

FADE IN:

INT. STAIRWELL, TENEMENT FLAT - DAY

The camera roams up the stairwell of a dingy house divided into flats. There's black mould on the walls, wallpaper peeling at the edges.

We hear a dull, repetitive "thud" sound in the distance.

We move up the stairs and out onto the landing. We pan down a hallway towards a door.

The sound of the "thud" is getting louder as we advance.

We roam up to the door, to the keyhole, and go through the keyhole into...

INT. FLAT - CONTINUOUS

A shabby little bedsit. The "thud" is loud now, but still slow, repetitive, metronomical.

We pan across the bedsit to the bathroom.

In the bathroom we see SIDNEY BALFOUR. He's in his 40s, burly with a childish unkempt hair that's receding. He stands in his underpants and methodically bangs his head against the wall, the source of the "thud" sound. He has his eyes clamped tight shut and tears flow from them. He winces, grits his teeth. He seems to be in abject pain - not just from hurting his head against the wall but from some deep existential agony.

All the time he sobs quietly to himself and whispers.

BALFOUR

Get out of my head. Get out...

EXT./INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

A long queue forms outside a city bookstore.

The queue leads into the store where a cardboard cutout of crime writer DAN O'SHEA stands behind an empty desk. Dan O'Shea is mid 30s, handsome-ish with gelled, jet black hair. In the cutout Dan has his arms folded and smiles confidently.

We pan along the queue. There is a strange, skittish atmosphere pervading, with people looking around and

whispering as they clutch their novels for signing - Dan's latest tome, "Bloodletting". Teens giggle amongst themselves. We overhear two girls talking.

GIRL

(To female friend)

Do you think he's here?

A teenage boy grabs the girl suddenly by her sides, making her jump as he says:

BOY

He's behind you.

After the scare the two girls titter, the group of boys behind them laugh.

EXT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Outside of the bookstore a car pulls up. Dan O'Shea is driving. He has bags under his eyes, greying temples, looks pale and weary, very different to the flash cardboard replica taking his place inside the bookstore.

He's parked a little away from the store. As he observes the queue lined up outside he seems apprehensive.

He rubs his face, prepares himself. He reaches for the door handle, opens the door a crack. Before he steps out he takes another look at the crowd. He hesitates.

He pulls the door shut. He starts up the car again, drives off. Nobody has noticed him.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - DAY

KAREN TOMPKINS, a pretty psychiatrist in her 30s, is halfway through hypnotising a patient. The patient, an obese man in his 40s, sits on a chair, head slumped down, eyes closed.

KAREN

When you feel anxious, depressed or lonely, junk food won't be a solution. Junk food will make those feelings worse. When you wake up, you'll no longer find junk food desirable in any way.

A beat.

KAREN

Okay, Trevor, you can wake up now.

She claps her hands. Trevor snaps out of his trance.

TREVOR

Was I...?

Karen nods.

KAREN

Uh-huh. I think you should be fine for a while, Trevor. Jenny will schedule another appointment for you.

TREVOR

Thanks.

Trevor rises, goes out.

INT. WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Waiting on a chair outside is Dan. When Trevor exits and approaches the receptionist, Dan gets up and goes into Karen's office.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Karen is filling out a report of the last session, her head down studiously. She doesn't look up as Dan enters.

KAREN

Good day, Mr O'Shea.

Dan lies on a couch by the wall, eyes up to the ceiling.

DAN

It's happened again.

Karen keeps on writing, ostensibly ignoring him.

A beat.

DAN

There's this woman... I'm irresistibly drawn to her.

KAREN

(Still writing)

You want me to help you to stop finding unattainable females attractive?

DAN

I want you to hypnotise her into liking me.

KAREN

I can't do that, Mr O'Shea.

He sits up.

DAN

Why not?

KAREN

It's not ethical.

He rises, approaches her. He leans into her.

DAN

Then tell me how to woo her?

KAREN

To "woo" her?

DAN

Yes. Or to court her.

She stops writing, considers this.

KAREN

You could invite her to lunch, I suppose.

DAN

Where?

KAREN

Somewhere nice. Expensive. Giallo's on the Green.

DAN

Anything else?

KAREN

A good passionate kiss always helps.

He leans in. They kiss each other hard on the lips.

They break away, laughing.

EXT./INT. GIALLO'S RESTAURANT - DAY

They sit eating a fine lunch, glass wines filled.

KAREN

You didn't go in?

DAN

They weren't there for me. They're there because of this bloody thing.

We see a newspaper by Dan's side. He opens it onto a page with a picture of Dan. Another picture in the same article shows a crime scene - a covered body being stretchered out from a sealed off building. The headline reads:

BESTSELLER INSPIRES COPYCAT MURDER

DAN

The whole thing's a fiasco, Karen.

KAREN

It's all book sales.

DAN

I should have done the other novel instead.

KAREN

There are thousands of crime novels out there, Dan. He just happened to read yours. He would have done it anyway, you know that. Don't let it get in the way of your muse.

DAN

You're my muse, baby.

KAREN

Besides, don't you say your work is all about subtext?

DAN

(Smiling)

Subtext. Yeah. I find subtext very interesting.

KAREN

(Smiling)  
Oh? It sounds like there's some  
subtext to this lunch.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They screw - vibrantly, sensuously, Dan thrusting deep  
inside her, her moaning ecstatically.

They break off, heaving, satisfied.

Karen reaches for cigarettes on the bedside locker, lights  
up a smoke.

DAN  
Don't suppose you're going to give  
me one of them.

KAREN  
And waste all those sessions?

He shrugs, rises.

He pulls on a pair of shorts. She blows a smoke ring at  
him. He exits the room.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He goes to the kitchen, pours himself a glass of water  
from the tap.

It's a typical suburban home, elegantly furnished if kind  
of cluttered and messy. There's a tonne of books and  
magazines piled around the place. A few potted plants  
attempt to make it homely.

As he sips his water he looks out in the back yard. In the  
shadows at the end of the garden something moves. A  
figure.

Dan squints, tries to make out what it is. But it's gone.  
Alarmed, he puts down the glass, goes to the door. He  
steps out into the garden.

He's wary, but walks down towards the end of the garden.  
He looks around him.

He sees something on the ground in the distance,  
illuminated by moonlight. Something small.

He walks towards it. As he gets closer he sees what it is.

A heart. A human heart. A BEATING human heart.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan wakes up suddenly, gasping for breath. He's covered in a cold sweat.

Just a dream.

He checks beside him. Karen is asleep, lightly snoring.

He eases his head back down on the pillow. But his eyes are alive, the dream lingering. It doesn't look like he'll be able to get back to sleep for a while.

INT. RADIO STUDIO - DAY

Thin Lizzy's "Killer On The Loose" plays over the sound system.

Dan sits in the radio studio with a giant pair of headphones on. He grins forbearingly as the track plays out.

The DJ, a slimy motormouth called ALBERT SMALLS, fades down the end of the song.

ALBERT

That of course was "Killer On The Loose" by Thin Lizzy. Dan O'Shea, you know a thing or two about killers. You've been signing copies of your new bestselling novel "Bloodletting" all week. How has it been?

DAN

It's been great, Albert. The fans have been just great. As always.

ALBERT

This is your third book in the Inspector Lloyd Nathan series. It's also your third bestsell...

DAN

(Interrupting)

Nathan Lloyd. It's Inspector Nathan Lloyd.

ALBERT

One thing I've always wanted to know, Dan... how do you get into that mindset of your characters?

DAN

They're just ordinary people. I try and find what makes them tick, what motivates them.

ALBERT

Uh-huh. And that's what your fans like? Your realism?

DAN

I think so.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sidney Balfour is begging outside a shop. He sits, slumped against the wall, an empty cup half-heartedly held out before him, a plaster on his forehead.

A car pulls up to the kerb. There is a woman in the front, a baby strapped into a seat in the back. She gets out, goes into the shop. Her window is down a little, the car radio on. The radio broadcast leaks out of the car.

ALBERT (O.S.)

We do know there's one fan out there who takes it very seriously indeed. How does it feel to have a fan who's actually a killer?

BACK TO STUDIO

Dan grimaces. He wasn't expecting this. His expression says he doesn't want to answer.

BACK TO STREET

Balfour continues to sit, slumped in a stupor, outside the shop. The sound of the radio broadcast is in the background.

ALBERT (O.S.)

Of course, I'm talking about the killing of Edward Grant last week. His body was mutilated in a step-by-step re-enactment of a scene from 'Bloodletting'.



DAN (O.S.)  
I don't have anything to say about  
all that.

At the sound of Dan's voice Balfour perks up.

ALBERT (O.S.)  
Something like that's got to play  
on your mind. This... copycat killer...  
obviously read your work, was  
inspired by it.

DAN (O.S.)  
I'm not responsible for all the  
crazies out there.

Balfour rises. He hurries over to the car. He cocks his  
ear to the gap in the window in order to hear the  
broadcast better.

The baby strapped in the back seat starts to cry. Balfour  
ignores it.

DAN (O.S.)  
I'm pretty sure this murder would  
have happened anyway.

INT. RADIO STUDIO - DAY

Dan squirms in his chair under the grilling. Albert seems  
to be enjoying his discomfort. It's good radio.

ALBERT  
Is having a copycat in some weird  
way an honour for a crime writer?

Dan's had enough.

DAN  
I don't write manuals.

He stands up, takes off the headphones and storms out of  
the studio.

Albert's a bit flustered but not too bothered. He's got a  
reaction for his listeners.

ALBERT  
That was Dan O'Shea, author of the  
Lloyd Nathan books. We're a little

ahead of schedule so here's an extra track to take you through till lunchtime. Here's Talking Heads with "Psycho Killer".

The opening throbbing chords of "Psycho Killer" plays.

EXT. STREET - DAY

The woman comes out of the shop. She sees Balfour leaned up against the car, the baby crying in the back seat.

WOMAN

Hey.

But Balfour isn't paying any attention to her. Something about the radio broadcast he's heard has energized him. He marches off up the street.

The woman hurries to her car, gets in. She instinctively locks the car door while keeping an eye on Balfour moving up the street. She reaches behind to the baby and tries to calm it down.

INT. BAR - DAY

Dan's sitting in the corner booth of a quiet pub. He's an empty glass beside him, a thin amber film of whiskey coating it. He's on his phone to his publicist, MYLES MCCARTHY.

DAN

(Into phone)

I thought he promised not to bring all that up.

INT. PUBLICIST'S OFFICE - DAY

McCarthy, a jaded near-retiree, placates Dan. His office is his home, a comfy pad in the country. McCarthy is feeding his dog some biscuits from his hand as he talks to Dan on the phone.

