

DETROIT RUN

By Odin Ozdil

EXT. CORNER STORE - DETROIT SUBURBS - DAY

A storefront window displays a postcard carousel with glossy photos of famous Detroit icons: cars rolling off the Ford assembly line; Motown Records; the riverfront Renaissance Center. A snapshot of the famous city of industry admired by the world once upon a time.

REVEAL the postcard stand is in a BOARDED-UP STORE that has long ago gone out of business.

ZHOOF! A bullet shatters the glass and rips through the card.

MORE GUNSHOTS from across the street.

EXT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP PARKING LOT - DAY

Taking cover behind a police car, gun drawn, is OFFICER JOHN TAYLOR (25). Tall, a natural athlete, African American, on alert. Next to him is OFFICER BRIAN KELLY (50s), white, pork belly. Kelly has a bloodied and broken nose. Both wear bulletproof vests.

Kelly breathes hard as John checks to make sure a BULLET lodged in Kelly's vest didn't clear through.

JOHN

You're good.

Kelly's breathing comes under control. He's relieved. John shouts into his radio.

JOHN

Shots fired! Need backup! Old Cadillac dealership on Jefferson. Two men, Black. We're under fire!

DISPATCH (O.S.)

29-400. We're sending help right away.

JOHN

You all right?

KELLY

Yeah, you?

John nods. He scopes out the lot. Weeds grow through the cracked concrete. The glass dealership window panes are covered with graffitied wooden boards. A chain link fence blocks off the property from the street.

Behind a large stack of tires is TREY JONES (25), squat and compact, African American. He pokes around the corner, ducks back down, keeps his cool. He has a gun at the ready.

Huddled in fear next to him is his younger brother LOUIS JONES (18). A lankier version of his older brother, he sports a black eye.

TREY
You good?

LOUIS
(panicked)
We're gonna die.

Louis clutches Trey's arm.

TREY
I'll get us out of this. Remember that time Dad came back with the bat? I showed him. Remember?

LOUIS
(shaky)
Yeah.

Trey scans to make sure the cops aren't advancing. He sees a SECURITY CAMERA above a sign: "PRIVATE PROPERTY: THIS PROPERTY BELONGS TO DETROIT CASINO SERVICES. NO LOITERING."

TREY
I always got us, right? You good?

Trey pats Louis' hand, Louis releases.

LOUIS
Yeah, I'm good.

The fear in Louis' eyes betrays his words.

Trey eyeballs a rotting wooden board covering up a window into the dealership. He grabs Louis by the shoulder.

TREY
Come on!

LOUIS
Trey!

A panicked Louis barely keeps up as Trey pulls him along.

Kelly takes the opportunity to shoot, John briefly hesitant before joining in. They barely miss the brothers.

INT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP - CONTINUOUS

Trey crashes through the wooden board, landing on the dusty showroom floor, Louis right behind him.

Trey immediately looks for cover in the derelict building.

TREY

There!

Trey points to the kitchen area, pulls Louis up to his feet as they stumble behind the counter.

John, without stepping in, calls out with caution.

JOHN

This is your last chance. Put your guns down. Let's talk about it.

Trey spots another boarded-up door in the back.

TREY

We already tried talking. You put your guns down!

JOHN

Don't work like that.

TREY

(whispers to Louis)
I'm gonna give you cover, you head out the back.

LOUIS

I can't leave without you.

TREY

I'm gonna buy us time. You got this, Bro. I'm right behind you.

Louis nods. John barely pokes his head into the dealership and shouts towards the brothers.

JOHN

We can wait. We got backup.

Trey lays down fire. John promptly ducks back away from the entrance hole.

KELLY

You done talkin'?

John nods in earnest.

Louis stares at the back door but is too frozen in place to make a run for it.

Trey's gun CLICKS. Empty. He ducks back down and sees his panicked brother.

TREY

Louis! I told you to go!

LOUIS

Sorry.

ON JOHN: With the break from shooting, he jumps into the dealership, sprints across the showroom floor, finds cover across from the break room. He's got an angle on Louis.

Trey pulls Louis up to his feet.

TREY

Let's go!

John has a clean shot at Louis and fires.

CONTACT. Louis takes a bullet in the gut and goes down.

TREY

Louis!

Trey has to abandon going to Louis' side as Kelly is already inside popping off a few rounds in Trey's direction. Trey dives for cover behind an old fridge.

SIRENS OUTSIDE as additional POLICE UNITS arrive.

OFFICER (O.S.)

Move in!

From his cover spot, Trey makes eye contact with Louis. Louis groans and clutches his bleeding stomach.

LOUIS

Go.

It is not an easy decision for Trey to make.

LOUIS

(crying)

Trey, run!

Trey takes a good look at his brother, turns and runs.

EXT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP - SAME TIME

Trey crashes through the wooden board --

And is surprised to find the back of the lot is on a slope. He tumbles ten feet before smacking into some shrubs.

TREY

Damn!

He is quickly back up on his feet and running from the scene.

INT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP - SAME TIME

John jumps out after Trey while Kelly gets to work handcuffing the pained Louis.

EXT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP - CONTINUOUS

John hits the unexpected slope, losing his gun and radio as he rolls into the shrubs.

JOHN

Damn!

Every second counts. John forsakes collecting his gear and takes off after Trey, handcuffs jangling on his waist.

INT. ABANDONED CHEVY DEALERSHIP PARKING - SAME TIME

Kelly radios in with Louis suffering at his feet.

KELLY

Perp with gunshot wound. Medical needed ASAP. Partner on foot after second suspect.

(to Louis)

Stupid bastard. It didn't have to go this way.

Louis wails, his face contorts with pain.

EXT. GRATIOT AVENUE - CONTINUOUS

The one-on-one chase continues down the major suburban street. A mile ahead lies the downtown Detroit skyline.

With the initial sprint over, the two settle into marathon-style running. John sheds body armor to lighten his load. Trey looks over his shoulder, surprised John is keeping up.

By their form, it's apparent both are trained runners. Not merely a chase, this is a game of self-control to expend just enough energy to keep pace, hoping the other burns out first.

EXT. DETROIT - VARIOUS

The duo passes by the lives of inner city Detroiters: family BBQs in a park, corner markets, auto body shops, housing blocks overridden with blight. But for a few kids, most pay the chase no mind.

Downtown grows closer. Up ahead is the GENERAL MOTORS RENAISSANCE CENTER (RenCen), a group of seven connected skyscrapers that prominently tower over the city.

EXT. ATWATER STREET - CONTINUOUS

Trey turns on the juice to pull ahead. John reciprocates, matching the new pace. Both breathe hard, but neither are giving up.

They pass the hustle and bustle of a slowly recovering business block. Trey rounds a corner while John veers off into --

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

John flies by dumpsters, startles a homeless man.

INTERCUT:

Trey glances back to see he has lost John. With a slight smirk, he keeps running.

EXT. ALLEY - SAME TIME

For a long moment John loses sight of Trey, but the shortcut gamble pays off when John emerges onto --

EXT. RENCEN - CONTINUOUS

The unexpectant Trey is rammed by John --

Trey goes sprawling into the street --

Gets back onto his feet --

Into the path of a BLACK CADILLAC ESCALADE. Trey makes hard contact with the grill, rolls up the hood, smashes into the windshield, flips end-over-end as he clears over the car and lands on the other side.

John is stunned. He runs out to the street to the motionless Trey.

Trey's foot is missing a shoe. It lays nearby in the street.

The GM towers loom overhead.

EXT. RENCEN - LATER

Trey moans in pain as he's loaded on a stretcher by TWO MEDICS and loaded into the back of the ambulance. His face is bruised and scratched.

TREY

Louis. Where's Louis?

MEDIC

Who's that?

TREY

My brother.

MEDIC

I'm sure he's fine. Let's worry about you right now. Do you have anyone to call?

TREY

My mama. 313-248-6311.

Medic #2 writes it down.

MEDIC

We'll have her meet us at the hospital. Can you try moving your legs for me again?

TREY

(grunts)

Did they move?

The medics share a glance.

MEDIC

We'll have it all checked out at the hospital.

Trey spots John watching.

TREY

I ain't done with you. I ain't done
with you!

John turns his head away from the anger storm being directed
at him.

A squad vehicle pulls up and out steps DEPUTY CHIEF WILLIAMS
(60s), graying and commanding, African American.

WILLIAMS

Quite a run.

John nods.

JOHN

The kid at the dealership?

WILLIAMS

(gently)
He didn't make it.

John struggles to come to terms with the news. He's
overwhelmed with the shock of finding out he killed a man.

JOHN

I... he...

Williams attempts to comfort.

WILLIAMS

You saved your partner's life
today, don't forget that.

JOHN

It happened so fast. It just
spiraled.

WILLIAMS

Don't worry, son. It happened in
service. We protect our own.

INT. CITY HALL - DAY

John, uniformed, paces outside the courtroom. He sits down,
lightly rocks back and forth, disturbed. He can't get
comfortable, stands back up.

Chief Williams approaches, observes John's state. Takes a
seat at the benches and motions for John to join him.

WILLIAMS

Twenty-five years on the force with your father. I know he isn't around anymore, but I don't need to ask him to know he'd be proud of you.

JOHN

(sarcastic)

Proud his son killed a young Black man.

WILLIAMS

No. Not young, not Black, a man with a gun. Your dad loved family and he loved the street. And he knew that to protect one he had to do what he had to do to in the other. And sometimes that don't come easy.

JOHN

I think about how it went down, what could've gone differently.

Williams puts a hand on John's shoulder, chooses his next words carefully.

WILLIAMS

If you never want to pick up that badge and gun again, no one will blame you. But you did what you had to do in the moment, and the results were out of your control.

John glances at the courtroom doors.

JOHN

How do I go in there? How do I face him after what happened?

WILLIAMS

You testify all the reasons you did what you had to do. His defense attorneys aren't there to protect your life in the line of fire. You're not there to make Trey Jones, an attempted cop killer, sympathetic. If he gets away with taking a shot at an officer, you're endangering everyone on the force. Today, your responsibility is to the brotherhood.

Kelly enters the hallway, catches John's glance. He heads over with a big grin.

JOHN

Shit.

Kelly walks up with outstretched arms to embrace John.

KELLY

This guy. An animal! Runs like cheetah.

(pats own stomach)

Me, a buffalo!

Kelly guffaws. Williams is tuned into just how unsettled John is. The BAILIFF opens the door and motions to John.

PROSECUTOR

Officer Taylor, you're up.

John peers in, sees Trey at the defendant's table sitting in a wheelchair. He takes a deep breath and walks in.

Trey, relegated to a wheelchair, sitting at the defendant table, turns to face John, sheer contempt on his face.

INT. COURT - DAY - DAYS LATER

John stands in the back behind the spectator gallery.

The JURY returns with the verdict. Trey's mother, PAMELA JONES (50s), supportive, anxious, leans over the gallery barrier, puts a hand on Trey's shoulder.

BAILIFF

Please rise.

Trey glances at the bailiff. Obviously he can't comply. The WHITE JUDGE reads.

JUDGE

Trey Jones, on the charge of attempted murder of an officer of the law, guilty by unanimous verdict. Penalty, life in prison.

Pamela breaks out in tears.

TREY

(voice quivers)

Mama.

PAMELA

We're gonna get through this.

POV JURY: As the bailiff wheels him out, Trey yells at the judge and jury.

TREY

You all heard what you wanted to hear! But you ain't listen to how it went down!

JUDGE

The court has indeed heard the case, Mr. Jones.

TREY

Yeah, what about the actual murderer standing in the courtroom?

Trey settles on John with hate-filled eyes.

TREY

John Taylor, where your judgement at for killing Louis?!

JUDGE

Officer Taylor was not the one on trial, Mr. Jones.

TREY

He should be!

Pamela grabs his arm in an attempt to stop him.

JUDGE

That'll be all, Mr. Jones.

TREY

All for you. It's still happening for me!

JUDGE

Bailiff.

The bailiff handcuffs Trey to the wheelchair.

TREY

Get off me, man!

JUDGE

There's a time and place for protest.

TREY

Bitch, that ain't how protest works!

As he passes by a stiff-necked John, Trey spits at him.

