

FISSURE
by
Nicholas Turner

VERSION 7

© 2006 Nicholas Turner
134 Langton Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
415-652-7037
nhturner@aol.com

WGAw Reg.: 1106615

FADE IN:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

PAUL GRUNNING (30s), haggard, opens his eyes.

He's lying on the couch, an old blanket draped over him.

Grunning reaches for his watch on a nearby table. A couple of framed pictures, lying face down, are also on the table.

Seeing the time, he gets to his feet. He's wearing a t-shirt and boxer shorts.

He knocks over a couple empty beer bottles as he gets up.

Grunning ambles to the closed door and KNOCKS softly.

GRUNNING
(whispered)
Sarah...

No response.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(louder)
Sarah.

SARAH (O.S.)
What?

GRUNNING
I need my clothes.

Grunning opens the door and slowly walks into the -

INT. GRUNNING BEDROOM - MORNING

Sarah (30s) lies in a queen-sized bed, rumpled sheets and blankets around her. She narrows her eyes at Grunning.

SARAH
What's the hurry? It's not like
you're going to work.

Grunning pads over to a chest of drawers and pulls out some clothes. There are more photo frames, face down, on the chest.

GRUNNING
I have my meeting.

She snorts.

SARAH
(sarcastic)
Of course.

INT. MEETING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning, bleary-eyed, sits in a folding chair in a drab room. A clock on the wall reads 9:30.

He's surrounded by a handful of others, also seated, groggily clutching coffee cups.

They're saying a prayer. Grunning doesn't really join in, just mouths the words.

GROUP
God grant us the serenity to accept
the things we cannot change, the
courage to change the things we
can, and the wisdom to know the
difference.

As the group says AMEN, Grunning's cell phone RINGS.

He pulls it from his pocket and looks at the screen. It says "Hudson."

He stands.

GRUNNING
I'm sorry. Have to get this.

The others glare at him, but he walks to the corner of the room and puts the phone to his ear.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - MORNING

An overcast day. Grunning drives his car down a quiet street.

He parks in front of a large house.

The property is impressive but not well-kept.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Grunning looks up at the house.

He stares down at some items on the passenger seat: a badge on a chain, a note pad and his cell phone.

He picks up the phone and stares briefly at the display - it reads 10:03 a.m. He dials.

GRUNNING
It's Grunning. I'm here.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

POLICE CHIEF HUDSON sits in his office. In the B.G., SOUNDS of frenzied commotion. Officers come in and out, handing him things.

HUDSON
What'd you find?

GRUNNING
(annoyed)
I haven't gone in yet. Where are the others?

HUDSON
(sighs)
Listen, Grunning. We can't spare another body right now. Dispatch is swamped.

GRUNNING
Why? What's happening?

Hudson doesn't respond because he's YELLING a muffled answer to a question in his office. He comes back on the line.

HUDSON
You're going to have to handle this on your own for a few hours. Til we can get some more men out there.

GRUNNING
Hell of a way to ease me back in.

HUDSON
If I could I would. Just get the interview started.

Grunning stares out at the house.

HUDSON (cont'd)
Grunning?

GRUNNING
Yeah?

HUDSON
(his voice softening)
How's the arm?

Grunning looks down at his left arm.

GRUNNING
Fine.

HUDSON
You can do this. It's routine
stuff. Check back later.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning pockets the phone and note pad. He puts the badge around his neck and checks the gun in his shoulder holster.

He winces as he rubs his arm, then pulls a bottle of pills from the car's cup holder and dispenses one of them.

He hesitates for a moment and takes two pills instead, swallowing them quickly.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

Grunning stands at the front door, looking down at his note pad. The words "680 Oakmead Lane. Ulster" are scrawled on it.

His cell phone RINGS.

He pulls it out and looks at the display, which reads:
"Sarah."

Grunning answers the phone.

GRUNNING
Yeah?

INTERCUT:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

SARAH

Paul, I...I didn't want to say this while you were at home. I know how you get.

GRUNNING

What are you talking about?

SARAH

You know it hasn't been working, you staying in the house.

GRUNNING

C'mon, Sarah.

SARAH

I'll make sure your stuff gets packed up. Just sign the papers.

GRUNNING

(getting upset)

What's the hurry, Sarah? What's the damn hurry?

Grunning steps away from the front door, looking around.

SARAH

I need to be done with this. Plan a future.

GRUNNING

And what about the past? Just forget about it?

She doesn't answer.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(softening)

You know if I could fix what happened. If I could go back and--

SARAH

It's not just that, Paul. If you don't understand by now...

She sighs.

SARAH (cont'd)
Sign the papers.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning slams his phone shut.

He walks to the front door again and KNOCKS. There's no response.

He checks the door; it's unlocked. He slowly goes in.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The windows of the room are clouded and dusty, and the inside of the house is very dim - as if it's gone from day to night.

The foyer has a doorway leading to a corridor and a stairwell leading upstairs.

GRUNNING
Hello?

He creeps across the room. From above, a NOISE. Grunning stops moving and looks up.

The ceiling CREAKS with the sound of a footstep.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Hello?

The footsteps stop.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm a police officer.

Grunning looks up the stairwell and listens. It's quiet.

He walks out of the foyer and into the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

It's brighter in here, but he sees no one.

Grunning sidesteps down the hall, looking at doorways.

The sound of a woman CRYING stops him.

GRUNNING
Mrs. Ulster?

The sobbing continues.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm here to help.

He puts his ear to it, hearing the sobs more clearly.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Ma'am?

He opens the door. The crying is louder still. Grunning steps into the -

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

There's no one there. The crying has stopped abruptly. Grunning spins around, confused.

He examines the room: a few pieces of drab furniture and shelves choked with books.

Grunning walks over to a bookshelf, noticing a series of science textbooks. Roger Ulster's name appears on the spine of several of them.

He pulls one of the books off the shelf and looks at the cover: "The Properties of Physics."

Grunning flips it over and sees an "about the author" blurb on the back, along with a picture of ROGER ULSTER.

The picture reveals a world-weary man in his early 50s. It reads: "A renowned scientist and academic, Roger Ulster teaches at Pullington University and advises the Pullington Defense Institute."

At that instant, someone in the hallway darts past the door.

Grunning drops the book and runs back into the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Once again, it's empty. The person is gone.

GRUNNING
Show yourself!

Frustrated, Grunning opens another door and walks into the -

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

The lights are on in the room, and there's a plate of eggs on the dining room table. They appear untouched.

Grunning puts his hand over them to feel the steam.

On one wall there's a window into the kitchen. A swinging door leads to that room.

The SOUND of a woman's voice comes from that direction.

EMMA (O.S.)
It's ready.

Grunning bursts through the door and into the -

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The corpse of Roger Ulster lies on the kitchen floor. There's a hole in his head, and blood has spilled across the linoleum.

Roger's hand lies to his side holding a .38-caliber revolver.

As Grunning stares at the body, the sight triggers a -

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

We see the vague image of toys on the floor. The SOUNDS of a child playing.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning staggers back in shock. He collides with a woman, EMMA ULSTER.

Grunning spins around to face her.

She's in her 40s, with a bewildered look on her face. Her eyes are red and wet from tears. Her hair lies loose around her shoulders.

GRUNNING
I'm Detective Grunning. They sent
me...

He stammers, still in shock.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
This was supposed to be an
accident.

EMMA
A suicide...my husband has taken
his life.

GRUNNING
(recovering)
When did this happen?

EMMA
I found him just a few minutes ago.

GRUNNING
And you haven't touched...the
scene?

EMMA
No. I called the police
immediately. You arrived very
quickly...thank you.

She SOBS.

GRUNNING
Who were you speaking to just now?

EMMA
What?

GRUNNING
You said something...before I came
in the room.

EMMA
There's no one here, detective. I'm
in a fog - maybe I was talking to
myself.

She lets out another SOB.

GRUNNING
Maybe you should leave the room,
while I...

EMMA
Yes, of course.

She continues to cry as she walks into the dining room.

Grunning immediately pulls out his cell phone and dials. He puts it to his ear.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

HUDSON
Hudson here.

Grunning speaks quickly, on the verge of hysterics.

GRUNNING
"Something routine," that's what you said.

HUDSON
Grunning? Is that you?

GRUNNING
Yeah, it's me. I need a medical examiner now.

HUDSON
Calm down, Grunning. Where the hell are you?

GRUNNING
Where do you think I am? I'm at the house.

HUDSON
House?

The B.G. NOISE in the chief's office swells. Someone YELLS Hudson's name.

Grunning looks down at the body.

GRUNNING
Self-inflicted gunshot wound...
Chief, I don't think I can handle this.

HUDSON
Listen, Grunning. Things suddenly got real hectic over here. I gotta go.

GRUNNING
I need help, or I walk right out of here.

HUDSON
Fine.

END INTERCUT:

GRUNNING
So you're sending--
Hudson has disconnected.
Grunning slams his phone shut.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Damn it!
He stares down at the body.
He has to look away. He walks to the other end of the room
and opens a door leading to the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Emma is standing there. Her eyes are still swollen with
crying, but she appears to have recovered a bit. She has put
her hair up in a ponytail.
She seems surprised to see Grunning.

EMMA
Oh, you're still here, Detective.
Grunning looks at her quizzically.

GRUNNING
Of course.
She stares at the floor, saying nothing.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Mrs. Ulster...

EMMA
I told you to call me Emma.

GRUNNING
You did?

Now it's her turn to look at him quizzically.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Right, anyway. I'm going to need to
ask you some questions.

EMMA

Fine.

GRUNNING

How many people live in the house?

EMMA

Four. Roger and I. Our son Andrew.
And Rachel, of course.

GRUNNING

Rachel?

EMMA

Roger's graduate student.

GRUNNING

She lives here?

EMMA

She rents a room from us. It was
easier that way - with them working
together so much.

GRUNNING

Are your son and Rachel both in the
house right now?

EMMA

Yes.

GRUNNING

I'll need to question them too. I'm
going to get some things from the
car. Don't touch anything.

She nods.

Grunning walks down the hall and into the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

It's much dimmer in this room, and Grunning struggles to find
the front door as his eyes adjust to the low light.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

He walks out to his car.

He leans against the car, trying to pull himself together.

Feeling as if he's being watched, he spins around and looks up at the second-floor windows of the house.

There's a young woman in one of the windows staring down at him, but she quickly steps out of view.

Grunning opens up the car door and looks in the glove compartment. Pill bottles spill out.

He shakes a few of them before he finds one that's not empty. Grunning downs a few of the pills.

He also pulls a tackle box out of the glove compartment and shuts the car door.

