

M A G A Z I N E   D R E A M S

Written by

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"Here is what I would like for you to know: In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body -- *it is heritage.*"

~ Ta-Nehisi Coates

"I am an invisible man. No I am not a spook like those who haunted Edgar Allen Poe: Nor am I one of your Hollywood movie ectoplasms. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids, and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me."

- Ralph Ellison

**INT. GYM - NIGHT**

It is past midnight and only one light burns. The rest of the world drops off into shadow.

Captured beneath the lonely cone of light is a mountain of a man.

A black man.

CAMERA lurks toward him...

He's lifting a frightening amount of weight. Sweat has bled through his hoodie and puddled at his feet.

Wide shoulders and a hulking back heave as he sucks for oxygen -- eyes locked into his reflection with sweltering intensity.

The arms of **KILLIAN MADDOX** tremble as he grimaces through the burn, fatigue seizes his muscles to failure -- he drops the weights. Grunts, snorts -- ashamed, enraged.

He SLAPS himself across the face. Grunts like an animal. Spits onto the floor. Slaps himself again. Harder. Grunts louder. Fury.

Hauls the weight back up and continues to lift...

SCORE bleeds in...something anxious and haunting and devastatingly somber. It carries over...

**INT. QUIET STREET - NIGHT**

Night has fallen on the American suburbs. Televisions glow inside middle-class homes as street lamps bathe the neighborhood in an eerie golden hue. Somewhere a dog is barking.

Killian jogs down the middle of the street, headphones on.

CAMERA follows behind... a sense of quiet menace in the air...

The tender SCORE is slowly overtaken by "**SONNE**" by Rammstein.

The raging heavy metal and tender score wrestle for the soundwaves, melting into a violent melody of contradiction.

**Title card:** Magazine Dreams

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

A cluttered, modest house. Quiet and dark inside. Killian pours a bowl of dog food and sets it down before an awaiting canine.

**LATER**

Hunched over a small kitchen table. An overhead lamp casts odd shadows down his face, eyes hiding in the dark recesses.

In front of him a small mountain of food:

15 hard boiled eggs. A lean 8 oz steak. Steamed broccoli. A sweet potato. A heap of brown rice. A gallon jug of water.

An emotionless gaze is fixed on a little TV resting in the room's corner. He pushes bland food into his mouth as he passively watches the nightly news.

On screen: black faces wanted by police.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Wearing only a pair of small white briefs Killian stands before a body length mirror.

He cycles through a series of bodybuilder poses. Rippling muscles pop and bulge through his black skin.

CAMERA is low, he towers over us, grunting and quivering like some agonized and tortured beast.

The SCORE swirls and dances.

**WIDER ANGLE REVEALS**

Walls plastered with POSTERS of professional bodybuilders. Deeply tanned skin shrink wrapped around freakishly huge physiques. All frozen in some hellish grimace.

Killian continues his posing routine...

The way his face contorts, the blooming focus in his eyes, the mausoleum of hairless oiled male bodies surrounding him, it's a surreal image. A chamber decorated with human flesh.

**LATER**

Sitting on the edge of his bed, guzzling a protein, shake.

His laptop is open. Porn plays. He gazes blankly at the screen as he drinks. Sounds of hard fucking fill the lonely room.

He finishes the last of his shake.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING**

At the kitchen table eating breakfast:

A plate of scrambled egg whites (15). Two plain chicken breasts. A bowl of unsweetend oatmeal. A bowl of unsweetened greek yogurt. Three plain pancakes. Two bananas. A grapefruit. A cup of black coffee. A gallon jug of water.

The small TV plays. The dog rests at his feet.

He chews and swallows. Chews and swallows.

**WIDER ANGLE REVEALS**

Sitting across the table, his GRANDFATHER.

Stooped over. Jaundice skin and sunken cheeks, in poor health.

The grandfather's unsteady hand brings a spoonful of soup to his mouth but the tubes from his oxygen tank get in the way.

Killian does not intervene, trying to respect his grandfather's dignity. When the feat proves too difficult Killian leans across and adjusts the tubes. Not a word spoken between them.

Killian's eyes return to the TV. Local morning news. Somewhere a black man has been arrested. America is a little safer now.

Killian pushes another bland mound of food into his mouth.

On the wall above hangs a framed picture of Jesus Christ.

**INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECKOUT LINE - DAY**

Killian bags customer's groceries. A WOMAN and her TEENAGE DAUGHTER. The daughter is screaming at her mom.

They fight as if Killian isn't even there.

TEENAGE DAUGHTER

...you literally try to control like every part of my life. Like, it's *fucking insane* what I deal with.

TEENAGE DAUGHTER (CONT'D)  
Literally insane. Do you ever think --  
for one second -- how I might feel?

WOMAN  
I'm sorry sweetie.

DAUGHTER  
...fucking insane...

Killian keeps his eyes on the groceries.

Invisible to them.

**LATER**

A heavy set MAN in the checkout line. He talks loudly into his bluetooth. He hasn't once glanced at Killian.

KILLIAN  
Paper or plastic?

The heavy set man doesn't hear him, continues jabbering away.

KILLIAN  
Would you like paper or plastic?

Still nothing.

KILLIAN  
Excuse me? Sir?

The man pulls the bluetooth from his ear, annoyed --

HEAVY SET MAN  
What are you saying?

**LATER**

A WHITE KID (22) scrolls through his phone as Killian bags his groceries. Trap music blares from the kid's headphones. He nods his head to the music, mouthing the lyrics, eyes on his phone, he hasn't looked up once, as if Killian does not exist.

Killian glares at the kid. A *flicker* of disgust in his eyes.

**WIDE ANGLE ON KILLIAN**

Trapped by a sea of products, mass produced and packaged in plastic. He bags the groceries, monotonous, like a robot.

WOMANS' VOICE (PRELAP)  
It says here you were recently  
hospitalized with blood clots.

**INT. STATE MANDATED COUNSELOR OFFICE - DAY**

The voice belongs to a middle-aged woman. She is a STATE MANDATED COUNSELOR. Killian sits across from her with a gaze that is both enigmatic and intimidatingly direct.

KILLIAN

Yes. I was.

The counselor glances down at her notes.

STATE COUNSELOR

Now what's this about a "violent fit"?

KILLIAN

....?

STATE COUNSELOR

Says here when you were in the hospital you had "a violent fit" and became "loud and abrasive with the nurses." And that you threatened them.

Her eyes return to Killian, awaiting his response.

KILLIAN

I don't know about any violent fit.

STATE COUNSELOR

Did you tell the nurses you were going to...  
(refers back to her notes)  
"Split their skulls apart and drink their brains like soup?"

Killian stares back, yes, he did.

KILLIAN

I don't like people touching me.

STATE COUNSELOR

Killian, the state has mandated these sessions because they are worried about your aggression. They want to see that you won't cause harm to anyone. And that you're still capable of caring for your grandfather.

KILLIAN

I am.

STATE COUNSELOR

Can we help show them that you are?

KILLIAN  
 My grandpa was a bodybuilder also.  
 Did I tell you that?

She remains patient, allowing the digression.

STATE COUNSELOR  
 Yes. You did.

KILLIAN  
 I have a contest in a few weeks. If I  
 place I can go to Nationals and try for  
 my Pro Card. That's why I'm cutting.

A dash of worry across the counselor's face.

STATE COUNSELOR  
 You're cutting yourself?

KILLIAN  
 Leaning out. Not eating as much.

The counselor takes a moment, shifting her tone...

STATE COUNSELOR  
 Are you still having nightmares?

A darkness rolls behind his eyes...he lies;

KILLIAN  
 I don't know what you're talking about.

STATE COUNSELOR  
 According to the history here it says you  
 suffer from migraines and nightmares.

....

KILLIAN  
 You mean like bad dreams?  
 (he lies)  
 No...that's not true.  
 (beat)  
 Yeah sometimes, so what?

STATE COUNSELOR  
 And...that sometimes you can hear your  
 mother's voice...in your head...or  
 other voices...talking to you.

A looong pause as Killian stares back at her. Then, finally:



KILLIAN

No.

I think you got your files mixed up.

She remains polite and patient. Genuinely concerned for the wellbeing of this giant man. She continues, gently:

STATE COUNSELOR

Do you often feel that people don't understand you?

KILLIAN

I dunno.

(beat)

Sometimes.

STATE COUNSELOR

Do you feel that *anyone* understands you?

A moment...

KILLIAN

My mom. My dad.

She shifts gears, gently...

STATE COUNSELOR

Last time...when I tried to bring up what happened with your parents you became emotional and you sa --

KILLIAN

No I didn't.

The counselor ignores the lie. Nonjudgmental. Continues...

STATE COUNSELOR

You became emotional and you said you didn't want to talk about --

KILLIAN

-- No I didn't -- and I've said it now in a calm and non-confrontational voice.

(beat)

I don't want to talk about them anymore.

She backs off, gathers herself. Takes a different approach.

STATE COUNSELOR

What *would* you like to talk about, Killian?

He gazes around the room...thinking of what to say...

KILLIAN

I have to drive to another  
neighborhood to get groceries  
because they don't have any grocery  
stores in my neighborhood.

STATE COUNSELOR

Yeah? How does that make you feel?

KILLIAN

No grocery stores. Only junk food.  
Food that kills you. Do you think  
they do that on purpose?

STATE COUNSELOR

Who's "they" Killian?

Killian takes a moment. Deciding if he can trust her...

KILLIAN

Nevermind.

He looks around the room once more, his mind wandering...

KILLIAN

I think people are lazy. I think people  
want good things to happen but don't  
want to work for them. My grandpa, he  
put in the work...did two tours in  
Vietnam. Served this country. Most  
people don't want to work.

(beat)

And they're gluttonous. You should see  
how much crap food people buy. It would  
make you sick. Makes me sick.

(beat)

Just makes me sick.

The counselor strains a polite smile. Scribbles down some notes.  
Killian turns and gazes out the window.

**CLOSE ON**

- A syringe sinking into an ampule of *trenbolone*. Drawing the  
liquid up into the barrel...

- A needle popping into flesh. The plunger depresses, pushing  
the toxic liquid down...

**WIDER ANGLE** reveals Killian in his --

**BEDROOM**

Where he finishes injecting the steroids.

Now he plunges the syringe into an ampule of *testosterone-propionate* and injects that into his butt cheek as well.

Finally he loads up a syringe with *Winstrol* and injects that into his upper thigh.

A tiny pin drop of blood at the injection site. He daps the blood away and sucks it from his fingertip.

#### **INT. GYM - EVENING**

Killian pumps weights. Dripping sweat. A man possessed.

#### **INT. GYM POOL - EVENING**

Killian does some light calisthenics in the pool.

Across the way THREE WHITE GUYS from the gym wade in the shallow end, talking and laughing amongst themselves. Killian observes them, yearning for the friendship, the camaraderie.

KILLIAN'S EYES travel over the men in silent wonder...their straight hair...their narrow noses...their thin lips.....over their bodies now...their sculpted shoulders...their rock hard chests...the way the water laps around their toned abdomens.

Some strange carnal sensation expands within him.

He slowly sinks beneath the water's surface and drifts to the bottom of the pool. He floats there, as if dead -- suspended in the liquid like some exotic species preserved in a glass jar.

HOLD on this image for an uncomfortably long time...

#### **INT. GYM - MEN'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT**

The three gym guys are talking amongst themselves as they get dressed. Killian sits alone, tying his shoes, nobody talks to him.

It's as if he's invisible to them.

He makes a clumsy attempt to break into their conversation:

KILLIAN  
You guys been to the Applebees yet?

The guys stop talking and look over at Killian, confused, not sure if that was aimed towards them.

GYM GUY 1

What?

KILLIAN

They just opened a new one.  
They have all you can eat tonight.

The statement hangs there as the guys trade glances.

GYM GUY 1

Why do you talk like that?

KILLIAN

Talk like what?

Little condescending smirks on the guys mouths. Toying with him.

GYM GUY 1

Never mind.

GYM GUY 2

I told the girlfriend I'd eat with  
her tonight.

GYM GUY 3

Yeah I got plans, too.

Killian nods. He's used to this kind of thing.

KILLIAN

Cool.

He picks up his gym bag and leaves. Once he's gone the three guys look at each other and snicker.

# **INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Killian helps guide his frail grandfather into the bathtub.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

Dear Brent. It's Killian again.  
I've written you a few times before  
and haven't heard back. I'm sure  
you get a lot of fan mail and must  
not have seen my letters.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - NIGHT**

Killian pours a bowl of dog food and sets it down before his dog.

**LATER**

Hunched over a small kitchen table. An overhead lamp casting odd shadows down his face.

In front of him sits a small mountain of food:

15 hard boiled eggs. Two chicken breasts. Steamed broccoli. A sweet potato. A heap of brown rice. A gallon jug of water.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

Anyway, I'm leaving my phone number  
here in this letter in case you'd like  
to call me. We can talk about training  
or diet or anything you want.

His emotionless gaze is fixed on the little TV. Nightly news. Someone somewhere has been shot and killed. America is dangerous once again. Killian pushes the food into his mouth.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I saw your new magazine cover, I  
think it's the best I've ever seen.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Standing in his underwear before the mirror, entombed by the body building posters, Killian cycles through his poses

One centerfold in particular is larger than the rest:

It's of IFBB Pro **Brent Vanderhorn**. Blonde hair. Blue eyes. Jaw of stone and the body of Zeus. Tanned. Oiled. Glistening.

CAMERA floats in on the frozen image...

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I think you are a great athlete and I  
admire you greatly. I see you won your  
last competition. Congratulations. I  
have one coming up. Please wish me luck.

CAMERA floats back in on Killian, flexing and gazing at the image of Brent Vanderhorn.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I have your poster on my wall and I  
look at it every day.

KILLIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
I'm working hard and one day hope  
to build a physique as magnificent  
as yours.

**LATER**

Hunched over his desk, writing the letter we've just heard aloud.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Please call or write me back.  
Your number one fan, Killian Maddox.