TREY

Louis Jones! Never forget his name!
Louis Jones!

A shaken John leans against the wall and closes his eyes. He can hear Trey's objections as he is wheeled out of the courtroom and down the hall.

EXT. SUBURBAN DETROIT - EARLY MORNING

SUPER: FIVE YEARS LATER

John, wearing sweatpants and BLUE NIKE VAPORFLY SHOES, has worked up a nice sweat as he jogs by rows of small 1950s ranch houses. The sun pops over the horizon, freshly illuminating the sleepy suburban street.

John approaches an INTERSECTION as A GARBAGE TRUCK drives by. John turns on a speed burst as he DASHES by the truck, barely clearing the front of it. The truck BLARES its horn. John jogs backwards away from the truck and tosses back a grin.

JOHN

I had it!

The truck rumbles on.

EXT. PORCH - LATER

John arrives from his jog. He does some cool down exercises, takes his shoes off and leaves them on the porch mat before heading inside.

INT. PRISON - FAMILY MEETING AREA - MORNING

Trey, now 30 years old, limps over to a small table by himself. Other INMATES visit with family members.

Trey lightly cringes as he MASSAGES his leg. He cranes his neck towards the visitor entrance door. No one left in line.

He waves a guard over, who approaches, irritated.

GUARD

What do you want?

TREY
My mother is supposed to be here.

GUARD
Think I know where your mama is?
Think I'm your daddy?

TREY
(feigns politeness)
No, Sir, just she's never missed...

ANOTHER GUARD walks up to with a MEMO and whispers in the guard's ear. The first guard's face slightly softens.

GUARD
(to Trey)
She died last night.

The guard hands over the memo. Trey is stunned. "CAUSE OF DEATH: HEART ATTACK."

Trey smacks the table and YELPS. He repeats this action rhythmically and with increasing force. A WAIL creeps into the yelps. The reaction is psychotic. The other inmates and their families stop speaking and stare, disturbed. Trey continues to punch harder and wail harder.

The guards move in and restrain him. He's not having it. The guards pile on.

EXT. GREEKTOWN CASINO - LOADING DOCK - DAY

John stands by with his uniformed partner, OFFICER RAVEN HARRIS (25), a 5'3" female African American firecracker. A MEDIUM-SIZED DUFFLE BAG is loaded into an ARMOR TRUCK by two private security guards, TOM AKRON & TOM BRIDGES (50s).

JOHN
Tom.

Tom A nods.

TOM A
John.

RAVEN
Tom.

Tom B nods.

TOM B
Raven.

RAVEN
How's Mary?

TOM A
Fatter by the day.

TOM B
Why you gotta talk about Mary that way?

TOM A
You get a wife and then you can talk. She's always talking shit about me.

Tom B shakes his head, steps into the back with the bag.

JOHN
(under breath to Raven)
Bet you five bucks Tom B bitches about sitting in the back again.

Tom B takes a seat, rests a shotgun on his lap.

TOM B
Why am I always in the back?

TOM A
'Cause your lazy ass likes it better back there.

Tom B shrugs and accepts. Tom A shuts him in and gets in the driver's seat.

John and Raven share a grin as they get in their police car. Raven rides shotgun.

RAVEN
This a sweet gig. I bet the other boys would kill for it.

John stares down the road, doesn't comment. Raven clocks John's shift in energy, lets it go.

INT. PRISON - ELECTRONICS CLASS - PRISON - MORNING

Trey gazes out the third-story window beyond the prison walls. A TRAIN chugs by in the distance. Between prison and the tracks are TWO SEPARATE SETS OF 20-FOOT WALLS that encircle the prison. The first is made of brick, the second is a barbed-wire fence. ARMED GUARDS are stationed on watchtowers alongside both.

Trey turns his attention back to the classroom. The current lesson on the whiteboard is "CLOSED LOOP CONTROL SYSTEMS."

Trey and other prisoners are coding and soldering circuit boards. Trey raises his hand for the INSTRUCTOR (60s).

TREY

Done.

Others in the class swap quizzical glances. The instructor checks out Trey's board of wires, circuits and lights. He pushes a button, a RED BULB lights up.

TREY

Boom.

Instructor follows the wiring, confused.

INSTRUCTOR

Wait, how did you connect...

He examines it closer, confusion turns into being impressed.

INSTRUCTOR

Ah, very efficient. You got a talent.

The instructor records A+ on his grading sheet. Trey's ten previous grade assignments are all A+s.

The instructor looks around at the other inmates.

INSTRUCTOR

What am I gonna do with you for the next couple hours?

TREY

I can chill in the library.

Instructor nods, fills out a pass.

INSTRUCTOR

If you were on the outside I'd hire you in a heartbeat.

With the instructor's attention on another student, Trey covertly WRAPS METAL WIRE from a spool up and around his arm. He pulls down his sleeve to cover it up.

INT. PRISON - LIBRARY - MORNING

Trey is holed up in a corner with a large print coffee table book on Detroit history.

He flips through pages covering the auto industry, city architecture, 1967 riots. He MARKS UP A MAP with distances between landmarks.

ON TV: FOOTAGE OF GEORGE FLOYD MURDER AND PROTESTS

An ELDERLY LIBRARIAN INMATE (70s) pushes a book cart and replaces books. He has trouble reaching a high shelf. Trey helps him.

ELDERLY INMATE

Thanks.

They watch the Floyd reporting.

ELDERLY INMATE

Maybe things'll change.

TREY

Too late for us. And they won't.

The elderly inmate nods. He glances in approval at Trey's books.

ELDERLY INMATE

Good on ya, son. Learning about our great city. Hope we get to see it again.

TREY

I plan on it.

INT. POLICE CAR - WOODWARD AVE - DAY

John and Raven tail the armored truck on the main road leading out from Detroit to the suburbs. Raven queues up some Detroit heavy metal and rocks out hard. John doesn't like the music but grins from the sheer ridiculousness of his partner.

EXT. BANK PARKING LOT - DAY

John and Raven shadow the armored truck into the secured bank parking lot.

As the gate closes behind them, Tom A hops out and knocks on the back. Tom B unlocks the back and hops out.

JOHN

Whoa! Too soon for knocking.

John gets out of the car, motions to the gate.

JOHN

The gate's not closed yet. Someone
can still run in.

TOM A

Yeah, yeah. In a bit of a hurry
today.

TOM B

(depressed)

He's got his anniversary with Mary.
You don't want to make Mary angry.

JOHN

I don't care about all that.

RAVEN

Let's stick to protocol, boys, all
right?

The Toms nod, slightly embarrassed.

INT. POLICE CAR - CONTINUOUS

John and Raven pull out of the lot.

RAVEN

Good ol' Tom and Tom.

(into radio)

This is Adam Five. We've finished
delivery. Resuming patrol.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

Adam Five, confirmed for patrol.

RAVEN

How much you think is in that bag?

JOHN

Casino pulled in 1.4 billion last
year. Taking into account credit, I
guess a half million a day in cash.

Raven whistles.

INT. PRISON - CELL - DAY

Trey finishes up some squats, the activity causes him pain.
His right leg quivers. He massages it with OINTMENT, rubbing
it over large surgery scars. A BELL rings.

EXT. PRISON - COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

The SUN is harsh and casts LONG SHADOWS. Trey watches as guards patrol on foot and in towers. Inmates use their free time to work out and play basketball.

Trey hobbles over to the wall, bends down near an ELECTRIC OUTLET to tie his shoes.

He looks around -- no one pays attention to him. He fishes around in the dirt until he finds the END OF A BURIED WIRE.

He unwraps a couple feet of new wire from beneath his sleeve and attaches it to the existing wire. It's enough length to finally extend to the outlet. He STICKS the end into the socket.

He stands up, remains unnoticed. He closes his eyes for a moment, the sun directly behind him.

An inmate dribbles the ball. BOUNCE. BOUNCE.

As the guard turns his back to the courtyard and begins his walk towards the gate --

BOUNCE. BOUNCE.

Trey moves as quickly as he can towards the far brick wall.

BOUNCE. BOUNCE.

The inmates continue to play basketball and the guards continue to patrol.

Trey squats concealed in the dark strip of shade along the edge of the wall. He digs up the other end of the buried wire. The various segments reveal he's been assembling the entire length bit-by-bit.

He removes ADDITIONAL WIRING wrapped around his other arm and attaches it to the line. It is now long enough to connect to another ELECTRIC OUTLET built into the brick wall.

He waits to connect.

The bell goes off, all the inmates line up. No one notices Trey is missing yet.

With the inmates filing in on one side, the delivery truck gate in the brick wall opens. It takes a some long seconds before the truck begins to roll through it.

Meanwhile, the second gate in the fence beyond still has a few feet left to close.

Trey makes his move -- he inserts the end of the wire into the outlet, completing a circuit that shorts out the courtyard.

A FUSE BOX BLOWS in a shower of sparks. Gates stop closing.

Everyone is startled, the guards immediately draw their guns and point at the nervous inmates.

GUARD

Get down!

The intimidated inmates immediately comply. With all the attention on the wide open area, Trey goes unnoticed as he uses the shadow along the wall to sneak around the gate.

He hides under the truck as additional guards rush in to secure the courtyard. As the last of them run by, Trey makes his best dash for it to the outer gate and slips under the two foot gap.

He emerges into the large field, heads towards the distant approaching train. Unnoticed, wind in his face, he grins ear-to-ear. He may not be moving as fast he used to, but he's never felt more free.

EXT. RUN-DOWN HOME - FRONT PORCH - DAY

John and Raven walk up to the front door. John knocks. No answer. A shadow passes behind the door glass. John and Raven nod in confirmation.

JOHN

Open up. It's the police.

A WHITE MAN (40s) replies gruffly from inside.

MAN (O.S.)

Nobody home.

JOHN

Sounds like it.

John knocks again.

MAN (O.S.)

I don't have to open up. I know my rights.

RAVEN

Actually, you do, Sir. We've received a call about a domestic disturbance, have to check it out.

MAN (O.S.)
I ain't call nobody.

JOHN
So maybe you're not the one that
needs help.

John motions he's going around the back. Raven nods.

MAN (O.S.)
This my house and I said no one
wants you here.

EXT. RUN-DOWN HOME - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

John approaches the back porch. In the upstairs window he sees a BATTERED WOMAN (25), face puffy from a fresh beating.

RAVEN (O.S.)
We're here to help.

MAN (O.S.)
Don't need it.

John sees the back door is WIDE OPEN.

EXT. RUN-DOWN HOME - FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Raven overhears the interaction inside.

MAN (O.S.)
Hey! What you doing in my house?!

JOHN (O.S.)
Get down on the ground! Back up!

RAVEN
Shit--

Raven rattles the front door handle but it's locked.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME TIME

John has his TASER GUN drawn as an overweight man writhes on the floor. He struggles to stand, takes a swipe at John.

JOHN
You just can't make it easy.

Raven rushes in through the back, gun drawn. She and John quickly wrestle the resistant man into cuffs.

John shoves the man's face into the ground roughly. Raven doesn't approve, keeps tight-lipped.

INT. BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER

The frightened woman has locked herself in. Her eye is swollen, she clutches a phone. There is a KNOCK on the door.

RAVEN (O.S.)
Ma'am? It's all right now. You can open up.

She opens the door and hugs Raven out of relief.

EXT. HOUSE - LATER

An ambulance and additional police vehicles have arrived. The abusive man gets hauled off. The battered woman sits on a stretcher with a blanket around her while a MEDIC checks her out.

John and Raven watch in silence.

JOHN
You good?

RAVEN
(distant)
Yep.

JOHN
So you're not good.

RAVEN
There was no imminent threat.

JOHN
I saw someone inside in trouble.
Probable cause. Door was open.
I had to handle the active
situation and I got the job done.

RAVEN
There are multiple ways to get the
job done.

JOHN
He wasn't cooperating and I took
what I believed were appropriate
measures at the time. It's all
legal.
(pointed)
(MORE)

JOHN (cont'd)

Is there going to be an issue with the report I should know about?

RAVEN

No, but fuck you. I don't want to lose a partner or get killed because you ran in after some asshole when you didn't have to.

John crosses his arms.

JOHN

You been on the force what, a year? I know it's not easy being new, even more so for a woman.