He walks away, forgetting to lock the car.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Grunning opens the tackle box and removes a roll of yellow police tape.

He stretches the tape across the doors of the kitchen. As he works, he avoids looking down at the corpse.

Sighing, he turns toward the body and crouches down next to it.

Grunning pulls two gloves from the box, puts them on and picks up the .38-caliber revolver.

He opens it and spins the cylinder. It's empty.

There's a voice behind him.

EMMA

I should have never let Roger keep that.

Startled, Grunning looks back at her.

Emma's face is still wet with tears, and her hair hangs loose again. She looks wild with grief.

GRUNNING

This is his gun?

She nods.

EMMA

I didn't think he had any bullets.

GRUNNING
He had at least one.

Grunning clicks the gun shut.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Where'd he get this?

EMMA
One of his military friends, I
think. He works at the defense
institute.

As she speaks, Grunning examines the back of Roger's hand.

EMMA (cont'd)
What are you doing?

GRUNNING
Checking for burns.

EMMA
What for?

GRUNNING
(without responding)
What kind of work did your husband
do at the institute?

Grunning places the gun in a plastic bag and puts it in his
breast pocket.

EMMA
Nothing he told me about. You might
ask Rachel. She would know.

Grunning looks down at Roger's clothes: a tweed sportscoat
and tie.

GRUNNING
Looks like he was going to work.

EMMA
Roger usually leaves at nine. This
was so sudden. I even cooked him
breakfast...

She trails off and SOBS again.

GRUNNING
(almost to himself)
Why would a man who was about to do
this get dressed for work?

Emma doesn't respond. She continues to cry.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Listen, Mrs...

EMMA
(recovering)
Call me Emma.

GRUNNING
Right. Emma. I know this is hard.
But please find the others and meet
me in the living room. I'll join
you in a few minutes.

EMMA
Okay...

She begins to walk out toward the hallway.

He notices something near the dining room door and stops her.

GRUNNING
Wait... what's that?

He points at some shattered pieces of china and a bit of
scrambled egg on the floor.

EMMA
His breakfast...he dropped it.

Grunning confused. At that moment, his cell phone RINGS.

He puts it to his ear and waves her away into the other room.

GRUNNING
Grunning...

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

HUDSON
Grunning, it's Hudson. Listen,
sorry to be short with you earlier.
We're jammed up over here.

GRUNNING
Well, I need--

HUDSON

I have a job for you. I know we wanted to ease you back in, but this--

GRUNNING

What are you talking about, chief?

HUDSON

(talking over him)

I wouldn't call on you like this. Frankly, you sound like you're still a bit...out of it. But we desperately need the manpower.

GRUNNING

I already have my hands full...

HUDSON

I just need you to baby-sit the scene for a few hours. Routine stuff - some kind of accident.

GRUNNING

What?

HUDSON

680 Oakmead Lane. It's the last house on the block.

GRUNNING

Chief, I'm here. I'm at the house.

HUDSON

Grunning...what the hell are you talking about?

GRUNNING

(frustrated)

I'm at the house. I'm standing over the damn body (MORE)

HUDSON

How'd you...

GRUNNING

You called me about this an hour ago.

HUDSON

No...
(reflecting)

HUDSON(cont'd)

Did I? It's been crazy here. But we only just got word--

GRUNNING

Well, you did. And you promised to send help. It's no accidental death. I told you this.

The BUZZ of activity at the chief's office escalates.

HUDSON

I'll get help. Just hold on.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning clicks the phone shut. In a daze, he looks down at the body.

GRUNNING

What's happening, Roger?

Roger, still very dead, doesn't answer.

Grunning walks out the door toward the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

He finds the door to the living room and walks in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

There's no one there.

GRUNNING

(annoyed)

C'mon.

He turns and yells out:

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Emma! I said to meet in the living room.

There's no response.

Suddenly there's a WHOOSH of someone passing by the doorway.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Hey!

He runs back out to the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

The hallway is empty. Grunning runs down toward the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The room is dark, and he sees no one.

GRUNNING
Get back here.

He looks at the front door - it doesn't look as if it's been opened lately. He stares up the darkened stairwell.

Grunning advances slowly and begins mounting the steps.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

The stairs CREAK under his weight.

GRUNNING
Emma?

He walks into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

It's quite dark as he makes his way down the hallway.

He KNOCKS on a door. There's no answer.

He turns the knob slowly.

GRUNNING
Hello?

Grunning steps into the -

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Weak sunshine filters through heavy drapes. The bed hasn't been made, but the room is otherwise quite neat.

Grunning steps over to the dresser and picks up a framed picture. It's a family shot of Roger, Emma and ANDREW ULSTER, a boy in his teens.

He puts it down and notices that one of the dresser drawers is pulled out a bit.

He opens it and stares at the contents: men's clothes, mashed up in a disorderly pile. The mess stands out from the neatness of the rest of the room.

Grunning notices something at the bottom of the drawer and pulls out a wooden box.

Putting two socks on his hands to avoid smearing any fingerprints, Grunning pops open the box.

It has a foam interior, with space for a revolver, but it's empty.

Grunning feels around inside the rest of the drawer but doesn't find anything else. He puts the box back in and shuts the dresser.

Grunning checks out the rest of the room. He opens a couple closets and peeks under the bed. He finds nothing unusual.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Back out in the hallway, Grunning makes his way down to another door. He grabs the door knob.

GRUNNING
Anyone there?

A sleepy female voice MUMBLES something from behind the door.

Grunning opens the door and walks into -

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - MORNING

A woman, RACHEL CLARIS (20s, attractive), has her back to the door as she draws the curtains. Suddenly the room fills with bright sunshine.

There are cardboard boxes scattered around the room, filled with books and other personal effects. It appears as if she's getting ready to move out.

She turns around to look at Grunning, startled. It looks as if she's been crying.

RACHEL
Who are you?

GRUNNING
I'm Detective Paul Grunning.

He extends his hand to her. She shakes it, warily.

RACHEL
Rachel Claris.

Grunning looks over to her bedside table. He sees a bottle of wine, empty, and one glass.

RACHEL (cont'd)
What are you doing here?

GRUNNING
(confused)
It's an unusual case, Ms. Claris.
I'm going to need to speak to each
of you.

RACHEL
What case?

He stares at her, shocked.

GRUNNING
You do know...about Mr. Ulster?

RACHEL
Did something happen to Roger?

Rachel looks panicked. Dread spreads across Grunning's face.

GRUNNING
Emma Ulster didn't tell you? You
didn't hear the shot?

RACHEL
What happened?!

GRUNNING
Roger's dead.

Fresh tears begin to stream down her face.

RACHEL
And she...

She trails off.

GRUNNING
She what?

RACHEL
How did it happen?

GRUNNING
He shot himself.

A puzzled look crosses her face. She shakes her head.

RACHEL
With what? He didn't own a gun.

GRUNNING
He had one hidden in his dresser.

RACHEL
He can't be dead.

GRUNNING
It's true, miss. I'm sorry.

RACHEL
Roger wouldn't...not today. He's
waited his whole life for today.

GRUNNING
Why...what's today?

She collapses onto her bed and SOBS. Gradually her tears turn to rage.

RACHEL
Oh, she couldn't stand it. That
bitch...

She tries to run from the room, but Grunning stops her. He holds her back and slams the door.

The door has an old-fashioned key in the lock. Grunning turns the key.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Let me go!!

She struggles to get free.

During the scuffle, she strikes Grunning's left arm. He GROWLS in pain.

The burst of pain triggers a -

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

We see toys scattered across the floor.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning manages to throw Rachel to the bed. He reels back, cradling his arm.

RACHEL
You have no right to be here.

GRUNNING
Trust me, this is the last place I
want to be. But until I get some
answers, no one goes anywhere.

She turns away from him. A silence falls as Grunning
recovers.

Grunning's gaze falls on one of the moving boxes. A framed
photo pokes out. It's a shot of Rachel, her arm around
another young woman. They look like sisters.

He looks away at the sound of Rachel's voice.

RACHEL
(coldly)
What's wrong with your arm?

GRUNNING
Nothing.

RACHEL
A little tap from me didn't do
that... Did you break it?

GRUNNING
(sighs)
Something like that.

RACHEL
Gunshot wound?

GRUNNING
I'm fine. Now tell me: Did Emma
Ulster have something to do with
Roger's death?

RACHEL
If she didn't pull the trigger, she
pushed him to it...

GRUNNING

How?

RACHEL

(talking past him)

I was already leaving. What more
did she want?

GRUNNING

Were you sleeping together?

She shoots him a look and collapses into more TEARS.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

I have to ask you...

Suddenly there's voice from behind the door:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Rachel? Are you alright?

Rachel's head jerks up from the bed as she stares at the
door. Her tears disappear in a flash of shock and terror.

RACHEL

It's Roger.

GRUNNING

That's impossible.

The doorknob jerks. The door shakes in its jamb, but it's
securely locked.

RACHEL

Let him in.

Grunning doesn't move.

Rachel's terrified eyes focus on Grunning.

The doorknob stops shaking. It's quiet.

GRUNNING

Stay here.

He unlocks the door and looks out into the hallway. It
appears to be empty.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning steps out, shutting the door behind him. He turns
the key in the lock and pockets it.

The hallway is quite dark. His eyes take a moment to adjust.

GRUNNING
Show yourself.

There's no response.

He feels his way down the hall and KNOCKS on the next door.

He turns the knob and pushes the door open with a CREAK.

The room is dark, but Grunning can see it's an office.
There's no one inside.

He moves along until he spots motion.

In the dark of the hallway, Grunning sees a man behind a plate of glass.

He stops suddenly.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Don't move!

He looks closer.

It's a mirror.

He SIGHS and keeps moving.

Grunning reaches a door at the end of the hall.

He tries the knob, but the door won't budge.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Is someone in there?

He shakes the door again.

A male voice answers - but not from behind the door. It's coming from another room down the hall.

ANDREW (O.S.)
Yeah?

Grunning moves down the hall in the direction of the voice, opens a door and enters -

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

A boy in his early teens slouches in a chair. The room is unkempt, a typical teenager's room, strewn with sports equipment and memorabilia.

His face in his hands, the boy looks up to face Grunning. He tries to hide the fact that he's been crying.

The shades are closed in the room, but beams of sunshine stream through the gaps in the curtains.

GRUNNING
Are you Andrew Ulster?

ANDREW
Yeah. You must be the cop.

GRUNNING
I'm Detective Grunning.

ANDREW
Detective, huh? What's there to solve here? You saw my dad.

GRUNNING
Was that you a few minutes ago? In front of Rachel's door?

