

LSD/88

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN

WHITE TEXT

January 5th, 1961

An excerpt from The President's
Board of Consultants on Foreign
Intelligence Activities:

"...the CIA's concentration on
political, psychological, and
related covert action activities
have tended to distract
substantially from the execution of
its primary intelligence gathering
mission."

FADE IN:

EXT. ROOFTOP - 10 STORIES UP

TITLE:

JUST OUTSIDE WASHINGTON D.C.

1953

Rain pours. The dark clouds above appear to be within reach.

FRANK GIBSON, 42, in a soaked black suit, lets the rain pelt
him. The rain covers his tears but his face shows anguish.

He slowly steps to the edge of the roof, slipping a few times
on his way. Shaking, he steps to the ledge. He peers over.

C.U. FRANK'S FACE

A guttural sob rips out of him. Leans back. But then, a deep,
calming breath.

EXT. MIDDLE OF BUILDING

The windows reflect the surrounding forest. A beat. Then
Frank drops through frame.

OVERHEAD FROM ROOFTOP

We can barely make out the ant-like heap of man who has shattered below. The rain quickly splashes and spreads the blood.

FADE TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. DANTE'S BAR - DUSK

TITLE:

CHICAGO

1960

As dusk descends a bar sign flickers on: DANTE'S in neon red.

INT. DANTE'S BAR

YOSHIRO TIFUNE, Japanese-American, mid 20's in a sharp gray suit, leans against the basement door with a cigarette hanging from his mouth, painfully bored.

He glances at the clock. Seconds tick by in slow motion.

At the table in the center bar it is the same. SAL DIMARTINO, an old, fat Italian man heaves with each phlegmy breath. He stares at the man across from him, his usual scowl set deeper, accentuating his disgust.

VICTOR sits across from him in a big puffy coat and fedora that hides his face. Time returns to normal as Vic breaks the silence.

VICTOR (O.S.)

Well, Sal-

SAL

And another thing. I don't like looking at you.

VICTOR is in his early 20's and impeccably dressed. Under his coat is a crisp brown suit with a blonde kravatt wrapped around his neck. This adornment hides deep burns that go down his body, but the scarred skin licks up under his jaw and chin. He is indeed unsettling to look at. Victor smiles and his scars stretch.

VICTOR

To tell you the truth Sal, I don't
much like looking at you either.

SAL

Enough. I don't like dragging my
ass down here for this. It's
unbefitting for a man of my
caliber.

He slurps the remainder of his whisky, slams it on the table-

SAL (CONT'D)

Another!

VICTOR

Maybe you've had enough-

SAL

Shut up!

Sal is drunk, again, even more so than usual. Victor nods to
JASPER, the large man behind the bar. Jasper begins making
the drink.

Sal clears his throat of phlegm and SPITS ON THE GROUND.

Victor looks at the phlegm on the ground with contempt. His
calm facade slips as the rage inside him begins to leak.

SAL (CONT'D)

Ha. Now you're getting it.

Victor looks over at Yoshi-

SAL (CONT'D)

Uh-uh, don't look at your chink.
We're talking here.

Victor slowly turns back and meets Sal's eyes, barely able to
conceal his rising anger.

SAL (CONT'D)

Are you getting the picture? You
know why you're here right? You're
here because a terrible thing
happened to you and your family,
and someone, bless their heart,
feels sorry for you. Pity is what
allows you be to here.

(MORE)

SAL (CONT'D)

And while you're here, you and these freaks are our eyes and ears, and when appropriate, our mouths, to the miscreants that border this shithole you call a neighborhood. So we don't have to get their shit on our shoe or their stench in our nostrils.

Sal sucks in phlegm through his nose. Victor's fist tightens under the table.

SAL (CONT'D)

But me, a made fucking guy, still has to trek down here with niggers and spics crawling all over the place. And I'll tell ya, at the end of the day, it certainly smells like there's shit on my shoe!

Jasper places a fresh drink by Sal, takes a few steps back and remains there.

Sal gulps his drink.

SAL (CONT'D)

(wipes his mouth)

And now, now I hear you's are trying to expand your little operation. Stretch your legs, feel a little wind under your balls. You gotta be outta your fucking skulls! To think you'd ever be allowed to do so, let alone have the wherewithal to do it...

Yoshi straightens up now and looks at Jasper.

VICTOR

I don't know what you mean Sal.

SAL

(smiling mischievously)

You might think you're a good liar behind that burnt face mask you got there. But you're not.

(looks around)

You fucking freakshows, I've never seen a motlier crew. A burn victim, a Jap and a mute. Marone! The balls you got to think you can step beyond your means. Luckily, you have me watching over you, guiding you.

(MORE)

SAL (CONT'D)
And even luckier, I actually do
encourage free market thinking. But
dues have to be paid, of course.

Victor begins to grin.

VICTOR
Of course. The American way. These
dues go directly to you, I'm
assuming.

SAL
Naturally.

Victor smiles wide and stands up.

VICTOR
Naturally.

He reaches out his hand. Sal stands, pleased at how easy this
has gone, and reluctantly shakes Victor's hand.

In an instant Victor pulls him forward and clocks him with a
left cross right in the mouth. Jasper catches Sal from behind
and wraps his huge arms around him.

SAL
(blood dribbling from his mouth)
You stupid fuck, you're dead!

Jasper lifts him up as Yoshi approaches-

SAL (CONT'D)
Getchur hands off me you-

Yoshi jams two fingers into a pressure point on Sal's neck.
Sal starts sputtering and struggling. Victor gets in close.

VICTOR
I'd rather take the extra money we
earn and wipe my ass with it,
before I gave it to such a
worthless scum sucking fat wop like
you Sally boy.

Yoshi increases the pressure and Sal loses consciousness in
Jasper's arms.

Yoshi and Jasper look expectantly to their leader. Vic shakes
his hand out and looks at each of his men, thinking it over,
but he already knows.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(nods to the basement
door)
Get rid of him.

Jasper begins dragging him to the basement door. Yoshi hangs for a beat, looking at Victor.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
What?! Last time I checked you
weren't the mute one.

Yoshi holds his look, then goes to help Jasper carry Sal down to the basement.

Victor, alone in the bar, silence descending on him. He smashes the whisky glass against the wall.

