



TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. DENSE FOREST - NIGHT

A figure runs through brittle branches and tramples over damp leaves. His features are bathed in darkness, but this is GIDEON COLE. Rain falls, thunder rumbles, lightning flashes periodically to illuminate the thicket of trees in eerie blue light.

GIDEON'S P.O.V.

As he runs, he brushes through brambles with his hands, hurriedly parting branches, looking down to his feet in finding his way over stray twigs and dirt.

INTERCUT rapid shots of a slashing blade, tearing skin, oozing blood, disembodied HOWLS. Distorting and overlapping, reality starting to break down until...

Gideon stops in his tracks. He has come face to face with the outline of a man standing perfectly still in the shadows of a clearing. They stare across at each other as another batch of LIGHTNING flickers between them and thunder CRASHES.

SHADOWMAN

Everyone's afraid of the dark.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gideon's eyes snap open and awake. He doesn't bolt upright or scream, just lies still in bed with a frozen, terrified stare.

GIDEON

(involuntary)

Everyone's afraid of the dark.

A beat, then he reaches out to his bedside table to flick on a lamp. We can now see that Gideon is in his fifties, has an intense, world-weary complexion, and most notably a rash of old scar-tissue across his face and hands.

He reaches out to his alarm-clock. It shows 11:47 PM.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

The clock on the dash shows 11:47 PM.

ADJUST ANGLE to show RACHEL ATHERTON behind the wheel, a demurely attractive brunette woman in her forties.

The car radio plays out "Everyday" by Buddy Holly at a gentle volume. Rachel allows herself to hum along.

She peers through her rain-spattered windshield, wipers working overtime to beat away the unrelenting downpour. On the passenger-seat lies a pile of partially-marked mid-term papers.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

Rachel's car cruises along through the rain, no other traffic in sight. A LEGEND then begins to SCRATCH or ETCH its way across frame, complete with appropriate sound (this will be the style for all subsequent legends):

GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT
11:47 AM

Some distance ahead we see --

A FIGURE

clad in a large hooded overcoat. He stands perfectly still in the middle of the road and mutters to himself inaudibly.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Rachel continues to drive and hum until her headlights flash upon the HOODED MAN in the road ahead.

RACHEL

Jesus.

She slams on the brakes.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT

The car SKIDS to a halt just next to the Hooded Man. He doesn't even flinch, continues muttering. Rachel's window comes rolling down and she leans her head out.

RACHEL

God, I am so sorry. I didn't see you until...

(beat)

Are you okay? Do you need some help?

The Hooded Man is still muttering, the same phrase over and over again. Rachel starts to get a sense of danger.

RACHEL

What's that?

HOODED MAN

(suddenly louder)

Everyone's afraid of the dark.

With that, he LUNGES in through her open window. His dark hand rushes RIGHT INTO THE LENS.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - SOME TIME LATER

Rachel is now tied and bound with rope to a large tree in a forest not altogether dissimilar to the one in Gideon's dream.

Opposite Rachel is a YOUNG MAN tied to another tree with BARBED WIRE. The Hooded Man paces the area between them, wielding a large HUNTING KNIFE.

Rachel cries in sheer terror as her captor approaches with the point of the knife to her neck.

HOODED MAN

Open your eyes. Open your eyes or
suffer his fate.

She swallows hard and reluctantly blinks her eyes open. The Hooded Man caresses her face with the knife then proceeds to her male counterpart.

He steps right up close to the man, raises the knife...

...and begins cutting away skin. The victim HOWLS in agony -- he's being skinned alive.

The knife draws blood from his cheek and starts PEELING UPWARD. It pivots under the flesh and starts ripping it from his face. The Hooded Man's arm works away at a steady rhythm as he literally butchers his victim.

Rachel SCREAMS like she has never screamed in her life as we ASCEND away from the horrific sight and TILT UP to the dark treetops which tower toward the cold, gray sky.

FADE OUT

END OF TEASER

GO TO MAIN TITLES

ANDREW GARDNER

MONTE

ANDREW GARDNER

MONTE

ANDREW GARDNER

ABYSS

ANDREW GARDNER

ANDREW GARDNER

ANDREW GARDNER
ANDREW GARDNER

"THE WASTELAND"

GUEST STARRING
WENDIE MAZUK

CALLUM KEITH RENNIE

DOUG HUTCHISON

SEBASTIAN SPENCE

AND
DENNIS HOPPER

THEME BY
MICHAEL WANDMACHER

PRODUCER
JAKE DIAMOND

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
ANTHONY JOHN BLACK

CO-PRODUCER
JAMES SWANSON

PRODUCER
REBEKAH GRANT

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
ANGELO SHRINE

WRITTEN BY
JAMES JORDAN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

The sky is now bright and clear, but still gray without even a hint of blue. PUSH DOWN to reveal that the area is now a crime scene, marked off by yellow police tape, OFFICERS, DETECTIVES and FORENSICS TEAMS buzzing around. Everyone's breath is visible with every exhale in the cold air.

~~8:11~~ AM

A CAMERA takes photographs of the tree now marked out in white tape, blood-stained but the body long gone. Behind the camera is Gideon. He eavesdrops on DETECTIVE PITNEY (female, late 40s) and DETECTIVE NEMHAUSER (male, mid 40s).

NEMHAUSER

Cyclist found them just after sunrise. The male was dead by the time paramedics arrived, completely stripped of skin, but the female was left unharmed -- at least physically.

PITNEY

And the trees they were bound to were parallel?

NEMHAUSER

Yeah. These two.

PITNEY

Make sure the photo guy gets some shots to show the scale between the two positions. Some point of view angles too.

She points over her shoulder to Gideon, still snapping photos. We stay on Gideon as he listens and takes it all in.

PITNEY

What do we know about the victims?

NEMHAUSER

Guy still hasn't been IDed. Won't be easy, considering. Woman's name is...

He looks down to his notepad, flips over a few sheets.

NEMHAUSER

...Rachel Atherton. Forty-three. She's being given the once-over in hospital.

Gideon stops listening and turns to them for the first time.

GIDEON
Which hospital was she taken to?

NEMHAUSER
Excuse me?

GIDEON
The female victim. Which hospital
was she taken to?

NEMHAUSER
(indignant)
St. Paul's.

PITNEY
(to Gideon)
Don't you just take the photos?

GIDEON
Yes, that's right.

PITNEY
Then just take the photos, okay?

Pitney's hostile attitude is more than communicated in her fierce glare. Gideon holds it but backs off.

CUT TO:

INT. ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL - DAY

Rachel sits upright in a hospital bed. She has little to no physical scars but her eyes are glazed over, traumatized.

Gideon enters delicately.

GIDEON
Rachel Atherton?

RACHEL
Yes? Are you another one of the
police investigators?

GIDEON
Not exactly.

RACHEL
Then what exactly?

GIDEON
My name is Gideon Cole. I'm a
photographer, I sometimes freelance
for the police at crime scenes.

RACHEL
So you've come to take my picture?

GIDEON

(more intense)

No. I've come to paint one.

He steps closer. She notices his scars but doesn't say anything, tries not to stare.

GIDEON

You've been through an incredibly traumatic experience. Right now you're feeling more vulnerable than you ever have in your life. You're gripped by an almost tangible sense of terror. You're paralyzed by it. It's almost as if you don't want to even move or have any human contact for fear that the slightest sound or movement could cause you to crumble.

Rachel is struck by his words. He's reading her with eerie accuracy and articulation. It's almost spooky.

RACHEL

You think you understand how I'm feeling?

GIDEON

People are people. But I understand fear. And I understand terror.

RACHEL

(softly)

Twelve hours ago, the only thing terrible in my life was a stack of mid-term papers and SATs waiting to be marked. Now I've been quizzed by police twice over and what I'm most afraid of is being... labelled and... categorized... and reduced to --

GIDEON

-- a victim.

Rachel meets Gideon's eyes: exactly.

GIDEON

I can help you.

Rachel tries to maintain her facade, but she's starting to break now.

RACHEL

How?

GIDEON

I said I'd paint you a picture.

Now let me put it in a frame.

(beat)

When you're ready.

Rachel eyes him dubiously, but she's strangely drawn to this man, talking to her in way that none of the police or doctors have or ever could.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - DAY

A large rural property that stands alone, bordering on a mansion. An Edwardian building with three floors, Gothic Revival architecture dating back just over a century.

A BLACK SUV

pulls up along the driveway, tires scraping over gravel.

CUT TO:

INT. GIDEON'S SUV - DAY

Gideon drives with Rachel beside him in the passenger seat. She gazes up at the house through the window then shifts awkwardly, reminded of the presence of the near-stranger beside her.

RACHEL

I'm not sure about this.

GIDEON

I understand. If you'd like to go back, I'll turn around.

