

UNTITLED AJA PROJECT

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3/8/2010

1 EXT. POLICE STATION - EVENING

1

FLASH! FLASH! In a haze of journalists and photographers, a handcuffed prisoner hides his identity under the hoodie of his Michigan football sweatshirt. Two officers escort him into the building, leaving many of the reporter's questions unanswered.

Off to the side, a news correspondent stands in front of a camera.

REPORTER

After a dramatic shoot-out with the police at the University of Michigan stadium, authorities say they have finally apprehended Eli Burns who they believe to be the prime suspect responsible for the murder of three people...

2 INT. POLICE STATION- EVENING

2

Seen from behind, the suspect is led through the police station, while the other officers stop to catch a glimpse of the fugitive.

3 INT. CENTRAL BOOKING - EVENING

3

The prisoner steps in front of a white wall painted with a measuring tape holding a plaque- *Detroit Police Department #067435-*

An officer reaches in to remove the hoodie from his head revealing, ELI BURNS- A tall, handsome twenty-year-old with messy dark hair partly covering his eyes. He looks like he's been through hell.

ELI (V.O.)

Getting a higher education can mean different things to different people. For some, it's an expensive Ivy League degree which usually takes four years...

FLASH! His mug shot is taken.

ELI (V.O.) (CONT'D)

... For others, it's the school of hard knocks where, depending on your major, a degree can take a lot longer.

OFFICER

Turn to the side.

He turns to his profile-

ELI (O.S.)

Which learning institution you end up enrolling in, depends mostly on where you start out in life...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FLASH!

4 INT. HOUSE- MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

4

The second hand on a clock ticks away in extreme CU. It's just past midnight.

Pull back revealing a Cartier clock sitting on a night table. A GLOVED HAND enters frame and swipes it off the table- This is clearly a robbery in progress.

Next, the gloved hand slides into an opened dresser drawer carefully searching through clothing.

Dressed in black and wearing night vision goggles, the cat burglar maneuvers through the dark with precision.

Seen through the thief's bluish-green POV he enters a closet and searches through an underwear drawer. It's obvious he is an expert with cutting edge technology .

He finally pulls out A SMALL JEWELRY BOX, opens it, and removes diamond earrings, gold chains, and a lady's watch. He puts everything in his backpack.

Suddenly, headlights appear through the window wiping across the bedroom wall and catching the burglar's reflection in the mirror. He removes the bulky night vision goggles- It's Eli.

5 INT. HOUSE- FOYER - NIGHT

5

A stylish couple in their late forties enters the house.

WOMAN

I really don't understand what you see
in those people.

MAN

We're going into business together.
You don't have to like them.

6 INT. HOUSE- MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

6

POV from the walk-in closet as the couple comes into the bedroom and starts to undress unaware of someone watching them-

WOMAN

They're obnoxious, trust fund babies.
How old do you think they are?

MAN

I have no idea.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The man removes his shirt and tie, putting his watch and wallet on the dresser while the woman goes to the walk-in closet to hang her dress.

WOMAN

I'll bet you they're swingers.

MAN

Huh-huh. Sure.

THE WOMAN WALKS OUT OF THE CLOSET WITHOUT EVER SEEING ELI WHO STANDS BEHIND A ROW OF CLOTHES. The young burglar smiles, enjoying the idea of being invisible.

WOMAN

Did you see the way she was looking at you?

MAN

She was not looking at me. We had three bottles of wine. She was staring off into space. I just happened to be in it.

The man goes to the bathroom while his wife stands at the dresser removing her jewelry.

WOMAN

Trust me. They were both checking me out as well...

The woman now joins her husband and they continue from their respective sinks.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

...and I know the difference between staring into space and flirting.

Eli stealthily moves past the bathroom door. His gloved hands pass over the dresser, picking up the watch, the woman's jewelry and removing money from the man's wallet.

Suddenly, the man walks out of the bathroom wiping his face with a towel.

When he lowers it, Eli is gone.

MAN

It certainly seems like you've given it some thought. Are you sure you're not the one who wants to spice things up?

The woman joins her husband as he gets into bed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WOMAN

Oh absolutely. That's why the kids are spending the night at your parents'. So we can bring our swinger lovers over here...

MAN

I knew it...

The man pulls his wife close to him and the couple roll around in bed fooling around.

7 **INT. HOUSE- DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

7

The door to an Art Deco armoire opens revealing rows of crystal glasses and dinnerware from Tiffany's.

With the sound of the couple giggling and laughing upstairs, Eli reaches inside the armoire and opens an expensive wood box exposing shiny silverware- the kind which is passed from generation to generation.

He smiles as he removes A SINGLE SILVER SPOON...

CUT TO:

8 **EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

8

Eli emerges from a bush on the side of the house and jumps onto a bicycle- HIS BACKPACK FULL WITH ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL JOB!

9 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

9

Peddling at a steady pace now, Eli turns onto another street of this affluent, tree lined neighborhood before shifting to a higher gear.

10 **EXT. ANN ARBOR, MI - NIGHT**

10

In the small college town of Ann Arbor, crowds of young people gather around late-night bars and restaurants. Eli rides through avoiding everyone and slips into a back alley.

11 **EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT**

11

Eli glides along the back of a building, stops, and locks his bike to a lamppost.

He looks around and, when the coast is clear, walks to a basement window, pushes it open, and slides in.

12 **INT. UNDISCLOSED BASEMENT STORAGE ROOM - NIGHT**

12

In the dark basement storage room, Eli makes his way through a maze of boxes finally exiting to a hallway lit with fluorescent lighting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He climbs a flight of stairs, and quietly opens a door leading to A LARGE, BEAUTIFUL GOTHIC LIBRARY.

13 INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

13

Eli walks under the bicentennial cupola before settling at a table where his books are already opened.

Except for a few late-night crammers, the library is empty.

After a minute of pretending to study, he packs up his stuff.

Stopping at the checkout counter, he hands the librarian a few books and his student ID.

She looks at his picture, his name *Eli Burns*, then up at his face, before SECURING HIS ALIBI BY SWIPING HIS CARD INTO THE SYSTEM.

14 INT. U OF M DORM - NIGHT

14

A few students exit the dorm building as Eli enters.

Walking down the hall, some doors are decorated with signs and pictures, while others are open for everyone to see inside- There's drinking, gambling, and even some studying going on.

A student stands in a doorway yelling into a loud room.

STUDENT

You guys need to join a frat if you're gonna have music playing twenty four hours a day.

DRUNK GUY

Relax dude. It's almost Spring Break.

STUDENT

It's September, you idiot.

15 INT. U OF M DORM ROOM - NIGHT

15

Eli walks into a very messy dorm room to find his roommates THEO and AARON doing bong hits, eating cheeseburgers, and playing a video game on the Wii.

Aaron has a shaved head and, wearing an Arsenal football jersey, swings the Wii control with a deep Cockney accent.

AARON

Come on, you wanker! Go faster.

Sporting a New York baseball cap and a *Basket Case* T-shirt, Theo is a typical New Yorker. He lifts his head from the bong with a lung full of smoke.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI
More research?

AARON
Brain function, focusing on hand-eye coordination. Required for my biology class.

THEO
Bro, if you go under the seaweed you can surprise those swimmers and eat them. I thought you played this before.

AARON
I was British champ, fool.

Eli heads to his room when Aaron remembers something.

AARON (CONT'D)
Hey Eli? Can you sneak us into the stadium for the next game?

ELI
I already told you. I don't have the keys anymore. That was a summer job.

Eli walks through the common bathroom to his room.

AARON (O.S.)
Oh come on mate, hook a brother up!
Eli?!

THEO (O.S.)
(mocking his accent)
Oh come on mate, hook a brother up!

Unlike the chaos of the first room, Eli's room is much neater. Two beds sit on opposite sides of each other next to two desks furnished with identical lamps.

Julian, an Asian student, sits at the window pointing a small satellite dish at another building. He wears a pair of headphones.

Eli slides his backpack under the bed and begins undressing.

ELI
Any luck?

JULIAN
Nope. But it's just a matter of time.

ELI
You're sick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JULIAN
(to himself)
Just a matter of time...

Eli lays in bed and closes his eyes.

16 **EXT. U OF M CAMPUS - NEXT MORNING** 16

The *UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN* campus is buzzing with fall semester activity.

Eli bikes to class when he veers off onto the sidewalk in front of MANNY'S HOUSE OF BURRITOS.

MANNY, a Mexican in his fifties, smiles as he hangs outside the "to-go" window with a white paper bag filled with food.

Eli rides by, grabbing the bag.

MANNY
You got three minutes, Eli!

ELI
Thanks, Manny.

17 **EXT. DIAG SQUARE - MORNING** 17

Lined with beautiful red, orange, and yellow trees, three long sidewalks converge into the social center known as *The Diag*. Eli stops his bike in front of a large message board where thousands of notes and advertisements are pinned- *Guitar Lessons, Apts-4-Rent, Ride Sharing, etc...*

He takes down a note and reading it brings a smile to his face.

18 **EXT. U OF M CAMPUS - CONTINUOUS** 18

Among the rows of ivy covered, 19th century buildings is HUTCHINS HALL, the beautifully restored law center.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
... *"We of the Republic pledged ourselves to drive from the temple of our ancient faith those who had profaned it. But our covenant with ourselves did not stop there..."*

19 **INT. U OF M CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS** 19

In a stadium seating classroom with the words *HISTORY OF CORPORATE CRIME* written on the chalkboard, PROFESSOR FREEDMAN, an attractive woman in her late forties, reads from a book-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
... Instinctively we recognized a deeper need to find, through government...

An embodiment of the American melting pot, the ethnicity of the student body is as varied as it is numerous.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
... the instrument of our united purpose to solve for the individual the ever-rising problems of a complex civilization....

Among the many attentive students, Eli sits in the center listening and occasionally jotting down notes.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
... To do this we knew that we must find practical controls over blind economic forces and blindly selfish men....

Eli's eyes drift towards a full lock of blond hair, and curvy shoulders on a coed a few rows down.

The girl looks back at Eli revealing a cute face covered in freckles. She smiles at him and he quickly shifts his eyes back to his notes.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
... We have always known that heedless self-interest was bad morals; we know now that it is bad economics. Out of the collapse of a prosperity has come the conviction that in the long run, economic morality pays..."

She lowers the book and removes her glasses.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
... Believe it or not that speech was given by Franklin D. Roosevelt in his 1937 inaugural address. He was commenting on corporate greed and it's effect on the Great Depression...

Suddenly, the bell rings but the professor raises her hands silencing the class.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
... Which brings me to your homework...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A general moan fill the class.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
 ... Write two thousand words comparing
 the corporate misconduct of the Great
 Depression to the more recent wave of
 corporate criminals and their effect
 on the global economy. See you next
 time.

The students stand and begin exiting the class.

Eli walks to the front of the room.

ELI
 Why is it that when times get
 difficult everybody blames the guys at
 the top? Yet when everyone's making
 money those same people are considered
 geniuses.

Professor Freedman picks up her attaché case and Eli follows her out
 of the classroom through a crowded corridor-

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
 Still looking to become a lawyer to
 the rich and famous, Mr. Burns?

ELI
 Everyone has the right to counsel...

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
 But no one is above the law.

ELI
 What about the laws of nature?

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
 A society doesn't live according to
 natural laws, it functions through the
 Rule of Law.

ELI
 But doesn't ours work because it fits
 our nature? "Survival of the fittest".

20 EXT. HUTCHINS HALL - DAY

20

Eli and the professor continue down the long hallway.

ELI
 You want to know what I think?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
I'm sure you'll tell me anyway.

ELI
Basically, I think those "corporate criminals" you were talking about were just doing what came naturally to them—following their instincts.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
They're still criminals.

ELI
But look at Robin Hood. He was a thief, and everyone loved him.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
You're comparing Bernie Madoff to Robin Hood? He stole from the rich and gave it to himself...

ELI
Just like the government. I get it now.

The professor laughs and continues walking.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Why don't you join the debate team this year, Eli? We could use someone like you.

ELI
Thanks. I'll think about it.

They arrive in front of the administrative section of the building.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Of course you'll have to leave out the mythical characters. Have a good lunch.

ELI
You too. See you later

The professor walks into an office.

21 **EXT. LARRY'S PAWNSHOP - DAY**

21

Seen through a pawnshop window decorated with hanging guitars, saxophones, and cameras, Eli stands at the counter with LARRY, a large black man in his sixties.

22 INT. LARRY'S PAWNSHOP - DAY

22

Larry looks at a pair of diamond earrings through his loop.

LARRY

I'll give you three for the earrings,
one for the chain, and five for the
watch.

ELI

Did you see the size of those rocks?
And that's a Rolex Mariner. A classic
sailor's watch.

LARRY

Man, I don't care if Blackbeard wore
it, that watch is hotter than dog shit
in a skillet.

ELI

Rolex Mariner, Larry. I can get three
Gs easy on EBAY.

LARRY

With the serial numbers on the back
you'll get busted, and you know it.
I'll give you twelve for the lot.

ELI

I can't leave here without two.

LARRY

Fifteen, but that's only because I
like you.

ELI

You like me enough to rob me.

LARRY

Now why do you have to use words like
that around here?

ELI

Eighteen.

LARRY

Fifteen.

ELI

Those earrings have to be at least two
carats each, Larry. Larry?

LARRY

No, Eli.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI
Larry, I'm just trying to get through
school, man.

It's obvious Larry gets a kick out of Eli's enthusiasm. He holds out
a pair of football tickets.

LARRY
Fifteen and I'll throw in a couple of
tickets to next week's game against
Ohio. Fifty yard line.

Eli snatches the tickets from Larry's hand.

ELI
Done. Haha. My man.

LARRY
OK, Denzel. Take it easy.

Larry counts off hundred dollar bills.

CUT TO:

23 INT. ELI'S DORMROOM - DAY

23

An internet window opens to the- *University Of Michigan Tuition
Accounts* page.

Eli sits on his bed with his laptop, paying his tuition.

At the bottom of the page in red letters, *Past Due - \$13,350*. Eli
types in \$1,000 and clicks- *Confirm Payment*.

Just then, Theo and Aaron enter the room.

AARON
Hey, you dorks have a lighter?

THEO
You guys coming to the Delta party?

Theo puts on Julian's headphones and looks out the window.

JULIAN
Hey, leave that alone.