INT. BASEMENT

Jasper and Yoshi drag Sal through a dark red hallway. They stop at an ominous, rusted door. Yoshi opens it up and an archaic steel chair bolted into the ground sits in the center of the small room. The chair is covered with straps and ropes.

INT. CHAIR ROOM

Yoshi and Jasper place Sal in the chair. They strap in his arms, legs and feet. Yoshi puts a gag in his mouth. Jasper looks on uneasy. Yoshi nods. Jasper exits.

Yoshi walks over to a table in the corner with a small turntable on it. He drops the needle and classical music plays loud.

Black leather gloves smoothly pull over his hands. Yoshi cracks his knuckles and takes a slow, deep breath in, and out.

He stands behind the chair and pulls out a length of rope attached to it. He wraps the rope around Sal's neck. Sal starts to regain consciousness and moves his head around a bit.

The musical crescendo hits as Yoshi tightens his grip on the rope and begins to fall backwards.

We switch to SUPER-SLOMO.

The music slows and the sound warps. Yoshi drifts backwards in slow motion, allowing gravity to do the work for him, almost parallel to the ground now.

The music returns to normal as we snap back to regular speed.

Yoshi's body goes taut, gripping the strap. Sal's head and neck jerk as he struggles. The chair does not budge. Sal's face is turning an awful shade of red and purple.

C.U. YOSHI'S FACE

Serene, unblinking, staring up at the ceiling, the only motion coming from his hands being jerked by Sal's struggle, which slows, and slows, and...

CUT TO:

INT. VIEWING ROOM

TITLE:

SAN FRANCISCO

TOM KNIGHT stands in the back corner of a dark, smoky, sound-proofed room. He leans against the wall smoking a cigarette. He is 48 years old but looks older. His grey hair is thinning but his grey moustache remains thick. As he drags his cigarette, the glow lights up his eyes. Tom looks tired.

Tom glances at the two young agents sitting at the table in front of him, a recording device between them. The one on the right, AGENT MCGINNIS, takes notes attentively. The one on the left, AGENT JEFFREY, might be asleep.

A voice comes in low over the microphone.

JOHN (O.S.)

What's...what's happening?

Tom returns his gaze to the main show. The three men watch a small bedroom through a large one way mirror.

A robust, 40 year old JOHN sits in his underwear on a faux velvet red bed. A pro with her top off glances at the mirror.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Why do I feel this way?

PRO

It's okay baby...

The pro leaves the room and locks the door behind her.

The john looks at his hands. He looks at the door.

JOHN
Hey, where'd you go?

He gets up and tries to open the door.

JOHN (CONT'D)
Hey...HEY!

Unsuccessfully jiggling the doorknob, he dives back onto the bed and a soft cry is let out.

JOHN (CONT'D)
What the fuck is going on?

He rocks slowly. Then he catches himself in the mirror. He stares at himself...but it almost looks like he's staring through the mirror directly at Tom. His stare intensifies, anger building. He jumps up out of the bed.

JOHN (CONT'D)
YOU!

Close to the mirror. Still staring towards Tom. McGinnis notices and looks back at Tom. Tom stares straight at the john and drags his cigarette.

Suddenly the john laughs and begins making strange faces in the mirror. He starts rubbing his face and sits back on the bed.

Tom exhales smoke as the john continues to blabber.

CUT TO: LATER

The room is clear, the lights are on. Cleaners tidy the boudoir on the other side of the mirror.

Tom has his notepad out.

TOM
So is that how it usually goes?

JEFFREY
Yes, sir.

MCGINNIS
Um, well...

TOM
Agent McGinnis. Something to say?

MCGINNIS

Well, he...I'd say his reaction was a bit strange.

JEFFREY

What are you talking about? They all end up like that, zonked out and blabbing about some bullshit. This guy liked his own face.

MCGINNIS

But, before, he was...he was looking right at you Agent Knight.

Tom stares at him plainly for a beat. Jeffrey shakes his head and eases away from McGinnis.

TOM

You think the subject...saw me? Through a one way mirror?

MCGINNIS

I, no, no of course not. It just...seemed strange is all.

JEFFREY

That's strange? This whole fucking op is strange. And useless.

Tom makes a note and shuts his pad.

TOM

Thank you for having me today gentlemen, for your time, and your service on this operation. My conclusion concurs with Agent Jeffrey. This is not an effective use of agency time or manpower. Operation Midnight Climax is therefore disbanded, effective immediately, and you will receive new assignments in the coming weeks. I'll need to cross check your supply before it ships back. Agent McGinnis, if you'll show me to the supply room. Agent Jeffrey, you're dismissed.

JEFFREY

(big smile)
Thank you sir.

INT. BASEMENT HALLWAY

Tom and Agent McGinnis walk silently to the supply room. McGinnis is fidgety.

MCGINNIS

Agent Knight, I apologize if I-

TOM

Don't apologize. You were just doing your job.

A few more beats of awkward silence.

MCGINNIS

Of course you would know whether this op was effective or not. You were one of the founding agents...right? If you're shutting it down, it must be a load of crock.

Tom turns on him with a glimpse of silent, unvarnished anger. McGinnis gulps.

MCGINNIS (CONT'D)

The, the supply room is just there on the left.

He hands Tom the key.

TOM

(cooling)

Thank you Agent McGinnis.

Tom steps forward and McGinnis follows. Tom stops abruptly.

TOM (CONT'D)

Thank you, Agent McGinnis.

MCGINNIS

Of course, erm, thank you sir.

McGinnis practically runs away.

INT. SUPPLY ROOM

In a cramped supply closet, in front of an open lockbox, Tom rifles through sheets of LSD. At the top of each sheet is a label. LSD/589 one after another as he sifts through.

Then he suddenly stops. The sheet reads LSD/88. His jaw slacks. Then it snaps shut and clenches.

He looks around in disbelief. He removes it and carefully goes through the rest. All 589. He stands straight and takes a deep breath. He returns the LSD sheets to the box and locks it. Except for the 88. He places that inside his suit jacket pocket.

EXT. BUSY WASHINGTON D.C. STREET - DAY

TITLE:

WASHINGTON D.C

A main street hums on a beautiful morning. Cars drive by, a few beeps can be heard. Men and women wait at the bus stop, reading the paper, keeping warm in their coats.

A shriek is heard above all the noise. A woman looks up from her book and squints into the street.

A MAN, in only his underwear, runs full speed in and out of traffic. He stops at a parked car and growls at his reflection.

