

SOOTHSAYER

written by

Marc W. Shako

www.marcwshako.com
marcwshako@gmail.com
twitter.com/MarcWShako
www.facebook.com/marcwshako/
plus.google.com/+MarcWShako

The following fades in over black:

SOOTHSAYER

(n) a person who predicts the future by magical, intuitive, or more rational means.

This fades out. The hazy sound of wailing sirens fades in.

The sirens come into auditory focus. The air is shaken by a massive EXPLOSION. A panicked crowd screams.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The following unfolds through a shaky TV news CAMERA.

Chaos. The panic in contrast to the perfect weather.

Huge CROWDS gaze upward at the skyscraper they envelop. They jostle a shell-shocked REPORTER who stares down the lens. COPS cordon off the downtown street behind him.

COP

Get back, I said! Move back!

The Reporter jams a finger into his ear to block out the surrounding turmoil.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

Can you try to describe just what is going on down there?

REPORTER

Tom, it's utter chaos, just total devastation. The scenes here eerily reminiscent of that fateful New York September morning. Preliminary reports are that this is a gas explosion, which, as you can see...

The CAMERA reveals the devastation.

REPORTER (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Has blown... er, ripped a massive hole in the lower levels of the building behind me. Fires have broken out and there are people trapped on the floors above...

In the distance there is a fierce EXPLOSION. A wave of terror surges through the crowd. The CAMERA pans to catch a huge fireball swelling into the clear sky.

REPORTER (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 Oh my goodness, that's another!
 Another huge explosion some four,
 five blocks from here!

COP (O.C.)
 Okay everybody back! Get back!

The CAMERA flits back to the Reporter.

REPORTER
 At this point I think we have to
 consider the possibility that this
 is a... a deliberate act of...

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)
 We're going to have to interrupt
 you for a moment. This is
 incredible. We're getting confirmed
 reports of a second explosion, this
 time in Houston, Texas.

Another savage blast rocks the building--

The contents of an office careen through a shattered window.
 A huge desk tumbles earthward toward the crew, accompanied by
 a growing crescendo of screams.

Closer and closer, about to hit, it fills the CAMERA until--

INT. SIMPLE BEDROOM - MORNING

A handsome MAN bolts upright in bed, gasping for air and
 lathered in sweat. Breathless, his steadfast eyes survey the
 spacious surroundings.

The commotion wakes the pretty BLONDE at his side.

BLONDE
 Are you okay? ...David?

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Simply furnished. At the table, the Blonde, smartly dressed
 in skirt and blouse, wolfs down toast. David paces.

DAVID
 I'm serious, Sarah.

SARAH
 I'm still going.

DAVID
 I'm telling you, it was Boston.

SARAH

And I won't miss this interview because you had a dream, David.

DAVID

This wasn't just some dream. It felt different.

SARAH

David, I'm sure it looked real but it was just a nightmare and...

(checks watch)

Shit! I'm gonna be late.

She drops the toast, jumps up and heads for the bedroom.

DAVID

You're not still going?!

SARAH

I don't have time for this, David.

David follows her into the--

BEDROOM

She grabs her suit jacket. David snatches it from her hand.

SARAH

David. For God's sake!

He submits, handing her back the jacket. She puts it on.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Listen, I know you don't want to leave Boston, but...

DAVID

What? This isn't about that.

SARAH

Oh really. Last night you don't want to leave and all of a sudden you have some dream about...

DAVID

I saw it, Sarah! I saw it! They blew it up! They blew it up and you were inside.

SARAH

Jesus, David.

She gathers her things.

DAVID

Honey, wait. I'm sorry.

She shrugs his hand away and storms out.

SARAH
Thanks a lot for your support.

The door slams. David slumps onto the bed.

LATER

David dressed for outside. He stuffs a set of pristine chef's whites into a bag. His cell rings. PAUL CALLING. He answers--

DAVID
Hey.

PAUL (O.S.)
Hey pal. We still on for beers tonight?

DAVID
Uh, yeah, what time?

PAUL
(sarcastic)
Wow, you sound chipper this morning...

DAVID
(smiles)
I'm great, thanks for asking.

PAUL
Christ, why don't you just quit already? Join your old buddy down at the firehouse, the uniform's better and the chicks go crazy...

DAVID
It's not that. It's Sarah...

PAUL
How unusual. You know, I think you guys had more comebacks than Sinatra...

DAVID
Fuck you... Hey listen to this, you won't believe the dream I had last night...

PAUL
Holy shit. Turn on your TV.

David's face turns white - something awful has dawned on him.

PAUL (CONT'D)
You there? Quick.