Meanwhile, Aaron searches through Eli's desk drawer for a lighter
barely noticing a framed photo of an average middle class couple
happily posing with their children- ELI'S FAMILY.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Why don't you stop going through our
stuff and get out you smelly cock!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AARON
Uh... It's Cock-ney, Ok?

He removes a tin can from the drawer and opens it when ELI JUMPS UP FROM HIS BED.

ELI
Dude! Get out of there! I don't smoke.

Aaron discovers A COLLECTION OF SILVER SPOONS, INCLUDING THE ONE HE STOLE FROM THE HOUSE. ELI'S NIGHT JOB HAS KEPT HIM BUSY.

AARON
What the hell is this? You have forks too?

Eli grabs the can from Aaron and puts it back in the drawer.

AARON (CONT'D)
You know, you have to be born with one in your mouth. You can't just collect them.

THEO
(re: the microphone)
Whoa! You got one.

Julian takes the headphones away from Theo and listens- The satellite dish is pointed to a window across the street where a woman is clearly moaning in ecstasy.

AARON
Let me hear it.

But something preoccupies Eli who grabs his backpack and exits the room.

JULIAN
Where are you going, Eli?

All of a sudden, a curtain swings open in the window across the street-

THEO
Look!

A hot girl helps her lover up from the bed- ANOTHER HOT GIRL!!

Theo, Aaron, and Julian stand at the window drooling.

AARON
Woah!

THEO
Woah!

24 **EXT. CITY LANDSCAPE - DAY** 24

ESTABLISHING SHOTS OF DETROIT. ABANDONED AUTO FACTORIES, DESOLATE INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPES...

THE CITY APPEARS IN STARK CONTRAST TO ANN ARBOR'S GREEN PARKS AND LUSH RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS.

HERE, BRICK BUILDINGS ARE BOARDED UP AND ABANDONED WHILE THE STREETS ARE LITTERED WITH THE DECOMPOSING METAL CARCASSES OF OLD CARS. WELCOME TO MOTORCITY.

25 **EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - LATE DAY** 25

A Greyhound bus stops at the station and Eli exits with the familiarity of a local.

26 **EXT. DETROIT NEIGHBORHOOD - LATE DAY** 26

Eli walks along the desolate and dangerous streets of an urban neighborhood.

Years of economic downfall has decimated this part of town turning it into a shady neighborhood. Most Ann Arbor students would be scared to walk these streets, but not Eli.

He arrives at a broken down, one story house and waits for a car to drive by before moving around to the back.

Carefully, Eli looks inside the windows, casing the property. Judging by the old, flickering TV going on and off, and by the poor, dirty conditions of the interior, he is not here to rob it.

CUT TO:

Eli slips an envelope under the door and leaves.

Seconds later, the front door opens revealing a woman holding the envelope clearly containing money. Pale and worn from years of substance abuse, her wrinkled face seems older than it should be. She looks around the yard and finally calls out.

WOMAN

Richie? Is that you? Richie?

27 **INT. GREYHOUND BUS - MAGIC HOUR** 27

Back on the bus, Eli sits somberly watching the sunset's golden reflection glimmering off the Detroit skyline- Once a vibrant city now fading darkly into the night.

28 **EXT. TRI-DELTA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT**

28

A drunk student is carried out of a large house with the Tri-Delta sign hanging over the front door. Students loiter on the lawn which is littered with red and blue cups like electric flowers. Music pulses from inside.

29 **INT. TRI-DELTA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT**

29

This party is off the hook! The place is packed, and a thick crowd of students dance in the middle of the living room.

Theo and Aaron are among them, holding drinks while trying to rub up against coeds- Evidently it's not working.

Meanwhile, Julian talks to a very tall volleyball player.

Eli, on the other hand, stands off to the side by himself drinking a beer.

A brunette smiles at him from across the room when-

GIRL (O.S.)

Hey.

He turns to find the cute blond from his morning class- CHARLOTTE LAMBERT.

ELI

Hey.

CHARLOTTE

Whatcha doin'?

ELI

Nothing. You know. Hangin' out.

CHARLOTTE

My girlfriend and I were wondering if you'd come back to our room.

ELI

Oh yeah? Who's your girlfriend?

Charlotte points at the brunette across the room.

ELI (CONT'D)

Really? Sure, why not.

Cool as ice, he lets her lead him by the hand.

Both Aaron and Theo take notice, as Eli and Charlotte walk up the sorority house stairs- How does he do it?

30 INT. SORORITY DORM ROOM - NIGHT

30

Charlotte enters the small room and pins Eli against the door.

CHARLOTTE
I've seen you around.

ELI
Yeah, me too. So...

CHARLOTTE
So what?

ELI
Where's your friend?

CHARLOTTE
She's coming. Why? You ever do it with two girls before?

ELI
Are you kidding? Look at me. This body was made for threesomes. Don't worry.

Charlotte smiles and suddenly GRABS HIS BALLS TAKING TOTAL CONTROL!

CHARLOTTE
I think this one's all talk and no action.

ELI
Oh, hey. OK, joke's over.

CHARLOTTE
Now I understand why I hardly heard from you all summer. Too busy having orgies.

She squeezes harder!

ELI
Ow! Ow! C'mon, Charlotte. I was just playing along.

She finally lets him go.

CHARLOTTE
Forget it, this was a mistake. I'm not even allowed to have a boy in my room anyway.

She tries to open the door, but Eli blocks her in. He reaches into his pocket and removes the note he took from the message board.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI

That's not what your note said.

CHARLOTTE

That was meant for someone else.

ELI

It's got my name on it.

CHARLOTTE

No. That Eli is not a sex addict.

ELI

What? I'm not a sex addict.

CHARLOTTE

Tell it to your girlfriend back home.

ELI

You must mean my imaginary girlfriend.

CHARLOTTE

There's something weird going on.
Admit it.

ELI

There's nothing weird going on. What's
gotten into you?

CHARLOTTE

Nothing except for the fact that this
will be our third semester together
and you're still a total mystery to
me.

ELI

Some girls like that.

CHARLOTTE

I'm serious. If this is going to work,
you need to start opening up a little
bit.

ELI

Fine.

He tries to kiss up on her.

CHARLOTTE

Maybe you could come home with me for
Thanksgiving?

He tries again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELI
That sounds great.

CHARLOTTE
Or I could go to Baltimore with you?

He gives up trying.

ELI
If you want to get bored to death.
Sure.

CHARLOTTE
What's wrong with Baltimore?

ELI
Only that my parents are there.

CHARLOTTE
Your parents look perfectly normal to
me.
(she smiles)
You'll just have to break up with her
before we go.

ELI
Oh my god. Really? How about this?
Thanksgiving at your house and
Christmas at mine?

CHARLOTTE
I can't miss Christmas with my folks.

ELI
Don't say I didn't try.
(shifting)
Can we make up now?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know.

ELI
Please.

Charlotte nods seductively. They kiss and Eli looks deep into her eyes.

ELI (CONT'D)
So... where's your friend?

CHARLOTTE
Oh, I'm gonna kill you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

She slaps him playfully, but Eli lifts her over his shoulder and they both land together on her bed. The next kiss is deep and passionate.

CUT TO:

A few hours later, Eli lays awake next to Charlotte who is fast asleep.

After looking at her, he slowly slips out of her bed, grabs his clothes, and quietly walks out of the room.

CUT TO:

31 **EXT. U OF M LIBRARY - LATE NIGHT** 31

Eli walks up the grand stairs to the beautiful library.

He enters through the doors and passes through a turnstile swiping his library card. His name comes up on the card reader-ELI BURNS
1:17 AM.

32 **EXT. UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT** 32

A PATROL CAR drives through an upscale neighborhood lined with beautiful homes and royal oak trees.

As it disappears, Eli steps out from the shadows dressed in his black burglar's uniform. He looks at his watch, it's almost 2AM.

He eyes a colonial home and crosses the street.

33 **EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT** 33

Jumping over the backyard fence, Eli walks to the back of the house checking in each of the windows. Looking inside with his flashlight, he notices small alarm wires glued to the glass.

He removes a small drill from his bag and quietly punctures the glass. He then pulls the small wire through the hole and attaches it to a bypass clamp.

The clamp is connected to an electrical measuring device which reads-0.0.

ELI
(to himself)
It's not even on.

Using a slim-jim, he quietly jiggles the lock free and finally lifts up the window listening inside for any noise.

Satisfied, he straps on his night-vision goggles.

34 INT. HOUSE- KITCHEN - NIGHT

34

Eli enters the house very quietly.

The street lamps outside provide enough light so that Eli does not need to switch to night vision.

He is cautious and meticulous- A real professional.

He studies each valuable object in the house.

Slowly, with THE HARDWOOD FLOOR CREAKING BENEATH HIS FEET, Eli makes his way through the dining room.

An old commode grabs his attention. He opens the first drawer and finds- HIS SIGNATURE SILVER SPOON!

He picks one up and puts it into his pocket.

35 INT. HOUSE- GROUND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

35

Eli steps into the living room where he notices an amazing collection of paintings and pottery from all around the world.

ELI
(whispering sarcastically)
I'm sure Larry would be very
impressed.

It all seems valuable, but too big to be carried out. He picks up a gold cigarette lighter, a couple of silver candlesticks and a few other trinkets off the mantle.

His attention shifts to a grand piano where an arrangement of family photos is neatly placed. He takes a closer look.

The owners are intellectual liberals from the 60's. One picture shows the couple standing in the Amazonian Rain Forest.

ELI (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Tree huggers. Great.

Scanning the room, he takes one last look but nothing seems to be of much interest.

He heads towards the entry way without realizing HE HAS JUST STEPPED INTO A DARK LIQUID SUBSTANCE!

Facing a dark staircase, he finally switches to night vision mode-

The staircase illuminates and Eli calmly climbs up to the next floor.

36 INT. HOUSE- SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 36

At the top of the stairs he finds a long hallway with doors leading to the bedrooms. He must be especially quiet.

With precaution, he enters the first room.

37 INT. HOUSE- OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 37

Books are stacked everywhere in this room which contains a large desk and several boxes piled high with documents.

Still in night vision mode, Eli scans the walls which are covered with engineering degrees, one of them from THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN. The owner is obviously a scientist and a scholar.

Eli moves to the desk searching for anything to steal, but the mess is a surprising contrast to the rest of the house. He tries to clear the papers, but except for a few Mont Blanc pens, there is nothing of value here.

SUDDENLY, THROUGH A CRACK IN THE DOOR, A SHADOW MOVES ALONG THE HALLWAY! ELI STIFFENS, QUICKLY TURNS AROUND, AND GOES TO CHECK.

38 INT. HOUSE- SECOND FLOOR- CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 38

Peering from the doorway, he scans the hall. Nothing. No one. All the doors are closed. Just paranoia.

Eli returns into the office.

39 INT. HOUSE-OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 39

On a shelf, among framed sport photos, Eli notices a signed baseball suspended in a clear plexiglass cube.

Eli grabs the baseball and sticks it in his bag.

ELI
(to himself)
These people have nothing.

40 INT. HOUSE- SECOND FLOOR- CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS 40

He exits the office and continues down the hall to the other rooms. He doesn't notice someone else is moving in the dark!

Eli slowly opens a second door finding the beds made- probably a guest room. He closes the door and moves on.

With tension mounting, he explores the next room. He reaches for the door when he notices it's slightly ajar. He looks around. He could've sworn the doors were all closed.

(CONTINUED)

48 INT. U OF M DORM- ELEVATOR - NIGHT 48

In the elevator, Eli pats down his clothing looking for something and becomes frustrated.

49 INT. U OF M DORM ROOM - NIGHT 49

Eli enters the dorm room and continues searching through his backpack.

ELI
Shit!

JULIAN
(sleeping)
Dude? What are you doing?

ELI
I lost my phone...

JULIAN
Where were you?

ELI
I was...

Julian starts dialing his I-phone.

ELI (CONT'D)
... Who are you calling?

JULIAN
Your phone, maybe you can hear it ring.

Eli grabs the phone from Julian's hand and hangs up.

Eli grabs a few things from his room including the box of spoons in his drawer.

Julian sits up, noticing his roommate sweating and acting very edgy.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
Are you all right?

ELI
I'm fine.

He stuffs his bag full and runs out of the room.

JULIAN
My phone!

CUT TO:

50 EXT. UPSCALE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

50

Eli slowly rides his bike back to the crime scene, but when he turns onto the street blue and red flashing lights illuminate the neighborhood in the distance.

Now walking his bike, Eli approaches a group of neighbors who have gathered a few houses down. Eli is stunned- He's too late!

THE HOUSE HE JUST ROBBED IS NOW A FULL FLEDGED CRIME SCENE- TAPED OFF, BARRICADED, AND SURROUNDED WITH POLICE CARS, AN AMBULANCE, AND A CORONER'S VAN.

Eli watches as uniformed police and detectives walk around the house. A body bag is wheeled out on a gurney.

A neighbor standing in front of Eli hugs her husband.

NEIGHBOR 1

Oh my god. Are they dead? Oh my god.

Discreetly, Eli takes out Julian's phone and, without ever putting it to his ear, dials.

He continues to watch the crime scene for any reaction when suddenly, a uniformed officer runs out of the house holding a plastic evidence bag.

OFFICER

Detective Claymen? It's vibrating.

Wearing latex gloves, DETECTIVE CLAYMEN, a large male in his late fifties with a mustache, grabs the plastic bag, removes Eli's phone, looks at the caller ID, and answers.

CLAYMEN

Hello, Julian?

Eli slowly backs away from the scene and hangs up the phone.

Claymen turns to his partner, DETECTIVE DUPER, a Hispanic man in his forties.

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)

Hung up.

DUPER

We need to go to campus and find this kid.

Claymen looks at the neighbors standing in small groups. Years of experience and intuition are clearly visible in his eyes as he scrutinizes the entire scene.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eli is quietly walking away, when a song echoes from his pocket-
"The freaks come out at night." IT'S JULIAN'S RINGTONE!!

Eli's eyes widen as all the attention turns to him. He reaches in his pocket to turn it off, but it's too late.

Having dialed Eli back, DETECTIVE CLAYMEN RECOGNIZES HIM FROM THE PICTURE ON HIS PHONE!

CLAYMEN
 That's him!

ELI PEDALS AWAY LIKE AN OLYMPIAN! THE CHASE IS ON!