The whole bus stop watches him now as he darts back into traffic. A car passing through the intersection CRASHES into the man. He goes up and over the hood, rolling over the side of the car, landing with a thud. He screams in agony.

INT. TOM'S D.C. BEDROOM - NIGHT

The dead of night. Tom pores over documents strewn across a large desk illuminated by a lamp. He makes notes on a legal pad.

Tom lets out a sigh and lifts his reading glasses. Stands and stretches. He picks up another stack of documents striped with redactions.

He moves over to a chair by his bed and settles in. We can see the heading at the top. "Results of aerosol spray over French village: Hundreds missing". He turns the pages.

ON his desk and the view outside: complete darkness.

FAST FADE: The darkness turns to dawn.

BBBRRRNGGGG

Tom's alarm clock goes off. The bed beside it is still made.

Tom walks over to the alarm clock and shuts it off. In slacks and a disheveled undershirt, he's still got a document in hand. He hasn't slept.

Finishing the last sentence, he moves to the desk and begins gathering the documents up.

INT. TOM'S BATHROOM/BEDROOM

-Tom shaves at the sink.

-Tom reads the morning paper standing up, a cigarette in his mouth and a hot coffee steaming in his other hand.

-Tom puts on a fresh suit.

INT. CLOSET

Tom opens up his closet and moves some shirts out of the way, revealing a massive SAFE. He quickly sets the combination and it opens. It's filled with documents, and above them on a shelf, two small lockboxes. He tucks last night's documents back into a precise spot, closes the safe and resets it.

INT. CIA OFFICES - ROGER'S OFFICE - DAY

Tom appears to be in disbelief. He sits across from ROGER who's behind his desk.

TOM
(outraged)
You can't be serious.

Roger's smile doesn't budge.

ROGER
I thought you'd be thrilled Tom.
You're finally getting back in the
game, where it really matters.

TOM
I already am doing something that
matters.

ROGER
Shutting down hooker ops? My 16
year old nephew could do that.
(smirks)
Well, maybe not huh?

Tom's seething.

TOM

They're not hooker ops. I'm shutting down the last LSD experiments of Project MK ULTRA. Which, as I understood, was a top priority entering the Kennedy administration.

ROGER

I just told you you're going to be a main part of stopping Castro and you're practically spitting in my eye.

TOM

Every fucking agent in this place is working on Castro-

ROGER

(enjoying this)

Agent Knight, I'm not going to sit here and have you swear at me.

Tom just gets angrier.

TOM

This...is...bullshit! I was practically begging for this task force, for five years. Finally you give it to me, and in just two years of shutting these worthless ops down, I've saved the Agency millions of dollars and hundreds of hours of manpower. Meanwhile, agents are still spiking each other with LSD for kicks, and the most recent one streaks around DC in his underwear, in broad daylight, and almost gets himself killed. Three days after that, you decide to pull me off. Are you out of your fucking mind?

Roger just stares at Tom for a beat. The smile's gone.

ROGER

Listen to me you relic. If I decided, I'd bury you in the basement to die on desk duty. But, for some reason, somebody here likes you. Don't ask me why.

(leans back in his chair,
finished)

(MORE)

ROGER (CONT'D)
Pack your shit. You've got a one
way ticket to Chicago in two days.

Tom shoots out of his seat, barely able to hold his anger in.

TOM
(through gritted teeth)
Who's heading the op?

ROGER
Your old friend.

TOM
I don't have any friends.

ROGER
(laughs)
Ain't that the truth. He'll find
you. Now get the hell outta my-

Tom slams the door behind him.

EXT. TRAIN STATION

Tom gets off a streetcar at a sparsely populated stop. He
rounds a corner when a hand pulls him into an alley.

Tom quickly puts a wrist lock on him but the man's other hand
cocks a pistol. The man is smiling like a Cheshire cat.

AUBREY
Not so fast Tom.

Tom recognizes him and is surprised. He releases the lock.
Aubrey uncocks the pistol.

Once the surprise wears off, Tom's face shifts to disgust.
Aubrey holds his leery smile.

FRED AUBREY is in his mid 40's, with a round face, pale blue
eyes, a nicely combed blonde mustache and greasy, slicked
back blonde hair. Despite his girth he looks healthy,
vibrant.

TOM
What are you packing for?

AUBREY
Why the hell aren't you?

TOM
You following me?

AUBREY

Yes. Have been since you left the office. And you didn't spot me. That's disappointing Tom, especially since you're my head man now.

TOM

(getting worked up)
You son of a bitch coward. You run away and come back here like nothing happened!

AUBREY

Calm yourself Tom. I wouldn't be back if...
(dramatic pause)
Tom. 88 is back.

Tom doesn't blink.

TOM

No shit.

Now Aubrey shows surprise.

AUBREY

What?

Tom looks around the filthy alley.

TOM

Why don't we go somewhere a bit more...open.

EXT. PARK

Tom and Aubrey sit on a picnic table in the middle of a park, their coats pulled tight.

AUBREY

You're right you know. I did run. I wish I could've done things differently. I've changed over the years. And it seems like you have too. I don't remember you being so...gruff.

TOM

I guess you rubbed off on me.

Aubrey smiles.

TOM (CONT'D)

I get...angry, now. It comes and goes.

(sighs)

I may not have left after...after Frank, but, I wasn't really here either. I just went inside myself. And it's taken me a long time to even take a glimpse outside.

Tom stares off, getting emotional.

AUBREY

I didn't forget anything, Tom, I know how important Frank was to you-
(let's that hang for a moment)

But...I needed to get away. I couldn't process what happened. And then Frank...I dove into the work...

Aubrey looks away now. Tom looks at him with disdain for a moment but it wipes away as Aubrey turns to face him.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

Shall we get down to business?

Tom nods grimly.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

How did you know it was back?

TOM

After, the incident, Frank destroyed all of his equipment and immediately designated 88 as a dangerous failure, not to be tested again. I was gone, off destroying samples across the east coast. That's why I wasn't there when Frank...and you were already gone. But, I did it. I went to every safe house and watch spot and I destroyed every single sample of it...Then, I did my damndest to make sure it stayed gone. I monitored or shut down every op I could. And now, after all this time, I see a sleeve of 88, right in the supply, amongst samples ready to be used...anybody could have taken it. I don't...I don't understand how it's back.

Aubrey looks grim now.