Raven crosses her arms in response.

RAVEN

I like being a woman. Is that a problem?

John sees her exposed wrist, it has a GASH with fresh blood.

JOHN

You're cut. Did you get it checked--

RAVEN

I didn't want to report it.

He nods, slightly humbled.

RAVEN

I got your back, John. But don't play me like I'm too fresh. You're taking risks you don't need to.

JOHN

I learned it the hard way five years ago. Take my word for it -- if you don't get a jump on them, they get the jump on you.

RAVEN

I don't jump for anyone.

OFFICER #2 walks up and slaps John on the back, cutting the tension between the partners.

OFFICER #2

Hey, trying to get killed before your birthday party?

JOHN
What birthday party?

Raven shoots a cold stare at the officer. John realizes he just got privileged information.

JOHN
Bro, your chances of getting killed just shot way past mine.

The officer feels stupid for the mistaken reveal, backs away.

RAVEN
Just back away. Just back away.
(to John)
Play it like a surprise, will ya?

JOHN
You shouldn't have.

RAVEN
I know.

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

Trey, well-groomed, sweatpants, hair grown out indicating months have passed since his escape, limps up to a wall of shoes on display. His gaze stops on a pair of ORANGE NIKE VAPORMAX RUNNING SHOES.

He takes off his DIRTY SNEAKERS, slips on the VaporMaxes. He laces them up, walks around the store. They feel good. An EMPLOYEE (20s) sees him limping around, approaches.

EMPLOYEE
You like the shoes?

TREY
Yeah, these are great for runners.

The employee looks at Trey's limp.

EMPLOYEE
You run?

TREY
(sharp)
I'm trying on running shoes, ain't I?

Trey sits down, unties the shoes. The employee feels guilty.

EMPLOYEE

Sorry, bro, I didn't mean--

TREY

All good. Guess I won't be getting
'em.

The employee, uncomfortable with the interaction and happy to get out of it, goes to greet someone else who just entered.

Trey waits until none of the employees are watching, laces the VaporMaxes shoes back up, sticks his old sneakers in the box, and walks out of the store.

EXT. PACKARD CAR PLANT - DUSK

A poster child for urban blight. The crumbling plant, forsaken since 1958, sprawls over 30 acres of land and contains dozens of various building structures. A testament to American manufacturing leadership of past and present.

INT. PACKARD CAR PLANT - DUSK

Trey pushes a cart through the eerie, long-abandoned factory floor. Scattered around are remains of picked-over industrial machinery lain dormant for decades. The massive space has a forty-foot high ceiling, broken windows and puddles of sludge formed from collected rainwater.

INT. PLANT MANAGER'S OFFICE - DUSK

Trey plops down in a dusty office chair. The room has rotting wooden furniture.

The windows of the office overlook the abandoned assembly line like a battleship bridge looking out over the flight deck of an aircraft carrier.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

John steps outside, a SHOEBOX is placed where his shoes normally sit. A BIRTHDAY CARD with a picture of a bomb-cake reads: "THIS ONE'S GONNA BE A BLOWOUT." Under it is written: "Put these on for the greatest run of your life."

John examines the contents of the box. There's a PAIR OF ORANGE VAPORMAX SHOES, a BLUETOOTH EARPIECE, and a SMARTWATCH.

A brief moment of consideration. John looks around and can't find his regular shoes. He glances to the street, nothing out of the norm.

John tries on the new shoes.

The watch RINGS AND VIBRATES. Slightly startled, he glances down. A CALL is coming in. He picks up the watch, accepts the call and speaks into it while holding it.

JOHN

Raven? Appreciate the new kicks,
but you better not have thrown my
old shoes out.

TREY (V.O.)

Our run never ended five years ago,
John.

TREY'S FACE STREAMS LIVE onto the watch-face. Trey looks ready to cry.

JOHN

(realizing, dread)
Trey Jones.

No response.

JOHN

Trey... Can you hear me?

TREY

(voice cracks with
emotion)
Sorry, I'm very excited for this
moment. It's been a long time
coming, I almost don't know what to
say... But I do.

INTERCUT:

INT. PLANT MANAGER'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Trey sits in front of a desk setup with a LAPTOP AND
ADDITIONAL MONITOR, all powered with a RIGGED CAR BATTERY.

John's face is visible on the extra monitor via the camera
watch.

TREY

Do you ever think about what it's
like to run in fear? Being chased
down like an animal?

(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

Not knowing if you'll survive? Do you ever think about that?

JOHN

Are you... in prison?

TREY

We both have questions. But you didn't answer mine and I asked first. Think you've begun to understand what it's like to lose your family, to become a cripple?

JOHN

I never wanted what happened. To your brother. To you.

TREY

And you would have done what different?

John is at a loss for words.

TREY

Seems you haven't thought about it enough.

JOHN

You shot at us.

TREY

And why was that? Is that another question you don't have a good answer for?

JOHN

Where are you?

TREY

So worried about where we're at. Let's focus on where we're going.

JOHN

Where's that?

TREY

Much will be answered today, John. Patience, I had to learn it all these years in prison. You see that blue mailbox?

John looks towards the USPS POSTBOX past the sidewalk.

TREY
See what's under it?

The postbox rests on four stubby metal legs. A SHOE sits between its base and the ground.

JOHN
A shoe.

IT EXPLODES!

Letters rain down as the ruptured postbox smolders. Car alarms go off. Stray cats dart away.

TREY
Your shoes have explosives in them.
A wire mesh running through each
shoe creates a circuit that alerts
me if you try to take them off.

Trey's monitor displays a shoe schematic labeled "JOHN," and a HIGHLIGHTED DETONATION BUTTON.

TREY
And I can remote detonate the shoes
whenever I want.

The twisted gravity of the situation begins to sink in. John looks down to his shoes, frozen in fear.

TREY
You will run where I want. Do what
I say. You do not get to stop
unless I let you.

Trey sees John's heart shoot up to 160 BPM on a SCREEN WINDOW that tracks his vitals via the watch. The change in metrics makes him giddy.

TREY
He's getting it. Don't worry, the
shoes are perfectly safe, until
they're not. Now put on the watch
and pop in the earpiece.

John shakily dons the two additional accessories.

JOHN
Y-you don't need to do this. We can
talk.

On Trey's screen, John's vitals come online. Trey's voice now comes through John's Bluetooth.

TREY

You don't tell me what's what, I tell you. The shoes ensure you listen. Time for talking passed five years ago. Check it: This ain't a trial. This ain't a confession. This is your penance for pulling that trigger. You'll pay for murdering my brother; taking my legs; destroying my family. Rule number one, no outside communication. No calling for help. No leaving messages on pieces of paper, no borrowing someone's cell phone or anything like that. This is you and me. You got that?

JOHN

Yes.

TREY

Rule number two, no vehicles. No taking cars or bikes. I had to run for my life. You'll run for yours. Got it?

JOHN

Yeah.

TREY

From now on, I'm watching you. I see what you see. I'm tracking you. Wish that pig Kelley was still alive so I could watch him fail today too.

The laptop displays Google Maps with a CURSOR representing John's position.

TREY

Rule number three, the rule maker has the right to make you do whatever the fuck he wants because he has the power. Take a step.

John doesn't move.

TREY

One foot after the other. Go on.

John slides a foot forward an inch.

TREY

That's good. Now the other one.

John slides the other foot forward a little.

TREY

Good. Baby steps. To the sidewalk.
I didn't do all this to kill you
here and now. But I will if my mood
changes.

John gingerly steps forward, followed by another step.

TREY

Like trying on a pair in the store.

JOHN

Can we just talk--

TREY

We talk when I wanna talk. And
don't try to pull any shortcut
bullshit again.

JOHN

Anything you want.

TREY

(mocking)
"Anything you want." Don't be a
little bitch. You've got a big day
ahead of you.

JOHN

Fuck you.

TREY

Good. Let's start our game.

JOHN

What game?

TREY

(wistfully)
Man, we used to love playing video
games. Louis was better. People say
video games make you violent. But
how many crimes don't happen
because people are taking their
shit out on the TV?

With a BEEP, a FIFTEEN-MINUTE TIMER appears on John's watch.

TREY

There are tokens around town. You
find one, you punch in the number
and add time to your shoes.

(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

Find 'em all, you may survive the day. If it pleases me.

JOHN

How do I know--

TREY

You don't.

JOHN

(frantic)

Where are the tokens?

TREY

(calm)

For our first round, we go easy. My brother was born October 16th, 2002. Our mama, worry on her mind her baby daddy won't stick around, named her new son after the father's favorite hero, the greatest Detroit boxer of all time.

JOHN

Louis was named after a boxer... Joe Louis? He's dead.

TREY

And where's he honored?

JOHN

The Joe Louis Fist statue? That's where the token is?

ANOTHER BEEP and John's watch begins counting down.

TREY

You have fourteen minutes, fifty-eight seconds.

JOHN

Trey? Hello!?

A TEXT MESSAGE APPEARS on the watch screen: "GET MOVING."

John begins walking stiffly, still apprehensive in his shoes.

Trey tracks John moving very slowly on the POV screen and GPS. He SHOUTS into the microphone.

TREY

Run!

John is jolted into running. The GPS pace picks up.

TREY
Off to the races.

INT. DPD PRECINCT - DAY

Raven finishes decorating John's desk with birthday decorations. She hands a party hat to OFFICER #2. The officer puts it aside.

RAVEN
Put it on.

The officer takes a look at her and complies.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
Report of an exploded postbox in
Elmwood. Units respond with
caution, potential 707 in progress.
3150 Lafayette Street.

Raven's ears perk up.

RAVEN
That's John's place.

She's immediately concerned, calling John on her cell while heading out the door.

EXT. GRATIOT AVENUE - DAY

Trey tracks John's progress and vitals. He's running at an eleven mile per hour pace.

TREY
Bring it down to an eight mile
pace.

JOHN
I'm good. It's only another half
mile and I can--

TREY
Boy, you got no idea what else you
need to save energy for today.

John slows down, despite the adrenaline coursing through his system. Trey nods in approval.

TREY
I Googled you. You ran cross
country in college.
(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

I did too in high school 'til I had to drop out. Did you know that? Didn't have your training and still ran a better three mile than you.

JOHN

You're a better runner than me. I cheated cutting through that alley that day.

TREY

Telling me what you think I want to hear isn't going to cut it. I'm gonna enjoy teaching you even if it kills you.

JOHN

It wasn't personal.

TREY

It was for me. Like it is for you now.

EXT. JOE LOUIS' ARM - CONTINUOUS

50 yards ahead lies the 24-foot long majestic sculpture of Joe Louis' arm suspended by tension wires. It lives on a concrete island separated by a two lane road.

John rapidly scans the speedy cars looking for an in. Trey taunts from the Bluetooth earpiece.

TREY

Don't forget to look both ways.

Driven by both the timer and a disdain of Trey's advice, John gives up looking for a pattern and runs into traffic to take on each lane one at a time.

Cars SWERVE to avoid him. HORNS blare. He retreats.

Trey watches the screen in suspense.

TREY

Damn, John. Don't be so reckless or you're gonna ruin my plans. Focus.

John stumbles, dives through the second lane and avoids a near-miss, SCRAPING his forearms on the concrete upon impact.

TREY

Ooh!

John scrambles up to the statue, searching all around it.

TREY

Tick tock.

In the balled up part of the fist John finds the "token", a metal CHEVY HOOD ORNAMENT. He grabs it, examines. A FOUR DIGIT CODE is printed on it: 1016.

With THIRTY SECONDS LEFT, he punches in the numbers. FORTY MINUTES is added to the watch. John leans against the statue, shuddering in relief.

TREY

(amped)

Now that's how you start the show! Thought I gave you plenty of time, hope I didn't underestimate the rest of your day. Gonna be a real thrill to find out how well you know your city. Do you love it? I love it.

John breathes hard.

TREY

(irritated)

John, I asked if you love Detroit?

JOHN

I thought that was rhetorical. Yes, I love Detroit.

TREY

But you became a cop.

JOHN

Because I love Detroit.

TREY

We'll see what you love and what you hate. What you think you know, what you don't. You think you hate me. Like I'm less than human. But I had a moms.

