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## *reminder*

### **SCENE 1**

The cold wind blew through a dark alley, shuffling the man's dark coat. He had walked through these alleys so many times before. On and on, the long narrow concrete floor he looked down upon, kept getting longer and narrower. Just like the man's life, it doesn't seem to end. People had been telling him that he's getting too old for this job, that he needs to retire, but all he did was move on. Only if he could move on from his past.

He reached a corner where there's a turn, but he stopped. He sighed. He finally turned the corner, and another sad victim was waiting for him, already attracting flies.

"Ah, Wilson, you're here. We suspect he was killed 9 hours ago, and the body is not yet identified. It seems to be a knife wound."

"Thank you for the information."

The police officer seemed as if he had vomited a few minutes ago. The corpse's skin was pale, and it had lost most of its blood.

"Who do you suspect did it this time?" asked Wilson, gritting his teeth.

"We are working on that right now."

"Check for fingerprints, hair, whatever you can. I need to leave."

"Where are you going? We still need to check for evidence. It'd help a lot if you stayed!"

The detective stopped moving for a second, then kept on, ignoring the officer.

Wilson walked out of the alley, disappointed. He hated seeing a dead corpse, it made him feel as if that could be him someday. He always knew he could die any second, but that constant reminder, burned into his eyes, was too much to contemplate. *No, it's not the time to stop.* He lit a cigarette, the smoke felt familiar, something he will always remember for a very long time. The smoke flew up in the air slowly.

*Cough cough cough.*

He kept on walking, it was very quiet that cold night. Wilson looked around him in hope of what the bad people he was looking for would do to him. He knew he should have felt fear, but he knew that it's his time to let go. He was anticipating, waiting for the moment a shadow would stab him from behind. Nothing. He enters his apartment. He starts walking toward the fridge. Reached in to get yesterday's leftovers. He then went to his couch to finally relax after the long day. He looks at a picture of him and his brother fishing. The anger rises up in his eyes, he slams the frame on the desk so he can't see it anymore. He laid on the couch, breathing heavily, finally ready to rest.

### **Scene 2**

*BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ!* He instantly got up off the crumb-filled couch and answered the phone.

"Hello? Who is this?" Wilson answered with his morning voice.

"It's Chief Hawkins, we need you at the police station."

"Uhhh, yes. I'll be there" He got his coat and left the apartment.

He entered his slowly deteriorating car and drove off to the police station. His astray filling up to the brim, he stopped the car at the police station. The doors to the chief's office felt as if they got heavier each time.

"Woah hey, you don't look so good," said chief Hawkins.

"Why do you need me? Did something happen?" Wilson responded.

"Don't worry, nobody is hurt. See that man over there?"

The man outside the window seemed young, Wilson didn't recognize him. The young man was trying to tell jokes to the other officers. Nobody was laughing.

"Is he the new rookie you were talking about?" The detective said, curious.

"His name is Tommy Wilkerson."

The detective sighed and went up to the rookie

"Hi! I'm Tommy Wilkerson! I like telling jokes, and I'm here for the new jo-"

The detective instantly walked back to the office.

"Good guy. We had a great conversation." The detective lied. "Why is he here?"

"He's working with you," the chief immediately replies

"You've gotta be joking..."

"Nope, he is your new job partner."

"You can't do this. I told you that I don't want to work with anyone else after what happened." Said the detective with an annoyed tone.

"Look, you've been searching for this guy for too long. You should be grateful he was top of his class."

The detective looked back at the rookie, all alone but still smiling. He growled and said "Fine. I'll do it."

### Scene 3

As Wilson stormed out the door of the chief's office to get to his car, Tommy went after Wilson to introduce himself again.

"Hi! I'm Tommy Wilkerson! I like telling jokes, and busting people for their crimes. What's your name?" The rookie said anxiously.

"Wilson."

"Hi, Willy!"

"..Just.. call me Wilson."

"Oh.... okay." The rookie opened the dusty car door to get inside. The car door cranked open, barely opening, and Tommy squeezed inside.

"I've heard about you a lot in the criminal justice academy, you were really famous there. Were you really the best student?"

The detective did not respond, already annoyed by all the questions. Wilson turned on the radio, trying to calm down.

*\*click\* were caused by unknown people in the south, and a couple caused by a fire in a burning building. Several other murders have occurred all around North of Columbia. with most of these murders, they were in 1213 Walcott Street and caused by H- \* bzzbzzbzzzzbzzzbzzt.\**

The detective turned off the radio, angrily saying "Damn thing always does this!"