David lurches into the--

LIVING ROOM

He hesitates before picking up the remote. He fights his own instincts to push the button--

The sound comes moments before the picture--

It's immediately recognizable. David drops onto the sofa.

COP

Get back, I said! Move back! Come on!

The shaky TV CAMERA moves to Cops setting up a cordon outside a stricken skyscraper, exactly like David's dream.

DAVID

Oh God, no...

PAUL (O.S.)

I gotta go, pal. Just got the call. We're first in. Looks like a busy day. Call you later.

He hangs up. David stares in disbelief at the television.

The TV report plays out before David. He already knows it--

Word for word. The Reporter contacts the studio, finger jammed in his ear.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

Can you try to describe just what is going on down there?

REPORTER

Tom, it's utter chaos, just total devastation. The scenes here eerily reminiscent of that fateful New York September morning. Preliminary reports...

David's head swims. The sound fades but he is powerless to turn away from the scenes unfolding before him.

An explosion. David stares as--

NEWS ANCHOR (O.S.)

We're going to have to interrupt the live feed for a moment, this is incredible. We're getting confirmed reports of a second explosion, this time in Houston, Texas...

Another savage blast rocks the building.

As before, the desk careens into the sky and tumbles toward the crew, accompanied by the crowd's screams.

Closer and closer, about to hit, it fills the CAMERA until--

INT. SIMPLE BEDROOM - MORNING

A slightly older David bolts upright in bed. He's athletic now. Lathered in sweat, he gasps. The room is the same.

Tears fill his eyes. The steadfast gaze gone - replaced by vulnerability. He reaches across for Sarah--

But now he is alone.

CAPTION - FIVE YEARS LATER

LIVING ROOM - LATER

David eats breakfast in silence. Looks like he took Paul's advice: he now wears a BOSTON FIRE DEPT. LADDER 15 T-shirt.

He turns on the TV. A NEWS ANCHOR beside a color-coded 'Threat-level' graphic.

NEWS ANCHOR

...Increased threat level with the fast approaching 5th anniversary of the terror attacks in Boston...

He shuts the TV off.

EXT. DAVID'S APARTMENT - LATER

The sun shines on pleasant red-brick terraced suburbia. David exits, a bag slung over his shoulder. A sweet OLD LADY nears.

OLD LADY

Good morning, David! How are you?

DAVID

Morning, Daphne. Fine thanks, how are you today?

OLD LADY

If I cough too hard I crap my britches, but you know, I can't complain... I thought this was your day off.

DAVID

Swap-time. One of the guys can't make it. His mom's sick.

OLD LADY
No rest for the weary.

DAVID
You got that right.

OLD LADY
Say, haven't you gotten yourself a
lady friend yet?

David flinches at the question.

DAVID
No. No I haven't.

OLD LADY
I know what you're thinking. If you
were wondering, I'm available...

DAVID
Oh boy. Well that sounds...

A car horn beeps--

DAVID (CONT'D)
(relieved)
That's my ride.

OLD LADY
Who's that?

PAUL leans across the passenger seat and shouts through the
opening window--

PAUL
Morning Daphne.

OLD LADY
Whadda you want?

PAUL
(closing window)
Bye, Daphne.

David jumps in the car. They leave Daphne to shuffle off to
wherever she was going.

INT. PAUL'S CAR - DAY

Driving through the streets, David distant. Paul glances
across, concerned. He hopes to cheer him up--

PAUL
You hittin' on poor old Daphne
again?

It works. He smiles--

DAVID
Something like that.

PAUL
You know you'd have to pay for the
hip replacement if you did... you
know...

DAVID
Oh Christ.

PAUL
I'm just saying. You should find
somebody your own age, you know?

David is unimpressed.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Like this...

Paul slows. At the side of the road is a car, hood propped
open. Staring in at the steaming engine, is a cute WOMAN.

PAUL (CONT'D)
If I wasn't married...

DAVID
Come on. Let's not screw around.

Paul slows more as they approach--

DAVID (CONT'D)
Come on. Don't do this...

PAUL
Well we can't just leave her.
Besides, it's a good chance for you
to put your skills to the test.

DAVID
I don't have any sk...

Paul winds his window down as they draw alongside.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Paul...

PAUL
(to woman)
Little engine trouble?

The Woman turns. Bright eyed. Very cute.

WOMAN
This piece of junk is supposed to
get me to Richmond later.

PAUL
Not to worry. My friend here has
magic hands.

DAVID
(under his breath)
You asshole.

WOMAN
Would you mind?

David turns to Paul. Paul beams a huge smile--

EXT. ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

David works under the hood. Paul and the Woman chat through
open windows--

WOMAN
It's Faith.

