

CHET CLARKSON (cont'd)
The other children are listed in critical condition. Two officers were killed, a third is in intensive care. One of the two teachers shot, Nathaniel Phelps, was dead on arrival. The other, Sharon Cribb, is listed in critical condition.

Chet puts a finger to his ear-piece.

CHET CLARKSON
(continuing)
We now take you live to the home of Gale Howards, Herman's mother.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE FRONT DOOR OF THE HOWARDS' HOUSE - DAY

Gale Howards is surrounded by reporters.

REPORTER
Mrs. Howards!? Mrs. Howards! Do you have any idea why Herman would do something like this?

GALE HOWARDS
Herman is a happy, healthy, teenager with a promising future. I can't understand why he would do such a thing.

She runs inside and shuts the door.

INT: COMPUTRON NEWS NETWORK - CONTINUING

CHET CLARKSON
Even more disturbing, Howards recorded the murders on a digital camera and has apparently e-mailed the file to a person as yet unknown. Police are holding the footage and say they have good leads on the e-mail recipient. One thing is certain, no one is sure what motives lie behind these vicious killings. Chet Clarkson reporting live.

INT: LAX'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Lax mutes the TV and picks up the phone.

LAX
Come on you tub-bastage, answer your phone.

JACOB
You calling the cops?

LAX
My agent.

INT: MARTY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Marty, Lax's agent, decent looking, twenty-nine year old power type. He is in the middle of coitus when we hear his cell phone ring. Marty stops to contemplate answering it.

MARTY'S GIRL
Don't even think of it.

MARTY
Never.

They go back to their business.

The land line rings. Marty is distracted again. The answering machine picks up.

MARTY'S ANSWERING MACHINE
Hey. You've reached Martin
Schrift. Leave your information
after the beep.

LAX (O.S.)
Marty! Marty pick up the phone.
Pull out and pick up, God damnit.
I'm going to keep calling until
you pick up. Don't make me sing
Deep Purple.

MARTY
I should answer this.

MARTY'S GIRL
Are you fucking kidding me?

MARTY
You're right...It's great. Great.

LAX
(sings. He is tone
deaf.)
When the deep purple falls
Over sleepy garden walls
And the something, something...
In the midst of my reverie,
(more)

LAX (cont'd)
You-hoo come back to me

Here in my deep purple dream...

Marty gets up and answers the phone.

MARTY
Lax, how are ya'? What can I do
for you this time of night?

LAX (O.S.)
I'm not interrupting anything, am
I?

MARTY
No, no, I just got in.

We hear the bathroom door slam!

MARTY'S GIRL
(Through the bathroom
door)
Cocksucker!

LAX (O.S.)
I got an interview with Herman
Howards, Marty.

MARTY
Howards? Lax, the kid was
arrested a couple of hours ago.
How could you possibly have an
interview with him?

INT: LAX'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

LAX
He e-mailed me clips from the
gymnasium. Video clips of him
shooting children.

MARTY (O.S.)
You're the e-mail recipient? Who
else knows?

JACOB
Jacob.

MARTY (O.S.)
That's it?

LAX
That's it.

MARTY (O.S.)
Fabulous! Let's keep it that way.
This is great.

LAX
Actually it's fucked up, Marty.
Twenty-four children and a handful
of teachers gunned down by a kid!
I think I'm going to call the cops.

MARTY (O.S.)
They'll impound the evidence!
Hell, they'll probably arrest you
on the spot. You know what kind
of witch hunts these things become.

LAX
I don't know, Marty.

MARTY (O.S.)
It's important for people to know
what really happened.

LAX
Is it? What magazine could we get
to pay for this interview?

MARTY (O.S.)
Best bet is Query.

LAX
That's a tabloid. I'm a
journalist.

Split screen. Marty on the right Lax to the left.

MARTY
Oh, now you're a journalist? I'm
sorry, I thought you were a
Webcaster. I wasn't aware you
were interested in Journalism any
more.

LAX
They used pens and pads, I use
pens, pads and a netlink. What
can I say? I'm not as talented as
my elders, I need more tools.

MARTY
Call it what you want. I'm
telling you, the magazines think
you're burnt out Internet trash.
Not to mention the sauce.

LAX
What about the sauce?

MARTY
Lax, you're a public figure.
What do expect to happen when you
get belligerent in public.

Flash back to the belligerent night.

INT: MOOMBA'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Lax is standing in front of Sarah Michelle Gellar and Freddie
Prinze jr.s table. He is smashed. They are not amused.

LAX
I've always wanted to meet you,
because I have a question that I
think only you could answer.

FREDDIE
What's your question, man?

LAX
Would you be so kind as to kiss my
hairy ass?

SARAH MICHELLE
You sure have a lot of class, Mr.
Morales. Now would you be so kind
as to leave us alone? Or do I
have to call security?

LAX
Security at Poomba's? Hah!

EXT: Poomba's RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Lax is thrown out onto the street by two big bouncer types.
The press capture all of this in a blaze of flash bulbs.

Newspaper headline: **"Drunken Morales gets the boot."**

Back to split screen of Marty and Lax on the phone.

LAX
So what?

MARTY
So they don't want to hire you.

LAX
Alright, I'll do it for Query.