He brings the car to a stop outside the entrance.

RACHEL

Why have you brought me here?

GIDEON

To meet some other people not unlike yourself. People who can help you, who can share their experiences, and gain strength from the sharing.

Rachel looks back at the house and weighs things up in her mind, not liking being made to sound like a special case but curious nonetheless. She's come this far.

Gideon remains totally neutral, no pressure at all.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Gideon leads Rachel inside to the impressive reception hall. A wide staircase leads upward, large mahogany doors are left open in a welcoming manner.

RACHEL
Not too shabby.

GIDEON
Don't misunderstand. I've no pretensions to wealth or status. I inherited this house.

RACHEL
You live here alone?

She cranes her neck, taking in the abundance of space with her eyes.

GIDEON
Actually, the people I want you to meet live here with me.

RACHEL
I'm guessing you're not in the hotel business.

Gideon gives a hint of a smile at her half-hearted attempt to leaven the mood in light of the circumstances.

GIDEON
No. We're sort of a community. We have our own lives but we support each other from here.

RACHEL
(dubious)
Sounds like group therapy.

GIDEON
Call it a community.

They walk as they talk, Rachel being led to an impressive LIBRARY and on through the house -- the grand tour.

GIDEON
You're skeptical.

RACHEL
I don't know... I...

GIDEON
It's alright.

RACHEL
It's just that it all seems a bit...

GIDEON
Unconventional?

Rachel shoots him a look: that's one word for it.

GIDEON
We're unconventional people.
(beat)
Each of us has a unique insight
into the things that most people
don't want to even think about.
We've found that we can apply that
insight to help others, and in the
process help ourselves.

RACHEL
This isn't some kind of religious
mission, is it?

GIDEON
(vaguely amused)
I'm not religious, no.

Rachel stops walking, halting the tour. She's starting to
let her cynicism take over now.

RACHEL
Then what? Have you brought me
here to convert me to something or
to be some sort of pet project?
What is this all about?

GIDEON
It's about fear. The fear that is
instilled in us after a traumatic
event at the hands of other human
beings. That fear can only be
conquered by facing it and owning
it. If we hide from it, the cycle
only continues, and so the fear
owns us. Only by confronting what
has made us afraid can we overcome
it. That's what we do here.
That's who we are.

RACHEL
And you think that's who I am too?

GIDEON
That's for you to decide.

Rachel shifts awkwardly, vulnerable and out of her depth.

RACHEL
(hesitant)
You know, you haven't asked me yet.

GIDEON

Asked you what?

RACHEL

About... what happened. About what I saw.

GIDEON

No, I haven't.

(beat)

You haven't asked me either.

Gideon's scars catch in the light. After holding Rachel's gaze for a meaningful beat, he turns to resume the tour.

Rachel hesitates, her expression torn in weighing up Gideon.

CUT TO:

INT. WOOD CABIN - DAY

A small, humble hut, more of a way-station for campers than a permanent dwelling. A stark contrast to Athos House. The door opens and the figure of the Hooded Man steps inside.

He unfastens his heavy overcoat and drops of liquid flick off as he removes it. Most of it is rain water, but some of it is BLOOD.

We FOLLOW the man as he walks through the cabin and turns on a small TV. A NEWS ANCHOR appears on screen as he walks on past it.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.)

...still ongoing. Police are yet to release an official statement, but it is believed they are in the process of questioning one key witness who it is hoped will provide a description of the killer.

The Hooded Man turns his back to the TV as he sets down an object on a side-table. As he moves away, we see that it is the HUNTING KNIFE used in the attack.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.)

The victim's body is still awaiting formal identification, made more difficult by the extreme brutality of the murder. We now go to our report which contains some graphic details which some viewers may find distressing.

PUSH IN past the TV to where the Hooded Man starts to lay something out in front of a log fire. He cradles it delicately, arranging it with pride.

CRANE UP to reveal it is a long stretch of HUMAN SKIN, vaguely in the outline of a body, glistening in the firelight.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - FIRST FLOOR BEDROOM - DAY

Rachel wanders in, alone now. She steps through with trepidation, not quite sure where to go. The room is modestly furnished, cold and impersonal. A pet-cage contains a rat, and a stereo system sits atop a set of drawers. Rachel pushes a button absently and "Blood Runs Black" by Bitter Conflict starts blasting out.

As if alerted by the music, a BOY comes charging in. This is AARON SIDWELL (19), fierce yet introverted with shaggy dark hair that falls in his eyes. He kills the music.

AARON

(hostile)

What the hell are you doing in here?

RACHEL

I'm sorry, I was just...

AARON

Who are you?

RACHEL

I'm...

She extends her arm in a hand-shake gesture.

AARON

Don't touch me.

That was not an idle remark. He really meant that.

GIDEON (O.S.)

(commanding)

Aaron.

Both Aaron and Rachel turn to see that Gideon has appeared in the doorway. He strikes an authoritative stance, framed by the light around the open door.

GIDEON

(to Aaron)

This is Rachel.

(to Rachel)

Rachel, this is Aaron. He's part of our community.

AARON

What are you doing bringing her up here?

GIDEON

It's alright. I was just showing Rachel around.

RACHEL

(humble)

It's my fault. I was intruding.

AARON

(harsh)

Yeah, you were. She'd better not have touched Manson.

Aaron checks on the caged rat, poking a finger through lovingly. Rachel doesn't quite know where to put herself, feeling every bit the guilty guest who's made a faux-pas.

GIDEON

Aaron. Rachel is our guest. She should be made to feel welcome.

Aaron wavers under Gideon's stare, as if told off by a father.

AARON

The others are ready downstairs.

Aaron exits, softening to Gideon's face but remaining bullish to Rachel's. Gideon steps closer to Rachel as she lets out a heavy breath.

GIDEON

You should excuse him. He's had a difficult life.

RACHEL

What did he mean when he said the others were ready?

GIDEON

I told you we try to use our experience to help.

RACHEL

Help how?

Gideon extends his arm toward the door as his answer.

GIDEON

Please...

Rachel stares back at him, weighing things up in her mind.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

A group of four are assembled. Aaron sits around a large table, while at the head of the room stands MARK WATTERS, a white-haired man in his late-forties. He stands beside a large corkboard filled with crime scene photos.

Seated with Aaron is DEANNA SYKES (20s), an attractive woman with long, dark hair. Perched on the end of the table is ISAAC FREEMAN, a well-built man in his forties.

MARK

The signature aspect is the flaying of the skin. As such we can broadly categorize this as a torture-murder. The victim was likely chosen for convenience, in all probability kidnapped from the nearby road, making him a proxy or representative for elements of a more complex psychology.

Enter Gideon and Rachel, unseen by most.

DEANNA

The significance of the skin to the killer will hold the key. The act is complex and time-consuming, requiring precision and skill. He may have worked around animals at some time in his life, perhaps in a slaughter-house.

AARON

Do we know what kind of weapon was used?

ISAAC

Likely a hunting-type knife. From what little we can tell so far there were no hesitation cuts or mistaken tearing. The killer chose the right tool for the right job. Deliberate.

MARK

We'll know more when Gabrielle completes her examination of the body.

AARON

She's with it now?

MARK

Yes.

RACHEL

What the hell is going on here?

All eyes turn to Rachel, standing at the entrance with Gideon.

GIDEON

Everyone, this is Rachel.

There is an awkward glance around the room.

RACHEL

(uneasy)

I should go.

She spins around and charges out the door. Gideon looks to the others with a silent plea for patience, then turns and follows after her.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Rachel is storming off, just about ready to leave. Gideon follows but doesn't crowd her.

GIDEON

Please stay.

RACHEL

What was all that about? You said you were a community, you didn't say you were amateur detectives.

GIDEON

I wouldn't quite put it like that.

RACHEL

Then how would you put it?

GIDEON

We do what we can to help. We have a unique point-of-view when it comes to these matters.

RACHEL

(spilling out)

So did I. I had a front row seat.

GIDEON

I'm sorry.

RACHEL

I shouldn't have come. I don't belong here. There's things I have to get back to.

GIDEON

Do you think you can make it back?

RACHEL

I'll get a cab.

GIDEON

That's not what I mean.

RACHEL

Look, I don't need your help. I'm pretty sure the police don't either. I'll give them my statement, they'll find the person responsible, and I'll go back to work.

GIDEON

As simple as that.

RACHEL

Yes.

Rachel wavers. She knows it won't be.

GIDEON

Whatever you might think, we're not vigilantes. We're simply in a position to understand the minds of these people the way few ever could. Using that knowledge to help victims and stop those responsible prevents us from living in fear.

(beat)

I'd like you to stay. Not for our sake, but for yours.