JOHN

Had? I'm sorry. I remember her from court. Pamela. She seemed nice.

TREY

Acting like you care. Yeah, she was a good woman.

(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

Defined herself, never let anyone dictate her identity. Proud. She was a docent at the Museum of African American History. You know that Stevie Wonder line where he sings, "Her clothes are old but never are they dirty"?

JOHN

"Living for the City,"
Innervisions.

TREY

That was rhetorical. Everybody knows that.

JOHN

I don't know when to talk and when not to.

TREY

Sounds like a familiar situation when talking to a cop. I'll make it simple for you: you talk when I want to hear from you. Got it, boy?

JOHN

Yes... Sir.

TREY

Good. See? And I even told you where you gotta go next but you're just standing there like you wanna blow up or something.

John plays the conversation back in his head.

JOHN

The museum?

TREY

Thirty-nine minutes.

John takes off running.

EXT. EASTERN MARKET - MOMENTS LATER

John runs through the large Eastern Market, a daily produce market that supplies grocery stores and families with farm-direct food. He weaves around booths, shoppers, flower stalls and forklifts.

JOHN
How did your mom...

TREY
Your sympathy is too little, too
fake.
(pause)
Heart attack. Happens to a woman
after you kill one son and do all
you can to put the other away as
long as possible.

JOHN
That was the courts.

TREY
You work for the courts.

Trey checks John's heart rate and nine miles per hour pace.

TREY
Slow it down, you're gonna burn
yourself out. Gotta leave something
in the tank.

John doesn't change it up.

TREY
I ain't messin'. Slow. It. Down. Or
I'll slow you down permanently.

John grits his teeth. It takes considerable effort to force
himself to slow down.

Trey tracks John's speed drop to seven miles per hour,
acceptable.

TREY
Good. Just another day in Detroit,
everyone runnin' for their lives.

EXT. MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY - DAY

John arrives winded at the large, gray, domed stone building.
He takes pauses in front of a wall mural that reads: "Hate is
too great a burden to bear. It injures the hater more than it
injures the hated." -Coretta Scott King

Trey notices John's speed is zero miles per hour.

TREY
Why you ain't mov--

He notices John's ploy to evoke reflection by standing in front of the quote.

TREY

Man, you ain't gonna tell me something I don't know about this building. Look at the next quote and stop wasting time you ain't got.

John looks at the next quote over. It reads: "I knew then and I know now, when it comes to justice, there is no easy way to get it." -Claudette Colvin

John arrives at the entrance door--

Which is chained closed with a sign that reads "PLEASE EXCUSE OUR DUST."

JOHN

It's closed!

TREY

Closed?

John points his camera at the sign for Trey to see.

JOHN

The museum is closed for renovation!

TREY

Wasn't like that yesterday.

JOHN

"Wasn't like that yesterday?!" You didn't think this through, did you?

TREY

(dismissive)

I thought it through enough. Doesn't change a thing.

JOHN

Look, it's over. I can't get in. You can call it off. Really, you made your point. I get it.

TREY

You don't get this is the point. You in a problem situation and limited time to solve it. Eighteen minutes to be exact.

John checks his watch.

TREY

You've seen a bunch of break-ins on the job.

JOHN

Most break-ins aren't break-ins, they're walk-ins.

TREY

They teach you that in the asshole academy?

JOHN

Learned that one from Dad.

TREY

Yeah, saw he was a cop too. DNA breeding mother fuckers. Get your ass into the building.

John runs around the building trying windows and doors.

EXT. MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY - LOADING DOCKS - DAY

Behind the building, workers unload crates with African artifacts from a truck.

John waits until the workers enter the truck cargo area and then dashes inside.

INT. MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY - STORAGE - SECONDS LATER

John walks through a dimly lit empty museum corridor.

JOHN

(whispering)

I'm in, where am I going?

TREY

Do you know where you're from?

JOHN

Detroit three generations. Born in Detroit Mercy.

TREY

Before that?

JOHN
Mississippi, I think.

TREY
Before that?

JOHN
You're talking about Africa?

TREY
Africa is a continent.

JOHN
I know that. No, I don't know where
in Africa.

TREY
My moms would say we don't know our
history so we can't love ourselves.
That's why we can't love our
community.

JOHN
You're really talking to me about
loving others?

TREY
I am if you hear it.

JOHN
Where do I go?

TREY
If you're lost, what do you need?

JOHN
(blurts)
Your shitty clues ain't as good as
you think they are!

TREY
(mock insulted)
I take great pride in my clues.
But, if you can't hack it, then we
can end it right here--

JOHN
(apologetic)
Sorry. I got frustrated. Um, let me
think it through again. So I'm lost
and need...

John spots a MUSEUM MAP on the wall.

JOHN

A map.

He runs up to it.

JOHN

What am I looking for?

TREY

History, John. That's what we've been talking about.

JOHN

The whole damn building is filled with history!

John scans the index and settles on "African History Wing". He books it.

INT. MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY - EXHIBIT HALL -
MOMENTS LATER

Masks and weapons of different tribes adorn glass cases. John hurriedly scrounges for a token.

TREY

The cradle of human life,
Alkebulan, the true name of Africa.
They didn't kidnap slaves, they
kidnapped farmers and doctors and
sons and daughters and brothers and
sisters. And they did it with the
help of our own. Black slave
catchers helping the white man.
What do you think of that, officer?

JOHN

I think you can point to bad people
in any group when you need to make
a point, but their role obfuscates
the bigger conversation.

TREY

"Obfuscates!" Son of a-- is that
what's carved into Plymouth Rock
mother fucker? Get outta here with
your "obfuscates!"

John checks his watch: "3:00" left on the timer.

JOHN
(getting desperate)
There's hundreds of pieces in this
room. Where's the token?

TREY
Yes, now you understand my
difficulty. So many places I could
hide it, so why would I pick where
I did? Don't let the time obfuscate
your focus.

John looks around, dismisses a collection of headdresses.

TREY
What seems like a world of choices
is not the case. When there's only
one clear choice, doesn't make it
much of a choice, does it?

John examines a wall of spears.

TREY
Truth is we don't have as many
choices as we believe. We ain't
free. When was the last time we was
free? Maybe we ain't supposed to be
free or we won't even be us
anymore. You ever think about that?
It's our nature to be slaves. What
do you think about that?

JOHN
I think I'm running around with
bombs in my shoes talking about
Africa like I don't know my hist--

John spots a roped off EXHIBIT ON SHOES.

JOHN
Shoes.

John runs over, rips away the velvet ropes. Only a minute
left on the watch.

There are dozens of sandals, shoes and boots made of straw,
wood and leather. Practical design styles ranging from
grassland to desert. Some are adorned with beads, others with
feathers. A collection hinting at the varied lives and
landscapes of the giant continent.

JOHN
Which one is it?!

John frantically examines items, looking for the token. He rips apart shoes with closed toes and tosses them aside.

TREY

Tsk, tsk. You're destroying our history like it doesn't mean a thing.

JOHN

You're making me!

TREY

So you're saying you don't have a choice? Your personal survival excuses criminal behavior?

JOHN

That's bullshit.

TREY

Is it, though? If the stakes feel high enough you do what you gotta do to survive. You should think more about that one.

John pulls out another CHEVY HOOD ORNAMENT from a straw shoe, just as TWO BEEFY WORKERS walk in rolling a LOG CANOE on flatbed dolly. They take in the mess John has made of the collection.

Trey spies the workers from the camera and alerts Trey through loud mumbled YELL.

TREY

You got company.

John glances up.

WORKER #1

What the?!

JOHN

Shit.

WORKER #1 uses his radio.

WORKER #1

Trespasser in the African exhibit wing!

John quickly enters the code: 1120. He finishes punching in the final digit just as he is TACKLED by Worker #2.

The two workers pile on and hold a struggling John down. He checks his watch. He's earned an extra 30 minutes.

JOHN

You don't get it, I didn't want to do this!

WORKER #2

Sure, buddy. Why don't we just hang tight and you can explain this to the cops.

Trey pipes in on Bluetooth.

TREY

Remember the rules. Get out or go boom.

JOHN

I'd love to!

WORKER #1

So stop struggling!

JOHN

I'm not talking to you!

The workers are confused. John takes the opportunity to free an arm and SLUGS Worker #1.

JOHN

Sorry!

Trey laughs his ass off as John breaks away and squares off with the further pissed off workers.

JOHN

I gotta get out of here. I don't have time.

Worker #1 gets ready to lunge at John.

JOHN

Stay back!

John hurls the ornament at the worker.

TREY

I'm cool waiting for some more pigs to have a big ol' BBQ.

JOHN

Listen, for everybody's safety--

Worker #2 RAMS John with the canoe on wheels. He falls into it as the momentum carries him and CRASHES into a display case. Glass, masks, spears, and wooden shields fall on him.

TREY

Damn!

A HALF-DOZEN OTHER WORKERS arrive on the scene. They close in on John in a semi-circle.

John crawls out of the collapsed exhibit brandishing a BONE-TIPPED SPEAR. He takes some swipes so that the workers keep their distance.

JOHN

Stay back! I don't want anyone to get hurt!

Through the button cam, Trey has a SPEAR POV.

TREY

Tell 'em Kunta!

John glances through the GLASS WINDOWS to the street beyond. He focuses, THROWS the spear at it with all his might.

SLOW-MOTION: Everyone observes in awe as the spear sails gracefully through the air. Aerodynamic, sturdy, latent for 200 years, still as effective as the day it was constructed --

The spear EMBEDS in the thin wooden panel between the windows.

John drops his head in disappointment.

EXT. MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY - SECONDS LATER

John crashes through the window, rolling down the sloping roof onto the top of a maple tree.

He catches some large branches and quickly scales down. He takes off running.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

John quickly puts distance between himself and the museum.

Trey claps.

TREY

Whoo, that was good shit.

JOHN

Good shit?! The place was closed, I ran into security and almost blew up a bunch of innocent people and priceless artifacts!

TREY

But you didn't. And bad news, you lost time and you ain't gonna catch it.

SIXTEEN MINUTES on the watch left.

JOHN

Catch what?

Overhead, the MONORAIL rumbles by on the elevated track that runs in a three mile loop around downtown.

JOHN

The People Mover?

The train stops at Grand Circus Park station.

TREY

Dumb name for a dumb train that goes in a loop.

Before John can reach the station, the train continues on.

TREY

Built half-ass like this city. Ghetto mover. We all on a one way train with no driver--

JOHN

(impatient)

We all know the People Mover sucks! What, I'm supposed to be on that train but I missed it? What does this have to do with your family story? You just making--

Trey doesn't like being interrupted.

TREY

I think you better catch it at that next stop. Four minutes.

John picks up the pace, tails the People Mover from ground level.

TREY

And don't interrupt me again.

JOHN
I don't need your damn commentary
for every--

Trey yells into John's ear!

TREY
BAM!

Startled, John loses his coordination and stumbles, barely regaining his footing, trips over some garbage bags and crashes into some trash cans.

TREY
Do I really need to remind you how
close you are at any moment? Save
your breath. You got a train to
catch.

John holds his tongue and starts running towards the People Mover station a quarter-mile ahead. Fortunately, this part of the track has a curve in it and slows the train down.

INT. WAREHOUSE - SAME TIME

Trey tracks John's cursor on the map with a grin on his face.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - DAY

FORENSICS examines the area. The postbox is marked off. Chief Williams coordinates efforts.

ACROSS THE STREET Raven stands on a porch. A RING DOORBELL sits on the doorframe. She speaks into her radio.

RAVEN
You let me know the second anyone
remotely matching John's
description comes up.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
Copy that.

The HOMEOWNER emerges with their cellphone.

HOMEOWNER
Here's the Ring video from about
twenty minutes ago.

He hands it to Raven, she watches the clip that begins with the explosion caught in the corner of the frame.

EXT. JOHN'S PORCH - MINUTES LATER

OFFICER #3 steps out of John's apartment with John's phone and hands it to Chief Williams.

OFFICER #3

Wherever he is, he didn't take his phone with him.

Raven rushes up from across the street.

WILLIAMS

You get something off that porch cam?

Raven selects clips and scrubs as she shows him.