AUBREY

Unfortunately Tom, when something like that is brought into existence, it's very hard to shove it back into non-existence. Frank made it, and it's here in the world-

TOM

(snaps)

We made it. Frank knew the chemistry, but don't lie to yourself. We brought it into the world. The three of us.

AUBREY

(quick smile before getting serious)

You're right. That's why I'm here Tom. I was gone, but I kept my ears open. I heard a few years back there was someone new, experimenting with failed strains.

TOM

(gritted teeth)

Doctor Daniels. I chased his ass to Canada and he hasn't been back since.

AUBREY

Right. But someone else must have caught on. Because recently I heard an interesting piece of gossip. An unknown figure entering the Chicago narcotics trade. But not cannabis or heroin. They're pumping out different strains of lysergic acid diethylamide. All sorts of variations. And one of these new products appears to be 88.

TOM

Jesus. Is it, is it purposeful? Do they know what they're doing?

AUBREY

I don't know whether they're conscious or ignorant of its true...capability. All I know is that it's back. Maybe it never really left. But it's here now, and it's going straight to the streets.

(MORE)

AUBREY (CONT'D)

And we need to do all that's in our power to stop it. We're not working Castro Tom. We're working 88.

Tom looks off in the distance. He looks scared but resolved.

TOM

I've been terrified for the last 7 years that it'd come back. And now it has. But it's the one thing I can truly believe in anymore that's worth fighting. That's necessary.

AUBREY

Good.

Aubrey stands up in front of Tom.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

This is a two man operation. Only you and I will know what we're really doing. The CIA thinks we'll be facilitating weapons and information through Chicago to help with the Castro plot. The Mob will think the same.

TOM

The Mob?

AUBREY

Yes, the Mob. They want Castro dead maybe even more than we do, and they'll be damn useful to us for what we want in Chicago. They already have been.

TOM

And what is it exactly we want Aubrey?

Aubrey looks at him like it's obvious.

AUBREY

The complete seizure and utter destruction of all LSD88.

Aubrey gets closer and somber.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

I know we can't make up for all that's happened, with Frank, with what we brought into the world that night.

Tom shudders.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

But what we can do is make sure we prevent anything like that from happening again. We owe it. To our country. To Frank.

Tom's getting emotional but nods, brushes it away to steely eyed resolve. Aubrey slaps Tom's arm and backs away.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

Chicago's the epicenter. I'll see you there in two days and we'll go over next steps.

Aubrey begins to walk off.

TOM

Aubrey...what if we find someone...affected by it?

Aubrey looks at him confused.

AUBREY

We eliminate them.

And walks off.

Tom watches Aubrey go, fear and suspicion racking his face.

EXT. D.C. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

A figure trudges down a dark alley. Tom emerges from the shadows and he does not look good. He walks to the fire escape and begins a slow climb up.

EXT. FIRE ESCAPE - 5TH FLOOR WINDOW

Through the window we see KATE, a brunette woman in her mid 20's making dinner for one in between cigarette puffs.

Tom sits outside with a melancholy smile, watching her in her natural state for a moment. He taps lightly three times on the window.

Kate looks up without alarm. She walks over and opens it up. Tom enters.

INT. KATE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

TOM
We have to talk.

KATE
How long's it been this time?

TOM
Kate, there's-

KATE
How long Tom?

Tom collapses into a big chair.

TOM
Four days.

KATE
Jesus. You fucking idiot.

Kate goes back to the kitchen and lowers the flame on the stovetop. She pulls out a dopp kit from the cupboard and brings it over.

TOM
We need to talk.

KATE
You need to sleep.

From the kit she pulls out a syringe and a medicinal bag filled with clear liquid and begins prepping a dose.

TOM
We're moving.

KATE
(stops in her tracks)
What?

TOM
I've been reassigned to Chicago. To work with Fred Aubrey.

Kate's speechless, just for a moment.

KATE
You're kidding!

TOM

Officially we'll be working on Castro, but, he wants to, he says he wants to work on...well, what we've been working on.

KATE

Oh my God. This is great!

TOM

I don't like it.

KATE

What?!

TOM

One week after I actually find LSD88, right out in the open, he's back. Saying it's even worse than it appears. I don't like the timing.

KATE

(momentarily stunned)

...what are you saying? All you've told me for years is how real it is, how damaging it could be, and now, when you're actually given the chance to confront it, you want to, what, run away!?

TOM

I didn't say that! I just, we need to be careful. We can't trust Fred Aubrey.

KATE

No shit! We're not going to trust him. We're going to pretend to trust him, until we can kill him.

TOM

Jesus Kate!

KATE

What? We're not? According to you he's the reason my father is dead.

TOM

(ashamed)

It's not, it's not that simple.

Disgusted, Kate shuts down and goes back to fixing up the needle.

KATE

Roll up your sleeve you coward.

TOM

Oh Christ Kate, would you relax! If I can't talk this out with you-

KATE

Roll up your sleeve!

Tom rolls up his sleeve.

KATE (CONT'D)

I don't like what I'm hearing.

TOM

You shouldn't. This is frightening, to say the least. Fred Aubrey is incredibly dangerous, and if he's half honest about what's going on, we're in deep shit. You need to be prepared to get your hands dirty.

She perks up and smiles.

TOM (CONT'D)

Stop smiling!

She does, slightly. She can't contain herself. She finishes up the needle and squirts it.

KATE

Where's the sack of shit been all these years?

TOM

Japan, Germany, Russia, Vietnam. Deep covert work. Doing what exactly, I don't know, but you can bet it was diabolical in nature. The man was already...off, and that was before he left. But this now...openly speaking of going rogue, without a care in the world.

KATE

Seems like you two have more in common than you realize.

Tom looks up angry. Kate stares, challenging. He can't deny it.

TOM
(softening)
This is bad Katie.

KATE
No, this is good. Don't you know
the saying? Keep your friends close
and your enemies closer. And last I
checked, you don't have any
friends.

Tom smiles sadly and looks up at her.

TOM
I thought I had one.

Kate smiles down at him.

And sticks the needle into his arm.

KATE
Get some rest. We've got busy days
ahead.

Tom's eyes close and he nods off.

INT. TOM'S PLACE - MORNING

Birds chirp outside in the morning blue sky.

Tom's rummaging through the room. Documents everywhere. The closet is open and so is the safe inside, half empty.

