

BLACK SCREEN

FEMALE SMOKERS VOICE

I'm glad I went. 'Cause even if
things never go back to the way
they used to be, it gave me a
chance to make peace with myself.

(takes a long drag from a
cigarette)

I think I'm going to be all right.
(then loud with a smoker's
laugh)

Damn, that sounds so Pollyanna!

FADE IN:

INT. AA MEETING ROOM - MORNING

CLOSE UP on PAUL GRUNNING (early 30s), wearied, head back,
opening his eyes as a waft of smoke passes by his face.

He sits in a circle of EIGHT PEOPLE that includes the FEMALE
SMOKER and NANCY ALVEREZ (30), their AA counsellor.

RACHEL

I kept waiting for you sing
something like "the Sun'll come
out" and crap.

At that everyone, except Grunning, LAUGHS. The Female
Smoker, now known as JANICE gives Rachel a playful shove.

JANICE

Shut-up.

NANCY

Come on. Pollyanna's a great
description. A little girl who
believed in the impossible.
Forgiveness. She taught a whole
town that there was still something
they could place their hope in.
And isn't that why we're all here?
Jim?... Rachel?

Rachel smiles and nods.

NANCY (cont'd)

Paul?

GRUNNING

Nope. Department's orders based on
a request from Internal Affairs.
Didn't you read my file?

Nancy reacts, sensitive to the others.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Oh, I forgot. This group's
anonymous. Got it.

NANCY
I've got an idea. Why don't we all
take a break five, oh about eight
minutes early? Coffee and donuts
are in the back.

The group moves towards the refreshment table.

NANCY (cont'd)
Detective Grunning. Can I see you
a moment?

GRUNNING
Sure, why not.

Nancy waits until everyone has moved to the back and it's
just the two of them.

NANCY
It's been almost three weeks and it
seems like your still having a hard
time with this.

GRUNNING
That's your diagnosis? You don't
know me.

NANCY
You're right, I don't. Maybe I
don't need to in order to help you
work things out. I --

GRUNNING
Lady, let's get one thing straight.
I'm not here for help or hope or
anything else your pushing. I'm
here because I'm fighting to save
my job. And if that means sitting
here, three mornings a week for the
next six months, listening to
people whine about things they
can't do a damn thing about, then
that's what I'm going to do. And
you're going to tell them I did. I
showed up.

NANCY
 Detective, you...
 (backing off)
 Are going to have plenty of time to
 speak up. I just want to challenge
 you until you do to --

GRUNNING
 To what?

NANCY
 Be open. There's a definite reason
 why you're here. You see, I did
 read your file. It isn't about
 your job. It's about saving your
 life.

GRUNNING
 (whatever)
 Right.

Grunning heads for the back of the room and the donut table.

INT. AA MEETING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

It's the end of the meeting. The group has regathered,
 standing holding typed papers of the Serenity Prayer.

Everyone but Grunning recites it.

Nancy notices.

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

DISSOLVE TO:

I./E. GRUNNING'S CAR - DAY

In a cold sweat Grunning sits alone in his parked car behind
 the steering wheel staring into space. In his head, he hears
 his fellow AA members.

GROUP (V.O.)
 And the wisdom to know the
 difference. Amen.

Grunning loosens his tie. As he CLICKS his seat belt on he favors his left arm, displaying for the first time that he is in physical pain. Dwelling on it for a beat, he hears in the distance a COUPLE OF GUNSHOTS followed by SCREAMS and:

GRUNNING (V.O.)
(blood curdling)
Nooooo!

The RINGING of his cell phone brings him back.

He pulls it from his pocket and looks at the screen. It reads: "**Hudson.**"

Grunning makes an effort to quickly composes himself.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(up)
Hey, Chief. I thought you were
through checking up on me.

INTERCUT:

INT. POLICE CHIEF HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

POLICE CHIEF HUDSON (50) sits behind his desk. Behind him, through large glass windows, the station appears full of commotion.

HUDSON
You just now getting out?

GRUNNING
What can I say? My counsellor's a hottie.

HUDSON
Uh-huh. Better not let Sarah catch
you saying that.

GRUNNING
(thoughtful)
I won't.
(then)
What's up?

HUDSON
I need you to do me a favor. I
need you to check out a routine
disturbance over on Oakmead Lane.

Silence.

HUDSON (cont'd)
Grunning, you still there?
Grunning?

Nothing.

HUDSON (cont'd)
Damn cell phones!

GRUNNING
I'm here. Hell of a way to put me
back in, coach.

HUDSON
Yeah, I thought it might be in the
area, but I wasn't sure. What do
you think?

GRUNNING
I think my hot counsellor's not
going to like it.

HUDSON
I'm not crazy about it either. I
know how hard it's been. But the
department's swamped. Almost every
last one of my men are out there
answering all kinds of calls that
frankly don't make sense. I'd
blame it on a full Moon if the Sun
wasn't out. Okay so it's near the
old house. It's a Code 1. You see
the woman, a Mrs. Ulster, you take
the report, and you high tail it
back here.

A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER drops off a huge stack of files on
Hudson's desk and leaves.

HUDSON (cont'd)
'Cause I got a ton of paperwork
that needs doing.

Grunning sighs, then...

GRUNNING
What's the address?

HUDSON
680 Oakmead Lane.

Grunning writes it down on a note pad.

HUDSON (cont'd)
Call me when you get there, all
right?

GRUNNING
So you can check up on me again,
Chief?

HUDSON
Detective, I wasn't checking up on
your butt to begin with.
(softening)
I'll see you when you get in.

Hudson hangs up.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning closes his cell phone. He pauses for a moment
before starting up the car.

INT. GRUNNING'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Grunning enters to find SARA GRUNNING, also early thirties,
sitting in a chair adjacent to the couch he slept on the
night before -- an unrolled sleeping bag, with the words
"Property of East Texas Police Department" stenciled on it,
is evidence of it.

The television is on, but MUTED and barely noticeable due to
the unpacked moving boxes that surround it and clutter most
of the room.

Sara is nursing what is now her third cup of coffee. In her
lap is a picture frame, face down, and a box of tissue.

Without saying a word, Grunning walks over to a closet and
pulls out a metal lock box, that isn't locked.

Sara watches as he opens it, removing his police badge and
placing it around his neck. He hesitates for a moment, and
then he reaches in for his police revolver and a shoulder
holster. He clumsily checks the gun before fumbling it in
the holster. He hasn't touched this weapon in a very long
time.

Having gotten what he came for, Grunning is just about to
leave when he looks up, sensing that Sara wants to say
something.

GRUNNING
("Don't")
See you.

Without looking back he walks out the door. He's gone.

Sarah turns over the frame in her lap. It's a picture of a FOUR-YEAR-OLD LITTLE BOY. As she traces his face with her finger a tear splashes on the glass.

I./E. GRUNNING'S CAR/SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

Grunning drives his car down a quiet street. If it seems familiar, it is. It's his old neighborhood.

He stops at a four-way stop. Adjacent to it is a small neighborhood park. He gazes over at CHILDREN playing until the car behind him HONKS its horn.

I./E. GRUNNING'S CAR/680 OAKMEAD LANE - DAY

Grunning parks in front of the rather large house. The property is impressive but not well-kept.

From his vantage point from inside his car he can see that the number on the door reads: "680".

Grunning picks up his note pad and cell phone, which rests on the front passenger seat, briefly taking the time to look at the at the cell phone's display window. It reads: **10:03 a.m.**

He pockets these two items before getting out of the car.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - DAY

Grunning KNOCKS on the front door. He checks his note pad. Scrawled beside the Oakmead address is the name "Ulster." Repeating it to himself, he KNOCKS AGAIN.

There is still no response.

Grunning peers through the front window unable to see anything. So he tries again, determined, KNOCKING HARDER.

GRUNNING

It's the police, Mrs. Ulster. You
called for help...

He hits the door one more time. It CREAKS open.

He slowly goes in.

INT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

The windows of the room are clouded and dusty. The inside of the house is very dim, almost night-like causing Grunning to adjust his eyes before he is able to see a doorway leading to a hallway and a stairwell leading to the house's second floor.

GRUNNING

Hello?

He steps further into the room. A NOISE comes from above. Grunning stops moving and looks up.