RAVEN

Yeah, something messed up's going down. Look at this-- John looks to the mailbox before it blows up. He's surprised, stands there petrified, then takes off.

WILLIAMS

Any earlier footage of who planted the bomb at the mailbox?

Raven nods and selects another clip.

RAVEN

3 A.M. Hooded figure. Looks like he has a limp.

ON PHONE: Under cover of night, a hooded Trey, face obscured, runs up to John's porch and leaves a shoebox, running off frame with John's shoes.

RAVEN

So what's up with the shoes? Some guy with a limp targets John to scare him into a good run? Even gives him some new shoes to do it.

Williams looks back at the birthday card, focuses on the phrase "run of your life."

WILLIAMS

John had one of those already.

RAVEN

Whatchya mean?

He's shaken with a dawning suspicion.

WILLIAMS

Trey Jones. John chased him down.
Crippled him for life.

RAVEN

Heard about that. John never talks
about it. What went down that day?

WILLIAMS

John and Officer Kelly, Kelly died
a few years back, heart attack,
they were on a routine patrol. Got
a call about some shit going down
on some new casino property.

RAVEN

(realizing)
The gig.

Williams nods.

WILLIAMS

They caught two bad brothers--

RAVEN

(dubious)
"Bad brothers."

KELLY

The Jones brothers. They pulled
first on John and Kelly. There was
a firefight. John had to shoot the
little one, he didn't make it...
(proud to remember)
Louie. Yeah, that was his name.
There was a case. Open and shut.

RAVEN

(rewatching footage)
A lot seems open to me.

Raven glares at an uncomfortable Williams as she speaks into
her radio.

RAVEN

Delta Seven, over. Get me Michigan
Correctional. I need an update on a
prisoner, Trey Jones.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

Copy that, Delta Seven.

EXT. BROADWAY STREET STATION - DAY

John dodges around street musicians, a homeless man and a group of joggers.

He shoulder bumps an ELDERLY WOMAN and knocks her down.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Excuse me!

Her ELDERLY HUSBAND helps her up and shakes his fist.

ELDERLY HUSBAND

That's right! Keep runnin'!

John runs up to the structure just as the train arrives overhead. He bolts inside.

INT. BROADWAY STREET STATION - CONTINUOUS

John bounds up the stairs and vaults over the turnstile. A MOTHER WITH TWO CHILDREN at a kiosk purchasing tokens shakes her head at John's disregard of payment.

MOTHER

(to children)

You see that? He's a bad man.

EXT. BROADWAY PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

The doors close as John sprints the last few yards.

John lunges, jutting out his arm just in time and manages to get it through the door. The door clamps on it, then opens to let him in. The doors close and the train pulls away.

John collapses onto a row of empty seats trying to catch his breath. The car is mostly empty except for an AFRICAN AMERICAN TEENAGE COUPLE making out in the back and a MAN (70s) in a trench coat at the very front.

TREY

Be still my Black heart! I have to say, I really didn't know if you were going to make it! Exciting shit.

JOHN

(winded)

The rules said no vehicles.

TREY

No vehicles to get where you need to go. In this case, you're exactly where you need to meet.

JOHN

Meet who?

TREY

How many options you got?

John looks to the teenagers.

TEENAGE BOY

What you looking at?

The boy suspiciously eyes John before the girl pulls his focus back on her to resume making out.

John turns his attention to the man standing at the front of the car who gazes out the front window. He approaches trepidatiously.

JOHN

Excuse me, Sir.

The man turns to John with tears in his eyes. This is FRED JONES (60). They both look at the other from head to toe --

Each wear the same model of Nike VaporMax shoes.

FRED

He was always so smart. Four years old, he let the air out of my tires so I wouldn't drive off. Guess in life, you can never really run away from your problems.

JOHN

(shocked, into Bluetooth)
This man is your father.

TREY

Is he though? He didn't wanna be. Ask him. Ask him how much he wanted to be my father. Ask him what he ever did for my moms, where he was for Louis' funeral, how many times he visited me in prison.

FRED

It wasn't always like this. After I got laid off at the Chevy plant--

TREY

You ain't get laid off. They fired your ass for being a drunk. Still lying to yourself after twenty years. You smell that, John? Take it in.

John inhales.

TREY

I can smell his breath from here.

FRED

Some dogs just born to bite. I could never teach you right.

TREY

How'd you try to teach me? With the back of your hand? Or was it by knocking Louis and Mama around?

JOHN

Tell him you ain't that man any more.

John looks into Fred's weary eyes. Fred won't even try to make a case for himself.

JOHN

He's sorry.

TREY

That was pitiful, John.

JOHN

(lying)

No, really, he is. I can see it in his eyes.

TREY

A sorry man knows what he would do different. Naw, he's just sorry his ass can't run away this time.

John spots the timer on Fred's smartwatch. There are only a couple minutes left on both their timers.

FRED

I think this is for you.

Fred hands John a CHEVY HOOD ORNAMENT, etched on it is the number 0527. John quickly punches it in. His timer jumps another FORTY MINUTES. He exhales in relief.

FRED
Don't suppose you got one for me.

JOHN
(horror-struck)
I never got one.

Fred nods in acceptance.

JOHN
Trey, where's his token?

TREY
No token. He got it easy. Pops just needs to punch in a six digit code on his watch.

JOHN
Where is it?

TREY
It's Louis' birthday. One try, shouldn't need more than that.

Fred clearly has no clue.

JOHN
(to Fred)
Look, you know this. Do you remember what time of year it was when Louis was born? What you were doing? Was it winter?

FRED
(exhausted, resigned)
Son, I'd appreciate this last moment in peace if you please.

TREY
Finally, Pops faces up to what he don't know. I'm proud for you.

Less than a minute left on Fred's watch. Fred begins taking deep breaths.

John is stunned.

JOHN
(realizing)
Trey... you can't do this.

The train pulls up to the station. The doors open. Twenty seconds left on Fred's watch.

FRED
No more time. Best you get those
young-uns off.

JOHN
Trey!

TREY
Last stop, any way you cut it.

John runs to the back where the teenagers are making out.

JOHN
Get off the train!

He grabs the boy by his shirt and pulls him to his feet.

TEENAGE BOY
Yo! That's it!

The boy takes a swing at John who easily deflects it and PUNCHES the boy in the stomach. The boy goes down, wind knocked out of him.

John pushes the screaming girl off the train onto the platform. He grabs the boy by the collar and drags him off the train just as the doors close.

EXT. RENAISSANCE CENTER PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

The girl tends to the groaning boy.

GIRL
Help! Help!

John looks up to see Fred looking back at him through the rear window. As the train pulls away from the station --

BOOM!

John turns away from the shower of glass and smoke. He looks back at the train as it rolls to a stop. The blackened rear end is dented outward.

EXT. JOHN'S HOUSE - SAME TIME

The SOUND OF A DISTANT EXPLOSION draws Raven and the rest of the forensics team's attention.

Raven looks towards the city to a plume of rising black smoke.

EXT. RENAISSANCE CENTER PLATFORM - CONTINUOUS

John breathes heavy, in total shock. He sits on the ground under a MAP OF THE CITY. The traumatized kids scramble off the platform and down the stairs.

TREY
(solemn)
Better get moving.

Trey stares at the monitors and John's zero GPS speed.

JOHN
I ain't going anywhere.

TREY
We can make that happen, too.

JOHN
You killed your father. Animal.

TREY
You don't get to judge me today.
Today is your judgement.

JOHN
Sure, you get no judgement. You're
free of judgement. You poor,
innocent soul that's never done
anything wrong.

TREY
I got my judgement. I lived in hell
for five years. You ain't even
lived it for one day and look at
the murderous thoughts you got.

JOHN
You didn't even give him a chance.

TREY
Fred had his chance. Many. But he
failed.

JOHN
So what is it? People don't have a
chance or they do? Do I?

TREY
You gonna find out.

JOHN
What about you? Do you get a
chance?

TREY

You talkin' some bullshit now.

JOHN

You learned electronics, you made all this happen. You could've been a-a-

(searching)

An engineer. If you believe people have a choice to be better, then you do too.

TREY

We don't all start at neutral, fool. You think you could've ended up with my life but chose not to? Your family would never let you. You got support. Went to college, ran track. I didn't have that. I had to drop out to make payday. I took care of Louis, 'cause Daddy. Wasn't. Around.

Distant SIRENS. The direction of the smoke begins to waft towards John.

TREY

What'd I do that day for shit to come down on me? You think I choose that? I'm hanging with my bro and you and that fat Irish fuck showed up a mood. You ain't give a man a chance, you break him, then judge him by your broken laws. That ain't my choice.

JOHN

Why did you have me meet him if there wasn't anything I could do? Your pops was an asshole, fine. So fuck him. That ain't on me. A tough city ain't on me. I'm just another man. I try to live up to my duties. I ain't perfect. Maybe I mess up here and there--

TREY

"Maybe you mess up?" I just caught up with your murder record.

JOHN

Back at the dealership you shot at us first. Is that where--

TREY

We shot after you flexed on us for doin' nothing.

JOHN

You were on private property.

TREY

It was an abandoned building.

JOHN

Not your building. We never know what we're gonna run into. Like we did. What was I supposed to do, approach with ice cream?

Sirens near.

JOHN

(spent)

I've been running all day. The statue. The museum. This train. No more games. Please, don't make me run any more.

TREY

Bitch, be thankful you can still run. I don't have that luxury because of you.

JOHN

I am sorry for that. I still feel ter--

TREY

Feel! What you feel don't matter, son! What you did matters.

JOHN

What happened at the RenCen--

TREY

Oh, you'll feel what happened at the RenCen.

JOHN

...Why? Is that where we're going next?

Smoke from the train drifts into John's face. John coughs. The smoke is so thick it obscures the camera view for Trey.

Trey struggles to make out John's view. Trey glances at the GPS, the distance markers, and John's THIRTY MINUTE timer.

TREY

Yo, Smokey, you better start talking with your feet or this conversation's over.

Trey's finger hovers above the destruct button.

TREY

I already got most of what I wanted from this day. I'm good calling it, protector of the pieces.

John weighs his options. Sirens are very close. John gets moving and darts down the stairs to exit street level. He doesn't know which way to go.

TREY

North. We gonna end this where we started.

JOHN

The RenCen.

TREY

See you there.

John, grits his teeth, almost in a slight grin, heads off.

The smoking train lies still on the track like a giant metal corpse.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Trey puts down the microphone, repeatedly wipes the tears from his eyes as they form, sniffles, fighting full out crying.

TREY

Bastard. Ain't have to be this way. Did it to himself. Had his chance.

Trey jumps out of his chair in a rage and smacks an old bankers lamp off the table. It crashes into the wall and shatters. He slams the laptop closed, stomps on it into the ground. He grunts in pain as he puts weight on his leg. He pulls up his pant leg and applies ointment, massages it.

He checks his phone, the streaming video and remote bomb app is up and running.

He packs up his backpack, makes his way out.

EXT. JEFFERSON AVENUE - DAY

John is ducked down in a stairwell waiting for a POLICE VEHICLE to pass.

He gets a brief glimpse of who's driving -- it's Raven. He takes a step, fights the urge to run out to her.

TREY

You clear.

The car rounds the corner and John's opportunity passes.

JOHN

Shit!

He continues his running in the opposite direction.

EXT. JEFFERSON AVENUE - VARIOUS

John runs through a red light crosswalk, pushes by pedestrians, avoids bike riders. He passes by stores, projects, condemned buildings and overgrown lots.

EXT. RENAISSANCE CENTER PLATFORM - LATER

The entrance area to the stairs leading to the platform is being TAPED OFF as more police vehicles arrive by the minute. The bomb squad van is already parked out front.

Back on the platform, Raven interviews the kids as MEDICAL PERSONNEL finish looking them over. She stands where John sat on the platform earlier.

RAVEN

You're certain this was the man that pulled you off the train?

She points to a picture of John on her phone. The shellshocked teens nod.

RAVEN

Then the man on the train exploded.

The teens nod again.

RAVEN

I'm sure that was very difficult for you both.

TEENAGE GIRL

It was real fucked up, man.

RAVEN

You said they talked. Would you say they knew each other?