PAUL
Pleased to meet you, Faith. I'm
Paul. Mr. Magic Hands there is
David.

David leans around the hood at glares at Paul. He leans a
little farther and offers a wave to Faith--

DAVID
Try it now.

Faith turns the key. The engine bursts into life. Faith is
amazed. Paul proud--

FAITH
Magic hands.

PAUL
He cooks too.

FAITH
Is that so?

David shuffles around between Faith and Paul. Faith beams up
at David. Her eyes gleam--

FAITH (CONT'D)
Wow. I mean... the car. Thanks. I
owe you one.

DAVID
It's fine.

FAITH
Let me repay you somehow...

Paul grins to himself. Endgame--

David stalls. Awkward silence. Paul gestures "Go on"--

David straightens up--

Then slumps again.

DAVID
We should get going.

Paul shrugs to Faith. David trudges back to his seat looking somehow smaller than before.

She waves. Paul drives. David sits in silence.

EXT. FIREHOUSE - EVENING

The Ladder 15 Firehouse beautifully illuminated in the cool Boston evening. The flag flutters at half-mast.

INSIDE

FIREFIGHTERS mill about in the subdued recreation room. David washes dishes. Paul approaches--

PAUL
Whoa! Step aside chef, let me at these.

DAVID
It's OK. I got it.

PAUL
Come on... lemme give you a hand.

DAVID
It's fine... Really.

The world-weary FIRE CHIEF glances across. Paul shrugs. He turns to a GANGLING FIREMAN whose eyes are glued to the TV.

PAUL
You skating again, Wilt?

WILT
Look at this guy! Crusader!

PAUL
The newsreader?

WILT
No! The newsreader! Coulson.

The NEWS ANCHOR shoots a weighty gaze down the lens--

NEWS ANCHOR

President Coulson dismissed two high ranking senior officials today after they were found guilty on corruption charges. The President had this to say...

The BROADCAST switches to the White House conference room--

With an air of authority, PRESIDENT TOM COULSON, well-built, mid-fifties, addresses the massed journalists.

PRESIDENT COULSON

They say that this kind of thing happens all of the time in politics. Well I say not on my watch it doesn't.

The Chief overhears the conversation. He pokes fun at Wilt--

CHIEF

Wilt must be the only guy in America who doesn't like Coulson.

WILT

I told you before, Chief, it's not that I don't like him. But you can't be a politician and honest!

The others comically JEER Wilt.

WILT (CONT'D)

It doesn't work.

NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.)

The new airport style security at Boston South station failed again today...

A SHOT of Boston South Train Station appears on screen--

NEWS ANCHOR (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Causing more headaches for commuters. The system, installed after the terror attacks...

PAUL

Let's change the station, huh, Wilt?

WILT

Shit.

He turns the TV off. Everyone glances at David who pauses, without turning, before continuing his chores.

CHIEF

Wilt, make yourself useful, will ya
and help David with the dishes.

WILT

Sure thing.

PAUL

Hey come on, look alive. The shift
is over in...

(looks at watch)

...Five, four, three, two...

A sharp trill of a bell brings cheers from the firehouse.
Paul approaches David.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Beers tonight, pal?

David shakes his head--

The Chief takes Paul to one side.

CHIEF

Should he even be here?

PAUL

He's OK. Just needs to keep busy.

CHIEF

It's been five years.

PAUL

It's an anniversary. It's always a
tough time.

CHIEF

You don't think he'd do something,
you know, crazy?

Paul looks across at David.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN AREA - DAY

SOFT FOCUS. SOUND barely audible. On a pair of feet in shiny
black shoes with black trousers on a linoleum floor. A male
voice HUMS an inaudible tune.

Sound of a drink being prepared. Ice clatters into a glass. A
metal cap removed from a bottle. Glugging. The lid replaced.

Still on the shoes as he walks. Linoleum turns into plush
beige carpet.

The Man stops outside a door. An agitated voice mutters from the other side.

Knock knock.

SECOND VOICE (O.S.)

Come in.

He opens the door and enters a--

SECOND ROOM

Still in dreamy focus. Not clear, but the Waiter enters what looks like a small, elegant room. We watch as he approaches two other MEN. Frustratingly, we only see lower legs.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

At home, David wakes with a start. The TV is on--

NEWS ANCHOR

...Fifth anniversary memorial services in Boston and Houston, while the three cities that escaped...

He switches off. His cell rings. He checks before taking--

PAUL (O.S.)

David! What're you up to?

DAVID

Not much, I was about to...

PAUL (O.S.)

Good you can come over for dinner.

David pauses a moment.

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

Come on. Few beers, watch the game...