51 **EXT. STREETS AND BACK ALLEYS - NIGHT** 51

Eli pedals furiously through the residential neighborhood.

He turns back to see police car lights on his tail.

Eli veers onto another street desperately looking for an alley. He finds one, turns onto it, but the cop cars follow. Eli exits the alley onto another street.

52 **INT. COP CAR - NIGHT** 52

Detectives Claymen and Duper are in hot pursuit. They watch as Eli jumps a curve and turns onto another street.

DUPER
 There he is.

He picks up the radio.

DUPER (CONT'D)
 This is unit 22. We're pursuing and need air support. The suspect is on a bicycle heading south on Devonshire.

53 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT** 53

Weaving in and out of small residential streets, Eli pedals as hard as he can trying desperately to make it back to campus.

Then he finally rides by the Michigan Stadium which is covered with colorful signs for the next day's game.

54 **EXT. U OF M CAMPUS - NIGHT** 54

Suddenly more police cars appear ahead joining those already behind him.

More familiar with the campus streets, Eli makes a sharp left on fraternity row where the streets are lined with student cars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Then, he makes a quick right into an alley and hides behind a parked car- The cops drive by without seeing him!

Eli knows he has to keep moving and jumps on his bike.

He rides through the alley when- A HELICOPTER APPEARS OUT OF NOWHERE SHINING ITS SPOTLIGHT ON HIM!

This time there's nowhere to hide. The light is too bright and, to make matters worse, THE PATROL CARS RETURN TO THE CHASE!

Eli pedals hard, turns from one alley to the next, finally rounding the side of a fraternity house.

Still at the center of the spotlight, Eli rides right into a crowded backyard party, knocking over drinks and drunken students. Most of whom stare up at the helicopter lights.

Having lost the cop cars, Eli is still followed by the spotlight and can't seem to shake the chopper- He has no choice but to ride back through town towards the wilderness.

But the cop cars rejoin the chase once again, and Eli is close to exhaustion!

55 **EXT. U OF M MEDICAL CENTER - NIGHT**

55

He rides through the U of M Medical center and circles around the large building to the back. The patrol cars follow as he veers off onto a grassy athletic field.

If he doesn't find a way off the grass, it's only a matter of seconds before he gets caught. Then, he sees a THIN DIRT PATH THROUGH SOME TREES AT THE END OF THE FIELD.

Eli grinds his teeth and pedals as hard as he can- He turns into the forest path forcing the cops to stop in a cloud of dust!

Claymen waves for the other cars to go around, and watches as the helicopter follows Eli into the thick forest. He takes out Eli's cell phone and dials it again.

56 **EXT. FOREST - NIGHT**

56

Eli takes Julian's ringing phone out of his pocket and throws it into a passing bush.

With the spotlight barely making it through the trees, Eli puts on the night vision goggles using them to maneuver. But every time a flash of the spotlight gets through the trees, it creates a blinding effect in the night vision goggles.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eli is relentless, and finally, the helicopter loses him in the dense vegetation. He looks back to see the helicopter going in the wrong direction.

But when he turns back to the dirt path- HE SLAMS HEAD FIRST INTO A THICK BRANCH!

CUT TO BLACK.

57 **EXT. FOREST - MORNING**

57

Eli wakes up with a bloodied and bruised forehead. A few feet away a deer stares at him frozen among the trees. Contrary to last night's chaos, all is peaceful now.

But as Eli sits up, the deer is startled and runs away.

His goggles are next to him on the ground- shattered to pieces.

ELI

Great.

CUT TO:

58 **EXT. ANN ARBOR, MI - MORNING**

58

Eli walks around the corner to Manny's House of Burritos but it's early and the restaurant is still closed.

Instead, he goes across the street to Starbucks.

59 **INT. STARBUCKS RESTROOM - MORNING**

59

Turning on the faucet, Eli cleans up. First washing his hands, then using a wet towel to remove the dried blood from his forehead.

He takes a long, hard look at his tired and beaten face.

60 **INT. STARBUCKS - MORNING**

60

Eli walks out of the restroom and, keeping his head down, stands in line for coffee- but what he's really doing is keeping an eye on the flat screen TV and the weather report.

As Eli gets closer to the cashier, the news shifts back to the Anchor-

ANCHORMAN

*... And in tragic news, Professor
Harold Schmidt and his wife were found
dead in their home early this morning.*

The other patrons turn to the TV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN (CONT'D)
*Apparently the victims of a home
 invasion, police say, the couple was
 found tied up and brutally murdered.*

The students react to the news as Eli is next in line.

STARBUCK EMPLOYEE
 There are some seriously sick people
 in this world. What can I get you?

ELI
 Huh... Just a cup of coffee.

STARBUCK EMPLOYEE
 Your name?

ELI
 Eli... Uh...

Eli pays and waits for his drink.

ANCHORMAN
*... In the meantime, police say they
 have identified a suspect...*

Eli's worst fear is realized when HIS DRIVER'S LICENSE PICTURE IS POSTED ON TELEVISION.

ANCHORMAN (CONT'D)
*... twenty year old U of M student,
 Eli Burns is sought for questioning.
 Police warn anyone who may see this
 suspect to refrain from...*

The coffee clerk puts a coffee cup down on the counter.

STARBUCK EMPLOYEE
 Cup of coffee for Eli. Eli?

The other patrons look around, but Eli is long gone, leaving his coffee behind.

61 INT. CHARLOTTE'S ROOM - MORNING

61

Charlotte sleeps comfortably in her bed when someone knocks on the door. But before she can say anything, a COED enters the room.

COED
 Turn on the TV. You have to see this.

Charlotte wakes up with no clue, rubbing her eyes.

62 LARRY'S PAWNSHOP - DAY

62

Larry buzzes the door allowing Eli to enter.

LARRY
More of your mother's jewelry?

But Larry notices that Eli is unusually tense.

LARRY (CONT'D)
You look like shit.

ELI
Yeah thanks.

Eli spreads the stolen goods on the counter, including his tin can full of spoons.

LARRY
Where'd you get this stuff?

Larry picks up the candlesticks.

LARRY (CONT'D)
Anybody get hurt?

ELI
What the hell, Larry?

LARRY
Don't be bringing heat in here, Eli.
You know the deal.

ELI
No one got hurt, alright? Now how much
can you give me?

LARRY
Well these spoons are worthless unless
you have the rest of the set.

ELI
Fine. What about the other stuff?

LARRY
I'll give you two hundred for
everything.

ELI
Fine.

LARRY
Fine? Now I know something's wrong.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

But Eli is busy looking in the store.

ELI
And I want those.

He points to a pair of heavy duty wire cutters.

63 INT. MICHIGAN SPORTS SUPPLY - DAY

63

At the register, Eli finishes paying for the brand new blue and yellow University of Michigan hoodie, along with a matching ball cap and scarf. He looks like a typical university student.

CASHIER
How about a pennant or pin? You don't have a pin.

Eli tries his best to keep his face hidden when he hears music coming from outside.

Dressed from head to toe in school colors, he walks out to the street when the U OF M MARCHING BAND turns the corner rehearsing in full costume. The whole scene is loud and surreal.

But Eli's eyes are focused and, with everyone wearing the same school colors, he knows he is safer blending in among the masses. He spots a bicycle locked to a pole.

SNAP! Eli breaks the lock with the cutters and rides away.

64 EXT. U OF M DORM- DAY

64

Meanwhile, Charlotte walks by a series of police cars parked in front of the dorms. She enters the building as the other students look at her and whisper to each other.

65 INT. U OF M DORM HALLWAY - DAY

65

Cops stand outside Eli's dorm room when Charlotte walks up.

She sees Theo and Aaron quietly sitting in their underwear looking confused.

66 INT. U OF M DORM ROOM - DAY

66

Julian sits on his bed looking petrified as Claymen stands above him and another officer searches the room.

JULIAN
I know because I looked on my phone before I handed it to him. I thought he was on drugs or something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAYMEN
Does he usually do drugs?

JULIAN
No.

CLAYMEN
Well then why would you think that?

JULIAN
I don't know. I'm nervous.

CLAYMEN
Are you doing drugs?

JULIAN
No. I...

The police officer pulls out a crow bar from under the carpet.
Claymen turns to Julian.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
What? That's not mine.

Detective Duper sticks his head in the room.

DUPER
His girlfriend's here.

CLAYMEN
OK, Julian. Do you mind waiting
outside?

Charlotte and Julian cross paths in the doorway.

DUPER
This is Charlotte Lambert.

CLAYMEN
I'm Detective Claymen.

CHARLOTTE
I can't believe he would ever do
something like that.

CLAYMEN
Alright, take it easy and have a seat.

Charlotte sits on Eli's bed.

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)
When was the last time you saw him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLOTTE
Last night. He slept over.

CLAYMEN
Was he there all night?

CHARLOTTE
Yes. I mean, no... I think so. He left
before I woke up.

Charlotte puts her hands over her face.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)
I can't believe this is happening.

CLAYMEN
You have no idea when he left?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know. All I know is that he
could never kill anyone.

CLAYMEN
Then why can't we find him?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know. Maybe he's scared.

Claymen looks up at Duper. Clearly, they know something she doesn't.

CLAYMEN
Has he ever mentioned the name Richard
Latimer to you?

CHARLOTTE
No. Who is that?

CLAYMEN
That's his real name.

Charlotte hesitates.

CHARLOTTE
What are you talking about? No, you've
got the wrong guy. You have to call
his parents.

Duper notices her look at the empty frame on Eli's desk.

DUPER
Is this what you're looking for?

He pulls the photo out of his jacket and hands it to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

CHARLOTTE

Yes.

She turns the picture around and see another image on the back.

DUPER

It's cut out of a magazine.

CLAYMEN

Did he tell you this was his family?

She nods as tears well up in her eyes.

CHARLOTTE

He told me he was from Baltimore.

DUPER

He's from Detroit.

Suddenly her phone rings and she looks at the detectives.

CLAYMEN

Go ahead. Take it.

She answers.

CHARLOTTE

Hello?

67 EXT. U OF M DORM- DAY

67

Eli sits in the shade across the street using a new phone.

ELI

It's me. Where are you?

68 INT. U OF M DORM ROOM - DAY

68

Charlotte sits in stunned silence. And then, in a decisive move-

CHARLOTTE

Hey mom. I'm at Eli's dorm... I heard... I know...

Duper is disappointed it's not Eli.

ELI (ON PHONE)

It's not true. You have to believe me.

CHARLOTTE

Ok, mom. But I can't talk right now. I'm being questioned by the police.

She hangs up as Claymen looks straight at her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAYMEN
She must be worried?

But Charlotte cannot answer.

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)
Is there's anything else you can think
of?

Charlotte just shakes her head.

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)
This is my card. It's important you
call us if you hear from him, OK?

She takes the card as Claymen walks to the door.

DUPER
You do not want to become an accessory
to murder, all right? All right?

CHARLOTTE
Yes. Yes. I understand.

CLAYMEN
(suspiciously)
Oh, and if your mom calls again, tell
her not to worry. We'll catch him.

Charlotte just stares out the window at the street below. Eli is gone.

69 INT. ANN ARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

69

A group of officers stand in front of a television set watching a live transmission of the game from *The Big House*-

DONALD JONES, a young detective wearing a suit, sits behind his computer where *Richard Latimer's* mug shot, AKA *Eli Burns*, is on the screen. Jones scrolls down and reads the suspect's juvenile record-
Burglary conviction April 1996- Robbery Conviction June 1997- Convicted to one year of juvenile detention 1998.

His phone rings a few times before he answers it.

JONES
This is Detective Jones... No, ma'am,
that would be vice. This is the
robbery division. I'll connect you.

He hangs up the phone just as Claymen and Duper enter the bullpen and congregate with other cops.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

It seems like he want to say something, but instead stays at his desk doodling on his files. Concentrated. Thinking.

The files on his desk are covered with freehand drawings of SMALL SPOONS!

70 **EXT. BARNES & NOBLE - DAY**

70

Two uniformed officers sit in their patrol car staking out the Barnes & Noble bookstore across the street.

The sidewalk is filled with students wearing school colors and chanting victory songs.

Among them, Eli walks past the patrol car unnoticed. His simple "fan" disguise blends him in perfectly with the others.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
It's called *The Power of Myth*...

71 **INT. BARNES & NOBLE - DAY**

71

Wearing a Barnes & Noble nametag, Charlotte directs the client.

CHARLOTTE
... and you can also find it in the paperback section. Two aisles down.

The freshman leaves as another customer needs help.

CUSTOMER
Hey.

She is surprised by Eli holding a book and hiding under his ball cap.

CHARLOTTE
Oh my god. What are you doing here? I cannot be involved in this.

ELI
I did not kill those people. I had nothing to do with that...

CHARLOTTE
The cops are looking for you, Eli. Or should I call you Richard, or Richie? No? How about DICK?!

ELI
Ok, I deserve that.

He reaches out to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLOTTE
Don't touch me.

People are taking notice.

ELI
Can we please talk somewhere else?
Please?

72 INT. BMW - DAY

72

Outside, the cops notice Charlotte stepping away from her post with another customer.

Meanwhile, A MAN we've never seen before sits in a BLACK BMW keeping an eye on the cops.

73 INT. BARNES & NOBLE - DAY

73

Charlotte and Eli stand in between two bookshelves.

ELI
Yes, I changed my name but that's not a crime.

CHARLOTTE
Huh-uh... I saw your little family portrait up close. That's really creepy. Who the hell are you?

ELI
I'm Eli. That's who I am. The person you know. That's the real me.

CHARLOTTE
Why would you lie to me Eli?

He lashes out.

ELI
BECAUSE I JUST WANTED TO FORGET EVERYTHING! Start a new life.

She sees the pain in his eyes. She wants to understand.

ELI (CONT'D)
It's impossible for people like you to understand.

CHARLOTTE
What the hell is that supposed to mean?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI

People who come from money and privilege. People from good families. Look I'm not asking for pity. I just want you to know that I'm not a murderer. That's the truth.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, now you're telling me the truth?

ELI

I swear it.

CHARLOTTE

So then why are the police out there looking for you? Why don't you just turn yourself in?

He takes a second to get it out.

ELI

I dropped my phone in that house, and they think I had something to do with it. But I wasn't alone. There was somebody else there besides me. I don't know...