The ceiling CREAKS as footsteps scurry across it until suddenly... the footsteps abruptly stop.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(calling up)

I'm Detective Grunning. I'm here
to check out a disturbance.

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

He walks through the doorway.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

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

Grunning sidesteps down the hall, passing one doorway after another until he reaches one where the sound of A WOMAN CRYING stops him.

GRUNNING

Mrs. Ulster?

The SOBBING CONTINUES.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Ma'am?

He opens the door and steps in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

There's no one there. The crying has stopped in the same abrupt manner the footsteps did. 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 open door.

Grunning drops the book and runs after them. But...

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

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

Frustrated, Grunning opens another door.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

The lights are on. A plate of untouched eggs rests on the dining room table.

Grunning puts his hand over them to feel the steam. All indications are that they've just been served.

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

Without missing a beat Grunning realizes that the voice is coming from the kitchen. He quickly rushes toward it to find...

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

The CORPSE OF ROGER ULSTER lying on the kitchen floor. There's a hole in his head, and blood has spilled across the linoleum. Beside his lifeless hand rests a .38-caliber revolver.

Grunning stares speechless at the body.

FLASHBACK:

INT. THE GRUNNING HOME - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

From the CAMERA'S POV a the LITTLE BOY from Sarah's picture sits on the floor, surrounded by toys.

A large unknown shadow enters the room. The boy ceases his play, looks up and smiles, raising his arms.

END FLASHBACK:

Still eyeing the body, Grunning staggers back in shock. He collides with EMMA ULSTER, 40s with girlish shoulder length hair. She's hysterical.

EMMA

Oh, my God, my husband! Please,
please help us!

Grunning pushes Emma off of him and rushes out of the room.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Pressed against a wall as if using it to hold himself up, Grunning pulls out his cell phone.

INTERCUT:

INT. POLICE CHIEF HUDSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

HUDSON

Hudson.

Grunning speaks quickly, on the verge of hysterics himself.

GRUNNING

"Something routine?" It's a
frickin' homicide! Code one? It's
a damn Code three!

HUDSON

Grunning? Is that you?

GRUNNING

Yeah, and I'm gonna need backup, a
medical examiner, a coroner and
anything else you got.

HUDSON

Calm down, Grunning, and tell me
where you're at.

GRUNNING

I'm at the house!

HUDSON
House? What house?

GRUNNING
680 Oakmead Lane! The one you sent
me to!

Grunning bends down holding his head between his legs trying to breathe.

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

HUDSON
(covering phone
mouthpiece)
Hold on!

Hudson rifles through some papers on his desk, until he finds the one he's looking for.

HUDSON (cont'd)
Oakmead Lane. Here it is.
(reading)
See the woman. Disturbance --

GRUNNING
(standing back up)
Try Self-inflicted gunshot wound!
Chief, I can't handle this.

HUDSON
Listen, Grunning. Things are
pretty crazy around here, but for
godssake, I wouldn't have given you
anything dealing with...

GRUNNING
Okay, okay. Just... I need help.

HUDSON
Hang tight, all right? I'll send
over a unit. When they get there,
you let them handle it.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning closes his cell phone. Then he slowly moves off the wall, stepping back toward the swinging door which divides the dining room from the kitchen.

He pushes the door open and slowly walks through it.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Grunning sees Emma kneeling over her dead husband's body.

Her eyes are swollen and red from crying. Her cheeks are stained with tears.

INT. GRUNNING'S CAR - DAY

Grunning sits behind the wheel nervously waiting for back up to arrive. He rubs his left arm, the same one from before. And then it starts...

He hears CRYING. But this time it isn't coming from Emma. This time the crying comes from within.

He quickly pops a couple of pain pills, swallowing hard without water.

GRUNNING

Where the hell are they?!

Grunning looks down, noticing the Serenity Prayer paper lying next to him on the seat.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(with closed eyes)

Lord, grant me the courage...

Unable to finish, he lays his head back on the headrest.

After a beat, he lifts his head and unlocks the glove compartment, taking from it his police revolver and holster.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Emma is standing there. Her eyes are still swollen from crying, but she appears to have recovered a bit. She wears her hair up in a ponytail.

She seems surprised to see Grunning.

EMMA

Oh, Detective, you're still here.

GRUNNING

Mrs. Ulster...

EMMA

I told you to call me Emma,
remember?

He doesn't.

GRUNNING

Right. There's a police unit on the way. But in the meantime, I thought I could wait with you and ask a few. Would that be all right?

EMMA

I suppose so.

GRUNNING

Has the body -- Mr. Ulster been moved?

EMMA

Not that I know of.

GRUNNING

So you're not the only one in the house?

EMMA

Our son Andrew's upstairs.

Grunning looks up, remembering the footsteps.

EMMA (cont'd)

And then of course there's Rachel.

GRUNNING

(off her tone)

Whose Rachel?

EMMA

Roger's graduate student. She lives with us. It's easier that way. Roger likes to work at night. Sometimes very long hours. And she helps him in ways I can't.

Emma pauses in thought.

GRUNNING

What do you think happened to your husband?

EMMA

He killed himself with his very own gun.

GRUNNING

(this is hard)

Did you see him do it?

EMMA

I was in the kitchen making coffee.
Which reminds me, I never did get
that cup you asked for.

Grunning looks puzzled, but takes it in stride considering
Emma's grief.

EMMA (cont'd)

Cream and sugar.

GRUNNING

Black.

EMMA

(smiles)

Just like Roger.

Then her smile goes away.

EMMA (cont'd)

Are you coming?

GRUNNING

In a minute. There's something I
have to get from my car. I'm going
to need to question Andrew and
Rachel.

EMMA

Yes, I know.

She goes.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

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

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE/GRUNNING'S CAR - MORNING

He walks out to his car all the while looking and listening
for any signs of his long awaited back up.

When he reaches his vehicle he pops the trunk remotely with
his key and begins searching for something.

It isn't long before Grunning starts to feel as if he's being
watched. He spins around and looks up at the house's set of
second-floor windows.

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

Grunning grabs a tackle box from the trunk.

He walks away, forgetting to relock the car.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Grunning opens the tackle box and removes a roll of yellow police tape and stretches it across the doors of the kitchen. As he works, he avoids looking down at the corpse.

Emma, whose hair hangs loose again, watches his every move.

Once he's done taping off the room, Grunning pulls two gloves from the box and puts them on.

HEAVY SIGH. He turns toward the body, crouches down and picks up the .38-caliber revolver.

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

EMMA

I should have never let Roger keep that. I didn't think he had any bullets for it.

GRUNNING

He had at least one.

Grunning clicks the gun shut.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Where'd he get it?

EMMA

One of his military friends, I think. He does some work at the Defense Institute.

GRUNNING

Yeah, I know.

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

EMMA

What are you doing?

GRUNNING

Checking for gun powder burns.

EMMA
(a bit distressed)
What for?

GRUNNING
Emma, can I have that cup of coffee
now?

EMMA
Of course.
(more to self)
Funny way to ask.

Emma moves to the counter and reaches for the coffee pot.

GRUNNING
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
Something important. It was all
very hush-hush. You might ask
Rachel. Rachel would know.

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

GRUNNING
Looks like he had somewhere to go.

EMMA
Roger usually leaves for work at
nine. Right after he's had his
breakfast...

She trails off and wipes away a tear staring at her dead
husband as he lays on the floor.

GRUNNING
Mrs. Ulster?

EMMA
Yes?

GRUNNING
I'm sorry about your husband.

EMMA
Call me Emma.

She slowly moves toward the cupboard, grabbing an empty cup and saucer.

Grunning notices something near the dining room door.

GRUNNING
What's that?

EMMA
What?

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

EMMA (cont'd)
His breakfast... he must have
dropped it.

Grunning is confused. But before he can respond to it, his cell phone RINGS. Reading the display he knows it's Hudson.

Grunning answers it.

GRUNNING
Hold on.
(to Emma)
Could you go get Rachel and Andrew
and meet me in the living room?

Without saying a word, Emma leaves to do just that.

Grunning, back to phone.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Chief?

INTERCUT:

INT. HUDSON'S OFFICE - MORNING

HUDSON
Grunning, are you still in your
meeting? Because I have a job for
you.