DAVID

(smiles)

Who's cooking?

PAUL (O.S.)

Fuck you! Mary's cooking. Wise ass!

MARY (O.S.)

(in the background)

Tell him I'm cooking!

PAUL (O.S.)
I told him! You hear that?

DAVID
Yeah I heard. Listen, Paul, I don't
feel so...

PAUL (O.S.)
Great, so see you in an hour.

Click. DIAL TONE. David stares into the receiver.

DAVID
See you in an hour.

INT. PAUL'S DINING ROOM - LATER

David and Paul swig beers at the table in Paul's homely apartment. The Celtics game plays on TV in the background.

MARY, heavily pregnant, shuttles back and forth to the kitchen cleaning away dishes. David addresses her, his tone suggesting it isn't the first time he's asked--

DAVID
(getting up)
Mary, please let me help.

She gestures for him to sit.

MARY
I'll tell you what I told him, I'm
pregnant, not disabled.

She winks at David and disappears into the kitchen. David sits and looks to Paul who just shrugs.

Mary reappears with two fresh bottles of beer.

PAUL
Look at this angel.

She hands the men the beers. She kisses Paul before waddling back into the kitchen.

DAVID
What is it now, five weeks?

PAUL
Four weeks tomorrow. But it could
be any time.

DAVID
Aren't you nervous?

PAUL
Honestly? I can't wait.

A short pause. David tries to speak. Paul gets there first.

PAUL (CONT'D)
Actually, I wanted to talk about
you.

DAVID
Paul...

PAUL
Come on, pal. This ain't you.

DAVID
It isn't?

PAUL
My old man was always bustin' my
chops. 'Why can't you be more like
David?'

DAVID
People change.

PAUL
Bullshit, my friend. Listen, you
can't keep doing this to yourself.

DAVID
I can't?

PAUL
It was terrorists, David. They
killed Sarah. Not you.

DAVID
I shouldn't have let her go.

PAUL
You couldn't have stopped her. You
coulda told her a thousand times,
she still woulda gone. That was
Sarah.

Silence. Paul's right and David knows it.

PAUL (CONT'D)
You still having the dreams?

David nods.

PAUL (CONT'D)
The same every time?

A pause. David shakes his head--

DAVID
No. There's a new one.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN AREA - DAY

The sounds of Paul's place fade out. David describes the new scene as we see it.

DAVID (V.O.)
It's tough to make out where it is.
It's like an out of focus video.
But not quite. And the sound too.
Echoey. Like when you're underwater
in a swimming pool.

Exactly as before. A pair of feet in shiny black shoes on a linoleum floor. Male voice humming a tune.

DAVID (V.O.)
I see a pair of shoes. Black. And
black trousers, like a waiter. He's
fixing a drink.

Sound of a drink being prepared. Ice clattering etc.

Still on the shoes, he walks. From linoleum to plush carpet.

DAVID (V.O.)
Then he takes the drink, down this
corridor. Narrow.

The Man stops outside a door. Agitated voice the other side--

DAVID (V.O.)	VOICE (O.S.)
He stops outside a door. Like	I'm begging you, Tom. Don't
he's listening in. But I	do this. You blow the lid on
can't make out what's being	this thing we might not be
said. Not all of it.	able to...

DAVID (V.O.)
Anyway finally he knocks and...

Knock knock.

SECOND VOICE (O.S.)
Come in.

DAVID (V.O.)
The second voice. I know it. So the
guy, the waiter, he goes in.

He opens the door and enters a--

SECOND ROOM

As before, not clear, but the Waiter enters what looks like a small, elegant room. We watch as he approaches two other MEN. Again, we only see lower legs.

CUT TO:

INT. PAUL'S DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Paul engrossed--

PAUL
And? Then what?

DAVID
And nothing. I wake up.

PAUL
That's it?

DAVID
But I know it's something.
Something serious.

PAUL
You're sure it's not some dream?

DAVID
No. It feels the same as... It
feels the same.

Paul reaches into his wallet and pulls out a scrap of paper--

PAUL
Listen, I think it would do you
good to, you know, talk to someone.

DAVID
No. No more shrinks.

PAUL
This ain't a shrink. It's someone
like you. Actually a group of them.

Paul slides the piece of paper across to David. 'Second Sight-Sean' and a phone number scrawled across it--

David inspects the note.

DAVID
Second Sight? What is this?

PAUL
I told you, it's a group. People
who went through the same shit you
did. They have you know, visions...

DAVID

Come on. What is this? It's probably a bunch of guys sitting around in tin foil hats.

PAUL

It might be. And it might give you some answers. Call them, you hear me?