Rachel softens slightly, almost convinced.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Gideon and Rachel enter the room for a second time. Mark, Isaac, Deanna and Aaron all turn to look at them.

GIDEON

Please continue.

A beat of uncertainty from around the room.

MARK

Judging from what we have so far, we can reasonably assume that the killer is a white male of average to above average intelligence, probably with a strong familiarity with the location in which the murder was committed.

DEANNA

Which could be through occupation
or residency.

ISAAC

Potentially an outdoorsman. A
recreational hunter or fisherman.

AARON

What about the thing no one wants
to say?

An uneasy look goes around the room, a knowing, uncomfortable
look.

AARON

Jacob Allan Bane. This is pretty
much his M.O. Right about down to
a tee.

Everyone looks to Gideon delicately. Rachel is the only one
out of the loop and it shows on her face.

RACHEL

Who's Jacob Allan Bane?

All eyes are on Gideon, as if it's up to him to explain.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

A busy bullpen where DETECTIVES mull back and forth. Phones
ring almost constantly in b.g.

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
11:04 AM

Pitney and Nemhauser are gathered around a whiteboard.

PITNEY

We're developing a working profile
but I'd like to speak to the
witness again before signing off on
anything concrete.

NEMHAUSER

We can't. At least not yet.

PITNEY

Why not?

NEMHAUSER

Seems she discharged herself after
a visit from that guy -- what's-his-
name -- Cole.

PITNEY

The photo guy?

(beat)

What the hell does he think he's doing?

A shrug from Nemhauser, while Pitney is more concerned.

CUT TO:

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

The door opens with the JINGLE of a bell and the Hooded Man steps inside. He removes the hood of his coat and shakes away a few drops of rain. He begins walking down the small aisles of camping equipment and related hardware.

A young female SHOP ASSISTANT approaches.

ASSISTANT

Can I help you?

HOODED MAN

(eerily pleasant)

I'm looking for some barbed wire.

ASSISTANT

Any particular length or thickness?

HOODED MAN

The strongest you have.

ASSISTANT

Right this way.

She leads him forward with a broad retail smile.

HOODED MAN

Thank you so much.

She walks on just in front of him. He follows and takes something from a shelf as it catches his eye in passing: a roll of GAFFER'S TAPE.

As his hand carries it away --

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. MORTUARY - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Standing fully scrubbed over a steel slab is GABRIELLE JACKSON, mid-thirties with a no-nonsense demeanor. Behind her is a younger pathology assistant, NICK PASTOR, seemingly uncomfortable in his own skin and hanging on Gabrielle's every word.

~~THE~~ ~~CORONER'S~~ ~~OFFICE~~
11:17 AM

Gabrielle turns on a BOOM MIC suspended over the slab.

GABRIELLE

Beginning autopsy on as-yet
unidentified male, aged
approximately twenty-one to thirty-
five.

She pulls back a sheet covering the subject beneath her to reveal a CORPSE completely lacking in skin. It's red, fleshy and damp -- horrific.

GABRIELLE

Note the entire epidermis has been
stripped away.

PASTOR

Ouch.

Gabrielle shoots him a seriously humourless look.

GABRIELLE

Initial incisions appear to have
been made just below the zygomatic.

She turns to Pastor who proceeds to hold out a tray of clinical instruments. Gabrielle takes a SCALPEL and turns back to the body.

GABRIELLE

Proceeding with the internal
examination.

She begins to make an incision on the torso.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - GIDEON'S STUDY - DAY

Gideon sits at a large desk with *The Complete Works of T.S. Eliot*, a hefty tome, laid open. Rachel enters carefully.

RACHEL

Do you want to tell me?

GIDEON

Tell you what?

RACHEL

What everyone in there seems to know that I don't.

She indicates back toward the library just across the hall.

Gideon gets up to gaze out of the window. After a beat:

GIDEON

(intense)

Jacob Allan Bane. He was a serial murderer who claimed thirteen victims between 1989 and 1993. He would take them into the woods where he would use a hunting knife to skin them alive.

Rachel is struck by the significance. Gideon continues to stare out, not turning to face her.

GIDEON

He would keep his victims alive for days, sometimes only removing a tiny piece of skin at a time. Eight died, each of them suffering a slow and painful death. Five survived, left to live on with the physical and psychological scars.

RACHEL

(delicate)

You were one of the five.

GIDEON

You could say I was one of the lucky ones. Or not.

He turns to face her, the scar tissue in plain sight.

GIDEON

I couldn't go on after that. Couldn't go out, couldn't be with people, couldn't be alone. For the longest time I was terrified just to be awake.

RACHEL

What changed?

GIDEON

I did. I confronted it. I went to see Bane in prison.

(MORE)

GIDEON (CONT'D)

I looked into the face of the person who had done this to me, and let him look into mine. I owned the terror.

RACHEL

And now you think this guy Bane is out there again? That he's back?

GIDEON

That's just it. He's been safely incarcerated for fifteen years. He still is.

Out on Rachel, sharing an even closer bond with Gideon now.

CUT TO:

INT. MORTUARY - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Gabrielle continues her autopsy procedures with Pastor close by. She spots something on the inside elbow of the corpse.

GABRIELLE

Take a look at this.

PASTOR

What is that?

GABRIELLE

Could be a partial print.

PASTOR

For real? Can I get a "woot-woot?"

GABRIELLE

(painfully unamused)

Let's see if we can get it lifted.

Pastor begins to fetch more equipment from nearby.

PASTOR

(excited)

So, we crack this and what say you and me hit the town tonight and toast our skinless sausage here?

GABRIELLE

(stern)

Right, that's it. You're out of here. I won't tolerate that attitude, understand? Get out!

She glares at him with disdain before a humbled, child-like Pastor slinks out of the room. Gabrielle is straight back to work, not wasting another second on him.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - REAR GARDENS - DAY

Gideon stands alone in solitary contemplation. He stares out at the gray landscape, a fixed look of intensity on his face.

After a beat, Mark appears behind him and steps up beside him quietly.

MARK

You know it's the obvious first step.

Gideon nods solemnly.

GIDEON

I can't go.

(beat)

I faced him once, but it took everything I had. I don't think I can go through that again.

MARK

I understand. Isaac and I can go.

GIDEON

We both know I should be the one to do it.

MARK

You talk about sharing burdens. Let us carry this one for you.

(beat)

All the months we searched for my son, you were there beside me. I've always thought that not finding anything one way or the other -- not knowing -- that was the worst thing of all. But you were there every step. That's why I came here. That's why I'm still here today. Let me repay just a little bit of that.

Gideon turns to him and smiles just a touch, feeling his solidarity.

MARK

He still sending you letters?

GIDEON

Yes. Never regular. I never know when the next one's going to come, and somehow I'm always surprised when it does.

MARK

But they're not threatening?

GIDEON

No. No taunts, no intimidation.
Just communication. Not even any
hidden layers to get past the
prison censors.

MARK

Then why does he send them?

GIDEON

Honestly? I don't know.

Mark holds for a beat, then touches Gideon on the shoulder.

MARK

We'll let you know how it goes.

Gideon nods, then Mark leaves him with his thoughts.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL PRISON - ENTRANCE WALKWAY - DAY

TRACKING PAST a complex web of bars, cages, and metal grills.

KENT INSTITUTION
AGASSIZ, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mark and Isaac walk side by side, ascending a caged stairway,
led by a GUARD at a distance ahead.

MARK

Bane's been in solitary confinement
for the past six months. Hasn't
had a cell-mate. No one recently
released from the same block.

ISAAC

So this won't be easy. Do you
really think he's connected?

MARK

We won't know that until we can get
inside his head.

ISAAC

Is that what you teach your
undergraduates these days?

MARK

(wry)
No, I teach them to pass exams.

A door is unlocked and held open for them by the guard.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL PRISON - SECURE VISITING ROOM - DAY

Mark and Isaac now sit on one side of a reinforced panel of glass. On the other side, a prisoner is brought in flanked by two GUARDS. This is JACOB ALLAN BANE, a dangerous-looking man with an unsettling normality about him.

He sits and the guards back off.

BANE

They tell me neither of you are cops.

MARK

No, we're not.

BANE

So I don't have to be here talking to you if I don't want to.

ISAAC

That's correct.

BANE

You know I've been in solitary, right? That's not a-laugh-a-minute. So you two boys can be Jehovah's Witnesses for all I care. Misery loves company.

(beat)

So what's it gonna be? Past, present or future? In my experience, cops wanna talk about my past, but we've already ruled that one out. Prison staff, sometimes journos -- they're about the only ones who give a damn about my present. Now do-gooders -- parole officers, therapists, you know the type -- they're always on about the future.

(beat)

My money's on future for you. I don't see any copies of The Watchtower tucked under your arms, but that's got to be the general area. Am I right?