GRUNNING
What are you talking about?

HUDSON
I know we wanted to ease you back
in, but we desperately need the
manpower.

GRUNNING

Chief.

HUDSON

Trust me it's routine stuff. 680
Oakmead Lane.

GRUNNING

I'm here. At 680. I'm at the
house. I'm standing over the damn
body.

HUDSON

Body? What -- and how'd you...

GRUNNING

You called me. About an hour ago.

HUDSON

An hour ago I was at home in bed
and you were at your meeting.

GRUNNING

Look, it doesn't matter who called
me or when. I got a real homicide
on my hands. And in case you
didn't hear me the first time, I
need backup now!

The BUZZ of activity outside of the chief's office escalates.
Hudson notices.

HUDSON

Just hang tight.

GRUNNING

That's --

Hudson hangs up.

END INTERCUT:

GRUNNING (cont'd)

All I've been doing.

Grunning closes his phone. He looks down at the body.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

What the hell is going on?

Roger, still very dead, doesn't answer.

Grunning walks out of the swinging kitchen door.

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, Emma. I asked you to do one
simple thing.

He turns and yells out into the hallway through the open
door.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Emma!... Mrs. Ulster! Emma!

There's no response. He turns back into the room.

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

Grunning catches a glimpse out of the corner of his eye.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Hey!

He spins around and runs after it.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

No one is there. Grunning quickly continues on until he
reaches...

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

The room is dark, and still there is no one to be seen.

This causes Grunning to pull out his gun for the first
time... in a very long time.

He looks at the front door - it doesn't look as if someone
ran out of it he should've had heard it. 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 the very first door he passes. There's no answer.

He turns the knob slowly.

GRUNNING

Hello?

Grunning steps into...

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, but this time hesitates before going in.

GRUNNING

Anyone there? It's the police.

A sleepy female voice MUMBLES something from behind the door.

Grunning opens the door.

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - MORNING

A woman, RACHEL CLARIS (20s, attractive), has her back to the door as she opens the curtains, and suddenly the room is flooded with bright sunshine.

There are cardboard boxes scattered around the room, filled haphazardly with books and other personal effects.

She turns around to look at Grunning. His presence startles her.

RACHEL

(staring at the gun)

Who are you?

GRUNNING

I'm Detective Paul Grunning. Are you Rachel?

RACHEL

Yes. I live here.

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

RACHEL (cont'd)

Is something wrong? What are you looking for?

GRUNNING

You haven't been downstairs?

(off her puzzled look)

You do know about Mr. Ulster?

RACHEL

Did something happen to Roger?

Rachel looks panicked. Dread spreads across Grunning's face. He hates to be the one to have to tell her.

GRUNNING
Roger's dead.

RACHEL
Oh, my God. How?

GRUNNING
He shot himself.

RACHEL
No. He wouldn't. He couldn't.

She starts to tear up.

GRUNNING
You didn't hear anything?

RACHEL
I... no. I just woke up. I took a couple of sleeping pills.

Grunning looks at the empty wine bottle again.

RACHEL (cont'd)
(noticing)
I had a rough night. He can't be dead. He had so much to... Today was a very important day for him.

GRUNNING
What's supposed to happen today?

She starts to cry, then as if getting a revelation...

RACHEL
Emma! She did this!

Without warning Rachel tries to run out of the room. Grunning stops her.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Let me go!! Let me go!!

She struggles to get free.

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

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Much like Rachel, Sarah is in Grunning's arms and she too struggles to be free.

SARAH

Matty!!

END FLASHBACK:

INT. RACHEL'S ROOM - MORNING

RACHEL

Let me go!!

Without much thought, Grunning does just that, causing Rachel to fall on the bed while he reels backwards, cradling his arm.

RACHEL (cont'd)

She's going to get away.

GRUNNING

Until I get some answers about what happened in this house, no one is going anywhere.

Rachel breathes heavy. Silence falls as Grunning recovers from the pain in his arm.

Grunning's gaze turns to one of the moving boxes. A framed photo pokes out. It's a picture of Rachel and ANOTHER YOUNG WOMAN. Posed arm in arm, they closely resemble each other.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

You going somewhere?

Rachel looks at him, but doesn't respond.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Do you think Emma Ulster had something to do with Roger's death?

RACHEL

I think Emma Ulster had everything to do with Roger's death. If he pulled the trigger, she pushed him to it. My God, he told her I was leaving, what more did she want?

GRUNNING

So you two were sleeping together.

RACHEL
Excuse me?

Suddenly there's voice from behind the door:

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Rachel, are you alright? I heard
crying.

Rachel's head jerks up from the bed as she stares at the door.

RACHEL
(almost whispering)
It's Roger.

GRUNNING
That's impossible.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
Rachel, please don't be upset with
Emma.

Rachel's terrified eyes focus on Grunning.

Grunning quickly opens the door. No one is there.

Rachel peers over Grunning's shoulder.

RACHEL
I promise you, I'd know that voice
anywhere. It was Roger.

GRUNNING
Wait here.

Grunning notices a key in the door and takes it.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning steps out of Rachel's room, 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. Before he takes another step he once again pulls out his gun.

GRUNNING
Whoever you are, it's the police.
And I'm ordering you to 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 without entering 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 still unable to get in.

Suddenly he hears the sound of ELECTRONIC VIDEO GAME.

Grunning moves down the hall in the direction of the noise and opens a door.

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - DAY

What he finds is a boy, ANDREW ULSTER, in his early teens slouched in a chair in front of a television playing a video game.

The room is unkempt, a typical teenager's room, strewn with sports equipment and memorabilia. 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 my mom told me about.

GRUNNING

I'm Detective Grunning. Did your mom tell what happened to your dad?

ANDREW

He shot himself.

The video game makes NOISE signifying a high score.

ANDREW (cont'd)

All right!

GRUNNING

Was that you at Rachel's door?

Andrew continues to work the video game.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Is there another man in the house?

Andrew remains caught up. Grunning picks up the game's remote control and turns the video off.

ANDREW

Hey! I was winning.

GRUNNING

Have you left this room in the last few minutes?

ANDREW

Dude, what is your problem!

GRUNNING

My problem is your dad is lying down stairs on the kitchen floor and I need to know if he had any reason to take his life. Was he depressed or upset about something?

ANDREW

Who knows?

(re: remote control)

Can I have that back.

GRUNNING

You and your father must have been real close. I can tell because you seem all broke up.

ANDREW

Everything was okay between me and my dad before she moved in.

GRUNNING

She? You mean Rachel?

ANDREW

Yeah, that's the skank. The two of them. I always knew something was up. Last night I found out for sure.

GRUNNING

Well, don't stop there.

ANDREW

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

GRUNNING

What'd they say?

ANDREW

Mom was screaming. Said she wanted her out by the morning. Dad said okay, 'cause he wanted to make things right. And Rachel ran upstairs crying.

GRUNNING

Did your Mom threaten anyone?

ANDREW

Yeah. My dad with divorce.

GRUNNING

How about violence? Did she say she wanted to hurt anyone?

ANDREW

You think my Mom killed my Dad?

GRUNNING

What do *you* think?

ANDREW

I think the old man finally did make things right. Now everyone can be happy again.

Andrew snatches the video game remote out of Grunning's hand.

GRUNNING
Well I'll tell you. Right now,
you're about the only one in this
house having a party.

Before Andrew can respond, a loud POUNDING is heard coming from outside of Andrew's room.

ANDREW
What's that?

RACHEL (O.S.)
(yelling)

Hey! Hey!

GRUNNING
(looking at key)
Rachel.

ANDREW
Bitch.

More POUNDING.

Grunning leaves the room.

Andrew resumes playing his video game.

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 take you downtown,
fingerprint you and put you in a
windowless room under hot lights.
Your call.

RACHEL
What no strip search.

GRUNNING
Again. Your call.

RACHEL
Detective Grunning, right?

GRUNNING
That's right.

RACHEL
Where's your partner? I'm mean
don't you people travel in packs?

GRUNNING
Backup's on the way.

RACHEL
I hope so. 'Cause without a
partner, I can't tell if your a
good cop or the bad cop.