A heavy briefcase is opened and splayed on the bed.

CUT TO: LATER

The large briefcase contains a neat stack of documents. A duffel bag next to it is stuffed with more documents. Lighter fluid and a book of matches sit on top of it.

Tom pulls the two lockboxes out of the safe onto the bed and opens them. The first contains the confiscated LSD88. The second contains an old but pristine mini-shotgun.

He picks up the gun, cocks it, examines it, snaps it shut, back in the box. He places both boxes into the larger briefcase. Looks back at the safe.

Tom reaches deep into it and pulls out a framed photograph: Tom and Frank Gibson stand shoulder to shoulder, in uniform, trying to subdue their smiles but failing. They look happy, composed, young.

Tom looks at it and smiles. Begins to tear up. His jaw tightens and anger flashes. He places the picture into the LSD88 box, closes it and shuts the large briefcase. He picks it and the duffel bag up.

EXT. WOODS

In the middle of the woods a small fire burns in a pit. Tom stands over it tossing in more documents from the duffel bag. The smoke travels up above the trees to the sky.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CHICAGO

The river flows through downtown Chicago.

TITLE:

CHICAGO

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Tom enters the hotel room. All quiet. He turns the TV on. The Kennedy Brothers are fielding questions. Tom sweeps the hotel room for any sign of taps-

-Under the mattress and bed frame

-Along baseboards

-Unscrews the phone receiver

CUT TO: LATER

Tom sits on the bed smoking a cigarette watching the end of the press conference. Aubrey arrives.

AUBREY

You like watching those faggots?

TOM

Jack's a fag? That's news to the women of the world.

AUBREY

Believe me, he's barely foolin' em.

Tom's not sure how to take this so he feigns a smile. Aubrey smiles back, holding eye contact a second too long with his creepy, signature grin.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

Shall we?

Aubrey pulls files from his briefcase and plops them on the table in front of Tom.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

We got approval from the big pepperoncini himself for this group.

TOM

S.G.?

Aubrey nods.

TOM (CONT'D)

Impressive.

AUBREY

Our interests align.
(that smile again)
We are friends.

Tom begins going through the files. Bits and pieces can be seen over his shoulder.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

This is a real cast of F.U.I.'s (foeey's) we got on our hands. They operate out of a hole in the wall on the Southside called Dante's. The right hand man is a young Jap, Yoshiro. Grew up in an internment camp during the war. The big guy's Jasper, a dumb mute. He tends bar and serves as muscle. But here is the star, Fucked Up Individual Numero Uno.

Aubrey drops a thicker file on top of the others.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

The back of Victor's head pokes out of the bathtub, his scars visible.

AUBREY (O.S.)

Victor Wright. Son of a former hitman, big time connected.

(MORE)

AUBREY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 When Vic's twelve, the family's
 summer lake house burns down,
 taking the parents with it and
 leaving the kid with a burnt skin
 suit.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Tom reviews the file. Old pictures of the incident: the burnt
 down house, just a snippet of the child's burnt back. Tom
 winces.

AUBREY
 Hideous burns. When he's finally
 able to speak again, kid goes
 delirious, talkin' all sorts of
 crazy. A man burned the place down
 with fire shooting out of his
 hands. And just disappeared.

Tom looks up in disbelief.

TOM
 Jesus Aubrey...this...this is our
 man-

Aubrey stops him short.

AUBREY
 Tom....

He shakes his head. This is not something they'll be
 discussing in further detail. Tom is mortified.

INT. VICTOR'S BEDROOM

Victor stands shirtless in front of the mirror. We see him
 from behind, the horrible burns running up his back and neck.
 In the mirror, burns wrap around his chest, up to his jaw. He
 stares at himself with dead eyes and a hint of contempt.

AUBREY (O.S.)
 The guineas manage to find a
 woodsman, some vagrant they stick
 it on. Torture and kill him. But
 the kid's not buying it, he won't
 let up. They didn't get the right
 guy. Screams all day long. Nobody
 can get to him. So he gets put in
 an asylum.

(MORE)

AUBREY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Cracks straight after a few years,
lands in an orphanage, but not long
after he splits. Goes AWOL.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

AUBREY
Finally reappears four years ago
asking for a block. Says it's owed.
The big sausage thinks, what's
right is right. Of course, no
goombahs want to look at the poor
prick. But they find a use for him.
Figure he can do what the high and
mighty don't want to do, be seen
where they can't be seen, talk to
people they can't be seen talking
to.

Tom is ashen white. Devastated, hand on his head, staring at
the file.

We see: "-fire shot out of the man's hands", "immediately
engulfed the house in flames".

Tom leans back. Shallow breaths.

AUBREY (CONT'D)
Something wrong Tom?

TOM
Yes....yes, of course it's wrong.
We're responsible for this Aubrey,
for this child, for his parents'
death, for-

AUBREY
We don't know that for sure! And I
don't want to hear another thing of
it. This op can't change what
happened on that day in the woods,
and it sure as shit can't change
what happened to this kid. All we
can do now is focus on preventing
anything else like it from
happening. And this poor sap and
his crew are going to help us do
that.

Tom looks at Fred in disbelief.

TOM

Ok Fred, sure, you wanna ignore what's staring us right in the face. I'll ignore it. But you're telling me these are lowlifes. Trauma cases. What the hell are they supposed to do to help us?

AUBREY

Ah, Tom. You ask me what they can do? Anything we might want.

INT. CHAIR ROOM

C.U. Sal's grey, dead face.

A hand zips up the body bag, covering it.

AUBREY (O.S.)

They're our entry to the underworld. We need to find out where the 88 is going, where it's been, and most importantly, where it's coming from. And I'm telling you, under your guidance and supervision, they will blossom. They're not much now, but they have something to prove, something to gain. There's a fight in them, a fury. They can be useful.

EXT. DANTE'S - BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Victor oversees Jasper and Yoshi carrying the bodybag out the back.

AUBREY (O.S.)

Plus, they're vulnerable. We believe they snuffed a made guy recently.

They put the body in the back of a van and slam the doors shut.

AUBREY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So we have leverage. And more importantly we'll have discretion. We don't want any people with connections hearing about the nitty gritty of what we're doing. It'd be too much trouble. Too many questions.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

The van pulls up to an abandoned warehouse. Yoshi runs out to open the garage door.

AUBREY (O.S.)

