

THE CORNER

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EXT. MOSQUE, BAGHDAD - DAY/DAWN

DAWN. A VIEW FROM ABOVE THE ROOFTOPS OF BAGHDAD.

The SUN slowly RISES.

A CLEAR BLUE SKY is background to the MAIN TOWER of a MOSQUE - which reaches up - MAGNIFICENT.

The ADHAN (CALL TO PRAYERS) sounds OUT from the MOSQUE TOWER over the sleeping city.

The MUEZZIN climbs the minaret of the mosque, and he calls in all directions. As he does, he looks up at a plane high in the clear sky.

EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAWN/DAY

An AIRLINER comes in to land in New York.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

DANIEL BOYD turns a corner into view. He is early 40's, good looking, but his face is pale and gaunt with dark eyes.

Dan carries a GUITAR CASE and a luggage case as he walks the terminal corridor - ALONE.

VOICES sound. The RUSH of passengers appears in straggles of couples and families moving towards their departure - in CONTRAFLOW to Dan.

PEOPLE of all types bustle past Dan.

A YOUNG TANNED COUPLE; A CHATTING BLACK FAMILY; AN OLD JEWISH COUPLE HOLDING HANDS; STERN BUSINESSMEN ETC.

Dan is oblivious to the OLD JEWISH LADY as she stares right at him. Her EYES BORE into Dan - cold and hard.

Dan continues by them all at a steady pace.

EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT — DAY

Dan EXITS the airport building to face massed TAXI RANKS. A long queue of people jostles in line.

Dan cuts around the line of taxis to the other side of the road. He stands alone.

A lone taxi drives by and stops — WAITING. Dan gets in.

The taxi pulls away.

INT. TAXI — DAY

Dan sits in the back of the taxi.

DAN
Thirty Seven East Thirty Second
Street.

TAXI DRIVER
Gotcha.

The taxi driver SIGHS — bored — but makes conversation.

TAXI DRIVER
You European? You're from Europe,
right?

DAN
No.

TAXI DRIVER
It don't sound like you're comin'
home.

Dan stares out of the cab window — uninterested.

DAN
America is not a country where
the small things go unnoticed,
huh.

The taxi stares at him nonchalantly.

DAN
No — I'm coming home.

Dan holds his guitar case.

The taxi driver sits back, quiet and gets the message.

EXT. A STREET (37TH EAST 32ND STREET) – DAY

The taxi pulls up outside the tall, narrow HOTEL OASIS – idiosyncratic, eclectic – not run down.

Dan gets out and hands the taxi driver a \$20 bill – the driver SHUFFLES for change – but Dan has moved with CASES up to the steps of the Hotel.

The taxi PULLS AWAY as Dan enters the Hotel.

INT. HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan stops and looks around at the entrance – then walks to

RECEPTION

He puts his bags down and WAITS.

Dan CLEARS his throat. He is about to ring the BELL for attention – when he hears a SHUFFLING in the back.

A very OLD MAN, BURROWS, with a grey smoker's PALLOR, in suit trousers and pin-striped shirt and tie, appears and STARES at Dan.

Dan is taken aback by the intensity and directness of the stare. Dan steps backwards – and TURNS to LOOK as

the ELEVATOR DOORS some way behind him – open with a PING.

Dan looks at the elevator standing OPEN. He TURNS

To face the WIZENED HAND of BURROWS holding out a KEY in his opened PALM.

Dan looks down at the key – which reads

INSERT

END INSERT

Burrows clears his throat.

BURROWS

My name is Burrows.

Burrows eyes the guitar case dismissively. He raises an eyebrow.

BURROWS

What might be in the case, sir?

DAN

A guitar.

BURROWS

Really?

Burrows starts to COUGH. A smoker's cough – one that could last for weeks. Burrows hurries his words – CROAKY – before the cough consumes him.

BURROWS

You can take your luggage...

Burrows leans forward onto the reception counter, GASPING.

BURROWS

...to your room. We can take payment when you come down.

Dan doesn't argue. He takes the key – watching as the WHEEZING Burrows still STARES watery-eyed at him.

Dan picks up his CASES and moves, with Burrows hacking away behind him – and enters the

ELEVATOR

INT. HOTEL OASIS, CORRIDOR – DAY

The elevator arrives – PINGS as the DOORS OPEN – and Dan steps out.

Dan moves along the corridor to ROOM 7 on the THIRD FLOOR. He uses the key and enters

THE ROOM

Dan puts his guitar case on the bed and then his luggage case, also.

He CLICKS OPEN his guitar case and looks down at the BEAUTIFUL GUITAR lying before him.

Dan opens his luggage case, removes a WASH BAG and moves to

THE BATHROOM

Dan washes his FACE at the sink. He looks up and into THE MIRROR. He slowly TAPS his REFLECTION with his FINGER-TIP.

Dan moves back to

THE BEDROOM

He stands at the WINDOW and opens the GLASS DOORS. The NET CURTAINS BILLOW IN – along with the CITY SOUNDS.

Dan looks out at NEW YORK – standing for a LONG TIME.

Dan turns and takes his guitar from its case – he sits on his bed and PLAYS his classical guitar.

Dan plays – beautiful MUSIC.

Dan STOPS – he listens – at the sound of MUFFLED GROANS – and the 'PING' a baseball bat makes when it is hitting into a human body.

Dan BLANCHES. Then there is SILENCE.

Dan flinches as the noise starts again. He gets up to TRACE the sounds – he moves slowly to a cupboard – and opens it –

TO NOTHING

The cupboard – an empty walk-in-wardrobe – is silent.

Dan TURNS – he moves to his luggage case and picks up his wallet and passport – and leaves the room.

INT. HOTEL OASIS, FOYER – DAY

Dan exits the elevator and approaches the reception desk.

No-one is around. Dan LOOKS OFF and spots Burrows out the front, standing on the steps in shirtsleeves – smoking.

Dan walks to the Hotel entrance.

Burrows turns to stare at Dan.

Dan holds up his WALLET.

DAN
Just gonna pick up some smokes.

Burrows NODS — still staring.

Dan moves off and OUT and onto the STREET.

EXT. STREET — DAY

Dan walks the street.

PEOPLE walk towards him — all types of people. ONLY Dan walks in CONTRAFLOW — a single figure moving AGAINST the oncoming MIX of OTHERS.

Dan reaches and enters a

CORNER STORE

The shopkeeper SMILES as Dan enters.

Dan puts a bottle of JD on the counter and points to a CARTON of Marlboro lights — which the shopkeeper places by the JD.

Dan opens his wallet and pulls out two bills.

EXT. STREET — DAY

Dan EXITS the store with a brown paper bag under his arm.

Dan walks the street — opposite direction — but AGAIN in CONTRALOW to oncoming people.

EXT. STREET, HOTEL OASIS — DAY

Dan arrives at the Hotel Oasis — walks up the steps and enters.

INT. HOTEL OASIS — DAY

Dan passes through reception — which is DESERTED — and walks to the empty, open elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR — DAY

In the elevator Dan takes the cellophane from a pack of cigarettes.

INT. THE ROOM — DAY

Dan enters — tossing the cigarette carton onto the dresser. He takes a cigarette and lights it.

He cracks the JD and pours into a glass.

Dan sits on the bed and turns the T.V. on with the REMOTE.

The T.V. shows scenes from IRAQ

INSERT

T.V. Shots of U.S. soldiers rounding up
IRAQI suspects.

END INSERT

The T.V PRESENTER sounds OFF.

T.V. PRESENTER (O.S.)
...roadside bombs still being
the major threat to U.S. personnel...

The presenter's voice TRAILS OFF. SILENCE as

Dan turns to STARE at the TELEPHONE by the bed.

Dan looks at the telephone and drinks.

SUDDENLY the wardrobe DOOR flies OPEN and a

CHARRED, BLACKENED FIGURE

BURSTS OUT

The figure's body is still smoking. It stands at the foot of the bed — STARING at Dan. Dan RECOILS.

DAN

Jesus!

The figure moves its arm — tearing its blackened SKIN. The figure looks at its WOUND then at Dan — ACCUSINGLY.

Dan moves back in fear and bewilderment.

DAN

What?!

The figure GROANS at Dan. It ROLLS its EYES TO WHITE.

Then the figure reaches up and SLOWLY UNSREWS the LIGHTBULB from the socket just above its HEAD.

Dan stares in disbelief.

DAN

What the fuck?!

The figure puts its FINGER in the socket and ELETROCUTES itself – for a LONG TIME.

Then with a POP – it DISAPPEARS

Leaving a trail of SMOKE.

Dan leans back into his bed and GASPS for BREATH.

INT. THE ROOM – DAY

Faint TRAFFIC NOISE. A plane some way off.

Dan WAKES on his bed still in his clothes. He gets up, GROGGY, and stands in the middle of the room. He moves to

THE BATHROOM

Dan starts to WETSHAVE.

Dan gives a START as he 'CUTS' himself as he shaves. He stops as BLOOD appears in the foam on his face.

Dan slides the foam aside with his fingertips – to see a DEEP CUT on his cheek. The wound WIDENS and OOZES blood.

Dan steps BACK as the gash widens even more right across his face – so that his face seems about to FALL OFF.

Dan holds his cheek onto his face in a panic. He staggers back and against the bath.

He falls BACKWARDS and CRACKS his head against the tiles. He is

OUT COLD

The cold tap still runs.

EVENTUALLY Dan comes round. He forces himself up out of the bath – holding the back of his HEAD. He looks in the mirror to SEE his face is normal – no wound.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan adjusts his tie in the mirror – he is showered, shaved and DRESSED etc.

He puts on his COAT, collects his wallet and EXITS.

INT. FOYER, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan has come out of the elevator. He walks past

RECEPTION

Dan SCANS for Burrows but the place is EMPTY.

Dan SHAKES HIS HEAD and moves out.

EXT. THE STREET, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan exits the Hotel Oasis – LOOKS AROUND – gets his bearings and heads off up the block.

EXT. A STREET – DAY

Dan turns a corner and soon reaches an APARTMENT BLOCK.

Dan enters the

APARTMENT BUILDING

Helping an OLD LADY with the door so he doesn't have to BUZZ UP. He enters the

GROUND FLOOR – moves to enter the

ELEVATOR

INT. CORRIDOR, APARTMENT BUILDING – DAY

Dan exits the elevator and moves along the apartment corridor – searching. He approaches number 21 and waits.

Dan hesitates, nervous – then KNOCKS.

He waits – then the door OPENS.

MEL, 30s, pretty, with shoulder-length hair, faces him.

Dan does not speak. Mel's face GAZES OUT at Dan. She is puzzled – her face BLANK. Slowly she shows

RECOGNITION – and a flicker of WARMTH – quickly swallowed by a barely controlled SURGE of EMOTION that conceals a broken heart.

MEL

Dan? It's you?

Dan smiles.

DAN

I'm sorry, Mel. But it is.

Mel steps back a pace.

MEL

You'd better come in.

Dan enters Mel's

APARTMENT

Dan is shy and hesitant. He looks through to an ADJOINING ROOM to see a BOY, 19, practising electric guitar with headphones on (quiet practice).

The boy is oblivious to Dan's presence. Mel closes the door between rooms so that she and Dan are alone.

Mel gathers herself – she trembles. She starts to speak.

MEL

I...

Dan starts too.

DAN

I'm sorry, Mel.

Mel looks down - then

MEL
Sorry?

Her chest heaves.

DAN
I just flew in. I had to see you.

INDIGNATION rises up in Mel's body. Her lips tighten as she GRIPS the back of a chair.

MEL
I thought you were dead.

Dan is ashamed.

DAN
I might as well have been.

He looks at her.

DAN
I always loved you.

Mel turns away.

MEL
Oh, Jesus.

DAN
I never stopped.

She GLARES at him.

MEL
You stopped the day you walked
out without a word...

She glances unconsciously at the door that has her son behind - her emotion rises.

MEL
...And left me to face YOUR
family - alone.

She stares at him - hard.

MEL
Something you obviously felt
you couldn't do.

Dan sighs.

DAN

It was a long time ago.