MARTY
If they take you.

LAX

They'll take me. Anything on Howards is gold right now. They fly me and Jacob out there, we do the rest.

MARTY

Lax, why did this kid send you the stuff?

LAX

I'll let you know when I do.

MARTY

This could be exactly what you need, Lax. The perfect follow up to Georgia. Just don't go over the deep end with this one, huh.

LAX

What is that all about?

MARTY

You know what that's all about. The instability.

LAX

Two first class tickets to Iowa tomorrow. A research assistant waiting for me when I get there.

MARTY

A research assistant?

LAX

I have to know the background, Marty. I'm not going in there unarmed.

MARTY

I'll see what I can do. a friend of mine works for one of the big papers out there. I'll give him a call.

LAX

That's what makes you special.

MARTY

What's that?

LAX

Never afraid to use a friend in need.

MARTY
I know you're up to getting into
this kid's head. Big money, baby.
The right move.

LAX
Good-bye, Marty.

Lax hangs up.

LAX
(continuing)
Weasel.

MARTY
Prick.

INT: MARTY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Marty sits down at a computer. Books the tickets, etc.

MARTY
(To the bathroom door)
Sweetie, you coming out?

MARTY'S GIRL
Why don't you go fuck Lax Morales?

MARTY
We might not agree who gets on
top.

INT: NEWS BROADCAST - MORNING

A box at the top right corner shows various images of Broome,
Iowa.

NEWS CASTER #2
While parents of the formerly
peaceful community of Broome
grieve the tragic loss of their
children, parents all over
suburban America are wondering if
their town will be next in what
appears to be the next in a series
of copycat crimes started by the
Littleton, Colorado massacre.

The box morphs into the full screen and switches to shots of
the aftermath of "Bloody Broome": Blood on the walls, people
crying, etc.

NEWS CASTER #2 (V.O.)

"Bloody Broome" as it is now being called, is the eleventh high-school in two years to have incidents of students bringing guns into the classroom and opening fire. Never before has the carnage been this severe, nor the death toll as high as at "Bloody Broome". Twenty-five adults and children were killed in all, four remain in critical condition.

Back to news caster.

NEWS CASTER #2

The most disturbing fact remains that there is no clear motive for the act. What has become very clear, is that today's teenage culture is dangerous to everyone.

Senator John Cox issued a statement to the press this morning:

SENATOR JOHN COX

I am officially making a plea to the Grand Jury that Herman Howards not only be executed in the electric chair, but that his execution be televised in order for the children of today to see first hand what happens when you disregard the value of life. Thank you.

Back to news caster.

NEWS CASTER #2

A representative from the Children's Aid Society had this to say in response:

CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY REP.

Herman Howards must not be killed! He is a troubled child in serious need of psychiatric treatment. My God, what kind of message are we sending the world when America starts executing our own children?! Killing people does not stop people from killing people. When are we going to learn...

Back to News caster.

NEWS CASTER #2

In other news, the Dow is up 127 points, Nasdaq is down 158, and Computron continues to rise, today up 184 points.

INT: AIRPLANE (IN FLIGHT) - DAY

Lax and Jacob sit in first class. Jacob goes over his equipment, carefully cleaning each piece. Lax speaks into a tape recorder.

LAX

Intro to Herman Howards interview.
I...uh...I... penetrate the heart
of evil in hopes of understanding
the beast. Never know the price
my Karma will pay.

EXT: GEORGIA STREET - NIGHT

It is very dark. A group of skinheads hover around something. Fists swinging and feet stomping.

LAX (V.O.)

A chameleon, I blend, I fit in,
I acclimate. I get my story and
I pay the price. Any price. What
price will I pay for this one?

Close up on a black, fifteen year old boy's eye.

INT: RIDGEWOOD DINER - GEORGIA - DAY

Close on Lax's face.

ZOOM OUT:

Lax is mopping the floor of the diner. He is in a Ridgewood apron and has a shaved head. He is listening in on a conversation at one of the booths. **Sean Gall**, a man in his fifties sits with two young men, **Dougie-Dogg Wilson** and **Jim-Carl Lee**. They are skinheads.

DOUGIE-DOGG

So then, this little nigger piece
of shit says to me: "What you got
to be so proud of, cracker?"

SEAN GALL

And you told him?

DOUGIE-DOGG
I didn't tell him nothin'. I spat
on him.

Jim-Carl laughs hysterically. Gall is less than amused.

SEAN GALL
You spat on him?

DOUGIE-DOGG
Hit him right on the back of his
nappy head.

Jim-Carl explodes into laughter again.

JIM-CARL
I could just see that Dougie-Dogg
goob dripping down the back of
them naps.

SEAN GALL
Dougie-Dogg goob?

JIM-CARL
Yeah, Double-D's got bigger
goobs than a cow or two I know.

They both laugh again.

SEAN GALL
Bigger goobs than a cow. Well
tell me, Double-D, how you can
possibly expect me to make you a
captain, when, faced with a
beautiful opportunity to teach a
nigger exactly why the white race
is superior, the best you can
think to do, is spit a goob on
the back of his nappy head?

DOUGIE-DOGG
What's wrong with that?

SEAN GALL
Dumb kids. That's what you are.
The two of you. Dumb kids.