"Uh, one last question. Where are we going?" Tommy asked, confused.

“To a place the chief told me to show you. A crime scene.” Wilson said with no emotion.

Tommy’s eyes opened wide with shock, his skin turned pale like he saw a ghost. To the detective, it was clear that the rookie was new to seeing a corpse. He sighs in disgust. The car ride was finally silent.

#### **Scene 4**

They both exit the car, Tommy was sweating profusely. As Tommy and Wilson approached the dark alley, the detective stopped and sighed. The cold deceased body. Her eyes were red with blood, the hand marks on her neck were still visible. The rookie showed no emotion in his face. He doesn’t move.

“You better get used to this.” Wilson said, looking back at the rookie. As Wilson kneeled down to investigate, he found a familiar sign. The ring finger of the victim was gone. It was brutally cut off with a chisel just like always. He got up to take photos of the corpse. While Tommy was still standing there soullessly, waiting till it was time to leave, his face became blue, and his stomach brutally rumbled. He suddenly vomited on the floor.

“Rookie, if you're not going to help, go back to the car and wait there.”

Tommy did not listen. Wilson went towards Tommy and tugged on his shirt.

“Get in the car. Now.”

The detective pushed the rookie away towards the car, making the pale rookie stumble around. Tommy tried to get a last look at the body, but inevitably walked to the car door. Tommy strapped on his seatbelt and sat there, staring out the car window to the crime scene and observing the way Wilson investigated.

“I could maybe learn more by just watching,” the rookie said to himself with a shaky voice. Wilson entered the broken down vehicle, sighing. The car ride back to the precinct was dead silent. Tommy was speechless. He did not know what to do or what to say after seeing the lifeless body.

After Wilson drove in the parking lot, he got up from the driver's seat and stormed into the station. He instantly dashed towards the chief's office, where Hawkins was sitting down, writing. The detective slammed open the door and said angrily. “You tried to get me to work with a wuss?”

“Now hold on, hold on. Be nice to him.”

The chief was trying to calm him down, and the detective noticed, making him even more furious.

“Was this another one of Har-”

“Yes! The ring finger was gone. Like all the other victims. And the rookie, he puked!” The detective said. He slammed his hands hard on the chief's desk, shaking. He looked back at the rookie with disgust,

“I cannot work with that guy who has zero experience.” The detective got off the desk and circled around the room holding his head with his hands, mumbling not-nice words about the rookie.

“Hey!” the chief stands up from his desk and points to the door. “If you can't work with this guy, take a break, without pay.”

The detective paused. He walked up to the chief's desk and slid all the emails and papers to the floor, growling. Looking down at the detective, the chief escorted Wilson out of the room and slammed the door shut in his face. The detective sees the police officers looking at him.

"What are you looking at!? Get back to work!"

The detective stormed out of the police station, grinding on his teeth.

## Scene 5

Wilson left the horrible police station. The detective walked in the cold night to his apartment. Thinking about the rookie. *Idiot got me suspended for a week. I'm going to kill him. That's what. That's what I'm going to do.*

Before he realized, he was already at the entrance to his apartment. The detective walked into the lobby, and took the elevator up. He eventually reached his floor and started walking to 302, his room. His hands were still shaking with rage, struggling to use the key to open his door. As soon as he closed the door he started punching the wall. *That rookie ruined everything!* He slumped down on his couch and held a picture frame of him and his brother. Looking at the photo started to bring back the memories they used to share. He started tearing up. Then cried, then sobbed.

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

Tears were falling on the paper photo. He laid down and cried to sleep, no longer thinking of the rookie, but of his brother.

Still asleep, he started to hear sounds, then he saw colors. Red, white, and blue filled his eyes. He was below a stage with a mic on top. He realized he was dreaming, but he couldn't wake up. He saw the rookie talking on the stage, wearing his brother's clothes. He couldn't hear what he's saying, but he understood what was going on. *No! No! Move out the way!* He tried to speak but no words came out. He sees a figure in the bushes far away with a gun pointed towards the rookie. *No! Don't do this! Please!* The detective couldn't move. The gun fired. The awful noise ripped through the air like a plane.

He woke up at 5:00 AM hyperventilating and sweating. Wilson stood up with determination to find this man, the man haunting his life for 9 years. *No more breaks. No more nightmares. It's time to end this now.* He grabbed photos of maps and people. He stuck a dirty cardboard slab on his closet wall. With pins and red yarn, he connects all the images to the wall, his wall. *No more, Harold. You will pay for what you did.* Proud of his masterpiece—a dirty wall of images of people— he stands in front of it, smiling.