David stares at the paper, his eyes glazed.

PAUL (CONT'D)

David.

David snaps out of his trance.

DAVID

Yeah.

PAUL

Call them. Sooner the better.

David nods staring at the piece of paper--

INT. MESSY OFFICE - NIGHT

The tip-tap of a keyboard and classic rock music soundtrack a den of comic book and pop culture posters. A MAN, thirties, at an untidy desk plopped in a spaghetti junction of wires.

His fingers dance off the keys. Info scrolls down the screen. He smiles, gulps his coffee. Sand trickles through an egg-timer at the side of the keyboard.

He taps faster, punching the keys. His grin grows. He laughs, victorious as one finger descends onto the 'enter' key. He grabs the egg-timer at the side of his desk, turning it onto its side before the final grains disappear--

He grabs the desk phone and dials. After a few seconds--

SEAN

Hello, Mr. Bettner, you have twenty-six weak spots in... It's Sean...

No SEAN, the IT guy... It's...

(checks time on computer)

Twelve-thirty. As I was saying...

Yeah, twenty-six... Well yeah I can fix them, but it won't be cheap...

FANCY BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dim light spills from the den into SEAN's elegant bedroom. It gives us an idea of HOW much it'll cost Mr. Bettner--

SEAN
 OK. Oh, and Mr. Bettner? Cash or
 check only, remember? G'night.

Sean replaces the receiver. The phone rings immediately.

INT. MESSY OFFICE - NIGHT

He checks the caller ID window, then answers.

SEAN
 Carl, hi... No, not yet. The
 encryption job is crazy good, but
 I'm almost there. I should have it
 done in the next couple days...

Sean clicks a couple of keys on the computer.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 Not yet. He will. Maybe he's
 waiting for something... OK. Try to
 get some sleep. G'night Carl.

He puts the phone down. Again, it RINGS straight away--

SEAN (CONT'D)
 (exclaims)
 Thunder in paradise!

He checks the caller ID and answers.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 Hello... Hello?

INT. DAVID'S BEDROOM

David sits on the side of his bed, phone in hand. He stares
 at the scrap of paper.

SEAN (O.S.)
 Hello? David?

David loses his nerve. He hangs up. He screws up the piece of
 paper and launches it for the trash can. It misses.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN AREA - DAY

SOFT FOCUS. SOUND barely audible, almost as if underwater--

It's the vision. As David described before, the focus on a
 pair of feet in shiny black shoes with black trousers on a
 linoleum floor. He hums a tune--

He prepares the drink and then, still on the shoes as he heads down the corridor. Linoleum turns into plush beige carpet. The Man stops outside the same door--

VOICE (O.S.)

I'm begging you, Tom. Don't do this. You blow the lid on this thing we might not be able to...

The man knocks.

SECOND VOICE (O.S.)

Come in.

He opens the door and enters a--

MEETING ROOM

Still in dreamy focus. The Waiter enters a small, elegant room. He approaches the two MEN. Again, it's only lower legs.

But now the CAMERA pans up. At a small table we see--

President Tom Coulson. Sitting opposite, an AIDE. The Waiter hands the drink to the President--

PRESIDENT COULSON

Thanks, Chuck...

The President says something else, but WHOOSHING SOUNDS wash the words away. The Waiter replies and heads for the door--

PRESIDENT COULSON (CONT'D)

(to Aide)

The public has a right to know what their Government is doing, Bob.

BOB

Oh, come on, Tom, don't be so naive. If the public finds out about Soo...

Picture and audio more focused now. A COMMOTION in the background kills the conversation--

SHOUTING (O.S.)

FIRE!

An EXPLOSION rips through the air. Time slows--

A fireball expands. It engulfs the Waiter. Back up to full speed now--

The fireball draws closer with ominous, outlandish speed. Another MASSIVE EXPLOSION. The fireball gains, about to strike until--

INT. SIMPLE BEDROOM - MORNING

David bolts upright in bed. Gasping for breath, he snatches for the scrap of paper on the night stand, but it's gone. He gawks at the trash can--

Before we know it he's foraging through the contents. He empties the trash can onto the floor. He sees the screwed up ball of paper in the corner behind the bin--

Before it's buried in falling trash.

DAVID

Shit!

He rummages again, then stops. He reels to the phone on the night stand and snatches up the receiver. He hits 'Redial'.

INT. FANCY BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

On a night stand, the Caller ID window on a landline phone flashes to life. The ringing phone flanked by empty beer bottles and an overflowing ashtray.

Sean groans. Snoring Sean is elbowed by a HOT WOMAN.

HOT WOMAN

Sean! Wake up.