LAX
Excuse me, Mr. Gall?

SEAN GALL
What!?

LAX

I'm sorry to bother you, I've just been waiting to meet you for a long time and didn't think I'd get a better chance than now.

SEAN GALL

Why do you want to meet me, Yankee?

LAX

My mom told me a good deal about you. About what you did in the sixties.

SEAN GALL

The sixties? Your mother from around here?

LAX

She was. Moved up North when she met my dad.

SEAN GALL

That's a shame. Well, now that you've met me, what can I do for you, son?

LAX

I don't really know. I just moved here from New York.

SEAN GALL

New York City?

LAX

That's right.

SEAN GALL

Boy you a long way from home. What were you doing in New York City?

LAX

Going to NYU.

SEAN GALL

You're not a dumb kid, are you?

LAX

I'm not a dumb kid.

SEAN GALL

What made you come down to Georgia to meet me now, son?

LAX

I couldn't live in a place where
I had to be ashamed of my race.
Sir.

SEAN GALL

You felt ashamed to be White in
New York?

LAX

My neighborhood
was...uh...colorful.

SEAN GALL

Did you ever seek out the New York
chapter of the Brotherhood, son?

LAX

With where I lived, it was bad
enough to have my skin shining at
night as I walked home. If any of
those...people, had found out I
was involved with something like
that...I wouldn't be standing here
now.

SEAN GALL

See this is what I'm talking
about. A boy is made to feel
inferior in his own neighborhood
for no other reason than the color
of his skin. And they call us the
racists. Well you've come to the
right place. What's your name,
son?

LAX

Vic Bishop.

SEAN GALL

Where you stayin', Vic?

LAX

Over at the Motel Six.

SEAN GALL

I think we can find something a
little nicer, more home like for
you. Why don't you bunk with us
for a while?

INT: AIRPLANE (LANDING) - MORNING

Lax is jarred awake by the plane landing. Jacob is next to
him.

JACOB
Welcome to Iowa, old chum.

LAX
Gracias.

INT: FORT DODGE REGIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Sheila Williams waits for Lax and Jacob as they exit the plane. She is black, attractive. 25 years old, looking for a way out of Iowa and into New York. She holds a sign that reads "Morales".

SHEILA
Lax Morales?

LAX
Yes.

SHEILA
Sheila Williams. I'm here to pick you up.

LAX
I didn't know there were any sisters in Iowa.

SHEILA
Oh, yeah, three of us.

LAX
This is Jacob Silva, my camera-man.

SHEILA
Hello Jacob.

LAX
Do you have the background on Howards?

SHEILA
I have my background research on Howards.

LAX
You did it?

SHEILA
That's right.

LAX
Is it good?

SHEILA
It's brilliant.

LAX
May I have it?

SHEILA
Why would I give it to you?

LAX
Because that's what you were hired
for and I need it.

SHEILA
I was hired to pick you up and
take you to the prison. I haven't
been paid for this background.

LAX
What do you want for it?

SHEILA
We're negotiating?

LAX
Sure.

SHEILA
Let me sit in on the interview.

LAX
Absolutely, positively out of the
question.

SHEILA
Good luck, Mr. Morales.

LAX
No compromise?

SHEILA
Depends on who gets compromised.

LAX
I'll get you into the prison; you
can talk to the guards, take a
look at the conditions...And, if
it's as good as you say, I'll
drop you some quotes before I hand
the story in.

SHEILA
Drop me some quotes?
(Thinks about it)
No, I don't think you're going to
get it.

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - DAY

Sheila drives, Lax in shotgun, Jacob in the back with the equipment.

LAX

How about an exclusive with me on the interview with Herman?

SHEILA

An exclusive on your exclusive?

LAX

Yeah, I don't think that's been done before. The prospects are very exciting. We'll be breaking new ground. Please, give me the research.

SHEILA

Before you leave Iowa?

LAX

That would help.

SHEILA

Will you give me the exclusive before you leave Iowa?

LAX

argues Sure. Whatever you want.

Sheila hands the envelope over to Lax. ←

SHEILA

I've got interviews with Herman's friend Timmy Alburn. One with Michael Green, the school bully. Sharon Cribb, his Phys-ed teacher. Gale Howards.

LAX

Gale Howards? You just went around and interviewed these people on your own?

SHEILA

That's right.

LAX

No money involved?

SHEILA

No money.

Soft

next page

LAX

Why did they agree to it?

SHEILA

They wanted to tell their story.
And they know I'm good.

LAX

That good?

SHEILA

Brilliant.

LAX

You think it should be you going
in there with Herman.

SHEILA

I didn't say that.

LAX

You didn't have to.

SHEILA

I think we all know why it's not
me going in there. The question
on my mind is, why you?

LAX

Because I will get the answer out
of this kid's head.

- sticks out his hand

EXT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera, heading toward school. We see what is being described through Herman's eyes. But there is no sound to the action, all we hear is the interview. If someone is quoted by Herman, their lips move, but we hear Herman's voice.

LAX (V.O.)

What did you do when you got to
school?

HERMAN (V.O.)

Waited 'till everyone was in
second period. Then I went around
and put chains with locks on all
the exits. Second period is when
the security guards take their
lunch break.

