

UNTITLED KEVIN WILLIAMSON PROJECT

"PILOT"

Written by

Kevin Williamson

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EXT. HUNTSVILLE PRISON - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

FLOOD LIGHTS illuminate prison grounds. Surrounded by walls, razor fences, guard towers...

CHYRON: MAXIMUM STATE PRISON, HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS

INT. HUNTSVILLE PRISON - HUNTSVILLE, TX - NIGHT

A PRISON GUARD, 40'S, makes his way down a hall of concrete. He moves with ease... confidence. There's more to know about this man... a lot more. But, for now, it's limited to: An intelligent face. Handsome.

He punches a code into a digital keypad, tips his face to the security camera. STEEL DOORS DISENGAGE. He walks through--

INT. PRISON - GUARD LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The PRISON GUARD opens his locker, grabs a small duffel, when TWO FELLOW GUARDS prepare for their shift.

FELLOW GUARD

Later, Pete. You have a good one.

The GUARD (PETE) gives a nod, quickly exits with his duffel.

EXT. PRISON - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The GUARD (PETE) hops into an old Bronco, drives off, passing through a gate and guard shack. Waves are exchanged.

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

The TWO GUARDS approach the STEEL DOORS. One motions to the SECURITY CAMERAS.

GUARD #1

Open up, Gene.

Nothing happens. The doors don't open. The two guards share a look. Odd. One keys in the code. BUZZ. The DOORS open.

GUARD #2

Where is everybody?

There's no sign of anyone. They approach the GUARD STATION. See the control room door is ajar. They rush in to find...

BLOOD... EVERYWHERE. DRIPPING, SPLATTERED, STREAKED...

The guards are horrified as they find three, maybe more PRISON GUARDS on the floor. Dead. Their bodies EVISCERATED.

INT. BRONCO - NIGHT

The GUARD (PETE) careens down a long Texas highway. The prison gates behind him. He hears the ALARM SOUND. Through the rearview mirror, LIGHTS ERUPT as all hell breaks loose.

The GUARD hits the radio, finds some classic rock and settles in for a long drive. As it becomes quite clear -- this man is no prison guard.

EXT. ATLANTA, GA - MORNING

An apartment building in downtown Atlanta.

CHYRON: **ATLANTA, GEORGIA**

INT. APARTMENT - MORNING

The morning sun streams through the windows of a small loft. Minimal. Judging from the clutter, a single man's mess.

From somewhere, a CELL PHONE RINGS... and RINGS. A hand reaches for it. Finds it. Shuts it off. Beat. It BUZZES with a TEXT MESSAGE. Another beat then--

A head rises from the pillows, eyes squinting in the morning light. Meet RYAN HARDY, 40's. Handsome in the most damaged of ways. Tired and textured by life. And lots of booze.

He pulls himself from the bed, grabs his phone, stumbles to the kitchen area. He opens the fridge and grabs a carton of orange juice. Then proceeds to pull a bottle of vodka from the freezer. He pours the vodka straight into the juice carton and shakes.

He takes a gulp. It brings relief. Now, he's ready for the phone. He reads his TEXT MESSAGE: TURN ON YOUR TV.

Ryan finds the remote and CLICKS on the flat screen in the living room area. He starts for the bathroom as the television comes to life. THE NEWS BLARES. "Joe Carroll escaped from prison early this morning..."

Ryan stops cold. He turns back to the TV. His face frozen.

ON TV -- "Five dead in prison escape." "Serial killer Joe Carroll at large." Images of HUNTSVILLE PRISON, road blocks, search dogs, helicopters, a full-scale manhunt in progress. An image of the Bronco, abandoned by a road. Detectives scour it for evidence.

CLOSE ON RYAN'S FACE. Beyond shocked. He switches stations. CNN, FOX, MSNBC -- all cover the story.

FLASHES of information. "Prison bloodbath." "Not since Bundy's escape in '77..." "Sentenced for the murders at SMU in '03." "Two appeals denied, no chance of clemency..."

Ryan's CELL PHONE RINGS again. He turns to it. Hesitates. He doesn't want to answer it but...

RYAN

Hello?

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Moments from the phone call play out over the following.

-- Bathroom shower. Water beats down on Ryan as he leans against the wall.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)

Hello, Ryan, it's Dale Franklin, chief director of the FBI. It's been a while. How are you?

RYAN (V.O.)

I'm good, Dale, what can I do for you?

-- Bathroom mirror. Ryan brushes his teeth in the mirror. In the reflection, he sees the TV SCREEN.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)

We need your help in Texas.

-- On television. Past footage of Ryan being interviewed on a morning news show. Caption reads: PROFILING EXPERT RYAN HARDY.

RYAN (V.O.)

I'm not an agent anymore.

-- Bedroom. Ryan dresses. Troubled. Conflicted.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)

I want you to consult. You caught this guy once. You're a walking textbook. I've got my best agents on this but you know Carroll. Go down there, educate them, we gotta catch him fast.

-- Bathroom. Dressed now, Ryan is staring at himself in the mirror again. His face is stoic. Empty. Out of nowhere he SMASHES his fist into the mirror SHATTERING it. His hand bleeds.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)
How's your health?

RYAN (V.O.)
My back's good. I'm good.

-- Kitchen. With band-aids on his knuckles, Ryan empties several bottles of ARROWHEAD WATER into the drain. Fills the empty bottles with vodka and places them in his satchel.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)
So you'll do it?

-- Ryan reaches for a book. CLOSE ON THE BOOK. The cover reads, THE POETRY OF A MADMAN, with JOE CARROLL'S FACE on the front. On the back flap, a PHOTO of the AUTHOR, EX-FBI AGENT RYAN HARDY.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CORPUS CHRISTI, TX - MORNING

A mid-sized hospital.

CHYRON: DRISCOLL MEDICAL CENTER, CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS

A young resident, DR. SARAH FULLER, 28, heads down the hallway. A determined woman. Bright and cheerful -- she's exactly the doctor you want taking care of you. She cares.

INT. HOSPITAL - PATIENT'S ROOM - MORNING

An ELDERLY MAN, lively, robust, watches TV in bed as Sarah enters. She grabs his chart, reads it over.

SARAH
Good morning, Mr. Gayton. How's your stomach?

MR. GAYTON
Bleeding internally.

SARAH
Hey, we stopped that. I meant the meds, still nauseous?

The man is watching COVERAGE of the PRISON ESCAPE.

MR. GAYTON
Damn TV's making me nauseous. You been following this mess? That man, who sliced up all those girls in Dallas, eight, nine years ago... escaped from prison.

Sarah stops cold. Turns to the television.

MR. GAYTON (CONT'D)
Walked right out the damn door.

The life drains from Sarah's face. As an image of JOE CARROLL splashes across the TV SCREEN. Her knees go weak...

MR. GAYTON (CONT'D)
How the hell does that happen?

SARAH
Excuse me...

Sarah calmly exits the room.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - MORNING

Hands clutch the wall as Sarah fights to stay composed. She sees TWO SUITED MEN near the elevators, *FLASHING BADGES*, speaking to HOSPITAL STAFF. They point to her. Suddenly, the MEN are upon her.

DETECTIVE WARREN
Dr. Fuller? I'm Detective Warren,
Corpus Christi PD, we're here on
behalf of the U.S. Marshals Office.

Sarah tries to hold it together... *as her world comes undone.*

EXT. DRISCOLL MEDICAL CENTER - MORNING

Detectives escort Sarah down the steps of the hospital. Several REPORTERS have gathered. A small mob surround them as they make their way to the--

INT. UNMARKED CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah slips into the back seat of an unmarked car. A CROWD forms. CAMERAS FLASH. She looks down, sees SEVERAL FOLDERS on the seat. POLICE REPORTS. Marked 2004. She opens one. Crime photos, court transcripts, a PHOTO of JOE CARROLL.

INSTANT FLASHBACK:

INT. COURTROOM - DAY - EIGHT YEARS AGO

A younger, more innocent Sarah is on the witness stand. She steals a look at JOE CARROLL, who sits with his lawyer at the defense table. He stares at her. His eyes are not evil. They're warm. Full of easy charm.

BACK TO PRESENT -- IN THE CAR

Sarah stares at the file... at more PHOTOS of Joe Carroll.

PROSECUTOR (V.O.)
What happened next, Miss Fuller?

RETURN TO FLASHBACK -- THE COURTROOM

The PROSECUTOR questions a timid Sarah.

PROSECUTOR
After the noise that took Professor
Carroll's attention?

SARAH
Someone was coming. He turned
toward the bedroom door. That's
when I reached for the knife.

The Prosecutor picks up a large knife, bagged in evidence.

PROSECUTOR
Where was the knife at this point?

SARAH
It was still inside me...

The Prosecutor deliberately looks at Joe Carroll. All for
effect. It works. The jury reacts.

PROSECUTOR
What did you do then?

SARAH
I tried to remove the knife... to
pull it out but I was too weak.

PROSECUTOR
So what did you do?

SARAH
I pushed it instead... deeper into
my stomach and to the right.

There's an audible GASP from somewhere in the courtroom.

PROSECUTOR
Why would you do that?

SARAH
To puncture the splenic artery...
to bleed out faster. I wanted it
to be over.

A chilled silence. Broken by...