Mel's eyes fill with TEARS.

MEL

Nineteen miserable years...

DAN

But I regretted every day.

Mel wipes her tears away.

DAN

It wasn't because I didn't love
you.

Mel gathers herself.

MEL

Sure.

She LOOKS at Dan.

MEL

It would have been nice to know.
It sure would have helped...

She glances towards the other room.

MEL

...with things.

SILENCE

Dan moves to the apartment door.

DAN

I should go. I'm sorry.

Dan opens the door.

MEL

Where are you staying?

DAN

The Hotel Oasis. Around the...

She cuts him off.

MEL

I know it. The guy with the cough,
he's been almost as long as you've

been gone. Shouldn't really be here
at all, the way he smokes.

DAN
We've all gotta die somehow. Anyway, I'm
there.

She stares off as he looks at her – then sardonically.

MEL
For how long?

Dan feels that.

DAN
I don't know.

He EXITS.

Mel covers her face with her hands.

EXT. A STREET – DAY

Dan exits the apartment building.

He walks the streets. He NEARS a VAGRANT on a blanket lying
on the sidewalk. Dan passes slowly – and stops as

The VAGRANT STARES at Dan with an all-consuming CONTEMPT.
The man is shaking from bad nerves and malnutrition.

Dan sees the US MARINE IDENTITY TAG around the man's NECK.

The vagrant stares so hard Dan is unnerved and moves off.

Dan MOVES ALONG the street – disorientated. He enters

A BAR.

INT. A BAR – DAY

The bar is almost empty.

Dan sits at the BAR COUNTER. The BARTENDER arrives.

DAN
Bourbon, please.

The bartender gives him the shot.

Dan lights a smoke. Music plays in the background.

The T.V. is on ABOVE the BAR – low volume. NEWS of the PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RACE shows.

INSERT

Presidential candidates greet the public.
They exit airplanes and WAVE. BANDS play ETC.

END INSERT

Dan drinks. The bartender refills his glass – then moves off a little and gets to polishing glasses – silently.

Dan LOOKS AROUND.

He notices a FIGURE at the far END of the bar – HUNCHED.

Dan watches the figure smoke a cigarette – ASH two inches long – hangs from the man's filter-tip.

Dan looks CLOSER as he notices the figure is VERY THIN, with long GREY, WIRY HAIR in a ponytail.

The man's nails are three inches long. He slugs a bourbon straight off.

The man SLAMS his EMPTY shot glass down on the bar – and GROWLS.

OLD MAN

Wild turkey.

The bartender fills the man's glass.

The old man SLOWLY looks up to turn and STARE at Dan who is still unable to take his gaze away from the figure.

The man EYEBALLS Dan still as SMOKE OOZES from his nose.

The old man's EYES are YELLOW – wracked with AGE, PAIN and TORTURE – over what looks like CENTURIES.

The old man still stares EXPRESSIONLESS.

Dan is FREAKED.

The barman SMIRKS at Dan's discomfort.

Dan slugs his drink – leaves a bill hurriedly and LEAVES.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS — DAY

Dan closes the door to his Hotel room behind him.

He sighs in relief.

Dan takes his wallet from his coat — removes his cash —
DOLLAR BILLS.

He drops the dollar bills onto the top of the T.V. and
picks up the REMOTE.

Dan STOPS to stare down at the DOLLAR BILLS.

INT. BANK OF BAGHDAD, AIRCRAFT HANGER — DAY

MAYHEM.

U.S. MARINES shout and run back and forth.

Dan stands in SANDY COLOURED jacket and trousers. He is
flanked by MERCENARIES and SECURITY.

Marines load up CANVAS SACKS onto the BACKS of a line of
WAITING TRUCKS. They work in a CHAIN.

One marine grabs a sack which opens at the neck AS HE DROPS
IT. DOLLAR BILLS spill out in a SOUP of WADS.

Everyone stops and stares. Dan snaps.

DAN

Jesus! You do that out there and...

Dan FLICKS his head INDICATING the 'outside'.

But before Dan can FINISH — a MARINE — CAPTAIN GREEN —

STRIDES forward and SCREAMS into the marine's face.

CAPTAIN GREEN

And you are fuckin' BUGSPLAT on
the fuckin' windshield, you fucker!

Dan turns to his security INDICATING all the sacks of cash.

DAN

It's gonna be like wiping your ass
with a goddam postage stamp.

SECURITY crack a grin.

OUTSIDE and OVERHEAD is the SOUND of a HELICOPTER coming in to LAND.

SHELLS land and EXPLODE very close by. The marines fire out with various gauges of weaponry.

The trucks are loaded up with cash.

Dan gives the OKAY to the C.O and then gets in to the CAB of the first truck.

The DOORS to the aircraft hanger SLIDE OPEN and the trucks start to PULL OUT.

INT. BATHROOM, THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS - DAY

Dan runs a bath in his hotel room.

He sorts out his towel - the bath FILLS. Dan turns to the bath and FREEZES

as a FACE APPEARS up from the BATHWATER to the surface.

The face is BEATEN and BLOODIED and thrashes around in 'RESISTANCE' - as though in a 'reverse' or upside down water torture.

The 'FACE' is HELD by TWO HANDS which FORCE a RUBBER TUBE into the MOUTH of the FACE.

Water is PUMPED down the throat and into the stomach.

Dan staggers back.

The ROOM SPINS as

The bathwater THRASHES in a violent frenzy.
Dan SNAPS to - as he hears a LOUD

KNOCKING

On his HOTEL DOOR.

Dan looks at the bath - the water is calm - with no face.

The knocking continues. Dan turns and in a DAZE he opens his Hotel room door.

Dan's disorientation continues as he see Mel STEP FORWARD into his room.

Mel's arm reaches OUT and her HAND holds A LARGE SET of KEYS.

MEL
Your father left you these.

She lets go. Dan's open palm moves slowly out and forward to CATCH the keys as they FALL.

EXT. THE OLD HOUSE, STREET, MANHATTAN – DAY

Dan and Mel walk along a wealthy, leafy street of BROWNSTONES.

They stop and LOOK UP at an old house more RUN DOWN than the rest. It is obviously EMPTY – lack of DRAPES – litter on the steps ETC.

Dan walks up the steps to the house and takes out the set of keys.

Dan UNLOCKS the front door – and he and Mel go into the big, old house.

INT. OLD HOUSE – DAY

Dan and Mel look up and around in the STAIRWELL to the entrance.

Mel SIGHS.

MEL
I haven't been back here for years.
The invites dried up pretty quick.

Dan is lost in the atmosphere of the place.

Mel moves close to him.

MEL
You didn't come back for his funeral?

Dan gathers himself.

DAN
No. We we're never close. You know.
But it wasn't that.

He looks sincere.

DAN

I couldn't.

Dan STOPS as he LOOKS at a WOOD CARVING on the DOOR.

He speaks softly.

DAN
Hasn't changed a bit.

MEL
There's a few things you couldn't do.

Dan shakes his head.

DAN
I called. And it broke mother's
heart...

He looks at Mel.

DAN
...but I couldn't.

Mel softens.

MEL
A father doesn't see his son for
nearly twenty years before he dies.

Dan tightens.

DAN
I wasn't the son he wanted. He
began to realise the extent of my
inabilities around about the time
I began to fully understand the
enormity of being the son of the
greatest....(he laughs)... yeah.

MEL
Why did you just go? No word.
Nothing. We all loved you.

Dan is silent.

Dan walks the corridor in the spacious house and stands at

AN OPEN DOOR

FLASHBACK

The house is FURNISHED. Dan is 19. He sits with his
CLASSICAL GUITAR.

He PLAYS – very well.

His teacher, GRAHAM, 40s, slim and serious, sits with his guitar – and listens. (Or they DUET.)

Dan finishes. PROUD.

GRAHAM

Excellent. I think you're ready to try for an agent – and then after a year or so...who knows? Carnegie Hall!

Dan GRINS. Then he looks UP to see his father, MR. BOYD, 68, with a SHOCK of WHITE HAIR, who stands just out the OPEN DOORWAY – looking in.

Mr. Boyd's face is STERN – not enjoying what he has just heard or seen.

Dan looks down – INTIMIDATED

DAN

Well, maybe the Concert Chapel.

END FLASHBACK

Dan turns to face Mel.

Then he looks around at the old house he grew up in. SLOWLY and SILENTLY he and Mel move through the ROOMS and CORRIDORS.

They occasionally look at each other KNOWINGLY – remembering the time they spent together in love as teenage sweethearts.

They move for a long time in SILENCE. They have a kind of PEACE together.

Mel turns and LOOKS into Dan's EYES.

MEL

I had everything I wanted.
Everything, in love and life.

Dan looks down.

MEL

Why did you have to go away?
Why?

INT. HOTEL OASIS, THE ROOM – DAY

Dan sits on his bed and drinks. He smokes a cigarette.

The T.V. is on showing BASEBALL.

Dan LOOKS ACROSS at the TELEPHONE.

Slowly he REACHES for it – and DIALS. He WAITS.

DAN

Hello, mom.

Dan falters.

DAN

It's Dan. Yeah, I'm in New York.

Dan listens. Then.

DAN

Just some business. When it's done
I can drive out to see you.

Dan FROWNS.

DAN

What?

Dan sighs and waits patiently.

DAN

Nothing went wrong, mom.
Everything's fine. I'm okay.

Dan listens.

DAN

Okay. I'll call soon. I'll come as
soon as I can.

He puts the phone down in relief.

DAN

"What went wrong?"

He leans back into the BED in EXHAUSTION.

DAN

I'm cursed, mom.

After a long silence Dan gets up.

He stretches and stands at the WINDOW briefly. Then he
moves to the DRESSER and OPENS the top DRAWER.

A copy of the BIBLE slides FORWARD – REVEALING beneath it –
a copy of the KORAN.

Dan stares at the Koran. Then he LOOKS OFF – out the window. Dan MOVES to the window. He SPOTS something.

Across the ROOFTOPS he sees a GUNMEN set up with a RIFLE and SCOPE.

The gunman is in a dirty traditional Bisht, Throbe and Ghutra, but he wears US Army boots.

The assassin aims through the scope at the STREET BELOW.

In HORROR Dan follows 'THE AIM' of the RIFLE to the STREET.

He SEES as a STRETCH LIMO pulls up and stops in the road below. A man in formal suit, 50s, gets out of the limo.

The man walks round the stretch to the sidewalk side of the vehicle as a GIRL, 7, gets out.

The girl is 'PRIMPED' and Daddy rushes to take her hand.

Dan looks AGHAST at the father and daughter on the street – then ACROSS at the GUNMAN – who TAKES AIM, slowly AND

FIRES

The young girl is CUT IN HALF by the BULLET. Blood SPILLS as half her stomach falls out of her torso.

The father stands in SHOCK.

Dan is frozen as he stares at the gunman who LOOKS OVER at Dan and gives an EVIL GRIN.

Dan WAKES from his nightmare and sits up in bed, sweating.

Dan lies on his bed – still in his clothes. Then he gets up and WASHES his FACE.

Dan EXITS his room to the

CORRIDOR

At the FAR END of the corridor – in the GLOOM stands an OLD CLEANER with a VACUUM.

The old lady STANDS up STRAIGHT to STARE at Dan as he enters the

ELEVATOR

INT. HOTEL OASIS, FOYER – DAY

Dan exits the elevator and moves past OLD COUPLES who chatter quietly on the sofas amid pot plants.

Dan reaches

RECEPTION

Dan spies Burrows who is in the midst of a really bad COUGHING FIT.

Burrows leans with a hand against the wall for stability and GASPS for breath as he WAVES Dan on by. 'Another time.'

Dan moves on

OUT of the Hotel Oasis.

EXT. THE STREET – DAY

Dan hits the street. He walks the blocks.

As he walks Dan is alone in 'his' direction. People walk past him – they seem to hurry TOO HARD – they KNOCK Dan as they pass him and CATCH his shoulder – or BLOCK him.

Dan moves on stressed and perplexed.

Eventually he reaches the old house. He looks up and puts the key in the lock and

ENTERS.