ISAAC

Present.

Bane's face darkens.

BANE

That would have been my second guess.

MARK

Were you aware that a murder was recently committed in which the victim was flayed after being bound to a tree with barbed wire in a woodland area?

Bane's eyes sparkle at the familiar description.

BANE

Can't say that I was.

ISAAC

Does that mean you were aware, but can't say?

BANE

(firm)

It means I wasn't, smart ass.

MARK

It's one of yours though, isn't it?

BANE

(playful)

You know my work?

Mark and Isaac remain stone-faced. Bane chuckles to himself.

BANE

So some guy's copying my act. So what?

MARK

So you admit there is an uncanny likeness between the murder I just described and those you committed between 1989 and 1993?

BANE

They say imitation is the highest form of flattery.

ISAAC

Were you involved in any way with this recent attack?

BANE

I happen to have an excellent alibi.

He gestures to the walls and ceiling around him.

ISAAC

We both know that being in prison doesn't stop you having any influence on the outside world.

BANE

I'm in solitary confinement. You understand that?

Isaac's face changes under Bane's stare, slightly disturbed.

ISAAC

(with meaning)
Yes I do.

Mark looks to Isaac, detecting that Bane's words just got under his skin.

MARK

Are you denying directing anyone outside the prison?

BANE

(annoyed)
I don't talk to anyone. I don't call anyone.

MARK

But you write letters, don't you?

Bane reacts with a wave of curiosity and realisation.

BANE

I see what this is. You're one of his flock, aren't you? He sent you. My friend Gideon.

MARK

No one sent us.

BANE

But you're one of them, aren't you? One of his grand old men. All held up in his grand old house. All for one and one for all.

Mark's silence is a confirmation. Bane just got interested.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - DAY

A dark sedan pulls up along the driveway and parks. Gabrielle steps out with a laptop bag and stack of files. She walks toward the house entrance.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY

Gabrielle lays out her files across the table. Gideon looks on with Rachel close by. Deanna and Aaron hover in b.g.

GABRIELLE

Sorry I couldn't get here sooner.
Traffic was infuriating.

GIDEON

It's alright. This is Rachel,
she's...

GABRIELLE

(totally dismissive)
Nice to meet you.

She's quick to get down to her files.

GABRIELLE

I was able to put myself forward
for the autopsy.

GIDEON

(to Rachel)
Gabrielle works as a forensic
pathologist.

Rachel nods, just about following but not keeping the pace.

GABRIELLE

Most of it doesn't tell us much,
suggesting our perpetrator is
forensically aware, but there was
something.

GIDEON

What is it?

She slides a print-out across the table. Deanna and Aaron
come closer.

GABRIELLE

At first I thought it might have
been a partial print.

DEANNA

That sounds like a break.

GABRIELLE

Except it wasn't. The size of the
impression and the weight
distribution fits, but there were
no analyzable dermal papillae.

GIDEON

Meaning the killer wore gloves?

GABRIELLE

Possibly, but there were no
material fibres to support that.

AARON

(impatient)

So it might be a print and it might not, and he might have worn gloves and he might not.

Gabrielle gives him an insufferable glare.

By now, autopsy photos have been spread around the table in gruesome detail, leaving Rachel with a pale face. She bolts out of the room.

The others exchange glances, realizing their indelicacy. Deanna is the one to go out in pursuit of Rachel.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - REAR GARDENS - MOMENTS LATER

Deanna emerges from the house to find Rachel sitting on some stone steps leading down to the garden.

DEANNA

(gentle)

I'd ask if you were okay, but it's such a silly question.

Rachel shoves a cigarette into her mouth, struggles to light it.

RACHEL

(agitated)

For Christ's sake.

She gives up with the lighter, her hand shaking too much. Deanna sits down beside her.

RACHEL

I'd been trying to quit since Christmas. Doesn't seem worth the bother now. Who cares about healthy living and five-a-day when you could be...

She stops herself from describing the attack.

DEANNA

(re: lighter)

Here, let me.

Deanna takes the cigarette, lights it, hands it back.

DEANNA

It's not easy, is it.

RACHEL

I managed for twenty years alright.

DEANNA

I mean being in there. Hearing it all raked over. I was the same when I first came here.

RACHEL

When was that?

DEANNA

(veiled)

A long time ago.

RACHEL

I know what everyone's thinking. That if I'd just pull myself together and start talking, give a description, whatever... things would be a whole lot easier.

DEANNA

I'm not thinking that.

RACHEL

Ratboy is.

DEANNA

Ratboy?

RACHEL

You know, the kid who keeps a pet rat and names it after a family of serial killers.

DEANNA

The Manson Family was a cult, not actual relatives.

RACHEL

Whatever.

Deanna smiles at the tangent, amused, before getting back to the point with a more serious face.

DEANNA

It's a process. You're here for us to help you, not the other way around.

RACHEL

That's my life from here on in -- getting help. Probably get pushed into weekly sessions of eggshell-walking with some patronising social worker who's secretly more screwed up than I am.

Deanna gives just a hint of a laugh.

DEANNA

You don't have to do anything you don't want to. If what you need is here, great. But if not, that's fine too.

Deanna gets up, heads back toward the house.

DEANNA

Take your time. I'm going to see if there's any more cigarettes that need lighting.

RACHEL

What is it you do? When you're not here, I mean.

DEANNA

(light)

I'm a patronising social worker who's secretly more screwed up than you are.

Rachel tilts her head: typical. Deanna leaves her with a smile.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL PRISON - SECURE VISITING ROOM - DAY

Mark and Isaac remain seated opposite Bane.

BANE

You've read up on me. You've checked my activities. Life's a fishbowl here. You have to know I had nothing to do with this latest crime. But thanks for coming down and filling me in.

MARK

Tell me about these letters.

BANE

What about them?

MARK

Well why do you send them?

BANE

Part of my rehabilitation. I write what I feel. Try to make a connection.

MARK

To get under his skin?

BANE

Interesting choice of words.

(beat)

No. It's like veterans meeting the people they shot down in the war, crap like that. My rehab officer says it's therapeutic.

ISAAC

You're encouraged to do this?

BANE

Not exactly. She says it's a good idea.

MARK

Do you send them to anyone else?

BANE

Just the other... victims.

ISAAC

You mean the ones that survived.

BANE

(snapping)

As opposed to the ones that didn't?

(beat)

You people are ridiculous. I don't know who you think you are. The police must be ten steps ahead by now, and here you are fumbling in the dark.

Mark and Isaac rise to leave.

MARK

(cold)

Thank you for your time.

BANE

Say hi to Gideon for me.

(with a wink)

And keep in touch.

Isaac is straight out while Mark takes a last look into Bane's face.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - DAY

Gideon leans down over the central table, studying the assorted papers and photos.

Rachel, Gabrielle, Deanna and Aaron are also present.

AARON

So can we actually rule anyone in
or out for this yet, or what?

GIDEON

It's too soon for that.

A phone on the desk rings. Gideon activates the speaker with
a push of a button.

GIDEON

Yes.

MARK (O.C.)

It's me.

GIDEON

Where are you?

MARK (O.C.)

We're on our way back from the
prison.

GIDEON

What did you learn?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. FEDERAL PRISON - PARKING LOT - DAY

Mark holds a mobile to his ear as he and Isaac walk.

MARK

It seems unlikely Bane was
involved.

GIDEON

You're sure?

MARK

As far as we can tell he's had no
contact with the outside world of
any kind. No one visits him and he
has no relationships with any
recently released prisoners.

GIDEON

What about guards?

MARK

We looked into it, but I have to
say I think it's unlikely.

ISAAC

(to Mark)

Ask them about the body.

Mark tilts the phone away, having to multi-task.

MARK

(to Isaac)

What? Oh yeah.

(into phone)

Have we got an ID on the victim yet?

GABRIELLE

Yes. Dental records came up with a match to a twenty-five-year-old male, Rich Tracers. The family came down and confirmed he'd been missing. They're pushing on with the funeral.

GIDEON

I'm going.

Odd looks from around the room.

MARK

What?

GIDEON

We still haven't pinpointed any concrete suspects. The killer may well attend the service, which means there might be an opportunity to catch sight of him.

AARON

How will you even know if you see him?

GIDEON

Instinct.

RACHEL

(awkward)

You want me to go with you?

Deanna shakes her head slowly in b.g.

GIDEON

(sympathetic)

I couldn't put you through that now.

Rachel is relieved, but tries not to show it.

GIDEON

Where is the funeral being held?

Off Gabrielle, about to answer --

CUT TO:

EXT. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH - NIGHT

Tilting down on the impressive structure and religious iconography, a steeple towering up INTO FRAME.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH
1:04 AM

Gideon and Aaron walk toward the entrance.