TEENAGE GIRL

I dunno.

TEENAGE BOY

They had them same shoes, though.

RAVEN

Oh?

TEENAGE BOY

Orange VaporMaxes. Both dudes were wearing 'em.

A BOMB SQUAD OFFICER descends the stairs.

BOMB SQUAD OFFICER

First sweep is clean for additional explosives. We found the body on the train... the top half. Looks like he was standing right on top of a bomb.

Raven's eyes go wide at the implication.

DISPATCH (O.S.)

We have someone from Michigan Correctional.

RAVEN

(into radio)

Delta Seven, over. Patch me through.

EXT. GREEKTOWN CASINO - DAY

John passes by in a full body sweat. A group of CASINO PATRONS exit laughing.

EXT. GREEKTOWN CASINO - LOADING DOCK - DAY

Tom A emerges with the daily bag and walk towards the armored truck where Tom B awaits.

TOM B

Where're John and Raven?

TOM A
DPD radioed no officers available
today.

TOM B
Protocol dictates alternate route
when no patrol.

TOM A
(doesn't want to admit he
forgot)
I know that.
(quickly considers)
Yeah, we're taking Canfield
instead.

TOM B
Willis better.

TOM A
I said Canfield.

TOM B
(doesn't want to argue)
Alright, whatever you say.

Tom B gets into the cargo with the bag and shotgun. Tom A
shuts him in and gets in the driver's seat.

EXT. WILLIS STREET - DAY

John rounds corner, pauses at the red stop light as traffic
passes.

JOHN
What we gonna do at RenCen?

TREY (O.S.)
I ain't know what was gonna happen
that day, you thinking you get to
know?

JOHN
Why you ain't telling?

TREY (O.S.)
You in a position to ask?

John doesn't like the evasiveness.

JOHN
What are you planning? You tell me.

Across the street, an armored car slows and stops. The window rolls down and a jubilant Tom A calls out.

TOM A
Yo! John! What you doing out here?
They said you were out today.

TREY (O.S.)
You know that fool? Is that a
casino truck?

John attempts to casually turn his body away from the truck.

TREY (O.S.)
How you gonna turn your body like I
ain't watching. How he know you?

JOHN
I don't really know him. I do some
security for them.

TREY (O.S.)
(in disbelief)
You kill my brother on some casino
property and then you get a gig.
Your reward for protecting the man.

JOHN
It ain't like that.

TREY (O.S.)
Motherfucker, how you gonna say it
ain't, he literally calling your
ass over.

Tom keeps calling from across the street.

TOM A
Hey! John, over here!

The pedestrian walkway light turns green.

TREY (O.S.)
Rob 'em.

JOHN
They in a truck.

TREY (O.S.)
Rob 'em.

JOHN
They got guns.

TREY (O.S.)
You a bomb. Work 'em and rob 'em.

JOHN
I can't risk the lives of others.

TREY (O.S.)
You do it every day you carry a
gun. Get that money, I let you
live. You have my word.

INT./EXT. ARMORED TRUCK - DAY

John jogs up to the truck. Tom A gets his first good look at him. Haggard, sweaty, scratched up, all smiles, John gives a big friendly wave.

An irritated Tom B calls from the cargo hold.

TOM B
Why are we stopped?

TOM A
It's John.

JOHN
Hey, Tom!

Tom A calls out to John.

TOM A
What's going on? You look like
shit.

John overplays being casual.

JOHN
Oh, man, yeah. You wouldn't believe
the day I've had.

TOM A
Raven with you?

JOHN
Raven... yeah, she's with the car.
It's broken down. You're good with
cars, right? Can you come check it
out?

Trey shakes his head at John's unconvincing performance.

TREY (O.S.)
They drive off, you done, son.

TOM A
Why aren't you in uniform?

Tom B can't see John from the inside rear compartment.

TOM B
What's going on?

TOM A
Something's up with John's car.

TOM B
Keep driving. We got a timetable.
He can call for a tow.

Tom A puts the car back in gear to drive off. John freezes,
wings his next play --

JOHN
I saw Mary with Tom.

TOM A
What? When?

John leans closer to the window.

JOHN
I'm sorry, bro, we all see it. She
practically wants you to walk in on
them so she can end the charade.

A bewildered Tom A turns to Tom B.

TOM A
(doubtful)
You been with Mary without me?

TOM B
What?

Tom B looks like he is about to object, then --

TOM B
Look man, I been going through a
hard time. Frankly, so is she. You
haven't exactly been supportive. Of
either of us.

John is surprised and at the reveal of information.

TREY (O.S.)
You knew his wife was cheating?

JOHN
 (whispers)
 No.

TOM A
 (hurt)
 You're like my brother.

TOM B
 I'm sorry. I never thought it would
 get so complicated. John, what the
 fuck, man?!

Tom A has his back turned to John to speak to Tom B through
 the separation grate.

TOM A
 Shut the fuck up! Don't you worry
 about John! You worry about--

John takes his opportunity to reach in and grab Tom A's gun
 and point it at Tom A's head. Tom B witnesses.

TOM B
 Tom!

JOHN
 Don't move.

Tom A freezes.

TOM A
 (scared)
 What the fuck, John?

JOHN
 (To Tom B)
 Put the shotgun down back there.
 Unlock the back.

TOM B
 John--

JOHN
 I ain't got time and neither does
 Tom.

John pushes the gun into Tom A's temple.

TOM A
 (scared)
 Tom!

Tom B complies.

TOM B
It's all good.

JOHN
Good. Both hands though the grate.

Tom B sticks his wrists through the grate.

JOHN
(to Tom A)
Strap him.

Tom A ties up Tom B's hands.

JOHN
Out. Slowly.

John steps back to let Tom A open the door and step outside.

JOHN
To the back.

John keeps the gun trained on Tom A as he opens up the back. The shotgun lies on the floor. Both Tom A and John eye it.

JOHN
You're not fast enough. No bending over. Toss me the bag, Tom.

TOM A/TOM B
Which Tom?

JOHN
(irritated)
Doesn't matter.

Tom B kicks it out. Tom A looks at John with hate in his eyes.

TOM A
Fucking nigger.

JOHN
(shock)
Really? You gonna show you're a racist now?
(pissed)
Kick out the fucking shotgun.

Tom B kicks it out. John slams the back door closed, secures it by shoving the shotgun through the door handles.

He looks around. No witnesses.

TREY (O.S.)
(anxious)
Get the fuck out! Let me see you
toss the gun. Can't be having that
when we meet.

John tosses the handgun into the bushes. He slings the bag over his shoulder and flees the scene.

EXT. CASS AVE - DAY

Having gotten far enough away from the heist, John stops for a breather near some projects. He's doubled over panting. Can't even look around.

JOHN
I can't run... I can't... Am... am
I clear?

Trey examines the cameras.

TREY
Turn a around... more. Yeah, you
good.

John collapses. He looks at his watch. One minute left.

JOHN
I got--

John's watch beeps. Fifteen minutes added.

JOHN
Just like that, adding minutes to
someone's life.

TREY (O.S.)
Or taking 'em away, you should
know. Lord have mercy, I was happy
just having you run 'til you fucked
up, gave up, or blew up -- but I
shoulda bet your stubborn ass
woulda kept going. Whoo! I'm
starting to believe fate's gettin'
me that money for my troubles.

Trey looks John's vitals over. Readings are low across the board.

TREY (O.S.)
You holdin' up, nigga thief?

JOHN

You painted me a vilified Black man. You happy? Whatever side of the gun I'm on, I'm a Black man. That there's no taking race out of the conversation. Is that what you wanted to hear today?

TREY (O.S.)

I ain't the one saying it.

JOHN

So I give you the money and we're done? I live.

TREY (O.S.)

Deliver and done. You keep your life. Been a long day. We ain't straight, but respect, you been through a lot.

JOHN

This a hefty pace still. Let me walk it. I'll deliver. I've done it all, you gotta show some mercy.

TREY

(dumb-dumb mocking voice)

Okay. Sure, I'll do that.

(incensed)

I don't have to show you anything. Power is not having to show mercy. You think you've run enough?! You can't run from the truth-- you ain't kill my brother, you murdered him. You made him pick up that gun. Now bring me my money or you'll be another stain on the side of the projects. That's still worth all the money in the world to me, believe it.

JOHN

Fuck! Fine, I'm coming.

John uses the wall to stand back up. Starts moving.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM - DAY

Raven chats over the radio while forensics buzzes about.

CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Michigan Correctional.

RAVEN

This is Officer Harris, DPD. I have a priority inquiry about an inmate, Trey Jones.

CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEE (O.S.)

Guess you ain't get the memo. Jones broke out a few months ago. Crazy smart shit. Wired our grid to blow. We're still repairing. Gonna cost us at least--

RAVEN

You ain't think to let John know before?!

CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEE

Who's John?

RAVEN

The cop who put him away.

CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEE

What, you think we got a list for every asshole in here of who they'd kill if they escaped?

He has a good laugh. Raven lowers the phone.

BOMB SQUAD OFFICER

What're you thinking?

RAVEN

John's shoes swapped out by an escaped con with a vendetta. John running around like a man possessed. A man wearing the same shoes gets his legs blown off...

(disbelief)

John's got explosive shoes on.

DETECTIVE

For real?

RAVEN

I think so.

The detective grabs his radio.

DETECTIVE

APB on Officer John Taylor.

Raven looks down at the semi-healed cut on her wrist.

DETECTIVE
John Taylor is code six. Apprehend
if seen--

Raven grabs the radio from the Detective.

RAVEN
(into radio)
Belay that.

DETECTIVE
We have to act--

RAVEN
Yes, but with caution. Because
that's our job too.
(into radio)
Anyone spots John Taylor, they
should not engage. Same goes for
Trey Jones. Radio in immediately if
you spot either. I repeat they
should not engage.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
Attention all units, APB on Officer
John Taylor and escaped convict
Trey Jones. Profiles available on
all mobile terminals. Code ten, do
not engage. Repeat, code ten, do
not engage. Stay clear and notify
immediately.

DETECTIVE
So now we wait?

RAVEN
We gotta get ahead of him...

TEENAGE GIRL
Uh, Miss?

The girl points to the SUBWAY MAP on the wall behind Raven.

TEENAGE GIRL
Think I saw old dude give that to
your friend.

Raven turns.

REVEAL: The Chevy ornament is sticking out of the subway map
right where the RenCen building is.

EXT. RENAISSANCE CENTER - SAME TIME

Trey glances to the spot where he was hit by a car years ago. Spits on the ground.

CROSSCUT:

EXT. BRICKTOWN - SAME TIME

John jogs through the revitalized block. Hipsters hang at wine bars, ice cream shops and breweries.

John is on fumes. The day catches up with him. He runs at the pace of a slow walk, weighed down by the bag of money. He's a sweaty mess.

TREY (V.O.)

You ain't gonna make it at this
pace.

Trey's voice drowns out. John has no fight left in him and is on the verge of collapse.

TREY (V.O.)

Keep up. You ain't done yet. I
ain't done with you yet.

John's not hearing him. None of it matters.

TREY (V.O.)

You don't wanna blow it, but I
will, don't you doubt it.

Exhaustion has set in. Trey's pep talk isn't working on John.

Trey examines the street. His anger wells up.

TREY

Fuck it. You don't get to make the
choice to stop. So I'll make it for
you.

John is out of form. His breathing is the loudest thing he hears. He rounds the corner. Arms hanging at his sides.

Like a hazy vision, DOZENS OF DISABLED MARATHON PARTICIPANTS IN WHEELCHAIRS coming at him from the opposite direction. Attached to wheelchairs --

INSPIRING FLAGS: "IT'S ABOUT ENDURANCE, NOT SPEED." "THE RACE IS AGAINST YOUR MIND." "ALL YOU'VE GOT, AND THEN MORE." "WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING THROUGH, KEEP GOING."

They wave to him and cheer. They're all smiles as they pass by. He manages a small reciprocal wave.

Inspired by their spirit, a cathartic calm kicks in. The new mental juice isn't enough to get him speeding by any means, but it's enough to halt his decline.

He gets a new level of focus. Keeps up the slightly faster new pace.

Trey is impressed with the slight uptick in speed and steadiness.