INT. THE OLD HOUSE – DAY

Dan walks through the house on his own for the first time.

He looks at a remaining kitchen chair and tables.

He stands by

THE FIRST FLOOR WINDOW

Dan looks out at the GARDEN BELOW. He OPENS the window and gazes down at the lawn beneath him – overgrown and EMPTY.

The wind breezes through the garden as VOICES SOUND.

The SOUND of CHILDREN SHOUTING AT PLAY (O.S.)

A GRUFF VOICE BARKS OUT

MR. BOYD (O.S.)

Do you kids mind! I'm trying to nap!

Dan smiles wistfully.

Dan moves from the window and back into the house.

Dan FREEZES as he sees the figure of his father – WHITE
HAired and ASHEN FACED.

Barely controlled RAGE engulfs his father's face – just the
occasional twitch or snort from the nose.

Dan SEES his father having a conversation with DAN, HIMSELF
as a young man of 19. Dan watches in fascination.

YOUNG DAN

Travelling to Europe could help me
start a career in music.

Disdain covers Mr. Boyd's face.

MR. BOYD

Career in music? Who do you think
you are, Andrés Segovia? Franco
should have had him shot, but he
lacked ideology. Do you know
that?

Mr. Boyd scowls.

MR. BOYD

What do you know about the
Spanish Revolution? I pay for
guitar lessons, sure, but not for
hallucinations disguised as
career advice. What has that
idiot been telling you?

Dan shakes his head.

YOUNG DAN

It's what I want.

Mr. Boyd seethes. He drags his cigarette LONG and HARD.
Exhaling SLOWLY – he speaks.

MR. BOYD

You have no idea. You want to suffer from the economic consequences Spain did, with it's isolation from the international community?

Mr. Boyd stares OFF, patronising.

MR. BOYD

Life is about money, Daniel, not whimsical flights of fantasy. Life is about respecting your family, elders and those who have fought to give you what you have.

Dan TURNS AWAY from the memory of his father. He walks up

THE STAIRCASE

Slowly, he examines every area he covers. The TALL WINDOWS in the first floor

LIVING ROOM

Up another flight on

THE STAIRCASE

Peering inside

BEDROOMS from

THE HALLWAY

Suddenly Dan STOPS as he hears WHISPERS. He moves along to

THE HALLWAY END

The whispering is closer and heartfelt. Dan moves to

A BEDROOM

Looking in he sees himself, 19, with Mel as a teenager.

Dan stands watching the memory of himself with Mel as sweethearts.

YOUNG DAN

I love you.

They KISS PASSIONATELY.

YOUNG DAN

I'll never leave you. I promise.

They kiss – so in love.

DAN
I will love you forever.

Mel swoons. They MAKE LOVE.

Dan stands at the bedroom doorway.

In HORROR he notices a MUTILATED FIGURE standing in the GLOOM behind the NAKED FIGURES of young Dan and Mel in their lovemaking.

The figure watches the couple with a MALICIOUS STARE – then its GAZE moves slowly UP to FIX on Dan.

Dan looks at the figure then he turns and moves away.

Dan stumbles back DOWN through the

OLD HOUSE STAIRCASE

To arrive outside the

FRONT DOOR

Dan stands on the front steps panting.

He gathers himself to consider what has just happened – then he LOCKS the front door.

Dan goes down the house steps and moves off up the street and hurries away.

INT. OYSTER BAR, LONDON, E1 – DAY

A young CITY SLICKER, NEVILLE, 21, enters the oyster and champagne bar with Dan, 19 on his shoulder.

It is Friday lunchtime – the bar is humming, full of men and women in city POWER MODE.

Neville heads for a corner table. They sit.

NEVILLE
Let me get this right, Dan. You've
come to Europe to start a career in
music?

Dan grins.

YOUNG DAN

That's right.

Neville overacts his routine.

NEVILLE

Are you totally and completely,
UTTERLY, fucking insane?

YOUNG DAN

I thought I'd maybe go to Spain.

Neville laughs as they settle in and pick up menus.

NEVILLE

Good idea, I hear Barcelona's
annual guitar festival is bigger
than the bull fight! But, has no-
one ever told you, musicians are
the ones who never get paid – and
(ergo), never get laid?

Dan keeps smiling.

YOUNG DAN

I can handle that.

Neville eyes him.

NEVILLE

Yeah, right. You go to Spain and
I'll hold you to that! A few
Sangria's and you'll be like a
bull at the bit.
By the way, if you want to see a
bullfight in Barcelona, then, you
are doing a thing that most
Barcelonans never do.

YOUNG DAN

I never mentioned going to a bull
fight. I'm not into that kinda
blood sport. I take your point
about the babes though.

A cute Spanish waitress comes into view. Neville looks
around and CLICKS his fingers for service.

NEVILLE

What the hell did Papa say?

Dan shakes his head.

YOUNG DAN

He won't forgive me...ever.

Neville has a sharp intake of breath.

NEVILLE

He doesn't really do forgiveness,
from what I've heard.

YOUNG DAN

Damn right. Forgiveness has
something to do with the
cessation of anger, but he
doesn't even know why he's
angry.

NEVILLE

What about dear old Aunty Fi'?

Dan looks down.

NEVILLE

You've broken your dear mother's
heart, young cousin?

YOUNG DAN

I'll stay in touch. She'll understand.
She'll have to.

Dan searches for some certainty.

YOUNG DAN

It'll only be for a few months.
What the hell?

A WAITER arrives.

NEVILLE

We'll have a dozen oysters and the
Moet...for now.

He glances sideways at Dan and smirks.

WAITER

Very good, sir.

Neville gets sarcastic.

NEVILLE

Unless you fancy the Spanish dish?

Dan shakes his head and laughs. The waiter moves off.

Neville stretches back and lights a smoke.

He scans the room – and notices two attractive GIRLS, 20s,
LOOKING OVER, from their group of friends.

Neville focuses on Dan.

NEVILLE

Let's get one thing straight, Dan.

Dan waits.

NEVILLE

There's no way I'm going to let you traipse around London... Barcelona, Europe, where-ever... twanging your way to your next meal.

Dan laughs shyly.

NEVILLE

I'm going to make sure you're earning good money and settled in proper conditions first, old chap.

Dan holds up his hands.

YOUNG DAN

I'll be okay.

NEVILLE

No way, Dan. I'll have a grovel with the boss...get you fixed up in no time.

Neville fixes Dan with a STARE.

NEVILLE

If I've got the old school tie I shall bloody well use it.

YOUNG DAN

No, really, I'll be fine.

Neville gets serious. He LEANS IN.

NEVILLE

Okay, have you got an agent?

YOUNG DAN

No. First thing tomorrow...

Neville leans back and ROLLS his EYES dramatically.

NEVILLE

First thing tomorrow, we'll get you an apartment...then we'll get you a job...and THEN you can conquer London and Europe...at your leisure.

Dan sighs.

NEVILLE

I'm duty bound.

The champagne arrives. Neville grabs and pours.

NEVILLE

You really don't think I'm going to let you grub around town without a decent place and position?

Dan looks resigned.

Neville holds up his CHAMPAGNE GLASS.

NEVILLE

We're going to enjoy the good things in life. And to do that...

Neville WAVES at the two girls who smile and look over.

Neville smiles BACK and INDICATES the champagne.

The girls move over towards their table. They arrive and confidently sit at the table.

NEVILLE

...you need money.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS — NIGHT

Dan lies slouched on his bed in his Hotel room.

He drinks JD and smokes a cigarette. He watches T.V. — which shows NEWS FOOTAGE of the Presidential Campaign.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)

There seems no doubt that most people out there feel there is a real need for a new direction, whichever side it may come from.

Dan swigs from his bottle. The T.V. shows the candidates.

INSERT

A presidential candidate walks through a shopping mall in shirtsleeves shaking hands with everyone and everybody.

END INSERT

The T.V. news reporter continues earnestly.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)
 Some people feel it is simply time
 for a new start, time to move on –
 bring in a new face and let America
 get on with being America.
 That is what we do best. And if the
 rest of the world doesn't like it...
 well, hey...TOUGH!

The T.V. continues to show candidates at all sorts of
 places – getting off PLANES and waving. Walking STREETS and
 greeting voters ETC.

The reporter gives the pros and cons.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)
 But despite all that, others are
 maintaining that regardless of
 everything else, there is one
 subject that refuses to go away –
 no matter how much America just
 wants to be America!

The T.V. CUTS from the hurly burly of the election battle.

INSERT

T.V. footage of COFFINS draped in the
 stars and stripes, of U.S. servicemen
 being carried out of planes on their
 return to U.S. soil.

END INSERT

The news reporter makes his point.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER (O.S.)
 And that subject is Iraq. Some are
 arguing that given the disaster
 that is Iraq, more needs to be done
 than just creating 'distance'.
 By just 'being America'.

The T.V. news footage shows footage of a devastated Iraq.

INSERT

T.V. footage of war-torn Iraq. Sewers running into the street. Children climbing over burned out cars – women weeping and mourning their dead.

END INSERT

The T.V. CUTS to show the news reporter IN SHOT.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER

That actually there is need for some reparation – some EVEN say – a sense of atonement.

The news reporter is animated with the gravity of what he is trying to convey.

T.V. NEWS REPORTER

While those arguments rage head-to-head and both sides become more entrenched, others are left pondering the subject and asking... 'Why? Just why, really, did we do it?'

Dan lies on his bed watching the T.V. – then he puts his glass down and gets up.

Dan stands by his guitar – then he picks it up. He positions a chair and sits.

He starts to PLAY his guitar.

INT. BACK CORRIDOR, RESTAURANT, LONDON – DAY

GUITAR PLAYING SOUNDS THROUGHOUT

Neville stands with the young Dan in a quiet, dark corner of a SWISH RESTAURANT. Both are dressed in SUITS.

Neville stares at Dan, slurring and swaying slightly.

NEVILLE

...let's face it, old chap.
What's the point of earning all this money if you can't enjoy a three hundred quid bottle of claret with lunch?

Dan nods, slightly drunk too.

NEVILLE

And of course, after that... one's
got to come round.

Neville LOOKS DOWN at LINES OF COKE he has finished
chopping on the side. He takes his ROLLED UP £20 and

SNORTS

GUITAR MUSIC CONTINUES TO SOUND OVER

MONTAGE

SHOTS OF GOOD LIVING IN LONDON

Neville and Dan RAISE CHAMPAGNE GLASSES with a
crowd of suited friends in drunken dishevelment.

The London Stock Exchange erupts into a FRENZY
of trading. Bulls, bears on phones – shouting, arm
signals ETC.

Dan and Neville LIGHT CIGARS from the same match.

Neville pours champagne onto a crowd of champagne
glasses amidst a crowd of REVELLERS.

Neville chops LINES OF COKE as Dan looks on. Two
GIRLS, 20s, sit and wait.

Dan congratulates Neville as he WINS at the ROULETTE
TABLE – with SOPHISTICATED girls on hand.

Dan watches Neville STROLL through an AUTO SHOWROOM
amidst the best cars in the world – as he PONDERs.

Dan snorts coke with Neville and two strippers in a
CLUB.

Trading on the London Stock Exchange.

Lighting CIGARS with £50 NOTES.

Shots of FOR SALE SIGNS outside LUXURY APARTMENTS in
POSH LONDON STREETS

INSERT

SHOT of NEWSPAPER ARTICLE – “London Property
prices continue through the roof – profits insane.”

END INSERT

Dan and Neville shake HANDS and smile with an Estate Agent as they GESTURE to the whole block of the luxury apartments.

Dan SNORTS COKE from the BUTTOCKS of a STRIPPERS THONGED ASS as she kneels on a coffee table on all fours – like the work of art.

Dan and Neville STAGGER drunk, exhausted and laughing hysterically as they move away from the CLASSIC CAR Neville has just SMASHED INTO a lamppost – steam rising from it.

Dan and Neville walk with ARMS AROUND each other into the distance and the darkness of night away from the classic car. They SWAY and SING as they go.

GUITAR MUSIC STILL SOUNDS

MONTAGE

OF TIME PASSING FASTER

Dan and Neville look a little older. Neville operates from a single large office with a personal secretary.