MCCARTHY

(Into phone)

He just went off on one. You know what Albert Smalls's like.

INTERCUT WITH DAN

DAN

(Into phone)  
I don't listen to the radio. I do  
sometimes make the mistake of  
listening to my publicist.

MCCARTHY  
There's no such thing as bad  
publicity.

DAN  
And other clichés.

MCCARTHY  
(Into phone)  
That's why you're the writer and  
I'm the publicist. Listen, Dan,  
your profile's never been bigger,  
you have to make hay while it  
lasts.

Dan sighs.

MCCARTHY  
(Into phone)  
You better go to the signing this  
evening. You can't miss two in a  
row. You know what they say, when  
life gives you lemons, make  
lemonade.

DAN  
(Into phone)  
You keep 'em coming, don't you?

MCCARTHY  
(Into phone)  
Listen, Dan, just go this time,  
yeah? How hard can it be?

Dan hangs up. The barman arrives over, points at the empty  
glass. Another?

Dan shakes his head.

DAN  
Just a coke.

INT. BOOKSTORE - EVENING

Dan sits beneath his cardboard doppelganger, signing books  
for a long line of fans. They're all ages, all sexes, all

excited to be meeting Dan, who tries his best to return their excitement though he really couldn't be bothered and is just going through the motions.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Balfour walks through the streets, hands buried in his pockets. He has a thousand yard stare which makes other pedestrians pass around him instinctively.

In the distance is a bookstore, lights on. There is a queue outside leading into the store.

INT. BOOKSTORE - EVENING

Dan's flying through the signings, not at all interested in his fans.

Balfour walks in. He looks around, sees Dan at his table.

He takes his hands out of his pockets. He's wearing gloves.

He walks up to Dan's table, skipping the queue. A few voices sound in protest, but nobody seems too keen to confront Balfour. He looks crazed.

He stares at Dan. Dan hasn't seen him enter as, he's been busy signing. He looks up at him, thinking he's next in the queue.

Balfour stares at him.

DAN

You got a book there, big guy?

Balfour's icy stare unnerves Dan.

Balfour pulls off his gloves. There's blood all over his hands. It drips onto the floor.

Dan rises quickly and moves back, knocking the chair and his cardboard persona over.

The crowd moves back, alarmed, but like spectators passing a car crash can't stop looking.

The security guards are up straight away. They restrain Balfour, who doesn't resist. As he's pulled away he keeps staring at Dan, who is numb with shock at this incident.

BALFOUR

Now will you leave me the hell  
alone?

DAN

(Confused)

What?

BALFOUR

Get out of my head. Get out of it.

He is dragged away by the security.

EXT. BOOKSTORE - EVENING

INT. CAR - EVENING

Dan and Karen sit in the car outside the bookstore. The bookstore's closed. A few policemen hang around outside it, along with a few curious onlookers

Dan is pale as the moon, shook up bad. He sips whiskey from a nagan. Karen sits beside him. She seems concerned on a number of levels.

DAN

He killed another guy. Today, just  
before he came here.

KAREN

Shit.

DAN

The police want me to go in  
tomorrow.

Dan takes another swig, desperately trying to settle his nerves.

KAREN

At least it's over.

He takes a swig from the nagan. She raises her hand to his wrist, gently blocks him taking a swig. She leans in, kisses him on the neck.

He puts the lid back on the nagan, sits back, closes his eyes. She starts the car and they pull out.

INT. SHOWER, DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan showers. We see him naked from the waist up. He is scrubbing himself intensely, scrubbing the day off of him.

The door of the shower opens. Karen steps in. He turns, sees her. They embrace, kiss - forgetting the world in each other's arms.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Inspector HARRY WOODS interviews Dan. Woods is in his late 40s and has the implacable, stern demeanour of an investigator.

Dan is unshaven, red-eyed, nursing a hangover and looking like he'd rather be anywhere else. Woods holds a copy of "Bloodletting" open and reads from it.

WOODS

"After he'd removed the organs he began on the face. First he sliced along the hairline and down under the jaw, the blood dazzling against the pale ceramic skin."

He puts the book down.

WOODS

It's word for word the mutilation of Edward Grant's corpse.

DAN

Fans are like family. You can't choose them.

Woods seems unimpressed by Dan's nonchalance.

WOODS

Sidney Balfour says you told him to do it.

DAN

I can't be responsible for who reads my books, Inspector.

WOODS

That's not what he meant. That's one of the strangest things about this strange case, actually. Sidney Balfour can't read. He's illiterate.

DAN  
(Shrugs)  
Someone told him then.

WOODS  
He says you told him.

DAN  
I never met him before in my life.  
Or Edward Grant. Or Conor Jennings.

WOODS  
He says he heard your voice in his  
head. Whispering to him. Guiding  
him.

DAN  
Right.

WOODS  
When he heard you on the radio  
yesterday, he finally knew whose  
voice it was in his head.

DAN  
So what is he? Schizo or something?

WOODS  
Sidney Balfour has suffered  
schizophrenic episodes all his  
life, yes. He's been in and out of  
care since he was 18.

DAN  
There you have it.

WOODS  
I'm not so sure it's as simple as  
that. We've no motive, apart from  
what he says about you. He didn't  
know his victims. I'm not sure he'd  
be able to do this alone.

DAN  
If you'll forgive me for being  
politically incorrect, it sounds  
like he's a random nutter. It  
really has nothing to do with me,  
Inspector. I can't help you with  
this case.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Woods and Dan smoke on the step outside the police station.

WOODS

Your own father suffered from mental illness, didn't he?

DAN

The media's had a field day with this, haven't they?

WOODS

If you wouldn't mind indulging me, what exactly happened with your father?

A beat.

DAN

When I was 10 my father tried to burn me to death.

WOODS

(Shocked)

Shit.

DAN

I got out of the house. My mother wasn't so lucky.

A beat as they puff on the cigarettes.

WOODS

Sorry again for having to bring you in.

DAN

That's no bother.

Dan walks over to his car.

WOODS

(Calling after him)

If you think of anything that might be relevant, Mr O'Shea...

He lets the proposal linger on the air. Dan goes to his car, sits in. He pulls off.



EXT. CEMETERY GATES - DAY

Dan pulls up outside a cemetery. He gets out of his car, walks into the cemetery. He carries a fresh bouquet of flowers.

EXT. GRAVE - DAY

Dan lays the flowers on a grave. We see the inscription on the headstone:

Marion O'Shea

It's his mother's grave.

Dan, hunkered by the graveside, takes out a small empty pillbox from his pocket. He scoops up a small sample of the grave soil with a small pillbox. He caps the box, puts it into his pocket.

We pan back and see Dan cut a lonely figure by the grave, the other graves stretching out around him into the distance.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan arrives home. He goes to a banzai tree on his windowsill. He takes out the small tube, pops off the lid and pours the grave soil onto the soil in the plant pot. He mingles it in around the root of the plant with his finger. Dan is sentimental, superstitious even.

INT. DAN'S STUDY - DAY

Dan sits in his study before a computer.

The shelves in his study are packed - books on real-life serial killers, forensic profiling and criminology, as well as a lot of books on tarot divination, astrology, clairvoyance, telepathy, extra sensory perception.

He has a Microsoft Word document open. It is blank except for "Chapter One" written in bold t the top of the page.

He stares at the blank page accusingly.

He gets up, paces the floor.

EXT. PROMENADE - DAY

Dan jogs along a promenade by a beach. It's not summer so there are only amblers and joggers like himself about. He's jogging fast, pushing himself hard, trying to lose himself in exertion.

Eventually he stops, stoops over, catches his breath, looks out over the horizon.

INT. BURNED OUT HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan walks through a burned-out house in the middle of the night. The walls are scorched, the windows blown out. Ashen detritus is all that's left inside. The wind whistles through the shell of the house. It's dark, eerie.

He's walking slowly, tentatively, having difficulty seeing where he's going. His steps ring out underfoot, puncturing the windy silence. Everything is spectral, dreamlike. He himself moves as if in a dream.

He turns a corner into a long corridor. He walks down it.

Karen steps out from a doorway ahead of him. She doesn't see him. She turns away and walks on up the corridor.

He opens his mouth to call after her, but no sound escapes.

He quickens his step, following her.

She turns into another room. A few seconds later he arrives at the door. He turns into the room.

Karen isn't in the room. Instead, a man hunkers in the middle of the floor, his back to Dan. The man is hunched over something that his form prevents us seeing.

Dan, warily, steps into the room.

The man turns around. It is Balfour.

He sees Dan. He holds out his hand towards Dan. In his hand is a beating human heart.

Dan now sees what Balfour is bent over. It's a human body. It is mutilated beyond recognition, not even discernible as male or female.

Balfour carries on holding out his arm, the heart beating slowly in the palm.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan wakes up with a gasp, like he's come up from under water. He's layered in sweat. Another dream.

He looks beside him. Karen sleeps quietly in the bed beside him.

INT. DAN'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Dan reads the newspaper at the breakfast table while Karen makes coffee in the background.

The headline of the article reads:

SECOND VICTIM MUTILATED

Dan's brow creases with concern as he reads the details.

EXT. GARDEN, DAN'S - DAY

Dan stands in the garden talking on his mobile. Through the window we see Karen inside eating breakfast.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Woods is on the other end of the line.

WOODS

(Into phone)

The flesh on both arms was stripped to the bone. His tongue was cut out, burned black, left in his skeletal hand.

INTERCUT WITH DAN

Dan looks troubled.

WOODS

(Into phone)

I didn't think that was from any of your novels?

DAN

(Into phone)

It's not. I just wanted to hear the details. Thanks.

He hangs up quickly. He looks troubled.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Dan sits bent over a handwritten manuscript in his study. He's absorbed in the text.

INT. GARAGE - DAY

Karen piles laundry into a washing machine. Dan enters. He has the manuscript in his hand. He shows it to her, indicates a paragraph.

DAN

Read this.

She stops the laundry, confused.

KAREN

Why?

DAN

Just read it. Please.

She takes it.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Karen sits with the manuscript on the sofa. Dan stands waiting by the bookshelf for her to finish reading.

Finished, she puts the manuscript on the coffee table.

KAREN

It's good.

DAN

It's gruesome.

KAREN

That's what your fans like.

A beat.

DAN

That scene... it's the exact same thing that happened to Conor Jennings.

Karen looks at him, puzzled.

DAN

It's step by step. The same murder.

KAREN

This Balfour guy copied you once, Dan... you can't blame yourself if he's done it again.

DAN

Karen, this is the manuscript for my next novel. It hasn't been published yet. No-one's seen it but me.

A beat.

KAREN

So it's similar?

DAN

It's not similar. It's the exact same. Every detail.

KAREN

That's an odd coincidence.