## Scene 6

He woke up again for the 7th time with sweat dripping down his head, and his heart beating fast. Each dream was different. The one he just had was him in a graveyard, looking at his poor brother in the ground, with Harold laughing in the corner of his eye.

The clock kept ticking, moving. If only he could do this as well. The rookie was still stuck in his mind. The detective got up from his couch for the 7th time and walked to the cardboard wall, his cardboard wall. He looked at the image of his brother, from across the room. *What should I do?*

Wilson went back to the office prepared to confront the rookie. As Wilson entered the building he saw the rookie sitting on a chair, all alone, waiting for the detective. Wilson walked up to the rookie and said in a monotone voice, "Hey!"

"Wilson, it's okay. I should have warned you that I've never seen an actual dead body before. I was nervous and it just came all out." The rookie said with a sad tone, as if he was trying to guess what the detective really wanted to say. He was wrong.

"Come with me, I need to show you something."

"Where are we going?" The rookie asked curiously. He was worried that Wilson would stab him in the chest for what he did, but the detective didn't seem mad. *Are we friends now?* The rookie asked himself, while following Wilson. He opened the car door for the rookie and he hopped in excitedly. The detective got inside and turned on the rusty, old car. He drove all the way back to his apartment.

The detective opened the key and gestured to the rookie to enter first. The rookie saw the punch marks in the wall and the tear stains on the couch, all he smelled was booze and cigarette smoke, wrinkles in his nose. The broken radio was talking about a murderer.

"You know, my mom always said 'if you're living clean, you are clean.'" the rookie said, hiding his disgust. Wilson tried to ignore that insult, and walked the rookie towards his closet. Wilson showed the rookie a giant cardboard wall of pictures of maps and red yarn connecting the images together. Possibilities of different people that could be the murderers, with one being circled in pencil.

"Ever since his first murder, I have been trying to find Harold for years. It mentally scarred me ever since."

The detective exclaimed, looking in pride at this disgusting, wet, dirty cardboard wall. The detective looked straight into the eyes of the rookie and said with a slight smile.

"You and I are going to find him no matter what."

They started planning. Wilson pulled all the pictures and maps off the wall and onto the floor where the rookie will organize it.

"I've got a clue." Tommy said, joyed because he was starting to be helpful.

"What is it?" said Wilson.

"So if the guy—"

The detective interrupted and said "Harold."

the rookie responded, continuing his sentence, "Ok. was here yesterday, and the day before, he was here, and so on, he's sort of going in a line!" shouted Tommy, pointing at a group of houses on 1213 walcott street, one at a time.

Wilson was still mad at the rookie for what he did. But should he? He looks at the rookie going back to find clues. He let out a chuckle.

"What's up?" the rookie asked, looking at the detective

"Nothing." the detective said, as he stopped looking.

"No, c'mon you can tell me. Please." the rookie begged.

"It's just.. You remind me of someone."

"Who? Please tell me."

The detective paused. He has never been this open with someone, other than his brother. His eyes opened wide with what he just said. *Don't say it.*

"You kind of remind me of my brother, he asked a lot of questions."

The detective stopped smiling, and the rookie looked away, going back to try and find more clues.

"Hey, I found something. As I said this guy is going in a line, so I tried tracing back his murders and I found out that he is either coming from one of the houses in 3492 Scottingwill street, or 5403 the motel on Scapper Road." The detective checked around where the rookie was pointing. Tommy looked at the detective,

"Should we go check?"

The detective was waiting for this moment all his life

"I'm going to Scottingwill street. And I think you are ready to go on your own investigation in the motel."

"Really? You mean it?"

The rookie's smile opened wider than ever.

"Don't make me regret my decision." Wilson says in a straight face.

## Scene 7

As the rookie exited out of his apartment, the detective leaves, to get into his car, and stop Harold for what he did to his brother. His hands were gripping tighter on the steering wheel, as his car went faster and faster. *I need to end this.* Him, fueled by revenge, thinking about ways he is going to torture this man, did not see he was already past the speed limit. He stopped his car on 3492 Scottingwill Street where the rookie suspected he lives. Wilson took out the gun from the glove box, left the car, and slammed the door shut. Walking to the dirty old house, a little voice he recognized says, *no more nightmares, no more pain, your brother would have wanted this.* He stopped in front of the house. shivers ran down his spine, not in fear, in hate.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK. The detective slammed his fist on the door.

"HAROLD! Come out and fight me!"

The possibility of this house belonging to one of a normal family didn't matter to the detective. He smashed open the door.