He finishes writing and puts his pen down. Scanning over his letter as he guzzles down a chocolate protein shake.

Types something into his lap top.

The sound of hard fucking fills the lonely room.

He gazes expressionlessly at the screen as he drinks.

PRELAP: the sound of a cheering crowd...

**INT. LARGE GYMNASIUM - BACKSTAGE - DAY**

Killian warms up backstage at a regional competition.

A dozen other bodybuilders warm up as well. They do push ups and bicep curls, pumping blood into muscle. Some are quiet and focused, others grunt and shout, psyching themselves up.

Killian is one of the quiet ones. Alone in the corner, mumbling under his breath. Immense concentration on his face.

SLOW ZOOM in on his eyes....something frightening behind them.

**INT. LARGE GYMNASIUM - MAINSTAGE - LATER**

Killian is on stage with THREE OTHER BODYBUILDERS. All of them oiled up, wearing small posing trunks.

The HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE comes over a speaker:

HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE  
Front lat spread.

Killian and the others strike the pose.

HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE  
Front double bicep...side chest...

The men turn and pose. Flexing and holding contraction. Muscles tremble, striations ripple below the skin.

A PANEL OF JUDGES gaze up at them. Their faces inscrutable and indifferent.

HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE  
Rear lat spread.

The men turn around and pose. Yelps of encouragement come hurdling from the faceless crowd.

PEOPLE IN THE CROWD  
Here we go Jake! / C'mon Kyle!

Nobody cheers for Killian.

HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE  
Rear double biceps...side triceps..

The men turn to the side and pose.

HEAD JUDGE'S VOICE  
Abdominal and thigh.

The men face front and pose.

CAMERA slowly pushes in on Killian until he fills the frame...

Time slows. Sound drops away.

Just SCORE now, playing like a symphony for this strange ballet.

Camera FLASHES pop from the crowd, dancing off his oiled black skin. He looks to be in complete pain. And complete ecstasy.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

TRACKING left to right over rows of packaged chicken...

Mass processed. Homogenized. Shrink wrapped in cellophane.

**INT. SUPERMARKET - POULTRY AISLE - DAY**

REVEAL Killian slowly rolling his cart along the poultry section, peering down at the packaged chicken...

He stops and picks up one of the styrofoam packages, inspects it, then picks up five more packages and places them into his cart.

Several feet down AN OLDER WHITE WOMAN is perusing the chicken as well. As Killian nears a subtle, quiet tension stiffens her body. Her eyes remain downcast on the chicken as she watches the large black man through her periphery.

Her shoulders tense. She moves her purse to the opposite side of her body and takes a small step away.

KILLIAN

Sorry.

Killian takes another package of chicken and leaves.

**INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK OUT AISLE - DAY**

**Overhead POV:** as his food glides down the conveyor belt:

Five dozen eggs. Six packages of chicken breast. Three lean steaks. Ground turkey. Cottage cheese. A dozen cans of tuna. A sack of potatoes. A sack of rice. Three canisters of oatmeal. Toilet paper. Vegetables and a few gallons of water.

**WIDER ANGLE REVEALS**

Killian placing the last of his items on the conveyor belt. Surrounded by gum, candy, magazines.

The CASHIER's eyes come up and immediately recognize him. She's older than him, around 40, hispanic, pretty, but shy. And we sense behind her friendly eyes hides a quiet sadness.

CASHIER

Oh, hi there.

Killian eeks out a self conscious smile.

KILLIAN

Hi.

It's obvious he's attracted to her and has been for awhile. And it's obvious that she's aware of this fact. What's unclear, at this point, is if she feels the same.

She smiles back, drops her eyes, and continues to scan.

A long silence passes as Killian searches for something to say.

KILLIAN

It must be around...4 o'clock.

She looks up again, not understanding...

KILLIAN

On Tuesdays you're here from 4-8 and on Saturdays you work the night shift.



CASHIER  
Oh yeah. Yup...And you always get  
the same amount of eggs.

KILLIAN  
Yeah. Love my eggs. Ha.

Another lull in the conversation as she scans the items and  
slides them down to the bagger.

KILLIAN  
Have I told you that I work here too?

CASHIER  
Monday, Wednesday, Friday, right?  
That's why we never work at the  
same time.

KILLIAN  
That's right. Good memory.

Another pause as Killian has run out of things to say. She  
picks up the slack.

CASHIER  
So...how are things?

KILLIAN  
I actually just had a competition.

CASHIER  
Oh nice.

KILLIAN  
Placed 6th.

She gives an empathetic smile.

KILLIAN  
No 6th is good. Yeah. Means I can go  
to Nationals and go for my Pro Card.

CASHIER  
Oh cool.

KILLIAN  
Maybe be on one of these magazines one day.

CASHIER  
That'd be cool. Total comes to...

KILLIAN  
-- \$74.88. Yup, saw it on the screen.

He hands over \$75 in cash.

KILLIAN  
Keep the change. Ha.

She smiles, polite.

KILLIAN  
Well...see ya next time.

CASHIER  
Yup. See ya.

KILLIAN  
Okay.

CASHIER  
Okay then.

Killian stands there awkwardly just smiling at her. She looks at him, not knowing what he wants. A few more seconds pass...

KILLIAN  
Bye.

CASHIER  
Bye.

He pushes his cart towards the automated doors. His smile drops, disappointed with himself....

#### **SUPERMARKET PARKING LOT -- MOMENTS LATER**

Killian pops his car trunk and loads in the grocery bags one by one. He's shaking his head, mumbling to himself. Playing the interaction back in his mind. He feels ashamed and cowardly.

He loads the last bag. Stops. Holding there. An idea coming over him. A wave of inspiration.

He closes the trunk and looks back at the supermarket.

Summoning courage...

#### **INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK OUT AISLE - MOMENTS LATER**

The cashier is helping another customer when he interrupts --

KILLIAN

Sorry -- sorry to do this here --  
and right now -- at your work --  
when you're working -- but I don't  
know where else I'd -- would you  
like to maybe go out with me  
sometime...? or...?

Her cheeks flush hot.

CASHIER

Oh. Um...

KILLIAN

You don't have to. Just in case you  
wanted to.

CASHIER

I, um...

She gives an embarrassed smile to the waiting customer, not  
sure what to say. Looks back at Killian...

KILLIAN

You probably have a boyfriend or  
something anyway. Nevermind.

Killian hands her a small piece of paper.

KILLIAN

This is my phone number in case  
you change your mind or you dump  
your boyfriend. Just kidding. That  
was a joke. I was gonna give you  
my number last week but you  
weren't here, anyway, now you have  
it. Have a good day. Goodbye.

And before she can say anything he turns and hurries away.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Killian is on the couch, 15 egg whites and a bowl of rice in  
front of him. He eats and watches the TV.

On screen: an old grainy video of the **1997 Mr. Olympia Contest**.

The biggest and most successful body builders in the world  
flex and pose on stage.

Killian gazes at the screen, a childlike wonder in his unblinking eyes.

The TV's blue glow flickers on his face, illuminating not just passion but something darker, more obsessive.

His lips *move* along with the commentary. He has it memorized.

He's watched this tape a thousand times.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Killian is in nothing but his underwear.

He places a small DIGITAL CAMERA on a tripod. Hits 'record' then backs up and settles into place standing before the camera.

KILLIAN

Yes. Hello. Killian Maddox here.  
Current NPC competitor, future IFBB  
Pro champion. The fundamentals of  
bodybuilding are as old as the --

He cuts himself off. Unsatisfied. Checks the camera display, doesn't like what he sees.

KILLIAN

Darnit.

**MOMENTS LATER**

Unplugs a lamp and drags it across the room. Takes a smaller bedside lamp and angles it, trying to create a studio lighting set up. Examines his set up. Something is missing.

**MOMENTS LATER**

He hangs a white bedsheet from his window to create a backdrop.

**MOMENTS LATER**

Killian is standing before the recording camera again.

KILLIAN

Hello. Killian Maddox here. Current  
NPC competitor, future IFBB Pro  
champion. The fundamentals of  
bodybuilding are as old as the  
sport itself. For true success one  
must master these poses. Okay, here  
are the eight fundamental poses.

He begins to pose. Squeezing. Holding his breath. Veins bulge in his forehead. He stops. Disappointed. Checks the camera display, doesn't like what he sees.

**MOMENTS LATER**

- Banging out push ups
- Bicep curls

**MOMENTS LATER**

Killian poses for the camera. Doesn't like what he sees.

**SHOWER**

Shaving his chest

**MOMENTS LATER**

Killian poses for the camera. Flexing insanely hard. Veins engorge in his neck and forehead. His face fire red.

He checks the playback. Doesn't like what he sees.

A tingling in his left arm. He rubs at it. Squeezing his hand open and closed. Ignores the pain.

**SHOWER**

Shaving his arms and legs now

**MOMENTS LATER**

- Banging out push ups
- Pumping out bicep curls

He drops the weight -- clutches his chest. Dizzy.

Drops to a knee, winces in pain as he holds his chest.

He waits there a moment, allowing the pain to pass.

This is nothing new.

**MOMENTS LATER**

More push ups

**MOMENTS LATER**

Killian poses for the camera. He's pouring sweat now. He flexes with all this might.

He checks the play back. This will have to do.

**CLOSE ON A COMPUTER SCREEN**

The video is uploaded to his YouTube page.

**CLOSE ON**

Killian's face as he stares down at the screen...

...waits.....waits.....refreshes.....waits....

**LATER**

Sitting on the edge of his bed eating a can of tuna fish. The blue computer screen glare provides the room's only light.

He refreshes the page once again.

3 thumbs up.

A cautious smile comes across his face.

4 comments. He reads them:

"fat faggot lol"

"baboon"

"this guy looks like he fucks little boys"

"too much fried chicken, not enough watermelon"

His smile fades.

He shuts the computer and stares into the dark...

**INT. GYM - BATHROOM STALL - NIGHT**

Killian finishes shooting *Winstrol* into his thigh.

He knocks a bump of COCAINE onto the back of his head. Snorts it up hard and fast. Does one for the other nostril.

**INT. GYM - NIGHT**

Killian jacks up weights. **Pantera** blaring from his headphones.

Eyes blazing into his reflection. Terrifying determination.

LONG SLOW ZOOM into his reflection...his eyes...

Fluorescent gym lights flicker overhead like silent omens.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Killian jogging home along a darkened street...

Vehicle headlights approaching from behind wash over his back and illuminate him in the night.

The lights belong to a POLICE SUV. The vehicle pulls even with Killian, rolling alongside him at a few miles an hour. Engine purring like a hungry animal, exhaust billowing into the cold evening air. Faceless occupants concealed behind tinted windows.

Killian keeps his eyes forward, ignoring the taunt, as if not to provoke the armed agent of the state. Tonight is not the first time this has happened. Lessons have been learned.

The SPOTLIGHT pops on -- scorching light blanches Killian's face. A chilling display of territorial dominance, observing him as if he were an unwelcome species. A violent species. Prodding him. Daring him to engage.

Killian's eyes remain averted, submissive, conceding. The alpha male will not be challenged. The spotlight cuts off and the victor speeds away into the night.

The street is once again dark and quiet.

Killian exhales and we realize now that he had not been breathing.

PRELAP: A phone ringing through the line...

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - EVENING**

Killian has the phone to his ear, waiting for his call to be answered. A MAN'S VOICE on the other end picks up.

MAN'S VOICE

Donaghue's roofing and painting.

KILLIAN

Yes. Hi. Hello. My name is Killian Maddox. I'm calling on behalf of William Lattimore, my grandpa. We live at 58 Tracy lane.

MAN'S VOICE

Okay...

KILLIAN

Yeah, you guys painted the house, I think it was a few weeks ago...

The voice, vaguely annoyed, retorts:

MAN'S VOICE

Okay. And what can I help you with?

KILLIAN

My grandpa says the paint looks thin and needs another coat and he's been trying to get you guys to come back out but says you've been blowing him off.

MAN'S VOICE

Yeah, he's been calling us -- maybe you can help your grandpa understand; the job is finished, okay? -- it's done, so we're not going to just come back out there.

Killian's blood begins to boil. He takes some calming breaths....

MAN'S VOICE

Hello?

Killian, trying his best to remain calm and polite:

KILLIAN

I don't think you understand what I'm saying. The paint is thin. It needs another coat. So I need you guys to come back out here, now, okay, please, and put another coat of paint on my Goddamn grandpa's Goddamn house.

MAN'S VOICE

Listen man --



KILLIAN

No no no you listen -- my grandpa  
is an American war hero that  
stormed the jungles of Vietnam.  
What have you done?

Bewildered silence on the other end.

KILLIAN

He's old and he's sick and you will  
treat him with respect. I'm asking  
nicely while using a very calm voice.

MAN'S VOICE

If you want us to come back out to  
the house you'll have to pay for it.

Triggered. Steam billows from Killian's ears. He closes his eyes.  
In through the nose, out through the mouth. Slow and calming.

KILLIAN

(exhale)

Ten...I control my emotions my  
emotions do not control me.

(inhale...exhale...)

Nine...I control my emotions my  
emotions do not control me

(inhale...)

MAN'S VOICE

What?

KILLIAN

(exhale...)

Eight. I control my emotions my  
emotions do not control me.

Inhale. Exhale. Killian's eyes open again.

KILLIAN

Are you in your store right now?

MAN'S VOICE

Uh yeah brotha, you called us here.

KILLIAN

I'm going to come down there,  
right now, and I'm going to split  
apart your skull and drink your  
brains like soup.

Killian calmly hangs up. Sets down the phone. Stands there for a moment, very still, collecting his thoughts.

KILLIAN

Grandpa.

We hear his grandpa moan from the other room.

KILLIAN

I'm headed out for a bit.

**EXT. DONAGHUE'S ROOFING AND PAINTING - NIGHT**

The store is closed for the night. Nobody inside. Killian's car screeches up to the front of the shop. Killian hops out --

KILLIAN

Cowards.

and without breaking stride PUNCHES straight through the store's front window. The glass shatters and falls. An alarm BLARES.