DAN

Coincidence? It's impossible.

KAREN

Maybe you got it from the same place Balfour did.

Dan paces the floor.

DAN

Plagiarism is the least of my concerns.

He's annoyed she doesn't seem to be paying attention

KAREN

Dan, you worked so hard completing the last novel. Now this whole copycat thing... You should take a few weeks off. Forget the book promotion for now.

He picks up another manuscript lying on his desk. He hands it to her, indicates a passage.

DAN

My original manuscript for 'Blood Letting'. The killing scene which Balfour copied. Look at the name.

She reads where he's pointing.

DAN

I changed the name before it went to press. But this is the original manuscript. Look at the name.

She reads.

KAREN

Edward Grant.

DAN

Still think its coincidence?

EXT. DAN'S GARDEN - DAY

They're out in the garden. She's staring out to the middle distance. He's behind her.

KAREN

I can't go through all this again, Dan.

DAN

I need to know, Karen.

KAREN

It was a psychosis, Dan. That's all. I thought you were over it.

DAN

It's not a psychosis, Karen.

KAREN

Maybe you need to see somebody again. I can recommend someone.

He turns, walks back into the house in a huff.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Dan sits drinking alone in his study. There is a deck of cards on the table in front of him.

He takes a drink.

He sits up, picks up the deck and shuffles it. He places it down on the table again.

He stares at the top card.

DAN  
(Whispering)  
Three of clubs.

He picks up the top card, turns it over.

It's the Seven of Hearts.

He puts the card to the side, concentrates on the next top card.

A beat.

DAN  
(Whispering)  
Ten of diamonds.

He turns it over.

It's the Ace of Clubs.

He flings it to the side.

He looks at the next one. Stares at it.

A beat.

DAN  
(Whispering)  
Five of spades.

He turns it over.

Joker.

He sweeps the cards off the table, scattering them over the floor.

He takes another drink. A long one.

EXT. BEACH PROMENADE - DAY

Dan jogs along a beach promenade. He's pushing himself hard, burning energy, covered in sweat.

EXT. BEACH PROMENADE - DAY - LATER

He slows, sits on a rock in the beach wall for a rest. He stares out to sea.

There aren't many people about. Nearby is a pier stretching out to sea.

On the pier a woman wheels a pushchair with a two-year old boy sitting inside. The boy drinks from a plastic cup.

Dan watches her walk out along the pier. The woman meets another woman and stops to talk.

The little boy's plastic cup falls from the pushchair onto the pier.

He climbs out of the pushchair to get it. His mother, distracted by conversation, doesn't notice.

The plastic cup is right at the edge of the pier. The boy toddles over to it.

Dan sees this. He stands up, worried.

The boy reaches down to get the cup. As he does he trips over a loose plank and topples over the edge. He falls into the sea with a splash.

Dan looks alarmed at what he's just seen.

The boy sinks under the surface.

We cut back to Dan. He is staring at the scene with a look of shock on his face.

We switch to Dan's POV, see what he's now seeing.

The woman pushes the pushchair along the pier. The boy is still in it. She stops to talk to another woman.

Just like a few minutes before.

The boy's cup falls out of the pushchair. Just like before. He gets out of the pushchair and walks to the cup.

We cut back to Dan. He's racing into the shoreline. He dives in, swims out.

The boy reaches down to pick up the cup. He trips over, drops into the sea. Exact same as before.



The mother glances down at the pushchair. She sees it's empty. She looks around for her boy. Nowhere to be seen.

Dread alights. She hurries to the edge of the pier, looks down into the water.

She sees the toddler in the sea, sinking under the waves.

She also sees Dan swimming into the frame.

He grabs the boy and swims with him to a nearby ladder. He grabs the ladder, leverages himself and the boy up along it.

EXT. PIER - DAY - LATER

The woman fusses over the little boy.

Dan stands to the side, dripping wet, amazed at what's just happened.

In between fussing over the little boy, the two women are effusive in their thanks for Dan, who seems stunned by what has just happened.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Dan arrives home. Karen is surprised to see him drenched.

KAREN

What happened you?

He looks at her.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

They're lying together in bed. There is stony silence.

DAN

I saw it. I saw the kid, what was going to happen.

KAREN

You've to stop this obsession, Dan. You're not... clairvoyant.

DAN

Karen...

She rolls onto her side, looks into his eyes.

KAREN

What am I thinking about?

DAN

What?

KAREN

I'm thinking of an object. What is it?

DAN

It doesn't work like that.

KAREN

Convenient.

DAN

I've always felt it, Karen.

KAREN

You feel different, Dan, because of your upbringing. Your father tried to kill you, for fuck's sake. Your sense of being an outsider is perfectly rational.

DAN

I'm not crazy, Karen.

He turns over. She turns off the bedside light.

EXT. INSTITUTION - DAY

Dan pulls into car park of an institution for the criminally insane. It's a large modern campus facility, bleakly clinical.

Woods is waiting in the car park, smoking by his car.

EXT. INSTITUTION - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dan and Woods walk into the grounds of the institution.

WOODS

I'm not sure why I've agreed to this. Some of the shrinks think it might help him open up. It could be cathartic. The rest think it's a big mistake, it could reinforce his delusion.

DAN

What do you think?

WOODS

I didn't become a cop because I like mysteries. I became one because I hated them. I just want any information you can get about his motivation, if he knew his victims.

Woods hands Dan a Dictaphone. Dan puts it in his pocket.

The two men enter the building.

INT. CANTEEN, INSTITUTION - DAY

Dan sits at a corner table alone in the empty canteen.

Balfour is brought out by two orderlies. He's wearing handcuffs and is in a standard inmate boiler suit. Woods accompanies the orderlies and Balfour.

INT. CANTEEN, INSTITUTION - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Balfour and Dan sit alone together, across a table from one another. Balfour still wears the handcuffs.

Woods and the two orderlies wait at a table some way off, out of earshot but watching very closely.

Dan and Balfour stare at each other.

DAN

Why did you kill Edward Grant?

BALFOUR

You told me to kill him.

DAN

How did I tell you to?

BALFOUR

It was just a little whisper in my ear.

DAN

Like I was beside you?

BALFOUR

Beside me.

(Tap his finger to his head)  
Then inside me.

DAN  
When did I start whispering to you?

BALFOUR  
The fifth of July. In the evening.  
You started. Then a few minutes  
later, the same thing. Then it was  
only a minute apart, then a few  
seconds. You wouldn't leave me  
alone. I couldn't get any sleep, I  
couldn't get you out of my head. I  
knew it wouldn't stop until I  
obeyed you. It was like a worm had  
bored into my skull and was moving  
around.

DAN  
Why did I want you to kill him?

BALFOUR  
I don't know. You just wanted him  
dead, didn't you?

A beat.

DAN  
And do you hear me whispering to  
you now, Sidney?

BALFOUR  
No. Not anymore. Ever since I  
killed those two men, you've  
stopped whispering. Everything is  
very peaceful.

DAN  
And how did you know who Edward  
Grant is? What he looked like?  
Where to find him?

BALFOUR  
You told me.

DAN  
I described him?

BALFOUR

It wasn't just a whisper. You... you put images in my head.

DAN

So it's not a whisper now, it's an image.

BALFOUR

(Agitated)

It was you. It was you all along.

The ordierlies tense as Balfour raises his voice. Dan placates Balfour, not wanting the conversation to end.

DAN

Calm down, Sidney.

Balfour settles.

DAN

I'm here to help you.

BALFOUR

(Shakes head)

No, you're not. Hahaha. No, you're not. The devil doesn't help anyone.

Dan leans in.

DAN

Sidney, isn't it true that those whispers you heard... isn't it true that you didn't hear them until after you killed Edward Grant?

BALFOUR

No, no.

DAN

Isn't it true you killed Edward Grant, you cut him up, then you read in the paper about how it was like the scene in my book? Isn't that when the whispers started, Sidney? They didn't come till after you'd killed Ernie Grant.

BALFOUR

(Angry)

No, it wasn't no book, no newspaper. It was you. Right from the start. You made me do it.

Balfour rises. He's agitated and tries to lash out at Dan.

Dan rises, steps back away from Balfour.

The orderlies rush over, grab Balfour. Balfour starts to cry. He weeps pathetically like a child.

BALFOUR

Why? Why me? What did I do?

The orderlies lead him away. The interview is over.

EXT. CAR PARK, INSTITUTION - DAY

Woods and Dan talk. Woods is irritated.

WOODS

I should be in there myself for agreeing to that. What a mess.

Dan opens his coat, takes out the Dictaphone and hands it to Woods.

DAN

Here's your tape. He didn't tell me anything.

Woods takes the tape scornfully, pockets it. He looks at Dan.

WOODS

Why did you suggest this anyway? I thought you weren't interested.

DAN

I thought I could help.

WOODS

You sure you're not just looking for ideas for your next novel, Mr O'Shea?

He smirks at Dan accusingly. Dan smiles, gets into his car.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - EVENING

Dan and Karen argue. Karen is in a state.

DAN

I've had writers' block for months.  
What kind of novelist would I be if  
I didn't take an interest in this?

KAREN

This isn't a story, Dan.

DAN

I've spent 10 years solving crimes  
that never took place, Karen. Shit  
I've made up.

KAREN

You write fiction, Dan. Remember?

DAN

I write bullshit, Karen. Nathan  
fucking Lloyd bullshit.

(Beat)

Capote was writing *In Cold Blood* by  
the time he was my age. Roberto  
Saviano published *Gomorrah* in his  
20s.

KAREN

Roberto Saviano's on a Mafia  
hitlist. I don't know why you want  
to mess around in this, Dan.

DAN

This is the next book, Karen. This  
is my chance to do something real.

KAREN

You're too close to it.

DAN

And that's why I have to do it.

She walks out of the room, exasperated.

EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

Karen throws a suitcase into the trunk of her car. She gets into the car. Dan watches her.

KAREN

You could come with me if you want.  
A few weeks in the mountains.

DAN

I need to follow this through.

KAREN

Well, at least I'll get my thesis done.

She kisses him, gets in the car.

DAN

Don't be long, okay.

She drives off.

INT. STUDY - NIGHT

He's in his study. There's a glass of whiskey beside him. The lights are off throughout the house, just a lamp illuminating him, casting a low light.

His laptop is in front of him and he's opening up a Word document.

He checks the date on the Word document.

DAN

(Mouthing to himself)

The fifth of July. I wrote that scene the fifth of July.

He stares out the window, thinking.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

INT. CORRIDOR, APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Dan follows an ailing old caretaker down a corridor.



The caretaker stops by a door, takes out a set of keys and opens it.