A CAR DOOR SLAMS. BACK TO PRESENT -- Detective Lewis is behind the wheel while Detective Warren rides in back with Sarah. Only seconds have passed.

DETECTIVE WARREN
Is there anyone you'd like us to
contact? Friend? Family member?

A moment. Sarah shakes her head. *No. There's no one.*

EXT. PRISON - GROUNDS - MORNING

INMATES hang in the yard as GUARDS patrol from towers. A helicopter flies over.

EXT. PRISON - ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The helicopter lands on the rooftop. Ryan Hardy emerges from it. PRISON GUARDS escort him to FBI AGENT JENNIFER MASON, 30's, attractive, all business.

MASON
Ryan Hardy, I'm Special Agent
Jennifer Mason, BAU-2, this way.

PRISON GUARDS lead them through a door and down metal stairs. Agent Mason moves with purpose, fast and focused.

MASON (CONT'D)
I'm not sure what Franklin told
you. But I'm running point for the
Bureau and the Marshals are heading
the ground search.

RYAN
And the Texas Rangers?

MASON
They're in charge. You can't miss
'em. They wear really big hats.

This woman has some bite. The elevator doors close.

INT. PRISON - ELEVATOR - DAY

The elevator descends. They continue.

MASON
If anyone asks, you're here
strictly as a consultant and you
report directly to me. Any
questions?

RYAN
How's Sarah Fuller?

Mason pauses. It takes her a second to compute.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Carroll's last victim? She's a
doctor now in Corpus. Is she safe?

MASON
She's under 24/7 watch.

RYAN
I'd like to speak to her.

MASON
About what?

RYAN
I'd like to know how she's doing.

This catches Agent Mason off guard. She finds it odd.

MASON
Perhaps later. Ya know, when we're
not trying to find a serial killer.

Ryan's not sure he likes this woman. In fact, he's sure he
doesn't. The elevator doors open. They start out.

INT. PRISON - CORRIDOR/CONTROL BOOTH - MORNING

The crime scene. The US MARSHALS OFFICE, CORONERS OFFICE,
FORENSIC AGENTS are all there. Sweeping for evidence,
documenting, re-constructing...

Ryan walks through, taking it in. The blood splattered
walls, the bodies are being bagged and removed.

It's a gruesome sight. Ryan does his best to look unaffected
by it. Emotionless. He almost pulls it off until it gets
the best of him and he's forced to turn away. And breathe...

SEVERAL AGENTS have gathered around the MAIN CONSOLE watching
surveillance footage of the escape.

CLOSE ON MONITORS -- JOE CARROLL, dressed as the Prison
Guard, walks down the hallway.

ON ANOTHER MONITOR -- Joe Carroll can be seen in the LOCKER
ROOM avoiding direct contact with the oncoming GUARDS.

TEXAS RANGER SCOTT TURNER, 50's, hardened good ole boy, wears
a big Cowboy hat, provides the commentary.

CAPTAIN TURNER
 Dips his head, avoids the camera.
 Friendly wave, no direct eye
 contact and out the door he goes.
 Damn almighty.

Turner looks up -- sees Ryan with Mason.

MASON
 Ryan Hardy, this is Captain Turner,
 TRU.

CAPTAIN TURNER
 (eyes Hardy)
 I know Ryan.

RYAN
 Captain Turner.

The Captain's words are loaded. They reveal a history. Not
 a particularly good one.

CAPTAIN TURNER
 (to Mason)
 We go way back. I was a Deputy
 when he first brought Carroll in.
 (to Ryan)
 You still running around being the
 expert on all those news shows?

RYAN
 It's a living.

CAPTAIN TURNER
 Is it?

Turner's an ass. Mason interjects.

MASON
 Director Franklin asked Mr. Hardy
 to consult.

Mason quickly leads Ryan away.

INT. PRISON - CARROLL'S CELL - DAY

Ryan stands in the 8X6 cell. Metal cot, table, toilet...
 bare. If not for a row of books lined on the table, it
 wouldn't appear lived in. Mason stands in the doorway.

MASON
 We swept, but everything's intact.
 He left it like this.

RYAN
OCD minimalist.

MASON
He was scheduled to be executed
next month.

RYAN
August 4th.

Yes, Ryan knows the date. He notes the books: BYRON, KEATS, SHELLEY; but most of the books are all by EDGAR ALLAN POE.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Still the Romantic.

Ryan eyes a bad painting on the wall. It's of a LIGHTHOUSE on a barren beach. Dark and Gothic in mood. Then, dead center on the table is a single book -- THE POETRY OF A MADMAN by RYAN HARDY. Ryan picks it up. It's old and worn.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Who let him have this?

MASON
Anyone could have slipped it to
him.

Ryan flips through the pages of the book when a folded piece of paper falls out. He picks it up to find his own name neatly written on it. He looks to Mason. *What?* She gauges his reaction as he unfolds it and reads.

RYAN
"Dear Ryan, I enjoyed your book.
Have you ever considered a sequel?
Best, Joe."

Ryan takes a moment, absorbs the letter. Troubled by it. He deliberates then turns to Mason. Very matter of fact.

MASON
Has Carroll been in touch with you?

Ryan doesn't like her implication.

RYAN
I haven't seen or talked to Carroll
since his trial in '04.

MASON
Any idea why he left that for you?

RYAN

The obvious. He plans to kill again and he wants us to watch it. Carroll is a psychotic narcissist whose ego must be fed.

Mason is disappointed with this answer.

MASON

Is that all you got?

Ryan's starting to get annoyed by this woman's attitude. She clearly has an opinion about him.

RYAN

Yep.

MASON

How much alcohol have you had to drink today?

Mason calls it like she sees it. Ryan fires back.

RYAN

Not enough.

MASON

I don't have time for this. Franklin seems to think you can help so start helping or fade into the background -- I've got a job to do.

She's more business than bitch. She starts out when--

RYAN

Carroll had help. Have you checked the visitor's log, employee files?

MASON

We're on it.

RYAN

Carroll's wife, Claire Matthews, has anyone talked to her?

MASON

She's being questioned. We have her under watch as well.

Ryan's trying. He's off his game, but he's making an effort.

EXT. TEXAS NEIGHBORHOOD - MORNING

Big yards. Big homes. A nice place to live. Except for the NEWS VANS, PATROL CARS and MEDIA CIRCUS that surrounds one particular house.

SUPERIMPOSE: MATTHEWS' RESIDENCE, HOUSTON, TEXAS

INT. MATTHEWS' RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING

CLAIRE MATTHEWS, 40's, peeks through the blinds of a window. Eyes the MEDIA outside. Normally, Claire is a very controlled woman. Full of strength. Refined. Sophisticated. But not this morning...

Right now, she's only pretending to be those things. Anything to hide the hysteria growing inside.

She turns back to the kitchen where POLICE OFFICERS secure the house. TECHNICIANS work on the phones, installing wire taps. On a kitchen counter, a TV blasts a NEWS UPDATE.

CLOSE ON TV SCREEN --

REPORTER

Ex-FBI agent Ryan Hardy arrived in Huntsville this morning. Hardy was the man responsible for apprehending Carroll in '03, as detailed in his best-selling book...

Claire watches as ARCHIVED PHOTOS of Ryan Hardy fill the screen. DETECTIVE JOAN GARCIA, 30's, appears behind her.

DETECTIVE GARCIA

Sorry for the intrusion, Ms. Matthews. I have a few questions.

Claire stares at the detective blankly.

DETECTIVE GARCIA (CONT'D)

When was the last time your husband contacted you?

CLAIRE

(corrects her)

Ex-husband. Detective, I don't mean to be rude but I'll wait for the FBI to arrive. I need to speak to Ryan Hardy. Thank you.

And with that Claire starts for the stairs, leaving the Detective a bit flustered.

INT. MATTHEWS' RESIDENCE - CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Claire enters her bedroom -- INSTANT FLASHBACK.

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - TEN YEARS AGO

A different bedroom. Years ago. It's dark. A younger Claire enters. She moves to the bed when she's GRABBED FROM BEHIND by Joe Carroll. She SCREAMS as they both LAUGH and tumble to the bed. Playful.

They come together. Kissing... groping... it heats up fast, growing passionate. Joe Carroll looks into her eyes...

JOE CARROLL

So perfect. You and me. I love you, Claire.

Claire smiles. Moved by this. But something more.

CLAIRE

I'm pregnant.

He freezes. Surprised. It takes a moment to sink in but then Joe Carroll grabs her and pulls her to him and they kiss.

BACK TO PRESENT

Claire is shaken from her memory by little TEN YEAR OLD JOEY MATTHEWS. Cute and too smart for his age. He races into the room...

JOEY

Mom? Mom?

CLAIRE

Yes, honey.

Claire swoops him up in her arms.

JOEY

What is going on? Why can't I watch TV?

Claire looks to the doorway where the nanny, DENISE, a sweet faced girl of 24, stands.

DENISE

I didn't know what to say.

JOEY

It's Dad, isn't it?

Claire is pained by this. She looks to Denise, at a loss too.

EXT. DUPLEX - CORPUS CHRISTI - DAY

A modest duplex in a residential area. REPORTERS, NEWS VANS, SPECTATORS crowd the side-walk and entrance.