AARON

You should have let her come.
Rachel.

GIDEON

She's not ready.

AARON

So you keep saying, but how much
better off would we be if we
actually had someone who could
recognize this guy's face?

GIDEON

I'm not sure she even could.

AARON

(dismissive)
Yeah, right.

CUT TO:

INT. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH - NIGHT

Gideon and Aaron slink in and take a seat at the back. A small crowd sit in the aisles in front of them. A PRIEST leads the service.

PRIEST

We are gathered here today to mourn
the passing of Richard Adam
Tracers.

GIDEON'S P.O.V.

as he examines the congregation, each of them potential suspects.

PRIEST

I am the resurrection and the life,
sayeth the Lord. He that believeth
in me, though he were dead, yet
shalt he live, and whosoever liveth
and believeth in me shall never
die.

ANGLE ON several seated mourners in turn. All look normal, but any one of them could be hiding a secret.

AARON
(whispering)
This is pointless.

RESUME GIDEON

as he strains to look further down the church.

PRIEST
We will begin with a hymn chosen by
Richard's parents. If you would
all please stand to sing "Abide
With Me," page one-oh-seven.

The congregation rises.

Someone then breaks away from the group, very close to Gideon, just a row or two in front, so close that Gideon can only see the back of his head as he gets up and walks out.

Caught off guard, Gideon follows as the congregation begin to sing: "*Abide with me, fast falls the eventide...*"

CUT TO:

INT. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH - ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gideon speeds up slightly in search of the man. He catches sight of him leaving through a side door and follows, faster.

Aaron appears further back, starts to catch up.

"The darkness deepens, Lord with me abide..."

CUT TO:

EXT. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The figure ahead of Gideon breaks into a run. Gideon matches his speed -- it's a chase around the outside of the church now.

Aaron follows suit, closing the gap on Gideon who isn't closing the gap on their target.

AARON
Hey!

INTERCUT with shots of the funeral congregation singing:

"Change and decay in all around I see..."

CUT TO:

EXT. ALL SAINTS' CHURCH - CEMETERY - CONTINUOUS

The pursued figure darts through shrubbery and weaves through tombstones at a desperate pace.

HANDHELD ON GIDEON

as he gives chase with everything he's got. He catches his arm on a sharp branch and lets out a pained GRUNT.

Aaron stops to help him.

AARON

Are you okay?

GIDEON

(slightly pained)

Yes.

They resume the chase but round a corner to find that their man has got away.

AARON

(breathless)

Damn it.

Gideon is strangely silent. He's staring at something.

AARON

What? What is it?

GIDEON

Look.

Aaron adjusts his gaze to look away from the horizon and down to the ground. They've been led to an open grave, the grave of the victim waiting to be buried. But something is already inside...

It's human skin.

We linger on the sight of flesh draped over damp earth for just a moment then TILT DOWN onto it before rapidly ASCENDING up so we are left on the image of the cold, brown cemetery and the shrinking figures of Gideon and Aaron beside the open grave.

"In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me."

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - NIGHT

The property is now lit-up from within, almost like a lighthouse in the dark of night.

Rain hammers down from the heavens, soaking the concrete a dull gray and the earth a deep brown.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The group are now united. Gideon stands at the head of the table. Deanna, Aaron and Isaac are seated. Mark and Gabrielle stand at either side. Rachel peruses bookshelves in b.g., distant -- texts on psychology and T.S. Eliot dominate.

Photographs are assembled on the board -- crime scene shots taken by Gideon, suspect mug-shots, post-mortem reports. Others are passed around the table.

GIDEON

We won't know if the skin belonged to the deceased or if there's a second victim until it can be examined.

He nods to Gabrielle for this task. She nods back.

DEANNA

Did you call the police?

AARON

Yeah. We made sure to leave before they could turn up.

MARK

This is a break in the pattern. A departure from Bane's M.O.

ISAAC

Why would he leave the skin?

DEANNA

(uncertain)

That is strange. It changes the profile.

AARON

Yeah, but how?

RACHEL

Let me see.

The group turn to Rachel. She stands removed from them, vulnerable. Gideon eyes her, hesitant.

RACHEL

I want to see.

After a beat, Gideon turns the photos around and moves them down the table to Rachel. She picks them up, holds them, stares.

She then closes her eyes, part horrified, part remembering.

RACHEL

(recalling)

He said something. There was something he said.

Everyone hangs on her words, very attentive now.

GIDEON

Go on.

RACHEL

(struggling)

He kept saying... "everyone's afraid of the dark."

GIDEON

(struck)

Those are Bane's words.

MARK

But how could that be? That was never made public. No one knew.

GABRIELLE

And you said you all but ruled out Bane's involvement, right?

DEANNA

So who does that leave?

AARON

The police. The ones that led the investigation the first time around. The ones that caught him.

GIDEON

Or another victim. Someone who survived an attack.

(beat)

Someone like me.

A sombre silence. Gideon and Rachel's eyes lock.

GABRIELLE

(realising)

The partial print I found.

ISAAC

The one that might have been
gloved, except wasn't?

GABRIELLE

Right. That could have come from
someone who had the skin of their
fingertips removed.

Gideon looks down to the scars on his own hands. The others
look to one another, a sense of things beginning to fall into
place.

They are interrupted by a loud KNOCKING at the front door.

Gideon goes to answer.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Gideon swings open the door to reveal Pitney and Nemhauser,
both drenched from the rain which continues to fall in b.g.

PITNEY

Gideon Cole?

She flashes her ID badge.

PITNEY

You were taking the photos down at
my crime scene this morning,
remember?

GIDEON

That's right.

PITNEY

We'd like you to come down and
answer a few questions for us.

GIDEON

(troubled)
About the murders.

NEMHAUSER

(ironic)
How'd you guess?

Gideon takes a glance back in the direction of the library,
the others just about visible in b.g.

He then turns back to an insistent Pitney. Nemhauser points
the way outside with a gloved hand, a gesture to exit.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Gideon sits on one side of a small table, calm and collected.

VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
10:14 AM

Pitney and Nemhauser sit opposite, hard-faced.

PITNEY

We've been looking closely at all your activities since the first murder -- taking the photos, whisking away the only key witness. And then there's your history.

(beat)

Do you realize how many boxes you tick as a suspect, Mr Cole?

GIDEON

Yes, I do.

PITNEY

Where were you last night from eleven onwards?

GIDEON

I was at home. Sleeping.

NEMHAUSER

Can anyone confirm that?

GIDEON

Not directly, no.

PITNEY

Most people, Mr Cole, would be doing everything they can right about now to convince us we're wrong. They'd be saying just about anything to protest their innocence. You're not very convincing.

GIDEON

That's because I don't think you're wrong.

NEMHAUSER

Is that an admission of guilt?

GIDEON

No. I think your profile is correct. I'd come to the same conclusion. But it's one of the other four.

PITNEY

They don't tick as many boxes.

GIDEON

You can't know that until you talk to them.

NEMHAUSER

We plan to.

GIDEON

Good.

Pitney flicks through the papers in front of her on the table.

PITNEY

Tell me about Rachel Atherton. Why did you go to see her at the hospital?

GIDEON

To help her.

NEMHAUSER

All victims have to stick together, is that it?

GIDEON

I can understand her the way few others could or ever will.

PITNEY

But you're not quite the same, are you. See, that's the part I can't figure. This new twist, forcing someone to sit and watch but not harming them directly. What's that all about? Variation on a theme?

GIDEON

You're asking me as if I'd know.

PITNEY

But you were so eager to theorize before. You just said you agreed with our profile, that you'd come up with the same conclusion. That's what you like to do, isn't it?

She looks back down to her notes.

PITNEY

I've been reading about you. In 2001 you aided the parents of a missing girl until she was found by police in an abandoned set of flats. In November 2004 you made a citizen's arrest in a murder case. August 2006, took in an abused boy from a children's shelter. May 2007, supplied a tip on a serial rapist. Bit of a wannabe crime-fighter, aren't you? You might even call it an obsession.

GIDEON

You're studying me when you should be studying the killer.

NEMHAUSER

Which presumes the two aren't one and the same.

PITNEY

You know what I think, Mr Cole? I think you're a dangerous man. A charismatic obsessive. David Koresh, Marshall Applewhite... they all had to start somewhere.

(beat)

I think the scars of what was done to you never healed, and that your life's been dictated by it ever since.

Gideon stares. It's true, just not in the way she thinks.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The remaining group are now in a state of crisis.

Mark paces the floor, Isaac stands with phone in hand, Aaron bites his nails, Gabrielle remains seated while Deanna stands further back with Rachel.

MARK

This is ridiculous. I can't believe it's even come to this.

GABRIELLE

What are we going to do?

Aaron marches up to Rachel, agitated and fierce.