He wakes with a start. One red eye scrutinizes the phone. He checks the Caller ID before picking up. He mumbles into the handset like a long lost friend is calling.

SEAN

David!

Amazed, David stops pacing his bedroom--

DAVID

Yeah... How did you know?

SEAN

Paul gave me your number.

David's face washes over with a odd mixture of disappointment and embarrassment.

SEAN (CONT'D)

What's going on?

DAVID

What?

SEAN

Cat had your tongue last night, now you're calling at... wait, what time is it?

DAVID
I had another dream.

SEAN
Well, sometimes the dreams come back and...

DAVID
No. It was different. About the President.

In a heartbeat, Sean is sober and upright.

SEAN
Get a pen, I'll give you another number. Call me in one hour from a payphone. Do you understand?

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

David and Sean in phone booths in separate parts of the city. Sean fires quick-fire questions at hesitant David.

SEAN
And you're certain the carpets were beige?

DAVID
Pretty.

SEAN
This could be really important, David. Think. How sure are you?

DAVID
Ninety per cent. Ninety-five.

SEAN
And this was in some kind of conference room?

DAVID
Yeah. I think so... A meeting room or something. Perhaps in a hotel.

SEAN
Good. That's very good.
(pause)
Who have you told?

DAVID
Just you.

SEAN
Keep it that way. What happened the first time?

DAVID
First time?

SEAN
First time you had a vision.

DAVID
My girlfriend was killed.

SEAN
How?

DAVID
The terror attacks.

SEAN
Who did you tell?

DAVID
The police.

SEAN
Did they take you seriously?

DAVID
Who? The police?

SEAN
The police.

DAVID
No.

SEAN
Good.

DAVID
The other guys...

SEAN
Other guys? Police?

DAVID
No. Not cops.

SEAN
Do you own a gun?

DAVID
What?

SEAN
Keep up, David. A gun. Do you own one?

DAVID
No.

SEAN
Ever fired one?

DAVID
Sure.

SEAN
Good.

THROUGH A WINDSHIELD - DAY

As David chugs along a busy main street.

SEAN (O.S.)
I think it's time we met. The
museum.

DAVID (O.S.)
Which one?

SEAN (O.S.)
JFK. Nine-thirty. Make sure you're
not followed.

David glances furtively in his mirrors. CLICK. Dial tone.

EXT. JFK MUSEUM - LATER

David swings into the half-full parking lot. Parks up.

Exits his car and locks up. He lumbers to the entrance,
constantly checking over his shoulders.

INT. JFK MUSEUM - CAMPAIGN TRAIL EXHIBIT

An exasperated TEACHER tries to contain a gang of PUPILS who
dart around the 1960 Democratic National Convention to the
soundtrack of Kennedy's 'New Frontier' speech.

David spots a Man gazing at an exhibit. He approaches.

DAVID
Sean?

It is. He doesn't move.

SEAN
Look straight ahead. You're late.

DAVID
Yeah, sorry. The traffic.

SEAN
Were you followed?

DAVID
 (chuckles)
 I'm sorry, this is all a little
 cloak and dagger, Sean.

SEAN
 Your laptop, does it have a
 password?

DAVID
 My laptop?

SEAN
 Does it have...

DAVID
 Yes, but what's that got to do...

SEAN
 Let me guess. Single word, capital
 letter to start, then a number.

DAVID
 So...

SEAN
 Two hours.

DAVID
 What?

SEAN
 I could be in there in two hours.
 Less, probably. Me. Not the
 government...

He reaches into his pocket and produces a cell phone.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 You know how easy it is to get into
 one of these things?

David obviously doesn't.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 Mine? Password protected. A phrase.
 Upper case letters, lower case
 letters, digits, symbols, so if the
 spooks find it...

DAVID
 Spooks?

SEAN
 Government agents.

DAVID
 Why would...

SEAN

David, things are going to start moving and when they do, they'll move fast.

David doesn't get it.

SEAN (CONT'D)

You saw the president die, David. You think you're the only one who sees things?

Still not getting it.

SEAN (CONT'D)

There is a timeline in place, and now you are on it. And so am I. Let's say, just for example, you try to stop this thing. Their visions reveal you around Coulson at the time of his death. They put two and two together... they're the kind to shoot first and ask questions later, if you smell what I'm stepping in.

DAVID

That's insane! I haven't decided I'm going to do anything yet!

SEAN

Sure you have.

DAVID

You don't even know if I had a vision. It could have been some crazy dream.

Sean reaches down to a briefcase. He pulls out a plain manila envelope. He hands it over.

SEAN

Carl had that made three weeks ago.