CHYRON: **SARAH FULLER'S RESIDENCE, CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS**

A young man, pushes through the crowd. WILL WILSON, 20's, handsome. He's bewildered at the commotion.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - DAY

Small and quaint. Sarah watches the activity around her. DETECTIVES, POLICE OFFICERS swirl about, securing doors and windows. She hears a familiar voice.

WILL
(off camera)
I'm her neighbor, Will Wilson.

Sarah races to the front door where Detective Warren blocks Will's entrance.

WILL (CONT'D)
My boyfriend and I live next door.
We're friends.

SARAH
Will?

Warren looks to Sarah. Sees they know each other. He lets Will pass. He goes to Sarah and hugs her.

WILL
You should have called me.

She smiles, comforted by her friend's presence.

WILL (CONT'D)
Billy's on his way. We're here for
you. Whatever you need.

She nods, holding back tears, struggling to hold it together.

EXT/INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

An out-of-business Wal-Mart has been converted into a temporary command center. Crowded chaos.

CHYRON: **COMMAND CENTER, HUNTSVILLE, TEXAS**

INT. WAREHOUSE - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

A make-shift lobby. Desks have been set up to deal with the REPORTERS, CONCERNED CITIZENS, POTENTIAL WITNESSES, etc.

An AGENT interviews a SEXY (and trampy) BRUNETTE.

SEXY BRUNETTE

I visited Joe three times this year. I dye my hair, I'm a natural blonde. Joe likes dark hair, most of his victims were brunettes.

An OFFICE WORKER -- HARRIET (elderly lady) moves through the crowd fielding questions. A WOMAN enters, nice, wholesome, well put together. Could be a soccer mom.

WOMAN

I need to speak to someone about Joe Carroll?

HARRIET

Take a seat and fill this out.

Harriet hands her a clipboard and pen.

INT. WAREHOUSE - BULLPEN OFFICE - DAY

The heart of the investigation. An enlarged map of Texas has been affixed to the wall. SEVERAL AGENTS mark it up as they trace the field search. A digital clock flashes the time lapsed since Carroll's escape -- **8 HRS. 24 MIN.**

Mason leads Ryan through the bullpen to a small set of desks towards AGENT WESTON and AGENT RILEY, two younger agents. Eager. More brains than brawn.

They greet Mason and Ryan. Weston and Ryan shake.

WESTON

Mr. Hardy, Mike Weston, it's a pleasure, I read your book back in the academy. Big fan.

Riley holds up Ryan's book as they shake.

RILEY

I'm playing catch up. I'm on Chapter 3. Glad to have you.
(to Mason)
The Rangers want a profile.

Mason looks at Ryan.

MASON
You up for it?

RYAN
It's what I'm here for.

INT. WAREHOUSE - COMMAND CENTER - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

In the back of the store FIELD AGENTS, DETECTIVES, UNIFORMED COPS crowd around a platform where--

ON STAGE -- VARIOUS PHOTOS of Joe Carroll are projected. The man, the convict, the killer... Ryan stands at a podium. He's a little nervous. He takes a sip from his WATER BOTTLE, clears his throat and begins--

RYAN
Um... hello... I'll start with some background. Before Joe Carroll joined the ranks of Bundy, Gacy, Ramirez -- he was a professor of Literature at Southern Methodist University. Considered to be a brilliant teacher. Friendly, handsome, charismatic. A doting husband and a father.

Ryan's nerves begin to disappear. He knows this subject and his confidence takes over.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Also, a budding novelist, in 2003, Carroll's first and only novel, THE GOTHIC SEA, was published. A poorly received work that critics universally panned. It would later become a best-seller but upon its initial printing was a critical and commercial flop. You can imagine what this did for a man blessed with an unhealthy frontal lobe. This single event would prove to be Carroll's escalation trigger.

OFF TO THE SIDE -- Mason watches with Riley and Weston.

RILEY
(re: Ryan)
He's good.

MASON
He's drunk. On cheap vodka. He smells like every man in my family.

RILEY

I thought he was disabled. Didn't Carroll stab his spine?

MASON

He has a slight limp, favors his right.

WESTON

He can't pass the physical.

MASON

FBI cut him loose. He's a washed up talking head.

RILEY

Turner says we should watch our backs. Apparently, the man has "moments."

Mason and Weston eye Riley. *What the hell does that mean?*

BACK ON STAGE -- Ryan continues.

RYAN

His lectures favored the Romantic Period. He aspired to Thoreau, Emerson, in particular, his hero, Edgar Allan Poe. He revered the irrationality of Romanticism. Like Poe, Carroll believed in the insanity of art. It must be felt. To mold and craft death is the highest spiritual experience. Which led him to brutally eviscerate 14 female students.

PHOTOS of CARROLL'S VICTIMS are projected. School and family SNAPSHOTS. Innocent, young faces are juxtaposed with their gruesome, bloody CRIME SCENE PHOTOS.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Carroll was a picquerist. The act of stabbing, slicing the flesh aroused him. He often cut out his victim's eyes as a nod to his favorite works of Poe, THE TELL-TALE HEART and THE BLACK CAT. Poe believed the eyes are our identity. The window into our soul.

Ryan turns to the VICTIM'S PHOTOS. Their faces resonating deeply within him. Especially one in particular -- Sarah Fuller. Mason takes note of this.

INT. WAREHOUSE - BULLPEN - DAY

Mason is being briefed by Weston and Riley. Ryan is at a desk, pouring over a file.

WESTON

Carroll had 112 visitors in the last two years. 43 in the last six months, 14 visited four times or more.

Ryan notices the SEXY BRUNETTE slink across the warehouse. His eyes find all the WOMEN waiting to be interviewed.

RYAN

Are those Carroll's groupies?

WESTON

And future Jerry Springer guests.

Ryan watches them. Fascinated. Someone brings in a coffee run. Sets the tray down. Mason casually picks up two coffees. She sets one in front of Ryan. He stares at it.

MASON

(back on point)

We need to find out who had the most access to Carroll.

RYAN

Carroll was going for his third appeal. He had forgone legal aid and was representing himself.

MASON

We know that.

RYAN

And by law, he had access to a legal library. So every Tuesday, Carroll was shackled and transported to the Newton Gresham Library where he was confined to a sealed room with one guard--

MASON

And furnished with law books. We know all of this, Hardy.

RYAN

Were they actual books or digital files accessed by a computer?

WESTON
 Digital. Everything's archived on
 the library's server.

RYAN
 So Joe Carroll had internet access?

RILEY
 It would have been restricted.

As they all start to realize where Ryan is going with this--

RYAN
 Because that would stop Carroll.

Mason jumps on this. Furious at the possibility.

MASON
 We need to rip apart the library's
 ethernet. Get a cyber tech in
 here. And we'll need a subpoena.

RYAN	MASON
Screw the subpoena. It takes	(speaking over him)
too long. Call Franklin.	I can get a subpoena.

WESTON
 Nobody has to call anybody. I can
 get into that library. Just
 everybody, "Sssh..."

Weston gets busy at his computer as they stand behind him.
 Mason looks to Ryan. She appears slightly impressed.

INT. WAREHOUSE - MAIN ENTRANCE - DAY

The lobby area. Still a tornado of activity. The nice WOMAN
 from earlier sits patiently. Just then, she gets a text on
 her CELL PHONE. She looks down, reads it.

Beat. As she takes in what it says. Then, she grabs her bag
 and rises. She moves to the center of the lobby area and
 looks around -- at all the people that come and go. Then,
 quite calmly she reaches into her hand bag and withdraws an
 ICE PICK. Silver and shiny.

She lets her bag hit the floor and then begins to unbutton
 the front of her dress. Several PEOPLE notice instantly.
 For others, it takes a moment. It's a most bizarre sight.

As the WOMAN'S DRESS slips down her body. She's completely
 nude underneath. But her body is marked. Inked. Every inch
 of her flesh is covered in writing.

Harriet turns around, sees her -- eyes wide. As does EVERYBODY else. GASPS, SCREAMS... instant commotion.

TWO UNIFORMED COPS approach. The woman waves the PICK, keeping them at a distance.

INT. WAREHOUSE - CONFERENCE ROOM - SAME

Ryan turns to the COMMOTION from the lobby. SEVERAL OFFICERS race by. Ryan follows. So does Mason. *What the hell?*

INT. WAREHOUSE - MAIN ENTRANCE - SAME

The WOMAN is surrounded now. An OFFICER steps forward.

OFFICER

Ma'am, you need to put that down.

CLOSE ON THE WOMAN -- this once seemingly normal lady now appears quite insane. Her naked body a freakish sight.

ON RYAN as he pushes through the crowd. He sees the WOMAN at the center of all the attention. Like a caged animal. He breaks past the OFFICER.

RYAN

Hey, you don't wanna do this. Why don't you give me that? Okay?

The woman turns to Ryan. He starts for her. CLOSE ON THE WOMAN'S EYES as they tear up.

WOMAN

"Lord help my poor soul."

In a flash, the WOMAN abruptly brings the ICE PICK to her face and GOUGES HER OWN EYE. BLOOD SPEWS.

SCREAMS pierce the building. As the WOMAN stumbles to her knees, both hands PUSH THE ICE PICK DEEPER into her head.

Her body slumps to the floor, convulsing, gyrating as the EMBEDDED ICE PICK protrudes from her face. PEOPLE turn away in horror.