Andrew stares up at him; he doesn't understand.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Is there another man in the house?

ANDREW
No.

GRUNNING
You haven't left this room in the last few minutes?

ANDREW
Are you saying there's someone else here? Someone who could have...

GRUNNING
Listen, Andrew, did your dad have any reason to take his life? Was he depressed?

ANDREW
I...I don't know. I mean, things
haven't been the same since *she*
moved in.

Grunning watches the hallway as he talks to Andrew.

GRUNNING
Rachel Claris.

ANDREW
That he would do that to
mom...right under her nose.

GRUNNING
So you know about your dad and
Rachel?

ANDREW
I thought something was up. It
wasn't til last night...

Grunning turns back to Andrew.

GRUNNING
What happened?

ANDREW
They had a big fight. All three of
'em. I could hear from up here.

GRUNNING
What'd they say?

ANDREW
Mom was screaming. Said she wanted
her out by the morning. Dad denied
everything, of course. Rachel was
crying the whole time.
(bitterly)
Big frickin' performance on her
part. Whiny little--

GRUNNING
(cuts him off)
Did your mom threaten anyone?

ANDREW
I told you, she told her to get
out...

GRUNNING
Threaten with violence, I mean.

Andrew stops short as he sees where Grunning is leading him.

ANDREW
If you think mom... I mean, if
you're trying to get me--

GRUNNING
What do *you* think happened?

ANDREW
I don't know. He must've been
upset. For bringing all this into
the house.

BANG, BANG, BANG...

Someone is pounding the door in another room.

ANDREW (cont'd)
Serves him right.

BANG, BANG, BANG...

Grunning looks back toward the direction of the sound, which
is louder now. He jerks his head back to face Andrew, as the
boy's words register.

GRUNNING
What'd you just say?

BANG, BANG, BANG...

ANDREW
Who is that?

GRUNNING
Must be Rachel.

ANDREW
Bitch.

BANG, BANG, BANG...

GRUNNING
(exasperated)
Jesus Christ...excuse me.

Grunning ducks out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The pounding has stopped. Grunning finds his way to Rachel's door and unlocks it. He steps inside.

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - MORNING

Rachel stands by the window. She turns to face Grunning.

RACHEL
How dare you lock me in here.

GRUNNING
I could have three uniformed officers restrain you. Would you prefer that?

RACHEL
What officers? Odd that they would send you here alone. Don't you people usually have a partner?

GRUNNING
We'll have more men here shortly.

RACHEL
Without a partner, I can't tell...are you the good cop or the bad cop?

Rachel turns back toward the window, which looks out over the front yard and the street.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Did you find Roger?

GRUNNING
I told you. Roger's dead.

RACHEL
I know his voice. It was him.

GRUNNING
Maybe it'd be best if we all went down to the living room.

Rachel doesn't respond - she's still looking out the window.

RACHEL
How'd you get here?

GRUNNING
What do you mean?

RACHEL
I mean, where's your car?

Grunning strides over to the window and looks out. His car is gone.

GRUNNING
Shit.

He dashes out of the room.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

He runs out the door toward the road. His car is right there, just as it was earlier.

He spins around. There's no one there.

GRUNNING
(shouting)
If you think this is a prank...

A dog barks in the distance, but it's otherwise silent.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
This is police property.

He looks in the car and sees the unlocked door. He slams his hand against the roof.

Grunning walks over to the front of the car and rests his hand on the hood.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(to himself)
It's cold.

He shakes his head. Dazed.

He opens the driver's side door and gets in. He pulls out more pills from the glove box.

Grunning sees his frazzled reflection in the rear-view mirror.

He pulls out his cell phone. The time on the display reads 10:29 a.m. His fingers hover over the keypad, ready to dial. But he stops himself.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Don't do it.

Finally he dials and puts the phone to his ear.

INTERCUT:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

SARAH
Hello?

GRUNNING
It's me.

SARAH
Paul, I think it's best if we
don't...

GRUNNING
No...listen, Sarah. Something's
wrong. Something's happening to me.

SARAH
(doubtful)
What are you talking about?

GRUNNING
I got called in to work this
morning.

SARAH
You had to go back sometime.

GRUNNING
It's not that. Nothing makes sense.

SARAH
I don't have time for this, Paul.
What do you want?

GRUNNING
(sighs)
Nothing.

SARAH
You think things are easy for me?
You think my life makes sense?

GRUNNING
We used to be able to could count
on each other...

SARAH
How can I do that when all you do
is remind me of Matty...of what
happened.

GRUNNING
I need help, Sarah.

SARAH
I know.

She hangs up.

END INTERCUT:

His hands shaking, Grunning puts his car key into the
ignition.

He ponders turning the key for a moment.

Grunning looks back at the house.

He sees Rachel in the window. She draws the curtains shut and
disappears.

GRUNNING
They'll kill each other.

He grabs the bottle of pills and gets out of the car.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning returns to the dining room. The plate of eggs is
still sitting there.

EMMA (O.S.)
Roger?

Emma walks in from the direction of the kitchen. Her hair
lies loose again, not in a pony tail.

She's startled to find Grunning there and staggers back.

EMMA (cont'd)
What are you doing in my house?

GRUNNING
Emma, c'mon. I'm Detective
Grunning. I need to you stay
focused here.

Something seems to register in her mind.

EMMA
Oh, the police. Took you long
enough to get here. We called hours
ago.

GRUNNING
Called?

EMMA
About the intruder?

GRUNNING
There was an intruder in the house?

EMMA
That's why you're here, isn't it?

GRUNNING
Why didn't you mention this before?
When was he here?

EMMA
Maybe 3 o'clock in the morning.

GRUNNING
Did you get a look at him?

EMMA
No. It was dark. He asked about
Roger...

GRUNNING
So you spoke to him. You didn't
recognize the voice?

EMMA
No.

GRUNNING
But he knew your husband?

EMMA
I think so. He asked about his
work. It was all so horrible.

GRUNNING
Could he have had something to do
with your husband's death?

She's stunned.

EMMA
You must be confused. My husband is
Roger Ulster.

GRUNNING
I'm aware of that, Emma.

EMMA
He's not dead.

Grunning moves toward the glass window that looks into the kitchen.

GRUNNING
Please, Emma. We can get through
this. Your husband's body is
right...

But as he looks through the glass, there is no body. Roger Ulster is gone.

He turns to face Emma, his eyes wide.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
My God...you moved him?

EMMA
Moved him?

GRUNNING
Where is your husband?!

EMMA
Upstairs.

He gives her one final look and dashes out of the room.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Grunning runs down the hall. Along the way, he hears a piercing SIREN. It sounds like a police car or ambulance pulling up.

He stops.

GRUNNING
Thank God.

Grunning runs into the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

And then outside.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

There are no signs of police cars or emergency vehicles - just Grunning's car sitting in its usual spot.

The sounds of sirens have stopped.

GRUNNING

No!

Grunning runs out into the -

INT. STREET - MORNING

He sees a police car fly along a distant street - headed in some other direction.

GRUNNING

They were here.

Grunning gets a determined look in his eye and runs back toward the house.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

He looks toward the stairs, as if he's about to run upstairs. But he looks down the hallway.

Grunning goes back down the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

He bursts into the -

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The room is just as it was before. Roger Ulster's body lies on the floor. The yellow police tape lines the area.

Grunning looks around frantically.

GRUNNING

How did...

Grunning ducks under the tape and approaches the body carefully.

He nudges it with his foot.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Still dead, Roger?
(beat)
God, what am I doing?

He slumps down on the floor, massaging his left arm.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

In the doorway, we see the vague image of a man and the glint of a piece of metal.

RETURN TO SCENE:

From his new vantage point on the floor, Grunning sees a glint from the wall. It's a spot directly across from the swinging door.

He crawls over to check it out. There's something small and metal wedged into the wall.

Grunning reaches over to his tackle box and pulls out a large pair of tweezers and a plastic bag.

He digs the tweezers into the wall and pulls out a bullet.

Grunning stares at the bullet closely.

He pulls Roger's revolver from his breast pocket and lifts it out of the plastic bag.

A large vase suddenly appears above Grunning's head. He sees a shadow pass across the gun.

Before he can look up, CRASH...the vase comes down on his skull and shatters. He collapses.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The front door opens and TWO POLICEMEN cautiously enter the house.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Hello? Police.

SECOND POLICEMAN
Grunning...you here?

There's no response, as the door slams behind them.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Why is it so dark?

SECOND POLICEMAN
Feels like a tomb in here.

The first policeman steps toward the hallway.

FIRST POLICEMAN
(calls out)
Grunning?

There's no response.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Grunning lies unconscious on the floor, the shards of the vase scattered around him.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

We see more details this time. The front door opens. Grunning walks in. He's holding a stack of files.

He passes MATTY, a young boy who's playing on the floor.

Matty jumps up and greets Grunning.

MATTY
Daddy.

Grunning struggles to keep hold of the files.

GRUNNING
Careful, Matty.

Matty eyes the badge hanging on a chain around Grunning's neck.

MATTY
Can I play with your badge, Daddy?

GRUNNING
(walking past him)
How many times do I have to tell
you: It's not a toy.

Grunning walks into the -

INT. GRUNNING DEN - EVENING

The room is a jumble of books, photos and files from police cases.

He drops the files on his desk.

Sarah calls out from another room.

SARAH (O.S.)
Where've you been?

GRUNNING
(shouting back)
Don't start, Sarah.

SARAH (O.S.)
You missed the meeting.

Grunning looks puzzled.

SARAH (O.S.) (cont'd)
At school.

GRUNNING
I...

SARAH (O.S.)
Forget it.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

The two policemen stalk the hallway.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Anybody home?

The two men reach the doorway of the dining room and push it open.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

They examine the room. The second policeman looks at the plate of eggs on the table, putting his hand over it. It's now cold.

SECOND POLICEMAN

Someone didn't eat their breakfast.

The first policeman stares in the window to the kitchen. But he doesn't see Grunning lying there, nor the body of Roger Ulster. It looks perfectly normal and empty.

The policeman turns away.

Emma steps from behind a cabinet and comes into view in the window. But the officer is already looking in the other direction. No one sees her.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING DEN - EVENING

Grunning sorts through the files on his desk.

SARAH (O.S.)

Can you give me a hand in here?

Grunning sighs, gets up.

He walks out into the -

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Matty is playing with his toys on the floor.

SARAH (O.S.)

Where's Matty?

Grunning glances down at Matty.

GRUNNING

He's fine.

Grunning walks into the kitchen.

As Matty plays, we close in on the front door.