Better to use the freaks in the shadows. They need our help, and they'll know we can hurt 'em real bad, anytime we want. It's a perfect marriage.

INT. HOTEL ROOM

Tom looks up.

TOM

How is Ginny by the way?

Aubrey, surprised, his huge smile spreads.

AUBREY

Oooh, there's that acerbic wit I missed. I'm glad you're coming around.

Tom holds a sly smile as Aubrey collects his things.

TOM

What about the approach? It might take time to win a bunch like this over.

AUBREY

No, no, believe me, they're open to the idea. S.G.'s let it be known we are their saving grace. They just smoked a made man, and as far as they know, we're the only ones standing between them and eternal damnation. They'll be begging for our help.

Tom nods.

AUBREY (CONT'D)

Alright, always something to be done, especially in this game we now find ourselves in. Shake a leg Tom. Reach out if you need anything.

And with that he's gone.

Tom's smile disappears. He stews in his seat, anger boiling over. Breathing between clenched teeth, he begins reviewing the documents again.

A photo of young Victor's face wrapped in bandages stares back at him helplessly.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Victor's face lit by the orange glow, stares into the fire of the incinerator. Yoshi and Jasper place the body bag on a gurney and crank it in.

Victor watches, his fedora silhouetted by the flames dancing in front of him.

INT. DANTE'S - NIGHT

Yoshi sits in a booth smoking a cigarette reading his book. Victor paces back and forth.

YOSHI
(puts book down)
Can you stop?

VICTOR
No. This is how I think.

YOSHI
I prefer to think out loud.

Victor can't help but smile at his stoic partner's sarcasm. He sits down across from him.

VICTOR
You think we're fucked Yo?

Yoshi looks down for a beat before meeting Vic's eyes.

YOSHI
We might be.

Victor looks off, annoyed, but doesn't argue.

VICTOR
I'm sick of it Yosh. Sick of the orders, sick of living like glorified servants. Sick of that fat faced fuck strolling in here every Sunday asking for more and more money he didn't earn.

YOSHI

He didn't leave us many options.
Even for him, that was, aggressive.

VICTOR

So. They must be figuring it out by
now. It doesn't take a genius. They
come here, blow our brains out. Or
they snatch us up and torture the
living shit out of us. That's what
they'll do.

YOSHI

Keep your head Vic.

VICTOR

(snaps)

That's what I'm trying to do.

Victor gets up and paces more.

YOSHI

We're not helpless.

VICTOR

So you're saying we fight?

Yoshi shrugs.

YOSHI

It's that, or die.

Vic takes that in, takes a breath and nods his head.

YOSHI (CONT'D)

We need to be ready. And when they
come, we strike first. But you need
to have a clear head.

Vic smiles. He's soothed by his partner's lack of fear in the
face of death, and his willingness to fight. Vic pats Yoshi's
shoulder.

VICTOR

You always know what to say my
friend.

Vic puts his coat and hat on.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

I'm gonna go clear my head.

EXT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

A few girls hang outside smoking cigarettes. A few shy men loiter nearby.

INT. DARLENE'S ROOM

A young woman, DARLENE, brushes her hair in the mirror. A soft knock at her window. She looks in the mirror and sees Victor's pale face through the window, wrapped up in his big coat. She gets up and lets him in.

DARLENE

Hi Vic.

He enters all bundled up, gloves under his pits.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Want me to take that coat off-

He shakes his head no.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Are you in one of your moods again?

He glares at her. She cocks an eyebrow and waits. He nods his head yes.

DARLENE (CONT'D)

Ok.

She gets on the bed and pats it, inviting him over. After a beat he climbs in, jacket still on. She takes his hat off and spoons him. He nestles in. She begins softly humming and gently traces his face with her fingers. He closes his eyes.

EXT. ABANDONED TOLLBOOTH - NIGHT

The highway jutting out above, Yoshi walks toward the abandoned tollbooth. The Southside projects stretch out behind it.

Inside the tollbooth sits JEROME, warming his hands. He's black, a couple years older than Yoshi, solidly built.

JEROME

Took you long enough.

YOSHI

What's the issue?

JEROME

You told us to come to you with anything strange, and well. The other day, some white guy in a suit walks into the diner. As if that ain't strange enough. Comes right up to me and Pete and plops a fucking suitcase on our table. Says, "This is a gift. It will help your community." And then walks the fuck out.

YOSHI

(intrigued)

What was in the briefcase?

Jerome fishes in his pocket.

JEROME

This.

He flashes an LSD sleeve similar to what Tom had earlier. The marking on the top reads: 88.

Yoshi examines it.

YOSHI

This is LSD?

JEROME

I guess. I don't know what this dude was thinking, we don't really mess with that shit. I don't see much profit in it.

Yoshi looks at him.

JEROME (CONT'D)

But, y'know, maybe. I don't know. Either way, some cracker gives me a briefcase full of free drugs, I don't fucking trust it, even if it was Santa Claus himself. And I don't want the big wigs catching wind and raising hell over it. So I thought I'd tell you and you can run it up the chain and see what it's all about. You dig?

Yoshi examines it.

YOSHI

There's a whole briefcase of this stuff?

JEROME

Yeah.

Yoshi nods and puts the LSD in his pocket.

YOSHI

Hang onto it. Don't move any of it.
I'll run it up the chain. Thank you
Jerome.

JEROME

Yeah, yeah. You let me know Yosh.

And with that Jerome walks off back towards the projects.

Yoshi takes the LSD out and stares at it thoughtfully.

EXT. CHICAGO STREETS - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Victor walks along peacefully, head cleared.

Suddenly a car passing by speeds up and veers onto the sidewalk going straight towards Victor. Vic dives into an alley, only to be grabbed by two large men and slammed against the wall. A man gets out of the car. It's TONY DIMARTINO. He's around Victor's age, dressed in an equally stylish suit.

TONY

I'd say it's good to see you Vic,
but I'd be lying.

VICTOR

What the fuck is this?

TONY

You know what it is. Where's my
uncle?

VICTOR

I could guess he's out stuffing his
fat face somewhere and probably be
right. But I don't know for sure.

Tony chuckles. And pulls out a knife. He presses it to Victor's cheek.

TONY

I'd probably be doing you a favor
if I carved up that ugly mouth of
yours, huh?

He slices just enough to draw some blood from Vic's cheek and pulls the knife back.