EXT: BACK OF BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL - MORNING

Three security guards sit around smoking cigarettes, eating
their lunch, enjoying their break.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL COMPUTER LAB - MORNING

Herman's POV.

HERMAN (V.O.)
I went to the computer lab. Told
my friend Timmy to send out a
different message of the day on
the hallway monitors...A mandatory
pep-rally.

SHOT OF: The hallway monitor with the new message on it.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
Skip your third period, go to the
gym.

INT: COMPUTER LAB - MORNING

Herman's POV.

CLOSE ON:

Timmy Alburn, sixteen year old computer-nerd.

HERMAN (V.O.)
Timmy thought it was a great
prank. I told him to make sure he
was there. He said he wouldn't
miss it for the world.
(Laughs)

INT: BY HERMAN'S LOCKER - CONTINUING

Herman's POV as he opens the locker.

HERMAN (V.O.)
I went to my locker and got the
guns and pipe bombs.

He takes them out and caresses them lovingly.

LAX (V.O.)
How did you get the pipe bombs?

HERMAN (V.O.)
I made them.

LAX (V.O.)
Was it easy?

HERMAN (V.O.)
Yeah, once I got the instructions
off the net.

SHOT OF: An internet screen with blueprints for pipe bombs.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)

I went to one hardware store and
got half the ingredients,

INT: HARDWARE STORE #1 - DAY

Herman's POV of an old, bald man behind a hardware store
counter handing Herman a receipt with a big grin on his face.

HERMAN (V.O.)
Then I got the other half at
another store.

INT: HARDWARE STORE #2 - DAY

Herman's POV of a middle-aged man with a moustache behind a
hardware store counter handing Herman a receipt with a big
grin on his face.

HERMAN (V.O.)
No one had any clue what I was up
to.

LAX (V.O.)
And the guns?

HERMAN (V.O.)
A guy I know works at the WALMART
in Council Bluffs, he sold them
to me.

EXT: WALMART - DAY

A 24 year old **clerk** wearing a Walmart uniform
Walmart, waving to the camera with one hand
balances a shotgun on his shoulder. Big smile
to tell, but the man is Douggie-Dogg.

LAX (V.O.)
Don't you need to be eighteen to
buy guns in Iowa?

SHOT OF: A copy of Iowa's gun laws.

HERMAN (V.O.)
Do you have any idea how many
people own guns in Iowa? I tell
you it scares me.

? slows up

The gun law paper catches on fire. When it burns up, we see average, everyday **people** walking around the streets of Broome; **mothers** pushing their **babies** around, **businessmen** working at their offices, **hot-dog vendors** selling food in the park, etc., only everybody has a large gun clearly strapped to their side.

HERMAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

There are more ways around being under eighteen and getting a gun than I can count. Everyone and their brother has a gun.

A baby in a carriage holding a real gun and giggling.

LAX (V.O.)

You mean everyone and their mother.

HERMAN (V.O.)

What?

LAX (V.O.)

Everyone has a mother, not a brother. That's the saying- "Everyone and their mother".

EXT: PARK - DAY

An angelic looking **mother** playing with her **toddler** in the park.

HERMAN (V.O.)

Whatever.

LAX (V.O.)

You are aware that everyone has a mother, right?

An extreme close up of two baby-blue eyes.

HERMAN (V.O.)

Jesus Christ you ask stupid questions. I thought you were some kind of hot-shot reporter. That's why I agreed to talk to you. This is a very important story, you know. I don't think you'll ever have one bigger.

Back to the mother playing with her son.

LAX (V.O.)
 Did you ever think of the people's
 mothers or fathers or loved ones
 while you were shooting them in
 their faces?

EXT: PARK - DAY

Extreme close up of the mother's face screaming in horror,
 but the only sound we hear is the interview.

HERMAN (V.O.)
 No.

LAX (V.O.)
 You never thought that maybe these
 kids had people who cared about
 them, would miss them?

ZOOM OUT TO:

EXT: PARK - DAY

The mother holding her dead child in her arms. She is
 screaming uncontrollably.

HERMAN (V.O.)
 No.

LAX (V.O.)
 Why not?

HERMAN (V.O.)
 Because I'm obviously fucked up,
 Lax. Do you think a normal person
 goes into school and shoots
 everyone?

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera. He's shooting his classmates.

HERMAN (V.O.)
 What can I say? I'm special.

LAX (V.O.)
 How do you think your mother would
 feel if you had been killed?

INT: THE HOWARDS' BATHROOM - NIGHT

Gale Howards in a bubble-bath drinking a glass of white wine.
 Not celebrating, just relaxing.

HERMAN (V.O.)
It would have taken her a few days
to realize I was gone.

LAX (V.O.)
Oh, come on.

HERMAN (V.O.)
No, Lax. Sometimes I could go
three, four days without seeing
her.

LAX (V.O.)
How is that possible?

HERMAN (V.O.)
It's not like me and her have a
lot to talk about. She goes to
work all day, I go to school all
day. The last thing either one of
us wants to do at night is rehash
our daily routines. She has her
life, I have mine. That's the way
we both like it.

INT: THE HOWARDS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

POV of the TV. We see Herman at age nine, (blond with a bowl-cut) playing a video game. His eyes are the same baby-blues we have seen before. They're transfixed on the screen and we see the reflection of the game on his face. The only parts of his body that move are his fingers and eyes. A soda can sits next to him.

