and removes his Prospect Vest. He lays the cut across the chair in front of Stone.

STONE

What are you doing?

ART

I'm leaving. I don't belong here around men like you.

STONE

You can't just leave! We have rules here, motherfucker! You can't just up and walk away!

ART

Watch me.

Art turns and begins to walk toward the door, still holding the knife in his hands. Stone's eyes narrow.

STONE

Just like your fucking father...

Art stops halfway across the room. His back tenses.

ART  
Did you kill him?

Silence.

ART (CONT'D)  
Did you kill him??

More Silence.

ART (CONT'D)  
Did you kill my father?!

STONE  
Yeah I killed him!  
(growls)  
Tommy's insolence was gonna ruin everything! So I did what no one else would -- I went to that job site, and I took care of fucking business! I tossed his sorry ass over the side of that scaffolding, like I would any other sack of garbage, and I'd do it again, too!

Art clutches the knife tightly. His body trembles with rage. Stone keeps his fiery gaze fixed on Art's back.

STONE (CONT'D)  
So, what are you gonna do now, Art? You gonna walk away? Let the man who killed your father go free?!

Art doesn't respond... Stone grows restless.

STONE (CONT'D)  
If you were a man -- if you had any real integrity to speak of, you'd come for me now, while I'm laid up in this bed with nowhere to go!

Art's back stiffens. He takes a deep breath and turns around slowly... Stone smiles, ready for the challenge.

STONE (CONT'D)  
That's right, Art -- come finish what your old man started!

Art locks eyes with Stone.

ART  
'He who fights with monsters beware, lest he become a monster himself.'

(MORE)



ART (CONT'D)  
(sheathes knife)  
Friedrich Nietzsche said that.

Stone's face drops. Art shakes his head at him.

ART (CONT'D)  
If there really is nothing waiting  
for us after we die, then I guess  
what ultimately immortalizes a man  
is the legacy he leaves behind,  
once he's gone.  
(beat, sad smile)  
How will you be remembered?

Stone glares at Art in indignant silence... Art nods.

ART (CONT'D)  
That's what I thought -- you're as  
mortal as they come.

Art turns and exits the room.

Stone frowns and pulls back his comforter, revealing a PISTOL  
hidden beneath the sheets.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Smoke stands alone, still staring out the bay window. Rob and  
Leach continue watching TV. Art walks through the room, and  
out the front door, without saying a word to anyone.

Smoke watches him go. He looks back toward Stone's bedroom.

INT. STONE'S BEDROOM (CONTINUOUS)

The TV BLARES across the empty bedroom. Smoke pokes his head  
inside the doorway. He sees Stone sitting in bed, unharmed,  
staring at the pistol. Smoke frowns to himself.

Stone notices Smoke's sullen demeanor. He eyes him warily.

STONE  
You look disappointed...

Smoke shrugs. He nods at the pistol on Stone's lap.

SMOKE  
So do you.

MONTAGE - ART'S DEPARTURE

## A.) EXT. STONE'S DRIVEWAY - DAY

The sun has burned through the grey morning sky. Art buckles his helmet and FIRES UP his bike. He pulls out of the driveway without giving the house a second glance.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can keep your head when all about you, are losing theirs and blaming it on you. If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, but make allowance for their doubting too...

## B.) INT. STONE'S BEDROOM

Stone sits in bed, cradling the pistol in his lap. The dark room seems larger and more empty than it did before.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can wait and not be tired by waiting, or being lied about, don't deal in lies. Or being hated, don't give way to hating, and yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise...

## C.) EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

Art rides his bike home, his head held high, a subtle smile across his face. The trees along the road have started to change color in the crisp air of the approaching fall.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can dream and not make dreams your master, if you can think and not make thoughts your aim. If you can meet with triumph and disaster, and treat those two imposters just the same...

## D.) EXT. HIGHWAY (PA) - DAY

Jeff rides down the highway with a pack of Rolling Thunder Members. The BOTTOM PATCH on the Men's Vests all read: "PENNSYLVANIA".

Jeff's face is stern and hardened. The back of his vest is still bare... The faded outline of where his patches once were, is apparent on the dark leather.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken, twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools. Or watch the things you gave your life to broken, and stoop to build them up with worn-out tools...

E.) INT. CONCORD STATE PENITENTIARY - HOLDING CELL

Rick lies across the bottom bunk of his cell. He wears a pair of reading glasses, as he reads a book under the white glow of an overhead light.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can take one heap of all your winnings, and risk it one turn of pitch-and-toss. And lose, and start again at your beginnings, and never breathe a word about your loss...

F.) EXT. TOM'S HOUSE - AFTERNOON

Art and Reina pack Reina's car with brown moving boxes. Tom's motorcycle rests on a trailer mounted off the back.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew, to serve your turn long after they are gone. And so hold when there is nothing in you, except the will which says to them 'hold on'...

G.) EXT. RANDY'S BAR - AFTERNOON

Art and Sully smile at one another, saying their final goodbye's. Art extends Sully a handshake. Sully pulls him in for a big hug... Art chuckles and hugs his friend back.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue, or walk with kings nor lose the common touch.  
(MORE)

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

If neither foes nor loving friends  
can hurt you, and all men count  
with you, but none too much...

H.) INT. REINA'S CAR - EVENING

Art drives down the Westbound Interstate, chasing the setting sun. Reina lies asleep in the passenger seat next to him. The tiny car is filled to the brim with all their possessions.

Art looks over at Reina and smiles. He takes his hand off the wheel and squeezes Reina's hand tenderly. She smiles and squeezes his hand back... All is right with the world.