Dan and Neville eat at an up-market restaurant with TWO YOUNG WOMEN. Dan smiles as Neville shows the ENGAGEMENT RING on one woman's hand that he has just given her.

Neville's WEDDING DAY – with Dan as BEST MAN.

Neville moves into a BIG HOUSE in the suburbs.

Dan and Neville sip wine in the GARDEN on a summer's DAY as Neville's kids run around and PLAY.

Dan and Neville become partners in the FIRM. They shake hands with the other PARTNERS – champagne corks pop with the secretaries.

The London Stock Exchange. Trading MAD as EVER.

INSERT

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE (WITH WOMAN BANKER IN PICTURE) READS – "Stock Exchange Profits On A New High – Bonuses Set To Go Through Glass Ceiling."

END INSERT

Dan sits in Neville's LIVING ROOM in his big house.

Neville's children are OLDER and BIGGER. Neville brings the ROAST BEEF to the dining table. Dan watches the FAMILY scene – on the OUTSIDE.

Dan sits in his APARTMENT staring out over London. Rain beats against the window.

Dan walks along the EMBANKMENT – ALONE. He looks at attractive women passing by – but continues alone.

Neville's WIFE enters her LIVING ROOM in a coat carrying SHOPPING – to GASP at Neville NAKED on the sofa with THREE STRIPPERS.

Dan CONSOLES Neville who swigs from a BRANDY BOTTLE as TEARS ROLL down his cheeks.

Dan and Neville drive past Neville's big EX-HOUSE to watch as Neville's ex-wife PARKS her JAG and the children exit the car in PUBLIC SCHOOL UNIFORMS. The ex-wife LOOKS UP to see Neville and Dan parked. She stares SOURLY.

Neville and Dan carouse on a YACHT IN THE MED with TWO BABES IN BIKINIS. Dan and Neville stagger about munching on LOBSTER and swilling champagne.

END MONTAGE

INT. HOTEL OASIS, THE ROOM – NIGHT

Dan sits in the chair in his Hotel room – still playing the GUITAR.

Dan finishes playing.

Dan looks at the guitar.

DAN

Where did it all go?

INT. LOUNGE, PRIVATE CLUB, LONDON – NIGHT

Dan sits in the private CLUB LOUNGE with Neville – who is NEARBY. Neville smokes a CIGAR with a brandy and sits joking with friends and other members.

Both Dan and Neville are now OLDER than before – in their MID 30s.

Dan is alone and watching Neville – detached – as he jokes and holds court.

NEVILLE
 ...And so I said "Listen, love,
 if we do and I don't pay you...
 well, I'd just never forgive
 myself."

Neville and his group all laugh.

Dan MOVES OFF further and sits alone in a corner.

Dan sits in SILENCE.

He TURNS as two men, 50s, dressed in SUITS, appear beside him.

They are ROBERTS, balding and heavy-set, and STEVENS, grey-haired with glasses.

They stand FACEING Dan who is puzzled.

DAN
 I'm sorry...

Roberts smiles.

ROBERTS
 No, I'm sorry. We don't wish to
 intrude, but we were hoping you
 would spare us a moment of your
 time?

Dan is non-plussed – he SHRUGS.

DAN
 Sure, go ahead.

Roberts and Stevens sit opposite Dan.

STEVENS
 I'm Bob Stevens and this is my
 colleague, Ray Roberts.

Roberts SMILES and NODS at Dan who returns the NOD.

Stevens takes a SURREPTITIOUS GLANCE around the room, LEANS FORWARD a little and LOWERS his voice slightly.

STEVENS
 We were hoping to interest you,
 Mr. Boyd, in a proposition that
 would assist the United States
 Government.

Dan looks ASQUINT. He glances over at Neville who is still engaged with his crowd, OBLIVIOUS.

DAN

Is this a joke?

Stevens tightens.

STEVENS

I can assure you, Mr. Boyd, it most definitely is not.

Dan looks straight on.

DAN

You got any I.D.?

Roberts leans in, serious.

ROBERTS

We don't do I.D.

Roberts leans back. Dan waits.

SILENCE

The silence is long – so that Dan is made to feel that there is no joke, no scam.

Roberts softens.

ROBERTS

May we continue?

Dan relaxes a little.

DAN

Sure.

ROBERTS

Thank you.

Roberts takes out a cigarette and offers one to Dan who declines. Roberts delays his light.

ROBERTS

We want to offer you a chance to use your knowledge, experience and expertise in the distribution of money.

Dan's FACE DROPS.

DAN
Money laundering?

Roberts HOLDS UP HIS HANDS in a gesture for Dan to slow down and cool it.

Roberts and Stevens GLANCE at each other and decide to play it 'DRY FUNNY' for a moment - so

ROBERTS
Not really.

STEVENS
Not how you might normally think it.

This gets Dan back on track.

DAN
Now I'm intrigued.

Roberts leans in again.

ROBERTS
Good.

Roberts raises an EYEBROW and waits.

STEVENS
We need someone to organise, balance and distribute vast sums of cash in a compact time scale while maintaining liquidity and security.

Dan gets a little jumpy.

DAN
Okay. Wait, fellas. Before we go any further...just tell me...is it legal?

Roberts and Stevens look at each other. Roberts lights up.

STEVENS
It has to be. You will be the law.

Dan relaxes again. Intrigued once more he waits.

ROBERTS
To be able to maintain the grip on figures whilst cash is being moved around like icebergs in the Atlantic.

Dan fidgets. His patience goes.

DAN

Excuse me? I haven't a clue what the fuck you are talking about.

Roberts and Stevens look at each other and smile dryly.

STEVENS

I'm sorry. Theoretically...it's difficult to pitch.

ROBERTS

Difficult to grasp in the abstract.

Dan looks serious.

DAN

So?

STEVENS

We need someone...

ROBERTS

An American...

STEVENS

With little or no ties...

Roberts waits - before

ROBERTS

To run The Bank of Baghdad.

Dan stares incredulous.

DAN

What?!

Roberts and Stevens pause. Then

STEVENS

Mr. Boyd, this is deadly serious.

He lets Dan settle.

STEVENS

The U.S. invasion is imminent as I'm sure you know. As soon as the U.S. forces take control of Baghdad the Iraqi infrastructure will go into meltdown and will thenceforth cease to exist.

Roberts' dry tone labours the matters of fact.

ROBERTS

Baghdad has long been known as the bank robbery capital of the world, and that's before you start on Saddam's 'way' of running government departments, whilst sorting the United Nations oil-for-food program - for example.

Dan listens - bewildered. Roberts continues.

ROBERTS

And you can't take over a country and not have everybody who was getting paid - not get paid.

Stevens backs up.

STEVENS

The teachers, the doctors...

Dan is impatient.

DAN

Yeah, yeah I got all that.

Roberts hopes they are making ground.

ROBERTS

It would piss them off.

DAN

Just a little.

STEVENS

Something we can't afford to happen if we just invaded.

Dan starts to understand.

DAN

So...?

ROBERTS

We need someone to organize the cash flow. To see the cash - the wages - gets out there - is balanced and accounted for...

DAN

Within reason.

Roberts and Stevens nod cautiously.

ROBERTS AND STEVENS
Within reason.

Roberts continues his thread.

ROBERTS
...So that the Bank of Baghdad is
seen to still exist and starts to
operate under a democratic regime.

Stevens steps in to adjust.

STEVENS
Democratic government. Democracy —
that's what it's all about.

Dan is struggling to keep up. Then

DAN
So...who would I be working for?
The CIA?

STEVENS
You'd be employed by the American
Government.

They both sit on those words like they are made of
concrete.

Dan looks at them as they sit stony faced.

DAN
Right.

Roberts brightens a tad.

ROBERTS
Needless to say it will have its
own significant rewards.

Dan smiles and nods slowly.

Stevens brightens too.

STEVENS
Thanks for listening.

Stevens and Roberts both rise.

They still face Dan.

STEVENS
Think about it...

They SHAKE Dan by the HAND.

ROBERTS

...As an American.

They SMILE and WALK AWAY.

Dan sits ALONE – in SILENCE.

LAUGHTER from Neville and his group barely impinges.

INT. A DINER, NEW YORK – DAY

Dan sits in a DINER stirring his COFFEE CUP.

Dan RUMINATES. He smokes – the smoke BILLOWS in the SUNLIGHT that STREAMS IN.

Dan notices someone watching him.

An OLD LADY, 90s, WRINKLED AND HAGGARD STARES at Dan from across the diner.

The old lady smokes her cigarette.

She stares and drinks her coffee and smokes – never taking her eyes off of Dan.

Dan looks back at the lady – then around – unnerved, wondering if he is alone in this attention.

Still the lady STARES.

Finally Dan gets up – he leaves a BILL on the table – and LEAVES.

EXT. THE DINER, STREET, NEW YORK – DAY

Dan exits the diner onto the street. He walks.

EXT. STREET, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan walks the street and APPROACHES the Hotel Oasis.

He goes up the steps to the Hotel.

INT. ENTRANCE, HOTEL OASIS — DAY

Dan enters the Hotel. He PAUSES and looks around.

A very OLD COUPLE sit in the reception LOUNGE and quietly SIP their COFFEE.

Dan MOVES to

RECEPTION

Which is deserted. Dan waits and LOOKS AROUND.

Burrows APPEARS from the BACK with a light COUGH.

Dan TURNS to see him.

BURROWS

Good day, sir.

DAN

Morning. You been up all night?
Don't you sleep?

Burrows looks at Dan — LANGUID.

BURROWS

I don't sleep, sir...I wait.

Dan looks at him curiously and then smiles. He reaches into his COAT and takes out his WALLET.

The RECEPTION PHONE starts to RING.

DAN

I thought it was time I better...

Burrows holds UP HIS HAND — PALM OUT — as the reception phone RINGS INTRUSIVELY.

BURROWS

Plenty of time for that, sir.
Excuse me.

Burrows answers the phone in an excessively DRY and CRACKED NEW YORK TONE.

BURROWS

Good morning, Hotel Oasis, how may
we help you this glorious sun-
kissed day?

Dan watches in bemusement.

Then Burrows starts to struggle with a TICKLE in his THROAT as he listens on the phone.

Burrows CLEARS his throat – the cough starting to ARRIVE.

Dan, resigned, MOVES OFF, to the

ELEVATOR

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan enters his Hotel room and closes the door behind him.

He puts his wallet on the dresser.

Dan sits on the chair and takes his GUITAR.

LEISURELY – he TUNES it.

Dan gets up and stands with his guitar as sunlight STREAMS into the ROOM.

Dan starts to PLAY.

BEAUTIFUL MUSIC SOUNDS

Dan puts DOWN his GUITAR – but the MUSIC STILL SOUNDS.

Dan LIES on his bed – he CLOSES his EYES – and goes to SLEEP.

SILENTLY two BURNT and SCARRED FIGURES APPEAR in the room. They move towards Dan on his bed – and STAND over him.

Dan WAKES and FREEZES as he sees the figures LOOM over him.

Dan goes to MOVE but the two figures grab hold of Dan and force him DOWN.

The figures STARE FULL of HATRED into DAN'S EYES.

The figures SLOWLY force Dan from his bed to the

MIDDLE OF THE ROOM

They stand under the main light.

One figure puts a CORD NOOSE over Dan's HEAD and around his neck. The figure TEARS the SHADE away from the light above Dan's head.

The figure TIES the CORD to the LIGHT FITTING – then they both lift Dan UP so he HANGS by the NECK.

The figures STRIP Dan NAKED as he kicks and CHOKES.

The two figures BEAT DAN with LUMP HAMMERS up and down HIS BODY.

Dan cannot SCREAM as he HANGS.

One figure stops beating Dan to step back and lift the TABLE LAMP off the dresser.

The figure SMASHES the LAMPSHADE OFF against the dresser – breaking the BULB in the process.

The figure moves close to Dan.

The figure STABS Dan's body with the broken light bulb – up and down his ARMS, LEGS and TORSO.

The JAGGED GLASS slices into DAN and the ELEMENT in the BULB induces ELECTRIC SHOCK.