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

The two cops are out front again.

The first policeman talks on his cell phone.

FIRST POLICEMAN
There's no one here, chief.

SECOND POLICEMAN
He want us to search the place?

The first policeman signals him to be quiet.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Got it, sir. We're on our way.

He clicks the phone shut.

FIRST POLICEMAN (cont'd)
No time. We got three more places
to check out.

The second cop looks back at the house.

SECOND POLICEMAN
Something's off here. Grunning's a
good cop. If he said there was--

FIRST POLICEMAN
(cuts him off)
Grunning was a good cop. Let's go.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

As Matty plays, the front door opens noiseless behind him.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

A glass of water is splashed on Grunning's face. He awakes,
lying on the kitchen floor, looking up at Rachel.

Grunning sits up and rubs the back of his head. He feels
something and looks at his fingers: blood.

GRUNNING
Did you hit me?

RACHEL
I found you like this.
(through tears)
Found you both.

Grunning looks over at Roger's body, undisturbed.
Then he looks around him, panicked.

GRUNNING
Where's the gun?

RACHEL
I don't know.

GRUNNING
Someone took Roger's revolver.

Grunning looks her up and down, to see if the gun is on her.

RACHEL
If I took it, would I be stupid
enough to keep it on me?

Grunning checks his own gun in his holster. It's still there.
He pulls it out and checks the clip. The gun is loaded.

Grunning gets up and looks around the kitchen. He sees a
round spot along the counter top - where the vase used to be.

GRUNNING
You and Emma fought last night?

RACHEL
Well, yes. But she's wrong about
Roger and me. We aren't sleeping
together...

She looks down at Roger's dead body and corrects herself.

RACHEL (cont'd)
...weren't sleeping together.

GRUNNING
Something must have set her off.

RACHEL
 Roger never tells her anything. So
 when she sees him sharing
 everything with me...you can
 imagine.

GRUNNING
 You had no romantic feelings for
 him?

RACHEL
 That's not the point. We never
 acted on them.

GRUNNING
 Oh, I think that may have been the
 point for her.
 (beat)
 God, what was he thinking - keeping
 you in the house.

RACHEL
 (getting angry)
 It was professional. I'm not one of
 those clichéd graduate students.

GRUNNING
 Assuming for a moment you're just
 an innocent bystander here, who the
 hell did this?

RACHEL
 You've ruled out suicide?

He hesitates.

GRUNNING
 I found a second bullet...in the
 wall.

Remembering the bullet, Grunning examines the floor.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
 I was holding it...

He notices a puddle of water near Roger.

Grunning pushes around the vase shards, looking for the
 bullet.

He cuts himself on one of the shards.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Ow.

Grunning sucks on his finger.

RACHEL

Here.

Rachel takes his hand and pulls him over to the sink.

She runs the tap over his finger.

RACHEL (cont'd)

It doesn't look deep. Hold still.

They lock eyes for a moment, as she holds his hand.

Grunning pulls away.

He looks back at the floor.

GRUNNING

Someone took the bullet.

RACHEL

So there were two shots?

He steps away from the sink and crouches down next to the bullet hole in the wall.

GRUNNING

If Roger did this himself, the trajectory doesn't make sense. I think the gun was planted on him.

RACHEL

Can't you test for that?

GRUNNING

Sure, but I need a forensics team.

RACHEL

If it's true, if Roger didn't do this...I think we both know what happened. You can't let her get away with this.

GRUNNING

No one's getting away with anything.

Grunning ducks beneath the police tape as he approaches the door.

He stops.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Wait, I need to know what Roger was doing today. At work.

RACHEL
It has nothing to do with this.

GRUNNING
Let me be the judge of that.

RACHEL
I don't even really know. I just worked with him at school, never at the institute. I wasn't allowed to set foot in that place.

GRUNNING
But you know about his work.

RACHEL
Bits and pieces. He was very excited about something today. That is, until last night. The fight...he got distracted.

GRUNNING
Do you know where he slept last night?

RACHEL
In his office, probably. I'm not sure he slept, though. He didn't sleep much in general.

GRUNNING
Emma said something about there being an intruder.

RACHEL
An intruder?

She pauses, thinking.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Wait a minute. I think I did hear a voice. A man.... God, I thought it was a dream.

GRUNNING
When?

RACHEL
Late. Two or three in the morning,
maybe? I have no idea.

GRUNNING
What did the voice say?

She shrugs.

RACHEL
I was conked out. I...I took some
sleeping pills last night.

GRUNNING
This man...the intruder...could he
be connected to the institute? Emma
says he asked about Roger's work.

RACHEL
A lot of people were interested in
his work.

Grunning looks down at Roger's body.

GRUNNING
Enough to kill for it?

She doesn't respond.

He walks out.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Don't touch anything.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

He looks to see if Rachel is following him. She's not.

He gets to the other end of the hall when his phone RINGS.
Grunning answers.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

HUDSON
There you are.

GRUNNING
Where's my backup?

HUDSON

I sent a car over there. They said you left. I dispatched a second patrol to make sure.

GRUNNING

Did they come inside?

HUDSON

Sure. They checked out the place. Said it was deserted. No body. No nothing.

GRUNNING

I was in the kitchen.

HUDSON

Grunning, I don't know how to say this...

GRUNNING

What?

HUDSON

I have nothing but sympathy for what happened. You know that. But...

Hudson falls silent for a moment.

HUDSON (cont'd)

You've cracked. You're not making any sense. I don't know where you are right now, but go home...just go home. We can talk later.

GRUNNING

And leave these people?

HUDSON

People? What people? I'm beginning to think this whole thing was a crank call.

GRUNNING

(his wheels spinning)

Wait a minute, chief. It's not just me. You said you've gotten a lot of complaints.

HUDSON

There's no pattern. A few missing persons. Some stolen property.

GRUNNING
Something's happening.

HUDSON
There's no connection, Grunn--

GRUNNING
(cuts him off)
Map it.

HUDSON
What?

GRUNNING
Put all the complaints on a map.
See if they're concentrated
somewhere.

HUDSON
I don't have time for that.

GRUNNING
Humor me, chief. I'm not the only
one not making sense today.

Grunning hears SHARP FEMALE VOICES.

END INTERCUT:

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Gotta go.

He hangs up.

Grunning turns to see Emma and Rachel at the end of the
corridor. He runs toward them.

Rachel is holding Emma's arms, trying to restrain her.

EMMA
Let go of me. How dare you?!

Rachel sees Grunning coming.

RACHEL
Detective, she's here. I've got
her.

Emma turns to Grunning.

EMMA
Please, help. She's crazy.

Grunning separates them.

EMMA (cont'd)
(seething)
You whore.

RACHEL
Murderer!

GRUNNING
Emma, I'm going to have to search
you.

EMMA
What is this about? Haven't I been
through enough?

GRUNNING
Were you in the kitchen earlier?

He begins to pat her down.

EMMA
Don't you dare touch me.

She grabs his hands.

Grunning stops abruptly and stares at her hands. Her fingers
are covered in bandages.

GRUNNING
How did your hands get like that?

EMMA
I cut myself...gardening.

GRUNNING
They weren't cut before. When did
it happen?

EMMA
I'm...I'm not sure. It must have
been since I saw you.

GRUNNING
Your husband is dead, and you
decide to plant azaleas?!

EMMA
It wasn't...I...

GRUNNING
Did you hit me with the vase?

EMMA

Vase?

RACHEL

You lying bitch.

GRUNNING

Quiet, Rachel.

(to Emma)

You cut yourself on the shards
picking up the bullet.

EMMA

I...I don't understand.

GRUNNING

Where'd you put Roger's gun?

EMMA

You...you don't have it?

GRUNNING

Listen Emma, we can discuss this
now. Here. Or I can arrest you and
take you to the station.

EMMA

But...Andrew would be alone...

GRUNNING

We'll take him in as well. Maybe he
knows something about how his
mother's hands got cut up.

EMMA

Roger's death was a suicide.

GRUNNING

That's your story now? Last time I
saw you, you said he wasn't dead.

(MORE)

EMMA

No, you're confused.

Grunning sighs and takes out a pair of handcuffs.

He begins to fit them around Emma's wrist.

GRUNNING

We have a unique opportunity here.
Normally this place would be
crawling with cops right now.

GRUNNING(cont'd)

All of them strictly following
procedure. As it is, it's just me.

He CLICKS the cuff shut.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

I could be your best friend here.
Just help me sort this out.

EMMA

Shouldn't I have...a lawyer?

GRUNNING

No lawyers here, just us.

EMMA

What about her?

Grunning turns to Rachel.

GRUNNING

Rachel.

He tilts his head, suggesting that she leave.

RACHEL

Fine.

She walks back into the kitchen.

GRUNNING

Here's how it looks, Emma. You shot
Roger. Then you put the gun in his
hand to make it look like suicide.
But you were sloppy. You fired two
shots.

EMMA

It's not true.

GRUNNING

(ignoring her)

When I mentioned we would check his
hands for powder burns, to make
sure he fired the gun, you got
worried.

She shakes her head.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

So you hit me. Took the gun, the
bullet and...

(thinking)

GRUNNING(cont'd)

Wait, you must have scrubbed his hands too. That's why there was water on the floor.

EMMA

I swear to you, when I found Roger, he was already dead.

He stares in her eyes intently, trying to spot a lie.

GRUNNING

Then what are you hiding?

She looks down.

He SLAPS the wall behind her.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(shouting)

Where's the gun?!

EMMA

I don't know.

GRUNNING

Fine. We'll do this your way.

He grabs her and forces her down the hall.

He throws her into the living room and slams the door shut behind her.

Grunning spots a chair against the wall of the hallway. He grabs it and wedges it beneath the knob of the living room door.

He shouts in the direction of the kitchen door.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Rachel, watch this door.

Grunning walks down the hall toward the foyer and stairs.

As he walks away, he hears Emma POUNDING on the door. It gets increasingly louder, reverberating through the house.

BANG, BANG, BANG...

When Grunning reaches the end of the hallway, the pounding abruptly stops.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Grunning is pulling out drawers from the dresser, scattering clothes all over the floor.

The empty gun case sits open on the bed.

He moves on to the closets, tossing out hangers and boxes. He finds nothing.

He stops dead. He stares at some clumps of dirt on the floor.

A smile crosses his lips.

Grunning looks up at a potted plant sitting on a shelf.

GRUNNING
Sloppy, Emma. Sloppy.

He grabs the potted plant and turns it upside down. The plant and soil shake loose and fall to the ground.

He gives the pot another shake and the revolver comes loose, tumbling to the floor.

Grunning carefully picks up the gun by the edges.