HERMAN (V.O.)
We don't interfere with each
other. She's very good about
giving me my space.

LAX (V.O.)
Your life consists of playing
video games and making pipe bombs.
Didn't she have a clue?

HERMAN (V.O.)
She's a busy lady.

LAX (V.O.)
What about your father?

HERMAN (V.O.)
He lives in Chicago with his
girlfriend.

LAX (V.O.)
Been kind of lonely since?

HERMAN (V.O.)

Lonely?

We hear **brakes** and a **scream** outside. Then a car **peeling out**. **Screams** follow. Herman is distracted by the noise, slightly at first. He shrugs it off and continues playing his game. Then sirens are heard. It is too much. He gets up and goes to the window.

EXT: ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HOWARDS' HOME - CONTINUOUS

A little girl strewn along the curb. There is a crowd around her and some people are **screaming**.

NEIGHBOR

That's Gale Howards' girl!

INT: BY THE FRONT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Herman looks out, a blank expression on his face, he doesn't seem to feel one way or the other about what has just happened.

EXT: ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HOWARDS' HOME - CONTINUOUS

A **Neighbor** runs toward the Howards' house, knocks on the door.

NEIGHBOR

Gale! Gale, are you in there?
Herman? Is anybody there?

INT: THE HOWARDS' HOME - CONTINUOUS

Herman has moved away from the window and is staring at the door while the Neighbor knocks. Finally the Neighbor gives up and leaves. Herman watches him go from the window.

EXT: ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HOWARDS' HOME - CONTINUOUS

An ambulance arrives. Herman's little sister, eight years old, is carried into the ambulance and driven away. The crowd begins to disperse. There is a splotch of blood left behind on the street.

INT: BY THE FRONT WINDOW - CONTINUOUS

Herman goes back into the living room and calls his mother's cell phone number.

GALE HOWARDS (V.O.)

Hello, you've reached Gale Howards
at Computron.

(more)

GALE HOWARDS (cont'd; V.O.)
 I can't get to my phone right now,
 but please leave your name and
 number, or feel free to e-mail me
 at
 GHowards@Computron, or try the
 office at 555-6808. Thank you.

Herman hangs up and dials 555-6808.

A recorded voice answers.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)
 Hello. Welcome to the Computron
 phone answering system. Your
 business is important to us. We
 know your time is valuable. The
 following is a list of options to
 maximize the efficiency of your
 call:

If you are calling in reference to
 stock options, press one.

If your call is regarding
 Computron merchandise, press two.

If your call is concerning job
 placement, press three.

For all other inquiries, please
 press four now.

Herman presses four.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)
 Please wait one moment while I
 transfer your call.

There are some clicking and transferring noises, followed by
 a dial tone.

YOUNG HERMAN

Damnit!

He hits redial.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)
 Hello. Welcome to the Computron
 phone answering system. Your
 business is important to us. We
 know your time is valuable. The
 following is a list of options to
 maximize the efficiency of your
 call:

(more)

(cont'd)
If you are calling in reference to
stock options...

Herman presses four.

RECORDED VOICE (V.O.)
Please wait one moment while I
transfer your call.

The same clicking sounds are heard, followed by a tired voice.

TIRED VOICE (V.O.)
Computron answering system this is
Gloria how may I help you?

YOUNG HERMAN
I'm trying to reach my mother,
Gale Howards.

TIRED VOICE (V.O.)
Is that all I can help you with
today?

YOUNG HERMAN
Yes!

TIRED VOICE (V.O.)
Are you satisfied with my service?

YOUNG HERMAN
Yes!

TIRED VOICE (V.O.)
Hold one moment while I transfer
you. And have a nice day.

INT: GALE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Rose, Gale's secretary, sits at her desk typing. The phone rings. She pushes the button on her hands-free headset and continues typing.

ROSE
Good afternoon, Gale Howards'
office, this is Rose, how may I
help you?

YOUNG HERMAN (V.O.)
I want to talk to my mother?

ROSE
She's in a meeting right now, I
can have her call you back just as
soon as she's done.

HERMAN (V.O.)
Can you get her? It's kind of
important.

Rose stops typing, agitated.

ROSE
Hold one moment, I'll see what I
can do.

INT: MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gale is sealing a deal with two corporate men when the
intercom buzzes.

GALE HOWARDS
In this particular sector, I can
all but guarantee that you will
triple your intake by the end of
the first quarter...
(intercom buzzes)

ROSE (O.S.)
Ms. Howards?

GALE HOWARDS
Please excuse me for a moment.

She picks up the phone hastily.

GALE HOWARDS
(continuing)
Yes, Rose, what is it?

ROSE (O.S.)
Sorry to interrupt, Ms. Howards,
but your son is on the phone and
says it's "kind of important".

GALE HOWARDS
I'm sure it's not as important as
this. Tell him I'll call back when
my meeting is over. No more
interruptions please.
(She hangs up)
Sorry about that. Now, as I was
saying...

INT: GALE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Back to Rose.

ROSE
I'm sorry. She can't take a break
now. May I take a message?