CLOSE ON RYAN -- unable to register what he's just witnessed.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. WAREHOUSE - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

A storage room is being used as a temporary morgue. The WOMAN'S BODY lies on a rolling stretcher. The ice pick has been removed. The CORONER explains the writing on her body.

CORONER

She did the writing herself. Left handed. See? Right to left. With a Sharpie and a mirror.

Ryan and Riley inspect the woman's inked body. Ryan reads the skin on her leg. "Once upon a midnight dreary..."

RILEY

(reading her arm)
"The Fever called living is conquered at last..."

RYAN

It's all Poe. And what she said, Poe's last words. When he was found delirious on the streets of Baltimore, he uttered..."Lord, help my poor soul."

Mason enters with paperwork. Looks to the dead woman.

MASON

We've run her prints, so far, we've found seven identities and four of them are wanted in three states. Two of them visited Carroll repeatedly in the last six months.

RYAN

Anything on her cell phone?

MASON

Disposable. She received one text from another disposable purchased with cash from a vendor in town one week ago. Text: "Do it now."

RYAN

Carroll could easily convince an unbalanced brain to do this.

MASON

An exertion of power?

RYAN
 And theatrics. A poetic way of
 saying, "I'm in control."

Mason's CELL RINGS. She answers.

MASON
 (beat, turns to Ryan)
 I have Sarah Fuller for you.

This surprises Ryan. An unexpected gesture on Mason's part.
 He takes the phone. Steps away.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Detective Warren hands his CELL to Sarah.

SCENE INTERCUTS:

SARAH
 (on cell)
 Mr. Hardy?

RYAN
 (on cell)
 How are you, Sarah?

The sound of her VOICE affects him. Mason turns away to give
 him some space. She knows it's personal.

SARAH
 Not good.

RYAN
 We're going to find him. Nothing's
 going to happen to you. You're
 gonna be okay. I promise.

SARAH
 I appreciate you calling.

And she means it. She finds his voice comforting. There is
 a kinship between them. They share a painful history and
 it's apparent. They say their good-byes. Ryan turns to
 Mason -- hands her phone back.

RYAN
 Thank you.

Mason nods. It's almost a "moment" but she drops it. She
 has more information.

MASON

They questioned Claire Matthews.
She won't speak to anyone but you.

RYAN

I guess I should speak to her then.

Just then, Riley appears with news.

RILEY

It's confirmed. Carroll was using
the library's internet. He was
communicating with someone.

Off this new info--

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sarah enters the kitchen where WILL and his boyfriend, BILLY,
similar in appearance, are unloading bags of Chinese take-
out.

WILL

I can smell the MSG...

BILLY

I know, I went to the one in the
strip mall. It was fast.

SARAH

It's fine, Billy, thank you.

BILLY

How ya doing?

She shrugs. Billy tries to lighten the mood.

BILLY (CONT'D)

So, are we just gonna ignore the
hot cop candy? Do we know if he's
single?

He refers to DETECTIVE WARREN in the living room. Sarah
can't help but smile now. She glances at the TELEVISION.

ON TV SCREEN -- JOE CARROLL'S LIFE is being analyzed by an
EXPERT PSYCHOLOGIST.

PSYCHOLOGIST

(on TV)

He should have stuck to teaching.
His novel was a bad imitation of
his hero, Edgar Allan Poe...

INSTANT FLASHBACK:

INT. SMU - LECTURE HALL - DAY - NINE YEARS AGO

A full classroom. A younger, more innocent Sarah is a student in Joe Carroll's class. He's engaging as a professor. His passion is seductive.

JOE CARROLL

Poe's chief principle. Insanity as art. It was the Romantic Period, death was about theme, motif, mood, emotional aesthetic. Poe equated death with...?

STUDENT #1

He equated death with love.

JOE CARROLL

Not love.

SARAH

Beauty. Poe believed art was about beauty and nothing was more beautiful than the death of a beautiful woman. *Helen, Lenore, Annabel Lee...*

Carroll takes notice of Sarah, intrigued.

JOE CARROLL

"To bereave beauty..."

He motions to Sarah to finish--

SARAH

"..Is to elevate one's soul".

And she does beautifully. Carroll nods, pleased.

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sarah is chilled by the memory. Beat.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

A LARGE VIDEO MONITOR is filled with digital data. URLs and IP TEMPLATES. Weston explains to the others.

WESTON

Carroll never visited the same web address twice which suggests he was communicating through various URLs.

RYAN

Who with?

WESTON

There's the rub. Every time I access an IP address it mutates. It's a fairly sophisticated virus. It's gonna take a while.

RYAN

It's a stalling tactic.

MASON

Yes, a very good camouflage job.

RYAN

Where were the guards when Carroll was sitting there chatting online? Who were these idiots?

Riley pulls up their names on his iPad.

RILEY

The detail changed. Wait, he had one regular. Jordan Raines.

Ryan pulls his employees files. Scours them.

RYAN

(reading)

Jordan "Jordy" Raines, 32, 4 year employee, works death row, night shift, let's check his shifts--

(checks the schedule)

Last night. Called in sick--

(realizing)

We got him. The prison guard.

Jordy. He helped Carroll escape.

Riley is already running a search for him. Calls out.

MASON

Get his home address--

RILEY

Got it.

They fly into action. It's Ryan who is first out the door. He's clearly finding his game.

EXT. CITY STREETS - HUNTSVILLE - DAY

SIRENS BLARE as POLICE VEHICLES races down the street.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

CHYRON: **JORDY RAINES' RESIDENCE, HUNTSVILLE, TX**

A lower-income neighborhood. SPECIAL AGENTS disembark from a van. Rifles in tow. They fan out...

EXT. JORDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Small. Run-down. Captain Turner is with TWO VESTED AGENTS. He KNOCKS on the front door. No answer. "One, two..."

The HOUSE IS SEIZED. Windows SHATTER. Doors are BASHED in.

EXT. JORDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Mason and Ryan disembark from an SUV. They start for the house, ducking under police tape, entering the front door.

INT. JORDY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

An ungodly STENCH assaults them. Jordy wasn't big on cleanliness. Beer bottles, discarded take-out, newspapers...

SWAT MEMBER

He's not here.

Ryan and Mason move through the living room. Next to a recliner are books. Classic Poe. THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER, THE MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE. Then, more titles...

THE NIGHT STALKER. CLOWN KILLER. THE STRANGER BESIDE ME. Books on notorious killers; Ramirez, Gacy, Henry Lee Lucas...

THE POETRY OF A MADMAN by Ryan Hardy.

Mason has found a desktop computer. She investigates. Finds some HOME VIDEO CLIPS. Presses PLAY.

ON COMPUTER SCREEN -- Jordy, (30), a big lug. Sweaty. Imposing. He holds a small puppy. It keeps trying to lick his face. It tickles, causing Jordy to LAUGH.

JORDY

Say hi to the camera. That's it.
What's your name? Huh? Awwwww...

Ryan enters the KITCHEN AREA, looks around. Mason joins him. ON THE REFRIGERATOR, flyers have been posted. LOST: BUZZY. A photo of a small poodle. IF FOUND PLEASE CALL...

These flyers are everywhere. All of them LOST AND MISSING PETS. *What the hell?* Turner steps in from the LAUNDRY ROOM.

CAPTAIN TURNER

You're gonna wanna see this.

Turner points to the garage.

INT. JORDY'S HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Mason and Ryan enter to find... Blood stained walls. Carcasses everywhere. Only they're not human.

Dead animals litter the floor, some hang from the ceiling. Dogs, big and small... other animals too. An array of animal carnage spread out on display. A GROTESQUELY STAGED EXHIBIT.

Ryan buries his nose in the sleeve of his shirt, fighting back nausea. He steps toward a WORK TABLE where a large canine lays. A German Shepherd. Its hair soiled, matted with blood. Ryan stares at the poor, lifeless animal.

The dog's missing an eye. It's been removed from it's socket. Ryan leans down for a better look when...

BLOODY JAWS SNAP FEROCIOUSLY. STRIKING OUT. ATTACKING.

It shocks the life out of Ryan. He leaps back. The dog is still alive, barely. Its head rises, swaying. VICIOUS GROWLS mixed with PAINFUL WHIMPERS as the dog clings to its last bit of life. It's been mutilated and tortured.

MASON

He's been practicing.

RYAN

He's in the acceleration process. Carroll has been teaching him how to become a serial killer.

Off this revelation--

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. JORDY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

The CSI Team has arrived. They collect and record. Ryan and Mason navigate around them. Mason is on her CELL.

MASON

(on cell)

We have an accomplice. We're looking for two men now. Run his prints through CODIS, see what comes up. Call me back.

Ryan holds up a copy of Carroll's novel THE GOTHIC SEA.

RYAN

It's been inscribed, "Jordy, you're capable of greatness. You just have to believe. Joe."

MASON

Who is this Jordy guy?

RYAN

Lonely, broken man, unstable, vulnerable to kindness. Carroll recognized his potential and seduced him.

MASON

He's emulating Carroll. You saw those animals. He removed their eyes.

RYAN

Jordy looks to Carroll the way Carroll looks to Poe. It's almost a god-like worship.

MASON

Carroll must have a lot of charisma.