INT. APARTMENT SUITE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

It opens into a vast, plush apartment suite which covers the full floor. This is Edward Grant's apartment.

CARETAKER

The police already looked.

DAN

Where was he...?

A beat.

CARETAKER

The bathroom. Look, don't take anything, okay?

DAN

Don't worry, Sam. I'll need an hour.

The caretaker glances at him, smirks humourlessly.

CARETAKER

Meter's running.

He closes the door, leaving Dan inside the apartment alone.

Dan wanders around, taking it all in. It's a tasteful, affluent apartment, minimalist and postmodern in style with great views of the park and cityscape.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Dan is checking drawers, checking wardrobes.

He turns on the computer in the office, goes through the files. He opens up some documents with details of shares Grant owns - pharmaceuticals, military, surveillance companies.

He stops before a painting, the only painting in the apartment, and examines it. It's a copy of "The Transportation of Psyche by Zephyrus to the Palace of Eros" by Pierre Paul Prud'hon.

Dan continues wandering around the apartment.

He comes to the bathroom, pushes open the door. He looks at the bath. He furtively glances around the room, doesn't go in any further.

He steps out, closes the door behind him.

He walks back to the living area. He takes out a Dictaphone, presses record. He starts speaking into it as he surveys the room.

DAN

He spent his last hours preparing a meal, reading a little, running a hot bath... Mundane things. Had he known he'd be dead before nightfall he might have considered doing something else... ringing an old friend, meditating or praying, writing a final letter to heal old wounds, remembering a past love. Who knows? What we know is by nightfall he'd had his organs removed, his face sliced off...

He clicks off the Dictaphone's recording function.

A beat.

He clicks on the Record function again, speaks into the Dictaphone.

DAN

Title of novel. Quiet Rooms... No....

(Thinks)

Hollow Rooms.

He clicks off the Dictaphone.

He walks around some more. He goes to the bedroom, opens wardrobes.

He does a double take when he sees a photograph on  
It's Grant with several other people. One of the crowd is  
a woman.

Dan closes in on the woman in the photograph, his face  
confused and excited.

He studies the woman in the picture with shock. The woman  
stands beside a tall handsome blonde man.

Dan opens the frame, slips out the picture. He rolls it  
up, puts it in his pocket.

INT. FOYER, APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Dan walks to the foyer where the caretaker reads at a  
desk. He's reading "Bloodletting". Dan stops by his desk,  
takes out his wallet. He peels off some notes, hands them  
to the caretaker.

The caretaker hands him the book and a pen.

CARETAKER

If you wouldn't mind, Mr O'Shea.

DAN

Of course not.

Dan signs the inside cover of the novel.

CARETAKER

Is that how you research all your  
books, Mr O'Shea?

DAN

This one's a little different.

CARETAKER

I look forward to reading it.

Dan walks out, leaving the caretaker to his stoic vigil.

EXT./INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan's in his car parked out on the street. He's on his  
mobile to Karen. He holds the picture of the woman,  
staring at it.

DAN

It's her, Karen. It's my mother.  
Edward Grant knew her. I have to  
see this through.

KAREN (O.S.)

Just be careful, Dan.

DAN

I will, babe.

KAREN

(Concerned)

Listen, Dan... whatever happens...

(Beat)

I love you. Remember that.

DAN

(Perplexed)

Yeah, of course. I love you too.

She hangs up.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Dan drives through the countryside. He travels down a narrow country road until he arrives at a large two-storey house.

It's a modern monstrosity with fake Palladian columns attempting to give it some class. It stands like a monolith in the middle of nowhere.

Dan drives past. He turns down a side lane, parks in the nearest gateway he sees.

He gets out of the car, walks back to the house. He checks no-one is around, then climbs over the gate and walks up to the house.

There is a police tape draped across the front door. It's Conor Jennings' house.

He walks around the back, checking through the windows as he passes.

He goes to the back door. He takes out a small crowbar from his jacket, prizes the door open.

He goes inside.

INT. BIG HOUSE - DAY

The house is a statement of wealth - marble surfaces, Turkish rugs, glass chandeliers, massive wall-mounted TVs. It's all a bit cluttered and tacky, an ostentatious mish-mash of styles.

Despite the furnishings, it has an unlived in feel - definitely a bachelor's pad, not a family home.

There's a home office with a few modern computers and filing cabinets.

There's a study with a large collection of texts - old editions of classic novels, medieval and ancient texts on politics and philosophy. There's also a section on daemonology, alchemy, witchcraft, voodoo...

There is only one painting, in the living room. It's a copy of 'Zephyrus and Chloris' by William Adolphe Bougeaureau. Dan stands in front of it for a while, taking in the detail.

Dan walks around, checking drawers, wardrobes, filing cabinet, lockers - rifling through whatever documents, clothes, folders, photographs he finds. Looking for a clue. Looking for anything.

He turns on the computer in the office, goes through the files. He finds the same some Excel spreadsheets with a list of investment portfolios - pharmaceuticals, military, surveillance companies.

He opens a filing cabinet. He takes out a folder, opens it. It's full of clippings of newspaper headlines, with dates and other ostensibly random numbers and letters inscribed alongside them.

A sample of the headlines:

Strikers beaten by police

IMF forces cuts in health, education

New law allows for increased surveillance of citizens  
Government ups military spending  
New prison gets go ahead  
Unemployment, emigration surges as jobs outsourced  
Banks win battle to regulate themselves  
Pharma giants win patent rights  
No jail for bribe politician

Dan can't make sense out of any of it. He puts the folder back, closes the cabinet. He starts to go upstairs.

As he passes the window he freezes.

There's a car coming up the drive to the house.

Dan slinks back from the window. He unplugs the computer, shuts the cabinets and drawers.

He moves quickly but quietly upstairs.

He goes into a small windowless bedroom. He looks around, lies down, checks under the bed. He thinks better of it, steps into a wardrobe. He closes the door. He can see through a small gap in the door.

He has a view of part of the upper hallway, through the open door of the bedroom.

He hears the front door being forced open.

Dan holds his breath. He hears footsteps below.

After a few seconds the footsteps come up the stairs.

Dan tenses. He can see the man pass by the open bedroom door. He's holding something. Dan can't make out what it is.

Dan waits, keeping his breathing quiet as possible. He waits.

The man returns, this time walking backwards and hunched over. Dan can't make out what he's doing.

But we can. He's pouring petrol from a canister along the floor.

The man, a hulking figure who looks like a bouncer, walks down the stairs, pouring a line of petrol as he descends.

Downstairs he walks through the house, dousing the carpet, the furniture, with petrol.

He uses up the last of the petrol in a line to the front hall. He throws away the canister. He steps back, opens the door. He takes out a match, lights it. He throws it on the floor, closes the door as the line of flame erupts and spreads throughout the house immediately.

It speeds through the house, burning up the carpet.

It's the smell that gets to Dan first. Then the smoke. Then he sees the line of flame burning through the upper hall.

Panicked, he comes out of the wardrobe. He goes to the door. The upper hallway is totally engulfed by flame.

He's trapped.

The far side of the hall there's a bathroom.

He takes a bedsheet off the bed, drapes it around him. He stands at the door, poised, ready to spring.

He races through the flame, the bedsheet shielding him. He lands in the bathroom. The bedsheet's caught fire. He throws it out into the hall.

He goes to the window of the bathroom, opens it. He stands out on the ledge.

It's a long drop down. There's a tree nearby with a branch sticking out. The smoke is coming thick into the bathroom now, the heat immense. Dan's sweating. The flames are growing, licking into the bathroom, the dense black smoke encircling him, making him cough, his eyes water.

It's enough to make him black out. Almost.

He aims for the branch, jumps for it, arms outstretched.

His arms hit the branch but he can only hold on for a nanosecond. He loses his grip, falls.

He hits the ground with a thud.

He blacks out.

CUT TO BLACK

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

You all right, buddy?

Slowly Dan opens his eyes.

The face of a fireman looks down at him. He gazes around, sees he's on a stretcher being carried away from the house.

It's ablaze. Two fire trucks and a small army of firemen are putting out the fire.

He turns his head back to the sky, closes his eyes. He blacks out again.

CUT TO BLACK

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, POLICE STATION - DAY

Woods interviews Dan, who looks beat after his ordeal.

Woods holds Dan's Dictaphone in his hand and doesn't look pleased. He slides it across the table towards Dan, who takes it, puts it in his pocket.

WOODS

This isn't a story, Mr O'Shea. It's not research.

DAN

Look, this involves me. My mother's picture was in Edward Grant's house...

WOODS

I thought you said you'd no connection to Edward Grant.

DAN

I don't. At least I didn't think I had.



WOODS

So where's the picture?

DAN

I can't find it. I must have  
dropped it in Jennings's house.

WOODS

You've got to see how this looks.

DAN

How does it look?

WOODS

It looks like you're interfering  
with a police investigation. It  
looks like you're trying to burn  
evidence.

DAN

It wasn't me that started the fire.  
There was a guy....

WOODS

So you've said.

DAN

Listen, you're right. There's  
something going on here. I agree  
with you.

WOODS

You've become a liability, Mr  
O'Shea.

DAN

Grant and Jennings, I don't think  
they were randomly targeted. They  
had some connection.

WOODS

What kind of connection?

DAN

I don't know exactly. They both had paintings in their homes. You must have seen them?

WOODS

A lot of people like art, Mr O'Shea. Believe it or not I have one or two paintings myself.

DAN

The two paintings... they had the same subject. Zephyrous, Greek God of the Wind.

A beat.

WOODS

That's it?

DAN

Jennings, he had newspaper clippings in a file. A lot of political stuff, business stuff.

WOODS

(Unamused)

Newspaper clippings.

DAN

Both men had investments.

WOODS

They were well off. They had shares.

DAN

If you keep digging, you'll find some connection between them, I'm sure of it.

Woods looks at him with a mix of suspicion, exasperation and disbelief.

EXT./INT. DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan arrives home.

He's agitated after all that's happened. He wanders around the house, restless.

INT. DAN'S STUDY - DAY

He stops by his bookshelf in the study, pulls out a book. The cover title reads:

Realising Your Psychic Potential

He turns to the back sleeve.

We see a picture of the author, ELSA BARRETT. She's a small, plump middle-aged woman with a relaxed, hippy-ish vibe and understanding smile.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

An old Georgian building refurbished to offices. Plaques by the door list a host of businesses. We close in on one plaque, which reads:

New Age Publishing

INT. OFFICE, BUILDING - DAY

Dan sits before Elsa Barrett, who looks the same as she does on the book jacket.

New Age Publishing is a small operation manned by a skeleton crew in pokey cramped offices. Astral charts and motivational slogans adorn the walls.