CHARLOTTE

What are you talking about? Did you know those people?

Eli looks down to the ground.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

What? Tell me the truth or I swear.

For the first time in his life, he knows he should come clean.

ELI

I was robbing the house.

Charlotte is shocked and confused.

ELI (CONT'D)

That's how I've been paying for school.

CHARLOTTE

What? What about your scholarship?

ELI

I barely made it out of high school.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CHARLOTTE

Well then how did you get into college?

ELI

I faked my transcripts...

CHARLOTTE

Oh god, I can't believe this.

Eli finally comes to realize.

ELI

... I faked everything. That's why I can't go to the cops. They'll never believe me...

In disbelief, Charlotte looks at him with tears in her eyes. Perhaps she never realized how much she loved him, or how badly she could feel betrayed.

ELI (CONT'D)

... But I never lied to you about us. I love you, Charlotte.

CHARLOTTE

You really don't get it, do you? I have no idea who I fell in love with.

ELI

That's not true. I'm the same...

CHARLOTTE

No. You listen to me now. I don't know who you are. Do you realize how scary that is? No matter what happened to you in the past, Eli, you lied to me. And you're a criminal. And I will never ever trust you again.

ELI

Charlotte...

CHARLOTTE

I never want to see you again!

She walks away when Eli grabs her arm.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

Leave! Before I call the cops.

ELI

I'm sorry. I'm so sorry about everything.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

He walks away, disappearing among the books.

In the next row, THE MAN FROM THE BMW HAS BEEN LISTENING THE WHOLE TIME AND FOLLOWS HIM OUT.

74 **EXT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S HOUSE - EVENING** 74

A VOLVO maneuvers into a parallel parking space on a street lined with two story brownstones.

Coming home from the game, Professor Freedman steps out of her car wearing school colors, and walks down the block to her house.

75 **INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S HOUSE - EVENING** 75

Freedman enters the flat where she is greeted by an old Golden Retriever who growls and barks.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Ok, buddy. It's me. Here I am.

She turns on the light as the dog continues growling.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
What has gotten into you, boy?

Freedman doesn't notice the OMINOUS FIGURE IN THE BACKGROUND!

ELI
Professor.

SHE JUMPS, SCARED OUT OF HER WITS.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Who the hell is that?

ELI
It's me. It's Eli.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Eli?

ELI
Eli Burns.

Freedman backs away.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
What are you doing here?

ELI
I'm sorry. I couldn't wait outside.
They're looking for me everywhere and
I had nowhere else to turn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
How did you get in?

ELI
Through a window... I didn't do any of
it. I swear on my life.

Freedman grabs the house phone when Eli takes a step forward. SHE
FREEZES.

ELI (CONT'D)
I need your help. Just hear me out,
and then I'll do whatever you think is
best.

Freedman looks in his eyes and doesn't see a killer. She hangs up
the phone.

76 INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

76

Eli cleans his plate with a last piece of bread while Freedman puts
the other dishes in the dishwasher.

ELI
After I found his wife's body in the
bathtub, I thought he must have killed
her and then hung himself.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
And you're sure someone else was in
the house?

ELI
I'm telling you I got in a fight him.
That's probably when I dropped my
phone.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
Well from what you're telling me you
could be an important witness.

If she believes him, maybe the cops will too.

ELI
And my career in law?

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
You're a burglar with a record, Eli.
Don't you think you should take care
of that little problem first?

Eli gives a guilty look. He knows she's right.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
 You're never too old to change. "I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others..."

ELI
 "... rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence." Frederick Douglass. I took your human rights class.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN
 He was a born a slave and ended up being one of the most influential figures in American history.

Professor Freedman finally sees Eli's vulnerable side.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
 It's not about lying, or grades, or your career anymore. A family was murdered and you may be the only person who can explain why...

Eli looks up at the professor.

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN (CONT'D)
 I'll call a lawyer in the morning and we can go in together. Ok? It's time to come clean.

As hard as this may be to accept, Eli knows she's right. He leans back in his chair both defeated and relieved.

77 INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S 2ND FLOOR- GUEST ROOM- NIGHT

77

Laying in bed, Eli watches the late night news where Claymen is wrapping up a press conference. He talks behind a podium surrounded by microphones.

CLAYMEN (TV)
... it's important that students stay accompanied especially at night, and that we all be on the lookout for anyone who may seem suspicious.

ANCHORWOMAN
Since that press conference, Channel 4 News traveled to Detroit's West Side and was able to track down an exclusive interview with the suspect's mother, Grace Latimer...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eli suddenly sits up to watch. His mother appears on television-
IT'S THE WOMAN FROM DETROIT TO WHOM HE EARLIER GAVE THE MONEY.

ELI'S MOM
My son is not a killer.

Her hair is pulled back, and even though she looks cleaned up, she seems nervous.

REPORTER
But he's been in trouble with the law before, hasn't he?

She nods.

ELI'S MOM
When his father and I lost our jobs at the auto plant things became very difficult around here. For a lot of people. Eli just tried to help and he got in some trouble.

REPORTER
When was the last time you saw your son Mrs. Latimer?

Tears fill her eyes and she cannot answer.

Eli too is moved. It's too much emotion.

ELI'S MOM
It's not his fault. My son is a good person. He's not a killer.

CLICK! Eli turns off the TV and lays back tears filling his eyes. Who is he? What has he become? It's time to end this. He shuts his eyes.

CUT TO:

78 INT. SCHMIDT HOUSE - NIGHT

78

Eli is back at the scene of the crime, standing at Schmidt's bedroom door wearing the night vision goggles.

He slowly pushes the door open and finds the professor's body hanging just like the last time. But now, he knows what to expect and is less fearful. He walks into the bedroom.

Step by step he approaches the hanging body. Once he is close enough he reaches for it and, grabbing the arm, slowly turns the body around revealing- Professor Schmidt's dead face. When suddenly-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE PROFESSOR OPENS HIS EYES AND STARTS STRUGGLING FOR HIS LIFE AS IF HE WAS JUST HUNG!

Terrified, Eli turns to run, but instead RUNS RIGHT INTO THE KILLER!

CUT TO:

79 INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S 2ND FLOOR- GUEST ROOM- NIGHT 79

ELI JUMPS OUT OF BED IN A COLD SWEAT! JUST A VIVID DREAM!

He wants to lay back down, but something doesn't feel right.

He stands and goes to the window where he sees A SMALL PLATOON OF POLICE OFFICERS MANEUVERING OUTSIDE. SHIT!!

The doorbell rings!

80 INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT 80

Eli quicksteps down the stairs to the living room.

ELI

Professor? Did you call the cops? I
thought we where going to wait
until...

He can see Professor Freedman sitting by the fireplace- Eli approaches her from behind.

ELI (CONT'D)

Professor Freedman?

He slowly moves around the chair to find-

PROFESSOR FREEDMAN WITH HER EYES STARING UP AT THE CEILING! SHE'S BEEN STRANGLLED TO DEATH AND HAS THE SAME EXPRESSION SCHMIDT HAD IN ELI'S DREAM!

ELI (CONT'D)

Oh my god!!

The doorbell rings again, scaring him.

POLICE (O.S.)

Professor Freedman? It's important we
come inside! Is anyone there?

Eli doesn't have time to mourn the loss of his friend as he quickly understands his predicament- If he is caught with this dead body, it will be the nail in the coffin the police is looking for- HE SNATCHES THE PROFESSOR'S KEYS FROM THE LIVING ROOM TABLE!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Hiding his limp, he walks to the professor's car and looks back at the police cars parked in front of the house.

Eli jumps into the Volvo and starts the engine.

He maneuvers out of the parking space and finally drives away, once again narrowly escaping.

But what he doesn't see is that- ACROSS THE STREET, THE BLACK BMW PULLS OUT BEHIND HIM AND FOLLOWS HIM INTO THE NIGHT.

87 INT. VOLVO - NIGHT

87

Eli drives the professor's car with tears of rage. He finally registers what has just happened, and the guilt is overwhelming.

ELI

What the hell is going on?! DAMMIT!!

He slams the steering wheel over and over again taking out all of his anger and frustration.

Finally, he turns down a residential street and stops the car. He stares into space realizing he is utterly alone. He leans forward, resting his head on the steering wheel and cries quietly- a broken man.

Suddenly, he lifts his head and looks into the rearview mirror. Outside the car, there is nothing but darkness and silence.

He puts the car into drive and takes off. He checks the rearview mirror again. Is someone following him or is he just paranoid?

He turns down a street with brighter street lamps. And then he sees it- The BMW turns onto the same street.

Eli turns again, and the BMW follows.

Turning onto a busier street, Eli watches the BMW on his tail. In a decisive move, he speeds towards an intersection and, as the light turns yellow, he accelerates.

The light turns red and Eli flagrantly burns it.

In the rearview mirror he watches the BMW accelerate through the red light as well. Now he knows for certain he's being followed.

Eli drives faster and faster through late night traffic almost causing an accident. But no matter what he does, the BMW stays with him.

Finally, Eli turns the steering wheel hard to the right onto another street.

- 88 **INT. BMW - NIGHT** 88
- The Killer and The BMW Man, who had previously followed Eli at the bookstore, are in hot pursuit.
- They close in on Eli, but when they turn the corner, THE VOLVO IS STOPPED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD WITH THE HEADLIGHTS ON!
- 89 **EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT** 89
- The Killer exits the car signaling to BMW Man to stay put. He walks over to the Volvo.
- He approaches carefully and looks inside the vehicle- It's empty and Eli is gone.
- 90 **EXT. PATHWAY - NIGHT** 90
- The Killer walks into the alley scrutinizing every corner.
- Looking from the shadows, Eli recognizes the Killer's face from Schmidt's house.
- The killer approaches a large garbage bin and peers inside. ELI IS HIDING BEHIND IT, JUST A FEW FEET AWAY!
- The Killer approaches and removes his gun from his holster.
- One step away from being discovered, Eli holds his breath, trying his best not to move, when-
- BMW MAN
Come on. Let's go. He's gone.
- After a beat, The Killer walks back the way he came.
- Eli finally breathes as he watches THE KILLER GETTING INTO THE PROFESSOR'S VOLVO AND DRIVING AWAY FOLLOWED BY THE BMW.
- 91 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT** 91
- Click! Clack! Using Larry's cutters, Eli cuts into a another lock snatching yet another bicycle.
- 92 **EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN** 92
- With the first light of day on the horizon, Eli rides the bike through a residential street scrutinizing every house until something catches his eye.
- He turns back to a house where a stack of uncollected newspapers lay on the front porch. Eli quickly hides the bike in some bushes.

93 INT. HIDEOUT HOUSE - MORNING

93

Eli enters the house through a window and checks all the bedrooms. He checks the rest of the house. It's empty.

He walks into the kitchen and finds a note pinned to the fridge.

ELI

... Please feed the cats, bring in the paper...

CUT TO:

94 INT. HIDEOUT HOUSE- BASEMENT - MORNING

94

Eli walks down into an average basement with a washer dryer, a tool bench, and several storage boxes.

He digs through some of the boxes until he uncovers camping equipment including sleeping bags.

He stands in the middle of the basement. This will be his home until he can figure things out.

95 EXT. HIGHWAY - MORNING

95

A patrolman cautiously approaches the abandoned Volvo on the side of the road with his flashlight.

He scans the light into the car shining it on a bloody rope.

96 INT. PROFESSOR FREEDMAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

96

The forensic team has locked down the crime scene, taking pictures, lifting fingerprints, and taking DNA samples.

Detective Claymen and Duper stand over the Professor's dead dog.

DUPER

Even strangled the damn dog.

Claymen thinks before walking back into the living room.

CLAYMEN

So he goes to one of his professors... she feeds him, puts him up for the night and to thank her he strangles her to death, takes her car and leaves it on the highway with the rope and his fingerprints everywhere? Makes no sense.

DUPER

The guy's a sociopath.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAYMEN

With a 4.0 grade point average. Not too smart.

DUPER

Ted Bundy had a degree in psychology. It's obvious this kid wants to get caught.

But Claymen is not so sure.

97 INT. DORMROOM - AFTERNOON

97

Julian, Aaron, Theo and a few other guys take a break from their poker game to watch a talk show-

DR. SIMMS

... It would seem to me that he exhibits classic traits of someone diagnosed with ASPD or Anti-Social Personality Disorder...

98 INT. DELTA DELTA DELTA SORORITY HOUSE - AFTERNOON

98

At the sorority house the girls listen to the same program where DR. SIMMS, a greying psychologist and an expert in profiling, gives his evaluation of Eli.

DR. SIMMS (TV)

... The combination of losing his father to alcoholism at such a young age and his mother's consequent substance abuse made it practically impossible for Eli to develop normal, functional social skills...

Charlotte sits among the girls with a look of concern on her face.

99 INT. DETROIT HOUSE - EVENING

99

Eli's Mom sits in the dark as she watches the same show. Drowning her pain in a bottle of vodka, she is completely numb to the words she hears.

DR. SIMMS

... For Eli, it's been a long, steady progression of criminal acts which probably started with rape, cruelty to animals, and eventually led him to murder...

100 INT. LARRY'S PAWNSHOP - EVENING

100

Larry packs Eli's stolen goods into a bag as he watches the show from his shop.

DR. SIMMS

... Most of the time, a violent killer like this is a sadistic person who prepares for his crimes very carefully and chooses his victims according to a specific criteria...

LARRY

I knew that kid was trouble.

HOST (TV)

So why is he doing this, Doctor?

101 INT. HIDEOUT HOUSE- BASEMENT - NIGHT

101

With empty fast food boxes and soda cans spread about the basement, it's clear Eli has not left this hiding place for the last couple days.

DR. SIMMS (TV)

Subconsciously, I believe, he is attempting to exercise revenge and punish the society who ruined his family and caused the death of his father.

He watches the same show everyone's been watching with disbelief.

DR. SIMMS (CONT'D)

... No longer willing to be the victim his parents were, Eli probably has a strong desire to be successful while at the same time embodies a profound hatred for the wealthy. This paradox can often result in a total lack of empathy for those around him, especially his victims.

It's amazing how deep and how twisted the situation has become.

ANCHORMAN

If anyone comes in contact with The Campus Killer make sure to stay clear and call 911 immediately...