GRUNNING
Is that it? You done flirting with
me? Because I got a few more
questions I'd like to ask.

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

RACHEL
Did you find Roger?

GRUNNING
I told you. Roger's dead.

RACHEL
I know his voice. It was him at
the door.

GRUNNING
Maybe it'd be best if I got Emma
and Andrew and we all went down to
the living room and talked this
out.

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

RACHEL
How'd you get here?

GRUNNING
What do you mean, how'd I get --

RACHEL
I don't see a car.

Rachel moves away from the window. Grunning strides over to take a look. His car is gone.

GRUNNING

Shit!

He dashes out of the room.

E./I. FRONT OF HOUSE/GRUNNING'S CAR - MORNING

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

He spins around. There's no one there.

GRUNNING

(shouting to anyone)

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 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... before finally dialing anyway.

INTERCUT:

INT. GRUNNING'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

SARAH

Hello?

GRUNNING
It's me. I had to call.

Silence.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm sorry I rushed out this morning. I'm on a case. I guess the Chief's starting to believe in me again. Bound to happen, right?

More silence, then...

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Sarah, something's wrong. Something's happening to me and nothing is making any sense... You always could talk me down, you know. So I had to call.

SARAH
Paul... Are you all right?

GRUNNING
(sighs)
Yeah. How are you doing?

SARAH
Not so good.

GRUNNING
Me either.
(clears throat)
I'll see you later, all right?

Silence, and then she hangs up.

END INTERCUT:

INT. GRUNNING'S CAR - MORNING

Grunning looks back at the house.

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

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 you stay focused here.

Something seems to register in her mind.

EMMA

Oh, the police. That's right.
Took you long enough to get here.
We called hours ago.
(off his look)
About the intruder.

GRUNNING

You didn't tell me there was an intruder in the house.

EMMA

Why else would I have called you?
I heard him walking through the house at about three o'clock this morning.

GRUNNING

Did you get a look at him?

EMMA

Oh, no. It was dark. But I think I could recognize his voice.

GRUNNING

He spoke?

EMMA

He asked about Roger. What he was working on.

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. He's not dead.

(off of Grunning's look)

He's not.

Grunning moves toward the swinging door. He opens it and
peers into the kitchen. Roger Ulster is gone.

He turns to face Emma

GRUNNING

Emma, where's the body.

EMMA

What body?

She walks over to the swinging door.

GRUNNING

My God, you moved him?!

EMMA

Moved who? I don't know what
you're talking about.

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.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Grunning runs outside.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MORNING

The sounds of sirens have stopped.

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

Grunning runs out into the street.

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

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

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

He stops at the bottom of the stairs, looking up before running down the...

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

And bursting 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, and then ducks under the tape, approaching the body carefully.

He crouches down and nudges Roger. Nothing.

GRUNNING

Still dead.

(beat)

God, what am I doing?

Still crouched and massaging his left arm, Grunning sees a glint from the wall. It's a spot directly across from the swinging door.

Grunning gets up and reaches into 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 it closely.

He pulls Roger's revolver from his breast pocket.

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
Police. Anybody home?

SECOND POLICEMAN
Grunning... you here?

They wait to hear a response as the door slams behind them.

None comes.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Man, it's dark in here.

SECOND POLICEMAN
Feels like a tomb.

The first policeman steps toward the hallway.

FIRST POLICEMAN
(calls out)
Grunning?

Still 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

The front door opens. Grunning walks in with a handful of files.

He passes MATTY, his four-year-old son, who sits surrounded by toys, playing on the floor.

Matty jumps up and greets Grunning, grabbing his leg.

MATTY
Daddy!

Grunning struggles to keep hold of the files.

GRUNNING
Careful, Matty.

Grunning almost trips on one of Matty's wooden cars.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(calling; frustrated)
Sarah? This place is a mess.
Matty, how many times do I have to
tell you to pick up your toys?

MATTY
Daddy, play with me.

GRUNNING
Not now, Matty. Dad's got to get
to work.

Grunning walks into the...

INT. GRUNNING DEN - EVENING

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

He drops the new files on his desk.

Sarah enters.

SARAH
Did you call me?

GRUNNING
Yeah. Matty... forget it. I'm on
a deadline with some of these
reports.

SARAH
And you're tell me this because?

GRUNNING
I'm going to have to eat dinner in
here.

SARAH
You got fifteen minutes.

Grunning doesn't look happy.

SARAH (cont'd)
Well, how much time would you like?
An hour? Three? Because we can
wait. It's not like we haven't
done it before.

GRUNNING
I'm a cop, Sarah.

SARAH
And a father. And a husband. Or
did you forget?

GRUNNING
You got something to say?

SARAH
I just did.

They hear a CRASH coming from the other room.

SARAH (cont'd)
Oh, Matty... what is it now?

GRUNNING
That room's a disaster.

Sarah gives Grunning a look. They both go to see what it is.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

The two policemen look both ways down the hallway.

FIRST POLICEMAN
Doesn't look like anybody's here?

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

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

They examine the room. The second policemen looks at the now cold plate of eggs on the table.

SECOND POLICEMAN
Looks like someone forgot to eat
the most important meal of the day.

The first policeman pushes open the swinging door to the kitchen and peers in, but he doesn't see Grunning lying there, nor the body of Roger Ulster. It looks perfectly normal and empty.

The first policeman turns away.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Matty has resumed playing with his toys on the floor when the front door opens and TYLER, a big menacing looking guy, quietly opens the front door and walks in.

In his friendly way, upon seeing him Matty reaches up to be picked up.

The man holds Matty. Soon the boy tires of his new friend and wants down. The man clumsily tries to hold onto Matty, putting his hand over the boy's mouth to prevent him from crying out.

But it's Matty's kicking in the air that eventually knocks over one of Sarah's table lamps. It crashes to the floor.

Sarah and Grunning enter.

They see Matty is being held by Tyler, who draws a gun.

SARAH
(screaming)
Matty!!

Grunning holds Sarah back.

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
Ask him what he wants us to do.

The first policeman signals him to be quiet, and takes out his note pad.

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

He closes his phone.

SECOND POLICEMAN
Well?

FIRST POLICEMAN

We just got three more places to
check out. This whole town's gone
nuts!

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)

He's the reason his son is dead.
Ain't nothing good about that.
Let's go.

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. It's 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. He
realizes that this is the first time Rachel's seen it.

Then he looks around him, panicked.

GRUNNING

Where's the gun?

Grunning's police revolver can be seen sticking out of his
coat pocket. Rachel points to it.

RACHEL

Right there.

GRUNNING

Not this one.
(getting up)
The one that killed Roger Ulster.

Grunning looks around the kitchen. He sees a round wet spot on the counter top - where the vase used to be.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Andrew said you and Emma fought
last night.

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

She looks down at Roger's dead body.

GRUNNING
So you're saying she came at you
with no cause?

RACHEL
No. She had plenty of reason to be
jealous. Roger and I had a lot in
common. As his student aid, he
shared things with me he couldn't
share with her. We were close, but
I'm not into married men.

GRUNNING
Did you tell Emma that?

RACHEL
I tried. We both did.

He hesitates before...

GRUNNING
I found a second bullet in the
wall.

RACHEL
So that has to rule out suicide,
right?

Grunning bends down and pushes around the vase shards,
looking for the bullet.

GRUNNING
I was holding it before I got hit.
Ow!

He cuts himself on one of the shards.

Grunning sucks on his finger.

RACHEL

Here.

Rachel takes his hand and pulls him over to the sink and turns on the water, beginning to clean the wound.

RACHEL (cont'd)

It doesn't look too deep.

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

RACHEL (cont'd)

I think you're going to be okay.

Grunning pulls away, moving toward the bullet hole in the wall.

GRUNNING

If Roger committed suicide one bullet would've done it.

He looks back at the floor.

RACHEL

What is it?

GRUNNING

Even if he missed the first time, the trajectory of the second bullet doesn't make sense. I'm starting to think the gun was planted on him.

RACHEL

Can't you test for that?

GRUNNING

With the right equipment and a couple of guys from forensics.

RACHEL

If it's true, if Roger didn't do this... then the only person it could be is Emma. Please. 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)

What was Roger suppose to do today at work? You said it was important. Too important for him to kill himself.