Dan's body JERKS and CONVULSES.

Dan struggles with the CORD around his neck – trying to get his fingers underneath to relieve the tension.

His fingers get under the cord to ease his breathing as the figures still TORTURE HIM.

Dan is still CONSCIOUS as he can LOOK DOWN IN HORROR as one figure stands with a LONG BLADE.

The figure puts the BLADE TIP to Dan's NECK.

Dan struggles and KICKS OUT – but

the figure CUTS OPEN Dan's BODY DOWN from NECK to STOMACH.

Then the figure QUARTERS DAN.

Dan's resistance has STOPPED as HIS GUTS SPILL OUT.

DAN WAKES.

Mel stands over Dan.

Compassion and emotion cover her face.

Mel tries to move close to Dan but he is SHAKING and CONVULSING with FEAR.

MEL

Dan. It's me. It's Mel.

Mel SITS on the side of the bed and HOLDS Dan.

MEL

It's me...It's me.

Gradually Dan's fear subsides.

He COMES ROUND – and LOOKS UP to see

MEL'S BEAUTIFUL FACE looking down OVER HIM.

She SMILES.

MEL

It's me.

Dan has calmed. He looks around – realizing the horror of his DREAM.

Dan sits up on his elbows – panting.

He looks at Mel.

DAN

Jesus. What happened?

Mel GASPS BACK her laughter.

MEL

I was about to ask you...

They look at each other and smile.

MEL

Are you okay?

Dan grunts.

DAN

I think so.

Dan sits up. He breathes slowly.

Mel has gone to the bathroom and returned with a face towel. She wipes the perspiration from his face.

Dan gets back to normal.

Mel watches him calmly. Dan notices her.

They look at each other.

Slowly Dan moves CLOSER to Mel –FULL OF DOUBT– almost too scared to presume – but she is relaxed.

Dan puts his arms around Mel — and HOLDS HER.
He BURIES his FACE in her HAIR and on her SHOULDER.
His breathing HEAVES.

DAN

I missed you.

Emotion rises UP in Mel.

DAN

Every damn day.

They look into each others eyes.

MEL

Was there never anyone else?

DAN

No. Never.

A surge of emotion takes over Dan. He puts his face down into her neck.

DAN

I'm sorry. So sorry.

Mel holds Dan for a long time.

He brings his face up to see her smile.

MEL

Take me to the house. Take me to
'the jolly corner'.

EXT. A STREET — DAY

Dan walks with Mel at a dreamy pace. They hold hands and amble along.

They are the only people who walk in their direction.
Everyone they meet or PASS is in CONTRAFLOW.

EXT. A STREET, THE OLD HOUSE — DAY

Dan and Mel stop outside the big old house.

They hold hands and look up at it.

Dan is dreamy as he speaks.

DAN
It's almost like it contains our
other lives. The ones we should
have had.

He turns to look at her in SADNESS.

She smiles at him.

MEL
I know. That's why I like it so.

INT. THE OLD HOUSE - DAY

Dan and Mel walk together through the house - ARM IN ARM.

They sit at the wooden table in the KITCHEN with its HIGH
CEILING.

Dan takes an IMAGINARY TEAPOT and 'POURS' into an IMAGINARY
CUP which he puts in front of Mel.

Mel picks up her imaginary cup and saucer and SIPS her
imaginary tea.

CUT TO

Dan and Mel stand by an OPENED WINDOW in the
LIVING ROOM

The breeze BILLOWS the net curtains AROUND Mel and Dan,
wrapping them in itself.

They stand and look at each other THROUGH the NET CURTAIN -
perception is altered, they seem closed in - CUT OFF and

ALONE TOGETHER.

Mel looks down at the garden.

MEL
Do you remember our secret place
- in the garden?

Dan smiles knowingly.

DAN
The jolly corner.

Mel laughs.

She gazes into Dan's eyes.

MEL
Why did you go away?

Dan faces her sadly.

MEL
And why did you come back?

INT. BANK OF BAGHDAD (OR AIRCRAFT HANGER) – NIGHT

The CAVERNOUS Bank of Baghdad – with ornate and awesome DÉCOR and pillars – is CHOCK FULL with MARINES.

Dan stands in the middle of CHAOTIC and FURIOUS ACTIVITY.

A line of ARMY TRUCKS stands manned and ready to start up.

OUTSIDE is the SCREAM of FIGHTER JETS overhead. Shells EXPLODING and ROCKETFIRE sound ALL AROUND.

Marines defend their position in the Bank by shooting 'OUT' into the Baghdad night.

A MARINE on a RADIO tries to maintain communication and decipher events outside.

Dan stands at a makeshift table in front of his LAPTOP.

Dan is dressed in a plain linen LIGHT KHAKI or sandy coloured suit.

Dan punches numbers into his laptop.

Behind him a group of marines stands beside a

MOUNTAIN OF CASH.

The marines stuff the WADS of CASH into canvas SACKS and tie them up.

Then each marine takes a sack of cash to a set of scales to be WEIGHED – where the amounts are ADJUSTED.

Then each marine TOSSES his sack onto the back of a truck in the line.

After that the marine moves away from the zone to be FRISKED by TWO SERGEANTS before they exit the area.

Dan watches and waits as his assistants KEEP COUNT of the sacks, the weight ETC.

All the information, the counting is REFERRED to him.

ASSISTANT

Two Seven five.

DAN

Okay.

Dan puts that into his laptop.

Dan turns AS

TWO MARINES appear from nowhere in a jeep.

They SCREECH to a HALT and jump out GRINNING.

One marine opens the BACK OF THE JEEP.

Several SACKS and A WOODEN CRATE sit in the back of the JEEP. The marine grabs a SHOVEL and drags the contents out.

The other marine clears the rest out from the jeep by pushing it out with his BOOT.

The sacks and then the crate fall out onto the floor –

REVEALING all manner of TREASURES. COINS, STATUETTES, ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS and BOOKS

LIE IN A HEAP.

The marines grin and skip ecstatically back into the jeep. One MARINE looks out of the jeep as he starts it up.

MARINE

What a fuckin' candy store.

He wheel spins the jeep away.

Dan looks down at the pile of treasure on the floor. His face is EXPRESSIONLESS.

A SENIOR MARINE OFFICER strides by as EXPLOSIONS sound nearby and jets scream overhead.

OFFICER

Whoever authorised this operation at this fuckin' time must be fuckin' insane.

He stands by Dan.

OFFICER

Jesus Christ, there's a war on.

Dan looks at him casually.

DAN

I did.

The officer looks BLANKLY at Dan and MOVES OFF.

The activity is HECTIC – mad rushing around amidst SMOKE and NOISE.

Amidst it all – even as a civilian – Dan remains totally calm and DETACHED.

He just keeps watching the SACKS of CASH being filled, weighed and LOADED UP onto TRUCK after TRUCK and then

Punches it all into his LAPTOP.

He smokes a cigarette.

MONTAGE

Gradually the mountain of CASH is eroded down. Thousands of sacks have been loaded onto the backs of the trucks in line.

Marines in civilian dress man the trucks.

Dan maintains his data in his laptop.

Finally Dan shuts down his laptop and closes it. He turns in relief to look at Roberts and Stevens who have remained UNSEEN – and stand in the SHADOWS.

Dan NODS HIS HEAD.

Stevens and Roberts whisper to CAPTAIN GREEN who steps forward in front of the trucks and gives the order to MOVE OUT into his RADIO.

The trucks START UP and SLOWLY PULL OUT of the building with ARMED JEEPS as escort.

Dan picks up his laptop – gives a NOD of recognition over to Roberts and Stevens and

URNS AND WALKS AWAY.

INT. BEDROOM, HOUSE, BAGHDAD – DAY/DAWN

A BOY, BRAHIM, 9, lies SLEEPING on the floor under light covers as the DAWN LIGHT creeps into his bedroom.

Brahim's father, ABDUL, 40s and bearded, enters quietly and bends over Brahim.

Abdul gently touches Brahim on the shoulder and whispers in Iraqi.

ABDUL (In Iraqi)
Brahim. Wake up, my son.

Brahim's EYES OPEN.

He looks up at Abdul, his father and sits up, YAWNING.

Abdul pats his son's head and smiles before going out.

INT. THE MOSQUE, BAHDAD - DAY

Abdul and Brahim enter the Mosque and remove their shoes.

Abdul and Brahim pray with the other men in the Mosque.

Brahim whispers passages of the Qur'an, hoping his father will be impressed.

EXT. THE MOSQUE, BAGHDAD - DAY

Abdul and Brahim exit the Mosque and walk together.

Brahim holds his father's hand as they walk BRISKLY. Brahim is FULL of EXCITEMENT.

BRAHIM (In Iraqi)
I am so excited, father.

His father looks down and smiles.

ABDUL (In Iraqi)
It is going to be a magnificent day, Brahim.
I heard you by the way, inside. I'm impressed. You'll soon be a Muezzin. But you'll need to preserve your strength to call to prayer five times a day.

Brahim laughs.

INT. BEDROOM/OFFICE, ARMY COMPOUND, BAGHDAD – DAY

In a dusty sparse room with mattresses on the floor and makeshift utilities – Dan sits in sandy coloured trousers.

He is bare-chested and smoking as he sits at fold up tables working at his laptop.

Dan mutters to himself as he works – SWEATING.

DAN
Complete the Southern Quarter...

Dan types into his laptop.

His assistant, GREG, 21, washes coffee cups in a bowl on the floor dressed only in shorts. Greg grouches.

GREG
How much fuckin' longer?

Greg lights a cigarette and looks at Dan who is irritated by the distraction.

GREG
I mean, we've won the war.
Haven't we?

Greg looks out of the window.

GREG
There's no fucker out there!

Dan stares into his laptop – but in a casually singsong voice, like it's not for the first time – he chides Greg.

DAN
Move away from the window.

GREG
But it's over. They're fucked.
We won.

Dan looks up at Greg – but doesn't say a word.

Dan shuts down his laptop and picks it up – RISING.

DAN
I gotta report back.

Dan makes to exit.

He stops and looks around the room – at the laundry on the floor, beer bottles and mags STREWN about.

DAN
Just try and keep it tidy. Keep it
ticking over. Do your best.

Greg watches him leave – disgruntled.

INT. CORRIDOR, ARMY COMPOUND, BAGHDAD – DAY

Dan weaves his way through the HOT and DUSTY CORRIDORS of
the U.S. ARMY compound.

INT/EXT. A COMMUNITY CENTRE/HALL, BAGHDAD – DAY

Brahim runs in and out of the COMMUNITY HALL chasing around
with FRIENDS his age amongst the CROWD of WEDDING GUESTS.

Iraqis of ALL AGES stand and talk in front of TABLES of
FOOD.

MUSICIANS play and PEOPLE DANCE.

The BRIDE and GROOM sit SHYLY at the HEAD TABLE surrounded
by relatives.

Abdul LOOKS AROUND PROUDLY at the happy party celebrating
the marriage of his eldest son.

Abdul approaches his WIFE, who is seated and takes her
hand.

Abdul's wife SMILES as she rises and they move to the hall
centre. Guests clap as they watch Abdul and his wife.

ABDUL DANCES WITH HIS WIFE TO THE MUSIC.

INT. US ARMY COMPOUND, BAGHDAD – DAY

Dan walks along the corridors of the compound. He carries
his laptop.

He moves past the

LEISURE ROOM

He sees bare-chested MARINES partying on a daytime
impromptu. They have a keg of beer, smokes and bourbon.

Some play PING-PONG drunkenly.

MUSIC BLASTS OUT.

A group of marines stand in a SEMI-CIRCLE shouting and laughing.

Dan moves THROUGH — on the EDGE of the leisure room — hardly looking at the raucous marines.

SUDDENLY Dan STOPS.

Dan looks at the semi-circle of marines who shout and cheer. Dan sees as on the FLOOR

MALE and FEMALE marines PILE ON TOP of one another in contorted 'MOCK SEXUAL POSITIONS'.

The group LAUGH as they drunkenly struggle to balance their grotesque GROUP HUMAN STATUE of ORGIASTIC CONTORTIONS.