He went around the house, trying to find Harold.

"HAROLD, DON'T HIDE! YOU WILL PAY FOR WHAT YOU DID!" He stomped up the stairs to the bedroom and slammed the door open, but there was no sign of Harold. He went back downstairs to the living room area. His nose tingled because of the bad smell. He looked around the couch, already losing his hope, he looked around the sticky kitchen, then the bathroom. Still, Harold couldn't be found. He went outside to the trapdoor of the basement and opened it. Darkness seeped into his eyes as he felt around for the light switch.

*Click.*

Nothing. Just supplies for a hurricane and a jar of ring fingers, it's possible Harold lived here. He sat down on the creaky floor, and hyperventilated. *Where are you? I need to find you.* He laid down on the floor and wept. But then realized the rookie is where Harold is.

## Scene 8

As the Rookie got closer to the motel he started to get excited for his very first solo investigation

The Rookie pulled up through the driveway, stoked to find the murderer. He thought to himself that if he captures Harold, Wilson will finally appreciate him as a detective. As Tommy got the keys from the landlord to access every room, he started his investigation. He started with the bottom floor. Flies fly around each room. When the rookie started walking to the last room in the corner, all of a sudden the walkie-talkie made a static noise. *\*Tshh\** The walkie talkie on his chest starts up. The rookie, in a rush, rummages around for it.

“Yes, hello. Did you find him?”

“STOP RIGHT NOW!” As the detective was saying this, the rookie opened the room door. *Oh no*. petrified, the rookie stood absolutely still in the dark, shaking. The door closed. He brings out his flashlight, still shaking. The stab sound was quiet, like a mouse. A body fell.

“TOMMY? ANSWER ME! TOMMY?”

## Scene 9

The detective, fearing the worst, got in his car and drove to the motel. He pulled up to the driveway, frantically looking for Tommy in fear that Harold got to Tommy before him. *No no no, please no, this can't be...* the room door was open, with bloody footprints running away. He entered the room, and saw Tommy groaning, seething, bleeding.

“He-.. he got away. I'm sorry.”

“Tommy, don't die on me like this”

Little flashes of his brother's face appeared on the rookie's face in Wilson's mind. The knife was gone. Everything around Wilson was turning dark and gray. It was as if time slowed down. His brother's voice said *Harold is getting away! This man is not your friend, your brother was your friend*. The detective was hyperventilating, sweating, crying. He saw the rookie in front of him. Behind him was his brother. Everything else was dark, there was nothing. His past was crushing his spine as he crouched in front of the rookie. He started smoking less when he met the rookie. He smiled, after nine years, when he met the rookie. *Please forgive me*.

He put pressure on the stab wound and picked up the rookie to the car. He drove to the hospital as fast as he could and then tells the front desk,

“HELP! TOMMY'S BEEN STABBED!”

Without much explanation the medics took him to *the emergency room*. The detective stands there, all alone, just the same as the last time.

He walked back to his apartment, alone. He entered his apartment, all alone. *“I'm sorry, Tommy.”* The knife on his desk was there. He was thinking of what it would look like if his blood was splattered all over the floor. He walked to the knife and picked it up and put it up to his neck. *I'm sorry tommy*. His hands were shaking, he chuckled thinking of how Tommy looked when he saw that dead body. He remembered all the stupid questions that Tommy asked him. Then he remembered how he barely responded to

them, how he treated the rookie horribly, not even calling him by his name. There he was, standing in the middle of apartment 302, with a knife about to cut his neck. The voice from 9 years ago was back. *Do it. Do it. Do it. You couldn't get him. You're worthless.* He dropped the knife, laughing, and crying. Getting reminded about the past. He wiped away his tears.

He went to the cardboard wall, and looked at the possible place the killer is now. He remembered the bloody footsteps moving right from the motel apartment. He must have moved to the abandoned pencil factory that's about to get demolished on Friday. As he got to his car he heard the voice again. *You're worthless. Just give up.* But this time for Wilson it's different; he didn't care about the voices because he knew that he was close.

### **Scene 10**

The drive to the factory was cold, dark. The clouds in the sky are coming back. It seemed as if they never came when Tommy was with him. The rain starts to fall on the car windows as Wilson smokes his cigarette. *Harold.* The small voice in his head he gained when his brother died is getting louder and louder. He reaches for another cigarette but the cart is empty. Shakily, he sighs. The wheels on the car keep moving on and on but the detective doesn't feel he can. He can't control his hate for Harold. He sees the pencil factory on his left. *If I smash into it, I'll die, and possibly Harold too.* His life has no worth to himself anymore, it feels as if the little voice in his head is taking over his whole body. As he stops the car in front of the factory, he doesn't pull out his gun from the glove box. He wants to slowly beat this man with his fists. He leaves the car, the rain pouring down his hair.