RACHEL

He was suppose to conduct the final experiment on a project he had been working on at the Defense Institute.

GRUNNING

What kind of experiment?

RACHEL

I'm afraid I don't know. See I just worked with him at school, grading papers, filing. I didn't have the clearance to set foot in the Institute.

GRUNNING

But you said he shared things with you.

RACHEL

Bits and pieces. Look, I know he was very excited about something today. He was almost Emma's fight came out of no where and upset us all.

GRUNNING

How did it end?

RACHEL

I did the girl thing and ran upstairs crying. Later I heard Emma go to her room, and I think Roger slept in his office.

GRUNNING

Emma said something about there being an intruder.

RACHEL

I don't know anything about that.

She pauses, thinking.

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

GRUNNING
Do you remember what time it was?

RACHEL
Late. Two, three in the morning,
maybe?

GRUNNING
And you didn't get up to
investigate?

RACHEL
How could I? Believe what you've
heard. Sleeping pills and wine do
not mix.

GRUNNING
Emma said an intruder was in the
house asking about Roger's work.

RACHEL
From the Defense Institute? I know
a lot of people are interested in
what he was doing. The rumor on
campus is that it's pretty
important.

Grunning looks down at Roger's body.

GRUNNING
Yeah, maybe important enough to
kill him over it?

She doesn't respond.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'll be back. Don't touch
anything.

He walks out.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY

Before he can get to the end of the hall, Grunning's phone
RINGS. Grunning answers.

He answers it.

INTERCUT:

INT. POLICE CHIEF HUDSON'S OFFICE - DAY

HUDSON

Dammit, Grunning, I've been trying to reach you!

GRUNNING

Where's my backup?

HUDSON

I sent a car over there and they said nobody was home.

GRUNNING

Did they come inside?

HUDSON

Not only did they come in, they checked the place out and said it was deserted. No body. No nothing. No you.

GRUNNING

Chief, I've been here the whole time.

HUDSON

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

GRUNNING

Sure you do.

HUDSON

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

Hudson falls silent for a moment.

HUDSON (cont'd)

You're not making any sense. I don't know where you are right now, but go home... just go home. Take all the time you need and we'll talk later.

GRUNNING

I'm working the case.

HUDSON

What case? What case?! Am I
talking to the right person? Is
this another full moon crank call?

GRUNNING

(his wheels spinning)
Wait a minute. Crank calls. You
got a lot of strange calls today.
So it's not just happening to me.
What's going on, Chief?

HUDSON

I don't know. I'm sending my men
out on the usual, and then when
they get there either the crime
didn't happen or they're hours too
late. It's like our timings all
off.

GRUNNING

(remembering)
Emma said her husband wasn't dead.

HUDSON

You say something, Grunning?

GRUNNING

Yeah. Everything's just now
starting to make sense.
(cuts himself off)
Map it.

HUDSON

What?

GRUNNING

Put all those crazy complaints on a
map. See if they're concentrated
somewhere.

HUDSON

I don't have time to play connect
the dots.

GRUNNING

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

Grunning hears SHARP FEMALE VOICES coming from the house.

END INTERCUT:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY

GRUNNING

Call me when you've got something.

He hangs up.

Grunning turns to see Emma and Rachel arguing at the end of the hall. He rushes toward them.

When he gets there Rachel is holding Emma's arms, trying to restrain her.

EMMA

Let go of me. How dare you?!

RACHEL

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

Emma turns to Grunning.

EMMA

Please, help me. She's crazy.

Grunning separates them.

EMMA (cont'd)

(seething)

You whore.

RACHEL

Murderer!

GRUNNING

Rachel, I got it. 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.

She grabs his hands.

EMMA

Don't you dare touch me.

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

GRUNNING

What happened to your hands?

EMMA

I cut myself... gardening.

RACHEL

She's lying. The woman has a black thumb to go with her black heart.

GRUNNING

Rachel!

(to Emma)

It's funny. I've got almost the exact same cut. But it didn't come from gardening. It came from broken pieces of glass vase. Did you hit me with the vase, Emma?

EMMA

It wasn't... I do not know what you're talking about.

GRUNNING

Where'd you put Roger's gun? We can discuss this now. Or I can arrest you and take you to the station.

EMMA

But Andrew would be alone. Roger's death was a suicide.

Grunning sighs and takes out a pair of handcuffs.

Putting her hands together in front, he begins to fit restraints around Emma's wrist.

GRUNNING

I really don't want to do this.

He CLICKS the cuff shut.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

If you'd talk to me I wouldn't have to.

EMMA

I should have a lawyer.

GRUNNING

You're entitled to one. But right now it's just us.

EMMA

And her?

Grunning turns to Rachel.

GRUNNING

Do you mind?

He tilts his head, suggesting that she leave.

RACHEL

Fine. Just call me if you need any help.

(then to Emma)

It looks like I'm not the only one who'll be leaving the house today.

She walks back into the kitchen.

GRUNNING

Here's what I think happened, Emma. You shot Roger out of jealousy. Then you put the gun in his hand to make it look like suicide. But you're better at making coffee than you are at killing people. So you ended up with two bullets. One in the wall and one in Roger. You conked me on the head to get the one in the wall.

EMMA

That's not true.

GRUNNING

Isn't it? When I started checking Roger's 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... well, it all adds up. The only thing I don't understand is why you'd tell me about an intruder. That could've been your alibi.

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 doesn't answer.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(shouting)

Where's the gun, Emma?!

Emma looks up toward the stairs.

Grunning moves Emma down the hall.

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

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

Emma is still POUNDING on the door from the inside, but with a lot less force.

EMMA (O.S.)

(tired)

Please, open this door...

Rachel moves to the side as Grunning 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

I found the gun, Emma.

EMMA

I... I'm glad, Detective.

GRUNNING

Really? Even though 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)
Where'd it go. It's gone.

RACHEL
What's gone?

GRUNNING
The revolver. I just had it.

RACHEL
It must 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
(caught)
I was just looking at it.

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)
Whoa. What happened in here?

GRUNNING
(ignoring him)
Where did you find the gun?
Exactly.

ANDREW
On the ground. Right there.

He points toward the door.

GRUNNING
Just lying there? What are you
doing in here?

ANDREW
Looking for my Mom.

GRUNNING
Did you see your dad's body.
Earlier. In the kitchen.

ANDREW
Yeah, I saw it.

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. 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 missing second 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?

His gut feeling tells him to take out his own gun. He tries
placing the bullet into its chamber. It fits.

But how can that be?

Stunned, Grunning puts both the gun and the bullet back into
his pocket and his gun back in its holster.

Grunning staggers 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.

He gives it a strong push, hurting his left arm. He reels in pain.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Grunning and Sarah enter.

Holding Matty in one arm, Tyler draws a gun.

SARAH
(screaming)
Matty!!

Grunning holds onto Sarah back.

END FLASHBACK:

Crazed, sweat pouring down his face, and still holding his arm, Grunning tries the door again. But it remains sealed.

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 enter.

GRUNNING
What's behind the locked door in
the hall?

Andrew glimpses Grunning's crazed expression.

ANDREW
Dude?

GRUNNING
What's behind that door?!

ANDREW
Nothing -- Storage. My Dad had it
sealed off to save on electricity.

GRUNNING
Is there any other way to get in
there? Is there?!

ANDREW
I don't know!

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

GRUNNING
(astonished)
Roger?

At the end of the hall, the man vanishes, disappearing into thin air. There's no one there.

Grunning runs toward the spot where the man vanished.

He scrambles down the...

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

And into the...

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Still nothing. No sign of anyone.

GRUNNING
No, it can't...

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.

RACHEL
(alarmed)
Detective...

GRUNNING
You're real, right?

Grunning looks around. He can barely get the next sentence out.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
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 and back to Grunning.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Upstairs. Walking down the hall.
Then he disappeared - right in
front of me.

RACHEL
Like a ghost?

Grunning stares at her and nods.

RACHEL (cont'd)
Are you sure?

He can't answer.

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

Grunning takes the pills from his pocket and swallows one, still nursing his injured arm.

Rachel's gaze focuses on his arm.

RACHEL (cont'd)
How did it happen?

GRUNNING
I told you. He just appeared out of no where.