ELI

The Campus Killer? Really? That's just great.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANCHORMAN

... In other news, the United Auto workers have called an emergency meeting in two days where the Senator from Michigan...

Click! Eli turns off the TV and lays back on his makeshift bed.

Deep in thought, he glares up at the ceiling with the book he stole from Barnes & Noble resting open on his chest. The title- ***Cold Turkey Planet: Breaking Western Oil Addiction*** by Professor Harold Schmidt, Ph.D.

In fact, he is surrounded by books- all written by Professor Schmidt.

Suddenly, a knocking sound startles him! He quickly stands and walks up the basement stairs.

Cracking the door open, he looks through to the kitchen where an OLD WOMAN fills a cat's bowl with food.

OLD NEIGHBOR

Don't you worry, Mommy and Daddy will be home next week. You eat up and I'll see you tomorrow.

102 **EXT. SCHMIDT HOUSE - MORNING** 102

Meanwhile, Detective Jones from the robbery division exits his car in front of the Schmidt crime scene.

The commotion which had previously surrounded the house has been replaced by a single stretch of yellow police tape.

103 **INT. SCHMIDT HOUSE - MORNING** 103

Jones enters the house through the kitchen door. The house carries with it an ominous, dark feeling.

Walking through the living room, he looks around and then heads up the stairs.

104 **INT. SCHMIDT BATHROOM - MORNING** 104

Jones stands above the blood stained carpet. He takes it all in before moving to the bedroom.

105 **INT. SCHMIDT BEDROOM - MORNING** 105

Detective Jones looks around the bedroom. The sheets have been removed from the bed, but he cannot find anything else out of the ordinary.

106 INT. SCHMIDT HOUSE - MORNING

106

Jones walks in the hallway- the creaking floorboards beneath his feet.

He arrives in front of the armoire and, using a handkerchief, slides open the silverware drawer- ONE OF THE SPOONS IS MISSING.

107 INT. BARNES & NOBLE - DAY

107

It's opening time at Barnes & Noble and Charlotte stands behind her manager who opens the gate.

She is about to enter when Detective Jones approaches.

JONES
Charlotte Lambert?

Both women turn to find Jones holding his detective badge.

CHARLOTTE
I've already talked to the police.

JONES
You spoke with Homicide. I'm with Robbery.

She understands his connection to the case. Jones takes notice.

JONES (CONT'D)
Have you talked to him since that night?

CHARLOTTE
No.

JONES
No contact whatsoever? What do you think happened?

CHARLOTTE
I don't know. But I can't imagine him killing anyone. He may be a liar and a thief but he's not a killer.

JONES
A thief?

CHARLOTTE
What?

JONES
You said he was a thief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She backpedals.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know, you're with Robbery,
right? I have to get back to work.

Charlotte starts walking away when Jones continues.

JONES

You want to hear what I think? Maybe
you can tell me if it fits. I think
Eli is responsible for a whole string
of burglaries that started when he
enrolled at school.

Charlotte listens closely.

JONES (CONT'D)

I think Eli was robbing that house and
by coincidence saw something he wasn't
supposed to. He panicked, left his
phone behind, and all of a sudden he's
the prime suspect. Does that sound
about right?

Charlotte is relieved but still reserved about opening up.

JONES (CONT'D)

Homicide is under a lot of pressure to
bring him in. This college does not
need a serial killer on the loose, and
they'll do anything to catch him.

CHARLOTTE

What do you care anyway?

JONES

Let's just say I know what it feels
like when no one believes you.

Charlotte thinks, but doesn't know who to trust anymore.

CHARLOTTE

Sorry. I can't help you.

She walks away.

108 **EXT. DIAG SQUARE - EVENING**

108

Later that day, Charlotte stands with other students at the message
board.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After a thorough search, she walks away empty handed. Another person at the message board turns around- THE BMW MAN NOW FOLLOWS CHARLOTTE BACK TO CLASS!

109 INT. U OF M CAFFETERIA - DAY

109

In the cafeteria, Theo and Aaron sit at a table eating while trying to get passing girls to sit with them.

THEO

Ladies? Care to join us?

PASSING GIRL

Loser.

Suddenly, Eli moves Aaron's bag from a seat and sits at their table holding a tray. At first they don't see his face.

AARON

Hey man. We've got girls that are gonna sit here.

ELI

I'm sure one day you'll wake up and that will be true.

The two boys are frozen. Scared stiff.

ELI (CONT'D)

Relax. I'm kidding. Guys, just act normal and keep eating.

AARON

What are you doing here?

ELI

I need your help.

AARON

Are you crazy? The cops came by the dorm.

THEO

Yeah, you're like a fugitive.

ELI

I know. The Campus Killer. It's absurd. Someone is obviously framing me.

THEO

Woah, really?

Aaron kicks Theo under the table.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THEO (CONT'D)

They said you made up everything about yourself. That's pretty twisted.

ELI

It's a little more complicated than that.

AARON

Yeah. Who the hell are you, man?

ELI

I'll explain it all to you guys later but right now I need you to help me...

AARON

No way. Forget it, man. We've never had anything to do with you and now you come to the main cafeteria on campus looking for help. The south side cafeteria...

There's something strange about the way Aaron speaks. Then, Eli notices THE BLUETOOTH IN HIS EAR IS FLASHING ACTIVE!

AARON (CONT'D)

... What do you want us to do Eli Burns? Or whoever you are.

ELI REALIZES THEIR CONVERSATION IS BEING OVERHEARD-

ELI

Ok. Look, I'm going to catch the next train out of here. If you want to help me that's where I'll be. I know you won't let me down.

He leaves, but not before seeing the phone in Aaron's hand.

AARON

(into the phone)
Did you get that?

110 INT. ANN ARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

110

Detective Claymen is surrounded by other cops as he finishes talking on his cell phone.

CLAYMEN

Well done, Aaron. Try to stay around other students.

He hangs up and grabs his jacket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)

We got him. He's going to the train station.

Duper and the other officers follow him, when Detective Jones joins them at the exit.

JONES

Hey Detectives...

DUPER

We're a little busy right now.

JONES

Yes sir, that's the thing. I don't think he did it. Eli Burns. Richard Latimer.

Claymen stops in his tracks.

CLAYMEN

Why do you say that?

JONES

Well, I've been investigating a string of burglaries and...

CLAYMEN

Burglaries?

DUPER

This is Donald Jones. The new guy in Robbery.

JONES

I think he's been breaking into houses around here for at least a year now.

CLAYMEN

I'm listening...

JONES

Why would he start killing his victims now?

DUPER

Because he got caught and didn't want to leave witnesses.

JONES

But he doesn't have a history of violence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

CLAYMEN

How do you explain the second victim?
Professor Freedman.

Jones doesn't have an answer.

JONES

I checked all the evidence and in the other robberies, the one thing that's been missing from every house was a single silver spoon...

The cops can't believe what they're hearing. One of them can't even keep a straight face.

CLAYMEN

Right. We've got a serial killer to catch.

Claymen and Duper are already out the door while the other detectives console Jones.

OLDER DETECTIVE 1

Don't worry about it, Jones. Keep up the good work.

OLDER DETECTIVE 2

Yeah and my wife called. Seems she can't find the egg beater. Maybe we can send you and a couple of patrol units out to the house.

The detectives exit laughing their heads off.

111 **EXT. ANN ARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY** 111

The cops run out of the building and into their cars. This is probably more commotion than Ann Arbor has ever seen.

112 **EXT. U OF M LIBRARY - DAY** 112

Aaron watches the police cars flying by with their lights on. A small smile of satisfaction comes on his face as he removes his student ID card from his wallet and enters the library.

But when he swipes his card into the turnstile- The name Eli Burns flashes on the control screen and AN ALARM GOES OFF!

Aaron looks around in confusion when TWO SECURITY GUARDS JUMP HIM AND TACKLE HIM TO THE GROUND!

Just a few turnstiles away, totally unnoticed, Eli slips into the library using Aaron's student ID card. HE SWITCHED THE CARDS IN THE CAFETERIA!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns back to Aaron who is forcefully restrained on the ground.

ELI
 (to himself)
 Ouch. That's gonna leave a mark.

113 INT. U OF M LIBRARY- RESEARCH CENTER - DAY

113

Using Aaron's library card like a credit card, he swipes it through a computer unlocking the database.

He types in- *Professor Harold Schmidt*- when a series of articles appear- ***University of Michigan Solar Car Wins National Award Five Years in a Row***, and ***Alternative Fuel Nation***, and many more...

A couple of students walk by and Eli lowers his head. He waits for them to pass and continues reading headlines-

Tackling the Fuel Cell, Scientist Talks with Committee On Energy and Commerce. At the bottom of that article, Schmidt is in a photograph with a group of politicians-

Then another article, ***UM Alumni Against Globalization***- A picture shows him picketing with other students.

ELI
 He graduated from here.

Eli walks to another section of the library. He looks through a row of books with dates on them until he finds one from 1968- It's an old yearbook.

He flips through the pages and finds a student picture of Schmidt. Looking deeper he finds a picture of the baseball team and finds Schmidt among the players.

In another picture, he sees Schmidt at an anti-war rally with his arm around another student- JOHN MCMAHON. The name sounds familiar. He flips back to the baseball team and finds that McMahon is also in this picture standing next to Schmidt.

ELI (CONT'D)
 Why do I know this name?

He looks up from the yearbook and notices students trying very hard not to stare at him. Eli knows he's been recognized.

He quickly walks back to the data base and types in JOHN MCMAHON. The result is eye opening to say the least- John McMahon is a Senator from Michigan.

He returns to the article with the photo of Schmidt and the politicians- SURE ENOUGH, PROFESSOR SCHMIDT AND SENATOR MCMAHON STAND NEXT TOGETHER-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI (CONT'D)
They've known each other since
college...

He wants to continue, but he can feel it's time to go.

Eli walks away from the computer when he notices a security guard and turns the other way.

He quickens his pace while feeling the intense gazes and pressure coming from all around. Another security guard appears and Eli breaks into a light jog. And finally-

STUDENT 1
It's him. It's Eli Burns!

STUDENT 2
He's got a gun!!

But what was tension a second ago has turned to panic and the students scream and duck under tables.

Eli now runs towards the exit when he sees the campus police coming through the doors.

He runs the other way and jumps over a table before running through some aisles.

Passing by rows and rows of books, Eli turns a corner down a hallway but it's crowded with students.

The police approach and ELI DUCKS UNDER A TABLE, KICKS SOME CHAIRS, AND COMES OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE.

He runs back through another series of aisles and sees he is being chased from all directions.

Finally, he jumps through the door leading to the basement.

114 INT. U OF M LIBRARY BASEMENT - DAY

114

He climbs down the stairs- The security guards follow.

Running as fast as he can through the narrow hallways, ELI THROWS DOWN PILES OF BOXES AND BOOK SHELVES CREATING OBSTACLES and slowing down his pursuers.

He turns into the familiar room with the basement window, runs to it, and starts climbing feverishly, when- ONE OF THE SECURITY GUARDS GRABS HIS LEG!

115 **EXT. U OF M LIBRARY - DAY** 115

Eli is halfway out of the basement window clawing at the grass for leverage.

He kicks repeatedly until HIS FOOT LANDS ON THE SECURITY GUARD'S FACE, SENDING HIM FLYING BACK INTO THE ROOM.

Eli pulls himself out, runs past the bike, and turns the corner.

Another guard runs down the street, but Eli has disappeared!

ELI HANGS ONTO THE SIDE OF A BUS AND RIDES AWAY FROM EVERYONE!

116 **EXT. DIAG SQUARE - EVENING** 116

Trying not to get noticed, Eli pins a cryptic note next to the hundred others on the same message board Charlotte had visited a few days earlier.

117 **EXT. COMPUTER SCIENCE BUILDING - EVENING** 117

A newspaper article shows a picture of Senator McMahon smiling and shaking hands with a factory worker. The title reads- *McMahon to Appear at United Auto Worker's Rally.*

Eli lowers the newspaper to see Julian walking with a group of students before splitting off by himself.

ELI
Hey, Julian.

Eli sticks the wire cutter handle into his back surprising Julian.

JULIAN
Oh! Hey wait! Oh god, is that a gun?

ELI
Just stay cool, and everything will be alright. Let's go in here.

Eli forces Julian into an empty classroom.

118 **INT. COMPUTER SCIENCE CLASS- EVENING** 118

Eli looks outside until the hall is finally clear.

JULIAN
Please don't kill me. I'll do whatever you want. Just don't hurt me, man.

ELI
Julian, don't be an idiot. Why would I hurt you?

CONTINUED:

JULIAN

Because you're a sociopath who hates rich people?

ELI

That makes absolutely no sense. And anyway, you're not even rich.

JULIAN

That's a good point. So what's with the gun?

Eli shows him the wire cutters.

ELI

It's not a gun. I just thought you might not cooperate.

JULIAN

What do you want from me?

ELI

I need you to help me get into Schmidt's e-mail account.

JULIAN

That's a federal crime. No way. What you really need to do is turn yourself in.

ELI

I'm being framed, Julian. It's really not in my best interest to turn myself in right now.

Julian looks at Eli with serious doubt and cynicism.

JULIAN

Framed? You? Really?

ELI

You think it's a joke, but from all the stuff I've been reading about Schmidt, we could be dealing with some very dangerous and powerful people.

JULIAN

We? Who the hell is we?

119 INT. SCIENCE RESEARCH HALLWAY - NIGHT

119

Eli uses a small set of tools to pick a lock. Julian stands behind him, very nervous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JULIAN
 (whispering)
 This is crazy. You didn't tell me you
 were breaking in.

ELI
 Almost there.

JULIAN
 Just hurry. I thought you were good at
 this stuff.

Just then, the lock pops open.

JULIAN (CONT'D)
 Oh, thank god.

120 INT. PROFESSOR SCHMIDT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

120

Eli closes the door and turns on a desk lamp.

At first glance, the office seems undisturbed. Julian and Eli look
 around- There are file cabinets, books, and a chalkboard with faded
 formulas.

JULIAN
 Hey, he ran the Solar Car Program.
 They won that cross country race last
 year.

ELI
 The American Solar Challenge. Five
 times in a row.

JULIAN
 There's his computer.

Julian sits at the desk, while Eli scans the walls which are covered
 with degrees, awards, and photographs.

ELI
 This guy spent his life studying
 alternative energy. Wind, geothermal,
 hydrogen. He was looking for the next
 best thing.