KILLIAN

This is what you get for messing  
with an American hero of war!

He winds up and punches the next pane of glass. It too shatters and falls.

KILLIAN

This is what you get!

A deep gash in his forearm now -- blood leaks as if from a ruptured hose. He ignores the pain, blinded with rage.

KILLIAN

Stormed the jungles of Vietnam.  
This is what you get...  
This is what you get...

He kicks out the rest of the glass with his heel -- a tingling in his left arm. Dizzy. He winces. Squeezes his hand open and shut. Tries to talk through the pain.

KILLIAN

...this is what you get...  
for messing...with an...  
american...hero...of war...

Clutches his chest now, staggering backward...

An ELDERLY WOMAN has been watching him from a distance. Stoic and bewildered. Killian sees her, tries to run away, woozy, stumbles into his car -- blood smears over the hood --

-- struggles to turn the ignition, speeds off, swerving wildly --

**INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

One hand on the wheel as the other tries to wipe the slippery blood. No luck, it just spreads across the dash.

A sharp pain cuts through his chest. He grits his teeth, grimaces, light headed now, trembling blood slicked hands slipping off the steering wheel...

His breath becomes shallow and wheezy. His eyes roll white and his head goes limp as he loses consciousness.

The car veers off the road and crashes into a ditch. His head slams into the dashboard -- knocking him out cold.

**EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Hold on the image of his car face first in a ditch. Steam rises from the bent hood. Horn blaring into the night.

**CUT TO BLACK**

The blaring horn holds over the black..

...the long mournful note thins out...distorting into a drab and hollow hum, like the buzz of some otherworldly insect.

Hints of color -- green and blue -- tiny bursts of luminescence in the deep dark, heaving, refracting growing brighter. It's as if we are suspended deep underwater, watching fireworks explode across the surface of a raging sea.

The humming grows louder. The shifting orbs of light take shape.

We realize we are looking at a **CAT scan**. The image is Killian's brain.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

Killian startles awake -- gasping for air...

A NURSE stands over his bed, changing out his IV bag. She glances down at him and smiles.

NURSE

Good morning. Doctor's here.

He blinks, squinting through bleary eyes, taking in the room, trying to find his bearings.

A small bandage is wrapped around his forehead and the nurses have done their best to clean the paint off his skin

KILLIAN

(hoarse, weak)

...where am I..?

A DOCTOR briskly enters the room, snapping shut a folder and clicking closed his pen. He extends a hand for Killian to shake.

DOCTOR

I'm Dr. Hoberman. I'm one of the hospital's internal medicine doctors. Dr. Kapadia, the cardiologist, will be in to see you later. How are you feeling?

Killian gazes back at this man, still confused...

KILLIAN

Is my grandpa okay?

DOCTOR

Mr. Maddox you suffered a heart attack which caused you to lose consciousness and drive off the road. You also suffered quite a substantial concussion which is why you may feel a little fuzzy right now.

Details start to fill in, Killian's memory returning...

DOCTOR

We also ran some other tests and I'm going to be direct with you: what we found is concerning.

The doctor takes a seat in a chair next to the bed.

DOCTOR

You're showing all the tell tale signs of anabolic steroid abuse. A pretty severe level of abuse. Are you currently taking steroids?

Beat. Then Killian slowly shakes his head, no.

DOCTOR

Have you ever taken steroids in the past?

Beat. Then Killian slowly shakes his head, no.

DOCTOR

Whatever we discuss in this room is private information. You have a very serious condition and it's important that you're completely honest with me. I'm here to help. Do you understand?

Killian grunts and nods, yes.

DOCTOR

Your cholesterol level is close to four hundred -- which is extremely high. Your blood pressure is two forty over one ten. Blood pressure this high is deadly, okay. You already had a heart attack, if left untreated this could lead to an aneurysm or a stroke, coronary artery disease. Kidney failure. Heart failure. These drugs you are taking are powerful and they are toxic and your body is beginning to shut down. You have the organs of someone twice your age. So let's try this again: are you currently taking any sort of anabolic steroid?

Beat. Then Killian slowly shakes his head, no. The doctor stifles his frustration, pivots.

DOCTOR

Well...your blood work showed elevated liver enzymes -- we did a scan and found several tumors growing on your liver. Now, they're not cancerous but they do need to be removed. So what I'm going to do is prep you for surgery this evening and --

Killian tries to speak but the words get tangled in his throat.

KILLIAN

n..gh...no...

DOCTOR

What's that?

KILLIAN  
...no surgery.

DOCTOR  
It's important we remove the tumors as soon as possible. If they get worse, which they will, they could hemorrhage and that would be very bad.

KILLIAN  
You're not coming at me with a knife.

DOCTOR  
Mr. Maddox --

KILLIAN  
I can't have a scar. I'm a bodybuilder.

A moment as the doctor realizes just how far gone Killian is. He opts for the last resort.

DOCTOR  
Mr. Maddox, if you don't do something about your condition you are going to die.

Killian takes a moment to think about this...then:

KILLIAN  
Bodybuilder's can't have scars.

# **INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT**

It's dark and quiet. Killian pokes his head out of his room and looks to his left, and looks to his right. All clear.

He pads out, barefoot, and walks away.

His hospital gown is open in the back and his bare ass shows.

HOLD on this shot.

SOUND drops away...

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Dear Brent. It's Killian again. I'm beginning to think maybe I'm being ignored. I hope this isn't true. I really hope not.

# **CLOSE ON**

- A syringe popping into flesh
- A pill popping onto a tongue

- A bump of cocaine snorted up a nostril

KILLIAN (V.O.)

Do you check your mail? I check mine daily and you haven't written and you haven't called. I know you haven't had any competitions lately so I know you can't be that busy. Are you okay? I'm worried about you.

**INT. GYM - NIGHT**

Killian hauls weights up and down. Glaring at himself in the mirror, his face twisted into an insane snarl.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

Anyway, I was in the hospital last week. Just thought you should know. I'm okay. No pain, no glory, right? I think if you listened you'd see we have a lot in common. I'd love to meet you, I have so many questions.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Hunched over his laptop, stuffing his mouth with a banana.

Google homepage. He types: *liver tumors.*

Scrolls through a series of grotesque images.

He's completely unfazed, as if reading the weather forecast. Scarfs down the rest of the banana.

He types: *how to make people like me?*

CLOSE ON his eyes as he reads...he finds nothing revelatory.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I've attached a picture of myself to this letter to show my progress. As you'll see my chest is really filling out. I'm working on my upper body, it's nowhere near as magnificent as yours but hopefully one day it will be.

He types in something else and the sound of hard fucking fills the lonely room.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
I met a girl at work. Her name is  
Jessie. We'll see where it goes.  
I think you would like her.

**INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK OUT AISLE - DAY**

Killian bags the groceries of A SUBURBAN WOMAN. She blabbers away on her phone. Talking shit about a mutual friend.

She pays Killian absolutely no mind. He's invisible to her.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Hopefully one day you and Amanda can  
hang out with us. That would be fun.

A BOXED PIE from the bakery slides down the conveyor belt...

Killian opens the box and SPITS onto the pie.

He closes the box and places it into the woman's grocery bags.

The woman continues blabbering on her phone. Never noticed.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Please call or write me back.  
Your number one fan, Killian Maddox.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Killian at the kitchen table. In front of him sits a small mountain of food: 15 hard boiled eggs. Two chicken breasts. Steamed broccoli. A sweet potato. A heap of brown rice.

His grandfather is next to him, slurping soup.

They gaze silently at the small TV. Anderson Cooper is on.

They watch for a moment, his grandfather mumbles under his breath, shaking his head in disgust, flips the channel to Fox News.

Tucker Carlson. They watch for a moment...

Killian's grandfather shakes his head, aggrieved, weary.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER  
Every night with this. Both of them.  
Pointing fingers, talking shit.  
Every night.

Killian grunts in acknowledgement between bites of food. He's indifferent on the matter.



KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

A man's problems are between him and  
God and God ain't gonna put nothing  
on your plate you can't handle.

KILLIAN

Yes.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

You already know that.

KILLIAN

Yes sir.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

It takes a fierce backbone to make it  
through this life. They're not gonna  
give us anything, especially not us.  
You earn it. That's how it works.

Killian grunts and nods and keeps chewing...

The grandfather ruminates, gazing at the screen, still riled.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

Crying the world ain't fair...  
Well, it ain't fair -- it ain't  
supposed to be fair. There's folks  
who know this...

(points at screen)

And folks who don't.

Killian swallows a mouthful of food, chases it with his water.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

That's a good quality about you,  
you don't go around blaming the  
world for being what it is.

KILLIAN

No, sir.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER

No, you don't. And I'm proud of you for it.  
I mean that. You got a heart of a Champion.

Killian stops chewing for a moment as his heart swells with  
pride. Deeply moved by the compliment.

KILLIAN

(mouth still full)

Thank you.

The grandfather looks back at the screen.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER  
 You pick the weight up, you put it  
 back down. You do it again.  
 Anything else is a fairytale.

They sit there in silence. The soliloquy has run its course.

A moment passes...

The WALL PHONE rings. His grandfather answers it.

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER  
 Maddox residence.

He listens...mouth turning into a little smile, pleasantly surprised. He gives Killian a wry, encouraging look...

KILLIAN'S GRANDFATHER  
 Yes he is...  
 (handing over the phone)  
 A young lady.

KILLIAN  
 (still chewing)  
 Who is it?

Killian takes the phone, puts it to his ear, sucking his fingers clean.

KILLIAN  
 Hello?

A FEMALE VOICE on the other end. It's soft. Shy.

FEMALE VOICE  
 Hi.

Killian's face is blank, he has no idea who this could be...

KILLIAN  
 Yes? This is Killian Maddox speaking.

FEMALE VOICE  
 Yeah, hello? It's Jessie.

Killian's chewing slows, eyebrows knotted, still has no idea...

KILLIAN  
 .....?

FEMALE VOICE  
From the Safeway.

Killian bolts up from his chair -- thighs slamming the table -- he charges out of the kitchen -- phone cord stretches around the corner into his room where slams the door shut behind him.

#### KILLIAN'S BEDROOM

Nervous, he wipes his hands on his shorts, forces the mouthful of chewed egg down his throat.

KILLIAN  
Yeah, hi -- I didn't...I didn't think you were gonna call.

JESSIE'S VOICE  
Is this your...cell phone?

KILLIAN  
What? Oh yeah -- no, it's not. I have a cell phone but I don't know, this seemed more old fashion I guess.

JESSIE'S VOICE  
Oh, ha ha...

Awkward silence as they both wait for the other to speak...

JESSIE'S VOICE  
So, anyway, I thought about what you said and yeah...I think it'd be fun to go out sometime.

KILLIAN  
Oh really? Oh okay.

He looks into the mirror and nervously brushes the crumbs off his mouth.

JESSIE'S VOICE  
Only if you still want to.

KILLIAN  
Yes. I do.

JESSIE'S VOICE  
You don't sound excited.

KILLIAN

No no I am. I'm very excited.

(beat)

This makes me very happy.

A CUE begins, somber and gentle and disquieting...

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - BATHROOM/SHOWER - NIGHT**

Killian taking a shower.

We hear the remainder of the phone call play over...

KILLIAN (OVER)

So how about tonight?

JESSIE'S VOICE (OVER)

Oh. Like, now?

KILLIAN (OVER)

Yeah. We could go to Applebees or...

JESSIE'S VOICE (OVER)

It's almost...it's kind of late  
don't you think?

**STANDING IN FRONT OF MIRROR**

He carefully shaves his face.

KILLIAN (OVER)

How about tomorrow night?  
Happy hour.

JESSIE'S VOICE (OVER)

Ha, slow down cowboy. How about Thursday?

KILLIAN (OVER)

Yes. Sure. Thursday. Thursday's my  
favorite day of the week.

**BEDROOM**

Ties a tie around his neck.

Slips a burgundy sports coat over his shirt and tie.

Studies himself in the mirror. We get a full length view and  
see he's also wearing slacks and dress shoes.

JESSIE'S VOICE (OVER)  
Okay. Thursday it is.

KILLIAN (OVER)  
Okay. Cool. See you Thursday then.  
(beat)  
Jessie?

JESSIE'S VOICE (OVER)  
Yes Killian?

KILLIAN (OVER)  
This makes me very happy.

He nods. Satisfied.

PRELAP: blaring heavy metal deathcore music...

**EXT. APPLEBEES PARKING LOT - KILLIAN'S CAR - NIGHT**

Killian is parked in front of the Applebees. He's gazing up at the restaurant, his stomach knotted with nerves.

The death metal song BLARING from his speakers -- a terrifying onslaught of blood curdling screams -- calms him down.

He inhales deep through his nose, out his mouth, trying to relax and focus, an athlete before competition, a soldier before combat.

KILLIAN  
Keep it right, keep it tight.  
Play like a champion tonight.  
Keep it right, keep it tight.  
Play like a champion tonight.

In the car parked one spot over TWO BLACK GIRLS stare at him with bemused little smiles. Killian has yet to see them.

KILLIAN  
Keep it right, keep it tight.  
Play like a champion tonight.

The girls bust out laughing. Killian's concentration breaks, he looks over, through his window and see the girls breaking up.

He cuts the engine. The music abruptly stops and all goes quiet.

BLACK GIRL  
(muffled through the car window)  
This nigga really out here  
listening to some Bon Jovi.

Humiliated, he gazes into his reflection. He's very still, as if the slightest move may cause the world to spin off its axis.

Then he opens his car door and dry heaves onto the pavement.

The girls stop laughing.

**INT. APPLEBEES - NIGHT**

Killian is sitting alone at a booth. Over dressed for the casual environment. Foot tapping nervously under the table.

He glances up and sees Jessie enter the restaurant and look around. He gives her a small wave. She lights up, heads over with a beaming smile on her face...

Killian stands to greet her. He sticks out his hand to shake but she goes right in for the hug, catching him off guard.

JESSIE

I hope I'm not too late.

KILLIAN

No -- not at all -- thanks for coming. Wow, you look... I've never seen you out of your work outfit. You look...like a model or something.