Dan looks on as the Marines party on down.

To the side — Dan notices a Marine DRAPED in a BLACK PLASTIC BIN LINER with a BAG for a HOOD —

The marine tries to stand and balance on a wobbling COFFEE TIN.

The MARINE laughs DRUNKENLY.

MARINE #1

See...I can do it!

Marine #1 HOLDS his ARMS OUT and 'TWITCHES' his HANDS — as if receiving an ELECTRIC SHOCK — while he still balances.

He gives the SOUND EFFECT.

MARINE #1

Zzzzzt...Zzzzzt...Zzzzzt.

Another soldier in black plastic bag and hood tries to balance but falls off.

MARINE #2

Whoa...shit!

A third soldier in a black plastic bag and hood, SPINS OFF even more DRUNK. He TWIRLS AROUND singing THE BLUE DANUBE before CRASHING into a SOFA.

Dan has seen ENOUGH — and he moves away back to the corridor.

He reaches an out of the way OFFICE.

Dan KNOCKS and ENTERS

THE OFFICE

MARTIN sits behind a desk. He is 50s, BALDING, the army bureaucratic.

He looks up and smiles as Dan enters.

MARTIN

Dan? Just the man.

Dan sits down and puts his laptop on the desk.

DAN

It's all panning out. The figures
add up – more or less.

They smirk. Dan CONNECTS his laptop to a CENTRAL COMPUTER
and starts to TRANSFER DATA.

He refers to the money mission.

DAN

We have a network...of sorts.

He looks at Martin – serious.

DAN

It seems to be working.

Martin holds Dan's gaze.

MARTIN

Just seems that bit fuckin' easy,
don't it?

Dan waits for his laptop transfer to complete.

DAN

Who knows? Two weeks and my job
is done.

Martin smiles ruefully.

DAN

With respect...This place could
turn into hell-on-earth...

He disconnects his laptop – closes it up – and picks it up.

DAN

...But I won't be here.

Martin shrugs.

MARTIN
Son-of-a-bitch.

Dan moves to the DOOR and turns back and nods.

DAN
So long.

MARTIN
So long.

Dan exits the office.

INT. CORRIDOR, COMPOUND, BAGHDAD – DAY

Dan walks away from Martin's office and walks the winding corridors of the army compound.

Dan moves out through a door to the

COURTYARD

And the BLINDING SUN and HEAT – just as

A UNIT is SCRAMBLED.

Marines dive off campbeds and rush into ACTION – tying helmets on and putting on jackets and grabbing rifles.

They RUN to man TWO ARMOURED PATROL VEHICLES.

CAPTAIN GREEN watches as his men board the trucks – he BELLOWS.

CAPTAIN GREEN
Let's go surf the sand. No time for
a piss now – ha ha ha.

The SLIGHTLY CRAZED Captain smokes a cigarette like he is in a FILM – and stops – to look at Dan.

The Captain nods RECOGNITION – remembering Dan from the MONEY MISSION.

Dan remembers also and NODS.

The Captain STROLLS over.

CAPTAIN GREEN
Hey! Wanna kick back?

The Captain laughs.

CAPTAIN GREEN
Wanna take a joy ride?

He JERKS his thumb BACK at the two trucks waiting.

The Captain stands and looks at Dan – who seems FROZEN in the moment.

DAN
I'm a civilian.

The Captain laughs.

CAPTAIN GREEN
This is Iraq. We can do what the
fuck we like.

Dan thinks – then runs towards one of the trucks.

INT. ARMOURED TRUCK, STREET, BAGHDAD – DAY

Dan hurriedly puts on COMBAT GEAR and a HELMET as he sits in the back of the armoured truck.

He is helped into his jacket by the marines who LAUGH. Dan laughs also – at the craziness of it.

Marines pass cigarettes and curse – but EUPHORIC with ADRENALIN.

One marine, SMITH, grins at Dan.

MARINE SMITH
We're goin' downtown.

They all laugh.

Dan's smile STOPS when

Two marines take POTSHOTS with SEMI-AUTOMATICS into civilian houses and into shops as they speed through community areas.

CAR BOMB wreckages lie roadside. Mangled metal everywhere.

Everyday objects like bikes, dustbins, trailers lie broken, overturned, burnt out and in piles.

No-one has had the courage or the will to clear anything.

The SERGEANT points to a group of children by the roadside who SUDDENLY SCATTER and run down an ALLEY when they see the U.S. trucks turn the corner.

The Sergeant SHOUTS OUT to FOLLOW the children.

SERGEANT

Down there!

EXT. STREET, BAGHDAD – DAY

The trucks drive up to two or three isolated HOUSES at the end of the ROAD/ALLEY.

The vehicles stop and wait – engines running.

INT. ARMOURED TRUCKS, BAGHDAD – DAY

Inside the trucks, the marines wait, quiet and cautious.

Dan watches silently.

Eventually the Captain's voice sounds ON THE RADIO – from the other truck to Dan's.

CAPTAIN GREEN

We're gonna search the two
buildings. Let's go fuckin'
steady, boys.

Slowly and in 'combat ready' mode the marines jump out of the patrol vehicles.

They scout around for hostility and move towards the isolated houses.

They move and cover each other as they walk.

OUTSIDE one HOUSE, a VERY OLD MAN, 80s, stands WATCHING them at the GATE of the house.

The old man is silent and impassive – his cotton garments blowing in the hot wind. He doesn't move.

Dan has exited the truck and slowly moves towards the marines who stand a few yards off the houses.

The Sergeant and the Captain confer.

SERGEANT

Sure as fuck looks like summin'
goin' on to me, Cap'.

The Captain looks around. In the DISTANCE MUSIC SOUNDS –
traditional music like heard at ABDUL'S SON'S WEDDING.

CAPTAIN GREEN

We'll go in and take it real easy.
Piece by piece.

The Captain turns as Dan slowly nears them. The Captain's
FACE shows he now wishes Dan wasn't there.

The Captain looks over to the truck about to send Dan there
WHEN

The Sergeant JUMPS BACK.

SERGEANT

WHOA!!! FUCK!

They TURN to see the old man FLY BACK 2 or 3 yards and land
on the ground.

The Captain, Dan and marines move over slowly to the old
man – still scouting round and covering themselves.

The old man lies DEAD.

His white robes are BLOOD SOAKED. The man's left arm and
part of his UPPER TORSO have been TORN OFF.

BLOOD POOLS AROUND the body.

The Captain RELAXES – and looks off.

CAPTAIN GREEN

Guess some of our boys are gettin'
a little target practice.

He stands looking down at the old man.

CAPTAIN GREEN

He had his time.

Dan watches as the soldiers react.

SERGEANT

Some fucker's havin' a joke on
us, Cap'.

The Captain scans the HORIZON for a place or BUILDING which
could hold a SNIPER.

SERGEANT

We done bin' dumped in the shit.

The Captain REMAINS COOL still scanning the horizon.

SUDDENLY SMITH and the marines SHOUT OUT

MARINE SMITH

CAP', LOOKOUT!!!

The Captain, sergeant and Dan ALL SWIVEL and

FREEZE

as a BOY runs from behind a fence near to the corpse of the old man and

RUNS SCAMPERING across the street in a PANIC.

The soldiers WATCH as the boy runs – terrified.

SUDDENLY – the boy's HEAD EXPLODES OFF from a SNIPER'S BULLET.

The boy's HEADLESS BODY keeps running for a few PACES – with BLOOD SPURTING, then FALLS. It is BRAHIM.

FLAILING AND TWITCHING.

The Sergeant, Captain and other soldiers all RELAX.

They TURN to STARE at each other OPEN-MOUTHED, then ERUPT to

CHEERS AND LAUGHTER

The Captain shakes his head and GRINS.

CAPTAIN GREEN

Best motherfuckin' shootin' I ever seen.

Dan stands watching silently – his face is PALE and set like STONE.

Dan FOLLOWS as the soldiers light cigarettes and move back to the vehicles – making sure they don't stay too long.

The soldiers get in the vehicles which start up – then the TRUCKS ROAR OFF into the distance.

CLOUDS OF DUST rise up as the trucks drive away.

SLOWLY – one by one – the CHILDREN who had run away down the alley start to REAPPEAR from behind FENCES and SHRUBS.

They move slowly to GATHER and to LOOK DOWN at the DEAD BLOODY BODY of their friend and to

STARE OFF at the disappearing TRUCKS which SOUND in the DISTANCE.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS – NIGHT

Dan sits on his bed drinking from the bottle of JD. He leans back and lights a cigarette.

Dan RUNS HIS HANDS through his HAIR.

He FLICKS his FINGERS. He SMOKES HARD as his anxiety RISES.

He RUBS his FACE and eyes – trying to gain some mental clarity.

Dan looks at his guitar standing across the room.

Dan's EYES move across the room AS

THE WARDROBE DOOR SLOWLY CREAKS OPEN

Dan waits – IN FEAR.

Slowly, a 9 year old BOY, in IRAQI ROBES – APPEARS from behind the door.

The BOY'S ROBE is SOAKED in BLOOD. It is BRAHIM.

Brahim moves slowly towards Dan on the bed – who STARES on in TERROR.

Brahim gets closer and Dan can see that HALF OF BRAHIM'S HEAD is missing.

Dan RECOGNIZES Brahim as the boy shot by a sniper in Baghdad.

Brahim shuffles close to Dan and stands STARING at Dan with BIG SAUCERLIKE, LIFELESS EYES.

Dan RECOILS.

DAN

My God. What do you want?

Brahim stares at Dan in silence.

Dan STARTS TO CRACK.

DAN
I'm sorry. I couldn't do anything!

Dan is distraught as the GHOST stares at him full of HATRED and SADNESS and PAIN.

Dan looks right into Brahim's EYES.

DAN
I'm sorry.

On Dan's WORDS Brahim FADES AWAY slowly into NOTHINGNESS.

Brahim has DISAPPEARED. Dan SIGHS with RELIEF.

Dan gets up and stands LOOKING OVER to where Brahim's ghost had been standing.

Dan stands SILENT — turning slowly — MESMERIZED by the EMPTY SPACE.

He comes to FULL AWARENESS of his ALONENESS.

Dan MOVES TO the

WINDOW

He stands by the drapes and STARES OUT AT NEW YORK.

FLASHBACK

THE OLD HOUSE

Young Dan and young Mel lie together as LOVERS — and whisper as sweethearts.

They are NAKED together under the sheets in the summer HEAT.

Dan stares into Mel's EYES.

DAN
I'll never leave you.

They make love.

END FLASHBACK

THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS

In his Hotel room Dan moves away from the window.

Dan moves to the table and takes his bottle of JD – he slugs from the bottle.

Dan STARES at the half-full bottle IN HIS HAND.

Then he looks at his guitar stood on the floor.

FLASHBACK

THE OLD HOUSE

Young Dan practises his GUITAR SCALES.

The DOOR to his room SLOWLY OPENS – there is no knock.

Dan's father, Mr. Boyd, stands at the door – IMPOSING.

Mr. Boyd smoothes back his white hair with his hand which still contains a smoking cigarette.

MR. BOYD

Daniel, I wondered if we might talk, there is something I need to discuss with you?

Dan stops playing and politely puts his guitar to one side.

DAN

Sure.

Dan waits expectantly as Mr. Boyd enters.

MR. BOYD

I'm not getting any younger, as you know, Dan.

Dan smiles nervously.

Mr. Boyd becomes impatient with the gentle and polite approach and changes his tone a little.

MR. BOYD

Anyhow, it is time for me retire. And you may have guessed, it's pretty obvious, really, that your mother and I had set our hearts on you taking over control of the business.

Mr. Boyd looks at Dan equating loyalty with love.

MR. BOYD

We hoped that you would continue the work I have done...

Dan fidgets uncomfortably.

DAN
I'm grateful for...

Mr. Boyd cuts Dan off.

MR. BOYD
...And the family itself feels
it is right for you to consolidate
what is a family concern, and a
means of a secure livelihood to
us all, Dan.

Mr. Boyd STARES at Dan.