JULIAN
 That probably pissed somebody off.

ELI
 (sarcastically)
 You think?

While Julian checks the wiring on the professor's computer-

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eli stops in front of an autographed picture on the wall. It's Professor Schmidt and Senator McMahon at a baseball game standing next to a baseball player in uniform. This picture is from the 1980's.

JULIAN

This computer is burnt out. I can't even start it.

Eli suddenly reacts by turning off the light.

ELI

Shhhh...

Julian freezes. Someone outside the door is trying to get in.

ELI (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Hide. Under the desk.

JULIAN

(whispering)

Oh no. Shit. Shit.

ELI

Quiet.

Eli gets behind the door and waits. Julian is terrified.

They both watch as the door cracks open, and a man slowly enters.

But before he can close the door, ELI GRABS HIM AND STICKS THE WIRE CUTTER'S HANDLE IN HIS BACK.

ELI (CONT'D)

(aggressively)

Put your hands against the wall! Put your hands against the wall!

INTRUDER

OK, OK. Don't kill me please.

Julian watches from beneath the desk in awe, as Eli pats the man down and finds nothing.

ELI

Looking for me?

INTRUDER

No. I'm not looking for anyone.

Eli slams the intruder against a wall. Julian has never seen his friend's violent side.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELI

Who do you work for, huh? Are you following me?

INTRUDER

No one. No, I don't know you. Please. I don't know anything.

Eli sees that the guy is genuinely scared.

ELI

Why are you breaking into this office?

INTRUDER

I... I don't know...

Eli turns on the lights and finds a young guy his age who finally registers Eli's face.

INTRUDER (CONT'D)

It's you?

ELI

What about it?

INTRUDER

You didn't do it? Did you?

ELI

Who are you?

INTRUDER

My name is Sanders. Jeremy Sanders. I worked for Professor Leland at the University of Toronto...

Julian, who is still under the desk, listens attentively.

JEREMY

... He and Schmidt were working on the same thing and...

ELI

And?

JEREMY

... Two weeks ago Leland was out walking his dog when he was found dead sitting under a tree...

Julian appears from under the desk. He and Jeremy acknowledge each other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

JEREMY (CONT'D)

... They said he had a heart attack. But when I got to the lab the next day, all his work was gone. Computers, notes, everything...

Eli and Julian look at each other.

JEREMY (CONT'D)

... I'm here because I found a letter from Schmidt in Leland's mail.

CUT TO:

121 INT. PROFESSOR SCHMIDT'S OFFICE - LATER

121

Eli digs through a file cabinet while Julian and Jeremy search through every book, and stack of paper they can find.

JEREMY

All four scientists were working on the same type of technology. And all four are now dead.

JULIAN

What about a paper trail? E-mails? No one's making the connection?

JEREMY

Only Schmidt's letter to Leland. I mean, we never thought much about it at first. The guy from Stockholm died in a random car accident, and we simply lost touch with the Indian scientist.

Frustrated, Eli shuts the file cabinet.

ELI

There's nothing here. What the hell does KG stand for?

JEREMY

I don't know. Schmidt called it the KG2.3. He said we should find it if anything happened to him. We all thought he was just being paranoid.

JULIAN

Looks like he had good reason. You think it's industrial espionage?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY

Maybe. I'm sure Professor Leland knew what it was. I thought if I came here I could find something, some clue. But now...

Eli's mind is reeling. He picks up the picture of Schmidt and McMahon, staring at it for a long beat-

ELI

I think I can get to someone who might know something. Can I borrow your car, Julian?

Both Jeremy and Julian look up at him.

SENATOR MCMAHON (O.S.)

.. Let's not forget that the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act was created for our companies to reinvest in Americans!

122 INT. UNITED AUTO WORKER'S UNION BUILDING - NIGHT

122

A crowd cheers as Eli removes the hoodie from his head and passes through metal detectors.

SENATOR MCMAHON (O.S.)

... And not for them to build more factories abroad. It was created to invest our money in our country...

Eli sneaks into the back of the large hall where Union members are gathered listening to Senator McMahon's speech.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)

... To invest in the technological infrastructure required to build the type of cars that not only Americans will buy, but also that the rest of world will buy...

The crowd of blue collar auto workers cheer. McMahon is very charismatic.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)

... And if we build cars that are technologically advanced, that are energy efficient, cars that reduce green house effects and global warming, whether you believe it exists or not...

The crowd laughs. Eli listens thinking maybe McMahon can help.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
 ... Then there is no way that any of
 our plants should close, or that any
 of you should ever be out of work. Not
 now. Not ever. Thank you and God Bless
 America...and I will see you on voting
 day.

The crowd applauds as the Senator walks off the stage to shake hands
 with the people.

Eli slowly makes his way towards the Senator.

McMahon shakes a few hands before Eli extends his and connects.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
 Thanks for coming. Don't forget to
 vote.

ELI
 Ever hear of a KG2.3 Senator?

SENATOR MCMAHON
 I don't think so. I don't build cars,
 son.
 (big smile)
 But I'm grateful for the American
 worker who does.

ELI
 It was something left behind by
 Professor Schmidt.

The smiling Senator suddenly seems moved.

SENATOR MCMAHON
 Terrible thing what happened. Were you
 one of his students?

ELI
 Not quite. I was there when he died...

The Senator smiles again as if he heard nothing and continues
 shaking hands.

ELI (CONT'D)
 ... I'm a witness. I saw everything
 and I need your help.

SENATOR MCMAHON
 Not here. Meet me outside in twenty
 minutes.

McMahon walks away in the crowd.

123 EXT. UNITED AUTO WORKER'S UNION BUILDING - NIGHT

123

Eli stands at a distance as Senator McMahon walks out of the building towards his idling car. Eli starts to walk over to him.

Before getting in the car, the Senator talks to one of his bodyguards- Eli can't believe his eyes, it's THE KILLER!

Eli quickly turns into a row of cars ducking down. He peeks above the hood and realizes that the Senator must be directly involved in this conspiracy.

124 EXT. HIDEOUT HOUSE - NIGHT

124

Back at his HIDEOUT, Eli lifts up the kitchen window to climb inside.

CHARLOTTE (O.S.)
Pssst. Eli?

HE JUMPS!

ELI
Oh shit! You scared me. Don't do that.
You found my note?

CHARLOTTE
I'm here aren't I?

Eli climbs in the window and extends his hand.

ELI
Come on.

CHARLOTTE
Do you even know the people who own
this house?

ELI
Kind of.

CHARLOTTE
What does that mean?

ELI
I know them better now.

He keeps his hand out. Charlotte looks around nervously and finally enters.

CHARLOTTE
This was a mistake.

125 INT. HIDEOUT HOUSE - NIGHT

125

Eli leads Charlotte through the house to the basement.

ELI
I'm so glad to see you.

CHARLOTTE
I don't know why I'm here. This is
crazy.

She follows him down the stairs.

ELI
Because you believe that I'm innocent.
And now I have proof. Sort of.

CHARLOTTE
Eli, I need to tell you something.

But Eli is too agitated.

ELI
Wait. Hear me out. When I was in
Schmidt's house...

CHARLOTTE
Robbing it?

ELI
Yes... After I found the bodies, I got
jumped by the guy who killed him. I
saw the same guy tonight talking to
Senator McMahan.

CHARLOTTE
Senator who?

ELI
McMahon. He and Schmidt have been
friends for years and I thought they
might be working together. But after
his speech, I saw him talking to this
guy who probably killed Professor
Freedman too..

CHARLOTTE
How do you know all of this?

ELI
... Because I also saw him at her
house. They're trying to make it look
like I killed her too...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI (CONT'D)

I should have never gone to see her.
Now she's dead and it's all my fault.

CHARLOTTE

Eli, this all sounds really insane.
You're scaring me.

ELI

I don't know how or why yet, but
somehow McMahon is implicated in
Schmidt's death.

CHARLOTTE

A Senator killed Schmidt? A US
senator?

ELI

Yes. Look...

Eli reaches into his pocket and removes the picture from Schmidt's office.

ELI (CONT'D)

This is Schmidt and McMahon years ago
at a ballgame. They went to college
here together. They were close
friends.

Charlotte barely looks at the picture. She is more concerned with Eli who paces back and forth.

ELI (CONT'D)

(talking to himself)

But why? Why would he have anything to
do with his murder? Especially if they
needed each other...

CHARLOTTE

Eli?

He snaps back to reality.

CHARLOTTE (CONT'D)

You have to turn yourself in, Eli.
There's no other way. Please.

ELI

I will, Charlotte. I swear. But first
I have to find out why they did it...

It's obvious she doesn't believe him. He points to the photo.

ELI (CONT'D)

... It's a conspiracy. Look at the
picture, Charlotte.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2) ELI (CONT'D)
 All of these people are connected...
 Plus three of Schmidt's colleagues are
 also dead.

But when he looks down at it, something strikes him like a bolt of lightning. Schmidt who stands next to McMahon and the baseball player is also holding a BASEBALL.

 ELI (CONT'D)
 Oh my god.

 CHARLOTTE
 What?

 ELI
 That's Kirk Gibson.

 CHARLOTTE
 Who?

 ELI
 The baseball player. And he's wearing
 number 23. KG2.3...

To Charlotte, Eli seems crazy as he quickly gathers his gear.

 ELI (CONT'D)
 ... It's in the baseball.

Out of nowhere- A GUN IS THRUST FROM THE SHADOWS AGAINST HIS CHEEK!

ELI IS FROZEN, AS JONES REVEALS HIMSELF!

 JONES
 On the floor. Nice and easy.

 ELI
 Let her go first. She's got nothing to
 do with this. Charlotte...

 JONES
 ON THE FLOOR! NOW!

Eli drops to his knees and gets on his stomach.

CLICK! His hands immediately are handcuffed!

 JONES (CONT'D)
 Ok, Charlotte. You can go.

 ELI
 What? You know him?

CONTINUED: (3)

JONES

I'm a cop. And she did the right thing.

CHARLOTTE

He wants to help you, Eli. He believes you.

ELI

Is that what he told you? You don't even believe me.

CHARLOTTE

I'm sorry. I was scared for you.

She climbs the basement stairs on the verge of tears.

ELI

WHY WOULD YOU DO THAT?! I CAN PROVE EVERYTHING!

JONES

That's what the police are for.

ELI

Yeah. A real bang up job you guys are doing so far.

126 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

126

Across the street, Charlotte drives away in her car.

Jones walks out of the house holding Eli by the arm.

JONES

Trust me. You're lucky I found you first. She's a good friend.

But Eli is devastated. He was so close and now it's the end of the road.

They walk to the unmarked police car and Jones opens the door to the back seat.

JONES (CONT'D)

Watch your head. If what you're saying is true, then we will get it all sorted out.

Eli sits in the back seat and, as Jones closes the door, A THIN WIRY ROPE COMES AROUND HIS NECK AND PRACTICALLY LIFTS HIM OFF THE GROUND FROM BEHIND!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI IS STUNNED TO SEE THE KILLER VIOLENTLY STRANGLING JONES RIGHT OUTSIDE THE WINDOW!

ELI
Oh shit!!

Eli quickly reacts by grabbing for the door handles, but his hands are handcuffed behind his back making it a real challenge. Not only that, but in a police car the rear doors can only be opened from the outside!

AS JONES FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE, ELI JUMPS INTO THE FRONT SEAT AND REACHES FOR THE DOOR. BUT IT'S ALSO LOCKED!

Outside the car, The Killer pulls Jones who is losing consciousness to the ground. Inside, Eli repeatedly kicks at the passenger window until IT FINALLY EXPLODES!

Unable to use his hands, ELI JUMPS OUT OF THE CAR AND LANDS ON THE PAVEMENT FACE FIRST!

Finally, Eli runs across the street disappearing between some houses.

127 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

127

Eli walks along the sidewalk staying in the shadows. His hands are cuffed behind his back. If the Killer drives by, he's a sitting duck.

He sees a set of orange lights at the end of the street and runs.

A crew of workers are busy repairing a broken traffic light.

Eli carefully walks around their truck looking for a the tool drawer. Using his teeth, he opens it and the whole thing falls on the floor with a loud crash.

A worker appears around the corner, but Eli is long gone.

SNAP! On the next street over, Eli uses his legs to squeeze a new pair of cutters breaking the chain connecting the handcuffs.

128 **EXT. PAWNSHOP - NIGHT**

128

Eli slips into the alley adjacent to the pawnshop and looks around before climbing the side of the building using drainage pipes and bricks for leverage.

Once on the roof, he slides off a huge, circulating air duct giving him full access to the pawnshop below.

Eli lowers himself into the hole and jumps inside.

129 INT. PAWNSHOP - NIGHT

129

Eli searches though the shop looking in the display cases, on the shelves, and through some drawers, when- A SHOTGUN IS THRUST FROM THE SHADOW INTO THE SIDE OF HIS FACE. ELI FREEZES.

ELI

What would you say if I told you that's the second time someone put a gun to my head today?

LARRY

I'd say you need a different hobby. Keep your hands where I can see them.

ELI

Easy with that, Larry.

LARRY

Who the fuck are you?

ELI

It's me. Eli.

LARRY

I don't remember buzzing you in. Now stand up slowly and walk...

Eli moves slowly.

ELI

Listen Larry, I need that baseball I brought in the other day.

LARRY

A 1984 World Series Kirk Gibson home run ball?

ELI

That's right.

LARRY

You brought evidence from a murder scene into my shop, didn't you? I should kick your ass for that alone.

ELI

It's a little bit more complicated than that.

LARRY

Oh, now you're gonna patronize me?! You little prick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Larry picks up the phone and looks down to dial.

IN ONE SWIFT MOVE, ELI KNOCKS AWAY THE SHOTGUN, GRABS IT FROM LARRY, AND POINTS IT AT HIS HEAD!

ELI
(whispering)
Hang up...

Larry slowly slides the receiver back on the phone and QUICKLY GRABS A BASEBALL BAT WIELDING IT UP IN THE AIR!

LARRY
You know the deal, punk. All sales are final.

It's the most uneven Mexican stand-off ever seen.

ELI
Larry? I've got a shotgun.

LARRY
Well then you better use it. Because if you think I'm gonna let a peckerwood like you push me around in my own shop you got another thing coming.