She blushes.

JESSIE

Thank you. You look handsome.

(seeing bruise on his head)

Oh my, what happened?

**CLOSE ON:** her hand gently brushing his bruise. The contact is gentle and inviting, a level of intimacy rare to Killian.

KILLIAN

Oh...yeah. I was in a car accident.

JESSIE

Oh my goodness. Was it bad?

KILLIAN

I'm okay.

They sit.

KILLIAN

I was wearing my seat belt. My dad always told me to wear my seat belt so...thanks dad, ha.

Jessie lights up -- excited.

JESSIE

My dad is the same exact way! Like literally the exact same. Anytime I tell him I'm going anywhere he's like "Jessie make sure you wear your seat belt". And I'm like "yeah dad, for the ten-thousandth time, I know".

They share a laugh. She's bubbly, playful, not nearly as shy as she was at the check out line. Things are off to a good start.

She leans over and lowers her voice as if to share a secret.

JESSIE

Can I tell you something?

KILLIAN

Yes please. Anything.

JESSIE

I was a little nervous about tonight so I maaaaaybe had a drink before I came.

KILLIAN

Really? Like alcohol?

JESSIE

Yes. I had one.  
Okay you caught me I had three.

KILLIAN

Oh. Ha. That's fine.

JESSIE

Can I tell you something else? Speaking of my dad...I maybe kind of told him about you...and this date...

KILLIAN

Really?

JESSIE

Yeah. Is that embarrassing?  
I'm embarrassed.

KILLIAN

No don't be. I'm...you're making me blush a little. You can't see but I am.

JESSIE

You can blush all you want.  
You have a nice blush.

KILLIAN

Guess I'll come clean, too.  
Truth is I come to the market  
when I know you're working just  
so I can see you.

JESSIE

Yeah?

KILLIAN

Yeah. And I've been wanting to ask  
you out for awhile now.

JESSIE

I always thought you might be  
checking me out. I always thought  
you were handsome. I'm just shy.

KILLIAN

I told my dad too. About tonight.

JESSIE

Shut up, really?

KILLIAN

No. I'm kidding about that one.

Jessie laughs.

JESSIE

Oh so now you're gonna give me a  
hard time huh? You're a funny one.

And then, as if the words just tumbled out of his mouth;

KILLIAN

My dad is dead.

Silence fills the moment....Jessie stares back at him. The  
smile holding stiff on her face....

When it becomes clear he's not joking her smile falls flat.



JESSIE

Oh.  
Oh I'm sorry...

KILLIAN

He was a policeman. My dad.

Jessie strains a little smile, searching for levity.

JESSIE

That's nice.

KILLIAN

My mom's dead too actually.

JESSIE

Oh my...I'm so...sorry. I didn't...

KILLIAN

You kind of remind me of her a little.

JESSIE

....

KILLIAN

It's okay. It was a long time ago.  
The Rosen family took me in for awhile -- they  
were nice -- but I live with my grandpa now.

The mood of the conversation has taken a sudden and drastic turn.  
The playfulness that started the date has entirely disappeared.

Jessie looks back at him, uneasy, at a loss for words...

JESSIE

I'm sorry about your mom...

KILLIAN

Yeah, someone killed her.

JESSIE

Oh my God.

KILLIAN

Yeah.  
(beat)  
My dad. My dad shot her and then  
he shot himself. That's why  
they're both dead.

Jessie's hand rises to cover her mouth. Her eyes filled with  
quiet horror.

Just then the WAITRESS arrives at the table. She's chipper.

WAITRESS  
Hey y'all good evening. Could I start  
y'all off with something to drink?

KILLIAN  
I actually think we're ready to order.

Killian's tone is casual, upbeat, as if the previous exchange never happened. Jessie, however, remains in a state of shock. She lowers her hand from her mouth and tries to shake herself out of the trance.

KILLIAN  
I'll have the sirloin. Eight ounce.  
Medium rare. With just the broccoli.  
No fries. No butter. And...also...the  
Cedar Grilled Lemon Chicken please.  
If Luís is in the kitchen tonight  
just ask him, he knows how I like it.

The waitress jots this down and then, assuming Killian is done ordering, turns to Jessie.

KILLIAN  
And the Southwestern Steak Salad...

The waitress looks back at Killian. A little surprised.

KILLIAN  
Hold the cheese and tortilla strips.  
Dressing on the side please. And does  
the maple mustard glaze on the salmon  
contain sugar? I always forget.

Jessie watches him. A strange mix of emotions flowing through her. She's disturbed...concerned...uncomfortable...

WAITRESS  
I'm actually not sure...I can check.

KILLIAN  
That's okay. I'm sure it does. I'll  
take the salmon, too. You can just  
hold the glaze.

WAITRESS  
(finishing writing)  
...okay...will that be it?

KILLIAN

Would you be able to do a side of chicken breast? Just chicken breast, grilled, nothing else on it?

WAITRESS

Yes. Sure. We can do that.

KILLIAN

And a diet coke please.  
And another water.

Killian snaps the menu closed, looks up at Jessie and smiles. She forces an awkward smile then drops her gaze.

JESSIE

I'll do the shrimp stir fry I think.

The waitress jots this down and takes their menus. She heads away, leaving Killian and Jessie in an uncomfortable silence.

Killian finds the courage to fill the void:

KILLIAN

I'm sorry what I said earlier.

JESSIE

What? -- no --

KILLIAN

About my mom and dad --

JESSIE

No no it's...it's okay --

KILLIAN

I shouldn't have said it -- I'm sorry.

JESSIE

No no -- I'm sorry -- I didn't...I'm sorry.

KILLIAN

I shouldn't have said it.

Disgusted with himself, Killian pounds the table -- silverware rattles -- Jessie flinches, startled.

KILLIAN

(to himself)  
Stupid.

He mumbles to himself. Jessie holds there, very still, a thin, tight, uncomfortable smile straining her face.

KILLIAN

I'm sorry I frightened you.

Still holding still...

JESSIE

It's okay.

...After a moment...she attempts to find levity:

JESSIE

I just can't believe how much food you eat.

She smiles a little, offering an olive branch. Killian sees her smile, he eases up, smiles a little too.

KILLIAN

It's a lot, I know. But that's part of it.

JESSIE

I guess it takes a lot of food to build all those muscles ha.

KILLIAN

You should see how much Brent Vanderhorn eats.

JESSIE

Oh yeah? Is he a friend of yours?

KILLIAN

Sort of, yeah.

JESSIE

Does he work at Safeway too?

...?

KILLIAN

What? Who?

JESSIE

Your friend? Brent Van...what was it?

A puzzled look on Killian's face. Putting it together...

KILLIAN

Wait, hold on, do you not know who Brent Vanderhorn is?

Jessie cheeks flush red. Any levity is gone once again.

JESSIE  
I'm...no. I'm sorry.

Her throat tightens. Whatever confidence the alcohol provided her has been obliterated.

KILLIAN  
Two time IFBB champion. He won the Arnold Classic. 2015 Mr. Olympia runner up. Been on the cover of Muscle & Fitness. Flex. Men's Health. Twice. Really? No?

JESSIE  
No. I'm sorry. I...no..

Red splotches spread across her neck. Ears flush. Panic rising.

KILLIAN  
Jeez. You really need to get out more.

She forces a fake smile which comes out more a grimace.

KILLIAN  
Anyway yeah -- I've been writing him letters. He hasn't got back to me yet but he will. He's probably just busy.

JESSIE  
Oh.

A panic attack beginning to swell within her. Killian oblivious.

KILLIAN  
Do you ever feel like the customers at work just walk right past you -- like you're not even there?

JESSIE  
Yes. Sometimes I guess.

KILLIAN  
Like they think they are better than you or cooler than you or whatever?

JESSIE  
Sometimes, yeah. I think.  
It's so hot in here.

KILLIAN

I'm gonna show them. I have Nationals in ten days. I'm gonna place and get my Pro Card. Then I bet they won't walk past me anymore.

JESSIE

What kind of music do you like?

KILLIAN

I've been training for this competition every moment of my entire life. I want to be Mr. Olympia one day. I won't let anything stop me from accomplishing this goal. 2016 Grand Prix, Dayton, Ohio -- a judge told me my deltoids were too small -- needed work -- so what do I do? -- I work them. Day and night. Until they're perfect. No sport on the earth takes as much time and energy and commitment. 24 hours a day. No days off. There's no missing meals. There's no missing sleep, there's no missing workouts. You can't do this at 90%. Or even 99. Take my word for it. If you're not 100% you will never be successful. You have to burn the bridges and burn the boats and commit all effort and focus to becoming the greatest bodybuilder on the entire planet. It's the most important thing I'll ever do. You have to do something big and important or nobody will remember you when you're dead.

(beat)

They're gonna put a picture of my face on the magazines and everybody will know Killian Maddox was here.

Jessie face has gone white. It looks as if she's going to cry.

JESSIE

I'm sorry, I have to go to the bathroom.

KILLIAN

Okay.

She quickly stands and scurries off to the bathroom.

HOLD on Killian's face. He bobs his head to the gentle restaurant music. Thinks things are going pretty well.

**LATER**

Ten minutes have passed. The main course has been brought out to the table and is sitting untouched, growing cold.

Killian waits patiently. Jessie has not yet come back.

The waitress shuffles gingerly up to Killian at the table, she's hesitant, bearing uncomfortable news.

WAITRESS

Hi. How is everything?

KILLIAN

Yes, thank you.

Beat.

WAITRESS

You're, um...your...*friend* wanted me to tell you that she had to leave.

KILLIAN

What? Jessie?

WAITRESS

She said she had a family emergency and that she had to leave. And that she's sorry. Very sorry.

KILLIAN

When?

WAITRESS

About ten minutes ago...

Killian's expression remains the same. A tiny rigid smile locked on his face. Fighting not to show his humiliation.

KILLIAN

That's right. Yes, she did say she had to go. She did say that.

The waitress is mortified. The moment is excruciatingly awkward.

KILLIAN

She had a family emergency.  
Thank you for reminding me.

The waitress, unsure what to say...

WAITRESS  
(re: the food)  
Would you like me to wrap that up?

KILLIAN  
Yes please.

The waitress begins to take the plates away.

A thought passes through Killian's mind...his eyes goes dark,  
the fake smile fades away...

KILLIAN  
You know what, you can leave them.  
And I'd like to place another order.

#### **LATER**

Killian stares at the food in front of him:

Buffalo wings. A full rack of ribs. A steak smothered in sauce.  
A triple bacon cheeseburger. Chicken parmesan. Chicken alfredo  
pasta. Fudge brownies with ice cream and two strawberry  
milkshakes. All in over 10,000 calories.

His eyes have glazed over and filled with a bleak and morbid  
self loathing. He begins to gorge on the food.

CAMERA pans away from him and looks out the window, as if his  
shame is too much to bear.

The SCORE melts into something sinister and haunting...

...it carries over to...

#### **INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Killian is on his knees in front of the toilet. He sticks his  
fingers down his throat and vomits.

#### **INT. GYM - NIGHT**

Killian pedals furiously on a stationary bike. Sweat has  
soaked through his hoodie and begun to puddle on the floor.

He works away with an obsessive, feverish intensity.  
His sheer focus unsettling, as if under a dark spell...

Deathmetal blares from his headphones, swirling with the  
ghostly score and creating something entirely unnerving.



CAMERA pushes in slowly on the back of his head...

**CLOSE ON**

A bottle of Dyazide pills (a powerful prescription diuretic)

A bottle of liquid magnesium citrate (a powerful laxative)

**WIDER ANGLE REVEALS**

Killian in his bathroom. He pops the dyazide pill into his mouth, tilts back his head and guzzles down the laxative...

**SHOWER**

Lathered head to toe in shaving cream, he shaves his entire body.

**TANNING BED**

Killian lay motionless in the bed, engulfed in the hypnotic blue glow. The way he's laying there...it looks like a coffin.

The tomb of some lonely alien.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Killian in his underwear. Posing in front of his mirror.

His movements are slow and graceful. His face stoic.

The ominous SCORE gives the image a sense of tragic poetry.

The hulking muscles armor protecting his haunted soul.

The score builds to it's nerve chilling CLIMAX....Then.

Silence.

Hold on him....

Cut to black.

**CLOSE ON**

A laminated NPC NATIONAL BODYBUILDING COMPETITION BADGE

Maddox, Killian. Competitor 768. With a picture of Killian.

The zipper of a hoodie zips up, hiding the badge behind it.

**CLOSE ON**

A duffle bag is zipped shut.

**WIDER ANGLE REVEALS**

Morning. Killian in his bedroom. Having just zipped his hoodie.

Duffle bag in hand, he takes one final look at himself in the mirror, then he flips off the lights and leaves the room.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - FRONT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER**

Killian shouts into a bedroom in the back of the house.

KILLIAN  
Grandpa -- off to the competition --  
be back for supper.

**EXT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - MORNING**

Killian exits the house carrying his duffle bag. A bottle of water in his other hand. He's calm and focused.

He opens the door to his car -- front hood still smashed up from the crash -- and tosses the duffle in the back seat.

The sound of an ENGINE roaring down the street brings his eyes up...

Just then a CARGO VAN screeches up behind him.

A "Donaghue's Roofing and Painting" decal on the side.

The DRIVER and PASSENGER jump out. The rear door slides open and A THIRD GUY hops out of the back holding a metal pipe.

DRIVER  
You Killian Maddox?

KILLIAN  
Yeah, who's asking?

Whack! The Third Guy hits Killian over the head with the pipe. Killian drops to the pavement.

DRIVER  
Think you can trash my uncle's shop!?

He stomps Killian's head with the heel of his boot and the three men proceed to beat him senseless.

They kick and stomp and pummel his back and crack him over the ribs with the pipe.

It's savage and violent and it's over quick as it came.

PASSENGER  
Fuckin' ape!

The driver SPITS on Killian, then the three men jump back into the cargo van and tear away. Quiet again.

#### **WIDE ANGLE**

CAMERA stays on Killian laying motionless on the ground.