He grabs a piece of the scattered clothing and pops open the cylinder. It's empty.

Grunning puts the gun back in his pocket.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Grunning strides down the hall toward the living room door. Rachel is standing watch in front.

Emma is still KNOCKING on the door from the inside.

EMMA (O.S.)
Please...

GRUNNING
(to Rachel)
Open it.

She pulls the chair away from under the knob and opens the door.

Emma steps into the hallway. She's hunched over, her hands still locked in the handcuffs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(to Emma)
I found the gun, Emma.

EMMA
I...I'm glad, detective.

GRUNNING
Don't lie to me. You're the one who
hid it.

She looks away.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Now tell me...

He reaches into his pocket for the revolver.

And finds...nothing there.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
The revolver...it's gone.

RACHEL
What?

GRUNNING
I just had it.

RACHEL
Could it have fallen out of your
pocket?

Grunning's eyes blaze. He runs back toward the stairs.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Grunning bolts into the room and finds Andrew there,
crouching on the ground.

Andrew is handling something.

GRUNNING
Drop it.

Andrew bolts up, the revolver tumbles to the ground.

ANDREW
I just found it there.

Grunning reaches down and grabs the gun. He puts it back in
his pocket.

Andrew looks around the room at the mess that Grunning created.

ANDREW (cont'd)
What happened in here?

GRUNNING
(ignoring him)
Where was the gun? Exactly.

ANDREW
On the ground. Right there.

He points toward the door.

ANDREW (cont'd)
By the door.

GRUNNING
Just lying there?

ANDREW
Yeah. I swear.

GRUNNING
What were you doing in here?

ANDREW
Looking for mom.

GRUNNING
Have you seen that gun before?

ANDREW
No.

GRUNNING
Never?

ANDREW
Never.

GRUNNING
But you saw your dad's body.
Earlier. In the kitchen.

ANDREW
Yeah.

GRUNNING
Was the gun in his hand?

ANDREW
What? No.

Grunning gives him a look of surprise.

ANDREW (cont'd)
I mean, I don't remember.

GRUNNING
But you don't think so.

ANDREW
I...where's my mom?

Andrew walks out. Grunning moves to stop him but stops, lost in thought.

Grunning marches over to the upturned flower pot and digs through the dirt.

He finds something and pulls it out.

It's the bullet.

Grunning pulls out the gun and pops open the cylinder.

He tries to put the bullet into the chamber. It doesn't fit.

GRUNNING
Huh.

He puts both the gun and the bullet back into his pocket.

Grunning walks out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning stops short in the corridor. He's in front of the door he couldn't open before.

Grunning knocks. No answer.

He presses his ear against the door and hears a faint sound.

It's a small child LAUGHING.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Matty plays with his toys on the floor, occasionally LAUGHING to himself.

The front door behind him slowly opens.

We hear arguing coming from another room.

GRUNNING (O.S.)
You could've reminded me this morning...

SARAH (O.S.)
I can't believe you're trying to blame me. If you cared enough, you would've remembered.

TYLER (a man in his late 20s or 30s, hard features, weathered) appears in the doorway. No one hears him amid the arguing.

Matty has his back to him.

GRUNNING (O.S.)
Well, I'm sorry.

SARAH (O.S.)
Just once I'd like a sign that you gave a damn about us...that you put this family first.

Tyler watches Matty playing.

GRUNNING (O.S.)
You know I do.

SARAH (O.S.)
Do I? Give me a sign here, Paul. Something.

Tyler creeps up and grabs Matty. The boy makes a muffled YELP as Tyler puts his hand over Matty's mouth.

GRUNNING (O.S.)
What was that?

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning staggers back from the door. The laughing stops. He presses his ear against it and the LAUGHING resumes.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

No...

He reaches to grab the door handle, but the knob comes off in his hand. He throws it to the floor in frustration.

Grunning BANGS on the door, but it won't budge.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Matty?

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Holding Matty in one arm, Tyler draws a gun.

SARAH (O.S.)

Matty?

Sarah walks into the room.

She stops, stunned, at the sight of Tyler holding a gun.

SARAH (cont'd)

Paul.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Crazed, sweat pouring down his face, Grunning tries the door again. But it's sealed.

He bangs into it, crushing his left arm. Grunning GRUNTS in pain.

He staggers down the hall and opens the door to Andrew's room.

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

Andrew is slumped on the bed, crying. He jerks his head up to see Grunning.

GRUNNING

What's behind that door?

He points in the direction of the sealed door.

Andrew glimpses Grunning's crazed expression.

ANDREW
Are you okay?

GRUNNING
What's behind that door?!

ANDREW
At the end of the hall?
It's...nothing. Storage. Dad had it
sealed off to save electricity.

GRUNNING
Is there any other way to get
there?

ANDREW
No. Why does it matter?

GRUNNING
(recovering)
I heard...sounds.

ANDREW
There's no one back there. I swear.

Grunning stares at the floor. He touches his ear, lost in thought.

ANDREW (cont'd)
What the hell's going on?

Grunning leaves the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning hears soft FOOTSTEPS down the hall.

He looks down the dark corridor. There's movement at the other end of the hall - near the stairwell.

Grunning draws his gun from the holster and strides down the hall.

A man comes into view. He's dressed in a bathrobe, walking away from Grunning.

From the back, the man looks like Roger Ulster.

GRUNNING
(astonished)
Roger?

At the end of the hall, the man vanishes. Disappears into thin air. There's nothing there.

Grunning runs toward the spot and flails his arms through the air. He smacks his face and looks again. Nothing.

He scrambles down the -

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

And into the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Still nothing. No sign of anyone.

GRUNNING

No!

He braces himself against the wall, looking like he might collapse.

Suddenly determined, he heads down the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

He passes the living room door. The chair is knocked over, and the room looks empty.

Grunning strides into the -

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

As Grunning flies into the room, he tears through some of the yellow police tape.

Rachel is standing there, leaning against the counter. Roger's dead body is on the floor, same as before.

He reaches over to her arm and grabs it, squeezes it.

GRUNNING

You're real enough.

RACHEL

(alarmed)

Detective...

Grunning looks around. He can barely get the words out.

GRUNNING
Where'd...Emma go?

RACHEL
I don't know. What's wrong?

He stares into space.

GRUNNING
I don't...I can't...

RACHEL
What's happening?

GRUNNING
I saw...Roger.

Rachel looks down at Roger's body on the floor.

RACHEL
Where?

GRUNNING
Upstairs.

RACHEL
What?

GRUNNING
Walking down the hall. Then he
disappeared - right in front of me.

RACHEL
Like...like a ghost?

Grunning stares at her and nods.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Are you sure?

GRUNNING
I'm sure I saw it.

Rachel studies Grunning. He's a wreck - sweating, disheveled,
his hands shaking.

Grunning takes the pills from his pocket and swallows one.

He nurses his injured arm.

Rachel's gaze focuses on his arm.

RACHEL
How did it happen?

GRUNNING
He just appeared...upstairs.

RACHEL
No, I don't mean that. Your arm.

Grunning gives her a strange look.

GRUNNING
What's that have to do with anything?

She sighs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
...if you think I'm seeing things...because of that?

RACHEL
Was it an accident?

GRUNNING
It's not your--

RACHEL
What happened?

GRUNNING
I made a mistake.

RACHEL
Just tell me.

Grunning takes a deep breath.

GRUNNING
You really want to know? It was someone I put away. He got released early...good behavior.

Grunning half-smiles at the thought.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
He came looking for me.

RACHEL
He tried to kill you?

Grunning turns away from her.

GRUNNING

If that were it...God, if that were it.

RACHEL

Did he...hurt someone? Someone close to you?

She reaches out to him, but he pushes her away.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Detective...Paul, right?

GRUNNING

(stern)

This isn't about me.

RACHEL

(pointing to Roger's body)

You just told me you saw *that* man walking around. I'd say it has something to do with you.

GRUNNING

He was there.

RACHEL

I want to believe you. But I haven't seen anything. And you're popping those pills...

GRUNNING

These just ease the pain - they don't do anything else.

RACHEL

Depends how many you take.

GRUNNING

It's not just me. It can't be...

She approaches him again, stopping a few inches away.

RACHEL

I know what it's like to lose someone...to feel like it's your fault.

GRUNNING

You mean Roger?

RACHEL
My sister. She...got sick. They
didn't catch it in time.

GRUNNING
(still gruff)
How is that your fault?

RACHEL
She didn't have health insurance.
She never could seem to hang onto a
job. I could've helped her but I
didn't...until it was too late.

Grunning faces her again and touches her shoulder.

GRUNNING
(softening)
Listen, I'm sorry. But I'm fine.

RACHEL
I'm just saying, you're under a lot
of stress. And getting conked on
the head didn't help.

She reaches up to touch the wound on his head.

GRUNNING
(almost to himself)
One of them knows what's happening.

RACHEL
One of them?

GRUNNING
Emma or Roger...

RACHEL
Paul, Roger's dead.

GRUNNING
You heard him, his
voice...upstairs.

RACHEL
I heard something. But this...

She gestures toward the body again.

RACHEL (cont'd)
That is cold, hard evidence. It's
just not poss--

GRUNNING
(shouting)
DAMN IT, I SAW HIM!!

Disturbed, she backs away from him. She reaches for the phone.

RACHEL
Paul, I'm going to call the police.
You need help.

GRUNNING
(bitterly)
Good luck.

As she begins to dial, he storms out of the room.

After watching him leave, she stops dialing.

She hesitates for a moment and replaces the receiver on the hook.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Grunning returns to the stairs and slowly climbs. His eyes crazed, he draws his gun.

He creeps up the steps and into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He marches down the hall.

GRUNNING
(shouting)
Listen, people...I'm through with
this!

He's frantic, pointing the gun at each doorway as he passes.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm going to get some answers now.

From the bedroom doorway, Emma appears.

They can barely see each other in the darkened hallway, but her hair appears loose and matted from sleep.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
There you are.

EMMA
Don't hurt us.

GRUNNING
Where's Roger?

EMMA
You know my husband?

GRUNNING
Enough with the games, Emma. Tell
me what's going on.

EMMA
Please...

GRUNNING
Is this about Roger's work?

EMMA
I...

GRUNNING
What was he working on?

EMMA
Oh God...

Grunning makes a move for Emma. She bolts away, back toward
her bedroom door.

She escapes inside just as Grunning reaches the doorway.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

As Grunning runs into the room, the light changes. Emma
vanishes - just as Roger did before.

Grunning spins around, totally disoriented.

He runs back out into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He hears hurried footsteps at the end of the hall. He can
just make out Andrew running toward the stairs.