TOM MCNALLY (V.O.)

'If you can fill the unforgiving  
minute, with sixty seconds' worth  
of distance run, yours is the Earth  
and everything that's in it, and  
which is more... You'll be a man my  
son!'

The FRAMED PHOTOGRAPH of Art and Tom sits on the dashboard, as if it were watching over Art and Reina.

FADE TO:

INT. RANDY'S BAR - OFFICE - NIGHT (2 MONTHS LATER)

Stone reads in his office. The orange ember of a lit cigar burns through the darkness. A desk lamp casts a spotlight down on a PISTOL left lying on the desktop.

A sudden ROAR of MOTORCYCLES, coupled with the MURMUR of MEN'S VOICES, disrupts the silence in the office.

INT. RANDY'S BAR (CONTINUOUS)

Stone pokes his head out the office door. The LIGHTS HUM overhead, casting an eerie glow over the empty barroom. Chubbs is the only one left inside.

STONE

Chubbs, what's all the racquet?

CHUBBS

Some fellas just pulled in from a  
sister charter.

STONE

Which one?

CHUBBS

Dunno. None of 'em come in yet.

Stone pulls on his Rolling Thunder Vest and eases his way out of the office... He uses a cane for support. His right leg is cast in a big metal brace... He takes a seat at the bar.

Stone and Chubbs peer out at a swarm of Rolling Thunder Vests, crowded outside the front door.

TWO MEN break away from the pack and enter... DON HENDERSON (mid40s) is a large, muscular man with salt and pepper hair... STEVE (late30s) is a stout, rough-looking character... The two approach the bar and take a seat.

DON

Hey bud, how 'bout a couple cold ones, huh?

Chubbs nods. Don notices Stone eyeing them warily.

DON (CONT'D)

How's it going, bud?

STONE

Who the hell are you?

Don looks over at Steve in disbelief. Steve shrugs.

DON

The name's Don Henderson -- I'm president of this charter. Steve here's my road captain. We figured we'd get off the road and get a drink at a safe place.

STONE

Anywhere in my territory is a safe place.

DON

Well that's good to know. You the president of this outfit?

STONE

I am.

DON

So you must be...

STONE

Kevin Stone.

Don looks over at Steve. Steve cracks an evil grin.

DON

Well, it's nice to finally meet ya,  
Kev. Heard a lot about you...

Don extends Stone a handshake. Stone shakes his hand, but still eyes the two suspiciously.

STONE

What charter did you boys say you  
were from, again?

DON

I didn't.

Don smiles as he continues shaking Stone's hand.

DON (CONT'D)

I run a charter just outside of  
Philly...

STONE

Philly, huh?

DON

Yup. That's right. In a little city  
called Allentown.

Don TIGHTENS his GRIP on Stone's hand.

Stone suddenly realizes what's happening... He turns and looks toward the front door, just as Jeff enters. The two lock eyes. Jeff starts making his way toward the bar.

Stone tries to get up, but Don holds his hand firmly.

Stone PUNCHES Don with his free hand, knocking him off his bar stool... Steve tries to reach across the bar and grab him, but Stone CRACKS him across the face with his cane...

Stone gets to his feet and hobbles toward the office.

Jeff quickens his pace after him.

INT. OFFICE (CONTINUOUS)

Stone hurries inside and SLAMS the DOOR behind him. He starts to limp toward the PISTOL lying on his desk.

Jeff KICKS the DOOR IN.

Jeff sees Stone going for the gun and KICKS him across his bad leg... Stone CRASHES to the floor.

He thrashes wildly on the ground... Jeff STOMPS on the bad leg, pinning Stone on his belly. Stone HOWLS in pain.

Jeff removes a SILENCED PISTOL from the inside of his jacket.

JEFF

Roll over...

Stone continues to thrash frantically.

JEFF (CONT'D)

I said roll over, goddamnit!

Stone stops thrashing. He takes a deep breath and rolls onto his back... He glares up at Jeff.

Jeff smiles and runs a finger down a large SCAR that extends from the top of his eye, down to the bottom of his chin.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You see this? You gave me this...

Stone studies the scar... He begins to chuckle. The laughter slowly builds into a hearty, almost maniacal, cackle.

JEFF (CONT'D)

You think this is funny??

Jeff SHOOTS Stone in the knee. Stone HOWLS in pain, but continues laughing like a madman... Jeff is livid.

JEFF (CONT'D)

What's so fucking funny, asshole!

STONE

(cackling)

He was wrong -- Art was wrong!

JEFF

Wrong about what?! What the fuck are you talking about!

STONE

That scar -- that scar is my legacy! It'll be with you 'til the day you die...

Jeff shakes his head. He raises his pistol. Stone smiles at his impending doom.

STONE (CONT'D)

You'll see my face every time you look in the mirror!

Stone is answered by the SOFT TINK of Jeff's SILENCED PISTOL. SHELLS TINKLE to the floor, as Jeff unloads his entire clip into Stone's chest... The PISTOL CLICKS empty.

Jeff holsters his gun and pulls out a little knife. He stoops down, over Stone's lifeless body, and SAWS OFF the "PRESIDENT" PATCH on the front of Stone's Vest.

Jeff stands up and pockets the patch. He looks down at Stone's body, emotionless. He SNORTS and SPITS on Stone's carcass, before turning and leaving.

The office is deathly silent.

Stone's bullet-riddled body lies soaking in a puddle of its own blood. It lays under the wall bearing the CREDO:

"TO REIGN IS WORTH AMBITION. IT IS BETTER TO REIGN IN HELL THAN SERVE IN HEAVEN!"

FADE OUT.