A boy rides past on his bicycle, taking no notice.

Somewhere a blue jay chirps.

After a moment Killian begins to stir. He sits up...

Looks around...spits out a tooth.

And then, after taking a beating that would send most people to the trauma unit, he somehow manages to stagger to his feet.

He wobbles, spits out a mouthful of blood and climbs into his car.

A THUNDERING SCORE kicks in -- disjointed, percussive, erratic -- brimming with a savage fury -- rising in volume --

#### **EXT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - DAY**

CAMERA races behind the car as it rockets down the highway.

#### **INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - DAY**

He grits his teeth, grunting and moaning, as the car barrels along at breakneck speed. *Is he chasing them?*

He frantically dabs at his bleeding face -- trying to push it back to shape as if he were a melting snowman. The effort is futile. Soon as he paws away a slick of blood and more pours forth.

His cheeks and lips and eyes begin to hideously swell...

Through bloody, gritted teeth:

KILLIAN  
no...no...no..no...

**EXT. CIVIC CENTER PARKING LOT - BACK ENTRANCE - DAY**

Killian's car skids to a stop in a "no parking" zone. He stumbles out, leaves the car and hurries into the --

**CIVIC CENTER - BACK HALLWAY**

CAMERA follows behind him in one long unbroken take:

He limps quickly down the hall. Dragging a wounded leg. Blood drips off of him, leaving a slick trail along the linoleum floor.

SCORE swells, manic and frightening. Growing in intensity.

He turns a corner, following a sign: "NPC Athlete Check In"

As people pass him we see their faces drop. Heads turn to stare.

PASSERBY

...Oh my God...

-- Killian doesn't notice or seem to care. He's dead-set, tunnel vision, only cares about the goal: Get on-stage...

An EMPLOYEE looks up from the check in table and sees Killian headed towards her. Her eyes widen. Terrified and bewildered.

KILLIAN

Killian Maddox is here.

Mouth agape, she just points down another hall. He turns the corner, hobbling even faster now. CAMERA follows....

...he busts into the BACKSTAGE AREA where other BODYBUILDERS are warming up... People begin to take notice of him...

Heads turning, eyes widening. Squeamish confusion.

As Killian peels off his bloody clothes CAMERA winds around revealing the face that has left everyone aghast.

It's become horrendously swollen. A sheet of blood has leaked from the gash on his forehead and painted his face red. His lips are busted. His nose is broken. The blood vessels in one of his eyes have burst apart like crushed tomato.

As his clothes come off we see dark discolored bruises spreading down the length of his body. Broken ribs.

Everyone stands around and watches. Nobody speaks.

A CONTEST EMPLOYEE approaches warily.

CONTEST EMPLOYEE  
Sir...

KILLIAN  
Have they called Maddox?

CONTEST EMPLOYEE  
...Are you okay?

KILLIAN  
Have they called Maddox? I'm here  
now -- I can go.

CONTEST EMPLOYEE  
Maybe you should --

KILLIAN  
Don't touch me -- I'm fine --

CONTEST EMPLOYEE  
...let a doctor take a look --

Killian BARKS at the man. Blood spittle spews from his mouth.

The employee backs away, frightened. Killian just now realizes that everyone in the room is looking at him.

He shouts to anyone who will listen;

KILLIAN  
Have they called Maddox?? I'm here!  
Killian Maddox is here!

Nobody responds. They just stare back in stunned silence.

KILLIAN  
KILLIAN MADDOX IS HERE!!

People look away, afraid to make eye contact.

The score builds louder, more ferocious...

Over the P.A. speaker we can hear the COMPETITION JUDGE call out "Killian Maddox". Killian storms off towards the stage...

CAMERA, still unbroken, follows...

### **MAIN STAGE**

He staggers out before the blinding lights.

A murmur rushes through the AUDIENCE. A few loud gasps.

He begins his posing cycle.

**THE PANEL OF JUDGES**

Stare back with a mix of confusion and horror.

**KILLIAN**

Flexes and grimaces. A mouthful of rich dark blood pours through broken teeth. Blood drips down his oiled chest and splatters onto the white mat. All this intensified by the beaming hot spotlights.

His wrist is broken and it's impossible for him to make a fist.

**KILLIAN**

I'm sorry...I need to just...

He wobbles, starting to see stars. Tries to rotate into a new pose, bare feet slip and slide on his blood.

Some members of the audience stand and hurry out of the room.

He tries to hold a new pose. His legs tremble. His entire body trembles. He speaks through a clenched jaw, barely audible.

**KILLIAN**

...please...wait....

The pain is too much, he lets go of the pose.

SCORE has grown into some sort of monstrous cacophony of sound. Hypnotic and terrifying.

He staggers backwards, losing balance, the world spinning beneath his feet. His body goes limp and he collapses face first onto the floor.

**BLACK**

The score comes to a chilling crescendo then -- silence....

PRELAP: The sound of ice water...

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - BATHROOM - NIGHT**

Killian lowers himself into a bath tub filled with ice water.

He wears a CAST on one wrist.

Wisps of blood plume in the water and turn in pink.

He gazes off into the distance, a somber expression on his face. He allows himself to sink beneath the ice cubes.

Disappearing from this world.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

Fresh bandages on his face, Killian searches YouTube.

A "recommend video" on the side panel catches his attention.

"BodyBuilder Faints At NPC Nationals"

He hesitates, then gives in to his masochistic nature and clicks the link...

It's official video from the NPC event.

On screen: we see Killian, bruised and bloody, unable to hold his poses, then stagger and faint on stage. Gasps from the crowd. Two judges stand to their feet, gazing peculiarly at his inert figure as if it were mangled road kill.

Two Event Promoters jog onto the stage and carry away Killian's limp body. More gasps from the crowd.

**CLOSE ON KILLIAN'S EYES**

moving down the screen to check the number of views...

17,482 views.

491 comments.

Killian closes his lap top.

He sits there, very still, gazing into space...

**LIVING ROOM - LATER**

Killian ejects a **Mr. Olympia** VHS cassette from the VCR and yanks out the film reel, twisting it into a knotted mess.

A shelf next to the TV holds stacks of VHS tapes. Mr. Olympia, The Arnold Classic, etc.

Killian pulls them off the shelf and rips their guts out.

**KITCHEN - LATER**

Killian before an open refrigerator. He tosses out all of his food into a trash bag. Chicken, steaks, broccoli, etc.

**OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - LATER**

He marches out hauling two fat trash bags. He heaves them into the garbage can, turns around, and walks back inside.

**BEDROOM - LATER**

Killian is in underwear, pacing his room. His dog lay curled on the bed, watching his owner, sensing his distress.

Killian glares at the dozens of bodybuilding centerfolds plastered to his wall. They almost seem to be taunting him.

He tears one down off the wall, balls it up and tosses it. Then he punches himself in the face. One of his cuts reopens.

He tears down another poster, punches himself again. He continues this, one by one...

**LATER**

Killian is asleep on the floor of his bedroom. His face gently bleeding.

Slow fade out...

**INT. SUPERMARKET - CHECK OUT AISLE - DAY****CLOSE ON**

The face of an ELDERLY LADY. She ogles at something...

**REVERSE TO**

Killian bagging her groceries. His face battered. Two black eyes, bandages, etc.

The elderly woman stares at his wounds like he's some sort of beguiling, offensive piece of modern art.

Killian feels her eyes on him, he looks up and gives the rubber necker a thrill, flashing her his bloody teeth.

Her eyes widen.

THE MANAGER, having seen none of this, calls to Killian from the door of his office.

MANAGER

Killian.

Killian looks over.

MANAGER

When you finish with your customer  
can I see you for a minute?



**MANAGER'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER**

Killian is sitting across the desk from the manager. The manager sighs long and heavy like a weary bear.

MANAGER

What's up with you brotha?

KILLIAN

...?

MANAGER

Two weeks I don't hear from you and then you just show up like nothing happened?

Killian has no answer.

MANAGER

What happened to your face?

KILLIAN

I fell.

The manager shakes his head. Not buying it. He's both frustrated and empathetic.

MANAGER

You can't just no show like that. I gotta let you go, man. I'm sorry.

KILLIAN

What do you mean?

MANAGER

I mean I have to let you go.

KILLIAN

You mean like fire me?

MANAGER

You gave me no choice, brotha.

KILLIAN

I'm fired?

MANAGER

I'm sorry.

KILLIAN

I need this job. I need another chance.

MANAGER

I've given you plenty of chances - I've had customer complaints, I've had other employees complain that you make them uncomfortable -- this computer...

(nods at computer on his desk)  
the hard drive is filled with porn. I know it was you so don't even try to deny it.

Killian gazes back. Caught. Manager throws his hands up.

MANAGER

I'm sorry man. I don't have a choice.

Killian sits there a moment, not responding.

An imperceptible switch flickers within him. Just allowing his eyes to crawl over the manager with lethal chill.

He then rises to his feet, places both fists knuckle down on the manager's desk and leans in close, threatening. Quiet.

The manager tilts backwards, eyes wide with fear.

KILLIAN

Be very careful how you talk to me.

**INT. STATE MANDATED COUNSELOR OFFICE - DAY**

Her eyes crawl over Killian's stitched wounds. Her face is full with empathy and patient, non judgmental concern.

STATE COUNSELOR

Were you in a fight?

KILLIAN

No.

STATE COUNSELOR

You can be honest with me.  
You won't get in trouble.  
It's safe here.

KILLIAN

There wasn't a fight.

She forces an unconvincing smile, having trouble believing him.

STATE COUNSELOR

How are you doing Killian?

KILLIAN  
I have to say I'm doing really good. I won first place at my show which means I got my Pro Card.

STATE COUNSELOR  
Wow, congratulations, that's amazing.

KILLIAN  
I'm going to be on the cover of a magazine. They came to my house and took pictures of me and everything. I'll bring you a copy.

STATE COUNSELOR  
I'd love one.

KILLIAN  
My grandpa is very proud of me.

STATE COUNSELOR  
I'm sure he is. And how are things progressing with the young lady from work?

KILLIAN  
She's my girlfriend now. She likes me a lot. She understands me. She laughs at everything I say.

STATE COUNSELOR  
I'm happy she brings you joy. It's important to find people that you can make emotional bonds with.

KILLIAN  
Yes, things are going very well for me.

His eyes glaze over...grief and shame expanding in his stomach...

STATE COUNSELOR  
What's her name?

Killian looks up from his gloomy reverie.

KILLIAN  
Who?

STATE COUNSELOR  
Your girlfriend?

He gazes back...his eyes empty...

# **INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

Cruising down a seedy street. Sex workers strut along the sidewalk. His eyes scan, nervous, this is new for him.

He pulls the car up along a WORKING GIRL. She comes right up and leans in his window.

WORKING GIRL

Hey sport. You looking for a date?

She's confident and straightforward. A seasoned pro. This intimidates Killian, he drives off.

**LATER**

Still cruising...up ahead Killian spots A GIRL WITH A FUZZY PINK COAT walking down the sidewalk.

Killian drives up alongside her, she keeps walking and he lets the car roll slowly beside her much in the same manner the Police SUV once rolled alongside him...

She smiles. He smiles back. There's something about her. A sweetness. A sense of innocence.

PINK COAT

Hi.

KILLIAN

Hi.

(beat)

Where are you going?

PINK COAT

Just walking.

KILLIAN

Walking where?

PINK COAT

Looking for what's out there.

KILLIAN

What are you looking for?

PINK COAT

Whatever comes my way I guess.

Killian has run out of things to say. He continues to roll alongside her...She can sense he's shy and inexperienced.

PINK COAT

You from around here?

KILLIAN

Is it okay if I don't tell you?

She smiles.

PINK COAT

You wanna hang out? I know a place.

Killian looks around, nervous. Checks his rearview.

KILLIAN

I dunno...

PINK COAT

It's just down the street.

He looks back at her. On his face, deciding...

#### **INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

The room is empty and dark. Neon light bleeds in through the curtains giving the place an eerie, extraterrestrial swelter.

The front door opens. The girl with the fuzzy pink coat comes in, Killian saunters in behind her, timid. She flips on the light, he looks around the room, still a little nervous.

She begins to take her clothes off. There's nothing sexy about it. Just routine.

PINK COAT

It's seventy for the hour. You can leave it over there.

She nods to a dresser. Killian places down a wad of cash and moves towards the TV.

KILLIAN

You mind if I turn on the TV?

Naked now, she ties her hair back into a bun.

PINK COAT

You can do whatever you want, sweetie.

He turns on the TV and dials the volume up very loud.

KILLIAN

I'd like to turn the lights off if that's okay.

PINK COAT  
You're the captain.

She flops back onto the bed.

He cuts off the lights, neon glow once again soaking the room.

He makes his way over to her, still fully dressed.

PINK COAT  
You gonna take your clothes off?

KILLIAN  
Okay.

He takes off everything but his briefs, struggles a little to get his casted hand out of his jacket sleeve. He kneels between her legs and holds there before her, shirtless.

KILLIAN  
Do you like how I look?

PINK COAT  
Yes.

KILLIAN  
Do you like my body?

PINK COAT  
Yes. I do.

KILLIAN  
What's your favorite part?

PINK COAT  
I like all of it.  
I like your big arms.

KILLIAN  
Do you like my deltoids?

PINK COAT  
I don't know what that is.

KILLIAN  
These...  
(touches his shoulders)

PINK COAT  
Yes I do.

KILLIAN  
You don't think they're too small?

PINK COAT  
I think your shoulders are perfect.

KILLIAN  
The judges always say they are too small.

PINK COAT  
Well the judges are wrong.

KILLIAN  
Do you think they're liars?

PINK COAT  
Everyone's a liar, baby.  
Do you wanna fuck me?

KILLIAN  
Hold on...just give me a second...

He rocks back onto his knees so he's kneeling between her legs. He sticks his hand down his briefs and jostles around.

KILLIAN  
Gimme just a second...

She watches him patiently. He's struggling, flustered...

PINK COAT  
You need help?