MR. BOYD
The welfare of all of us will
depend on you, Daniel.

Dan looks at his father in disbelief.

Mr. Boyd is sincere and confident in his words.

MR. BOYD
I trust I can rely on you.

Mr. Boyd looks at Dan directly for a few seconds then gets
up slowly and walks OUT.

Dan is shaken by the ultimatum.

Dan picks his GUITAR and HOLDS it, LOOKING AT IT.

He strokes its beautiful WOODEN VENEER.

END FLASHBACK

INT. A ROOM, U.S. ARMY COMPOUND, BAGHDAD — DAY

Dan stands in a small windowless room with a table in the
middle.

On the table is a HOLDALL BAG.

Next to the holdall is a CANVAS SACK.

Dan removes wads of BANKNOTES from the canvas sack and
places them into the holdall.

With the holdall FULL, Dan ZIPS it up and exits to the
CORRIDOR

Dan walks the long corridor with the holdall.

Dan PASSES STEVENS.

Stevens NODS at Dan – then STARES at the holdall – then he looks right back at Dan.

Dan and Stevens PASS each other in SILENCE.

They walk on in opposite directions.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS – NIGHT

Dan swigs from his JD bottle then places it on the dresser.

He moves to his GUITAR – and he STARTS TO PLAY

GUITAR MUSIC SOUNDS THROUGHOUT

FLASHBACK

THE OLD HOUSE

DAN'S ROOM

It is NIGHT. Young Dan packs his SUITCASE – slowly. He is HEAVY-HEARTED in his movements.

His clothes lie in the suitcase. Dan lays his GUITAR MUSIC on top of his clothes.

Finally he takes a FRAMED PHOTO OF MEL and places it on top in the suitcase. He closes the case.

Dan puts his GUITAR in its case and CLOSES IT.

QUIETLY Dan exits his room carrying both cases and stands in the

DARK CORRIDOR

Dan LOOKS ALONG the corridor to where Mel is sleeping. Dan turns SADLY and goes down

THE STAIRCASE

Dan reaches the

FRONT DOOR

He opens it and EXITS OUT onto

THE STREET

Dan WALKS AWAY from the HOUSE and AWAY into THE NIGHT.

END FLASHBACK

THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS

Dan's GUITAR still SOUNDS as he sits in his room STILL PLAYING.

Dan finishes his piece and stops playing. He is silent for a moment. He puts his guitar down.

He gets up and stands over his half empty suitcase. He moves some clothes ASIDE – to REVEAL

INSERT

The PHOTO OF MEL.

END INSERT

Dan looks at the photo.

Then he picks up his jacket – GRABS the JD bottle and EXITS his room.

INT. ELEVATOR, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan stands in the elevator. He is DARK EYED and GAUNT.

INT. FOYER/RECEPTION, HOTEL OASIS – NIGHT

Dan exits the elevator and walks ACROSS to RECEPTION

EXT. STREET, HOTEL OASIS – NIGHT

Dan exits the Hotel onto the night streets of New York.

EXT. A STREET, NEW YORK – NIGHT

Dan walks the night street holding his bottle of JD.

EXT. STREET, THE OLD HOUSE — NIGHT

Dan stands at the front door of the old house.

He places the key in the door — and ENTERS.

INT. ENTRANCE, THE BIG HOUSE — NIGHT

Dan enters the house. MOONLIGHT SHINES IN.

Dan SHIVERS and looks around — APPREHENSIVE.

At night the atmosphere is different — MENACING even MALICIOUS as a DRAUGHT moves through the building.

The CHANDELIER TINKLES — DOORS CREAK.

Dan moves up

THE STAIRCASE

And stands in the GLOOM of the

UPPER HALLWAY

Dan SENSES something.

He moves forward slowly and nervously.

Dan looks into the GLOOM and listens — WAITING.

He SEES the SHADOW of a FIGURE MOVE in the DISTANCE.
Dan FOLLOWS along the dark HALLWAY lit only by MOONLIGHT.

Dan finally reaches a room with a CLOSED DOOR.

Dan stops at the DOOR. It emanates a SENSE of EVIL — like a force or DARK ENERGY.

Dan stands. He sweats and breathes hard. He is horror-stricken at what is BEHIND THE DOOR.

Dan drinks from his bottle.

SLOWLY Dan turns away from the door — which seems to HEAVE with MALIGNANT FORCE.

Dan walks back down

THE STAIRCASE

to the

FRONT DOOR

and out of the house.

EXT. A STREET, NEW YORK – NIGHT

Dan walks the streets.

He comes to a BRIDGE. He smokes and looks over the bridge.

A LARGE 4x4 drives by. Dan turns as the vehicle ROARS by.

EXT. A ROAD, BAGHDAD – DAY

The armoured patrol vehicles drive AWAY from of the shooting of the old man and the boy.

INT. ARMOURED TRUCK – DAY

Dan sits in the patrol vehicle. He looks sickened.

The soldiers smoke and chat with MOCK BRAVADO.

SERGEANT

We're outta there, man.

Dan looks down at the floor – ASHAMED, MOROSE – when

SUDDENLY

A HUGE EXPLOSION SOUNDS

The truck JUMPS UP as it is lifted by the force of the BLAST.

SMOKE and DUST fill the inside of the truck.

The marines are THROWN AROUND amid SCREAMS.

MARINE O'GRADY holds his HELMET.

MARINE O'GRADY

What the...?

Dan sees MARINE SMITH holding his neck and BLEEDING.

Smith CRIES OUT in pain and panic.

MARINE SMITH

Aargh!!!

BLOOD SPURTS from an arterial wound on Smith's neck as he writhes around.

The Sergeant jumps to Smith's aid – assisted by MARINE DIXON. The Sergeant applies pressure to Smith's wound.

Then the Sergeant TURNS to BARK his ORDERS at O'Grady.

SERGEANT

O'Grady...take over!

O'Grady moves in to help Smith as Dixon desperately makes up a BANDAGE/DRESSING.

The Sergeant moves back and checks the driver – WATSON.

SERGEANT

You okay, Watson?

Watson turns – shaken and bruised.

MARINE WATSON

Okay, Sarge!

The Sergeant LOOKS OUT of the truck WINDSHIELD to a BILLOWING CLOUD of SMOKE and DUST.

He WAITS.

He looks at Watson – and INDICATES the TRUCK.

SERGEANT

Are we still runnin'?

MARINE WATSON

Yep.

Watson hits the GAS – the truck REVS UP LOUD.

MARINE WATSON

She's okay.

The Sergeant SIGHS in relief.

SERGEANT

Thank fuck for that!

He PUFFS OUT his cheeks.

SERGEANT

Fuck shit, that was close!

The Sergeant LOOKS OUT of the windshield to the street as the smoke and dust clear a little – to REVEAL

The other truck – stood stationary in the road.

The Sergeant stares out at the other truck which seems undamaged.

The Sergeant REACHES FORWARD and GRABS the RADIO HANDSET.

He GROWLS into the RADIO.

SERGEANT

This is Two Four.
Do you receive Five Eight? Over.

There is only a CRACKLE on the radio.

The Sergeant WAITS.

SERGEANT

Cap'? Jones? The fuck?
You there?

Dan watches as the Sergeant waits. The radio CRACKLES.

They stare out at the other truck.

Then over the radio – a COUGHING.

CAPTAIN GREEN (O.S.)

We gotcha, Sarge.

There is more coughing and choking sounding on the radio.

The Sergeant looks to his own men – sees that Smith is being STABILISED.

The Sergeant relaxes a little. He SMILES.

SERGEANT

Motherfucker! That was close.
Fuckin' roadside musta blown between
us. Split the difference.

The Sergeant FOCUSES and speaks into the radio again.

SERGEANT

Cap'...we're runnin'. Do you
have power?

He waits.

SERGEANT
I repeat, Five Eight, do you
have power?

COUGHING sounds continue over the radio – amidst CURSING –
and the radio crackles – UNTIL

CAPTAIN GREEN (O.S.)
We're tickin', Sarge. Good to go,
I reckon.

The Sergeant GRINS.

He looks around at his men – all shook up.

Then BACK into the RADIO.

SERGEANT
Goddamn! Let's get the fuck
outta here.

He re-hooks the radio – and sits back to face his men.

SERGEANT
Alrighty!

The Sergeant looks at Smith.

SERGEANT
You take it easy, Smithy, my boy.
We're getting' you back to base.

Dan sits in the corner STARING OUT ASHEN-FACED.

The Sergeant looks at Dan then out of the windshield as the
front truck moves OFF and they FOLLOW SLOWLY BEHIND.

Dan stares ahead. He looks up as

MARINE FOSTER leans over him.

FOSTER STARES into DAN'S FACE with BULGING EYES.

MARINE FOSTER
Hey, buddy, you okay?

Dan nods silently.

Foster stares intently at Dan as the truck drives slowly
away out of the smoke filled street.

EXT. THE BRIDGE, NEW YORK – NIGHT

Dan stands on the bridge looking down into the dark water.
Dan HURLS the bottle of JD into the river.

He turns to walk alone back on the street.

INT. THE ROOM, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

MORNING. A bird sings outside Dan's half-open window.

The breeze blows in. Dan lies asleep on his bed – still in his clothes from the night before.

Dan STIRS – his eyes open.

He gets up and goes to

THE BATHROOM

Dan takes off his shirt and WASHES at the basin.

Dan shaves. He combs his hair.

He puts on a clean shirt and tie – then his jacket. He pockets his wallet and the OLD HOUSE KEYS.

Then Dan moves over to his guitar and puts it in his case.

Dan looks around the room – he picks up his GUITAR CASE and EXITS.

INT. RECEPTION, HOTEL OASIS – DAY

Dan moves through reception – and passes Burrows at the counter.

Dan NODS as he walks by. Burrows NODS KNOWINGLY at Dan.

BURROWS

Goodbye, sir.

Dan smiles.

Dan exits the Hotel.

EXT. HOTEL OASIS — DAY

Dan walks away from the Hotel Oasis with guitar case.

EXT. A STREET, NEW YORK — DAY

Dan walks the route to the old house.

He stops in the SUNSHINE as he sees

a MOTHER with her PUSHCHAIR which carries a young child of about 3 or 4 years.

Dan watches as the mother PARKS the PUSHCHAIR while she BROWSES the FRONT OF A FRUIT STALL.

The pushchair rests on a slight slope whilst the mother picks out her FRUIT.

In the pushchair — the BOY KICKS HIS LEGS RHYTHMNICALLY.

The boys kicking CAUSES the pushchair's BRAKE to SLIP — and the BUGGY starts to ROLL slowly down the sloped sidewalk.

Dan WATCHES as the pushchair rolls down the sidewalk — TOWARDS AN INTERSECTION.

Dan TURNS HIS HEAD — to see a large REFUSE TRUCK driving towards the INTERSECTION.

Dan SEES the TRUCK — then the ROLLING PUSHCHAIR.

He thinks to shout but in a SPLIT SECOND he STARTS to RUN — dropping his GUITAR CASE behind him.

Dan RACES to the BOY in the BUGGY — AS

The truck approaches.

The pushchair picks UP SPEED and NEARS the street corner and the INTERSECTION.

Dan RUNS as

The buggy BOUNCES OFF the sidewalk and ONTO the ROAD — the BOY singing to himself as he ENJOYS the RIDE.

Dan nears the buggy as he sees the truck reach the corner.

Dan races desperately as the pushchair rolls out right under the approaching truck.

Dan jumps out in FRONT of the truck and grabs the pushchair – flinging it back to safety.

Dan stands ROOTED as the TRUCK LOOMS RIGHT over him.

The TRUCK DRIVER'S FACE shows HORROR as he BRAKES and SKIDS to a STOP

ONLY INCHES FROM DAN.

The driver looks down at Dan and the buggy – and RELIEF floods his face.

A SCREAM SOUNDS

MOTHER (O.S.)

MY GOD!

The mother races down the sidewalk to take her BOY from the chair and INTO HER ARMS.

The mother stares gratefully at Dan.

Dan SMILES – not saying a word – and PASSES by the mother.

The BOY looks up into Dan's face.