RYAN

He was very magnetic. When I first began to suspect him, all I had was instinct. I had no proof. I was having a hard time convincing anyone of my Poe theory. I was very unpopular with the Rangers. I started following Carroll everywhere. Home. Work. I was waiting for him to get sloppy.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

It was how I recognized Sarah Fuller. She was a student in his class. I would watch him teach. He was passionate. He knew how to inspire people. That's a gift.

Mason considers this when her CELL RINGS. She answers.

MASON

(relays to Ryan)

Jordy used an ATM 45 minutes ago in Laredo.

RYAN

That's a border town.

MASON

Turner thinks he and Carroll are Mexico bound.

RYAN

Carroll wouldn't be stupid enough to use an ATM.

MASON

But Jordy? Students make mistakes.

RYAN

Carroll wouldn't allow it. C'mon, Claire Matthews is waiting.

Ryan heads out.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

CLOSE ON A TELEVISION SCREEN

A NEWSCAST is in progress. A FEMALE REPORTER stands outside the Huntsville Command Center doing a LIVE REMOTE. A caption underneath reads -- BREAKING NEWS.

FEMALE REPORTER

(on TV)

No official statement but sources have confirmed that a woman is dead today by her own hands--

CLICK. The TV goes off. Billy has the remote.

BILLY

I say we watch a movie.

SARAH

I think I'm gonna lay down for a bit. If that's okay?

WILL

I think that's a good idea. Billy, we should let her rest.

Will and Billy group hug her.

BILLY/WILL

We will be right next door. Call us. We'll come running.

Sarah smiles up at her two friends.

SARAH

I love you, guys.

Will and Billy head out.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Sarah enters her bedroom. Goes to her closet, grabs a tee. A mirror hangs just inside the door. She pulls her scrubs over her head, catching her reflection.

CLOSE ON HER CHEST AND STOMACH. Deeply scarred.

Sarah slowly runs her fingers along the marks. The raised flesh. The healed stab wounds. *The visual reminder... of a nightmare.*

FLASHBACK:

EXT. SMU - PHI DELTA SORORITY - NIGHT - NINE YEARS AGO

A big and traditional sorority house.

INT. PHI DELTA - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - NINE YEARS AGO

JINGLING KEYS. TWO GIRLS are laughing. "That was creepy." "The whole night was creepy." The front door opens to reveal college-aged SARAH with her sorority sister ANNIE (20).

The house is dark... quiet. The only light comes from the SECOND FLOOR, shining down the staircase.

SARAH

It's so quiet.

They climb the stairs.

ANNIE

Because everyone's in Daytona.
Having fun. Everyone but us.

SARAH

I know it's sad. You should write
a song about it.

ANNIE

I hate being broke.

They disappear to the second floor.

INT. PHI DELTA - BEDROOM - NIGHT - NINE YEARS AGO

They share a bedroom. Annie goes straight for the bathroom.
CLICKS on the light. Sarah goes for the closet.

IN THE BATHROOM

Annie is brushing her teeth.

ANNIE

The hangover has begun.

SARAH

(from bedroom)

I told you not to drink.

ANNIE

I'm not interesting enough to not
drink. That's you--

Annie stops. Sees something in the mirror. Spins around--

IN THE BEDROOM

Sarah is changing when--

PFFT! CRASH. Followed by a MUFFLED SOUND. Sarah stops.
Looks to the bathroom door.

SARAH

Annie?

No answer. And then -- THE BATHROOM LIGHTS GO OUT. Sarah
starts for the bathroom. It's completely dark inside.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Annie?

Silence. It's unsettling. Sarah pauses. Stares at the
doorway. Then, Annie steps forward from the darkness.

GASPING... unable to speak. She's covered in blood. She reaches out for Sarah, her eyes pleading... *Help me.*

But then, she collapses to the floor. Sarah starts for her when a FIGURE emerges from behind her.

IT'S JOE CARROLL. He looks at Sarah... sweetly. Mesmerized.

Sarah stares at him. Frozen in horror...

END FLASHBACK:

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

Sarah is still standing in her closet, staring... her reflection stares back. A moment as the memory settles.

Suddenly, a FIGURE is REFLECTED in the MIRROR. Sarah SCREAMS. It's Detective Warren.

DETECTIVE WARREN

Sorry.

SARAH

No, I'm sorry.

Sarah tries to laugh it off.

DETECTIVE WARREN

Just to let you know. There's an officer in the hall. If you need anything. Okay?

Sarah smiles, thankfully.

EXT. MATTHEWS RESIDENCE - AFTERNOON

The MEDIA circus is still camped in front of Claire Matthews' home. A BLACK SUV drives up. Mason and Ryan get out.

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Mason introduces herself to Detective Garcia and others while Ryan stands in the FOYER. The nanny, Denise, comes down the stairs.

DENISE

Claire will be right down.

Off Ryan--

FLASHBACK:

INT. SMU - LECTURE HALL - DAY - NINE YEARS AGO

STUDENTS are leaving. Class is over. A younger Ryan Hardy, vibrant and healthy, approaches Professor Claire Matthews. Younger. Glowing. He's instantly taken by her classic beauty.

RYAN
Professor Matthews?

CLAIRE
Yes?

RYAN
I'm Agent Ryan Hardy with the FBI.
Can I speak with you?

Ryan holds out his badge.

MINUTES LATER

EXT. SMU - CAMPUS/PARKING LOT - DAY - NINE YEARS AGO

Claire and Ryan walk along the campus to a parking lot.

CLAIRE
I didn't know about the eyes.

RYAN
It was withheld.

Claire takes a moment. Thinks about it. Ryan finds himself staring. Intrigued by her.

CLAIRE
Try Edgar Allan Poe. THE TELL-TALE
HEART, THE BLACK CAT. Both have a
strong eye allegory. The eyes are
symbolic. The essence of identity.

Ryan gives this thought as they reach Claire's car.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
You should talk to my husband. He
knows that period really well.

RYAN
You're married?

Claire looks at him. He was flirting.

CLAIRE
Yes, I'm married, Agent Hardy.
Why? Were you flirting?

She makes a joke -- it completely diffuses their tension.

RYAN

With this material? Not a chance.

They both smile. He was clearly interested.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - FOYER - AFTERNOON

Claire comes down the stairs with Joey. Claire and Ryan's eyes meet. Both smile. It's bittersweet.

CLAIRE

Hello, Ryan.

RYAN

Claire.

There's something between them. A bond of sorts. Mason picks up on it. Claire leads them into--

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - STUDY - AFTERNOON

The room is warm and inviting. Mason introduces herself.

MASON

I'm Agent Mason, Ms. Matthews. I understand you wanted to speak with Mr. Hardy.

CLAIRE

Yes, but I need to speak to him alone please.

MASON

I'm afraid that's not possible. I'm the lead agent on the case.

CLAIRE

I'm afraid I have to insist.

Claire and Mason lock eyes. A stalemate. Finally--

RYAN

The woman wants to speak to me. Alone. Be polite. Get out.

Ryan's tone surprises Mason. He motions her to leave. She's pissed but refuses to cause a scene. He closes the door behind her. Turns back to Claire.

RYAN (CONT'D)
I'm gonna pay for that.

Claire grins. It actually breaks the ice. It allows them a moment to breathe and take each other in.

CLAIRE
Your limp is gone.

RYAN
Most of the time.

CLAIRE
But you're drinking too much.

She knows him well. Ryan nods. Silence. As these two damaged people exist for a moment.

RYAN
Have you heard from him?

Claire moves to her desk, opens it and withdraws an envelope.

CLAIRE
A week ago. This came for me. I
thought you should see it.

She hands the envelope to Ryan. He opens it, pulls a LETTER out. He unfolds it. Reads it. His face registers the information. Beat.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
How does he know?

RYAN
He doesn't. He's guessing.

He folds the letter and hands it back to her.

RYAN (CONT'D)
No one needs to know about this.
It won't help us find him.

Claire nods. Ryan sees her nerves are shot. Her tough exterior is failing her. He steps towards her, wanting to comfort her somehow but... he stops himself.

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - FAMILY ROOM - AFTERNOON

Mason is at the patio doors, fuming. She's on her CELL. Joey can be seen with the nanny in the background.

MASON

(on cell)

What do you mean there was no camera at the ATM? Are the Rangers on the ground there yet?

JOEY (O.S.)

Are you trying to find my dad?

Mason looks down. Sees Joey staring up at her. She looks to the nanny. Then, truthfully--

MASON

Yes, I am.

Little Joey nods.

JOEY

You know he's a bad man.

Mason nods. She knows.

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - STUDY - AFTERNOON

Ryan and Claire have moved to the couch. He's filled her in.

CLAIRE

Joe is always teaching. It was ingrained in him. It makes sense he would find a student.

RYAN

We have two killers out there now. There's evidence that points to Mexico. Would Joe go there?

CLAIRE

He would consider that beneath him somehow. Joe has accepted who he is. He's not looking for freedom.

RYAN

He wants to keep killing.

CLAIRE

He's quite good at it. Which wasn't the case with his writing. Artistic transference.

Ryan exhales. Tired. Frustrated. His cracks are showing. He doesn't seem to hide them with her.

RYAN
I need to find him, Claire. I
don't know how...

He turns to her. A long silent stare.

RYAN (CONT'D)
I'm sorry I didn't call.