AARON

This is your fault. If you'd have told them what they needed to know by now, they wouldn't have come for him. Tell them now. Tell them it wasn't him!

DEANNA

Aaron, back off.

RACHEL

I... I could go down and say something.

DEANNA

There's nothing you could do right now. They'll question him based on the same evidence we've been studying. It doesn't matter what you say.

Isaac hangs up the phone across the room and walks closer to the rest of the group.

ISAAC

I'm not getting anywhere. They won't tell me anything.

MARK

I'm going down there.

DEANNA

To do what? We'd be better off...

The ringing of Gabrielle's phone interrupts. She answers.

GABRIELLE

Hello?

(beat)

Yes. Alright. I'm on my way.

She hangs up and turns to the others.

GABRIELLE

They've found another body.

Collective looks of anxiety spread around the room.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Pitney and Nemhauser step into the room again and sit back down opposite Gideon.

PITNEY

Does the name John Durrant mean anything to you, Mr Cole?

GIDEON

No. Should it?

NEMHAUSER

That's the name of the second victim.

GIDEON

(surprised)

Second victim?

PITNEY

Yes. A body was just identified not far from the first crime scene.

NEMHAUSER

How about Alice Yeats?

GIDEON

Who?

PITNEY

A hardware shop assistant. She was forced to watch as John Durrant was skinned alive in front of her. Does that sound familiar, Mr Cole?

GIDEON

It's not me.

Unconvinced looks from Pitney and Nemhauser.

GIDEON

Think about it, I don't fit the profile.

NEMHAUSER

From where I'm sitting, you do.

GIDEON

If you've done your background work, you'll know that Jacob Allan Bane flayed his victims as a result of his repressed sexual urges toward the male body. The torture dealt with his guilt and self-loathing, while the defilement acted as a kind of aversion therapy.

(beat)

But why does this killer remove the skin? Why?

Silence from Pitney and Nemhauser.

GIDEON

Because it was done to him.

(beat)

(MORE)

GIDEON (CONT'D)

He's never dealt with the trauma.
He's never overcome the fear.

PITNEY

Whereas you have, is that what
you're saying?

GIDEON

You said you'd been reading about
me. I confronted the fear head on,
made my life about helping these
kinds of victims and preventing
more from being created. That's
how I dealt with it.

PITNEY

(almost convinced)
And this killer's way of dealing
with it is to inflict the same pain
onto others?

NEMHAUSER

One good turn deserves another?

GIDEON

Monsters beget monsters.

PITNEY

What about the women?

GIDEON

He isn't driven by the same sexual
urges as Bane. He may force them
to watch as a kind of voyeuristic
fantasy, or he may use them as a
means of widening the circle of
fear.

NEMHAUSER

The circle of fear?

GIDEON

This is a man who's been forced to
live with a disfigurement,
intimidated since the event, in the
full definition of the word. He
overcomes it by being in control of
the fear, by being the one to be
afraid of.

PITNEY

Like a school bully?

GIDEON

(while nodding)
That's why I'm betting he left the
skin at the first victim's grave.

PITNEY

It's not a bad theory, Mr Cole,
I'll give you that. But I'd like
to rely on something a bit more
tried-and-tested than dime store
psychology.

GIDEON

What do you mean?

PITNEY

We're bringing in the other four
men that were left alive by Bane.
There's going to be a lineup. I
trust I can count on your
cooperation?

Gideon is troubled by this. He has no objection, but his
face registers a deep concern as to the possibilities.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

The phone rings on the desk and Deanna steps up to answer.

DEANNA

Hello.

GIDEON (O.C.)

Deanna, good. I need you to do
something for me.

DEANNA

What is it? Are you alright?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - PAYPHONE - NIGHT

Gideon stands at the phone, supervised in b.g. by a UNIFORMED
POLICE OFFICER.

GIDEON

Yes, I'm fine. Listen to me,
they're going to try and get Rachel
to view a lineup of suspects.

DEANNA

Are you going to be in it?

GIDEON

Don't worry about me. What I need
you to do is to coach Rachel on
coping strategies. This isn't
going to be easy for her. You have
the professional skills to get her
through it.

DEANNA

How much time do I have?

GIDEON

I'm not sure. Not much.

Deanna furrows her brow: this is far from ideal under worse circumstances, but she's not going to say it.

DEANNA

I'll do the best I can.

GIDEON

Thank you.

The line goes dead. Deanna replaces the phone and turns around with a heavy sigh.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - GIDEON'S STUDY - NIGHT

Deanna enters to find Rachel standing alone, staring out of the rain-spattered window into the night.

DEANNA

There you are.

She approaches carefully.

DEANNA

Mark and Aaron have gone with Gabrielle to see the... well, to see the body. Maybe talk to the family.

RACHEL

How can you people do this all the time? Come home from the day job and get stuck in to all this?

DEANNA

Well for some of us the two aren't entirely separate. I'm not sure if that's a good thing or a bad thing.

RACHEL

I keep starting to think about lesson plans and class timetables, but I can't seem to focus anymore. Other things keep slipping in... you know.

A beat as Deanna decides how best to broach the subject.

DEANNA

It's the other things which you might need to focus on soon.

RACHEL

Why? What's going on?

DEANNA

The police are going to be calling you soon. They're setting up a lineup of suspects and they're going to want you to go down and see if you recognize anyone.

RACHEL

I'm not sure what help I could be. His face was covered by a... by a hood, mostly, and I... I can't remember.

DEANNA

It's okay. Many victims of traumatic crime block out the face of the perpetrator. It's not an uncommon psychological reaction.

RACHEL

So I'm a textbook shrinking violet, is that it?

DEANNA

That's not what I'm saying.

(beat)

I'll go with you. You can take as much or as little time as you like. You'll be in control the whole time.

Rachel gazes back out of the window and thinks.

RACHEL

Alright. I can do this.

DEANNA

You're sure?

RACHEL

I need to do this.

Deanna nods, supporting and understanding.

CUT TO:

INT. MORTUARY - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Gabrielle emerges from the examination room in pale blue scrubs to find Mark and Aaron waiting. She snaps off a pair of latex gloves.

GABRIELLE

It's definitely the same. Same knife, same wound patterns, everything.

(beat)

Any news on Gideon yet?

MARK

No, they're still questioning him.

Mark nods in the direction of a MIDDLE-AGED COUPLE standing with a YOUNG GIRL a short way down the hallway.

MARK

Those the parents?

GABRIELLE

(sombre)

Yeah. They've come to claim the body.

Mark and Aaron move off down the hall towards them.

MARK

Mr and Mrs Durrant? I'm very sorry for your loss.

Aaron hangs back and squats down to match his height with the girl, no more than eight-years-old.

AARON

Hey. What's your name?

No answer from the girl.

AARON

I'm Aaron. Your big brother's John, right?

She nods.

AARON

It's a bit of a scary place, isn't it?

She nods again.

YOUNG GIRL

Is John coming home?

Aaron doesn't know what to say. He can't be the one to break it to her. He looks up to Mark who is busy comforting the parents as they cry together.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - ID ROOM - NIGHT

Pitney takes Rachel and Deanna in to a small room with a large pain of one-way glass.

PITNEY

Ready?

Rachel nods slowly. Deanna comes forward and touches her arm.

DEANNA

It's not too late to change your mind.

RACHEL

I'm okay, really. I'm okay.

DEANNA

Just take your time. There's no rush, no pressure.

A glance between Deanna and Pitney: the two of them have very different priorities.

DEANNA

Remember, they can't see anything. You're perfectly safe. You're in control.

(beat)

I'll be here the whole time.

Rachel takes her place by the glass as Pitney gets things moving.

On the other side, five men begin to file in slowly. One of them is Gideon. One of them is the Hooded Man. They all turn to face the glass.

CLOSE ON RACHEL as she stares through to them, uncomfortable.

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT - BLUE FILTER

Rachel cries as the Hooded Man paces in front of her, face mostly obscured by his hood. He wields the large hunting knife threateningly.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - ID ROOM - NIGHT - RACHEL

struggling with her task. She looks across to Gideon and knows in her heart it isn't him. She continues on down the line.

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - NIGHT - BLUE FILTER

Rachel struggles against the tree she is bound to as the Hooded Man looms over the other captive whose face is now entirely skinless, just raw, red, damp and veiny.

YOUNG MAN

ARRGH!! ARRGH!! ARRGH!! ARRGH!!
ARRGH!! ARRGH!! ARRRRRGGGHHHH!!!!

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - ID ROOM - NIGHT

Rachel forces her eyes closed. Deanna stands in b.g, watching, worrying. Pitney looks to Rachel, hopeful.

Rachel opens her eyes again and looks back through the glass, this time to the Hooded Man who gives no signs of guilt.