INT: THE HOWARDS'LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A tear rolls down Herman's cheek.

YOUNG HERMAN

No. Forget it.

He hangs up and refills his Coca-Cola, then goes TV and plays his game, tears still falling.

INT: GALE'S CAR - EVENING

Gale is driving home on the freeway. Something o

GALE HOWARDS

Shit! Herman.

She takes out her cell phone, but can't get a signal.

GALE HOWARDS

(continuing)

Wonderful.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE HOWARDS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Gale pulls up in the driveway.

INT: THE HOWARDS'LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herman is in exactly the same position in front of the TV. His sad expression has changed to a blank one. Gale enters.

GALE HOWARDS

Mom's home.

Herman does not respond.

GALE HOWARDS

(continuing)

Don't sit so close to the television, it's bad for you.

Herman scoots back a few feet, his eyes never leave the screen.

GALE HOWARDS

(continuing)

Have you finished your homework?

He shrugs. The house is silent aside from the constant gunfire sounds emitting from the TV. Gale goes upstairs.

INT: THE HOWARDS'BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gale runs herself a bubble bath and pours a glass of wine.

*In his
Too soft
her.
Something
else.*

Same shot of Gale in the tub as before.

INT: THE HOWARDS' LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Herman is in the same position as before. Gale enters, fresh from her bath.

GALE HOWARDS
Where's your sister?

HERMAN
She was out roller-blading.

GALE HOWARDS
This late?

HERMAN
I dunno'.

GALE HOWARDS
What was it you called about
before when I was in my meeting?

HERMAN
Nothing important.

GALE HOWARDS
So why did you call?

Herman does not respond, he keeps his eyes glued to the screen. An eerie feeling creeps over Gale.

EXT: THE ALBURN'S LIVING-ROOM - DAY

Sheila interviewing Timmy Alburn.

SHEILA
So, Timmy, you were friends with
Herman?

TIMMY
I don't even know what that word
means anymore.

SHEILA
Did you know him?

TIMMY
What do you mean "know him"?

SHEILA
Did you hang out with him?

TIMMY
How do you mean?

SHEILA
Did you talk to each other?!

TIMMY
Yeah, we talked to each other.

SHEILA
Did he tell you anything?

TIMMY
Some stuff.

SHEILA
Such as?

TIMMY
How he was going to get vengeance
on all the assholes. How like he
was the smartest kid in the school
and everyone around him was just
idiots. Jesus was a prophet
before he turned seventeen, [too.]
I don't know, crazy shit.

SHEILA
What did you think of what he told
you?

TIMMY
I just thought he was angry. I
didn't know he was going to shoot
the whole school up.

SHEILA
Why do you think he was so angry?

TIMMY
Some people are just angry. That's
the way it is.

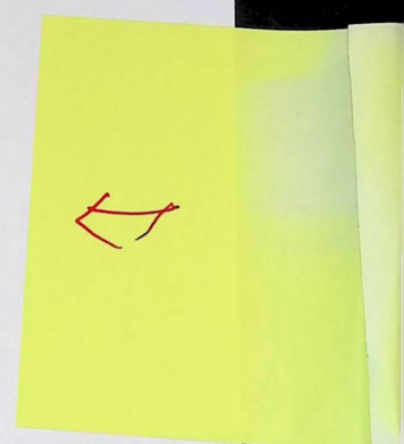
EXT: OUTSIDE THE SIDE DOOR OF BROOME HIGH - DAY

Sheila interviewing a **School Guard**.

SHEILA
Now, you've been a school-guard at
Broome High for how long?

SCHOOL GUARD
Eight years this september.

SHEILA
Did you know Herman Howards
personally?



SCHOOL GUARD
What do you mean "know him"?

SHEILA
Did you ever talk to him?

SCHOOL GUARD
Yeah, I talked to him. He was all kinds of fucked up...Do you mind if I say fucked up?

SHEILA
Say what you want.

SCHOOL GUARD
Yeah, he was *fucked* up! There's no way someone close to that boy could not have seen this coming. I don't know what's wrong with that boy's mother, but it must be something for her not to see the signs.

SHEILA
What would you say are the signs?

SCHOOL GUARD
The kid had no friends. How can a boy grow up with no friends and be a normal kid? Will you tell me that? Every kid, no matter how strange they are, has friends. Not Herman. He'd eat his lunch alone in the cafeteria and listen to the kids laugh about him two tables away.

SHEILA
Did you ever sit with him at lunch?

SCHOOL GUARD
We're not supposed to sit with the kids, and besides, child psychology ain't my field. I could tell though. The kid was going to snap. Anyone with a set of working eyes should've been able to see that. Those kids could have been nicer to that boy, maybe all this shit wouldn't have gone down.

SHEILA
Which kids?

SCHOOL GUARD

All of them.

SHEILA

You were on your lunch-break when it happened, right?

SCHOOL GUARD

What of it?

SHEILA

I'm trying to sketch out where everyone was.

SCHOOL GUARD

Now you want to blame me for this shit? [

SHEILA

I'm not blaming anybody.

SCHOOL GUARD

All you fools looking to blame someone. That's what you do. People feel better if they can point at something. Blame the games, blame the music, blame the school-guards. Go blame yourselves.