Elsa's office is a bit bigger and more homely than the rest of the operation. It used to be the parlour of an old 19<sup>th</sup> century residence. Despite the update to office requirements, it still has a musty, old-fashioned feel.

She wears a poloneck and plaid jacket, is plump and mumsy with a short haircut.

DAN

When I was younger I'd write short stories. Looking back later I realised a lot of the characters I wrote about were very similar to people I subsequently met. Girlfriends, friends, bosses...

ELSA

It could be you were writing about things you desired, or things you expected to happen. That could be the reason those things happened.

DAN

That's what I've been told.

ELSA

On the other hand, they could be genuine instances of foresight.

DAN

Everybody thinks I'm crazy. Maybe I am.

ELSA

It's not crazy to consider other possibilities, Mr O'Shea. Whatever brought you here is very real. From what you've told me about your experiences, I think it's very real indeed. Have you consulted a clairvoyant about your feelings before?

DAN

I was persuaded against it.

ELSA

Many people try to rationalise the gift of foresight.

DAN

I tried testing myself. It never worked.

ELSA

That's the mistake people make.

(Beat)

ELSA

Clairvoyance exists independently of our will, Dan. We don't always have the choice over what we are permitted to see. It's a gift. We are only shown certain things. Things we are meant to see.

EXT. ROOFTOP GARDEN - DAY

Elsa and Dan roam around the rooftop garden of her publishing company, overlooking the city.

DAN

Why are we shown these things?

ELSA

I can't answer that for you. I can tell you something though, Dan. Something not many people know.

She hesitates. Dan urges her on with his eyes.

ELSA

The reason people see the future..

A beat.

ELSA

The gift of foresight... it's a gift from the dead.

Dan stares at Elsa in disbelief.

EXT. CEMETERY GATES - DAY

We see Dan pull up outside the cemetery. The POV is from inside the cemetery this time. He gets out of the car, enters, coming towards us.

EXT. GRAVE - DAY

Dan stands by his mother's grave, looking down at it.

ELSA (V.O.)

The dead don't have the limited perception we do. They exist outside time, outside space. They see everything - the past, and the future. When we are given a glimpse of the future, it's because somebody deceased is showing it to us. Whispering it to us.

INT. CCTV MONITORING ROOM, POLICE STATION - DAY

The room is wall to wall monitors. Woods and another officer, STEVENSON, check out CCTV footage on a monitor in kiosk. Stevenson operates the playback controls.

The footage on the monitor shows a country road with a car driving past. The footage is paused.

STEENSON

This car passed close to Jennings' house around the time of the fire.

Stevenson presses a few buttons. The image on the screen is blown up so we can see the man in the car. It's the guy who set fire to Jennings.

WOODS

A lone male occupant. He matches the description. Can you get the reg?

Stevenson presses a few buttons. The image on the screen is blown up so only the registration is on screen. Woods jots down the numbers on a piece of paper.

INT. WOODS' DESK, POLICE STATION - DAY

Woods dials a number, waits.

EXT./INT. DAN'S CAR - DAY

Dan is driving through the city. He answers, hands-free.

DAN (O.S.)

Yeah?

WOODS

Dan, it's Woods. I just emailed you a picture.

INT. STUDY, DAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Dan is in his study checking email on his laptop.

There's an email from Woods, an attachment to it. He opens the attachment.

It's a JPEG image from the CCTV footage showing a close-up of the guy in the car.

Dan grabs his mobile, dials. Woods answers.

DAN

Yeah. That's him. That's the guy.

WOODS

You'd testify in court to that?

DAN

Yeah. Who is he?

WOODS

I'm not at liberty...

DAN

Come on. I found him for you.

WOODS

His car is registered to something called the Olympus Institute.

DAN

The Olympus Institute?

Dan is already googling it.

WOODS

They're a political think tank or something like that.

Dan has found their website, a shiny corporate site. The slogan on the site is:

Thought Leaders in Business and  
Governance

WOODS

Grant and Jennings were both board  
members.

DAN

So you've found a connection  
between them.

Dan has clicked on the "Our Staff" tab. Dan is looking at a smiling picture of the guy who burned the house. ERIC HOFNER, Director of Security.

WOODS

I appreciate your help on this. Now  
it's best you leave it to us.

He clicks off. Dan keeps staring at the picture of Hofner.

INT. DAN'S KITCHEN - DAY

Dan and Elsa sit facing each other across a small circular table. The lights are off and only a table-lamp illuminates them like a spotlight.

Both have their eyes closed and heads bowed in solemn thought, almost like prayer. Their hands link across the table. Elsa looks especially to be concentrating. An incense candle burns.

ELSA

Marion O'Shea? Is that you, Marion?  
Your son Dan is with me. If it's  
you, say so.

(Beat)

Marion O'Shea, if that is you give  
us proof. The name of your son's  
first pet. Marion O'Shea, the name  
of your son's first pet.

A beat.



ELSA  
It's... It's Rebel?

Dan opens his eyes, amazed.

DAN  
Yes.

He looks around the dark room. Is his mother present?

ELSA  
One more question, Marion. Your son's childhood friend. Who was your son's first and best childhood friend?

Elsa concentrates hard, cocks her ear as if listening.

ELSA  
It's Kevin... No, it's Gavin. Gavin Donnelly? Gavin Donnel...

DAN  
Gavin Donnellan. It's her.

Dan and Elsa look at each other. Dan is absolutely certain now.

DAN  
Ask her.

Elsa bows her head, closes her eyes again. Dan follows suit.

ELSA  
Marion. Your son is here. Tell us, Marion, why are you giving your son the gift of foresight?

A beat.

ELSA

To show you she is always around  
you. She's helping you.

A beat.

DAN

Am I meant to stop these things  
happening?

A beat. Elsa is concentrating hard.

ELSA

No. I don't think that's possible.  
I don't think that's her intention.

Suddenly the light snaps on.

Dan and Elsa look up, surprised. They stop linking hands.

Karen has walked into the room. She stares at Elsa  
scornfully. She has Dan's Dictaphone in her hand.

ELSA

I've lost it. It's gone. The  
connection's broke.

KAREN

There was never any connection.

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Elsa leaves, looks very cowed. Dan and Karen watch her  
leave.

She turns to Dan before she gets in her car.

ELSA

Dan, these things... they're not  
always straightforward.

DAN

I ought to break your neck.

Elsa sheepishly gets into her car, drives off.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Karen plays the Dictaphone.

ELSA (O.S.)

What was the name of your first  
pet?

DAN (O.S.)

I had a dog called Rebel.

She stops the tape.

KAREN

After you told me what you were  
planning I came back. Your mother  
didn't tell her those things, Dan.  
You did. Simple hypnosis.

DAN

You must think I'm an idiot.

KAREN

I think you're looking for answers.  
We all are.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dan and Karen lie side by side.

DAN

But I've seen things, Karen. The  
books... the boy on the pier... the  
photograph...

KAREN

Are you sure it was a photograph of  
your mother? It was an old picture,  
Dan. Worn. It could have been  
somebody who resembled her.

DAN

That doesn't explain the rest of  
it.

KAREN

Sometimes we just have to accept  
strange coincidences happen. Maybe  
there's a reason for it, maybe not.

(Beat)

You know what a real mystery is?  
Two people with the same souls, two  
people who are meant to be  
together... in a world of seven  
billion people they'd find each  
other. That they'd just happen to  
sit beside each other in a café one  
day and start talking. That's a  
miracle.

He puts his arm around her, holds her tight.

DAN

I don't know what I'd do without you.

INT. BURNED OUT HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan walks through the burned out house.

Everything is cold, eerie, spectral, dreamlike.

He walks tentatively down the corridor. He comes to the  
room where he saw the dream-vision of Balfour before.

He stands at the door, looks in.

In the centre of the room lies a charred, blackened body.

Dan enters the room, approaches the body.

He looks down at it. It's burned black, unrecognisable. It  
could be anyone, man or woman. It could be him.

The camera pans back. We see someone standing in the  
doorway watching Dan.

Dan turns around. He sees the man at the door staring in  
at him.

The man is small, nimble and hard-looking, arms knotty  
with muscle. His eyes are dazzling white in a sooty,  
smoke-darkened face.

The two of them stare at each other. They seem to  
recognise each other.

INT. DAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Dan wakes up sweating. Another dream.

Karen is not in the bed beside him. He hears the sound of the shower running from the bathroom the room over.

INT. DAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Dan and Karen eat breakfast in silence. Dan seems pensive.

DAN

I'm going to see my father.

We see the strain on Karen's face though she tries not to show it.

DAN

If my mother did know Edward Grant,  
maybe he did too.

She stops. She can't take it anymore.

KAREN

Your father hasn't agreed to see  
you in 20 years.

DAN

He'll see me today.

KAREN

How do you know he will?

DAN

I dreamed he would. I saw him. He  
was ready to tell me.

EXT. BUSINESS CAMPUS - DAY

Woods parks in the lot of a business campus, a neat grid of uniform office blocks.

It's a suburban park just off a ring road. Petrol stations, car showrooms and wasteland dot the roads into it; electric pylons recede into the horizon across overgrown fields.

Woods consults a large map on an information board which lists the businesses on campus.

He walks towards a building. The plate by the door of the building lists several companies. One of the plates reads:

Olympus Institute

Woods enters the building.

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

Dan drives along a motorway. He's travelling a long distance.

EXT. ASYLUM - DAY

Dan pulls up outside a grim, dirty-grey Victorian-era asylum. Its bleak, imposing appearance harks back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

INT. ASYLUM - DAY

Dan follows COLM MOORE, the jaded, schoolmasterly governor of the asylum, down the corridor. Their footsteps echo loudly in the grim environs.

MOORE

Frankly I'm amazed he's agreed to see you, Mr O'Shea. He's refused all visitors before.

DAN

I knew he would.

MOORE

It's been a long time. Your father's not the same man he was.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

MATT O'SHEA sits in front of Dan, a table between them. A guard stands by the wall, observing.

Matt is the man from the dream. Now in the cell he looks pathetic, weakened, totally institutionalised - a far cry from the hard man he seemed in the dream.

The palms of his hands and both his feet (he is barefoot) have deep scars on them. These are self-inflicted stigmata.

He avoids eye contact with his son, lowering his gaze. He seems apprehensive, fearful his son's presence.

DAN

You won't look at me?

A beat.

MATT

A cobra in the desert can blind  
from 2 metres.

DAN

Why did you agree to see me if you  
won't talk to me?

A beat.

MATT

I'll tell you what you want to  
know.

DAN

Why did you agree to see me?

His father laughs, a mordant, humourless laugh.

MATT

You come here to torment me?

(Beat)

You know why I agreed to see you.

DAN

I don't. Why?