FLASH CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL ROAD - NIGHT - BLUE FILTER

Rachel leans out of her car window as the Hooded Man stands in the middle of the road, soaked in rain and glistening in the lightning.

HOODED MAN

Everyone's afraid of the dark.

FLASH CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - ID ROOM - NIGHT

Rachel snaps out of it and backs away from the window.

RACHEL

(fragile)
I'm sorry.

Pitney looks frustrated.

RACHEL

I can't place anyone.

PITNEY

Are you sure? You don't recognize any of these men from the attack?

DEANNA

She said no.

PITNEY

Take another look.

DEANNA

We're done here.

Deanna goes to Rachel's side and starts moving her out of the room. Pitney looks back to the row of suspects and sighs.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - MAIN DESK - SOME TIME LATER

Gideon is being processed out at the desk. The other four from the lineup aren't far behind.

Pitney approaches.

PITNEY

I wish I could say you've been a big help, Mr Cole.

GIDEON

If it's my help you want, you'll listen to what I told you.

PITNEY

You may be free to go for now, but we're not eliminating any suspects just yet. We'll be close by.

GIDEON

I hope so.

PITNEY

I'd stay away from this if I were you. No more helping hands or armchair detective work.

Gideon ignores her and moves for the exit. PAN ACROSS with him as he leaves then RACK FOCUS TO:

THE HOODED MAN

He's been processed out too, but he's been watching and listening. His eyes follow Gideon as he leaves the building.

Off the menacing look in the Hooded Man's eyes --

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. FEDERAL PRISON - SOLITARY CELL - NIGHT

Bane lies back on his bunk, motionless, until a slat on his cell door is slid open and a folded newspaper slid through.

Bane rises and moves over to grab the paper. He sees that it has been folded over on a specific article:

FIVE SUSPECTS QUESTIONED IN SKINNING CASE

Bane's eyes flick from side to side, reading the story with interest.

BANE

"But at my back in a cold blast I
hear the rattle of the bones, and
chuckle spread from ear to ear."

He then sits back on the edge of his bunk and reaches across to a small bedside desk. He produces a blank piece of paper, a pen, and starts writing.

CUT TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - NIGHT

Rain falls heavily over the building, lights still on inside. Distant thunder RUMBLES from the gray skies.

11:44 AM

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - GIDEON'S STUDY - NIGHT

Gideon sits alone at his desk watching a NEWTON'S CRADLE ticking back and forth until Rachel enters.

RACHEL

How are you doing?

GIDEON

Shouldn't I be asking you that?

RACHEL

Do you always do that? Answer a question with a question?

GIDEON

Do you?

Rachel smiles.

RACHEL

I'm sorry I wasn't able to pick him out. From the lineup, I mean.

GIDEON

It must have been very difficult for you.

RACHEL

And for you. Having to relive it all as a suspect.

(beat)

You know, I think I'm starting to get it, why you do this. Why all of you do. It's not enough to sit idly by and wait for someone else to bring you justice and ease your mind. You have to be part of it.

Gideon stops and thinks, then something comes to him.

GIDEON

"He who was living is now dead. We who were living are now dying with a little patience."

(beat)

That's from The Wasteland. Do you know it?

RACHEL

(shaking her head)

What does it mean?

GIDEON

You find your own meaning. That's the beauty of it.

RACHEL

Is that how you see the world? As a wasteland in search of meaning?

GIDEON

Sometimes. Sometimes not.

He gets up from the desk and starts to walk out.

RACHEL

Where are you going?

GIDEON

To find meaning.

He walks out, a more focused look on his face now.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Gideon sits alone again, this time over the large table which is spread with his photos and papers. Elgar's Cello Concerto plays from the nearby stereo as we watch him work.

DISSOLVE TO shots of Gideon at the bookshelves, at the computer, studying pages, writing, reading, thinking. A MONTAGE of careful research to the music until Mark enters and switches off the stereo.

MARK

I thought you'd be resting.

GIDEON

He was there in the room with me, Mark, at the lineup. I could feel it.

MARK

The killer?

Gideon nods, then gestures down to the mounds of paper.

GIDEON

I've been digging in to the backgrounds of the other four.

MARK

The other four victims of Bane who survived?

GIDEON

Yes. Benjamin Roth, now fifty-eight...

He pushes forward a photograph from a line of three others on the table.

GIDEON

He was the first to survive one of Bane's attacks back in 1992.

Mark looks at the photo as Gideon pushes forward a second.

GIDEON

Dan Murden, thirty-five. Found wandering down the side of the road having escaped Bane's torture.

He reaches for another photo.

GIDEON

Joseph Hooper, forty-seven. Found by police in '93.

He pushes forward the final photo, this one showing the face we recognize as the Hooded Man.

GIDEON

Reuben Fisk. Forty-five, the last victim before Bane's arrest.

Mark studies the four faces.

MARK

Any one of these would fit the profile, and each of them could have made that print found on the first body.

GIDEON

Then we have to watch all four of them.

MARK

If you do that now, it'll just give the police more ammunition to use against you. I hate to ask the question, but are you sure your judgement's not clouded on this?

GIDEON

You're the one with the psychology doctorate. Tell me I'm wrong.

MARK

This isn't academia.

GIDEON

No it isn't. It's real life... and real death.

Mark thinks it over in his mind.

MARK

Alright. What do you want to do?

GIDEON

Gather the others.

Mark fixes his stare on Gideon before giving a gentle nod. He leaves as we stay on Gideon, determined and resolute.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT - A DARK SEDAN

pulls up by the side of the road and stops. Some way ahead of it is a pleasant enough estate, quiet and unremarkable.

2:07 AM

CUT TO:

INT. GABRIELLE'S SEDAN - NIGHT

Gabrielle sits behind the wheel. Beside her in the passenger seat is Aaron. He holds one of the photos of the old victims researched by Gideon, now suspects.

GABRIELLE

This is it. Now what?

AARON

Now we watch, I guess.

GABRIELLE

I'm not sure this is a good idea.

AARON

If he's right, one of these men is the one we're looking for. It makes sense to stay close and keep an eye on them.

GABRIELLE

And if he's wrong?

Gabrielle looks to Aaron, pointed but not harsh.

GABRIELLE

I have as much respect for Gideon as anyone, but this has got to him. You can see it as well as I can.

AARON

That doesn't make this the wrong move. He could kill again tonight, and he will if he isn't stopped.

GABRIELLE

Let's hope the police have got the same idea.

They both look out to the homes just beyond the car, watching for any signs of movement, keeping the photo close by.

CUT TO:

INT. ISAAC'S JEEP - NIGHT

Parked in a different street, Isaac sits behind the wheel with Deanna beside him. She holds another one of the photos.

ISAAC

He's still in there.

DEANNA

I don't think this is the guy.

ISAAC

Why do you say that?

DEANNA

Just a feeling really. I mean, he hasn't even left that room since we got here. He's in for the night.

ISAAC

Even so.

A beat as Deanna adjusts her position.

DEANNA

(playful)

At least I've got your army training on my side in case I'm wrong. That'll come in handy, right?

ISAAC

Yes it will, but not in the way you mean.

A raised eyebrow from Deanna.

ISAAC

A battle is won or lost in the mind, not the body.

DEANNA

You're not going to start quoting Sun Tzu at me, are you?

ISAAC

So long as you don't start quoting Freud.

DEANNA

(light)

Please. If I were to throw out a soundbite, it would be Jung at the very least.

They smile together, relieving just a little bit of tension from their dark purpose.

CUT TO:

INT. MARK'S HYBRID - NIGHT

Parked outside a block of flats. Mark uses a small pair of binoculars to look closer at the building. After a beat, he swaps them for his cell phone and starts dialing.

CUT TO:

INT. GIDEON'S SUV - NIGHT

Gideon sits with Rachel outside a more isolated rural house. Their photo is of the man we recognize as the Hooded Man.

A cell phone on the dashboard then begins to ring. Gideon answers.

GIDEON

Yes?

MARK (O.C.)

I'm outside Hooper's place. So far I'm not getting anything. How about you?

GIDEON

The same.

MARK (O.C.)

I'm going to take a closer look on foot.

GIDEON

Alright, but be careful.

MARK (O.C.)

I'll keep in touch.

He hangs up. Gideon replaces the phone on the dash as Rachel turns to face him.

RACHEL

Any news?

GIDEON

Not yet. All we can do is wait.

RACHEL

You really think this is going to work?

GIDEON

I think there's a chance, yes.

RACHEL

And if it does, if one of us finds him... what then?

GIDEON

We call the police. This is not about revenge or Old Testament justice. That's how he thinks. We're different.

(beat)

I admire you doing this. Being here. Seeing this through.

RACHEL

It's like you said. I'm here for my own sake, no one else's.