Grunning chases after him. But as they reach the stairs,
Andrew disappears.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Grunning stumbles down the stairs.

Breathing heavy, he marches back up.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He finds the door to Roger's office and BANGS it open.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Grunning steps into a cluttered home office. Rays of pale morning sunlight lance through the blinds.

Sitting at the desk, his head in his hands, is Roger Ulster.

GRUNNING
(his voice trembling)
Roger Ulster?

Roger looks up in surprise.

ROGER
Who are you?

GRUNNING
I'm a detective.

ROGER
Did Emma let you in?

GRUNNING
I...

Grunning stammers as he walks closer to Roger. He reaches out his hand.

Reflexively, Roger returns the gesture and they shake hands. Grunning stares down at his hand as he touches Roger.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
It's really you.

ROGER
What are you doing here?

GRUNNING
That's the thing. I'm
investigating...your death.

Roger pushes his chair back.

ROGER
What are you--why would you say
that?

GRUNNING
The last time I saw you, you were
lying in a pool of blood.

ROGER
Get out this instant. I don't know
how you got in here...

GRUNNING
Please, Roger. You of all people,
you have to believe this. You have
to explain what's happening.

ROGER
My explanation? You're clearly
insane.

Roger grabs the phone.

ROGER (cont'd)
I'm calling the police.

Grunning puts his hand on dial pad.

GRUNNING
What were you going to do at the
institute today? You had something
planned.

ROGER
How do you know about that?

Roger puts down the phone.

ROGER (cont'd)
Do you have some kind of badge?

Grunning pulls out his badge and ID and shows it to Roger.

ROGER (cont'd)
As you can plainly see...
(reading the ID)
Detective Grunning, I'm not dead.
Now please leave.

GRUNNING
I'm not going anywhere. And don't
you disappear on me again.

ROGER
Well, I can't tell you anything
about my work. It's classified.

GRUNNING
(frustrated)
Something has gone horribly wrong.

ROGER
I don't doubt you *feel* that way.

Grunning grabs Roger's shoulder.

GRUNNING
It's not in my head. Everything's
jumbled up. You're dead one moment,
the next you're right here.

They hear a shout from downstairs.

EMMA (O.S.)
Roger! Your breakfast is getting
cold.

GRUNNING
It's out of order.
(something clicks)
What time is it right now?

Roger looks at his watch.

ROGER
It's a little after seven.

GRUNNING
In the morning?

ROGER
Of course.

Grunning rips out his cell phone. The clock says 7:07 a.m.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emma sighs as she looks down at Roger's eggs.

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - MORNING

Rachel sleeps in her bed. The glass of wine sits next to her on the bedside table.

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - MORNING

Andrew lies in bed in his dark, awake, staring at the ceiling.

INT. GRUNNING BEDROOM - MORNING

Sarah sleeps in her bed.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning sleeps on the couch.

RETURN TO SCENE:

GRUNNING
(solemnly)
I arrived here at 10 a.m.

ROGER
Today?

GRUNNING
Today.

Roger stares long and hard at Grunning.

ROGER
No. It can't be. It was supposed to be contained.

GRUNNING
So this *is* about your work.

ROGER
I told you, I can't say...

Grunning sits down in a chair in front of Roger's desk. He draws his gun.

GRUNNING

I'm going to ask you this as a cop...but also as a man with a loaded Colt .45. What were you going to do at work today?

ROGER

God, if it's really true...I guess it doesn't matter anymore.

GRUNNING

Tell me.

ROGER

It's...it's hard to explain.

Roger thinks for a moment and picks up a piece of paper from the desk.

He folds the piece of paper several times, until it forms a tight square.

ROGER (cont'd)

You understand that time is a dimension.

GRUNNING

Sure.

Roger picks up some scissors and starts to cut the paper.

ROGER

Imagine that this is time unfolding. But you see, I've made these cuts.

He slowly unfolds the paper.

ROGER (cont'd)

Suddenly, time doesn't unfold in a linear way.

As he opens piece of paper, it takes the form of a series of complex shapes - like paper dolls, only they look more like abstract crystals.

ROGER (cont'd)

It splits up, divides. It may be one time here - another time a few feet away.

GRUNNING
(pointing at the paper)
These cuts...how would you do that?

ROGER
A very intense pulse of energy. But
not one that harms physical things.
That's just it, I didn't want to
hurt anyone. The first three
dimensions are left intact.

GRUNNING
It just sets time off-kilter?

ROGER
Exactly.

Grunning stands. He shakes his head, confused.

GRUNNING
It doesn't make sense. Stand up.

ROGER
What are you...

GRUNNING
Walk toward me.

Grunning backs out of the room into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

The hallway darkens. Roger vanishes.

Grunning walks back into -

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

In the sunshine of the office, Roger reappears.

GRUNNING
You didn't follow me.

ROGER
I can't cross the fissures.

GRUNNING
Why not?

ROGER

I was here when the test happened.
I'm inside it.

GRUNNING

But then how can I...

ROGER

Where were you at around 9:30 this morning?

GRUNNING

Across town.

ROGER

(almost to himself)

Yes, of course. You weren't nearby at the time of the disturbance. We were supposed to start at 9:30...it makes perfect sense.

GRUNNING

I don't understand.

ROGER

It's 7:11 right now. If I leave the room, it will still be 7:11 for me. Nothing appears wrong...but it is wrong. You're an observer, an outsider. You see things as they truly are.

GRUNNING

First time someone's said that to me today.

ROGER

You said you saw my body...

GRUNNING

Your...corpse is in the kitchen.

ROGER

How?

GRUNNING

Gunshot to the head.

ROGER

Who would do that?

GRUNNING

Is it safe to assume you're not suicidal?

ROGER

For now.

GRUNNING

Then you've been murdered.

Roger looks down, stunned.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

But we have time. We can stop this.

Roger looks up again, a sad expression on his face.

ROGER

I'm not sure it works that way. Whatever's happened has happened. I mean, it will happen and it has happened.

GRUNNING

What?

ROGER

The course of events. We're going through the motions. Our piece of the puzzle right now, it fits into everything else. You can't make a new puzzle.

GRUNNING

Of course you can. We can do whatever we want.

ROGER

Maybe me knowing that I'm going to be killed is what leads me to be killed.

GRUNNING

You don't know that.

ROGER

Maybe you're the killer.

Grunning ignores him; he's thinking.

GRUNNING

These fissures...how far back could they go?

ROGER
Who's to say? Days...months...
years, maybe.

Grunning stands up and looks at his cell phone, which now reads 7:13 a.m.

He backs out of the room still staring at Roger. As he passes out through the doorway into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

It's dark. The phone glows 3:13 a.m.

He walks down the hall and into the -

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Afternoon daylight filters through the room's heavy curtains.

The phone display reads 4:13 p.m.

Grunning pauses for a moment and touches his chest - as if he feels pain there.

Suddenly the phone lights up, ringing. The name "Hudson" flashes on the screen.

Grunning answers the phone.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

HUDSON
I wasn't going to check this out,
Grunning. But I figured I owed you
that much.

GRUNNING
Check what out?

HUDSON
I graphed all our complaints on a
map. Here's the weird thing. They
make a big circle.

GRUNNING
Let me guess: The defense lab is in
the middle.

HUDSON
How did you...

GRUNNING
Where am I on the map?

HUDSON
Don't tell me you're still at that
house...on Oakmead?

Grunning walks over to one of the curtains.

GRUNNING
Yes.

HUDSON
You're less than a mile from the
center.

Grunning draws the curtains and stares out across a field. A
boxy government building lies in the background.

HUDSON (cont'd)
What's going on, Grunning?

GRUNNING
I need a little more time.

HUDSON
(quieter)
It's not getting better over here.
A lot of the guys...

GRUNNING
What?

HUDSON
They haven't reported back in a
while. Their radios...they've just
gone dead.

GRUNNING
(sighs)
I'll do what I can.

Grunning clicks the phone shut.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning walks out of the room.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning begins walking down the hall but stops.

He stares at the door at the end of the corridor - the one he couldn't open earlier.

His eyes go wide.

Grunning puts his ear to the door. Again, he hears the dim sound of a child LAUGHING.

GRUNNING

Matty?

He presses harder against the door. The laughing gets louder.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Oh God, it is you.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tyler holds Matty, points the gun at Sarah.

Grunning appears in the kitchen doorway. He's aiming his gun at Tyler.

TYLER

Nice family you have here,
Grunning.

SARAH

(to Tyler)
Who are you?

TYLER

(to Grunning)
You know, I had a nice family too.

GRUNNING

What are you doing here, Tyler?

TYLER

When I was inside, they
disappeared. Big surprise, I guess.

GRUNNING

You'll go back to jail.

TYLER
You think I care about that...about
anything.

GRUNNING
What do you want?

TYLER
You took something from me. I'll
take something from you.

Tyler points the gun toward Matty's head. Grunning FIRES.
Just as Grunning shoots, Tyler shifts his position.
Grunning's bullet hits Matty, killing him instantly.
Tyler FIRES back at Grunning, hitting him in the arm.
Grunning continues FIRING, emptying his gun into Tyler.
Tyler collapses, dead.
Grunning drops down to Matty.
He cradles the child in his arms. Toys are scattered around
him.
Sarah SOBS.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning's head is pressed against the door.

GRUNNING
It's going to be okay, Matty.

Grunning begins slamming his body against the door, trying to
open it.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm going to get you.

The door doesn't budge.

The pain in his left arm flares up and he stops to clutch it,
GROANING.

Frustrated, he looks around.

He walks down the hall to -

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Roger is now standing, looking out the window. He's lost in thought.

GRUNNING
I need an axe.

ROGER
What? Why would--

GRUNNING
(shouting)
I NEED AN AXE!

ROGER
There's a hatchet in the hall
closet downstairs. What are you
doing?

GRUNNING
That door you sealed up. I'm going
to open it.

Grunning turns around and marches out.

ROGER
It's not going to work.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Grunning checks his cell phone, which reads 12:17 p.m.
He opens a closet door and digs through the clutter.
Triumphantly, he pulls out a hatchet.
He tests its weight and heads back toward the stairs.
Grunning reaches the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

He looks down. The hatchet has vanished.

GRUNNING
No!

He looks around for a moment and steps back into the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

The hatchet reappears in his hand.

He grips it tightly and rushes back into the -

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Again, the hatchet disappears.

Grunning GROWLS in frustration.

He runs toward the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He stands in front of the sealed door.

Grunning searches his pockets desperately.

He retrieves a Swiss Army knife.