TONY (CONT'D)

My uncle Sal is missing Victor. And one of the last places we know he was at was your dump. What happened?

VICTOR

He came to collect, we paid him, and he left. We both try to keep our meetings as brief as possible.

Tony looks at him, trying to read him.

TONY

That's understandable. I sure as hell don't want to be looking at you right now, and honestly, I don't like being around my uncle for too long either. A certain smell he's got to him.

Tony wipes his blade on Vic's jacket.

TONY (CONT'D)

If you hear anything, you let us know. And if I hear anything different from your story, well. I don't need to tell you.

The two men toss Victor into some trash barrels, and the three men get in the car and pull out.

Victor gets up panting, furious. He wipes his cheek and looks at his own blood.

INT. TOM'S CHICAGO APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tom and Kate enter a cramped, musty apartment. Tom sits down. Kate grimaces.

KATE

This is a pigsty.

TOM

I suppose you're staying at the Ritz.

KATE

Yes, actually.

Tom looks up.

KATE (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Daddy's money.

Tom takes off his shoes, exhales and relaxes into the chair.
Kate brushes off a spot on the bed and sits down.

KATE (CONT'D)
So how's this going to go?

Tom looks beat, sunk down in his chair.

KATE (CONT'D)
Come on grump. I haven't even dosed
you yet.

He slides up.

TOM
It should be straight forward.
We've got something on them, and
Aubrey said they're open to it.

KATE
We don't trust Aubrey.

Tom looks at her quizzically and smiles.

TOM
You think he's setting me up?

KATE
I don't know. I just think we
should assume everything he says is
bullshit.

TOM
(a beat)
You're right about that.

KATE
I can go in first, make sure it's-

TOM
No.

KATE
Tom, please, you have to stop-

TOM
No Katie.

He gets up and tries to light a cigarette but can't get the lighter going. She gets up, grabs the lighter and the cigarette from his mouth, lights it and inhales.

KATE

So this is all I'm going to be doing then, lighting your cigarettes and tucking you in at night?

TOM

You're supposed to give back the cigarette-

KATE

Tom.

Tom sits back down.

TOM

I'd be sending you into a den of murderous low life gangsters. This isn't a good one to start off on.

KATE

None of them will be good to start off on.

TOM

I'm telling you Kate...I do need you. I'm going to need you a lot more as this develops. I just...I don't know how this is going to go. So be careful what you wish for. And until then... yes, please tuck me in.

(lies on the bed)

I want to be well rested for the meet tomorrow.

Kate's still mad but she grabs her bag, takes out her supplies and sits on the bed. Tom looks at her gracefully, with a mixture of fear and pride.

KATE

(without looking up)

Stop looking at me like that.

TOM

I'm sorry, you just...when you get stubborn like that, you look just like him.

She looks at him, softening under the face she's still trying to hold. Then jams the needle in.

TOM (CONT'D)
Ah, shit. You gotta stop doing
th...

He dozes off.

INT. VICTOR'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Victor stands in front of the mirror in his robe. He can't take his eyes off the cut on his cheek. Whatever calm he had regained is now gone.

INT. TOM'S CHICAGO APARTMENT - EVENING

Tom pulls on his suit jacket. Looks in the mirror, adjusting it. Takes a deep breath. Kate comes up from behind and brushes his shoulders off.

KATE
I'll be here waiting. Good luck.
And be careful.

Tom smiles.

TOM
I'll be fine. Just like riding a
bike.

EXT. DANTE'S BAR - DUSK

DANTE'S shines in RED.

INT. DANTE'S BAR

Tom enters. Jasper's behind the bar, a bit surprised to see him. Yoshi's at a table in the corner reading his book. He glances up and stares at Tom. Tom nods to him and takes a seat at the bar.

TOM
Just a beer please.

Jasper just stares at him. A flush is heard and Victor emerges from the bathroom. He's surprised too. He looks to Yoshi then back at Tom and a wild smile spreads. He goes behind the bar.

VICTOR
I got this one Jasper.

Jasper, still staring at Tom, goes around the bar...and sits on a stool to Tom's right.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
How's it going partner?

Victor pours a beer.

TOM
Not too bad.

Tom looks around the empty room uncomfortably.

VICTOR
You from outta town?

TOM
Yeah. Just in from San Francisco
for some business.

VICTOR
What's your name?

TOM
(thinks about it)
My name's Tom.

VICTOR
What brings you to our humble
establishment Tom?

Yoshi approaches and sits to Tom's left, Tom tucked snugly between the two now. Tom takes a moment.

TOM
I understand...you fellas could use
some help?

VICTOR
(smiles)
Really? With what?

TOM
(cautiously)
...You weren't expecting me?

Victor's smile flickers. Under the bar he puts his hand on a pistol.

VICTOR
That depends. Who you with?

Tom takes a sip of his beer.

TOM
Thanks for the beer, but maybe
now's not the right time.

He makes to get up but Jasper pats him back down.

VICTOR
No, no. Stay awhile. There's no
rush...
(stares straight into Tom)
You already know you're intruding.

Tom stares right back at Victor, weighing the options in his head.

TOM
Ok.

VICTOR
Ok?

TOM
I'm here to recruit you.

VICTOR
I'm too old to play college ball.

Tom shakes his head ruefully.

TOM
(mutters)
I thought you'd been briefed-

VICTOR
Excuse me?

TOM
I'm here...to help you. Things are
in motion, that extend a lot
further than this bar, or
Chicago....

Vic stares at him blankly.

TOM (CONT'D)
We're not asking much. But for your
help, we can help you. We can make
sure the hot water you find
yourself in doesn't reach a boiling
point.

Vic's eyes flash. He places the gun on the bar.

VICTOR
Who sent you? Who do you represent?

TOM
I'm not affiliated with any gang
Victor, I represent a private
commodity-

VICTOR
(gun against Tom's temple)
I didn't tell you my fucking name!
Cut the shit!

TOM
I'm with the government.

Vic pulls the gun back and smiles.

VICTOR
I thought you said you weren't with
no gang. Huh...
(thinking it over)
...Jasper.

Jasper throws Tom to the ground. Jasper gets on top of Tom
but Tom knees him in the groin, toppling the giant.

He scrambles towards the door but Yoshi's already there.
Quick as lightning he smacks Tom in the face with his pistol.
Tom drops then staggers to his feet, bleeding from his mouth.