CLAIRE
We both know it wouldn't have
worked.

Another silence. It's loaded. Claire breaks first.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
So you're back with the FBI?

RYAN
No. Just for this. They can't
wait to get rid of me. I think
they're more afraid not to have me
here. In case I get lucky again--

CLAIRE
It wasn't luck, Ryan. You figured
him out. I was his wife, I didn't
know. You put it all together.
Where he was going that night. The
sorority house. No one but you.

Ryan nods, appreciates her words. Her compassion. If things
were different... Claire feels it too but...

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Is the girl safe? The last victim?

RYAN
Sarah Fuller. Yes. She's under
protection. She's a doctor now.
She's doing good. She got beyond
all of this.

Beat. As this resonates for both of them.

CLAIRE
I'm sure that pains Joe.

RYAN
Why?

CLAIRE
He fancies himself Edgar Allan Poe.
That was the impetus for his novel.
(MORE)

CLAIRE (CONT'D)
Poe died with an unfinished
manuscript. THE LIGHTHOUSE. Joe's
novel THE GOTHIC SEA was his way of
finishing what Poe started.

This registers with Ryan--

EXT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Ryan flies out of the house with Mason. They move to the
SUV. She's still livid.

MASON
What was that about in there?

RYAN
It was personal.

MASON
What do you mean? Personal? Are
you sleeping with Claire Matthews?

Ryan gets into the waiting SUV, ignoring Mason.

INT. SUV - NIGHT

Backseat. Mason gets in after him and they're driven away.

RYAN
We have to get to Sarah Fuller.
Carroll or his little helper Jordy
is going to make a move.

MASON
How do you know that? What did she
tell you?

RYAN
Carroll wants to finish what he
started. That would be Sarah.

MASON
I just checked in. She's safe. He
can't get near her...

RYAN
But he's going to try.

Off Mason--

EXT. DUPLEX - NIGHT

An AERIAL SHOT of Sarah's neighborhood. Flashing lights.
SQUAD CARS and MEDIA are camped outside her duplex.

A HELICOPTER LANDS in an empty parking lot. Ryan and Mason emerge -- they're met by Riley and Weston who usher them to a waiting vehicle.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Detective Warren meets Ryan and Mason in the hallway. A quick shake of the hands. They pass an OFFICER on guard.

DETECTIVE WARREN
I'm Detective Warren. Miss Fuller
went to bed about an hour ago.
(points)
Officer Pontz works the front door--

Warren leads them into--

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The apartment is quiet. Warren leads them through the living room. Ryan eyes TWO OFFICERS in the kitchen.

RYAN
Where's Sarah?

DETECTIVE WARREN
This way. We have a man at her
bedroom door.

He leads them to the hallway where...

IN THE HALLWAY

They see a little folding chair by Sarah's bedroom door. But no OFFICER. Where is he? Warren moves down the hall, looking for him.

DETECTIVE WARREN (CONT'D)
Jimmy?

Warren checks the GUEST BATHROOM. It's empty. Ryan storms the hall. Mason is on his heels. Detective Warren gets to Sarah's door first -- peers in.

THROUGH THE DOOR'S CRACK, the room is dark. Sarah's FIGURE is seen under the covers.

DETECTIVE WARREN (CONT'D)
Dr. Fuller? Sarah?

No response. He turns to Ryan.

DETECTIVE WARREN (CONT'D)
She's sleeping.

But that doesn't stop Ryan -- he PLOWS through the door.

INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Ryan moves to Sarah's bed.

RYAN

Sarah? It's Ryan Hardy.

Nothing. He gets closer. Something's not right. He pulls the sheets back and finds--

THE POLICEMAN. Covered in blood... his neck slashed. Dead.

Ryan EXPLODES into action.

RYAN (CONT'D)

She's gone. Get help.

Mason enters, checks the SLAIN COP. Confirms he's dead.
WTF? Mason calls for help.

MASON

We need back up. The girl is missing.

Ryan rages at Detective Warren.

RYAN

Where the fuck is she?

Ryan goes insane, searching everywhere. The next few moments are a blur as he turns the place upside down. Warren checks the closet. Ryan checks the window. It's bolted shut. This makes no sense.

RYAN (CONT'D)

How did she get out of here?

More COPS arrive -- a frenzied search ensues as Ryan spins out of control, searching every room of the apartment. The living room, kitchen, bathroom...

SARAH'S BEDROOM -- Ryan returns. Frantic. He goes to the closet -- checks it again, slinging clothes, rips the rod down, hits the back wall in anger. It makes a HOLLOW SOUND. He stops. Looks closer. Sees a crack in the corner of the wall. He TAPS on it. It moves.

He turns to find Mason behind him. Shows her what he's found. Ryan digs into the edges of the cracked lining. The entire back wall gives. Like a secret door. Mason pulls her gun. She turns to Warren, whispers...

MASON

Next door, go around.

Ryan motions to Mason. She holds aim while Ryan pushes the wall aside to REVEAL--

ANOTHER CLOSET -- of the apartment next door. He pushes through the hanging clothes. Mason stops him. She's the one with the gun. She steps in front of him.

Ryan follows her through the closet as they enter--

INT. NEIGHBORS' APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

They're in the neighboring apartment. That of Sarah's friends, Will and Billy. Evidenced by a PHOTO of the couple by the bed. CLUNK! A NOISE from the hallway.

Mason turns, gun aimed. Pauses. Adjusts her eyes. But Ryan doesn't miss a second. He pushes right by her to--

INT. NEIGHBORS' APARTMENT - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ryan moves down the hallway and into the living room. Mason now follows. Gun ready. CACHUNK! A NOISE at the front door. Mason spins towards it when -- it's KICKED OPEN by Detective Warren and a POLICE OFFICER.

Mason leaps out of her skin. She turns back to Ryan who has discovered something in the living room. He stands, staring at the dark wall.

MASON

Hardy?

He turns to her and CLICKS the light, REVEALING what he's discovered. The wall behind is streaked in blood.

The blood forms one single word... "Nevermore."

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. DUPLEX - NIGHT

The entire neighborhood is lit up with SQUAD CARS, AMBULANCES, MOBILE UNIT, MEDIA TRUCKS... a full blown circus.

INT. WILL AND BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A crime scene in progress. Tensions are high. Agents Riley and Weston are there with Ryan and Mason -- Captain Turner is there with his MEN.

CAPTAIN TURNER

The neighbors, Will Wilson, Billy Thomas exited in their SUV forty minutes ago.

RYAN

No one thought to search the vehicle?

Ryan is not taking any of this well. He's about to blow.

CAPTAIN TURNER

There was no reason to check. She wasn't missing. We're all a little tense, Hardy.

Riley reads from his iPad.

RILEY

Will Wilson teaches public school, 2nd grade, Billy Thomas is a computer tech. He runs the fraud division at TI.

WESTON

He would know how to activate a computer virus.

MASON

And fake identities.

Ryan sees a FRAMED PHOTO of Will and Billy as a HAPPY COUPLE.

RYAN

I bet they're not gay either. Carroll placed them here. To watch over her until he was ready. She'd never suspect them.

RILEY

They've been her neighbors for three years.

RYAN

They're taking her to Carroll. So he can kill her. He has to finish what he started and he's found people to help him do it. On the internet for Chrissake. It's like they're his followers.

CAPTAIN TURNER

I'm not buying two men would pretend to be gay and shack up next to a woman because some nut job told them to.

RYAN

Look at the minds we're dealing with here. The prison guard worships him, ice pick lady was brainwashed to kill herself, these two men have dedicated years of their lives to Carroll -- there's a fanatical obsession in play here.

(realizing)

It's a cult. It's a goddamn cult.

They all consider this. Mason is the first on board.

MASON

Like a Charles Manson cult.

RYAN

They're worshipping him. What else would it be?

CAPTAIN TURNER

We know Carroll's got some help out there but let's put a lid on the cult word until we... let's just not use that word. That gets in the press and we're done for.

Ryan shoots Turner a look. He's losing it.

RYAN

(points to wall)

He's going to kill her.

"Nevermore." THE RAVEN. Poe was symbolizing the finality of death.

Mason sees how emotional Ryan is becoming.

MASON

We understand, Hardy.

CAPTAIN TURNER

Why don't you step out and take a breather?

RYAN

(ignores him)

What is your tactical on the ground? Are you going door to door? What do you have in the air?

CAPTAIN TURNER

Mason, get him out of here--

RYAN

Have you pulled their GPS? Why are you standing here? Move--

Mason goes to Ryan -- he pulls away.

MASON

Hardy!

Mason YELLS this. Ryan stops. Looks at her. Sees the faces of everyone staring at him. He realizes he's gone too far. He storms out. Beat. The room settles.

EXT. DUPLEX - SIDE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Ryan exits the duplex. He paces the driveway, trying to cool down. He ends up at the fence. Kicks at it, unleashing. Beat. As he stands silently under a lamp post--

FLASHBACK:

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - NINE YEARS AGO

A street lamp shines down on Ryan. Fraternity and sorority houses line the street. He scans the yards, left to right. He's looking for someone. He moves up the street and into a driveway, RUNNING SMACK into--

SARAH with her friend, ANNIE. Both girls jump, startled.

RYAN

Sorry, girls.

Annie gets defensive. She's drunk and feisty.