MATT

You told me to. You told me you  
were coming.

DAN

I never...

MATT

Last night, you started whispering  
in my ear.... I know you wouldn't  
stop whispering until I saw you.

Dan is shocked by this.

DAN

I told you I was coming?

MATT

Your mother had such power, you  
have it too. It's why I did what I  
had to do. The only way to be sure  
is fire.

DAN

You haven't changed your story in  
all these years.

MATT

Thou shalt not suffer a sorceress  
to live.

He leans forward.

MATT

Fire is the only way to be sure.

Dan looks a bit annoyed by all this.

DAN

Did my mother know somebody called  
Edward Grant? Or Conor Jennings? I  
think she knew these people.

MATT

She knew people. More of your type.  
Covens stick together.

INT. TOILET, ASYLUM - DAY



Dan vomits into the toilet in a washroom. He stops heaving and tries to control his breathing. He's hyperventilating, having a panic attack.

He gradually calms down. Seeing his father has been a strain, it's brought back traumatic memories.

INT. RECEPTION, OLYMPUS INSTITUTE - DAY

Woods is waiting in the reception area. A frumpy, cold looking middle-aged woman mans the reception.

Eric Hofner enters.

He walks to Woods, hand outstretched. Woods rises, shakes.

HOFNER

Inspector Woods. Thanks for waiting. Come on through.

Hofner leads Woods to an office.

The workfloor is empty. Apart from the receptionist there doesn't seem to be any other staff working in the Olympus Institute today.

INT. HOFNER'S OFFICE - DAY

Hofner holds court behind his desk.

WOODS

You were identified in the house of Conor Jennings the day it went up in smoke.

Hofner looks unfazed by Woods' questions. He is utterly calm.

HOFNER

You know these old properties, word gets around they're empty and you have all sorts in there. Teenagers, delinquents...

WOODS

Were you in the house that day?

HOFNER

No, of course not.

WOODS

Were you anywhere near it?

HOFNER

(Smiling glibly)

I was here. Then I went home. All quite boring, really.

WOODS

So you weren't driving on the M40 at all that day?

Hofner senses a trap.

HOFNER

Mmmm... I'll have to check. Who is claiming I was in that house?

WOODS

I'm not at liberty to discuss that yet.

HOFNER

Could you hold on a second, Mr Woods.

Hofner stands up, leaves the room.

Through the glass panel in the office door Woods can see Hofner pick up a phone and make a call. He seems him talk briefly on the phone, put it down, and march back to the office. He arrives back in.

HOFNER

I think we can clear this up straight away, Inspector. Would you follow me please?

WOODS

Where?

HOFNER

I think you should meet the director of the institute, Sean Buchanan.

WOODS

What's he to do with it?

HOFNER

I think you'll find what you want to know. We can clear this up once and for all. He's on the top floor.

Without waiting for a reply Hofner leaves. Woods gets up, follows.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, ASYLUM - DAY

Dan speaks with Moore. Dan looks over a list of people on a sheet of paper. He seems annoyed.

MOORE

Every psychiatric professional who's treated your father is listed there. I'm not sure what else they can tell you.

DAN

25 years and his delusions haven't changed.

MOORE

We've done our best for your father, Mr O'Shea. His dementia has proved to be... implacable

Dan flips down through a list of names.

He freezes. His brow creases in confusion as he stares at a name.

We close in on the name on the list.

Karen Tompkins

Dan looks absolutely shocked.

DAN

Karen?

INT. BOARDROOM, OLYMPUS INSTITUTE - DAY

Woods sits across a large boardroom table from Sean Buchanan, a silver-haired patrician gent with a canny smile. He is immaculately attired in a bespoke suit. He is an older version of the man in the picture with Marion O'Shea.

Hofner stands at the door, observing.

Also at the boardroom table, at the far end, is a middle-aged woman, SUSAN HOLMES. Susan maintains the feline grace of her youth despite the onset of wrinkles. She holds in her hand a pen and a pad of paper.

Woods seems a bit put out by Susan's presence.

WOODS

Note-taking isn't necessary, Mr Buchanan. This is just an informal chat.

BUCHANAN

Susan's not here to take notes, Inspector.

Buchanan nods at Susan. She starts to write something down in her pad. We can't see what she writes.

Woods winces. He rubs his head. It's like he's got a migraine all of a sudden.

BUCHANAN

Are you okay, Inspector?

WOODS

Yes. Just a bit of...

But he looks nauseous, overcome. He winces again, a sharp pain bolting through his head.

Buchanan, Holmes and Hofner all observe him impassively.

Woods stands up.

He walks to a wooden cabinet, opens it. Inside is a decanter of Scotch and some glasses. He takes out the decanter and a glass.

He returns to his seat. He ignores everyone as he pours himself a glass of Scotch. There is a metronomical feel to Woods actions at the moment, very automatic, very robotic.

After pouring the drink, he downs it in one.

Buchanan smiles at him. Woods seems unperturbed, in a trance. Buchanan nods at Susan again.

She writes something down.

Woods pours himself another drink, downs it in one. He looks at Buchanan.

WOODS

What do you want to know?

BUCHANAN

(Smiling)

Everything.

INT. CORRIDOR, INSTITUTION - DAY

Dan paces the corridor. He looks shook, anguished. He holds the list of psychiatrist names. Beside each name is a phone number. He has his mobile in his other hand, as if building himself up to make a call.

He stares at the name again.

Karen Tompkins

He can't get his head around it.

He checks the number beside the name. He dials his mobile. It starts to ring.

INT. KAREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Karen is in her office writing up a report. Her mobile phone rings. She takes it out, answers it.

KAREN

Hello?

INTERCUT WITH DAN

Dan hears her voice. It's her. He can't believe it. He's dumbstruck.

INTERCUT WITH KAREN

KAREN  
(Impatient)  
Hello?

Dan hangs up.

He presses his hands to his face, trying to take all this in.

INT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE, ASYLUM - DAY

Moore is at his desk, writing up something.

Dan enters unannounced.

DAN  
Have you ever had a patient here  
called Sidney Balfour?

MOORE  
Mr O'Shea, I thought we'd concluded  
our business.

DAN  
Sidney Balfour. Did he ever stay  
here?

INT. BOARDROOM, OLYMPUS INSTITUTE - DAY

Buchanan stares at Woods, who still seems to be in a daze.

BUCHANAN  
That's everything?

WOODS  
That's everything.

Buchanan looks at Susan, issues an unspoken direction with his eyes. She starts to fill in something in her pad again.

Woods stands up. He turns, walks out. His movement is stiff, robotic. He doesn't say goodbye or acknowledge anybody as he exits the room.

Hofner opens the door for Woods and closes it after him.

Hofner addresses Buchanan.

HOFNER

Should I...?

Buchanan shakes his head.

BUCHANAN

It's taken care of.

Both men glance at Susan, who we see is sketching something in her pad.

EXT. CAR PARK, BUSINESS CAMPUS - DAY

Woods drives out of the business park.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

As Susan draws, we see Buchanan in the background is on his mobile.

BUCHANAN

(Into the phone)

Some writer called Dan O'Shea. I don't know either. But Edward and Sean are dead.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Woods drives along a country road. He still seems in a bit of a daze or trance, but he's able to handle the car all right.

He doesn't have his seatbelt on.

The road is empty. There is a bend in the road ahead.

A cluster of trees skirts the road at the bend.

Woods stares straight ahead at the trees as he drives. He puts his foot on the accelerator, speeds up.

He drives straight towards the trees at a ferocious speed.

His car speeds off the road at tremendous velocity and smacks into a tree trunk. Woods flies out through the window, smashing it. His body slams against the trunk of the tree, dead instantly, at the same time the bumper of the car bends around the trunk, the whole car mangled in one horrific instant.

Woods' dead and bleeding body lies crumpled by the base of the tree.

INT. BOARDROOM, OLYMPUS INSTITUTE - DAY

Susan finishes drawing in her pad. We now see what it is she's drawing.

It's a car wrapped around a tree, a dead body lying to the side.

It's the exact same scene as we have just seen with Woods, rendered in perfect, chilling detail.

INT. RECEPTION, KAREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan goes into the reception area of Karen's office, addresses the young receptionist.

DAN

Hi, Jenny. Karen left something behind her.

JENNY

(Smiling)

It's open.

Dan enters the office.

INT. KAREN'S OFFICE - DAY

Dan rummages through Karen's drawers, filing cabinets.

He leafs through the folders in the cabinet, spots something, takes out the folder.

The folder is marked "The Five Winds".

He opens it. We see pictures of Edward Grant and Conor Jennings, alongside three other photographs: Sean



Buchanan, Susan Holmes and another man, a fattish chap with the name Rowan Holsworth inscribed above his photo. The photos are accompanied by information sheets which list their addresses, ages.

Dan stares at the pictures.

INT. LIVING ROOM, DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dan sits alone, the lights off.

Karen enters the house. She turns on the light. She is surprised to see him there.

She sees the folder on the coffee table. The pictures of Grant, Jennings and the others spill out from it.

The game's up. She knows it.

KAREN

Dan...

A beat.

DAN

No more lies.

EXT. GARDEN, DAN'S - NIGHT

Karen and Dan talk in the garden.

KAREN

I wanted to protect you.

DAN

Protect me from what?

KAREN

The truth.

DAN

(Angry)

What truth?

KAREN

The truth of what you are.

DAN

Someone who's been duped, that's what I am.

KAREN

You don't even realise what you are. What you can do.

DAN

Evidently it's time I was enlightened.

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Buchanan and Hofner drive towards Dan's house.

EXT. GARDEN, DAN'S - NIGHT

Dan grills Karen. He's still fuming.

KAREN

I would have told you everything, Dan.

DAN

When?

KAREN

When it was over.

DAN

When what was over?

(Beat)

Tell me now, Karen. People are dying. Inspector Woods was killed today as well.

KAREN

What? How?

DAN

Crashed into a tree on an empty road. Can you believe that? I don't.

KAREN

Where was he?

There's a knock on the front door. Dan goes to answer it.

KAREN

Dan, where was Woods?

DAN

He'd gone to see someone at that place you have mentioned in your file. The Olympus Institute.

KAREN

Don't answer it.

He stalls.

KAREN

Dan, listen to me. I'll explain everything later. But first we have to get out of here.

Another knock on the door.

KAREN

It's not safe.

DAN

I can't trust you.

KAREN

One last time.

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hofner stands outside the door. There's no answer. He steps back, kicks in the door.

He rushes inside and roams through the house.

There's no one there.

EXT. BACK LANE - NIGHT

Dan and Karen run down the back alley from their house.

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Buchanan waits in a car outside Dan's.