He pops open the blade and shoves the knife into the socket that once held the door knob.

A small piece of wood pops out the other side, creating a hole.

Breathing heavily, he crouches and puts his eye to the hole.

INT. BACK ROOM - EVENING

It's a small but brightly lit room, filled with children's furniture.

A woman, her back to us, sits by a small bed. She's reading to an unseen child.

WOMAN

...all the king's horses and all
the king's men couldn't put Humpty
together again.

We hear the voice of a 4-year-old boy.

CHILD

Again!

WOMAN
No, that's the last time. You have
to go to bed.

CHILD
Will Daddy say g'night?

WOMAN
No.

CHILD
Why?

WOMAN
He's at work.

CHILD
Why?

WOMAN
Because his work is important.

CHILD
Will he see my game tomorrow?

WOMAN
I don't know...now go to sleep.

The woman clicks off a bedside light. She stands.

CHILD
I love you, mom.

She turns and faces our direction. It's Emma, years younger.

EMMA
I love you too, Andrew.

She walks toward the doorway, disappearing with a swish as
she passes through.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning pulls his eye away from the door.

Still breathing heavy, he stares into the darkened corridor.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Grunning enters with a pained look.

He puts his hand on his chest for a moment. The pain passes.
Roger is back at his desk, drawing something on a piece of paper.

GRUNNING
(gesturing)
What was that room?

ROGER
It used to be Andrew's. He outgrew it.

GRUNNING
The time...it must have been 10 years ago.

Grunning slumps down in the chair across from Roger.

ROGER
I'm not surprised. It probably got the brunt of it.

GRUNNING
What?

Roger shows him the paper. It's a sketch of the house and the institute, with an open field separating the two.

ROGER
It's the part of the house closest to the lab. The pulse would have struck here...

He points to the edge of the house.

ROGER (cont'd)
...and radiated out from there.

Grunning winces again and touches his chest.

ROGER (cont'd)
What's wrong?

GRUNNING
I don't know...something in my chest.

Roger looks down, panicked.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
What?

ROGER

Well, there was a problem. In the earlier tests...

GRUNNING

What happened?

ROGER

I'm not sure you want to know...

GRUNNING

What happened?!

ROGER

We were working at a microscopic scale. That's how we were able to keep it contained. But the fissures...they would get more and more unstable.

GRUNNING

Unstable...how?

ROGER

The living things we tested...they were bacterium. In the beginning, they'd be fine. But after a while, I'd find a cilium here, a bit of proteus there.

GRUNNING

I don't understand.

ROGER

They'd been sheared apart.

Grunning stands up, steps away.

GRUNNING

(alarmed)

So...what does that mean for me?

ROGER

If you keep passing through the fissures...well, you'll feel it first in your internal organs. Your heart, lungs, maybe your brain. Sooner or later...

GRUNNING

We need to fix this, Roger.

ROGER
I don't know if that's possible.

GRUNNING
We can change the course of this.
You're telling me everything's
predetermined?

Roger shrugs.

Grunning grabs a mug off of Roger's desk and hurls it against the wall. It SHATTERS loudly.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
You're telling me, I already did
that? Or I *will* already do that?
No! It doesn't work that way.

There's a voice from downstairs.

EMMA (O.S.)
Roger? What was that noise?

ROGER
(shouting)
Nothing, Emma. I dropped something.

EMMA (O.S.)
Would you get down here? Your
breakfast...

ROGER
Just a second.

GRUNNING
You can't go down there.

ROGER
Why?

GRUNNING
You're about to get killed, Roger.

ROGER
When does it happen?

GRUNNING
I'm not sure. Sometime before nine.

ROGER
Well...I don't know what to do.

GRUNNING
We're going to figure this out.
We're going to stop this.

ROGER
How?

GRUNNING
Who did it?

ROGER
That's what I don't understand.
Emma...she just wouldn't...

GRUNNING
She might if she thought you were
cheating.

ROGER
It's not like that. She came in
here a couple hours ago, in tears.
She said there was an intruder in
the house...

Grunning manages a smile.

GRUNNING
It was me...it was me all along.

ROGER
What?

GRUNNING
I was the intruder. God, why didn't
I think of that before?

ROGER
I held her for a while. I think it
helped her forget about Rachel.

GRUNNING
She's not the only one with a
motive here.

ROGER
Rachel? What possible motive would--

GRUNNING
I don't mean Rachel. I mean your
son.

Grunning steps outside into the -

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He feels a tinge in his chest and rubs it. But he quickly recovers.

He pops open his phone, which reads 3:24 a.m.

Grunning KNOCKS on Andrew's door.

ANDREW
(sleepy)
Yeah?

Grunning opens the door and steps inside.

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

Another twitch of pain crosses Grunning's face.

The clock on his phone now reads 12:54 p.m.

Andrew is sitting at his desk. He's looking at an old photo album.

ANDREW
Whoa. Ever hear of knocking?

GRUNNING
I did knock.

ANDREW
I didn't hear anything.

GRUNNING
(thinking)
No...no, of course you didn't.

ANDREW
What do you want?

Grunning doesn't answer.

He looks at a shelf lined with sports trophies.

GRUNNING
You play lacrosse?

ANDREW
Yeah. Soccer too.

GRUNNING
Looks like you're pretty good.

ANDREW
Coach says I have a shot at a scholarship.

GRUNNING
That must've made your dad proud.

ANDREW
(looks down)
We didn't talk about that kind of stuff.

GRUNNING
Why not?

ANDREW
He thought it was stupid.

GRUNNING
He said that?

ANDREW
No...I could just tell.

GRUNNING
That must've bothered you.

Andrew shrugs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Did you ever ask him how he felt?

ANDREW
Why? He never asked *me* anything.

GRUNNING
I'm just saying--

ANDREW
(angry)
It's too late now. Why the hell do you care?

GRUNNING
I'm sorry, you're right.

Grunning looks down at his phone. It reads 12:55 p.m.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
It is too late.

Grunning leaves the room.

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Grunning steps into the room, clutching his chest in pain.

Roger looks up from his desk, concerned.

ROGER
You can't keep doing that.

GRUNNING
It's okay for now. Nothing I can't handle.

ROGER
It's only going to get worse.

Grunning looks at his phone: 7:26 a.m.

GRUNNING
Listen, Roger. You need to talk to your son. I mean a real talk.

ROGER
You want me to tell him about this?

GRUNNING
No, about him. About how you feel.

ROGER
What?

GRUNNING
He needs to know. *You* need him to know.

ROGER
I...I love my son.

GRUNNING
When's the last time you told him that?

ROGER
We don't have that kind of relationship--

GRUNNING
There's still time to change that. Maybe we can't fix everything, but we can fix that.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Massaging his chest, Grunning holds his phone.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

GRUNNING
Chief, one thing.

HUDSON
Yeah?

GRUNNING
My house...is it inside the circle?
On the map you made.

HUDSON
(pauses)
Yes.

GRUNNING
(stoic)
Right.

Grunning clicks the phone shut.

END INTERCUT:

He stands there for a moment, still touching his chest. A grimace of pain crosses his face.

He pulls something from his pocket and looks at it. It's the bottle of pills.

INT. CAR - MORNING

Sitting in the driver's seat, Grunning starts the car and peels out.

He speeds down the street and toward the intersection, which appears clear.

But in the middle of the intersection, the daylight suddenly disappears.

A truck barrels toward him, its HORN BLARING.

GRUNNING

Jesus.

Grunning barely swerves out of the way.

As the car skids, the truck vanishes. Daylight returns.

Grunning recovers and keeps driving.

EXT. GRUNNING HOUSE - MORNING

Grunning pulls up in front of his house.

He hops out of the car and checks his cell phone. It reads 11:28 a.m.

He marches toward the front door.

Grunning BANGS on the door.

GRUNNING

Sarah?

He pulls out his keys and tries one of them in the lock.

It doesn't turn. The lock is brand-new.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Damn it, Sarah.

Grunning goes around to one of the windows and SMASHES it.

He begins to crawl in.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning walks around the room with his cell phone open, checking the time.

It glows 11:28 a.m. and doesn't change as he moves.

GRUNNING

C'mon. C'mon.

INT. GRUNNING KITCHEN - MORNING

He passes through the kitchen. No change in time.

INT. MATTY'S BEDROOM - MORNING

He walks into a child's bedroom. It's filled with toys, but they have a layer of dust.

Grunning picks up a building block, severing a silk thread of a spider's web. He looks at it sadly.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Back in the living room, he passes the framed pictures by the couch. They're all face down.

He picks one up and looks at it. It's of Grunning, Sarah and Matty.

Grunning glances back at his phone - no change. Discouraged, he puts the phone away.

He walks to the door.

On the way, he sees a shaft of light cutting cross the edge of the floor. It's wide and doesn't look natural.

Grunning crouches down in the shaft. Suddenly the scene changes.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Warm lights are on. A few toys are scattered on the floor.

GRUNNING

Matty?

There's no response.

Grunning winces in pain and pulls out the pill bottle. He takes one of the pills.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Matty!

In another room, we hear a soft GIGGLE.

Then the PATTERN of a child's footsteps.

Matty appears in the living room and runs toward Grunning.

MATTY

Daddy.

Grunning grabs Matty and hugs him tightly.

GRUNNING
Oh God, Matty. It's you. It's
really you.

MATTY
What's wrong, Daddy?

GRUNNING
Nothing's wrong, Matty.
Everything's perfect.

Matty turns back toward the other room.

MATTY
Mommy's reading a story.

The child turns to run back. Grunning sits up to stop him and his head passes out of the shaft of light.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

The scene changes back into a drab empty room.

GRUNNING
No!

He crouches back down again.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The room changes back to the past.

He sees Matty running away, back toward his bedroom.

GRUNNING
Matty, please. I need to tell you
something.

The child returns to Grunning.

Grunning holds him tight again.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I want you to promise me something.

He's trying to think of what to say, his wheels spinning.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
If you see someone you don't
know...in the house. A stranger.
You have to get away. You have to
scream.

MATTY
I know that, Daddy.

GRUNNING
No, really, Matty. This time is for
real. Please. Promise me.

MATTY
Okay, Daddy.

Grunning hesitates, thinking.

FLASHFORWARD:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tyler creeps in the front door. He spots Matty.

Before Matty can scream, Tyler grabs the boy. He cups his
hand over Matty's mouth.

RETURN TO SCENE:

GRUNNING
(almost to himself)
No, that won't be enough. There has
to be something I can tell you.

MATTY
Daddy, can I play with your badge?

GRUNNING
No Matty, I'm trying to--

Matty reaches for the badge. Grunning sighs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Fine.