TREY (V.O.)

Damn. You just score some cocaine?
I'm gonna miss this day, John. Most definitely gonna be watching these re-runs for years. You better believe this shit's on video.

INT. RENAISSANCE CENTER - WINTERGARDEN - DAY

Trey enters through the atrium entrance into the massive complex of interconnected skyscrapers. An indoor courtyard is framed by large windows two stories high.

Mounted under the atrium ceiling are CLASSIC CARS suspended and slowly rotating like slow-motion ceiling fans.

JAZZ FEST banners and decorative lights add to the ambiance. A JAZZ TRIO plays for those sitting at the public tables. A food court, classic car collection and shopping kiosks populate the floor space. If this were the first impression someone had of Detroit, they'd believe they were in a modern, upscale city -- circa 1980.

Trey appreciates the view looking out over the Detroit River at Windsor, Canada.

TREY

Never been to Canada. I'll have to visit sometime. I already don't like that idea anymore. Where should I go with my money?

JOHN (V.O.)

(huffs)
Hell.

TREY

Nah, too many blue boys there.

EXT. RENAISSANCE CENTER - DAY

John hobbles up, exhausted, numb. He looks over the spot he pushed Trey.

TREY (V.O.)
How you remember it?

John looks around for Trey.

JOHN
Worst day of my life.

TREY (V.O.)
First time we agree on something.
Inside.

INT. RENAISSANCE CENTER - WINTERGARDEN - DAY

Trey is seated at an indoor bench in the far corner of the atrium. SCAFFOLDING for a mural restoration hugs the wall directly behind him. Nobody else is seated nearby.

John, drained, slowly walks up. He finally faces his tormentor. The only thing separating them is the table. He puts the bag on it.

Trey motions to the chair in front of him. John pulls it out, plops down.

Trey shows off the phone puts it on the table.

TREY
You try something, no one else can
unlock this.

Trey takes out a bottle of water, cracks it open, and drinks it, savoring each gulp. John suppresses his want and watches like an obedient dog.

JOHN
We done?

TREY
Why you a cop?

JOHN
Come on man, let me take these
shoes off. Then we can talk all you
want.

TREY

'Cause Daddy was a cop and you want to be like him?

JOHN

You don't want to hear it.

Trey holds out A CADILLAC HOOD ORNAMENT, motions for John to talk. John checks his watch: TWO MINUTES LEFT.

JOHN

To Dad, being a cop meant equality.

TREY

To have white people power.

JOHN

To be able to arrest white people too. To be able to use the law fairly.

TREY

You think the law is fair.

JOHN

I didn't become a cop to reform the law. I didn't become a cop to solve America's racial problems. I became a cop to help people.

TREY

Did you help me the day you murdered my brother? You didn't stop being a cop after that day, did you? What'd your brother officers tell you after you killed Louis? It was you or that kid? You didn't have a choice.

JOHN

Something like that.

TREY

What would they have said if you were hanging out on some Tuesday, minding your own business, got approached like you were a piece of shit, assaulted, and when you defended yourself, you ended up crippled. Would your brothers in service say "you had it coming"?

JOHN

God, end this, Trey. Please, I'm begging you. I've been through enough. We both have.

TREY

(somber)

There is no "enough" John. Life don't stop until it's over.

JOHN

So you done with me or not? You want to teach me some shit but then gonna kill me anyway like I'm your father?

TREY

Nah, those bombs don't need to kill you.

He hands John the token and a BOTTLE OF WATER. John is overcome with relief. He begins to quiver. Cry. The tension of the day releasing. He looks at his watch, ONE MINUTE left.

John looks at Trey, makes the decision to show he's not totally broken. John quickly gulps down the water.

TREY

So you ain't broken, huh. All that...

John coughs, then finishes the last few drops. Punches in the numbers from the token.

His timer jumps to FIFTEEN minutes.

JOHN

(shock)

Fifteen minutes... Yo! What's this fifteen minute shit?

TREY

Time of our run until you took my legs.

JOHN

We had a deal. We done!

Trey shakes his head.

TREY

Sorry, Smokey, deal is you live, that don't mean we done.

(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

Them shoes you got on, on the lowest setting, you'll survive. But I'm gonna take your legs.

John's stomach sinks.

JOHN

No... Y-you're sick...

TREY

You're part of the sickness. So how healthy are you?

JOHN

(breaking)

I'm begging you. I'm sorry. Please!

TREY

Did begging help when I was on the ground?

JOHN

It doesn't need to turn out like this.

TREY

But it can. And it does.
(emotionally affected,
resolute)
Sometimes there's nothing you can do.

JOHN

(sobbing)

Don't say that. Don't say that.
(bucking up, pleading)
Trey, listen, you can stop this.

Trey is wiping away his tears, affected by the moment.

TREY

I know your pain. I been in your shoes.

JOHN

And I've been in yours!

TREY

(solemn)

Not yet, brother. And you still can't understand, until you cross to the other side. Until you've run your guts out.

(MORE)

TREY (cont'd)

After you've done everything you can. And it's still not enough to escape your fate.

John, unable to breathe, helplessness in his every fiber, drops to the table in agony.

JOHN

I know it happened to you. God, you don't have to do it to someone on purpose.

TREY

You know what they say: "An eye for an eye, a leg for--"

JOHN

(fed up)

Shut the fuck up. You think this is about smart-ass shit you been dying to say? This for real. You doing shit for real. You get that?

Trey holds up the phone, his finger over the red explosion button in warning.

TREY

I know real. I've had this shit planned out for years. You ain't gonna figure some way out now.

JOHN

I'm out there every day, dealing with domestic disputes, mentally ill, breaking up fights. I gotta keep up my defense. I have to make decisions. You do too. And you did. You ain't been perfect. You never ask yourself if you could have done better that day? You can't be that sure. I'm not. But just 'cause I don't have a good answer for you doesn't mean I ain't bothered.

TREY

I never said I don't belong in jail. I'm saying you do to.

JOHN

(softly)

Let me go. You don't want to hurt anyone else. Haven't you seen enough pain?

Trey doesn't have a response. He smacks the table in frustration.

JOHN

It's okay. We can both be okay.

Trey is torn. John is calm.

JOHN

Trey. Look at me. Please.

They make eye contact.

JOHN

You think being a cop is defined by having power over people. I get it, for you, that's what it is. What it's been from your dad, from all the authority over you. I should've done more that day. But the law gives me cover, in the street and in the courtroom. I get room to mess up. You don't.

TREY

I wanted you to taste it. To know what it feels like.

JOHN

Making people do things by taking their power doesn't feel how you think it does, does it? We can't hear each other when we're busy forcing the other into a corner. I'm getting to understand that better. That day with you, I failed to see a man in a difficult position. I failed to see myself in a brother. We can fix that, starting now.

Trey looks at the phone in his hand.

JOHN

Let's end it this time better than the last, okay? Nobody dies. You got power and you can use it how you want.

Trey navigates his phone to John's shoes, brings up the disarm button. John trembles in anticipation.

JOHN

Are you doing it? Did you stop it?

Trey, convinced enough, goes to deactivate John's shoes.

RAVEN (O.S.)
Don't move!

Raven has Trey dead in her sights, approaching from alongside the wall. Trey looks up and sees Raven, eyes wide, freezes.

RAVEN
I got him clean!

JOHN
No!

People nearby scatter as they become aware of the unfolding situation. The band stops playing and run off, those that can take their instruments with them.

Trey's hand is still over the button. It twitches.

JOHN
Don't shoot! Raven!

Raven approaches slowly. Her finger as tightly on the trigger as one can without pulling it.

JOHN
Stop! Right there. It's okay. We're working it out.

Raven is single-mindedly focused on Trey.

JOHN
Pulling that trigger is going to cause more problems. You don't want to rush in without reading the situation. You told me that.

Raven pauses in her approach.

Trey's other arm, hanging at his side out of Raven's eyeline, slowly reaches back behind him to one of the METAL RODS securing the scaffolding.

Like a statue slowly coming to life, Raven lowers the gun. She begins to tremble with the relief of what was avoided, yet still unsure if it was the right choice.

TREY
You trying to save your skin?

JOHN

Trying to save both of us. Just
turn these things off, man. Please,
can you do that?

TREY

(conflicted)

That wasn't the plan.

JOHN

There's no plan, man. We fuck up,
we try. Plans change.

SIRENS approaching up outside.

Trey's finger is still paused right above the command to turn
off the shoes. The sirens bring him back into the stakes of
the moment. His eyes can't hide his mounting fear. He nods in
accepting his fate.

TREY

And we're back.

He moves his thumb away from the deactivation button.

JOHN

Trey, deactivate me!

TREY

You think all those boys gonna let
me go?

JOHN

(to Raven)

We'll tell 'em to stand down.

(to Trey)

I'll protect you. I'll do
everything I can.

TREY

From the courts, too?

JOHN

Turn 'em off.

Trey holds out his phone. He shifts into survival mode.

TREY

Anyone follows me, you know I'll do
it.

JOHN

I know you're scared. You're right to be. But it can play out in a way that works out better for everyone.

Trey shakes his head, can't go there.

TREY

Gotta run.

JOHN

We been running--

Trey PULLS the rod away--

COLLAPSING the scaffolding over the three of them. Dozens of metal pipes and wooden planks rain down around them.

When all the noise and commotion finally stops, John and Trey emerge, relatively unscathed. Raven nowhere to be seen.

JOHN

Raven?!

Trey quickly hobbles off in the opposite direction of the atrium entrance.

John spots Raven under some beams. His strength is low as he struggles to lift the piece covering her face.

JOHN

Raven!

Raven moans.

Trey bounds up the escalators that lead up to the other side of the building.

JOHN

You okay?

John can't remove the tangle of beams around her.

RAVEN

Trey! Don't let him get away!

John looks up to see Trey disappear around the second floor corner hallway.

JOHN

I can't run no--

RAVEN

Go! Stop talking!

JOHN

But he's--

RAVEN

John, run!

John, in a small burst of anger-fueled adrenaline, roars in aggravation, heads to the escalator. The day of running has stressed John's muscles. The escalator stairs are painful for him and he moves slow. Each step is effort. He pauses, huffs, keeps going.

INT. ATRIUM CEILING - DAY

John arrives at the second floor. Light pours in from above. Just beyond the banister, hanging from the Atrium ceiling, a RED FINNED 1967 CADILLAC COUPE DEVILLE slowly rotates above the first floor.

The construction has blocked off the building exits on this floor. Trey is panicked as he scrambles around looking for a way out.

JOHN

(softly)

Trey.

Trey holds out the phone threateningly.

BELOW, POLICE rush in on the ground level.

Trey looks over the railing.

JOHN

We can slow this down.

TREY

You got back, so now you talkin'
all big!

JOHN

If we treat this like a lose-lose,
then we will. Let's find a way out.

Trey sets his sites on the FAR second floor landing which is currently inaccessible by the standard hallway due to construction...

But it seems possible by hopping across the series of rotating cars that hang from the ceiling.

Trey JUMPS.

JOHN

Trey!

Trey lands on the Deville. He stresses the joints, but despite some creaking, they hold firm. Trey quickly finds his balance, waits for the rotation to spin him 180 degrees, and jumps to the other landing.

John again finds himself marching to the beat of Trey's drum. As the back of the DeVille swings around --

He climbs up the banister, uses all he's got left and LEAPS --

Lands on the trunk of the hanging car, stressing the JOINT bolting it to the central arm, causing it to SWAY --

John rolls off, barely grabbing the fender, hanging on for life to avoid plummeting to the ground.

Raven, still trapped, watches in panic. Police begin attempting to free her.

DISLODGED METAL PIECES get the attention of the entering police.

RAVEN

Up there!

Using the momentum of the swinging car, John releases his grip and just barely catches the banister of the opposite landing. He heaves himself over and glimpses Trey round the far corner.

The momentum of the car swing BREAKS ADDITIONAL SAFETY JOINTS, and causes it to swing into A NEARBY HANGING CAMARO --

KICKING OFF A CHAIN REACTION THAT CAUSES THE ENTIRE SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR ALL THE HANGING CARS TO BURST!