He sees Dan and Karen come out onto the street in his rearview mirror. He steps out of the car and follows them. He takes out his phone, speed dials Hofner, who answers immediately.

BUCHANAN

They're out here. Hurry.

Hofner hurries out of the house. He joins Buchanan and the two of them follow Dan and Karen.

Dan and Karen run to a nearby high street, where there are pubs, stores and a shopping centre. The area is busy with shoppers and traffic.

They run through a shopping mall car park. A few vagrants sit around drinking cans in the car park.

Buchanan comes to the shopping mall, sees Dan and Karen fleeing.

He stares at the vagrants drinking cans. He concentrates on them, mutters something under his breath.

The vagrants get up. They seem dazed, in a trance, just like Woods was. They step in front of Dan and Karen and try and restrain them.

Karen screams as one grabs her. Dan stops, turns, dashes back and shoves the vagrant off Karen. The other vagrants circle them.

Dan backs away from them. There's a skip with some rubbish in it behind him. He takes out a long metal pole sticking out from the skip, wields it at them. He slashes it around the air at the vagrants, forcing them to keep their distance.

He clears a path, forcing them back. He flings the pole at them, grabs Karen and flees.

The vagrants don't give chase. Suddenly they seem back to normal. They look around at each other confused. What just happened? Buchanan and Hofner run past them, Buchanan no longer controlling them remotely. Buchanan and Hofner

chase Dan and Karen. They've made some ground and are closing in on them.

Dan and Karen run past the shopping centre entrance. A couple and two children walk out laden with shopping bags and pushing a trolley. The dad is a non-descript family-man type.

Buchanan stops running, stares at him. He whispers some words again.

All of a sudden the dad changes from a happy family man into a line backer. He steps out in front of Dan as Dan runs past and tackles him. He holds Dan tight in a bear hug.

The guy's wife and kids are shocked at this unexpected aggression by her husband.

WIFE

Mike, what are you doing?

But Mike isn't paying attention. He's fixated on stopping Dan, even though he doesn't know why.

Karen spots a can of spray perfume in the shopping trolley. She grabs it, sprays it in Mike's eyes. He shouts, lets go of Dan, rubbing his eyes.

Karen and Dan scarper. They've been delayed though, and Hofner has gained ground. He's nearly upon them.

Dan and Karen flee the shopping centre car park and turn a corner down a quieter street.

A blind man is walking a guide dog towards them.

Hofner turns the corner, he's inching closer to them.

Karen stumbles, falls. Dan's a bit ahead of her before he realises he's left her behind. He turns around, sees Karen scrambling to her feet.

Hofner is right behind her. The blind man is ambling past them. As Karen gets up Hofner grabs her.

On seeing this Dan's face clenches with rage.

Immediately the guide dog starts barking at Hofner. It lunges at him, bites him. Hofner screams, letting Karen go.

She runs away from him. The dog stands in front of Hofner, blocking his path, barking viciously, not letting him pass.

The blind man is frightened and confused listening to the uncharacteristic barking of his dog. The leash has been pulled out of his hand and he's standing with his hands out searching for the dog.

BLIND MAN

Here, boy. What's wrong? What's wrong?

But the dog is ignoring him. He's snarling at Hockheimer, keeping him from chasing his quarry.

Buchanan turns the corner. He sees Hochheimer brought to a standstill by the dog. He sees Dan and Karen bundling into a taxi some distance up the street. The taxi speeds off.

The dog stops barking, goes quiet. It calmly goes back to its owner. The blind man feels it at his leg, goes down and pets it, grabs the leash.

Hofner looks at Buchanan sheepishly. Buchanan glares back at him. Hofner ducks his head, ashamed. He's failed his master.

EXT./INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

Dan and Karen enter the room of a shabby, cheap hotel. Dan turns on the light, locates the fridge, takes out a beer, sits down and cracks it open. He takes a slug.

EXT./INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Karen is explaining everything to him, who listens incredulously.

KAREN

You can't see the future. You can't talk with the dead. You can't manipulate physical matter. But you do have the greatest power of all.

You can control people's thoughts.  
You can put ideas into people's  
heads, make them act on them. And  
they won't even know it's you doing  
it.

DAN

(Irate)

Why are you making all this up?

KAREN

Because it's true. You saw it  
yourself. The dog, the boy on the  
pier...

DAN

I had a premonition of the boy..

KAREN

No, you didn't, Dan. You made him  
fall in.

DAN

I wouldn't...

KAREN

Subconsciously you did. You were so  
eager to believe you were  
clairvoyant, you made him fall in  
so you could save him and convince  
yourself.

DAN

This is nuts.

EXT. BALCONY, HOTEL - NIGHT

Dan and Karen continue talking on a balcony overlooking the  
street.

KAREN

When I was working I met your  
father. Everyone thought he was  
mad. He was, really. He'd been

driven mad. But what he said about his family being witches was true. I realised that because my own father was one. I should have been one, should have the power you have. But my father was stripped of his power by a coven of five other witches. Only when all five are dead, will the power be restored to our bloodline. I needed you to help me.

DAN

It was no accident you bumped into me, was it? That we met in that café.

She shakes her head, agreeing.

KAREN

I realised you didn't know the power you had. It was buried deep in your unconscious. If I'd told you, you might not have agreed. So I had to use subterfuge. I got you to cast spells for me. I made you think it was fiction, part of your writing, but it was real. When my power had been restored, I would have told you everything, Dan. We would have been so good together.

DAN

We were so good together. At least that's what I thought.

KAREN

I did love you, Dan.

DAN

(Sarcastic)

Yeah, right.

KAREN



How could I not? We're the same.

DAN

I think that's less likely than anything else you've told me tonight.

(Beat)

And let's say all this is true, what about Sidney Balfour? He's in jail now. An innocent man.

KAREN

I didn't plan on him getting caught. I would have wiped his mind afterwards. The whole thing has turned into a mess.

Dan rises.

DAN

I've to... clear my head.

He exits the room. He is distraught, doesn't know what to think about all this.

She goes into the bathroom, turns on the shower.

INT. CAR, STREET - DAY

Buchanan dials his phone. Hofner waits in the driver's seat.

INT. CALL CENTRE - DAY

A labyrinth of cubicles, staff talking with telephone headsets.

A young customer service agent with a headset answers a call.

CUSTOMER REP

You're through to Richard. How can I help make your banking better today?

INTERCUT WITH BUCHANAN

BUCHANAN

Dan O'Shea. When was his credit card last used?

CUSTOMER REP

I'll need to verify your identity, Mr O'Shea. Can you tell me what was your mother's maiden....

Richard winces, holds his head like he's got a sudden sharp pain in it.

He types in a few words on his keypad, hits 'Enter'. A fresh page emerges on his computer monitor. He reads it.

CUSTOMER REP

The card was last used in the Dorset Arms this evening at 9.14.

Buchanan hangs up, gives Hofner the nod.

Hofner starts the car.

EXT. BATHROOM, DORSET ARMS - NIGHT

Karen is in the shower.

EXT. LOBBY, DORSET ARMS - NIGHT

Buchanan enters, goes to the reception desk.

The receptionist, an old man, puts down his newspaper and waits for Buchanan to speak.

Buchanan doesn't. He just looks at the receptionist. The receptionist rubs his head, overcome.

He turns, walks to to the wall of keys behind him. He picks out a key, brings it to Buchanan.

RECEPTIONIST

Room 32. The woman's there alone.  
The guy's gone out.

Buchanan takes the key, walks to the lift.

The receptionist sits back down. He seems fatigued all of a sudden.

INT. CHINESE TAKEAWAY - NIGHT

Dan waits in a Chinese takeaway. We see him from outside the window.

The cashier comes out from the kitchen with a plastic bag laden with food trays. Dan takes it, pays her, leaves.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Karen comes out from the bathroom, the towel wrapped around her body, her hair wet.

She freezes when she sees Buchanan sitting casually on the bed, waiting for her.

She instinctively steps back inside the bathroom and closes the door. Buchanan doesn't budge.

He waits calmly. A few seconds later the door opens. Karen steps out. She's under his psychic control. Buchanan takes a good look at her.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Dan carries the food back to the hotel.

As he turns the corner he sees Karen and Buchanan walking out of the Dorset Arms.

He steps back behind the corner quickly. He peers out from behind it, sees Karen get into the car with Buchanan. Hofner's in the driving seat. They drive off.

Dan watches them disappear. He comes out from behind the corner. The bag with the food slips from his grasp. He can't concentrate on anything now.

He turns and walks away from the hotel, not daring to go in.

He presses his hands to his head in turmoil. Everything's torn asunder.

EXT. MANSION, COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

A luxurious mansion deep in the countryside. A large garden estate around it. Buchanan's home. This is real wealth.

His car pulls in with him, Karen and Hofner inside.

INT. BEDROOM, MANSION - NIGHT

Karen sits on a bed in a luxurious bedroom. She looks sullen. She is back to normal, no longer under a charm.

The door opens. Buchanan enters. He's carrying a tray of food. He leaves it by her bed.

She doesn't look at it, has no interest.

BUCHANAN

Your father wasn't content to live as a normal. I didn't think it would bother someone who was born normal so much.

KAREN

My father told me what we were, what my birthright was.

BUCHANAN

Then he's a more dangerous fool than I gave him credit for. Ambition's a terrible thing, Karen. Look where it's brought you. I thought he'd at least have the good grace not to fill your head with such dangerous aspirations.

(Beat)

Tell me, how long did he last as one of them before he killed himself.

She looks away. A shadow seems to pass over her face at the memory.

He walks to the door, exits. She hears the "click" as he locks her inside.

She goes to the window, looks out. There's a steep drop to the ground below. And Hofner waits in a car below, keeping an eye on her window.

EXT. PARK - MORNING

Dan wakes up beneath a bush in a large city park. He's slept rough and looks a mess.

As he wakes up, he gazes out, sees a troupe of early-morning joggers passing by nearby.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Dan walks around. People instinctively avoid him as he walks down the path.

He looks forlorn, aimless. Despite Karen betraying him, without her he's lost. He wanders the streets like a ghost, provoking only cautious glares from the people around him.

He scans the faceless crowds, all eager to avoid him, not even wanting to see him, to acknowledge his existence. It's a far cry from the crowds of autograph seekers that sought him out before.

He walks around, comes to an intersection.

He presses his hands against his head, trying to compress the enormity of his situation.

He looks about him, evaluates the streetscape. People going about their business.

A vagrant is drinking a bottle of wine down an alley.

A traffic warden is moving down a line of cars, checking them, issuing tickets, slapping them on the windscreens of the empty vehicles.

A small crowd waits at a bus stop, everybody in their own minds, ignoring each other.

Dan looks around, takes it all in.