RACHEL
No, your arm. What happened to your arm?

Grunning gives her a look.

RACHEL (cont'd)
You can tell me.

GRUNNING
I made a mistake. And it cost me everything.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Grunning and Sarah enter.

Holding Matty in one arm, Tyler draws a gun.

SARAH
(screaming)
Matty!!

Grunning holds Sarah back.

SARAH (cont'd)
Let me go!!

GRUNNING
Sarah!

TYLER
You remember me, don't you
Detective?

Matty starts to cry.

SARAH
(whimpering)
Matty...

GRUNNING
It's okay, Sarah. He's going to be
okay.

TYLER
I told you we weren't finished.

GRUNNING
Tyler, this is between me and you.
Let my son go.

TYLER
Or you'll what? Arrest me? Send
me to jail? I ain't going back
there.

Tyler places the gun beside Matty's head.

Sarah starts to lose it.

GRUNNING
Let's talk about this.

TYLER
What was it you told me outside of
the court house the day you
testified against me? Oh, yeah. A
man's actions always have
repercussions.

GRUNNING
Tyler.

Tyler holds Matty up.

TYLER

You were right. I lost everything.
And today you get to too.

Tyler points the gun directly at Matty temple just as Matty starts to kick again. With perfect aim he hits Tyler in the crotch. It's painful. Seeing his chance, Grunning rushes in.

Matty falls to the floor, hard, hitting his head on the glass coffee table as he goes down.

Grunning and Tyler struggle for the gun.

Sarah reaches Matty and finds that he is unconscious. As the gun goes off...

Sarah SCREAMS.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY

GRUNNING

The bullet went right through my
arm...

RACHEL

And hit Matty?

GRUNNING

No. The fall killed Matty. And
Tyler got away. We put the house
on the market a month later. I
couldn't live or work with the
memories. Sarah was afraid our
four year old's murderer would come
back. After all this time she
still can't sleep through the
night. Or talk about it.

Grunning turns away from her.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

If I hadn't tried to be such a
super cop, my son might still be
alive.

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

RACHEL

Detective... Paul. I know what it's like to lose someone and to feel... helpless.

GRUNNING

Roger meant a lot to you.

RACHEL

He did. But I'm not talking about Roger. The girl in the picture upstairs is my sister. My best friend. She got sick. And by the time they were too late to do anything about it. I'm a scientist. I find answers that help to make this world make sense. But I couldn't do anything for my sister.

Grunning faces her again.

RACHEL (cont'd)

I'm so sorry about your son.

She reaches up to touch the wound on his head.

RACHEL (cont'd)

I don't know what I'd do if I lost a child.

GRUNNING

Or what you'd be capable of.

Rachel gives Grunning a puzzled look.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

(explaining)

I'm seeing things.

RACHEL

That hit to the head Emma gave you probably didn't help.

(reaching up touching it)

I don't think we ever did anything to clean it.

Grunning touches her hand as she brings it down.

RACHEL (cont'd)

I'll be right back.

She exits toward the kitchen.

Grunning takes out his gun again and the second bullet, trying to put two and two together.

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

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

He creeps up the steps and into the...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He moves steadily down the hall.

GRUNNING
(shouting)
Listen up, whoever you are... I've
had about enough of this!

He points his gun at each doorway as he passes.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm going to find you and I'm going
to --

Emma appears at the end of the hall.

They can barely see each other in the darkened hallway, both are more like shadows to each other than actual people.

If Grunning could see Emma clearly he'd notice that her hair is down and matted from sleep. She also wears a night gown.

EMMA
Who are you? Don't hurt us!

GRUNNING
Tell me about Roger?

EMMA
My husband?

GRUNNING
Today is supposed to be a big day
for him.

EMMA
Please, I don't have any money...

GRUNNING
What was he working on?

Andrew stumbles out of his bedroom. He too has on pajamas.

ANDREW
Mom, are you all right?

EMMA
Andrew, go back in your bedroom and
lock the door.

Without argument, Andrew scurries barefooted across the wood floor.

Grunning looks from Andrew back to Emma. He's pissed and she knows it.

EMMA (cont'd)
Oh God...

Grunning makes a move for Emma. She bolts back inside the master bedroom.

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.

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?

Both men are more than a little surprised.

ROGER
Who are you?

GRUNNING
You're here.

ROGER
Oh, yes.
(getting up)
The Institute told me they'd send a
driver. You're early. I haven't
had my breakfast yet, so I'm afraid
you'll have to wait.
(off Grunning's look)
What is it?

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 at Roger.

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

ROGER
Do you know my work?

GRUNNING
No, I don't. I mean, I'm not here
to take you to the Institute
either. I'm a police officer.
Detective Paul Grunning. I was
called to investigate your murder.

Roger steps back.

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

GRUNNING

Because the last time I saw you,
you were lying in a pool of blood.

ROGER

Get out this my house immediately.
I don't know how you got in here
but I'd appreciate it if you saw
your way out.

GRUNNING

Please, Roger. You of all people,
you have to believe me. You're
probably the only one who can
explain what's happening.

ROGER

My one explanation is 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. I know because Rachel
said it was suppose to be big.

Roger puts down the phone.

ROGER

How do you know about that? You
know Rachel?

GRUNNING

And Emma and Andrew. I've been
hanging out here for hours trying
to figure out who killed you.

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

ROGER

I was murdered.

GRUNNING

That's what I've been saying.

Beat.

ROGER

Well, as you can plainly see,
(reading the ID)
Detective Grunning, I'm not dead
any longer. Like Lazarus I've been
resurrected. Now please leave.

GRUNNING

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

ROGER

My work is classified, and unless
you've got a G-Five security
clearance we've got nothing further
to discuss.

Grunning walks over to Roger's desk.

ROGER (cont'd)

What are you doing?

GRUNNING

My own research. You're dead one
moment, the next you're not.
Something tells me that's the best
defense weapon this country's ever
going to have. And the answers got
to be right here.

ROGER

(rushing over)

You can't. These are my private
papers.

Before they can get into it, they hear a SHOUT from
downstairs.

EMMA (O.S.)

Roger! Your breakfast is getting
cold.

Then it clicks.

GRUNNING

It's out of order.
(quickly)
My watch says four fifteen. What
does yours say?
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 empty wine bottle and a full glass of wine sits next to her on the bedside table.

INT. ANDREW'S ROOM - MORNING

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

INT. GRUNNING APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Sarah sits in the same chair we saw her in earlier. The sleeping bag has a person in it, head facing the wall. It's Grunning.

RETURN TO SCENE:

GRUNNING
I arrived here at 10 a.m.

ROGER
Today?

GRUNNING
Today.

Roger stares long and hard at Grunning.

ROGER
No. It can't be.

GRUNNING
Talk to me, Roger.

ROGER
It was supposed to be contained.

GRUNNING
So this *is* about your work.

Roger doesn't respond. Grunning calmly takes his gun out of his holster and places it on Roger's desk.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I'm going to ask you this not as a cop...but as a man in desperate need of answers 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.

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
Imagine that this is time. One moment piled on another in a very uniform manner.

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

ROGER (cont'd)
But now you see, I've made these cuts.

He slowly unfolds the paper.

ROGER (cont'd)
Suddenly, time doesn't unfold in a linear way anymore.

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, and doesn't
connect, making it one time here --
another time a few inches away.

GRUNNING
(pointing at the paper)
These cuts...how would that
translate in the real world?

ROGER
A very intense pulse of energy.
But not one that harms physical
things. That's just it. That's
what so unique about my experiment.
I found a way to keep the first
three dimensions intact. It doesn't
hurt anyone.

GRUNNING
It just sets time off-kilter?

ROGER
It could give our Army a greatest
advantage any battlefield.

Grunning takes a moment.

GRUNNING
Stand up.

ROGER
What are you doing?

GRUNNING
I want to see something. Walk
toward me.

Grunning backs out of the room into the...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

It's dark. And looking back into the office, Grunning can
see that Roger has vanished.

Grunning walks back into...

INT. ROGER'S OFFICE - MORNING

In the light of morning, Roger reappears.

GRUNNING
You didn't follow me.

ROGER
I can't cross the fissures.

GRUNNING
Why not?