KILLIAN  
No...I just...maybe if I...  
You're very pretty.

PINK COAT  
Yeah? You think?

KILLIAN  
Yes. Very. Such pretty eyes...  
...and face. A lot of guys must like you.

She plays into it. Trying to get him going.

PINK COAT  
You want to fuck me?

KILLIAN  
Nice hair...

PINK COAT  
Come fuck me baby.

KILLIAN  
You're so beautiful.

He leans down and KISSES her on the mouth. She pulls her face away. He tries again, she evades him.

PINK COAT  
What are you doing?

He sits back onto his knees again, afraid he's offended her.

KILLIAN  
I was trying to kiss you.

PINK COAT  
No kissing.

KILLIAN  
I'm trying to make it,  
y'know...feel sexy...

PINK COAT  
No kissing.

KILLIAN  
Okay.

Rattled further now, Killian strokes himself harder, faster, more desperate. No luck. His frustration growing.

PINK COAT  
Here let me help.

She reaches a hand down his briefs. Feels around. She looks up at him, confused. He pushes her hand away.

KILLIAN  
Don't touch them.  
(beat)  
I take medicine that makes them small.

He rolls off of her and sits on the edge of the bed, his shoulders slumped. Eyes cast down on the old stained carpet.

She sits up next to him. His pain is visceral and it has stirred some genuine empathy in her. A long moment passes...

He gazes downward, making no eye contact as he speaks:

KILLIAN  
My cock is broken.



PINK COAT  
It's okay.

....

KILLIAN  
I'm sick.  
(beat)  
I have a sickness in me.

**INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

Killian driving down a dark strip of two-lane HIGHWAY. His eyes have frozen over into a thousand yard gaze.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Dear Brent. If you're not going to write back just let me know. I don't like having my time wasted. Speaking of wasted time, the date with Jessie was very bad. I don't know what went wrong. I just tried to be honest with her. Honesty is best, right?

Up ahead, the HEADLIGHTS OF ATRUCK barreling towards him in the oncoming lane...

He slowly lets go of the wheel...

The car gently sways...

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
These people don't get us. They don't know how it is. There are thoughts in my head and I have no one to talk to about them.

**TIRES**

Begin to drift across the double yellow line...

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
I think you're the only one who would understand. If only you'd listen to me.

**KILLIAN'S POV**

His car has drifted over into the other lane and the oncoming headlights wash across his face.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I don't have anything else to say  
right now. Maybe you'll hear about  
me one day and realize you've made  
a mistake. I have to go.

He gently closes his eyes...

The oncoming semi-truck is speeding towards him, horn blaring  
and flashing its lights.

Killian keeps his eyes closed. His body still. Oddly relaxed.

The oncoming horn is growing rapidly in volume as it nears --  
seconds from impact -- truck lights sweep violently to the  
other side as it swerves, narrowly missing Killian's car,  
roaring past like a freight train --

All is quiet again.

Killian opens his eyes and gently pulls over to the shoulder.

He sits there a moment, face devoid of emotion, looking out  
into the quiet night.

KILLIAN (V.O.)

Please write or call me back.  
Your number one fan, Killian Maddox.

#### **INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

Killian sits alone at a table. A cheeseburger and onion rings  
in front of him. Several empty beer mugs on the table.

He gulps down another mug of beer. He's drunk.

Chatter and laughter from a group of people entering the  
place brings his head up...

It's A MAN and his FAMILY (wife and two children 9, 12)

The man doesn't see Killian but Killian seems to recognize  
him. He watches as the man and his family take a seat across  
the restaurant, place their drink orders, etc.

Killian scoffs. Shakes his head. This man's presence, whoever  
he is, has clearly agitated him.

Killian goes back to chewing his burger. Tries to pull his  
gaze away from the man. Taps his foot, looks out the window,  
anxious energy, like an addict trying not to use.

Finally he gives into his urge. Pushes up from his chair and drunkenly saunters over to the man and his family.....

Stands very close, his crotch pressing into their table, they look up at him. Killian stares down at the man.

We may recognize him as one of the Donoghue men who several weeks back beat Killian senseless.

KILLIAN

You remember me?

Killian's glare is wiry and unhinged. The man looks at his wife and children, suddenly concerned about their safety.

KILLIAN

Yes I think you do.

He sways drunkenly, staring down at the man, his eyes glassy wild. The man's wife has grown deeply uncomfortable. She places a protective hand on her daughter, their eyes cast downward, as if avoiding the glare of a larger predator.

Killian leers over, taunting.

KILLIAN

Not so tough now, are you?  
Without your friends.  
Not so tough at all.

The man doesn't respond. Shaking. His eyes downward.

KILLIAN

Coward.

...

KILLIAN

Say it. Say you're a coward.

Trembling, eyes still cast down on the table...

FAMILY MAN

Please...leave us alone.

Killian ignores the plea, looks at the little boy.

KILLIAN

Your dad beat me up. He hit me with a pipe.

FAMILY MAN

(to his boy)  
Don't talk to him.

KILLIAN

Cracked my head open. Kicked me.  
Called me an ape. But he's not so  
tough now. Bet if I stuck this knife  
in his stomach he'd cry for his mommy.

The little boy is frightened and confused. Looking to his  
father for comfort only to find a man equally as afraid.

The family man pleads, his face flush red with humiliation,

FAMILY MAN

That's enough, man... please...

Killian ignores him, his eyes still on the little boy. He  
points at the little boy's glass of coca-cola.

KILLIAN

Don't drink this.  
This will make you fat.  
Nobody will like you if you're fat.

He swipes the glass of coke and staggers away, back to his  
table...

...sinks to his seat and guzzles down the entire carbonated  
beverage as he stares daggers at the family. The man and his wife  
try to calm their children. Everybody shaken from the affair.

Killian glares at them, inviting a challenge, but they don't  
dare look back his way.

He picks up an onion ring and flings it across the room at them.

Then another. The little boy starts to cry. The girl follows.

FAMILY MAN

What's your problem man?

At this point everyone in the restaurant has turned and to  
watch in uncomfortable silence.

Killian lobs his half chewed hamburger at them.

Off screen we hear a patron say "someone call the police".

FAMILY MAN

Just leave.

Killian bolts up from his seat and CHARGES towards the man --

-- the man scurries backward, shielding his head, terrified --

Killian stops short -- watching the man cower...and it's here, with the rapt attention of a terrified audience, that Killian seems to understand his role as the monster, the menace to society. A gleam in his eye as he relishes in this bizarre power.

He breaks into delirious, RAVING LAUGHTER.

His possessed gaze sweeps across the restaurant. The horrified spectators drop their eyes to the floor, wanting nothing of his ire. An audience frozen in polite terror. Docile. Afraid.

Killian staggers around, arms held out like The Gladiator.

KILLIAN

Are you not entertained?!

Are. You. Not. Entertained?!

Deathly silence. Everyone's eyes on the floor. Little kids crying.

KILLIAN

Killian Maddox was here.

You will forget most your days  
here on this earth but today, I  
promise, you will remember.

He tumbles somberly out of the restaurant to the --

## **STREET**

Staggering about, laughing maniacally again as -- wham! -- he slams his head through the window of a parked car.

Still consumed with delirious laughter, he yanks his head back, cut and bleeding and -- wham! slams it through the other window.

Two POLICE CRUISERS skid up to the curb --

FOUR COPS jump out -- tasers drawn --

COP

Fucking hands! Now!

Killian glares at them, in a daze. Bewildered by their presence.

In a flash two cops deploy their tasers -- 2,400 volts seize through Killian's body but given his brute strength he remains standing. Wobbling like a mummy. Grunting through a clenched jaw.

The lead cop spear tackles Killian to the pavement --

The other cops jump on top and wail on him with their clubs. Wet thuds smack off flesh and bone. The skirmish is violent. Ugly. Killian bucks and squeals like a wild animal.

COP  
Stop resisting!

Cops douse him with pepper spray. He screams, fueling his rage.

COP  
Clear!

The other cops jump off Killian and the lead cop blasts him with another taser gun. This flattens him out.

Killian shakes and spasms on the pavement. They quickly cuff his inert body.

COP  
Ah shit.

COP 2  
What?

COP  
The fucking guy's having a heart attack.

#### **INT. BACK OF AMBULANCE - MOVING - NIGHT**

Racing through the night. Sirens blaring. Lights flashing. Killian is slipping in and out of consciousness.

He has a oxygen mask over his mouth and an EMT sits over him manually pumping the bag valve.

Killian's lips move under the mask. He's trying to speak.

The EMT lifts the mask up from his mouth.

KILLIAN  
I'm...going...

EMT  
What?

KILLIAN  
...to fuck...you up...

EMT  
Just relax sir.

The EMT places the mask back over Killian's mouth.

**INT. JAIL - NIGHT**

Killian is calm now. Physically drained and likely drugged. Hospital bracelet still on his wrist as a POLICE OFFICER escorts him into a jail cell.

They uncuff him, close the cell door and walk away.

**JAIL CELL**

Alone in the dark with his thoughts.

Killian gently taps his head into the bars. Bang.

Again. A little harder this time. Bang.

Bang....bang...he knocks his head against the metal.

Slowly and rhythmically. Bang....bang....bang...

Another PRISONER shouts from down the way.

PRISONER (O.S.)  
Shut the fuck up!

Killian stops. Holds still a moment. Considering the request.

Then: bang.....bang.....bang.....bang.....

**INT. COURT ROOM - DAY**

DISTRICT JUDGE  
Mr. Maddox.

Killian stands. His face bruised and bloodied.

KILLIAN  
Yes.

DISTRICT JUDGE  
With regards to the following charges: disorderly conduct, disrupting the peace, public intoxication, resisting arrest and assault and battery on a police officer, you have decided to plead guilty.

KILLIAN  
Yes your Honor.

DISTRICT JUDGE

You are to serve 730 days probation and conduct 100 hours of community service. You are also ordered to pay \$150 to Larry's Bar and Grill for damages to their chair and \$800 to Mrs. Glenda Farber for damages caused to her car windows.

KILLIAN

Yes your honor.

The judge peers down at Killian over the top of his wire frames.

DISTRICT JUDGE

You going to behave yourself?

KILLIAN

Yessir.

The judge nods, bangs the gavel.

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - EVENING**

We hear the sounds of the front door unlock and someone enter the house. Killian shuffles into the kitchen.

He opens the fridge and looks inside.

Killian's POV: A few eggs. A bottle of ketchup. Some old lettuce. Cold and empty.

He closes the fridge and gazes around. Shouts into a back hallway.

KILLIAN

Grandpa?

...no answer...

KILLIAN

You asleep?

...no answer...

Coast clear, Killian picks up the wall phone. Dials a number....

KILLIAN

I'd like to place an order please.

**LATER**

He's half naked now, stripped down to his briefs, hunched over the table, stuffing his face.



On the table: Boxes and boxes of Chinese food. Enough to feed a family of six. An entire chocolate cake. A box of powdered doughnuts. A large pizza. A two liter bottle of Mountain Dew and a bottle of chocolate syrup.

# **WIDER ANGLE**

He chews with the numb and sorrowful gaze of grazing cattle. His dog lay by his feet. The overhead lamp casting them in a small cone of light. All else falls off into shadow.

They are all alone on this lonely planet.

...Slow fade to black...

# **INT. STATE MANDATED COUNSELOR OFFICE - DAY**

Killian across from the State Mandated Counselor. He doesn't look well. Face puffy and bloated, as though he hasn't slept in days.

We come in during a prolonged silence in the conversation. She looks at him with caring, empathetic eyes and a concerned smile.

STATE COUNSELOR

Killian, did I say something last time that upset you?

KILLIAN

No. How do you mean?

STATE COUNSELOR

Was something said, here in this room, that upset you?

KILLIAN

No. I don't think so...

Ever so patiently...

STATE COUNSELOR

Okay. Because after you left someone went into the hallway bathroom and they smashed all of the mirrors and broke the sink off of the wall. And it seems that whoever did this was very upset about something.

...

STATE COUNSELOR

And it's okay if you were upset. I'd just like to talk to you about why.

Killian looks around the room, mumbling to himself. He smiles inwardly, as if remembering a private joke.

STATE COUNSELOR  
Do you find that funny?

KILLIAN  
I just thought of a good memory.

The state counselor brightens, encouraged by the positivity.

STATE COUNSELOR  
Can you share it with me?

KILLIAN  
In grade school there were boys that teased me...said my skin was burnt...said my lips were big...called me dumb...called me a gorilla...threw bananas at me and things like that. And then one day I hit one of them in the head with a rock. And he went to the hospital. And they left me alone after that.

Killian looks at her and smiles. Innocently.

A cold shiver runs through her stomach.

**EXT. STRIP MALL PARKING LOT - DAY**

Killian exits the counselor's office and heads to his car.

**INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - PARKED - DAY**

Het gets in and twists the ignition.

"Living On A Thin Line" by The Kinks plays low on the stereo.

Killian sits there a moment. Not moving. His eyes surveying the parking lot...

...people coming in and out of stores, going to and from cars...

Gears churn in his head...an idea taking shape....no, it's more than an idea, it's a state of mind.

Spontaneous and involuntary, like becoming an aroused.

Then the idea comes. A gloriously wicked one. Magnificent and exhilarating and charged with dark electricity.

The song grows louder...

Then, as if consumed by a phantom, Killian's arm slowly raises,  
his hand forming into the shape of a PISTOL....

The song grows louder...

**KILLIAN'S POV:** Looking down the length of his wrist, his thumb serving as a sight, his index finger the barrel...

...he locks onto a person walking to their car...tracks along with them, ever so slowly, as to not allow them out of his sights...

#### **CLOSE ON KILLIAN'S FACE**

One eye closed for accuracy. The other lowered to the back of his hand like a sniper's eye.

**KILLIAN'S POV:** his arm glides over to another person, he follows them with his self made pistol...

The song grows louder...

He gently curls down his thumb, as if to mimic a shot, and WHISPERS the sound of his imaginary bullet --

KILLIAN  
 ...poosh...