David removes a blank sheet of paper. He turns it over. A police sketch. Identical to David, but with cropped hair.

David blanches. He looks up. Sean is already walking away. He hurries after him.

JFK MUSEUM - ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE EXHIBIT - LATER

Quiet. A group leave the exhibit. Only Sean and David remain.

Sean reaches into his pocket. He pulls out a tattered photo. THREE STERN MEN in tactical gear.

SEAN

In the middle, that's Martin. One of us.

He then points to the leftmost MAN, uniform pristine. Unlike the others he doesn't perspire, despite the obvious heat.

SEAN (CONT'D)

This man is Leon Stone.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN exits a room. Her shoes clack along the deserted corridor.

She calls the elevator. The doors ping open to reveal--

LEON STONE. Suited and booted, he strides out. Older than in the photo, but the same powerful build and cold, piercing eyes. The air of a man with whom you do not fuck--

SEAN (O.S.)

Serious piece of work. Works for the Agency. If they do know something, he'll be the one charged with finding you.

MUSEUM - MOMENTS LATER

David inspects the photograph.

Sean points to the MAN on the right. Lanky, with a crooked smile, his dark eyes glisten with mania.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

NATHAN WEEKES marches alongside Stone. All business.

SEAN (O.S.)

This guy is Nathan Weekes. Stone's right hand man. As nuts as he is tall by all accounts.

The Woman stares through the closing elevator doors.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A MID-AGED MAN propped up in bed. He admires a photo of the elevator woman (his WIFE) and two TEENAGE KIDS when--

Stone and Weekes enter. Weekes closes the door.

Stone stands at the foot of the bed. The MAN turns white.

SEAN (O.S.)
 The only thing Nathan Weekes is
 afraid of, is Leon Stone.

A NURSE enters. Stone glares. She exits as quickly she came.
 Weekes looms over the Patient. The Patient pleads with Stone.
 Weekes looks at Stone. Stone nods--

INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Looking through the windshield into the night as the WIFE
 draws slowly along the front of the hospital.

A rain of GLASS falls on the hood--

Then the MAN.

His dead eyes stare at the screaming Wife.

EXT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Watching through the broken window as Stone and Weekes exit.

Moments later the Nurse bursts in with an older COLLEAGUE and
 races to the window. They stare down at the car wrecked by
 her dead patient.

MUSEUM - MOMENTS LATER

David eyeballs Sean.

SEAN
 (waves crazily)
 JFK never went to the moon!

David is taken aback.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 I get it. You think I'm a nut.

David relaxes a little.

SEAN (CONT'D)
 Do me a favour. Take this.
 [Presents briefcase.]

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Dark but for David's face illuminated by the laptop. He
 checks emails. We hear the rest of their conversation.

SEAN (O.S.)
 I'll check with Carl and the others. Maybe you're right. Maybe it's nothing. I'll get back in touch in the next few days. Look at it this way: I'm wrong, you get to keep a very nice briefcase...

David looks across at the briefcase.

DAVID (O.S.)
 I'm sure my mom told me something about accepting briefcases from strange men.

SEAN (O.S.)
 Good man. Avoid your usual haunts.

DAVID (O.S.)
 I should be afraid of the government? Sorry Sean. I mean, those guys look serious and all it's just...

SEAN (O.S.)
 Have you heard of MK Ultra?

He enters 'MK Ultra' into a search engine. He hits SEARCH and selects the first page.

SEAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Agencies within the United States government tested LSD on US citizens as a kind of mind control drug. Some died...

The page confirms Sean's story.

SEAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 It's all online. While you're there check out 'Operation Northwoods'...

David grows concerned.

He scrolls to the bottom section, 'Further Reading'. The pointer hovers over a NORTHWOODS link. A CLICK--

SEAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 False flag operation. Never carried out, but basically the government planned terror attacks against US citizens to drum up support for a war against Castro...

The page opens. Scrolling down, the page backs Sean's claims. David is agog. He highlights different sections--

Incidents to establish a credible attack (not in chronological order):

Start riots near the base main gate (friendly Cubans).

Blow up ammunition inside the base; start fires.

United States responds by executing offensive operations...

David sits in stunned silence--

His phone RINGS, scaring the life out of him.

DAVID

Shit!

(answers phone)

Yeah?

PAUL

How goes it, buddy? Thought we could go for a couple ones, talk about your meet with the nut.

David eyes the laptop.

DAVID

Sure... but let's go to Robbie's.

PAUL

Robbie's?

EXT. ROBBIE'S BAR - EVENING

Faint music radiates into the half-empty, shadowy lot. A broken neon sign flickers. David pulls in. He exits the car, checking over both shoulders. In his hand, the briefcase.