*Don't shit
twice in the
same place.
People will
catch you.*

EXT: THE BROOME FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

Sheila interviews **Michael Green**, he is a big kid, in his uniform.

SHEILA

Now, Michael, did you ever think that something like Herman Howards was possible in your school?

MICHAEL GREEN

I don't think anyone believes that it could happen in their school; until it does. No one is safe from these nerds.

SHEILA

Do you consider yourself a jock?

MICHAEL GREEN

I play sports.

SHEILA

Did you know Herman?

MICHAEL GREEN

How do you mean "know him"?

SHEILA

Did you pick on him?

MICHAEL GREEN

No.

SHEILA

Thank you for your time, Michael.

MICHAEL GREEN

That's all you want to hear?

SHEILA

I want to hear the truth. You can save your lies for the people that can't smell bullshit.

MICHAEL GREEN

All right, I used to rib him a little, but no more than any of the other kids. He's evil!

SHEILA

Do you ever feel that if you hadn't ribbed him, he might not have done it?

MICHAEL GREEN

Hell no. Kids been getting hazed forever. But you didn't used to hear about them going into their schools and killing everybody cause of it. No, hazing ain't the problem, these whacko kids are the problem. There's a whole bunch of them at every school. We should just flag them down and put them away before someone does something like this again.

SHEILA

So if they do execute Herman, do you think it should be televised?

MICHAEL GREEN

They should kill him on TV.

SHEILA

Why?

MICHAEL GREEN

'Cause the only way I can get him
out of my head, is by watching him
die.

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - MORNING

Sheila and Lax in the front, Jacob in back with his
equipment. They are driving toward the prison. Sheila keeps
looking at Lax but turning away before he notices. Lax is
reading the interviews we've just seen.

SHEILA

What's your claim to fame, Morales?

LAX

Come again?

SHEILA

What do you have that makes you
feel special?

LAX

(not looking up)

I'm the youngest journalist ever
to win the Pulitzer prize. Is
that good enough?

SHEILA

You call what you do journalism?

LAX

I speak to my audience.

SHEILA

A Webporter, and they gave you
the Pulitzer. What did you do
again?

LAX

You never heard about it?

SHEILA

I remember hearing something about
a year ago.

LAX

(He looks up at her)

I went undercover into a sect of
Neo-Nazi Skinheads in Surville,
Georgia. They had beautiful plans
to kill every "Nigger, Spic, and
Ash" in all the state.

(more)

LAX (cont'd)

I supplied the Feds with enough evidence to bust them up before they could do too much damage, and I still gave an interesting insight into the horrific mind of a skinhead. That's why they gave me the Pulitzer.

SHEILA

What did you find in the mind of a skinhead?

LAX

Terror.

SHEILA

Terror?

LAX

Like all evils, hate stems from fear.

SHEILA

You know about hate? *and fear?*

LAX

More than I'd like to.

SHEILA

What did they do to you?

LAX

They killed my girlfriend when we were in college.

SHEILA

I'm sorry.

LAX

So are they.

Silence for a moment. Lax looks at Jacob recording what he sees, then looks out the window to his right.

EXT: OUT THE CAR WINDOW - MORNING

POV of Jacob's camera. Miles upon miles of corn in all directions.

LAX (V.O.)

Hell.

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - MORNING

SHEILA

Morales is a Spanish name, but you don't look like you have any Hispanic in you.

LAX

I'm one sixteenth Mexican.

SHEILA

Honey, I'm one sixteenth Cherokee, but I wouldn't go around calling myself "Writes with a vengeance".

POV of Jacob's camera, now on Lax and Sheila.

LAX

The name, Morales, has been in my family for generations. My great-great grandfather grew up in Mexico and ran across the border when he was sixteen. Back in 1886. He married a white girl and had my great grandfather. ~~He married a white girl and had my~~ *and who* *564* grandfather. My grandfather married a white girl and had my father, and my father married a white girl and had me.

SHEILA

No daughters?

LAX

Each man married once and had one son.

Silence for a moment. Lax goes back to the interviews.

SHEILA

You must have seen some ugly things when you were in Georgia, huh?

LAX

(not looking up)
You can't imagine.

SHEILA

Tell me.

LAX

Forget it.

*Women
will
hate
this.*

SHEILA
I can handle it.

FLASH CUT: The black kid's eye, looking up. It is the same shot we saw briefly before.

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - MORNING

LAX
I said, forget it.

SHEILA
Did you go out bashing "Niggers,
Spics," and what else did you say?

LAX
Ash. That's what the *skin-heads*
call Jews.

SHEILA
Did you go out bashing, Lax?

Lax gives a laugh of full dismissal.

SHEILA
(continuing)
Did you bash anyone? You can tell
me. I understand. Surrounded by
hate. Life on the line. Maybe you
had no choice.

EXT: A DARK STREET IN SURVILLE GEORGIA - MIDNIGHT

A group of skinheads surround a fifteen year old black kid.
The child is tied up and has duct tape around his mouth.

CLOSE ON:

Dougie-Dogg's face.

DOUGIE-DOGG
Beat the boy.

CLOSE ON:

Lax's face(head shaved).

SHEILA (V.O.)
Was there a choice?

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - MORNING

Lax is in a trance.

He snaps out of it.