He pulls it from around his neck and gives it to Matty.

Matty begins playing with it intently.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Please, Matty. You have to listen.

MATTY
Come hear the story.

He begins to pull away again.

GRUNNING
(fighting back tears)
No, Matty please. Please.

Matty stares at him blankly. Grunning shakes his head.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(to himself)
It's no use.

Grunning shifts position so that he can stare Matty in the face.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Look at me, Matty.

Matty's gaze connects with Grunning's.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I love you, okay? You know that.

MATTY
I love you too, Daddy.

GRUNNING
No matter where I am, or where you
are - I love you. Everywhere and
forever.

MATTY
Everywhere and forever.

GRUNNING
Remember that.

Sarah calls out from another room.

SARAH (O.S.)
Matty?

Matty looks back toward his room. He tries to pull Grunning in that direction.

GRUNNING
I'm sorry...there's something I
have to take care of.

MATTY
Okay, Daddy.

Matty pulls away, and Grunning stands.

The room changes back to the drab daylight version. Grunning shakes with emotion.

He walks out the door.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

Grunning's car pulls up in front of the Ulster house. It has several new dents.

He gets out and walks into the house.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Grunning talks on his cell phone, his face flushed with pain.

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

HUDSON
My men...I'm losing them, Grunning.
And I don't know how. Half of them
have disappeared. The others, it's
worse...

He trails off.

GRUNNING
What happened to them?

HUDSON
I've heard screams...over the
scanners. Terrible screams. One of
them, he said it was like he was
being...

Grunning looks down at his chest, and finishes Hudson's sentence.

GRUNNING
...torn apart.

HUDSON
You...how'd you know that?

GRUNNING
It's not too late, chief. I'll take
care of this. I promise.

END INTERCUT:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning steps into the dining room.

He sees Roger standing over the cold plate of eggs. Roger
pushes them around with a fork, looking distraught.

Roger is dressed for work, wearing the tweed jacket and tie.

GRUNNING
How'd it go?

ROGER
I had no idea he was so angry...

Grunning puts his hand on Roger's shoulder.

ROGER (cont'd)
He said he knew where my gun was.
God, the look in his eyes. I think
he wanted to teach me a lesson
...for treating his mom that way.

GRUNNING
What'd you tell him?

ROGER
That I was sorry. That I never
meant to hurt him. But, you know,
it wasn't really about the thing
with Rachel...

Roger pauses.

ROGER (cont'd)
He never understood...how I felt
about him. I thought he knew.

GRUNNING
But you talked...

ROGER
I have a lot of time to make up
for. But I think we'll get there.

He looks up at Grunning.

ROGER (cont'd)
I still can't believe it's
possible...how did you know?

GRUNNING
I think Emma was telling the truth
about one thing. When she found
your body, you were already dead.

FLASHFORWARD:

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emma swings open the kitchen door and walks into the room.
She sees Roger lying there, shot.

Emma looks like she's about to scream, but she stifles it,
putting her hand over her mouth.

GRUNNING (V.O.)
But there was no gun in your hand.
When she saw that, she must have
figured that Andrew did it.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Emma rifles through the dresser and pulls out the gun box.
She pops it open, revealing the revolver.

GRUNNING (V.O.)
So her motherly instincts kicked
in.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emma carefully places the revolver in Roger's hand.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Grunning examines Roger's body, lifting the hand of the
corpse to check for burns.

GRUNNING (V.O.)
When I started examining the scene,
she was afraid I'd find the truth.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

As Grunning studies the bullet he found in the wall, Emma lifts a large vase over his head.

After Grunning collapses, Emma takes the revolver and the bullet.

RETURN TO SCENE:

ROGER

She was just trying to help him. I guess I don't blame her.

Roger looks at Grunning, worried.

ROGER (cont'd)

You're not going to...arrest them, are you?

GRUNNING

How can I? They haven't done anything yet.

ROGER

(thinking)

Right...of course.

GRUNNING

The important thing is you're alive. You can stop the experiment. You need to go to the lab. Now.

Roger looks at his watch and nods.

ROGER

It's 8:36. That gives us almost an hour. I'll get Rachel and we'll go down there.

Reflexively, Roger picks up his plate of half-eaten eggs. He walks toward the kitchen door.

Grunning stares at the floor, thinking of something.

GRUNNING

Wait...what did you just say?

Roger stops at the swinging door, still holding his plate. He has the door partway open.

ROGER
I'll get Rachel and go down
there...

GRUNNING
Rachel said she'd never been to the
lab. She only worked with you at
school.

ROGER
Oh, that's not true.

GRUNNING
But then...

The door to the hallway opens and Rachel appears.
She's holding the revolver.

RACHEL
I thought you'd get cold feet,
Roger.

ROGER
Rachel, what are you doing?

RACHEL
My job.

Grunning reaches for his gun, but Rachel trains the revolver
on him.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Don't even...

Grunning freezes.

ROGER
I don't understand.

RACHEL
All along I knew what this could
mean...what your work was capable
of. But you were so damn selfish.
You didn't want the rest of us to
sully your precious research. Well,
I need this, Roger. I won't let you
stop it.

ROGER
(his head swimming)
Why?

GRUNNING
(slowly, the thought
dawning)
Her sister.

Roger stares at Grunning, confused.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(to Rachel)
You can't save her. It doesn't work
that way.

RACHEL
Maybe. But I won't let him take
away my chance.

ROGER
All this time...that's what you
wanted? You said you loved me.

RACHEL
I loved your mind. But what do you
do with it? It's a damn waste.

Grunning stares at Rachel's position and at Roger, who's
still standing in the doorway to the kitchen.

FLASHFORWARD:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning imagines Rachel firing the gun at Roger, hitting him
in the head.

Roger drops the plate of eggs. It crashes to the floor.

Roger staggers back into the kitchen and collapses in the
same position we saw him in earlier. Dead.

RETURN TO SCENE:

RACHEL
I didn't think it would come to
this, Roger.
(waves the gun)
I wouldn't have even known you had
this thing if he...
(nodding toward Grunning)
...hadn't told me.

ROGER
We have to stop it, Rachel. It's
too dangerous.

RACHEL
It's out of your hands now. I can
go back and save her...I know it.
You can't stop me.

ROGER
People are going to die.

RACHEL
You don't know that.

Roger nods at Grunning, who's pale and sweating.

ROGER
Look at him. His heart's about to
give out.

RACHEL
Well, *I* feel fine.

ROGER
You're inside it. You can't tell--

GRUNNING
He's right. It's...killing me...

He GROANS and clutches at his chest. He bends over in pain.

She steps back.

Grunning suddenly straightens up again, pulling his gun from
the holster.

She reacts quickly, firing the revolver. The bullet hits
Grunning in the chest.

He fires at the same time, but his aim is off. The bullet
flies past her, past Roger, through the doorway to the
kitchen. It burrows into the kitchen wall.

She tries to fire again, but the revolver is empty.

The damage is done. Grunning's eyes go wide. He lurches,
drops his gun.

ROGER
(to Grunning)
Get out...get out of the room!

Grunning's face flickers with understanding. He stumbles out the door to the -

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

It's now 12:40 p.m. Grunning gasps for breath. He looks down at his chest. The wound is still there, but -

GRUNNING
The bullet...it's gone.

Grunning slumps back, relieved.

He pulls out his bottle of pills. He shakes it and one solitary pill falls out. His last one.

He swallows it.

He stares through the open door at the dining room. From this view, it's empty and quiet.

Grunning hesitates at the door, looking as if he may march back in. But he stops himself, clutching his chest.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

It's now 8:40 a.m. Roger and Rachel struggle over Grunning's gun. They move toward the swinging kitchen door.

Grunning steps back inside.

ROGER
(to Grunning)
Stay out of here...you'll die.

The blood around Grunning's wound begins to soak through. His head swims.

Rachel begins to twist the gun around.

The barrel is almost pointed up toward Roger's head.

Grunning watches.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Grunning throws the mug at the wall of Roger's office. It SHATTERS.

INT. MEETING ROOM - MORNING

He sits in his meeting that morning, mouthing the prayer:

GROUP
...accept the things we cannot
change, the courage to change the
things we can, and the wisdom to
know the difference.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Sitting on the floor of his house, in the shaft of light,
Grunning hugs his son Matty.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning summons his last bit of strength and barrels toward
Rachel.

He knocks her to the floor.

The gun flies into the air and lands nearby.

Grunning collapses, his clothes red with blood.

Roger picks up the gun and points it at Rachel.

She gets up and stares at Roger.

She comes toward him.

RACHEL
You wouldn't dare.

Roger FIRES the gun twice. The bullets strike her in the
chest.

She flies back and falls to the ground, dead.

Roger drops the gun and stares down at Grunning.

As Grunning looks up, he sees Emma and Andrew join Roger in
the room. Roger keeps his eyes on Grunning.

ROGER
(to Grunning)
I'll go. I'll stop it in time.

Grunning's eyes are clouding, but he manages a smile.

His eyes close.

FADE TO WHITE:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning's eyes open.

He's sitting on the couch. The room is bright and cheery.

A mug of coffee and the newspaper sit in front of him on the coffee table.

Sarah's voice - faint at first - becomes louder:

SARAH
Paul...PAUL.

He looks up at her.

SARAH (cont'd)
Shouldn't you be going to work?

Grunning looks over at the framed photos next to the couch. They're no longer face down - they're facing out toward the room.

GRUNNING
It's okay.

Grunning stares out toward the front door.

SERIES OF SHOTS:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The door opens.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Holding Matty, Tyler points his gun at the boy's head. Grunning FIRES his gun.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Grunning holds Matty in his arms, searching his chest for a wound.

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning snaps out of his reverie. He turns around and looks through the kitchen doorway.

Matty's standing there. Grunning smiles.

MATTY

Daddy!

Matty runs over to Grunning. Grunning hugs him.

Sarah approaches.

SARAH

I've got to take him to preschool.

GRUNNING

I can do it.

SARAH

Really?

GRUNNING

Yeah. I've got time.

He grabs his keys and picks up Matty, who laughs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(to Matty)

How much does Daddy love you?

MATTY

Everywhere and forever.

As they walk out, Sarah watches them. She smiles.

SARAH

Wait, stop.

Sarah reaches into Matty's shirt and lifts out a Grunning's badge. It's hanging on a chain around Matty's neck.

She traces her finger across a bullet dent in the badge. She kisses it.

SARAH (cont'd)

Thank you, Paul.

She slips it back into Matty's shirt and pats him.

Grunning and Matty walk out the door into the sunshine.

FADE TO BLACK.