ELI
Maybe you haven't heard, but I'm a sociopath. They call me The Campus Killer.

LARRY
I've known some killers in my time and you sure as shit ain't one. Now drop the gun before I bash your brains in.

ELI
This is nuts.

BUT LARRY'S HAD ENOUGH AND THE OLD MAN WITH THE BAT CHARGES THE BOY WITH THE SHOTGUN.

ELI FIRES TO THE SIDE EXPLODING A TELEVISION SET.

LARRY
You missed.

LARRY SWINGS THE BAT KNOCKING THE SHOTGUN OUT OF ELI'S HANDS.

THE BASEBALL BAT COMES FLYING AT HIS HEAD! ELI DUCKS OUT OF THE WAY.

LARRY SWINGS IT DOWN ON ELI WHO NOW ROLLS CLEAR!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELI GRABS AN OLD PAIR OF SHOES AND THROWS THEM AT LARRY-

BUT LARRY KEEPS SWINGING, AND ELI KEEPS DUCKING-

WITH EVERY SWING, LARRY SMASHES INTO SOMETHING ELSE DESTROYING HIS SHOP- A GUITAR ON THE WALL! A SHELF WITH OLD MOVIE CAMERAS!

ELI KICKS THE OLD MAN'S ANKLES, SWEEPING HIM TO THE GROUND- BUT LARRY PULLS ELI DOWN WITH HIM AND ROLLS ON TOP OF HIM.

ELI
Stop it Larry! You're eighty-years-old
for Christ's sake!

Then POW! ELI GETS PUNCHED SQUARE IN THE FACE!

LARRY
I'll still kick your ass, pee-wee!

ELI
AAAAWWW!!

WITH A BLOODY NOSE, ELI SHOVES THE OLD MAN TO THE SIDE WHERE THEY GRAPPLE, BOTH THROWING FISTS AND ELBOWS.

WITH SHELVES AND BOXES FALLING ALL OVER THEM, ELI IS FINALLY ON TOP-

BUT LARRY CONTINUES SWINGING- SO ELI RELUCTANTLY SLAMS HIS FIST DOWN INTO THE OLD MAN'S FACE- ONCE- THEN TWICE- THEN IT'S OVER!

Eli falls over exhausted. Next to him, Larry is half-conscious.

ELI (CONT'D)
Please tell me you're still breathing.

LARRY
(groggy)
Little bitch.

ELI
I need that ball back, Larry.

LARRY
Too bad. I sold it. And you're better off without it, that thing was hotter than a pussy in a cayenne pepper patch.

ELI
Dammit, Larry. Who'd you sell it to?

Larry smiles. Obviously, that's a loaded question.

130 EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

130

A nervous Julian sits inside his car which is parked in a dark street of an abandoned Detroit neighborhood where the majority of houses are boarded up or burned down.

Somewhere down the block, Eli walks across the street to a neglected building resounding with the beat of Hip-hop music.

ELI

Are you for real?

From behind a bush, Eli studies the house, looking inside at it's occupants. Three gangster thugs sit on a couch drinking beers.

Staying off the property, he moves around the fence to the back of the house. The high grass keeps him from getting a clear view inside, but it looks like there are more people in a back room.

Eli is about to jump over the fence when A LARGE PITBULL JUMPS UP AGAINST IT AND BARKS LIKE A FEROCIOUS ANIMAL!

Alerted by the animal, one of the thugs exits the house holding a gun.

Eli watches through the grass as the man inspects the surroundings making his way towards the barking dog.

THUG 1

Shut up you dirty mutt!

And without hesitation, kicks the animal in the gut, silencing it instantly.

He leashes the dog and fastens the other end to a pole in the yard.

THUG 1 (CONT'D)

Now keep it shut! You hear?!

The man steps back into the house, cursing to his friends about the neighborhood raccoons.

Eli jumps over the fence and crouches under a window. The dog looks at him whimpering, too afraid to bark again.

Looking through the window, the first thing Eli sees is A COUPLE HAVING SEX ON A BED. He looks further into the room and notices a shelf dedicated to baseball memorabilia- bats, gloves, and HIS BASEBALL.

But getting it back will not be so easy especially when he sees there is a gun on the night table next to a small mound of white powder. They are all coked up and packing!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eli moves around to the kitchen door and sees someone at the refrigerator. It's another thug who grabs more beers and heads back to the living room. Eli now knows there are at least five people in the house.

He finally builds up the nerve to enter.

131 INT. THUG KITCHEN - NIGHT

131

Sneaking in, Eli carefully closes the door behind him. The music is blasting but he can still hear the three guys in the front room talking above it.

With its torn wallpaper and dirty floors, the house is more like a squat than a home.

He finds the door to the bedroom ajar but for him to have access, he will have to pass through the hallway next to the living room. One of the thugs sits very close to the hallway and would only have to turn his head to see Eli.

132 INT. THUG HALLWAY - NIGHT

132

Eli goes for it and quickly moves into the bathroom facing the bedroom. Through a crack in the door he keeps an eye on the thug on the couch waiting for an opportunity to pass by.

The thug leans over the coffee table to snort some cocaine and Eli makes his move.

He walks quietly down the hall, grabs the doorknob, takes a deep breath, and enters.

133 INT. THUG BEDROOM - NIGHT

133

Eli stands by the door evaluating the situation. The bedroom is divided down the middle with the shelving unit containing the memorabilia. On the other side of the shelf, the couple is in full action.

If he is careful and stays on his side, he can grab the baseball without getting noticed.

He steps deeper into the room and slowly approaches the shelves.

Just a few more feet and the ball will be his. A step later, he is close enough to read the small, gold plaque on the plexiglass case-
KIRK GIBSON 23.

The couple gets very loud as the girl starts to climax. Eli takes this opportunity and grabs the baseball, but-

AS HE LIFTS IT OFF THE SHELF, THE MOANING GIRL OPENS HER EYES AND SPOTS ELI STANDING ON THE OTHER SIDE! SHE SCREAMS!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The man turns and with a reflex, GRABS HIS GUN, AND FIRES A COUPLE OF SHOTS AT ELI DESTROYING THE SHELVES SEPARATING THEM!

134 INT. THUG HALLWAY/ KITCHEN- NIGHT

134

Miraculously escaping the bedroom, Eli now finds himself facing three armed thugs. Instantly, THEY FIRE THEIR WEAPONS!

ELI SWINGS THE BATHROOM DOOR OPEN AND, USING IT AS A SHIELD, DIVES INTO THE KITCHEN FOR COVER.

In the hall, The Thugs have taken cover and look into kitchen.

The gunfire subsides and the music is now off. The only sounds are of the girl crying.

THUG 1
(yelling to the bedroom)
You all right, Vince?!

VINCE (O.S.)
That bitch stole my baseball!

THUG 1
Your baseball?

Thug 3 turns to Thug 1.

THUG 3
(whispering)
I think I left my gun in the kitchen.

THUG 1
What?

Back in the kitchen, crouching with his back to the wall, Eli spots Thug 3's revolver on the kitchen table.

He picks it up and uses the handle of the gun to crack open the plexiglass casing round the ball.

Meanwhile, the girl continues crying from the bedroom.

VINCE (O.S.)
Dammit girl! Why don't you shut your damned mouth. I'm trying to think.

Hidden in the base of the casing, Eli discovers A SMALL USB KEY!

VINCE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I don't know who you are, but you're not getting out of here alive. You hear me?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vince opens the bedroom door and creeps out of the hallway in his underwear quietly pointing for the thugs to follow him.

In the kitchen, Eli grips the gun tightly in anticipation.

All four men slide against the walls with their guns pointed when-
THE BASEBALL ROLLS OUT FROM THE KITCHEN AND STOPS AT THEIR FEET.

They look at each other not knowing what to do.

135 **EXT. THUG HOUSE - NIGHT**

135

Eli runs past a window and into the street where Julian's car screeches around the corner.

He dives into the window and the car takes off into the night.

136 **INT. JULIAN'S CAR - NIGHT**

136

The USB key is now plugged into the side of a lap top.

Julian drives while Eli looks at a technical blueprint on the computer screen. They listen to Jeremy Sanders on speaker phone.

JEREMY SANDERS (O.S.)

Apparently, it replaces the platinum element needed to create hydrogen combustion with a combination of nickel and a biological enzyme. It's an ingenious concept that would give the same results and finally make hydrogen engines affordable.

JULIAN

... and make oil obsolete.

JEREMY SANDERS (O.S.)

Not only oil. If it works, it wouldn't make sense to build any other type of engine. Hybrid, electrical, they'd all become useless.

ELI

Schmidt designed an engine worth millions.

JEREMY SANDERS (O.S.)

Try billions. We're talking about possibly revamping the entire auto industry.

JULIAN

I'm scared that I even know about this.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JEREMY SANDERS (O.S.)
*Anyone who you've talked to about it
 could be in danger.*

Julian stops the car in front of the police station.

ELI
 I've gotta warn Charlotte.

JEREMY SANDERS (O.S.)
I'll keep looking at it. Good luck.

They hang up and Eli quickly dial again.

JULIAN
 Ok, we're here. Let's go inside.

ELI
 Hang on.
 (into the phone)
 Hey? It's Eli. Listen to me. You have
 to meet me at the police station. I'm
 turning myself in, and I think you
 might be in danger.

Listening to the phone, his expression changes.

ELI (CONT'D)
 Who is this?

Julian becomes concerned as Eli flips to speaker phone.

THE KILLER (O.S.)
We need to have a little talk, Eli.

ELI
 If you hurt her, I swear I will hunt
 you down.

THE KILLER (O.S.)
*Spare me the dramatic teenage hero
 routine. Accidents can happen. It's a
 tragic fact of life.*

ELI
 Yeah? Well I think I might have some
 insurance.

THE KILLER (O.S.)
Really? For instance?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ELI

A certain blueprint that might be of interest to a few people. Important people.

THE KILLER (O.S.)

Go on.

ELI

KG2.3 stands for Kirk Gibson, number 23. Schmidt safeguarded his files in one of his prized baseballs. You guys just missed it.

Silence.

THE KILLER (O.S.)

I'll call you back.

Click! The phone hangs up.

ELI

Wait! Shit!

He knows he's gambling with his girlfriend's life.

JULIAN

You have to let the cops handle it, Eli.

ELI

Please call back. Please...

Nothing.

JULIAN

This is insane. You're gonna get us killed.

Then, it rings.

ELI

Hello?

THE KILLER (O.S.)

What do you say we make a little trade.

ELI

The Big House. Tomorrow, during the game... And I'll need some money, too. Let's say two hundred thousand...

Julian raises his thumb upwards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELI (CONT'D)
... No, five? Five hundred thousand.

JULIAN
(whispering)
In small bills...

ELI
In small bills... Bring Charlotte and
the money, or I go straight to...

Click! The man hangs up leaving Julian and Eli looking at eachother.

137 **EXT. ANN ARBOR - NEXT DAY** 137

It's game day in Ann Arbor. The streets are busy and everyone wears blue or yellow. It's hard to tell one student from the next.

138 **INT. U OF M STADIUM - DAY** 138

Inside the stadium it's kick-off time! The bands are playing, the cheerleaders bounce up and down, and the action on the field is reminiscent of roman gladiators- SLAM! CRACK! BOOM!

Eli watches the game from under his hoodie. He looks through the stadium for any sign of Charlotte.

TOUCHDOWN! MICHIGAN SCORES AND THE STADIUM ERUPTS! Eli looks at the replay on the giant monitor.

When he looks back down, A MAN is sitting in the empty seat next to him.

ELI
Someone is sitting here.

THE MAN
Lift up your shirt.

Eli sees the man holding a gun and lifts his shirt showing he's not packing or bugged.

ELI
Who are you? Where's Charlotte?

He hands Eli a pair of binoculars.

THE MAN
Forty yard line.

Eli looks at the players on the field until he finds the 40 yard line. He moves up to the bleachers and finally sees Charlotte sitting next to The Killer who wears an Ohio State T-shirt and holds a huge foam finger to Charlotte's head.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI
(to himself)
Nice shirt, loser...

Eli turns to The Man next to him who wears a secret service earpiece.

ELI (CONT'D)
... What's in the foam finger?

But The Man is not here for conversation.

ELI (CONT'D)
What about the money?

THE MAN
You'll get it when I get what I want.

ELI
You don't even know what you're looking for.

The Man is as cold as ice. A machine.

THE MAN
Whatever it is, you're gonna hand it over.

ELI
It's not on me. It's under one of these seats.

The Man looks around the stadium which seats over a hundred thousand spectators.

THE MAN
(into a mic)
He doesn't have it... Under a seat.

ELI
Who are you talking to?

THE MAN
You have ten seconds or the deal is off.

ELI
Who are you talking to? McMahon?

The man looks at his watch.

THE MAN
Five seconds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Everywhere Eli looks he sees older guys with earpieces and sunglasses. Is he being paranoid, or is he totally surrounded?

THE MAN (CONT'D)
 (into the mic)
 It's off. We're moving.

He stands.

ELI
 Wait.

The Man looks down at Eli. His eyes stern and determined.

THE MAN
 ... The seat number?

ELI
 Section 23. Row W. Seat 32.

THE MAN
 (into the mic)
 Did you get that?

ELI
 Now let her go.

THE MAN
 We need verification first.

139 **EXT. U OF M STADIUM - CONTINUOUS**

139

In front of the stadium, police cars arrive at the gate.

Detectives Claymen and Duper exit their vehicle followed by other officers.

140 **INT. U OF M STADIUM - CONTINUOUS**

140

A sign reading *SECTION 23* is seen through The Man's binoculars. Below it someone who looks like a fan moves briskly among the crowd looking for Row W.

ELI
 Who are you? Auto industry? Oil?

But The Man is unmovable.

ELI (CONT'D)
 CIA? Secret Service?

The crowd cheers loudly at the game.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI (CONT'D)

Judging by the way you take orders,
you probably have military training.
Blackwater?

141 INT. U OF M STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

141

Claymen looks at the thousands of people in the stands. It's like finding a needle in a haystack.

He looks down at the field where the quarterback throws an incomplete pass.

142 INT. U OF M STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

142

Eli and The Man watch the same play from their seats.

ELI

You're trained like a good little dog
aren't you? Always doing what he's
told...

The Man returns to the binoculars. Across the stadium, "the fan" finally turns into Row W.