ANNIE

Back off, dude. C'mon, Sarah.

Annie leads Sarah away.

SARAH

You don't have to be rude.
 (looks back to Ryan)
 Sorry, sir.

Ryan smiles at Sarah. *No worries.* He stares at Sarah. Her face has triggered something. He recognizes her. He watches as they make their way to the porch of the PHI DELTA HOUSE.

ANNIE

There's a killer on the loose and
 you want me to have manners.
 (on the porch)
 That was creepy.

SARAH

This whole night was creepy.

Ryan watches as they enter the dark house. Beat.

BACK TO RYAN -- PRESENT DAY -- His face pained.

SCENE INTERCUTS from PAST to PRESENT. Images FLASH fast and furious. As Ryan is haunted with the memories of that night long ago:

-- Ryan stares at the Phi Delta house. He walks along the driveway, searching for signs of intrusion.

-- At a side glass door, Ryan peers in. Suddenly, SCREAMING. He SHATTERS the door with his arm. Enters. From upstairs, more SCREAMING. Ryan DRAWS HIS GUN. Races up the stairs.

-- Ryan enters Sarah's bedroom. Sees Sarah on the floor. A bloody mess. Knife protruded from her. She grips it. He kneels beside. She's barely alive, she utters...

SARAH (CONT'D)

Behind you...

-- Ryan turns as Carroll ATTACKS. They go to the floor. Joe Carroll rises first, attempting to get away. Carroll reaches out for Sarah as...

-- Ryan ATTACKS. Carroll surprises him with the knife. It strikes Ryan in the back. He drops to his knees in pain. Carroll withdraws the knife. Ryan falls over.

-- Carroll goes back to Sarah. He raises the knife. Ready to finish her off. When--

-- A GUNSHOT sends Carroll flying to the floor. His body writhing. On Ryan, still on the floor. Gun in his hands.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. DUPLEX - SIDE DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Mason finds Ryan in the alley, leaning against the fence. He stares at the CROWD that has formed behind the barricade. He's raw. Vulnerable. He doesn't look at her.

MASON

Manson, Jim Jones, David Koresh.
They were leaders. They knew how
to connect to people. Inspire
them. But they didn't have
internet access--

(beat)

If this is a cult...

Mason looks at the ONLOOKERS behind the barricades. At the DIFFERENT FACES in the CROWD.

MASON (CONT'D)

They could be anywhere.

(a long silence)

I know Sarah Fuller is personal.
She would have to be...

(beat)

She could still be alive.

And with that she turns and walks away. Off Ryan--

EXT. STREET BARRICADE - NIGHT

Behind the barricades, a LARGE MOBILE UNIT sits. A pop out tent extends from it, shielding it from the public. The Rangers run a mobile command center from it.

Mason surfaces from the driveway. Riley YELLS at her.

RILEY

Our non-gay gay couple's real names
are Paul Hoffman and Jacob Wells.
Get this, Wells is from -- Laredo.

MASON

Where Jordy used the ATM.

CAPTAIN TURNER

I've got men on the ground there.
We have an address. Let's go.

Turner rallies his men. They take off.

MASON
We're right behind you.

RYAN
It's too easy. We're being played.
It's a distraction.

Mason turns to see Ryan approaching. Calm now. Solemn.

RYAN (CONT'D)
We're missing it. He's telling us
where he is -- we're missing it.

MASON
The evidence is telling us Laredo.
Let's start there.

And with that Mason takes off, preparing to leave.

INT. WILL AND BILLY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

AGENTS and CSI are now sweeping the room. Weston is there, wrapping up his own investigation. Ryan enters.

WESTON
Both men were listed on the
prison's visitor logs. You're
right. This was all planned.

Ryan studies the wall of blood. Looks to Weston.

RYAN
Do you have files on the men?

Weston swipes at his iPad.

WESTON
I have Wells Laredo info. And
Hoffman grew up near here, Padre
Isle. He has property records.
424 Beach Road.

Ryan looks back at the FRAMED PHOTO of the "couple." This time he sees something else. They're standing in front of a LIGHTHOUSE structure. He looks closer. THE LIGHTHOUSE BAR &... is all he can make out.

RYAN
Hey, can I see that?

Weston hands over his iPad. Ryan searches: 424 Beach Road, Padre Isle. A moment later: THE LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL. Ryan quickly ERASES his search. Hands the pad back. Ryan takes off. Off a curious Weston--

EXT. PARKING LOT - STREET - NIGHT

Official vehicles are lined up. With no one looking, Ryan slips into a vehicle and takes off.

EXT. OCEAN - NIGHT

The moon illuminates the choppy waters of the Gulf.

EXT. BEACH TOWN - NIGHT

Ryan's SUV moves down a long, winding road. He comes to a STOPLIGHT in the beach town of Port Aransas.

EXT. BEACH ROAD - NIGHT

Ryan's HEADLIGHTS appear in the distance. As they approach, the HEADLIGHTS shut off -- Ryan gets out, races down the road to a gated piece of property. An empty parking lot that leads to an abandoned restaurant that overlooks the water.

The front of it has a faux LIGHTHOUSE at its entrance. This is the same LIGHTHOUSE that was in the PHOTO. Closed for years now -- it's rundown and deserted.

Except the padlock on the chained gate is shiny new. Ryan sees this and quickly falls back into the shadows. He leaves the road and races off into the dunes toward the surf...

EXT. BEACH - NIGHT

Ryan races along the edge of the water. He comes up under the pier. Wooden pilings and planks -- he eyes a small staircase on the far side. He makes his way up to--

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Ryan darts down the old and empty pier, coming upon the back of the restaurant. An outdoor patio that's seen better days. Many of the glass doors are broken, allowing easy entrance.

INT. LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Ryan steps into the restaurant. He crosses the dining room. Moonlight streams in through the windows.

He comes upon a SERVER'S STATION -- sees the kitchen doors and the entrance to the TAVERN that adjoins it.

CREAK! Ryan turns to the tavern entrance. The SOUND of FOOTSTEPS stepping on GLASS. He reaches for his gun. Old instinct. There is no gun, no holster -- *there hasn't been one for years.*

Ryan considers his options... and then goes for it.

RYAN

I came alone, Carroll. It's just me. Isn't this what you wanted?

Silence. Just the SOUNDS of the night wind whipping through the building. And then--

SARAH (O.S.)

No, oh God! Nooooo!

Ryan races into--

INT. LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL - TAVERN - NIGHT

An old tavern. Nautical theme. Ryan searches through the bar, it's hard to see anything -- it's too dark. Suddenly, a LIGHT FLICKERS behind him. He turns--

WHACK! A WOOD PLANK CRASHES into his face. Ryan goes flying back. He lands on his back, his nose ruptured, spewing blood. He starts to get up when--

WHACK! He's hit again -- in his side. He goes rolling. And then, he hears a VOICE from his past...

JOE CARROLL

Hello, Ryan.

Ryan raises up, bloody and bleary-eyed. Joe Carroll has a LARGE FLASHLIGHT. He shines it in Ryan's face, making it impossible to see anything but blinding light.

Ryan tries to rise but he's too hurt...

RYAN

Where is she?

SARAH (O.S.)

Please... Nooooo... Noooo...

Ryan lifts himself up, pain shooting through his body as Sarah continues to CRY OUT. Ryan's eyes fight the darkness.

JOE CARROLL

The human eye is connected by seven muscles. I removed each one individually. Do you know how difficult that is to do?

RYAN

Sarah? Sarah? Where are you?

He can still hear her SCREAMING. But then--

CLICK. Sarah's VOICE is cut off. Then, CLICK, it comes back on -- her VOICE has been recorded. Carroll holds a small recorder in his hand.

JOE CARROLL

You know how I love my souvenirs.

Ryan turns to him just as Carroll SHINES his FLASHLIGHT to the dance floor and small bandstand where--

SARAH FULLER'S BODY has been strung up. On full display. Just for Ryan. Bloody holes where her eyes once were.

ON RYAN as he CRIES OUT. From his gut. The hurt and anger erupt from him. As he stares at her cold, lifeless body.

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

She lasted longer than I thought she would. Such a fighter.

RYAN comes at JOE CARROLL. He's hurt and limping but lunges, ramming him against the bar. Carroll breaks away, drops to his knees--

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

I'd like to turn myself in.

Carroll places his hands on his head. Ryan stares at him. *What the fuck?*

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

I surrender, Ryan.

Ryan is blind with rage, he starts for Carroll again--

MASON (O.S.)

Ryan. Stop. Ryan.

In seconds, Mason appears, gun drawn. Riley and Weston are there too. Weston races in and pulls Ryan off of Carroll.

Riley is there -- gun aimed at Joe Carroll.

JOE CARROLL

I surrender.

Weston keeps Ryan contained. As both men lock eyes in an intense stare--

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. LIGHTHOUSE BAR & GRILL - NIGHT

POLICE LIGHTS, HELICOPTERS, SQUAD CARS -- the old restaurant is now a crime scene. Carroll is shackled and placed into a STEEL POLICE VAN.

A CORONER'S VEHICLE takes Sarah Fuller's body away. Captain Turner oversees the proceedings.

EXT. PIER - NIGHT

Waves CRASH against the pier. Ryan sits on a bench near the end. The night air whipping all around. Mason appears.

MASON

Carroll's en route to Huntsville.