The mother whispers.

MOTHER

Thank you.

Dan acknowledges her and walks back to his GUITAR CASE – which lies on the sidewalk – and picks it up.

He continues his walk to the house.

EXT. THE OLD HOUSE – DAY

Dan enters the house with his guitar case.

He leans the case against a wall and moves OFF into the house.

Dan contemplates the house.

He looks at certain aspects of the house which seem different in the DAZZLING SUNLIGHT which spreads through the windows and BOUNCES off the walls.

The STAIRCASE and angles seem to STRETCH into INFINITY or at least LOSE their DEFINITIVE BORDERS and OUTLINES.

Dan STOPS.

He REMEMBERS.

The SENSE of a PRESENCE RETURNS.

BUT — he TURNS

To SEE Mel standing behind him — SMILING.

MEL

Hello.

Dan gasps.

DAN

I didn't hear you...

Mel laughs playfully and tosses back her hair.

MEL

I thought I'd find you here.

Dan stands puzzled. Mel moves towards him.

DAN

Mel, I didn't expect you.

MEL

You never did.

Mel walks gracefully and beautifully towards Dan. But then Dan's face contorts in horror — as then

MEL'S BODY BEGINS TO FOLD IN ON ITSELF.

Mel's forward motion ceases and she WALKS ON THE SPOT.

TERROR AND PAIN COVER MEL'S FACE as she

HOLDS OUT her ARMS TOWARDS DAN.

Mel lets out a LONG PIERCING WAIL as her BODY RECEDES BACKWARDS away from him.

MEL

Daaan!

Mel's body RECEDES backwards into NOTHINGNESS.

She DISAPPEARS — leaving only the ECHOING TRAIL of her PLAINTIVE CRY in Dan's EARS.

Dan stares AROUND HIMSELF in a EMPTY ROOM.

Dan is AWESTRUCK, MYSTIFIED – PETRIFIED – he
TURNS SHARPLY as he HEARS what is a
COSMIC GROAN

Dan SENSES the PRESENCE

He looks around – he waits – KNOWING something else is
there – only waiting to arrive.

SUDDENLY

IN THE ROOM a PORTAL OPENS NEAR THE CEILING

From the PORTAL – which STRETCHES DEEP as a DIMENSION –
comes the SCREAMS of BURNING BODIES and the PULSATING
CHAOTIC RHYTHMNS of the NOISE of

WAR

Then the HORRIFIC NOISES CUT OUT and STOP.

Dan looks to the SIDE as another PORTAL OPENS IN MID SPACE.

Mangled, burning bodies writhe, scream and choke in acrid
BLACK SMOKE in their dimensional hell.

Then the portal closes OFF.

SUDDENLY – and just as ABRUPTLY PORTALS OPEN AND THEN SHUT
all around DAN in the ROOM.

SOME ARE BIGGER – SOME NARROWER OR DEEPER.

FLASHES OF COLOUR – BURSTS of COSMIC SCREAMS, GROANS,
WHIRRING – AND BANGING

ALL ACCOMPANY EXLODING, MELTING, TEARING OF FLESH – RIPPING
of

BODIES, LIMBS AND HEADS

Dan SPINS in UTTER TERROR

ECHOES of VOICES LOOP IN AND OUT OF PERCEPTION

VOICE (O.S.)
Best motherfuckin' shootin' I
ever seen.

Then all the CHAOS STOPS.

The ROOM is BACK TO NORMAL

Dan is SWEATING and TERRIFIED as
HE WAITS

A VOICE SOUNDS

VOICE (O.S.)
Wanna go for a joy ride?

Dan looks from SIDE to SIDE.

Then THE BIGGEST PORTAL

OPENS BENEATH DAN so that

DAN is ELEVATED ABOVE THE PORTAL WHICH STRETCHES OUT BELOW
HIM INTO INFINITY.

DAN LOOKS DOWN TO A MAYHEM of HORRORS AND NOISES.

THE full extent of RAPE, TORTURE, CARNAGE and the HORROR of
its NOISE

EXPLODE beneath Dan so that he is

BLASTED by the WHIRLWIND of its

POWER.

BLOOD PARTICLES SPRAY UP AS DOTS — YET RIVERS OF BLOOD
SURGE AND GUSH up BENEATH DAN like BURSTING WAVES.

EXPLOSIONS OF FIRE RIP BODIES TO PIECES

THE HORROR IS IMMENSE

when SUDDENLY the portal

SNAPS SHUT — TO SILENCE

Dan WOBBLER on his FEET

He looks down to a steady, normal floor. The whole room
RESONATES with the WEIRDNESS of SOLIDITY and NORMALCY.

Then Dan LOOKS up to hear a DEEP LAUGH which comes from a
DARKENED corner of the ROOM.

Dan PEERS into THE GLOOMY CORNER to try and make out what
seems to be a

FIGURE

That is ENTIRELY a SHADOW — and which

sits in the GLOOM

The figure can barely be made out – but its size, shape, vocal style and manner are just those of Dan himself.

The figure HOLDS a GUITAR – the same as Dan's – except it seems to have had the wear and tear of centuries.

The figure plays the guitar – a few bars of 'IDAHO'. Then it breaks off BORED – and looks up at Dan.

There is SILENCE.

Dan is SPEECHLESS – and TERRIFIED.

DAN

Who...who are you?

The figure TWANGS a guitar string LOUDLY then slowly puts the guitar down.

FIGURE

That wasn't really our style,
was it?

Dan shakes his head – lost.

DAN

What?

Dan waits.

The figure speaks plainly.

FIGURE

We are free to go now.
Thank you.

Dan stares in disbelief as –

A RUSH OF NOISE AND WIND BLASTS INTO HIM.

FLASHBACK

THE TRUCK – BAGHDAD

In the truck after the roadside bomb the Sergeant checks his men as they prepare to move out to return to base.

SERGEANT

Allrighty!

The Sergeant looks at Smith.

SERGEANT
You take it easy, Smithy, my boy.
We're getting' you back to base.

The Sergeant looks away in frustration regarding Smith.

SERGEANT
Goddamn fuckin' shrapnel!

Dan sits in the corner STARING OUT ASHEN-FACED.

The Sergeant looks at Dan then out of the windshield as the front truck moves OFF and they FOLLOW SLOWLY BEHIND.

Dan stares ahead. He looks up as

MARINE FOSTER leans over him.

FOSTER STARES into DAN'S FACE with BULGING EYES.

MARINE FOSTER
Hey, buddy, you okay?

Dan nods silently.

Foster stares intently at Dan as the truck drives slowly away out of the smoke filled street.

Dan looks around in a DAZE.

He feels the side of his HEAD — and LOOKS at his FINGERS which are COVERED in BLOOD.

The NOISE of the SCENE DISTORTS.

Dan SLIDES DOWN SLOWLY onto HIS BACK and LIES SLUMPED — almost HORIZONTAL.

Through the WINDSHIELD the BLUE SKY and WHITE CLOUDS DRIFT on SLOWLY BY.

MARINE FOSTER FACE LOOMS over Dan — LARGE.

MARINE FOSTER
Fuck. He's been hit. In the head.
Oh my God — he's going!

Foster holds Dan in his ARMS in a PANIC as DAN'S EYES ROLL TO WHITE.

Dan STANDS by Foster, in the truck — OUT OF HIMSELF as the Marine lays Dan's bloody body down on the floor.

The Marine tries to apply pressure to Dan's HEADWOUND which gushes blood and oozes tissue.

But Foster TURNS AWAY in DESPAIR at the gruesome horror and futility of his efforts.

Foster looks around – desperate.

The other Marines watch helplessly.

FOSTER
For Chris' sake – he's dying!

Dan stands by the scene and watches impassively – out of his BODY – as a separate figure – and

WATCHES HIMSELF DIE.

END FLASHBACK

THE ROOM, THE OLD HOUSE

Dan stands in the ROOM of the OLD HOUSE.

The flashback and what it tells him REVERBERATE with MASSIVE INTENSITY.

Dan stands in the room with the figure still in the gloomy corner.

SILENCE

The figure looks up slowly.

FIGURE
You may have noticed...
we were not alone.

Dan stares at the figure.

In a series of FLASHBACK IMAGES he SEES the other spirits.

CUT TO – FLASHBACK

The old cleaner at the far end of the Hotel corridor

Burrows staring from behind the Hotel reception

The very old figure sitting at the bar

The war veteran on the street

The old lady in the Diner

Marine Foster staring at him in the truck in Iraq

The old Jewish lady at Kennedy Airport terminal

END FLASHBACK

Then Dan begs to know.

DAN

What does it mean?

Calmly the figure answers.

FIGURE

We had to wander.
And atone.

Dan is confused.

DAN

Atone?

CUT TO

FLASHBACK

BAGHDAD

BRAHIM runs out from behind a fence and scampers in a panic.

END FLASHBACK

THE ROOM

Dan is back in the room with the figure.

The figure answers Dan's question.

FIGURE

You did.

CUT TO

FLASHBACK

INTERSECTION — STREET, NEW YORK

Dan runs and manages to reach the pushchair in time to
PUSH the buggy OUT OF THE WAY of the ONCOMING TRUCK — to
SAFETY

Just as the TRUCK

LOOMS OVER HIM

The TRUCK DRIVER'S FACE is full of HORROR as he
SLAMS on the BRAKES

But the TRUCK SKIDS and
HITS DAN

Dan FLIES BACK – his HEAD SMASHES into the ROAD.

Dan lies on his back in the road – as BLOOD OOZES from his
HEAD.

The truck driver gets out.

The MOTHER SCREAMS as she holds her BOY and COVERS HIS
EYES.

Dan STANDS BY – OUT OF HIMSELF as he watches his DYING BODY
lie in the ROAD.

Passers by arrive to help.

The dying body of Dan lies bloody – he tries to GET UP and
to RAISE HIS HEAD.

But his EYES ROLL TO WHITE and he
FALLS BACK – DEAD.

The mother looks down at Dan's DEAD BODY and WHISPERS.

MOTHER

Thank you.

Dan STANDS OVER HIS DEAD BODY LOOKING DOWN – then he WALKS
past the mother and child to

WALK SLOWLY to his GUITAR CASE which LIES on the SIDEWALK.

Dan picks up his guitar case and
WALKS AWAY

END FLASHBACK

THE HOUSE

Dan stands in the ROOM – ALONE.

The figure HAS GONE.

Dan looks around – waiting.

There is NOTHING.

SILENCE

Dan WANDERS the HOUSE as in a DREAM.

He PASSES through the ROOMS to SEE the
LIFE HE MIGHT HAVE HAD.

He – in late 30s – and Mel, 30s, sit on a SOFA, CLOSE.

They LOOK into EACH OTHER'S EYES and FACES.

MEL'S EYES SHINE BRIGHT AND LOVING.

HER LIPS, HER FACE ARE RADIANT – FULL OF LOVE. SHE WEARS
THE SAME SKIRT AS THE SPANISH WAITRESS IN THE RESTAURANT
WITH NEVILLE.

Dan puts his FINGER on her LIPS to touch her SMILE.

Dan stands in the

CORRIDOR

To TURN away from his VISION.

Dan WANDERS – FLOATING DREAMLIKE down the
STAIRCASE

TEARS ROLL DOWN his CHEEKS as Dan picks up his
GUITAR and he sits at the BOTTOM of the STAIRCASE.

Dan PLAYS HIS GUITAR – and

VERY VERY SLOWLY

HE FADES AWAY INTO NOTHINGNESS

Leaving ONLY the SOUND of a GUITAR

The SPIRALLING STAIRCASE and the OVERARCHING EXPANSE of the
HOUSE and its FEATURES –

GRADUALLY METAMORPHOSE and TRANSMUTE INTO an ESCHER-LIKE
CONTINUITY OF INFINITY.

The FRONT DOOR SOUNDS – OPENING.

A LADY'S VOICE – SOUNDS – OFF

LADY (O.S.)

Oh yes, it's a very desirable
residence. And nobody has set
foot inside for years...

Her voice and the FOOTSTEPS of OTHERS entering the house
TRAIL OFF into SILENCE.

THE END