Victor walks out from behind the bar, gun pointed at Tom.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
Sell me spook! You'll help us...how?

TOM
(spits blood)
No one will ever know about
your...dust-up. That's settled, you
can forget about it. You're free to
expand, with our assistance...and
complete approval from the big man.

VICTOR
Bullshit!

Yoshi looks at Vic. That sounds pretty good.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
What would we have to do?

Tom leans on a barstool for support.

TOM

All you'd have to do is more of what you do now. A go-between, gathering information, tagging some underworld people for various tasks. All the while never letting on what it is you're actually doing.

VICTOR

And...what are we actually doing?

TOM

I...I can explain. Just put the guns away.

Victor pauses to consider, but his eyes are wild.

VICTOR

On principle, I do not trust the fucking government, nor will I ever trust a cheeseball Fed, if that's even who you really are, especially one promising the blue fucking sky above. It's too late to be taking any chances.

(cocks his pistol)

Let's take a walk downstairs.

TOM

If you just hear me out-

VICTOR

Wasn't a question.

Jasper tries to grab him but Tom pokes him in the eyes. Yoshi sidles up and sticks the gun in Tom's side. He guides him downstairs.

TOM

Wait, this, you're making a mistake. This isn't in your best interest Victor.

VICTOR

Shut up!

INT. BASEMENT

They walk downstairs. Tom tries to remain calm but the dread builds as they descend the dark stairwell.

They go through the red basement hallway.

They get to the room and Victor opens the door. Tom sees the chair in front of him.

TOM

No!

He struggles to turn back.

INT. CHAIR ROOM

Jasper throws Tom into the chair and Yoshi begins strapping him in. Tom struggles, trying to get up-

TOM

You don't understand!

Jasper delivers a right and a left to placate him. Yoshi straps the last one around his neck.

TOM (CONT'D)

(barely conscious)

Wait...I know what happened to
you...as a kid...you were
right...you were right...

A look shoots across Victor's face. This hits him deep in his core. Speechless. He doesn't move.

Yoshi pulls back and begins choking Tom. Tom sputters but can't get another word out. His eyes bulging out of his head, gasping for air and getting none-

TOM'S POV:

The light begins to dim as Tom's breath leaves him, vision tunneling until-

BLACK

Silence.

SPLASH OF WATER

Tom jolts awake, his vision blurry but regaining. Victor leans in close to Tom's face.

VICTOR

What are you talking about spook?

Tom gasps for breath, dripping wet, bleeding, exhausted.

CUT TO:

INT. BAR

Tom sits in a booth, back to the wall, holding a cold beer can over the welt on the side of his face. The other side doesn't look much better. His lip is cracked and swollen, and the top of his suit is still wet with a towel draped over it.

Victor, Yoshi, and Jasper (pouting, holding his own eye), sit across from him on the edge of their seats.

VICTOR

So. Spill.

Tom sighs and puts down the beer.

TOM

Well. You were right. When you were a kid, the person who...did that to you and your family. It was real.

VICTOR

(through gritted teeth)

I know.

TOM

He was the result of an experiment the government was conducting. We were testing versions of LSD to see if it had any potential for mind control in the field, and one of the strains, well. It produced something none of us thought to be possible.

Yoshi clocks this news calmly, but carefully watches Victor's reaction. Victor's eyes fill with rage. He hops out of his seat and points his gun at Tom.

VICTOR

Your government, your fucking agency did this to me! To my, to my family!

Tom's too exhausted to even lift his hands.

TOM

You're right. You're right Victor. It was my agency. But as soon as I found out what had happened, as soon as I realized what this failed experiment had done, I dedicated my life to stopping it from happening anywhere else. I don't know how successful I really was.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

I'm still fighting it today. But I know I prevented it from getting a lot worse.

Victor's still standing there, locked in.

VICTOR

(on the verge of tears)

What happened to him? What happened to that fucking monster?

Tom looks down, ashamed.

TOM

He...he disappeared. As far as we know he may still be out there somewhere....

Victor is shaking with rage.

VICTOR

What...what's his name?!

TOM

His name is Cassidy Morris.

This breaks Victor. He can't control himself and some tears leak out. Yoshi gets up to console him, while also pointing the gun down. The fire in Victor returns in a flash.

VICTOR

I want him dead! I want him fucking begging for mercy in front of me, and then I get to say, NO!

He collapses into his seat.

TOM

(a beat)

Victor. I promise you, as part of this mission we're about to take on, I will search for and find the man that did this to you. I will bring him to you. On top of that, I'll make sure the three of you become powerful and wealthy beyond your imagination. You'll be free to run your own operation, untouched by rival gangs. All you have to do is help me stop it from happening again. And we can make sure no other little boys or girls have to go through what you've gone through.

Victor almost breaks down again but composes himself. He looks Tom right in the eye.

VICTOR
You got a deal.

He stands up to shake. Tom painfully gets up and shakes his hand.

VICTOR (CONT'D)
(gripping his hand)
And if you're lying to us, about any of this...Tonight will seem like a pleasant evening amongst friends.

Tom nods, knowing he's for real.

EXT. DANTE'S BAR - MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Tom limps out of the bar. He takes a deep breath of fresh air. He made it out alive. But he has a long way to go.

EXT. DARK CITY STREETS

Tom limps along the deserted streets when he passes two young black kids sitting on a stoop. They appear to be brothers, the older one around 17, the younger maybe 13.

OLDER
Oh shit man, what the fuck happened to you?

Tom doesn't answer, just keeps walking. They get off the stoop to get a closer look.

OLDER (CONT'D)
You need some help? We can get you bandaged up or somethin'-

TOM
No. Mind your business.

YOUNGER
It's okay.

The younger brother reaches his hand out to Tom's.

As soon as their hands make contact, Tom's eyes roll back into his head and he COLLAPSES. UNCONSCIOUS.

This doesn't phase the brothers.

OLDER

Haha! I can't believe this shit works.

The older brother searches Tom's pockets. He pulls out his wallet, takes out the cash, and drops it back onto Tom.

OLDER (CONT'D)

Hell yeah.

He pockets it and starts jogging away.

The younger brother doesn't move, staring down at Tom sadly.

OLDER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Come on Remy!

REMY stares at Tom for another beat then runs to catch up to his brother.

OVERHEAD

We slowly zoom out above Tom, crumpled on the ground, unconscious, alone.

CUT TO BLACK

THE END