ROGER
The fissures I discovered have a set radius based on levels. This house is within it. When the test took place at the Institute this morning I was in here, hoping to join my team later with the results.

GRUNNING
So what your saying is...

ROGER
Detective, I'm inside of the experiment. Where were you at around 9:30 this morning?

GRUNNING
Across own at in twelve-step meeting. It's a long story.

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. In my world, you're lying on the kitchen floor dead.

ROGER
How did it happen?

GRUNNING
Gunshot to the head.

ROGER

My God. Who would do that?

GRUNNING

Obviously not you. Which rules out suicide. Roger, the way I see it, we've got about two hours to figure out who murdered you and how to stop them.

ROGER

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

GRUNNING

You're giving up.

ROGER

It is the course of events. We're pieces of a puzzle. And in the end we can't determine what the picture will be.

GRUNNING

Of course you can. We can do whatever we want. It may be impossible, but we've just got to
(realizing he's heard this before)
Believe.

ROGER

Sounds very scientific.

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.**

GRUNNING

I'll be right back.

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 Pullington
Defense Institute is in the middle,
and the house on Oakmead Lane is
somewhere in there too.

HUDSON

Are you practicing on being a mind
reader?

Grunning walks over to one of the curtains and looks out the window.

Beat.

GRUNNING
Is my old house in there?

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Grunning quickly walks 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.

He tries harder to open the door.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Grunning holds Matty as he dies in his arms.

Sarah cries by his side.

GRUNNING
(blood curdling)
Noooo!!

RETURN TO SCENE:

Grunning's head is pressed against the door.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
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.

He is taken aback when he see Grunning.

GRUNNING

I need an axe.

ROGER

What happened?

GRUNNING

(shouting)

I NEED AN AXE!

ROGER

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

GRUNNING

That door you sealed up. There's some kind of a portal behind it, isn't there?

ROGER

Electrical activities started happening in there shortly after I began doing my first experiments. I tinkered with fissures even before I joined up with the Institute. I sealed off the room to keep everyone out. I didn't know how unstable it was. Today proves I still don't.

Grunning turns around and marches out.

ROGER (cont'd)

(calling after him)

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 tucking an unseen child in for the night.

As Grunning struggles to see more, he notices that the woman is Emma, years younger.

When she's done, 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 before the experiments started?

ROGER

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

GRUNNING

How long ago? Ten, twelve years.

ROGER

I suppose. I hypothesized that the electrical activity started occurring in there because at one time that room was the most emotionally charged room in the house. Love creates an amazing amount of energy that can't be duplicated.

Grunning slumps down in the chair across from Roger and touches his chest.

ROGER (cont'd)

You're in pain.

GRUNNING
Something in my chest.

Roger looks down, panicked.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
What is it?

ROGER
There was a problem in the earlier tests. We were working at a microscopic scale. That's how we were able to keep it contained. But the fissures...they kept getting 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
(in English)
Again?

ROGER
They'd been sheared apart. Later we discovered that the levels in which we run the experiment have everything to do with that.

Grunning stands up, a bit uneasy.

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

GRUNNING
Somebody's got to fix this, Roger.

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

GRUNNING

Are you telling me everything's predetermined? That we're looking at something we can't do a thing about?

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! I 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

Coming.

GRUNNING

Where are you going? You're about to get killed, Roger.

ROGER

When does it happen?

GRUNNING

Before you touch your eggs.

ROGER

Well... What do you suggest I do?

GRUNNING

Help me figure this out. I know you and Emma fought last night over Rachel. Could she have killed you out of jealousy.

ROGER

Detective, we made up before our heads hit the pillow. The only thing that continued to worry her last night was this intruder in the house.

Grunning puzzled look turns into a smile, as he realizes...

GRUNNING

It was me.

ROGER

I don't understand?

GRUNNING

I was the intruder, running up and down these halls at all hours of the day. God, why didn't I think of that before? Okay so the wife's not jealous. But somebody else could be.

ROGER

Rachel's my assistant, nothing more.

GRUNNING

I wasn't talking about her.

Grunning steps outside into the...

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

He feels a tinge in his chest and rubs it. But he almost wills himself to quickly recover.

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 wide awake. He's looking at an old photo album.

ANDREW
Whoa. Ever heard of knocking?

GRUNNING
Later. I promise.

ANDREW
What do you want?

Grunning doesn't answer.

He looks at a shelf lined with sports trophies.

GRUNNING
You play lacrosse?

ANDREW
Yeah. What's it to you?

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)
He thought it was stupid.

GRUNNING
He said that?

ANDREW
He didn't have to.

GRUNNING
That must've bothered you.

Andrew shrugs.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Made you angry. Even mad?

ANDREW
Nah, that would've meant I cared about the jerk.

GRUNNING

You're father's dead. Can't you
say anything good about him.

ANDREW

Sure. He's dead. Good.

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

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 this.

GRUNNING

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

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

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Listen, Roger. You need to talk to
your son. I mean really talk.

ROGER

We don't have that kind of
relationship.

GRUNNING

Tell me about it. The kid hates
your guts. Talking to him could
mean the difference between life
and death for you.

ROGER

I'm at a loss.

GRUNNING

He needs to know you love him.

ROGER

I do. I love my son.

GRUNNING

Then tell him. There's still time
to let him know that.

(MORE)

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Maybe we can't fix everything, but
we can fix that.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Massaging his chest, Grunning lies on the bed.

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 pulls 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 to his old house. There's a "For Sale" sign in front.

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

He slowly steps toward the front door, peering into the large picture window.

From his POV the house is empty and has no signs of life.

He pulls out his keys out of habit, and then notices there's a real estate lock box on the house.

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

He crawls through it into the house.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

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

It glows **11:35 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. The colorful boarder wall paper tells us this along with a tattered teddy bear that rests in the corner.

Grunning picks up the bear. He's flooded with memories.

GRUNNING
It's got to happen here. This is
where the love was.

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

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

He walks to the door.

On his way out, 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, grabbing him around the neck for a big hug.

MATTY

Daddy!

Grunning grabs Matty and hugs him tightly.

GRUNNING

(kissing him)

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

MATTY

What's wrong, Daddy?

GRUNNING

Nothing's wrong, Matty.
Everything's fine. I'm here,
and... everything's fine.

Grunning kisses him again, then...

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Hey, where's your Mom?

Matty turns back toward the other room.

MATTY

In there.

The child turns to run. 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

Please God, 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. There's something I
need to tell you.

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. Call Mommy. Call me...

MATTY
Daddy.

GRUNNING
That's right. Call Daddy, okay.
Promise me you won't forget to call
me.

MATTY
Okay, Daddy.

Grunning hesitates, thinking.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Tyler covers Matty's mouth.

END FLASHBACK:

GRUNNING
(almost to himself)
No, there's got to be more. Matty,
Matty, look here. There has to be
something else I can tell you.

MATTY
Daddy, can I go play now?

GRUNNING
Matty, please, son. I'm trying to -

Matty reaches for the badge. Grunning has lost his attention.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Yeah. You can play with my badge.

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

Matty begins playing with it intently.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
Come here.

Grunning grabs Matty, and gives him a big, long hug.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I love you.

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

GRUNNING (cont'd)
I love you, Matty.

Matty's gaze connects with Grunning's.

MATTY
I love you too, Daddy.

GRUNNING
I love you everywhere and forever.

MATTY
Everywhere and forever.

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
No, you go. Give your Mom a big
hug for me.
(hugging him)
Make it last forever.

MATTY
Okay, Daddy.

Matty pulls away, and Grunning slowly 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.

His phone rings. He answers it without emotion.

GRUNNING

Yeah.

INTERCUT:

INT. POLICE CHIEF 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?

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

Are you okay?

GRUNNING

Not really.
(staring at the house)
But there's a couple of things I
need to take care of.

END INTERCUT:

Grunning closes his phone and gets out of the car.

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning steps into the dining room.

He sees Roger dressed for work, wearing the tweed jacket and tie, sitting at the table staring at the cold plate of eggs.

Grunning sits at the table beside him. Any movement is very painful now.

GRUNNING

How'd it go with Andy?

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. That he got and he wanted to use it on me and Rachel. God, the look in his eyes. He wanted to teach me a lesson for the way he thought I treated his mom.