He stares at the vagrant.

The vagrant is oblivious to him, concerned only with drinking his wine.

Dan keeps staring at him. He whispers under his breath.

The vagrant winces, rubs his head as if struck by a feeling of nausea. He stops drinking the wine. He stands up. He pours the bottle of wine onto the ground, spilling

every last drop. He looks cool, nonchalant and detached as he does this. He discards the bottle, picks up his few belongings and walks away.

Dan is amazed.

He looks towards the traffic warden moving up and down the line of cars, a trumped up jobsworth.

The warden stops, checks a car, writes a ticket, puts it on the windscreen.

Dan stares, concentrates. He talks under his breath.

The warden is walking away from the car. He stops, returns to the car. He picks up the ticket he's just wrote. He tears it up. He walks up the street.

Dan turns his attention to the bus queue. The bus is coming and the crowd surge to the kerbside, waiting to board it. The driver slows as it comes near the bus stop. Dan stares at the bus driver. He concentrates on the driver, whispers under his breath.

The bus picks up speed again and drives past the crowd of people. It carries on down the street. The crowd are apoplectic.

Dan is flabbergasted.

It's all true.

He retreats to a wall, slinks down against it, presses his hands against his head again, thoughts swirling about his head. The street continues going on about its business around him, without him. Again oblivious to him.

INT. CELL, INSTITUTION - DAY

Balfour sits in a padded cell. He looks doped up.

The door opens. Dan enters.

Balfour looks at him. The dope in his system means he is not surprised to see him.

DAN

Come on.

INT. CORRIDOR, INSTITUTION - DAY

Balfour follows Dan down a corridor. Orderlies, nurses and doctors walk past, ignoring them.

Balfour is wearing his own clothes now.

EXT. INSTITUTION - DAY

Dan speaks with Balfour outside the institution.

DAN

They won't bother you anymore. They  
won't even remember you.

Balfour just stares at him.

DAN

You won't remember any of this,  
Sidney. I'm sorry you were  
involved. Go home.

Balfour looks at him in a daze. Dan puts his hand on Balfour's shoulder.

DAN

Go home.

Dan gets in a car. We've no idea where he got it but we can guess. He drives off.

Balfour stands watching him leave. Then he turns around, looks about him. He looks to the horizon. He starts to walk up the road away from the institution.

EXT. STREET - DAY

INT. CAR - DAY

Dan is parked in his new car by a train station.

He dials his phone.

INT. RECEPTION, OLYMPUS INSTITUTE - DAY

The receptionist at the Olympus Institute answers her ringing landline.

RECEPTIONIST

Olympus Institute. How may I help  
you?

INTERCUT WITH DAN

DAN

I want to speak with Eric Hofner.

EXT. STREET - DAY - LATER

Dan waits in his car.

Hofner pulls up behind him. Dan sees him. He gets out of the car, goes to Hofner.

He sits into the passenger seat.

Hofner looks at him, smiles. He pulls out, drives off.

INT. CAR - DAY

Hofner drives through the countryside. Dan looks pensive in the passenger seat.

DAN

So you're one of them?

HOFNER

(Shaking his head)

No. I serve them.

DAN

What are they?

HOFNER

They're the reason things are the way they are. They're tomorrow's newspaper editorials, the government's next policy, the next stock market trend, the next military budget. They're everything. There's not an area the five winds don't influence.

DAN

The coven's been depleted.

HOFNER



Coven? Hahaha. I haven't heard that in a while. Grant and Jennings are dead, that's true. But there'll be others to take their place. There always is. People come, people go. Power always stays the same. The five winds are always blowing.

EXT. BUCHANAN'S MANSION, COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

A long drawing room, upstairs in the house. There's a desk at the top of the room, some chairs and dais line the walls. The shelves are lined with copious amounts of antique books.

Karen sits at the far end of the room. She doesn't look like she's been harmed.

Buchanan, Susan Holmes and Rowan Holsworth are also in the room. Holsworth smokes as he paces the room. Susan occupies an armchair, looking aloof and bored as she leafs through a first edition of Malleus Maleficarum (Hammer of the Witches) from the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Hofner pulls into the drive. He and Dan get out of the car.

Dan looks up at the window with the light on. He steels himself for entry. He follows Hofner into the house.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

The interior is lush, extravagant. Marble busts of Greek god decorate the walls. Dan follows Hofner up a grand staircase.

INT. STUDY, MANSION - NIGHT

Hofner shows Dan inside to where Buchanan et al are waiting.

He sees Karen and immediately goes to her.

DAN

Are you all right?

KAREN

Yes.

They embrace.

BUCHANAN

Touching. We'll see how touching it  
is in a minute.

Buchanan stares at Dan.

Dan winces, like he's got a sudden headache. He looks at Karen dispassionately. He steps towards her, grabs her by the throat.

He presses her against the wall. Karen gasps as the grip tightens.

Holsworth smiles.

SUSAN

I'm surprised you don't get bored  
of such easy thrills.

HOLSWORTH

Come now, Susan. One can never  
forget the basics.

Dan holds Karen, but we can see on closer inspection his grip isn't that tight.

Dan whispers something under his breath.

SUSAN

What's he saying to her?

Suddenly Holsworth stands up. He walks to the table, grabs a sharp letter opener and approaches Buchanan, who doesn't see him coming. Susan does notice.

SUSAN

Sean!

Buchanan sees him just in time. He breaks off contact with Dan just before Holsworth slashes at him with the letter

opener. He grabs Holsworth's arm and disarms him. The letter opener drops to the floor.

Holsworth is in a trance, dead-eyed, controlled by Dan now. Dan lets Karen go.

DAN  
(Softly)  
Get out of here.

Karen runs to the door.

Susan sees her attempt to flee. She grabs the letter opener from the floor and runs at Karen with it.

Dan focuses his energy on Susan, creasing his brow with concentration.

Susan stabs herself in the throat. Blood rushes out from the wound.

Holsworth is back to himself now and he and Buchanan start in wonder at what's happened Susan.

Susan rushes across the room and throws herself through the window, smashing it. She drops to the ground below, dead instantly.

Dan turns his attention to Holsworth. Holsworth flies backwards against the wall. His body ascends the wall, like its being dragged up by an invisible pulley.

He's spread-eagled against the wall, hoisted halfway up it, defying the laws of gravity.

Buchanan watches amazed, horrified. This is beyond the power of witches. He looks at Dan.

BUCHANAN  
It's not possible.

Holsworth is screaming, blubbering like a baby. His arms start to extend. They're being pulled out of their sockets, as if by invisible horses.

His jacket and shirt rip open. We see the flesh at his joints stretch, then tears emerge, blood welling in the them and dripping down. His legs too are being pulled out slowly, like he's being drawn. It's slow, gradual,

horrific. He wails as his body is slowly torn apart. As the flesh rips we see the bone and muscle beneath the limbs being torn from the torso.

His neck starts to stretch upward. The flesh starts to rip just before we hear the crack of the spinal chord being severed. His head hangs limp down to the side, the life gone out of his eyes.

His distended, grotesque bloody corpse drops to the floor.

Buchanan stares at Dan in terrified awe.

BUCHANAN

No one can do those things?

DAN

I can.

BUCHANAN

The only way... the only way it's possible....

(Beat)

Who are you?

DAN

My mother was Marion O'Shea, born Doyle. Edward Grant knew her.

BUCHANAN

Marion? You're Marion's?

DAN

You knew her too?

BUCHANAN

(Staring at Dan)

Marion.

DAN

(Impatient)

What do you know about my mother?

Buchanan goes to a drawer. He opens it, takes out a picture. Inside the drawer there is also a Glock pistol.

But Buchanan only takes out the picture. Marion and him. Arms around each other. Very much the happy couple.

He throws it at Dan, who catches it. Dan looks at it, aghast.

BUCHANAN

The only way anyone could have your power, is if both your parents had it.

KAREN

Finish him, Dan.

Dan is trying to take all this in.

BUCHANAN

I won't go after blood. Take her. Take her and I promise nobody will go after you.

DAN

There's no-one left to come after us.

BUCHANAN

This isn't the only coven. But I'll make sure nobody touches you. Son.

DAN

Don't call me that.

BUCHANAN

Then go and this will be the end of it.

Dan turns to Karen.

DAN

We can't survive them all, Karen. It's for the best. We have his word.

KAREN

No, Dan. I want what's mine. I want my birthright. Kill him.

DAN

I'll protect us, Karen. There's been enough killing.

Karen picks up the letter open from the floor, Susan's blood still dripping from it. She rushes at Buchanan.

Buchanan quickly takes out the Glock pistol. He shoots Karen as she runs at him.

She's hit in the stomach. She stops dead, drops the letter opener. She gulps a mouthful of blood. Then she drops to her knees and falls forward.

Dan runs to her, raises her head. But the life is fading from her eyes.

He looks at Buchanan.

The gun in Buchanan's hand starts to distort in shape. The barrel bends down and presses against his fingers. We hear the snap of Buchanan's bones as they are crushed between the bending barrel and the handle. Buchanan shrieks in pain.

BUCHANAN

(Pleading)

We can be awesome together, Dan.  
Our power...

Buchanan raises his free hand to his head.

We hear the cracking of bone beneath the skin of his face. His head starts to distort in shape. The bone is subsiding beneath the flesh, like his skull is imploding. The sound is awful - a cracking and grinding of bone, a renching of cartilage and flesh.

Blood flows from his ears, nose, mouth and eyes. There is one final awful crack where his face subsides inwards, totally convex.

Buchanan falls forward, dead, blood pooling around his broken malformed head.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

Dan carries Karen's body to an empty dining room table. He places her on it carefully.

He closes her eyes with his palm. He takes one last look at her and leaves her.

He exits the dining room.

He descends the stairs.

Hofner waits at the bottom. As Dan comes near, he kneels before him. He reaches out his hand submissively for Dan to touch it.

Dan ignores him. He walks past Hofner and out of the mansion.

Hofner stands up. He goes to the door and watches him depart.

EXT. MANSION - NIGHT

Dan walks out of the front door. Susan's body lies crumpled on the grounds of the house. Dan walks past it without even looking at it. He is numb, his world having fallen apart.

Dan walks down the driveway and out onto the road and walks down it, leaving the mansion behind him.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Hofner douses the room with petrol. He pours the canister around freely, over the mutilated bodies of Holsworth and Buchanan.

Empty, he throws the canister aside. He stands in the centre of the room. He lights a match, drops it to the floor.

He stands absolutely still as the flames roar around him.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Dan walks down the road, flames burning from the mansion behind him.

He is empty and alone. He's paid a terrible price to realise his power.

He sees the lights of the city in the distance. He walks towards them.

CUT TO BLACK