He smashes open the cold, metal doors of the factory. Most of the machines are taken away, now it looks like a big empty room. The voice of Wilson echoes around the empty factory.

"Harold. You stabbed Tommy. Come here." The detective tries to keep a calm voice, but his fists are tightening.

"Was that his name?" Harold responds from somewhere. Wilson's eyes move around frantically, looking for him. He notices the fear in Harold's voice.

"You know... You're the last one that's looking for me. You are the last piece of the puzzle." His voice is weak, like he's been starving.

"Your brother was in the wrong for what he said at that point. The people would have agreed with me for what I did." The detective is clenching his fists, he can't seem to find him.

"Come out now Harold. I won't hurt you." a violent scratch on a pipe rings in the detective's ears, Harold's knife is sharp. A fast shot of gas leaves from one of the pipes, obstructing the detective's vision. In the smoke, he sees a pair of broken, brown, leather boots, and a drop of a knife.

Hands reach out from in front of Wilson to his neck. Harold pushes Wilson away from the gas where they can finally see one another. The rips in Harold's shirt and pants are huge. His crooked teeth are yellow. Wilson now sees the face that killed his brother, it's filled with spots of dirt from not showering. Wilson goes for a punch but Harold dodges and kicks him in the hip. Wilson switches back and punches Harold in the lip, throwing him off. Harold's creepy, bloody smile is now engraved in Wilson's mind. Harold



trips Wilson and he walks towards the knife on the floor. As Harold goes to reach it, Wilson gets up and kicks Harold in the side of his head, leading him to roll over and grab his ear in pain. He stands up with the knife and looks at Wilson with blood dripping from his cheek. He winces in pain and runs to Wilson with the knife in front of him, screaming. Wilson punches Harold to the side, not knowing that the knife has cut a huge gash in his body. Wilson walks to Harold, on the floor, his eyes wide.

“No. wait. You don't have to do this, I'm sor-.” the detective kicks the murder in the head, knocking him out.

The detective sits down and notices the huge cut in his belly. The pain that was stopped by the adrenaline rush was now gone, and it was getting worse and worse. He checked if the knife had rust on it. He sighed and said

“Thank god.”

It's no longer raining, it's a thunderstorm. The detective is dragging this handcuffed, unconscious body to the car, to give him to the police. The blood leaving Wilson's body is making him woozy, making it harder for him to focus. Wilson looks down on the cut in his stomach, distracting him from the Volkswagen about to hit him. His horrible life is flashing before his eyes, he doesn't move a bit. He just stands there soulless. The loud honk made by the driver praying that the detective moves. But it has no effect on Wilson.

He drives to the police station and stops a few feet from the entrance. He picks up the light, unconscious Harold and throws him on one of the desks. Everyone else there is speechless, looking at the bloody body of one of North Columbia's worst murderers yet.

“Wilson.... Did you do this?”

The chief asks, holding a handkerchief to his mouth.

“I need bandages. Now.” Everyone rushes around looking for aid for the detective.

## **Scene 11**

2 months have passed since Tommy was stabbed. He looks out the window from the hospital and sees the leaves now red, the clouds are back, and Wilson is waiting there on a chair.

“Tommy. You're awake.”

Tommy tries to get up but the extreme pain stops him.

“Woah, woah, woah. You're still hurt. Don't get up.” The detective stands up and gestures to the rookie to lay back down.

“Did... did you get him?” Tommy was still drowsy from the painkillers.

“Yes. yes we did, Tommy.”

“We?” the rookie asks curiously.

“You got the clues to find this guy. Without you, I never would have been able to do it.”

“Thank-”

“And, this wasn't even for your own gain as well. You did this for me. Thank you, Tommy.” The detective goes to hug the rookie.

The detective walks back to his apartment, smiling. After nine long years he finally,

unconditionally, can smile. The voice that has been in his head since the death of his brother, is now gone. He enters room 302 and looks at all the mess he's made for these nine years, just to find one person. He picks up all the newspaper, the beer cans, and the lit cigarettes and throws them in the trash. He goes to pick up a cigarette from his pocket, but he decides against it. *If you're living clean, you are clean.* He says to himself, thinking of Tommy. *My brother won't like seeing this mess.* He reassembles the pieces of the picture he broke earlier, and sees the somewhat clean house he used to live in.