

OVER DARKNESS, WE HEAR THE OPENING SOUNDS OF BARBER'S "ADAGIO FOR STRINGS." THE MUSIC CONTINUES THROUGHOUT.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

DAVID, a thirty-ish handsome man, shaves with a STRAIGHT RAZOR in the mirror. For a few minutes we hear nothing. Then,

DAVID (V.O.)
When I was a kid, my father backed into the bumper of our neighbor's GTO while he was on vacation.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The T.V. is on. The talking heads of FOX NEWS. Sean Hannity maybe. No volume except the symphony, which may grow a little louder, although we barely notice.

DAVID (V.O.)
It was three weeks old. My father called a tow truck, had it taken in, and paid for the repairs. By the time our neighbor got home, it looked as good as new.

David walks into the room and ignores the television while he gets dressed. It's with purpose and deliberation. He's almost done now--shoes, tie, and a tailored jacket that shows JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF CUFF.

He looks in the mirror. Completely copacetic.

He walks out the room and turns off the television.

We pause on the blank screen.

EXT. HOME - DAY

David locks his door. He's getting into a car now.

DAVID (V.O.)
You'd have never noticed, except my father left a fifth of bourbon and a note explaining the incident on the driver's seat.

He cranks the car and drives away. Panoramic views of the Marin Headlands at dusk.

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Later that night, our neighbor came by and asked for my father. They shared a few drinks in our parlor while I sat under the dining room table and listened to them talk. At the end of the conversation, he got up and said to my father, "Thanks again. That was damn decent of you." My father told him it was nothing and walked him to the door.

EXT. MARIN HEADLANDS - DAY

WAVES BREAKING ON ROCKS. The bridge in the distance.

It's a long way down.

DAVID (V.O.)

Decent. You don't hear that word much anymore.

We see his car pull up not far away from the cliff.

EXT. MARIN HEADLANDS - LATER

David is now digging a hole. He stills wears the tie but has ditched the jacket, which now rests on the hood of his car. In it he buries a box, approximately one foot cubed. We may or may not notice a few blood stains on the outside.

DAVID (V.O.)

I used to do these elementary school tours where I'd tell kids your age what we do for a living. Aside from the normal questions, like asking how often we shoot people, there was always one kid who would ask what the hardest part of the job was.

(beat)

I've done a lot of thinking about that kid lately.

He walks over to his car and opens the trunk. This time, we definitely notice a bloodied baseball bat and, even more shockingly, a PAIR OF LEGS sticking out.

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In case you wonder that yourself, I'm going to try and answer as best I can right now. What if you couldn't get justice? What if you got within two degrees of it, but you didn't get the thing itself? Is that close enough? What if you beat its head in so badly trying to close those last two connections, you snuffed it out and lost your only chance for the real thing? Would you substitute it? Cover it up and hope it stuck for the victim's sake? Would that be enough?

He doesn't touch either the bat or the body, but throws the shovel in. Then walks around to the front of the car and gets in. He backs it up a little closer to the cliff.

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I've been thinking of these questions. Of my father. Of that little boy. Of you.

CUT TO:

EXT. CLIFFS - DUSK

The man is now looking off into the distance. Contemplating the absolute.

DAVID (V.O.)

I keep asking myself, "What was the decent thing to do?"

(beat)

Maybe sometimes, when you've lost the faith, the best thing you can do is help others who still have it keep it alive. Maybe it means catching the wrong one and keeping your mouth closed. Maybe years from now, when you get this, you'll understand.

He walks back over to his car. The trunk is empty, except for the bat, the body GONE. He closes it. The MUSIC is hitting its PEAK now.

DAVID (V.O) (CONT'D)
Maybe you'll have come up with a
better answer for these questions
than I have. Or maybe you'll never
have to answer them at all. I'd
like that the most.

He is driving away into the dusk. We're left admiring the
lush beauty of costal California in early fall.

EXT. POST OFFICE - NIGHT

David walks up to the BIG BLUE MAIL DROP and opens the lever.
He holds a letter up to it, about to drop it into the abyss,
and holds back for a minute.

After a moment's hesitation, he does.

DAVID (V.O.)
You and your mother probably won't
see me around anymore, but I hope
whatever peace I've given you is
enough. I paid a lot for it.
Sincerely, David.

As he's about to get into the car, he notices a SPECK OF
BLOOD on his tie. He gets in and drives away.

FADE OUT.