ELI (CONT'D)

... Never questioning his master. You
ever hear the word fascist?

The Man finally cracks a smile through his clenched jaw.

ELI (CONT'D)

Guess not. I forget that you military
types can't afford an education.
That's why you're so easily
manipulated...

Meanwhile, the fan searching for Eli's package quickly moves along the seats forcing students to stand as he passes.

ELI (CONT'D)

... Believing that bullshit about
making the ultimate sacrifice for your
country. It's a joke...

The Man has no response or emotion.

ELI (CONT'D)

... You're no different than a
terrorist.

Still nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELI (CONT'D)

... I'm sure your father must be very proud.

That was it-

THE MAN

You're god damned right he's proud. Who the fuck are you? What have you ever done?

ELI

I don't kill people for a living. That's for sure.

THE MAN

No. You have people like me do it. You have no clue what it's like to fight for something greater than yourself, do you?

ELI

Schmidt did, and you killed him. He was a true patriot. He was fighting for this country with a real purpose. Not like you.

THE MAN

Schmidt was a traitor. Do you have any idea how many American lives we saved by getting him out of the way? Of course not.

Wow. That sure sounded like a confession.

Finally, across the stadium, the fan reaches under a seat and comes up with an envelope.

The Man listens through his earpiece.

THE MAN (CONT'D)

Get up.

ELI

What about Charlotte?

Eli stands.

THE MAN

(into the mic)

We're moving.

(to Eli)

Just keep quiet and walk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Hiding the gun, he pushes Eli through the row of students.

SUDDENLY, THE CROWD CHEERS AS THE WOLVERINES SCORE ANOTHER TOUCHDOWN!

The Man is caught offguard and ELI REACHES FOR THE GUN!

THEY STRUGGLE AND TRIP, TUMBLING DOWN THE STAIRS, EACH TRYING TO GET CONTROL OF THE WEAPON UNTIL-

BANG! The gun goes off, but no one hears it through the noise and cheers. Instead, Eli runs away holding the bloody gun! He runs up the stairs as fast as he can.

The Man falls on a female student before painfully standing up with a gunshot wound to his stomach!

Sweating and holding his gut, he walks up the stairs.

THE MAN (CONT'D)
 (into mic)
 He got away. Son of a bitch has my
 gun.

Further away, Eli puts the gun under his sweatshirt and runs through a sea of students looking left and right.

In total panic, he knows he has just a few minutes to find her before it's too late.

He rushes towards the other side of the stadium looking everywhere, slamming into students, and running past a row of concession stands until- HE FINALLY SEES HER THROUGH THE CROWD!

But The Killer pulls her further away and, as the crowd thickens, they will both soon disappear.

In an act of desperation, Eli pulls the gun out and shoots up into the air- BANG! BANG!

EVERYONE SCREAMS AND HITS THE DECK INCLUDING CHARLOTTE, LEAVING ELI AND THE KILLER IN A STAND OFF! ELI POINTS THE GUN WHILE THE KILLER HOLDS THE FOAM FINGER AT CHARLOTTE'S HEAD.

ELI
 LET HER GO!

But Eli doesn't see the police officer behind him pointing his gun at him.

OFFICER
 (to Eli)
 DROP IT! DROP IT NOW!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

ELI

NO! IT'S HIM. THERE'S A GUN IN THAT
FINGER!

OFFICER

I SAID DROP THE GUN! I WILL SHOOT YOU!

Eli slowly lowers the gun and watches helplessly as The Killer pulls Charlotte away, blending back into the crowd.

Claymen and Duper run through the crowd catching up with the officer.

Eli stands with his hand above his head when HE SUDDENLY TAKES OFF.

CLAYMEN

DON'T SHOOT!

Claymen and Duper run past the officer.

CLAYMEN (CONT'D)

Too many kids. Secure the exits.

Meanwhile, Eli runs through the crowd looking for Charlotte. He turns left, right, runs a few yards and stops again- but can't see her anywhere- until he hears a faint voice calling his name.

He turns and spots her disappearing down a flight of stairs. He runs through the crowd KNOCKING OVER A STUDENT WITH A TRAY OF SODAS!

The student recognizes him.

STUDENT

It's The Campus Killer!

Eli gets up just in time to see Charlotte being pulled into a service door! He runs-

ELI

CHARLO...

SLAM! ELI IS TACKLED BY A SECURITY OFFICER! THEY STRUGGLE ON THE GROUND WHEN ELI BITES HIS HAND. THE GUARD SCREAMS. ELI KICKS HIM IN THE GUT AND GRABS HIS NIGHTSTICK!

A COUPLE OF STUDENTS TRY TO HELP THE SECURITY GUARD, BUT ELI JUMPS UP SWINGING THE NIGHTSTICK!

Everyone backs away and Eli runs towards the service door.

143 INT. U OF M STADIUM UNDERGROUND - DAY

143

Eli enters a long corridor running straight through to the stadium's underbelly.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Further away The Killer pulls Charlotte violently into the underground maze with thick metallic pipes running along the walls.

But Eli worked at the stadium all summer and knows these tunnels like the back of his hand.

He passes a series of metal doors and turns a corner when- BANG! A BULLET STRIKES THE WALL ABOVE HIS HEAD! ELI DUCKS AND JUMPS BACK BEHIND THE WALL!

Charlotte struggles with the Killer when he punches her in the face, instantly bloodying her nose. Now, using her as a shield, he walks towards Eli.

KILLER

What are you gonna do Eli? Throw that stick at me?

He slowly approaches Eli pointing the gun at the wall.

KILLER (CONT'D)

Beat me to death with it?

All of a sudden, THE NIGHTSTICK COMES FLYING AT THE KILLER FORCING HIM TO DUCK. BANG! HE FIRES AGAIN!

KILLER (CONT'D)

You need to be careful, Eli. You could've hurt your girlfriend.

The Killer approaches with the gun in one hand. Charlotte bleeds from her nose as he grips her arm tightly.

But as he slowly rounds the corner, ELI IS GONE!

KILLER (CONT'D)

Eli?

SLAM! ELI HITS THE KILLER FROM BEHIND KNOCKING THE GUN OUT OF HIS HANDS!

Exhausted, Charlotte falls to the ground, while the two men fight like banshees throwing fists, knees and head butts.

But Eli is enraged and fights not only to save himself and his girlfriend, but to avenge all of those people who were murdered.

ELI JUMPS ON TOP OF THE KILLER AND BEATS HIM WITH A FLURRY OF PUNCHES- IN A FLASH, THE KILLER UNSHEATHES A KNIFE AND SWINGS IT ACROSS ELI'S CHEST BARELY MISSING HIS NECK.

Eli falls back and the Killer jumps on top of him. He lifts his knife to swing a final, deadly blow, when- BANG!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A BULLET RIPS THROUGH THE KILLER'S NECK! He falls to the ground clutching his wound and revealing Charlotte holding the smoking gun.

Both Eli and Charlotte are in complete shock, when-

CLAYMEN
DROP IT! CHARLOTTE, DROP THE GUN!

The cops enter the underground corridor.

DUPER
HANDS UP!

Eli lifts his bloody hands and looks down at the killer who stares right back at him- bleeding to death.

144 INT. U OF M STADIUM - CONTINUOUS 144

Splitting a sea of students, Eli is led through the stadium crowd.

ELI (O.S.)
Someone once said, "Honor isn't about making the right choices. It's about dealing with the consequences"...

145 EXT. ANN ARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT 145

Back at the opening scene- FLASH! FLASH!

Handcuffed, Eli walks through a crowd of journalists and photographers trying to hide his identity under the hoodie of his Michigan football sweatshirt.

ELI (V.O.)
... I used to think that who you are is determined by what you have, how much money you make, what kind of clothes you wear, or what kind of car you drive...

146 INT. ANN ARBOR POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT 146

Eli is led through the police station, while the other officers stop to catch a glimpse of the captured student.

ELI (V.O.)
... Professor Freedman was right. You're never too young to learn or too old to change. I know now that whether you grew up fighting in the streets, or with a silver spoon in your mouth...

147 INT. CENTRAL BOOKING - EVENING

147

The officers walk Eli in front of a police camera to take his mug shot when one of them removes the hoodie covering his head.

ELI

... Or whether you got your education behind bars or have fancy degrees from Harvard or Yale... The only thing you truly ever have... Is your name, your integrity, your honor.

But this time, as Eli looks straight into the lens. THE SOUND OF A CROWD CHEERING ERUPTS.

THE MAN (PLAYBACK)

... You have no clue what it's like to fight for something greater than yourself, do you?

FLASH!

148 INT. U OF M STADIUM - DAY

148

Back on the sideline, Julian listens to his headphones sitting next to a crew of cameramen. The long distance audio recorder he used to peep on coeds is at his feet.

ELI (PLAYBACK)

Schmidt did, and you killed him. He was a true patriot. He was fighting for this country with a purpose...

He listens to his latest recording on his laptop, passing the audio through filters removing the cheering crowd until finally the sound is perfect.

THE MAN (PLAYBACK)

... Schmidt was a traitor. You have no idea how many American lives we saved by getting him out of the way do you?

JULIAN RECORDED EVERYTHING and burns the proof Eli needs on a CD.

He slides the CD into an envelope ADDRESSED TO DETECTIVE CLAYMEN.

149 INT. LIBRARY - DAY

149

A FEW WEEKS LATER

Healed and all cleaned up, Eli sits alone at a desk in the library. His head buried in books, he is back to his school work.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VOICE

Still hard at work? I certainly respect your resilience.

Eli looks up- it's Senator McMahon in his usual suit and tie.

SENATOR MCMAHON

Mind if I sit?

Eli returns to his books as McMahon pulls up a chair and sits.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)

I remember my days as a student. I never thought it would end. I just couldn't wait to get out into the world.

ELI

What can I do for you Senator?

SENATOR MCMAHON

Well, besides for some impressive homework that little "thing" had nothing on it.

ELI

What little thing?

SENATOR MCMAHON

Come now. Do you really think you got off so easy all on your own? I pulled a lot of strings for you, Eli...

But Eli doesn't believe him.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)

... Although it was very smart of you to hold on to it. I'll give you that.

Eli finally puts his pencil down.

ELI

Tying up the loose ends, Senator?

McMahon smiles.

ELI (CONT'D)

You know, there's still something I can't put together. Why not embrace Schmidt's technology? Why suppress it? Why kill people to suppress it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SENATOR MCMAHON

I don't know anything about that. My job has always been to keep Americans safe and warm at night.

ELI

... and employed. I heard your speech about building better cars and keeping factories open.

SENATOR MCMAHON

That's right.

ELI

Then why get rid of Schmidt? Why? His invention gave you that.

McMahon takes a second to answer.

SENATOR MCMAHON

Maybe he was too late.

ELI

Too late? How can progress ever come too late?

SENATOR MCMAHON

Maybe you don't understand how fragile and vulnerable an economy can be in a recession? How risky investments become.

Eli's face lights up. He's finally putting it together.

ELI

They were invested in something else? Of course. They had already spent the money. Schmidt's design was better, but it was too late. And using it would mean losing millions of dollars...

SENATOR MCMAHON

... and Jeopardize millions of American jobs.

There it is. Eli finally hears what he's been waiting for.

ELI

You couldn't care less about American workers. You're just protecting corporate millionaires.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

SENATOR MCMAHON
Isn't it the same thing? Think about
your father...

That takes Eli by surprise. What about him?

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
... Think about how different your
life would've have turned out if
someone helped the company he worked
for instead of letting it go under.
Maybe he wouldn't have lost his job...
or abandoned you...

That's a cheap shot.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
... Like I said. My job is to protect
Americans.

ELI
What about Freedman? How did she
jeopardize Americans?

SENATOR MCMAHON
We both have to accept our share of
the responsibility on that one don't
you think? Nobody forced you to become
a thief or end up at her house...

He's right, and it stings.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
... What's important now is that it
doesn't get into the wrong hands.

ELI
Like yours?

But McMahon turns very serious. He knows more than he's letting on.

SENATOR MCMAHON
Do you have any idea how much power
that formula represents? Do you want
the Chinese or the Russians to get a
hold of it? The Iranians? Think about
it. Do you want to share it with third
world nations? Should we go to war
because you think sharing is playing
nice?

ELI
That kind of power should end wars not
start new ones.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

The Senator cracks showing his true colors.

SENATOR MCMAHON
ALTERNATIVE ENERGY IS A WAR!
(realizing and whispering)
Grow the fuck up, Eli.

Eli thinks very carefully before he answers.

ELI
I have grown up. Finally. And you're
right. I've accepted responsibility
for my actions. For my part in it.
It's time to make things right again.
For everyone.

Eli closes his books.

SENATOR MCMAHON
I am warning you. Don't do something
you'll regret.

This makes Eli smile as he packs his books.

ELI
I think everyone in the world should
benefit from Schmidt's blueprints.
Even third world countries. That's
what he would've wanted.

SENATOR MCMAHON
Schmidt was a traitor! He was gonna
sell it to the highest bidder, you
idiot!

Eli stands up and pushes the chair against the table.

ELI
He was your friend...

For the first time, the Senator looks stunned.

ELI (CONT'D)
... I have to go now. Time for lunch.

Eli walks way from the table towards the library door. But this is
not the library he's used to. A UNIFORMED GUARD appears on the other
side of the door- ELI IS IN A PRISON LIBRARY!

SENATOR MCMAHON
How do you know that whoever you sent
it to will actually get it?

Eli turns back to see the senator sitting among the other convicts.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
Jeremy Sanders? How do you know for
sure something won't happen to him?

ELI
How do you know he's the only one who
has it?

They share a long pause. There is nothing else to be said.

SENATOR MCMAHON
I guess we'll just have to take that
risk.

ELI
I guess we will.

SENATOR MCMAHON
See you in a few months...

The door opens and Eli walks out with a smile.

SENATOR MCMAHON (CONT'D)
... If you make it out.

150 INT. PRISON CORRIDOR - DAY

150

Eli walks through the long corridor which is lined with windows
looking onto the library. McMahon watches him walk away powerless.

But the smile on Eli's face disappears as he rejoins the prison
population.

Well on his way to repay his debt to society, Eli has finally
accepted the errors of his ways and knows his journey to redemption
and respect will be long. But his expression is resolute and full of
determination. The school boy is finally a man.

CUT TO BLACK.