David hurries to the door, draws a deep breath, and opens it.

INT. ROBBIE'S BAR

A real dive. Dingy. What it lacks in class it makes up for in character. The blaring jukebox a background for laughter and the clack of pool balls.

The door opens and David peers in. He spots something--

Paul sits in a booth wearing a huge grin. And a tin-foil hat.

David cracks a huge smile.

LATER

David sits across from Paul, minus the headgear, in a booth. Alongside David sits the briefcase.

PAUL

So did he tell you why him and all his friends aren't state lottery millionaires?

DAVID

He said that we can't use the gift whenever we like. Or to help ourselves.

PAUL

Oh man. What a gyp.

DAVID

I don't know. Sean is a really cool guy, it's just...

PAUL

He's a little cuckoo?

DAVID

Yeah, how did you...

PAUL

He's in a club with a bunch of guys who think they can see the future.

They laugh.

DAVID

You know, he almost had me convinced...

PAUL

Whaddya mean?

DAVID

He had this drawing, like a police sketch and... I don't know. Probably a stage act.

David's cell rings. It's Sean.

PAUL

Maybe they're listening.

DAVID

Really though. What would you do?

PAUL

If I were you, I would answer the phone, while your good buddy here shows these assholes...

He gestures at the bar's CLIENTELE as he stands.

PAUL (CONT'D)

How to play a jukebox.

Paul ambles away to the jukebox. David takes the call.

DAVID
Hi Sean... Wait, I can't hear
you... it's really loud in here...
I'll go to the men's room.

He heads for the john, turns back, and grabs the briefcase.

INT./EXT. - MEN'S ROOM/INTERSTATE

David paces the dank men's room in flickering fluorescent light. Nasty graffiti on peeling paint.

SEAN (O.S.)
You hear me now?

DAVID
Just about.

Driving the interstate, Sean checks his mirrors; cool composure replaced with agitation, he glances at the bulging DOCUMENT in the passenger seat.

SEAN
I need to speak to you. Urgently.

DAVID
Sure.

SEAN
Not on the phone.

DAVID
What?

Sean peers at the file. He enters a long sweeping corner. Neon lights come into view. The Jack of Hearts motel.

SEAN
Meet me at the Jack of Hearts
Motel. It's on the I-95.

DAVID
The I-95? Sean...

David is irked.

SEAN
Good. Get here ASAP. Listen, David,
be careful. This is really heavy
shit. I'll explain when you get
here. Can you use somebody else's
car?

DAVID
I can't use mine?

SEAN
They might know it... Bring the
briefcase. And be careful.

DAVID
Sean, I'm not sure about this.

SEAN
David, it has to do with...

The last word is garbled but it sounded like--

DAVID
Sarah? Did you say 'Sarah'? SEAN!

SEAN
Shit! I gotta go. Hurry David.

CLICK. DIAL TONE.

DAVID
Shit!

David shoves his phone into his pocket.

The music volumes rises as he opens the door to leave--

He ducks back in closing the door behind him--

He spins around and opens the door a crack. He scans the bar--

Two LARGE MEN in suits tower over Paul. One pulls a photo
from his pocket. Paul gives it a once over--

DAVID (CONT'D)
Fuck!

Then Paul shakes his head.

David turns back. He fixes eyes on a small window--

EXT. ROBBIE'S BAR

A window to the darkened lot opens. The briefcase drops out -
followed by David.

David dashes to his car and jumps in. He fires the car into
life. It screams from the parking lot and out of sight.

The Suits burst from the bar into the lot.

INT. DAVID'S CAR - LATER

David barrels along, cell pressed to his ear.

DAVID
Come on Sean, answer.

He gives up, ends the call, and tosses the phone next to the briefcase. He speeds for the motel eyeing his mirrors.

The cell RINGS. He grabs it.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Sean...

PAUL (O.S.)
Nah, it's Paul.

David is angry--

PAUL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Listen, two guys in suits were just
now looking for you.

David doesn't answer. He thinks.

PAUL (O.S.) (CONT'D)
David?

DAVID
Who is this?

PAUL (O.S.)
It's me. Quit screwing around.

DAVID
I don't know who this is. Don't
call me again. You have the wrong
number. Do you understand?

PAUL (O.S.)
David, what are you...

DAVID
It's not David. Don't call me
again.

He ends the call and throws the cell into the seat.

He enters a long sweeping corner.

His face becomes bathed in orange glow.

Horrified, he SLAMS the brakes.

ANGLE ON

The JACK OF HEARTS MOTEL - Illuminated by the pulsing blue
lights of a fire truck, and ENGULFED IN FLAMES.