GRUNNING

What'd you say?

ROGER

That I was sorry. That I never meant to hurt her. But, you know, it wasn't really about Emma or Rachel.

Roger pauses.

ROGER (cont'd)

He never understood...how I felt about him. I thought he knew.

GRUNNING

You talked. It's a start.

ROGER

I have a lot to make up for. With what's about to happen I'm afraid I'm not going to get the chance.

He looks up at Grunning.

ROGER (cont'd)

You really think he kills me?

GRUNNING

No, not any more. But Emma thinks he did. She told the truth about one thing. When she found your body, you were already dead.

FLASHBACK:

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.)

There just wasn't a gun in your hand. When she saw that, because she knew how angry he was, she reached the only conclusion she could. Andrew did it.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MORNING

Andrew stumbles out of his bedroom. He two has on pajamas.

ANDREW

Mom, are you all right?

In Andrew hand is the gun.

GRUNNING (V.O.)

She'd seen him running down the hall very early this morning. Same time she stumbled into me.

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.)

What she didn't know is he was trying to put the gun back. I don't think she expected to see it in the box. But when she did, her motherly instincts kicked in.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

Emma carefully places the gun 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 gun and the bullet.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

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

Roger looks at Grunning, worried.

ROGER (cont'd)
If I die, will you arrest them?

GRUNNING
You're not going to die because I
figured out who the real killer is.

ROGER
Well, who is he?

GRUNNING
Me. I killed you.
(pulls gun from holster)
With this. Two shots rang out in
the house today. One hit the wall
in the kitchen, the other ended
your life. The kitchen bullet
matches my gun. When they dig the
led out of you, I'm sure that'll be
a match too.

ROGER
But why would you want to kill me?

GRUNNING

Now that I don't know. I'm in a lot of pain. Emotionally and physically. And I'm taking heavy doses of medication.

Grunning coughs, holds his chest this time, and swallows another pill.

GRUNNING (cont'd)

Maybe I'm just tired of living and killing you would end it for both of us.

ROGER

(looking at gun)

What do you plan to do?

Grunning places his gun on the table.

GRUNNING

I'm going to leave this here, and I'm going to escort you to the lab at the Institute, where you're going to reverse all of this. I figure if we leave now, we'll miss the hour of your demise. After we're done saving the world, I won't follow you home. You'll have the murder weapon, which means it's a good bet you'll get to live to experiment another day.

ROGER

You're bound and determined to prove me wrong. That there are some things we can change.

GRUNNING

There are. I'm hoping there are.

ROGER

All right. I'll get Rachel and we'll ride over to the Institute together.

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. Rachel?

Roger stops at the swinging door, still holding his plate.

ROGER

Yes, I'm going to need someone to watch the levels. She's got the proper security clearance.

GRUNNING

Rachel said she never went to the lab. She claimed she didn't know what you were doing over there because she wasn't able to get in.

ROGER

Well, I don't know why she'd make up a story like that.

GRUNNING

(pensive)

Me either.

Grunning walks over to the door, just as the door to the hallway opens and Rachel appears.

Now, unbeknownst to Rachel Grunning is behind the door.

She's holding a gun. He sees his police revolver on the table.

ROGER

Rachel, what are you doing?

RACHEL

They're waiting for you to evaluate the test. Roger, I can't let you go to the Institute today.

ROGER

But they need to know that something went wrong with the experiment.

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. All in good time, Rachel, you kept saying. While every day I lived in hell grieving for my sister. She was a part of me. She was all I had.

Roger stares at Grunning confused. Grunning puts his index finger to his lips telling Roger to be quiet.

ROGER

Rachel, please put the gun down
before someone gets hurt.

RACHEL

The levels had to be raised so that
I could expand the radius of the
fissures and get to her. I have to
go back in time and save her.

ROGER

It doesn't work that way. It
just... We have to bring things
down to their normal test levels at
once!

RACHEL

No! We can't. Not until I have my
sister back.

Grunning pushes the door on Rachel. The gun in her hand goes flying across the floor.

Grunning reaches for it, but before he can get it, Rachel seeing his police revolver on the table goes for it.

Grunning pushes Roger out of the way just as Rachel fires and misses. The bullet goes beyond the room hitting the kitchen wall.

Roger and Grunning are on the floor. Roger's broken plate of food is near the door.

Grunning staggers to his feet. Once again the fissures are affecting him.

Rachel trains Grunning's revolver on him.

RACHEL (cont'd)

Don't even...

Grunning freezes. Then...

GRUNNING

(holding his chest)
I'm sorry she's dead, but Roger's
right. You can't save her this
way.

RACHEL

What do you know about it. You're just a cop. And a damaged one at that.

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

FLASHFORWARD:

INT. DINING ROOM/KITCHEN - MORNING

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

Roger staggers backwards landing in the kitchen where he 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.

ROGER

People are going to die. There's a possibility that what you've done can't be reversed.

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 because he crossed the fissures.

RACHEL

I did too. I'm fine.

ROGER

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

GRUNNING

It's...killing me... and not just me. There are others out there, all over the city.

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

She steps back.

Grunning suddenly remembers he has the gun that he thought killed Roger. Pulling it out he straightens up again, and fires.

She reacts quickly, firing Grunning's police revolver back at him. Grunning's bullet missed. Her's hit him square in the chest.

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 the gun Grunning dropped. 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 stands 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:

INT. DINING ROOM - MORNING

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
Emma, call an ambulance.
(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 (O.S.)
Paul... Paul. Are you ready?

Grunning notices he's in the house. He looks over at several framed photos of his family on the table next to the couch. In each one of them they look extremely happy.

Grunning reaches for one. It's of Matty. He poses beside a lit birthday cake. On it is the number 5.

Grunning turns around and looks toward the kitchen.

In the doorway stands Matty, holding his tattered teddy bear.

MATTY
Daddy!

Matty runs to Grunning. Grunning scoops him up, and begins hugging while giving him with an intermittent tickle or two. Matty GIGGLES.

Sarah approaches with a pair of small shoes in her hand.

SARAH
Matty, shoes.

MATTY
(he takes them)
I'm a big boy.

SARAH
Yes, you are. And big boys go to
preschool. And to work.

Sarah give Grunning a quick kiss on the lips. It all but
startles him. He smiles. Kisses her back. Then...

GRUNNING
Hey, Matt. I love you.

MATTY
Everywhere and forever.

GRUNNING
(surprised he knows it)
Everywhere and forever. That's
right. That's right.

He hugs Matty again.

GRUNNING (cont'd)
(to self)
Must've been a dream -- whoa.

Grunning feels a pinch. It's his badge. Matty wears it
around his neck.

SARAH
You gave it to him.

GRUNNING
I'll take that.

Grunning slips his badge off of Matty. Sarah takes Matty out
of Grunning's arms.

SARAH
We've got to go. Oh, I almost
forgot. That letter over there
came for you today.

Sarah moves to the couch with Matty so that she can slip his
shoes on.

Turning his back to them, Grunning opens the envelope and pulls out... a picture.

Is of Roger and Andrew. They are standing next to each other. Roger has his arms around Andrew. Andrew wears his lacrosse uniform, and holds a trophy.

Grunning turns the picture over. There's writing on it.

ROGER (V.O.)
Thank you for giving me back my
son. I truly hope you're enjoying
yours.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - EVENING

The door opens.

Matty sits in the center of the room surrounded by toys.

A man overshadows him. Matty reaches up, hoping to be picked up. The man bends down... IT'S ROGER!

Just as he swoops Matty up, through the open door we see two cars of police intercept Tyler before he's able to set foot on the Grunning property.

From where he stands Roger watches as they handcuff him and take him away.

Once the excitement is over. Roger gently puts Matty back down on the floor. He puts his hand to his mouth, telling the child not to say anything. Matty is obedient.

As Roger turns to go, he bumps into the glass table... the lamp CRASHES to the floor.

When Sarah and Grunning enter they only see is Matty -- Roger is gone.

RETURN TO SCENE:

INT. GRUNNING LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Grunning places Roger's picture on a side table next to the Matty's birthday picture.

He then joins Sarah and Matty on the couch for one big embrace.

FADE TO BLACK.