#### **ON KILLIAN**

As he drifts leisurely from human target to human target, carrying out his own private massacre...

KILLIAN  
 (whispers)  
 .....poosh.....  
 .....poosh.....  
 .....poosh.....

The song takes over the entire soundwaves, carrying to...

#### **INT. SPORTING GOODS STORE - DAY**

CAMERA GLIDES OVER a glass display case of guns....

...pistols...revolvers...shotguns...automatic rifles...

#### **KILLIAN'S EYES**

Drink them in...a weary traveler finding the promise land.

The Kinks continue over...

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - GARAGE - NIGHT**

CAMERA GLIDES OVER a table...

On the table: An AR- 15. A Bushmaster XM 15. A Remington 870 pump action shotgun. A 9mm Sig Sauer. A glock 19. Extended magazine clips. Two hand grenades. A kevlar vest. Black tactile gloves. Black tactical pants. Black tactical boots.

Killian picks up one of the guns. Turning it over in his hands, feeling it's cold, heavy, lethal weight.

Finds his reflection in the full length mirror.

Likes how he looks.

He raises up the gun and takes aim as if to shoot.

He holds the pose...

A **TV/VCR** set plays an old military training video. On screen the instructor gives a step-by-step tutorial on firearm combat. Killian follows along.

The Kinks grow louder, carrying over to...

**INT. PUBLIC BATHROOM - STALL - NIGHT**

Killian stands in the stall. He's wearing a twin shoulder holster, TWO PISTOLS strapped to either side of his rib cage.

He snorts up two bumps of cocaine.

Zips up his jacket, concealing the weapons, and exits the stall...CAMERA follows him out of the bathroom and into a --

**NIGHTCLUB**

"Living On A Thin Line" competes with the thumping CLUB MUSIC.

A fog machine has pumped smoke into the place, it mixes with the colorful swirling lights.

Killian emerges from the cloud like a ghost, CAMERA follows...

He leans against the bar and orders a drink. Surveys the dance floor, bobbing his head with the music...

...looks around at all the people dancing...laughing...being young and beautiful and free...

His drink comes. He downs the entire thing in a single gulp.

Moves to the dancefloor....begins to dance...all by himself...

...as the music grows louder his dancing grows more intense...losing himself in the moment...

He knows he has the power to kill everyone in the room and that knowledge has lifted him into utter ecstasy.

PRELAP: TAT TAT TAT TAT TAT --

The music abruptly stops --

#### **INT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY**

Our senses are blitzed by the incredibly violent ear-drum splitting gunfire.

Killian is in a booth FIRING his AR - 15 assault rifle.

CAMERA pushes in towards him as he fires over our head. White hot FLASHES explode out the barrel --

-- QUICK FLASH of people dancing in the nightclub --

Back to Killian shooting. The sheer magnitude of the sound, the deafening silence that comes after, it's bone chilling.

CAMERA lands in a close up on Killian. He lifts his eye away from the scope and peers down the range to examine his target.

From the small, satisfied grin we assume he's got pretty good aim.

HOLD on his face...

The grin fades then disappears. The adrenaline rush evaporates. The fleeting moment of joy is gone. The darkness rolls back in. The bottomless void still needs filling.

PRELAP: A woman's voice singing "Psycho Killer" by Talking Heads..

#### **INT. KARAOKE BAR - NIGHT**

**CLOSE ON**



The drunk man, his eyes blood shot, snorts back a line in the middle of a wandering drug fueled tirade.

DRUNK MAN

...and it's all bullshit, you know?  
The whole corrupt system is just one  
all consuming lie. A turgid,  
malignant, all encompassing lie.

KILLIAN

Yes.

The drunk man chops up a few more lines, crushing and separating them into neat little rows. Rambling as he does...

DRUNK MAN

Keep us afraid, the bewildered herd.  
You're watching television, you're  
watching the news, you're being pumped  
full of fear -- all the time -- there's  
wildfires, there's terrorism, there's  
murder -- go to commercial -- buy this  
car or the girl won't fuck you, buy  
this home alarm system or your kids  
will be raped -- do you have ulcerative  
colitis? you probably do, buy this --  
do you have plaque psoriasis? if not  
you will soon, buy that. Meanwhile  
muslims are coming to kill you -- so  
are the blacks -- especially the  
blacks. No offense. And they throw the  
face of a black man on screen because  
the black man is America's worst  
nightmare. They keep a boot heel on  
your neck. They *created* the nightmare.  
They *need* the nightmare. What's the  
point of being on the mountaintop if  
there's no one in the valley to look  
down on. You know what I'm saying?

KILLIAN

Look down on. Yes.

DRUNK MAN

And for what? It's a campaign of  
fear and consumption, based on the  
whole idea: keep the sheep afraid  
and they'll consume. Fear is the  
gasoline which keeps the  
capitalistic engine running. Throw  
the monster in jail -- now you're  
safe. Go buy the new Ford truck.

He snorts up another line.

DRUNK MAN

They can bomb the entire middle east but I drive on a suspended license and I go to jail. And we accept this?

(snort)

It's time the people rise up. Make them feel the pain we feel. Taste of their own shit you know?

Killian, who has been listening intently, offers a plain solution.

KILLIAN

I could go shoot them if you'd like. I have a gun.

The guy laughs and plays along as he chops another line.

DRUNK MAN

Yeah that would be nice. Just go splatter their brains onto the dance floor. Bang! Bang!

The man snorts up another line. Killian watches him calmly.

KILLIAN

Yes.

The guy laughs again, finding Killian's dead pan hilarious.

DRUNK MAN

You're alright, man. You're alright.

The guy lowers down to snort another line. Killian gazes down at the top of the guy's head. So vulnerable...

#### **EXT. FAST FOOD RESTURANT - NIGHT**

We watch from a sinisterly voyeuristic distance as a pudgy MIDDLE AGED MAN with thin wisps of hair combed across his blading scalp exits with a large back of food.

The pudgy man gets into his car and drives away.

#### **INT. MIDDLE AGED MAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

Classic rock blares from the speakers. One pudgy hand on the wheel while the other digs into the grease stained bag, withdrawing an oily french fry and feeding it into his mouth.

He sucks his fingers clean.



**EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - NIGHT**

FOLLOW the man up the exterior stairwell and down the exterior hallway, the perspiring bag of trans fats wedged under his armpit. He stops before a door, slithers out his key. Opens the door. Enters.

**INT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - SAME**

He flips on the light, places down the bag of food and pads into the bathroom. Lifts the toilet lid and begins to pee.

All the while unaware of the large black man sitting quietly in the corner, automatic weapon resting calmly across his lap.

The middle-aged man empties his bladder, oblivious.

Killian waits, calmly in the shadows.

HOLD on this shot...

The man flushes and returns into the living room.

Upon seeing Killian a high-pitched gasp escapes his plump mouth. He goes still, stricken with numb terror.

KILLIAN

If you scream I'll shoot you dead.

The man doesn't dare. Futilely showing that he's unarmed. Killian peers back at him. Oddly serene and unflinching. Allowing the AR - 15 to rest gently in his lap.

MIDDLE AGED MAN

I don't have any money.

Killian allows the moment to linger. The man's life in his hands.

KILLIAN

Do you remember me?

The man has no idea who Killian is. He drops his eyes, shaking, terrified.

KILLIAN

Look at me. Do you know who I am?

MIDDLE AGED MAN

...no...

KILLIAN

Look at my face.

Then man brings his watering eyes up. Still no recognition.

KILLIAN  
2016 Grand Prix. Dayton, Ohio. You  
were the judge. You told me I  
wasn't good enough.

...

KILLIAN  
You remember me?

The man trembles.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
I judge a lot of competitions.

KILLIAN  
You didn't like my hamstrings or my  
deltoids. You placed me eleventh.  
Told me I wasn't good enough.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
...I'm sorry...

His voice a shaky whisper.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
I'll write the commissioner.  
I'll put in a good word.

KILLIAN  
It's too late.

The man whimpers.

KILLIAN  
You're on the mountaintop looking  
down on me.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
No...please...

KILLIAN  
Yes, you are.

The man whimpers again.

KILLIAN  
Take off your clothes.

MIDDLE AGED MAN  
Please...

KILLIAN

Do it.

The man slowly peels off his shirt. His pale flaccid stomach flops out over his belt.

KILLIAN

Pants.

The man hesitates, pleading, crying now.

KILLIAN

Take off your pants or I'll shoot  
you in the stomach.

The man unbuckles his belt and shimmies down his pants.

KILLIAN

Slowly. Like you mean it.

He steps out of the pants, exposing shins rubbed hairless from years of wearing socks. Wrinkled white briefs are all that remain.

Gun leveled on the half naked man, Killian uses his free hand to gently twist closed the blinds. They CREAK as they shut.

Ambient streetlight is shut out. The room grows dark. Lit only by the haunting blue glow of the man's fish tank.

Killian appraises the large bag of now soggy fried chicken and wilting french fries.

KILLIAN

Pathetic.

A stereo system on the shelf. Killian turns it on.

**"Because The Night"** by Patti Smith is playing.

He CRANKS up the volume. Very loud. The man begins to cry.

Killian RACKS the slide and raises the machine gun.

Over this music:

KILLIAN

Front lat spread.

The man doesn't understand. He doesn't move. Weeping.

KILLIAN

Front lat spread!

Confounded, the man obeys, striking a trembling front lat pose.

KILLIAN

Gross.  
Front double bicep.

The sniveling man obeys, twisting his flabby body into the new pose. Glowing in the surreal blue neon. Patti Smith wails. The soaring rock song lends the moment a bizarre and macabre irony.

In the corner A CAT watches the incident devoid of compassion. Blue aquatic neon reflecting in its placid black eyes.

KILLIAN

Rear lat spread.

The man follows orders.

KILLIAN

Fat. Dumb. Ugly.  
Side triceps.

The man begins to weep uncontrollably now.

KILLIAN

How does it feel?

..whimpering, no answer...

CAMERA floats ominously in toward Killian...machine gun raised...

KILLIAN

Look at me.

...

KILLIAN

Do you see me now?

...CAMERA lands in a chilling close up of Killian's face...

KILLIAN

Do you see what I have become?

A LUSH ORCHESTRAL PIECE fills our ears, sweeping across the soundscape with frightening beauty...

# **BEGIN MONTAGE**

## **INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Lit only by the screen of his lap top. Killian's eyes scan images and articles of mass shootings:

Sandy Hook. Orlando. Parkland. Las Vegas. Aurora. Fort hood.

Police vehicles and crime scene tape. Half covered bodies laying inert on the pavement.

Survivors and loved ones frozen in states of unspeakable grief.

Shock. Horror. Dismay.

And then the shooters. Pictures of them everywhere.

On the covers of newspapers.

On the covers of magazines...

Their faces etched into the annals of history. Like icons. Like kings. Living in eternal infamy.

#### **CLOSE ON KILLIAN'S EYES**

...Taking this all in with sublime focus...

...The orchestral piece grows louder...

#### **INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY**

Killian descends an escalator. His steady gaze set down on the sea of people beneath him...

The classical music gives the moment an air of macabre grace, entrance music for some falling angel.

As he glides downward time s l o w s . . . .

Mixing with the classical music comes sounds of gunfire.

People screaming.

Chaos.

These sounds are only in Killian's dark imagination.

For now.

People continue their lives, unaware of his fantasy.

#### **INT. CHURCH - DAY**

Killian sits in a pew at the back of the church. He appraises the congregation...the backs of people's heads..hovering there like sitting ducks. Vulnerable. Oblivious.

Everything remains in slow motion...

#### **KILLIAN'S POV**

The PRIEST giving his sermon. We can't hear the words, only the orchestral score...

Killian's eyes move to the plump little baby angels on the stained glass windows...

...his eyes move to a replica of Jesus hanging on the cross. Blood dripping from the crown of thorns. His eyes rolled dead.

Killian watches... The score continues over...

**INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT**

Slowed time continues as Killian stalks down the aisle.

He glides in front of the screen, like a specter, his body engulfed in the projector's light.

He looks out at the crowd of faces. A full theater.

JUMP CUT to an image that only lasts a half second, but in this brief moment we see everyone dead, shot to death in their seats.

**CLOSE ON KILLIAN'S EYES**

An eerie dark light dazzles within them.

The music swells and builds to its finish then fades away.

Killian closes his eyes.

Cut to black

**END OF MONTAGE**

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Killian at the kitchen table eating an entire ice cream cake.

The wall phone rings. He looks up at it. Not used to callers.

It rings again.

He picks it up and holds the phone to his ear. Skeptical.

KILLIAN

Yes.

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

Hello? Is this Killian?

The caller is a man. Confident and friendly.

KILLIAN

Yes?

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

Killian Maddox?

KILLIAN

Yes. This is he.

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

It's Brent.

His face doesn't move. Silence fills the air. His heart stops.

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

Vanderhorn.

.....

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

The bodybuilder... I got your letters...

After another short pause:

KILLIAN

Yes, this is Killian Maddox.

The voice laughs, a little uncomfortable, brushing it off.

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

I have a show in your area next week. Thought maybe you'd like a ticket. You can come backstage afterwards, say what's up.

Killian has yet to move. Yet to blink. As if he's not sure it's safe to trust his own ears.

VOICE THROUGH PHONE

Hello? Killian?

Killian responds flatly, cautiously.

KILLIAN

Yes. I'd like that very much.

HOLD on Killian's detached and unreadable gaze.

PRELAP: A tender, splendid piece of classical opera...

**INT. SHOW ROOM - DAY**

CAMERA floats majestically toward BRENT VANDERHORN as he poses on stage. His blonde hair, blue eyes and artificially tanned skinned shimmer under the lights. The embodiment of Aryan beauty.

He twists into a new pose, flexing, muscles ripple, his teeth pearly white.

REVEAL Killian in the crowd. Gazing up in child-like wonder.

The opera music SOARS.

**INT. BACK STAGE - AFTER THE SHOW**

Brent, towed off and wearing a sweat suit now, signs an autograph for a fan. Poses for a selfie.