40 tons of Detroit history in the form of Pontiacs, Cadillacs, Oldsmobiles, and Chevys rain down like steel missiles onto the incoming police below. Police run for their lives as the cars pound into the ground. The band instruments get decimated.

Raven is helpless as things crash down all around her.

No officer can follow John and Trey via the same route they just took.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - DAY

Trey, still holding the phone, reaches the end of the hallway. A glass window looks out over the Detroit River.

He repeatedly pushes the button to call the elevator.

A charging John SLAMS an unprepared Trey, crashing through the window --

EXT. RENCEN ROOF - CONTINUOUS

They emerge in a hail of glass, Trey back first, John on top facing down --

Drop TWELVE FEET towards a CONSTRUCTION PROJECT on the roof of the fourth floor --

Right onto a NAKED METAL ROD jutting upwards --

That IMPALES them both, up through TREY'S LEFT SHOULDER, and into JOHN'S RIGHT SHOULDER, clearing through.

Both SCREAM. They lay there, a sacrifice to the Detroit Gods on an altar of rebar. John is directly on top of Trey, facing him, nose-to-nose. A three-foot length of metal sticks out of John's back.

Both men are in great pain and distress. They struggle, but it's too difficult and too awkward.

They finally give up, pinned on each other like squirming beetles pinned to a display board. They painfully crane their necks in opposite directions.

	JOHN		TREY
Fuck.		Fuck.	

The phone lays a few feet away. Impossible to reach. TWO MINUTES left, still ticking down. They both try to reach for it. Not even close.

TREY
This some shit.

JOHN
Looks like no one's gettin' out
alive.

They have a panorama view of the city, facing away from the Detroit River and atrium. They contemplate the end.

TREY
I'll join you soon baby bro.

JOHN
I'm sorry I killed Louis.

TREY
Murdered.

JOHN
Murdered.

TREY
You sayin' that now, when it won't
save you.

JOHN
I'm sorry I ain't gonna be able to
take your pain away. You ready to
hear it matters? You think I wanted
that day to play out the way it
did?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CORNER STORE - DAY - FLASHBACK

The postcard carousel in the boarded-up store sits untouched -
- it's once again the day of the gunfight that altered the
lives of John and Trey forever.

INT. PATROL CAR - DAY

Rookie John (25) rides shotgun as Kelly drives. They scope
out the mostly desolate, run-down neighborhood. Kelly, almost
fatherly, leans over and straightens John's collar. John
focuses on some bird shit on the window as they pull up to --

EXT. MINIMART - CONTINUOUS

THREE AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN (20s) roughhouse and drink 40s out
front. They immediately sober up and eyeball the cop car.

JOHN
Why are we stopping here?

KELLY
Free coffee for officers. You want?

JOHN
I'm not taking from small
businesses.

KELLY
Shit son, we're giving. This guy
wants us to come 'round. That's why
he gives the coffee. You think it's
worth coming up here to save a buck
on black sludge?

As Kelly walks up to the store, the three men leave. John
sees through the window that the AFRICAN AMERICAN store owner
is elated to see Kelly. Kelly throws a "see what I mean" look
back at John.

John observes Kelly share a laugh with the owner.

DISPATCH (O.S.)
We have a 602L, old Cadillac
dealership on Jefferson.

JOHN
Copy that. We'll swing by.

Kelly gets back in the car with TWO COFFEES.

KELLY
Got ya one. He insisted.

John takes it.

JOHN
Loiterers at the abandoned Cadillac
dealership. Why does that even get
a response?

KELLY
All that property's been bought up
by the casinos. Gotta train the
neighborhood to respect the
property before they develop it.

EXT. ABANDONED CAR DEALERSHIP PARKING LOT - DAY

Trey (25) and Louis (18) sit on a curb. Louis sports a fresh
black eye. Trey lectures Louis while Louis picks at some
grass growing through the patchy concrete.

TREY
You can't let 'em knock you.

LOUIS
There was three of 'em. They jumped me.

TREY
You can't let 'em jump you.

LOUIS
Don't matter, I ain't walking that way again.

ANGLE ON: A security camera mounted to the wall of the dealership watching the brothers.

TREY
A'ight, so you start walking to work the longer way for a while. Then what happens when they decide they want that other street too? Then what you gonna do?

LOUIS
(upset)
What am I supposed to do, Trey? Fight 'em all?!

TREY
You ain't gotta do shit but hold yourself right and they won't fuck with you. They don't fuck with me.

Trey pulls out a PISTOL from his belt and holds it out.

Louis is taken aback. He doesn't seem comfortable with the gun being offered.

TREY
Now, you don't ever have to use this. I can even hang onto it for you until--

Louis grabs the gun with zeal. Trey is surprised.

Louis clearly enjoys holding it. He's already sitting up straighter, empowered.

TREY
Damn, when'd you become a little gangster? Alright, let's learn some basic safety before someone gets hurt.

A bit drunk and feeling loose, Louis throws his empty beer bottle at the dealership.

INTERCUT:

INT. PATROL CAR - SAME TIME

As John and Kelly are about to round the corner, they hear glass SMASH. They exchange a sober look.

WHOOP-WHOOP. Warning sirens on.

LOUIS

Oh shit.

TREY

Toss it. Stay cool.

Louis tosses the gun into a nearby shrub before they are in the line of sight of the police car.

John and Kelly roll up to the fenced off dealership property, blocking the damaged entrance gate.

KELLY

Good day, gentlemen.

Trey remains tight-lipped.

LOUIS

H-hi, Officer.

Kelly sizes Trey up. He knows who the weak link is.

KELLY

(to Louis)

You hear anything just now?

LOUIS

N-no, Sir.

KELLY

That's interesting because I heard something. Officer Taylor here heard something. Isn't that right?

JOHN

Uh, yeah. Yeah we heard some glass--

KELLY

So how is it we heard something, and you didn't? 'Cause it sounded like it came from right about here.

LOUIS

Uh, I-I, uh.

Louis is a nervous wreck, at a loss for words. Trey can't stand the compromised position his little brother is in.

TREY

I guess we wasn't listening.

Kelly nods, this is the attitude he was waiting for.

KELLY

I guess you ain't hearing me.
(to John)
Back me up.

Kelly pops out of the car. John is immediately in position behind him with his hand on his holster.

KELLY

You talking like you own this property. This your property?

Trey isn't backing down, looks Kelly in the eyes.

TREY

Naw, owning property ain't my thing.

KELLY

So you ain't welcome here.

TREY

As much as you.

KELLY

Wrong.

Kelly points to his badge.

KELLY

Get down on the ground.

Louis immediately drops near the shrub. Trey doesn't.

TREY

(To John)

Brotha, what you doing?

Kelly looks to John, John knows his allegiance is being tested. He makes his choice.

JOHN

Don't pull no brotha card here,
brotha. You ain't supposed to be
here.

Kelly approves, gets behind the resistant Trey.

TREY
Man, we ain't do nuthin'!

KELLY
You done plenty.

TREY
We was just talkin'.

KELLY
Trespassing and refusal to comply.
We're past talking.

He roughly takes Trey down to his knees.

KELLY
You think you been smart since we
pulled up. But you're not.

LOUIS
Trey!

TREY
Stay cool, Bro.

JOHN
(to Louis)
Eyes on me.

Trey is not going down easy and Kelly gives Trey's face a good shove into the concrete. Trey resists, throws his head back and SMASHES Kelly in the nose.

KELLY
Fuck!

John pulls his gun.

Kelly fully mounts Trey's back, puts him in a choke hold. Trey struggles.

KELLY
You just can't make it easy.

John trains his gun on Trey.

JOHN
Do not resist!

LOUIS
Trey!

Trey is having a hard time breathing. Blood from Kelly's nose runs onto his head and face.

LOUIS
Leave him alone!

Kelly glares at John to keep Louis under check.

JOHN
(to Louis)
Hey! I told you, eyes on me. Don't worry about him.

Louis can't take his eyes off his gasping brother.

LOUIS
He's choking him!

JOHN
He's gonna be fine.

LOUIS
Look at him! Does he seem fine?!

John looks at Trey, eyes rolling up, teetering on the verge of unconsciousness. John tightens his jaw, conflicted.

JOHN
He made his choices.

It's all the time Louis needs to pull the gun out from the shrubs and point it at Kelly and John.

LOUIS
Stop! Just stop!

Everybody freezes. John and Trey are both horrified at the turn of events.

EXT. CORNER STORE - DAY

SOUNDS OF GUNFIRE from across the street. A bullet SHATTERS the storefront glass and RIPS through the postcard stand.

More SHOTS and yelling as the situation devolves.

ANGLE ON: The DCS security camera "sees all."

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RENCEN ROOF - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

The two men are still pinned, 90 SECONDS left on the clock.

JOHN

When I first started on the job, I didn't think we needed to roll up tough like we do, but you escalated. The day I met you is when I learned that's just how we gotta do.

TREY

But when you come at us like that, that's how we gotta do. All this and you ain't really learn tho.

JOHN

All this and you still think you just a victim.

JOHN

Take some responsibility.

TREY

Take some responsibility.

They're both disgusted with the other, half-heartedly squirm, give up again.

JOHN

How we do ain't working out.

TREY

Seems so.

The timer clicks down. 90 SECONDS LEFT.

TREY

Shit, not like this.

With a renewed determination, Trey maneuvers his legs to get his feet up against John's chest. John YELPS.

JOHN

What're you--

TREY

(strained)

Ain't goin' out with your ass on top of me for the damn world to see.

Trey begins to LEG PRESS JOHN UPWARD.

Slowly John's shoulder approaches the top of the rebar.

John yells in pain. Does what he can to help, using a free hand to grab the rebar between them and himself push up.

The veins in Trey's face and neck pop out. He fights for every centimeter. His legs shake.

John grabs Trey's leg, helps steady it. Both strain from the pain of exertion.

The two men look into each others' eyes. Trey's bent legs violently tremble. Exhausted, he can barely keep John lifted.

John begins to tilt more towards the side of Trey's scarred leg, causing unequal weight distribution.

John, totally spent, gives Trey permission to give up.

JOHN
You can let go.

TREY
I can't... let go.

With a final scream and push, Trey uses his bad leg to heave John up and off the rebar.

John, free of the impalement, falls over and painfully rolls towards the phone --

He grabs it and hands it to Trey, who DEACTIVATES John's shoes just in time.

John looks over at Trey who lays on his back, pained, staring up at the sky and MUMBLING indecipherably, but for the words "Louis" and "Mama."

On his back, John kicks off his shoes, looks at his bloody, torn socks. He wiggles his toes, also looks up at the clouds.

Outside, MORE POLICE CARS pull up.

Raven emerges on the far side of the rooftop with a few other cops, limps across the gravel to John.

EXT. DETROIT - VARIOUS - DAY

-Shopkeepers open their stores.

-Couples purchase coffee and dessert from the Greektown pastry shops while musicians play blues on the street corner.

-An African American family walks on the riverwalk by the Underground Railroad Memorial.

-A cross-cultural spectrum of outer-suburb families arrive at the baseball stadium. African American, white, Latino, Arab, Jewish, Asian, wearing jerseys and barely keeping their excited children in check.

Detroit can be a beautiful, peaceful place, and on this day, it is.

INT. JOHN BEDROOM - DAWN - ONE YEAR LATER

The first rays of sunlight break in through a crack in the window shades and land on a shirtless John's face. He opens his eyes, looks up at the ceiling. A SCAR lays on the upper-right part of his chest.

INT. PRISON CELL - DAWN

Trey, shirtless, lays in bed on his back, a matching SCAR below his left collarbone.

Trey turns and looks out the window. His mind is active, but he is more thoughtful than angry.

INT. PRISON - ELECTRONICS CLASS - MORNING

Trey sits at the front desk reading James Baldwin's "Notes of a Native Son." He puts it down, helps an inmate wire a board.

EXT. PORCH - MORNING

John quietly steps outside and laces his shoes.

The air is crisp. The street is empty. He goes for a jog.

As he arrives at the nearby intersection, a GARBAGE TRUCK approaches. He has enough time to book it across the street.

He debates going for it --

But then slows down and jogs in place, WAITS THOUGHTFULLY for the truck to pass.

Once the coast is clear, John crosses the street and continues his run.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.