Ryan stares into the black night. His face dried with blood.

MASON (CONT'D)

No news on our prison guard and the not so gay neighbors.

(no response)

You should have the medic take care of your face.

RYAN

How did you find me?

MASON

This thing called GPS. You went rogue in a government vehicle. Here. Have some water.

Mason hands him a bottle of ARROWHEAD WATER.

MASON (CONT'D)

From your private stock. I went through your bag. I know. Tacky.

Ryan doesn't take it. Mason sits beside him. She opens it and takes a drink. It's been a long night.

MASON (CONT'D)

Why a lighthouse?

RYAN

Carroll's book was inspired by Poe's last unfinished work, "The Lighthouse."

MASON
Sarah was his unfinished work.

RYAN
He wanted to prove he could get the ending right this time.

She turns to him. Direct. Honest.

MASON
I'm sorry.

Beat. They look back to the ocean.

RYAN
What made you come?

MASON
You got to me. Laredo wasn't very poetic.
(then a smile)
And you're a bad influence.

Beat. Ryan appreciates this.

EXT. HUNTSVILLE PRISON - NIGHT - LATER

Establishing.

INT. PRISON - WORK OFFICE - NIGHT

Ryan appears, his face cleaned and bandaged. Riley and Weston see him, launching in on an update.

RILEY
The Rangers found nothing in Laredo.

Ryan's eyes go to the PHOTOS taped to the wall. Jacob Wells, Paul Hoffman and the prison guard, Jordy.

WESTON
Joe Carroll had 47 dedicated websites. Over a thousand chat rooms, blogs, online forums. He could have multiple resources.

Ryan likes the way they're thinking. Just then, Agent Mason appears looking strained. Something's up.

MASON
(to Ryan)
He'll only talk to you.

RYAN

You really want to put me in a room
with him?

Mason shrugs. She doesn't know what to do.

MASON

He refuses to talk to anyone except
you. There are still three killers
out there and God knows what else.
We need information. Talk to him.

Ryan hates this...

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ryan is escorted through several ELECTRIC DOORS.

INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

A small room. A table and two chairs. The door opens and
Ryan enters -- alone. He takes a seat opposite a very bound
and shackled Joe Carroll. No one speaks at first. Then...

JOE CARROLL

Sarah had to die, Ryan. She was
unfinished business. I know it's
sad. Tragic.

Carroll seems concerned. He's a very polite man. Ryan says
nothing, refusing to engage his emotions.

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

Poor thing. She had worked so hard
to pull her life together. It's
hard to recover from such trauma.
And she had done quite nicely which
is more than I can say for some--

Joe Carroll pauses for effect. Ryan merely stares at him.

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

You've been quite a disappointment.
I handed you a career and you
squandered it. I never expected
you capable of IN COLD BLOOD but
what was with that true crime
drivel?

RYAN

So what's my sequel about, Joe?
Everyone outside this room is
anxious to know. They're under the
impression you're going to tell me.

JOE CARROLL

Of course, I'll tell you. We're going to write it together, Ryan. Our sophomore effort. I've learned a lot since my last outing. My first book was too avant-garde. Overwrought. Lost in literati pretense. Even Poe whored himself out eventually. I've decided my new story should play to a wider audience.

Off Ryan as he digests this--

INT. PRISON - CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Agent Mason is watching their conversation on a monitor VIA VIDEO SURVEILLANCE. Weston appears.

WESTON

Franklin is on the phone.

Mason looks to him. Now? It's not the best timing but she takes the call, stepping away from the MONITOR.

MASON

(on phone)

Mason here.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

(from phone)

Agent Mason, it appears we have a new development.

MASON

Yes, sir?

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Three bodies were found murdered in the last six hours. One in Seattle, one in Boston, and one in Atlanta.

MASON

I don't follow, sir--

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

Their eyes were removed, Agent. On all of the bodies.

As Mason's face falls--

INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Ryan and Carroll continue.

RYAN

And how do your accomplices fit into this new plot? The prison guard, the gay neighbors. We know about your cult.

JOE CARROLL

I'm not a fan of that word. I like to think of them as friends. It's important to have friends, Ryan.

SCENE INTERCUTS:

EXT. SMU - PHI DELTA SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

It's late. The sorority house is dark and quiet. A cute girl, LINDA, is at the door, struggling with her keys-- when a FIGURE appears in the shadows.

BACK TO JOE CARROLL.

JOE CARROLL

Fun fact. Did you know the FBI estimates there are up to 300 serial killers active in the US on any given day?

ON LINDA as she senses someone. She spins around to find a CAMPUS SECURITY GUARD on the porch. She JUMPS.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Sorry, didn't mean to scare you.

Linda catches her breath. Relieved it's security. But a closer look reveals a big lug of a man. Imposing. It's actually JORDY RAINES -- dressed as a CAMPUS SECURITY GUARD. He smiles at the young girl.

LINDA

Is everything okay?

JORDY

Extra patrol this evening.

LINDA

Yeah, but they caught him. I heard it on the news.

JORDY

Still. Mind if I look around,
check your doors and windows?

Linda unlocks the door and allows Jordy entrance.

LINDA

I think everyone's asleep.

As Jordy steps inside.

INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

JOE CARROLL

Do you have any friends, Ryan?
I'll be your friend. Even though
you're fucking my wife.

Ryan instinctively glances to the CAMERAS that hang from the corners of the room. He covers.

RYAN

You're fishing. It's desperate.

JOE CARROLL

Did she show you the letter?

Ryan refuses to confirm it.

JOE CARROLL (CONT'D)

Claire is very important, Ryan.
Every good story needs a love
interest.

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Detective Garcia is wrapping things up with her men while Claire watches television.

FOOTAGE OF CARROLL being escorted back to prison. The HEADLINES read CARROLL CAUGHT. Claire turns off the TV.

BACK TO CARROLL AND RYAN.

JOE CARROLL

You know she's the only woman I've
ever loved. The mother of my son.
I'd like to see her.

RYAN

She'll never agree to that.

JOE CARROLL

She might change her mind.

INT. MATTHEW'S RESIDENCE - UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT

Claire climbs the stairs, moves to Joey's bedroom. Peeks in on her son -- but he's not there. The bed is empty.

CLAIRE

Joey? Joey?

Instant panic. *Where's Joey?* Claire looks for the nanny.

ON RYAN AND CARROLL.

JOE CARROLL

I've decided to go more traditional this time. Hero. Villain. Good versus evil. I need a strong protagonist so readers can truly invest. A flawed, broken man searching for redemption. That's you, Ryan. You're my flawed hero.

RYAN

I don't think so.

Carroll is beginning to get under his skin.

JOE CARROLL

Oh, yes, I insured that by killing Sarah. She was the inciting incident. The hero's call to action. This is merely the prologue, the beginning.

INT. SORORITY HOUSE - NIGHT

ON JORDY as the campus security guard. He opens a small black bag. He looks to Linda who is now gagged and bound. Tears streaming down her face. He informs her--

JORDY

It's my kit. It's important that I have the right tools.

JOE CARROLL (V.O.)

That was the entire point of Sarah's death. It was for you.

ON RYAN. Hearing this kills him. He's losing it fast.

RYAN

When you're writing my character,
make sure to include the part where
I hunt down everyone associated
with you -- and if this book ends
with anything other than your death
you better plan on a rewrite.

JOE CARROLL

Keep that anger. It works for you.

This infuriates Ryan -- HE EXPLODES, lunging at Carroll. He
throws the table aside, grabs Carroll and shoves him against
the wall...

He takes Carroll's hand, pulls it up and RIPS HIS FINGERS
BACKWARDS -- CRACKING BONES as ALL FIVE FINGERS break at
once. Carroll SCREAMS OUT in pain.

RYAN

I hope you're not planning on
writing that book with your hands.

JOE CARROLL

Guards! Guards!

Carroll is WRACKED with pain. Ryan grabs his other hand.

RYAN

Now tell me something I want to
hear.

JOE CARROLL

Somebody. Guards.

The first flash of fear in Joe Carroll.

RYAN

Start talking.

JOE CARROLL

Call Claire.

GUARDS enter the room, pull Ryan off of Carroll.

ON CLAIRE -- searching for her son.

CLAIRE

Denise? Where's Denise?

Detective Garcia races up the stairs.

CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Where's my son?

Claire is instantly frantic.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Denise is behind the wheel. Little Joey is asleep in the passenger's side.

ON CARROLL -- recomposing.

JOE CARROLL
Call Claire.

ON CLAIRE, racing through the house, SCREAMING for her son.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Denise's car pulls up and stops behind another VEHICLE. Sarah's gay neighbors (real names PAUL and JACOB) are waiting. They help retrieve a sleeping Joey.

They ditch Denise's car and quickly get into the other one and take off into the night.

INT. PRISON - HOLDING CELL - NIGHT

Carroll holds his hand in pain but appears calm and unflinching -- in control.

JOE CARROLL
Call Claire. Call Claire.

But Ryan is in control now too, more focused and assured than he's ever been.

RYAN
I will get you. I will get you.

Carroll is ushered out, smiling...

JOE CARROLL
It's just beginning, Ryan. It will be a masterpiece! A classic.

Off Ryan, heated and determined. As Carroll's words RING in his ears--

END OF PILOT