Killian observes from a timid distance. Finally works up the courage to approach, warily. Butterflies in his stomach.

He stands before Brent, quietly, waiting to be noticed. Brent looks up from an autograph. He meets the staring black man's gaze.

BRENT VANDERHORN

Killian?

KILLIAN

Hi.

Brent finishes the autograph, the fan leaves and it's just the two of them. Brent gazes at Killian, his eyes, blue as the ocean, sizzle with confidence. Immediately detecting Killian's shyness.

BRENT VANDERHORN

Well thanks for coming man. You look just like your picture.

KILLIAN

It was a good show. Very good. Your abs look even better than before.

Brent flashes that glowing white grin.

BRENT VANDERHORN

My babies. You wanna touch?

He lifts his sweatshirt, revealing a midsection carved of stone. Killian hesitates, bashful, awaiting further instruction.

BRENT VANDERHORN

Go 'head. It's cool.



Slowly Killian reaches out, as if touching a Holy artifact.

**CLOSE ON:** Killian's fingertips running gently over the peaks and valleys of sculpted muscle...

KILLIAN

They're perfect.

Brent drops his shirt back down and laughs.

BRENT VANDERHORN

You're funny.

Brent's eyes crawl over him. A delicious little idea forming...

Killian gazes back. Unsure of what is happening...

The air between them charged. Electric. Brent grins, lascivious:

BRENT VANDERHORN

So you're my number one fan, huh?

Off Killian's face...we cut to --

#### **INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

The bed sheets are ruffled.

Killian sits on the edge of the bed. Wearing only underwear, gazing in a bewildered daze at a spot in the carpet. He works his pants back on, trying to make sense of what just happened.

In the background, in soft focus, Brent swings out of bed, naked, snapping his briefs back on. He stretches and yawns. Scratching his belly. Satisfied. Casual. Routine. Another Friday night.

His cell phone buzzes on the nightstand. He checks the ID. Sighs.

BRENT VANDERHORN

Damnit.

He picks up. A finger to his lips asking Killian to be silent.

BRENT VANDERHORN

(into phone)

Hey honey.

He listens. A WOMAN'S VOICE can be heard on the other end.

BRENT VANDERHORN

Yeah my flight got cancelled.

(listens)

First thing in the morning.

Killian slips on his shoes. Confused. Unsure how to behave. Looks to Brent for some sort of reassurance but Brent pays him no mind.

BRENT VANDERHORN  
(into phone)  
I don't like being away from you either.

Sensing he's no longer needed, Killian opens the door and leaves the room in a somber fog.

Still on the phone, Brent doesn't care to watch him go.

**INT. MALL FOOD COURT - DAY**

Killian sits alone inhaling 10,000 calories worth of fast food.

HOLD...

**INT. SAFEWAY PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON**

Jessie leaving work for the day, still wearing her Safeway apron, heading towards her car after a long shift.

Her gaze catches on something in the distance, her face goes white with dread, she drops her eyes and quickens her pace.

KILLIAN (O.S.)  
Jessie.

She ignores his plea, hurrying toward her car, nervously digging into her purse to find her keys.

KILLIAN  
Jessie.

Killian is approaching from the opposite end of the lot, cutting her off. Jessie begins to retreat, backing away, afraid, awkward...

KILLIAN  
It's okay. It's okay..

She remains tightly coiled, one foot back should she need to run, appraising Killian coming nearer like a stray dog.

Killian senses her distress and stops advancing, allowing her some comfortable distance, they stand there about ten feet apart, neither one moving.

KILLIAN  
I just wanted to apologize.

...

KILLIAN  
I'm sorry I wasn't a better date for you.  
And I'm sorry if I frightened you.

Jessie says nothing. Still wary. Unsure what to say.

KILLIAN  
I hope you find someone nice one day.

...

KILLIAN  
You don't have to worry about me  
anymore. You won't be seeing me again.

Something both terrifying and heartbreaking about the way he says this and with that he turns and walks away, leaving Jessie shaking in the afternoon sun.

Prelap: a phone ringing through the line...

**INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - KILLIAN'S BEDROOM - EVENING**

Killian is pacing the room, phone to his ear.

KILLIAN  
Hi Brent, it's me again. I got your number from the league directory. I hope that's okay. Sorry for all the messages. I know you're probably busy but please, call me back... call me back because...I'm asking nicely and I'm not raising my voice...and because, honestly, when you ignore me it hurts my feelings...and makes me feel a little sad...and a little angry...and you've done those things to me...I just wanted to be your friend and you've done those things to me. I'd like you to call me back when you can. It's Killian Maddox by the way. Okay. Thank you.

He hangs up. Ruminates. Lets out a somber exhale.

A darkness rolls behind his eyes. A quiet fury. A change of mind.

He picks the phone back up and dials again. Straight to voicemail.

He says coldly and matter-of-fact:

KILLIAN  
I'm going to kill your entire family.

He hangs up. Gazes out the window. Ominous storm clouds coalesce in the sky overhead.

PRELAP: the sound of pouring RAIN.....

**INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

A stormy night.

Killian drives slowly down a dark street, windshield wipers wick away sheets of water. Peering out through the rain, looking for something, someone...

Up ahead, through the haze, a FIGURE moving down the sidewalk. Through the blurry windshield we make out her fuzzy pink coat.

Killian pulls up alongside her and rolls down his window.

Rain HISSSES on the sidewalk like popcorn.

KILLIAN

Hey.

Pink coat is walking gingerly as to avoiding puddles. She holds a small white umbrella over her little head. She turns, squinting through the storm into the dark car..

KILLIAN

You remember me?

PINK COAT

Yeah I remember you. Feeling better?

**INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT**

Neon light glows through the window, catching the rain on the glass and sending ominous shadows crawling down the wall.

Pink coat sits on the edge of the bed. Killian stands before her in the middle of the room. There's a noticeable difference about him this time. A quiet confidence. Relaxed focus.

He takes off his shirt, drops it to the ground. He stands there, half naked, as if on display.

He's grown puffier since we've last seen him. His muscles less defined. A soft layer of fat has smoothed him out.

KILLIAN

Do you think my skin is too dark?

PINK COAT

No. I like dark skin.

KILLIAN  
Are you lying?

PINK COAT  
No.

KILLIAN  
Don't lie to me.

PINK COAT  
I'm not. I think you have beautiful  
skin and a beautiful body.

KILLIAN  
Nobody understands how hard it is.  
Nobody ever listens.

PINK COAT  
I'm listening.

.....

KILLIAN  
Do you ever get bad ideas in your  
head? Ideas that make you sick?

PINK COAT  
Yes. I think everybody does.

KILLIAN  
What do you do?

PINK COAT  
I pretend they're not there...  
(shrugs despondently)  
What else can you do?

He glares at her. There's an unsettling intensity in his  
eyes. She matches his gaze, refuses to look away.

Rain patters the window. The moment is charged. Electric.

KILLIAN  
Get up.

She does, slowly. Killian backs into the corner of the room  
lowering himself into a chair, facing her.

KILLIAN  
Take off your clothes.

She begins to take them off in the same routine manner as before.

KILLIAN

Slowly.

Like you mean it.

She slows down...peels her wet top off....

Killian watches her with a peculiar gaze, as if viewing an exotic creature.

She steps out of her skirt and stands there naked in the center of the room, like an object.

She looks at him, awaiting her next command.

Killian says nothing. Sitting silent and still as stone, cloaked in the shadows, backlit by the eerie neon bloom.

A long moment passes...

Tension builds. Only sound is that of the driving rain.

KILLIAN

Get in the shower.

She backs away, slowly, into the bathroom. Cuts on the shower faucet, pulls back the curtain and steps in.

PINK COAT

(calling out from the shower)

You gonna join me?

Killian reaches down calmly underneath the chair, pulls out his black duffle bag and lifts out A PUMP ACTION SHOTGUN.

He cocks it.

KILLIAN

Yes.

Gun hanging to his side, he walks casually across the carpet and into the --

## **BATHROOM**

He stares at her body silhouetted through the curtain.

We stay outside the shower on Killian.

When she speaks her voice is ethereal and dreamlike.

PINK COAT  
I like when it rains....  
Everything feels simple.  
Like magic could happen.

Killian raises up the shotgun. Within the confines of this small bathroom the weapon looks absurdly large.

He points it at her glass pebbled silhouette. She continues rinsing in the shower, totally oblivious...

PINK COAT  
Do you like when it rains?

LONG SLOW ZOOM IN on Killian's face. Stoic. Calm. Focused. His eyes have glazed over as if in a trance....

LONG SLOW ZOOM in on her silhouetted body...

CLOSE ON: His finger tightening its squeeze around the trigger.

His concentration breaks. His senses come flooding back.

He lowers the shotgun. Realizes he hasn't been breathing for the past half minute and gasps for a breath.

He walks out of the bathroom, tosses the shotgun into the duffle and disappears out into the storm.

At the sound of the slamming door Pink Coat pokes her head out of the curtain. Looks around confused.

PINK COAT  
Hello?

Cut to black.

**CARD: One Month Later**

**INT. KILLIAN'S CAR - MOVING - NIGHT**

Killian drives. His dog sits in the backseat.

He looks in the rearview mirror at his dog.

His dog looks back. Its eyes mournful.

There seems to be a grim acknowledgement of what's to come.

**EXT. BACK DOOR OF AN ANIMAL SHELTER - NIGHT**

He ties the dog's leash around a lamp post. He bends to a knee and hugs the dog. Doesn't seem to want to let go.

He stands, pushing down any emotion that may have crept up.  
 He knocks on the back door of the shelter and trots away.  
 Hold on the dog. Tied up. Alone under a pool of yellow light.

#### **A SERIES OF TABLEAUS**

- Various shots of dawn stretching over the sleepy American town.
- A street lamp flickers off, going dark against the purple sky.
- A bedroom light comes on inside a cozy suburban home.
- A paperboy glides on his bicycle down a quiet street.
- CENTER OF TOWN, a work crew erects pedestrian barricades along the street. **A PARADE** is being set up through the main drag.

All quiet on the western front...

#### **INT. MADDOX RESIDENCE - DAWN**

Dawn's soft blue glow out the window.  
 A DIGITAL CAMERA sits in the center of the room.  
 Red record light blinking...  
 REVERSE on Killian, staring directly into the camera.  
 He clears his throat and begins to speak:

KILLIAN  
 Ladies and gentlemen of America,  
 my name is Killian Maddox and I  
 have come to save you.

#### **LATER**

AN ARRAY OF GUNS have been spread out on his neatly made bed.  
 Killian loads in rounds of ammunition. Cocks the slide.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
 I was asleep and now I am awake.  
 I have seen the light.  
 America has lied to you.  
 It does not care about the sick or  
 the poor or the ugly.



KILLIAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
It does not care if you are good  
or if you are bad.

There are winners and there are losers.  
This world is not for everyone.

#### **A SMALL TV**

Plays the Local Morning News. Cheery NEWSANCHORS talk about this year's 'Annual Fourth Of July Parade' happening today.

Thousands of people are expected to be there, etc.

Killian watches a moment, his face stoic, then turns off the TV.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
Dreams are for sleeping.  
The sooner you realize this the  
sooner you can be free.

He loads the massive firearms into a black duffle bag.

Zips it closed.

#### **BATHROOM**

He shaves his head.

KILLIAN (V.O.)  
It will all be over soon.  
  
Relax.  
  
You won't feel a thing.

#### **KILLIAN'S ROOM**

**"KILLIAN MADDOX WAS HERE"** has been spray painted on his wall.

Under a black trench coat he wears black tactical gear from head to foot. Duffle bag slung over one shoulder, he holds a machine gun and stares at himself in the mirror.

Steely eyed and resolute. A mercenary. A beacon of death.

He shouts to the other room, gaze never leaving his reflection.

KILLIAN  
Grandpa.

...no answer...

KILLIAN  
I'm headed out for a bit.

He stares at himself in the mirror...

KILLIAN (V.O.)

I still believe I could have been a champion.

Maybe in another life.

I have gone to be with mom and dad in  
the stars. I hope to see them soon.

The unflinching determination on his face shows signs of  
fracture. His visage softens. TEARS fill his eyes.

Fear of what's to come? Grief over what never will be?

Hope?

Elation?

The tears roll down his face...

He does not move.

Sound drops away.

HOLD....

SCORE bleeds in...

Epic in scope yet somber and intimate in timbre. It feels grand  
and gorgeous and haunted, like a looming storm on the horizon.

...it carries over to...

CUT TO:

# **A WHITE BACK DROP**

Sitting on a stool under the photo shoot lights is Killian.  
It seems as though some time has passed. His hair has grown  
back, he seems to be in better health.

Off screen we hear A PHOTOGRAPHER give gentle direction, her  
voice buried under the rising SCORE...

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

Chin up.  
Shoulders back.  
Very good.

We begin to hear the faint CHEER OF A CROWD in the distance,  
blending into the delightfully menacing orchestral piece...

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)

Three...two...one..

POP -- a camera flash --

CUT TO:

### **A MAGAZINE COVER**

Of Killian, frozen in time. Immortalized.

Sounds of the cheering crowd are a little louder now...

CAMERA pans away from the magazine...and floats down a long hallway in a ghostly drift...

....the crowd grows louder, fuller, closer...

CAMERA lurks toward the sound...

...glides into a SHOWROOM where an ecstatic audience cheers the finalists of a bodybuilding competition.

CAMERA floats over the crowd like a quiet breeze...

Drifting toward Killian, on stage, his black skin twinkling beneath the lights, dazzling in all his glory...

...SCORE builds to the brink of a gloomy elated madness...

Buried under the shimmering music we hear someone announce:

"Ladies and gentlemen your champion, Killian Maddox"

A gold medal is placed around Killian's neck.

Cheers and applause mix with the swirling violins.

CAMERA floats through in a dreamlike splendor...landing on Killian, posing for the crowd, camera flashes popping...

Killian soaks in the faceless crowd out there in the dark...

He basks in the love.

And just as the soaring strings build to their glorious crescendo Killian looks directly into our eyes --

Magazine Dreams