A tender beat, then something catches Gideon's eye out the window. Rachel can tell he's noticed something.

RACHEL

What is it?

GIDEON

There. Someone's moving around the house.

He opens the door to get out of the car.

GIDEON

Wait here.

RACHEL

Don't you want me to...?

GIDEON

No. You're safer here.

With a final intense stare that communicates his concern for her safety and her for his, Gideon exits and closes the door firmly behind him.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD - NIGHT

Gideon strides forward along a dark path toward the lonely little house ahead. There are more shadows than light sources. He continues on, carefully.

Around the side of the house now, but there's no one in sight. He steps over mud, dead leaves, twigs, trying to get a closer look into the house. Nothing.

CUT TO:

EXT. GIDEON'S SUV - NIGHT

Through the passenger-side window, we see Rachel peering ahead in search of Gideon, but he's out of sight by now. She looks to her watch, nervous and concerned.

After a beat, she takes a breath and steps out of the car, leaving the door open. She looks down the road, almost willing Gideon to return. She takes another nervous step forward when --

-- she's GRABBED from behind!

A hand comes over her mouth. It's the Hooded Man. He pulls the blade of his hunting knife under her chin.

HOODED MAN

Everyone's afraid of the dark.

Rachel's eyes widen in terror as she struggles against his grip, but he's too strong for her.

HOODED MAN

You can't fight it. You'll never be whole again, no matter what you do. I won't be the only one.

She tries to cry out but it's muffled against his palm.

HOODED MAN

You've seen it now. Can you feel it burning into your psyche? Branded onto your brain for the rest of your life?

(beat)

You'll always be afraid.

Just as he pushes the knife closer to her skin, Gideon appears at the end of the road. He sees them.

GIDEON

Hey!!

The Hooded Man looks ahead over Rachel's shoulder to see Gideon and instantly turns and sprints away into the darkness. Gideon runs to catch up with Rachel as she gasps for breath.

GIDEON

Are you alright? Did he hurt you?

RACHEL

(shaken)

I'm fine, I'm okay. Go, go after him. Go.

GIDEON

Are you sure?

RACHEL

Yes. Please, go.

Gideon holds her by the shoulders, examining her for wounds. Finding none, he gives her a reassuring look then runs in pursuit of her attacker.

HOLD ON RACHEL

as she tries to compose herself, but she's really a mess.

She then reaches into the car for the phone that's been lying on the dashboard. With shaking, fumbling hands, she dials three numbers.

CUT TO:

EXT. DENSE FOREST - NIGHT

Gideon runs through brittle branches and tramples over dead leaves. It's just like his dreams/memories of fifteen years ago.

The figure of the Hooded Man is just within his sights, sprinting far ahead.

GIDEON'S P.O.V.

As he runs, he brushes through brambles with his hands, hurriedly parting branches, looking down to his feet in finding his way over stray twigs and dirt.

HAND-HELD ON HOODED MAN

as he ducks and darts through trees, desperate to get away.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILLSIDE - NIGHT

The Hooded Man emerges from the forest but never stops running. He's out onto a dirt track leading over the hill and back to the road.

ON GIDEON as he too emerges from the forest, some distance behind, trying to catch up. He rounds a corner to notice a temporary sign that his quarry has sprinted straight past:

BRIDGE CLOSED FOR REPAIR

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

The Hooded Man runs over the bridge which stands high over the main road. HIGH ANGLE looking down on the bridge shows no traffic below. A quiet area, but quite a drop regardless.

THE HOODED MAN

slows and stops, finding that the other end of the bridge is barricaded up with roadworks -- impassable.

RACK FOCUS to Gideon as he catches up and the Hooded Man turns to face him, knife outstretched. Both are well out of breath now.

GIDEON

It's over.

HOODED MAN

It's never over. Not for us.

He shuffles closer to the edge of the bridge.

GIDEON

Lose the knife, come down with me.
I can help you.

HOODED MAN

You can help me? You can't even
help yourself. Look at yourself.
Look at what he made you. What he
made us.

(beat)

We're the same, you and I. I could
have been you, and you could have
been me.

GIDEON

And here we are together.

HOODED MAN

I saw you today, in that room, in
that humiliating parade. You and
the others. There we were, and I
saw four mirrors.

GIDEON

So you make others suffer the way
you suffered. How could you do
that?

HOODED MAN

Now there are more mirrors.

GIDEON

More people to live broken and
timid. More people to see the same
fear reflected in their eyes. Is
that what you really want?

HOODED MAN

For years I had to live on the
other end of people's repulsed,
pitiful gaze. But you know what
that's like.

GIDEON

I'm not you.

HOODED MAN

No?

GIDEON

You chose this. You're not just
the sum of what Bane made you. You
want someone to blame but the
person to blame is you.

(beat)

Not anymore. Now it ends. The
cycle must be broken.

The sound of SIRENS starts to penetrate the silence of the night. Realization registers in the Hooded Man's eyes.

Gideon eyes the knife, afraid at what might be triggered.

HOODED MAN

Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.

He lowers the knife and drops it to the ground beside him. His face turns lifeless as the sirens get louder, closer.

CLOSE ON GIDEON as he allows himself a steady breath, hoping this might just be over.

Then the Hooded Man steps up to the ledge at the edge of the bridge, still facing Gideon.

GIDEON

No!

Gideon starts to rush forward, but he's too late. The Hooded Man lets himself fall gently backward off the bridge, tumbling down to the road below.

ANGLE ON ROAD

The Hooded Man is just a crippled mass on the ground now as POLICE CARS finally appear, driving up with blue light bars flashing out. They stop under the bridge and Pitney and Nemhauser emerge from an unmarked car. They step slowly over the body before looking up to the bridge above.

ANGLE ON END OF BRIDGE

as Rachel steps into sight a distance behind Gideon. She has a timid look about her, wondering what's happened. Gideon looks back to her, his face filled with sorrow.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ATHOS HOUSE - REAR GARDENS - DAY

A crisp, sunny morning in the pleasant, well-kept greenery. A stark contrast to the previous scene.

Rachel stands over a fishpond, watching hypnotically. Gideon approaches from the house.

GIDEON

How are you this morning?

RACHEL

You know... getting there.

GIDEON

One day at a time.

Rachel stays looking into the pond.

RACHEL

Wouldn't it be nice to have the memory of a goldfish? Every bad experience wiped away in just seconds.

GIDEON

And the good.

A silent beat.

RACHEL

Is he...?

GIDEON

He died in hospital early this morning.

Rachel nods solemnly, eyes still on the pond.

RACHEL

You know, it's pretty crowded in there. They might be blessed with a short memory, but they're certainly pushed for space. It's a wonder they're not forever swimming into each other.

GIDEON

I think there's room for one more.

RACHEL

Wouldn't it upset the ecosystem or something? Introducing a new fish to the environment?

GIDEON

I don't think so. The others would soon adjust. The pond might even be better for it.

RACHEL

(turning to face Gideon)
My life's been turned upside down in the past few days. I'd be kidding myself if I thought I was going to get over it any time soon.

GIDEON

Then you'll stay?

RACHEL

I'll stay.

Gideon smiles and presents his arm out toward the house. Rachel follows the motion and walks inside.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - LIBRARY - MOMENTS LATER

Mak, Isaac, Gabrielle, Deanna and Aaron are all standing in a fairly welcoming manner as Rachel passes through with Gideon.

DEANNA

So you're sticking around?

RACHEL

For a little while, at least.

Deanna looks pleased, Aaron less so.

MARK

Welcome to the family.

Rachel continues in to join the others and we PULL BACK AWAY as the group comes together.

CUT TO:

INT. ATHOS HOUSE - GIDEON'S STUDY - SOME TIME LATER

Gideon sits alone at his desk. He reads from *The Wasteland*, a well-worn copy laid out in front of him.

ECU ON THE TEXT, favouring the final line:

"Shanthy shanthy shanthy."

There is a peaceful silence, broken only by the sounds of ticking clocks and the swinging impacts of a Newton's Cradle.

THE HANDS OF A CLOCKFACE

reach 11:47 AM and its ticking starts to slow.

THE NEWTON'S CRADLE

Its swinging beads appear to slow unnaturally before all the clocks stop entirely, leaving the room in total silence.

Gideon looks up from his text, as if being given a sign by the universe. He looks through the open doorway of his study to the main entrance as TIME SEEMS TO SLOW.

TIGHT ON THE LETTERBOX with camera severely OVERCRANKED.

An envelope falls slowly through, tumbling through the air and hitting the floor of the hall. It's addressed to Gideon, and a Kent Prison logo is on the letterhead.

CLOSE ON GIDEON

Stricken, knowing in his heart it's another letter from Bane. Off the tortured look in his eyes --

FADE TO BLACK

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