LAX

What?

SHEILA

In Georgia, did you have a choice?

Lax stares at her.

EXT: THE SIDE OF THE ROAD - CONTINUOUS

A **Prison van** is parked. Sheila's car pulls over.

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

LAX

Looks like this is it.

SHEILA

Looks that way.

Lax starts to get out.

SHEILA

(continuing)

You're not really going to give me
an exclusive, are you.

LAX

I'll make sure you get paid for
this background. I promise. Give
me your number, I'll pull the
necessary strings.

SHEILA

Think of it as a gift.

LAX

For what?

SHEILA

For busting up a group of
skinheads down in Georgia.

LAX

Can I have your number anyway?

SHEILA

Why?

LAX

Maybe we'll find time to fit that
exclusive in. You never know.

Sheila hands him her card.

*card? two
raft
they must
not work
for you,
you work for
them!*

SHEILA
You never do.

LAX
You were right you know.

SHEILA
About what?

LAX
You are a brilliant journalist.

SHEILA
Did you bash anybody?

Lax looks her in the eyes for a moment. Then walks away.

INT: PRISON VAN - CONTINUOUS

Lax and Jacob in the back of the van. The driver is on the other side of the cage.

DRIVER
You the Morales did that stuff
down in Georgia?

LAX
That's me.

DRIVER
Thought so.

The driver takes off his hat as he pulls away. He has a shaved head. Lax notices.

CLOSE ON:

Lax looking at the driver's shaved head.

EXT: A DARK STREET IN SURVILLE GEORGIA - NIGHT

Dougie-dogg, Jim-Carl and Lax(shaved head) surround an Asian girl. Dougie-dogg tries to grab her and she runs past Lax who does nothing to stop her.

LAX
That was awesome! Shit like that
just can't happen in New York.

DOUGIE-DOGG
Fuck that noise! Why didn't you
stop her?

LAX
I don't know. I didn't think to.
So what?

Dougie-dogg and JC shake their heads and walk off.

LAX
(continuing)
What does it matter?

INT: PRISON VAN - MORNING

DRIVER
You proud of what you did down there?

LAX
What?

DRIVER
Down in Georgia, you proud of what you did ?

LAX
Yeah. I am.

Close on Lax. He thinks about Georgia.

INT: THE SKINHEAD'S CLUB - NIGHT

It's a party. Some skinheads are moshing, JC and Dougie-Dogg are talking in a corner looking at Lax who talks with a **skinhead**.

LAX
So then I bashed him on his head with the garbage can. I pick him up, look at the kid, and I say: "You little maggot piece of shit. I had my ass kicked by so many of your fuckin' brothers. Now I'm gonna' take it out on you and your whole family. Do you understand me? I'm talking about your mother, your father, and your little sister. How's that sound?

SKINHEAD
I love the way ya'all say "fuckin'" in New York.

LAX
Yeah, I know.

SKINHEAD
How'd you know he had a little sister?

LAX

I took an educated guess.

SKINHEAD

What do you mean?

LAX

Sixty-seven percent of them in Georgia have a little sister. I looked it up at one of the census sights.

SKINHEAD

Damn, you are smart. And you were all by yourself when you bashed him with the garbage can?

LAX

Yeah, I followed him around the corner. You know, we got a good thing here. We got power here. we got White.

SKINHEAD

Yeah. Man. Let me get you another cold one.

LAX

Gracias.

The skinhead laughs as he goes to get another cold one for Lax.

PAN TO:

Dougie-Dogg and JC in the corner.

DOUGIE-DOGG

What do you think?

JIM-CARL

I think he's a nigger lover bein' treated like a damn guest of honor, that's what I think.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Someone should do something about it.

JIM-CARL

You can say that again.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Someone should do something about it.

He gives Jim-Carl a look to say "Get off your ass and do something about it."

JIM-CARL

Oh, right.

Jim-Carl gets up and heads towards Lax.

PAN TO:

Lax as JC approaches him.

JIM-CARL

You know what I think, I think
you're a nigger-lover.

LAX

Excuse me?

JIM-CARL

I said, I THINK VIC BISHOP IS A
NIGGER-LOVER!

The room goes silent.

JIM-CARL

(continuing)

What do you think of that?

Lax grabs JC, throws him to the ground and starts beating the
piss out of him. Sean Gall enters.

SEAN GALL

What is this Crap!?

The crowd scatters as a few skinheads pull Lax off JC.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Vic was beatin' the piss out of JC.

SEAN GALL

Why?

DOUGIE-DOGG

He called Vic a nigger-lover.

SEAN GALL

What a mess. Vic, in my office.

LAX

I'm sorry Mr. Gall...

SEAN GALL

Now Vic.

Lax goes into his office, Gall follows.

INT: SEAN GALL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

There are various **animal heads** on the walls. The office has the feel of a hunting cabin.

SEAN GALL
Have you been happy here, Vic?

LAX
I've never felt more at home.

SEAN GALL
Nothing bothers you?

LAX
No, nothing. I...Honestly Mr. Gall, I wish there wasn't so much competition between the brothers. It just seems that personal power within the group is more important to them than the entire concept of White Power.

SEAN GALL
You've noticed that too?

LAX
Yes sir.

SEAN GALL
And what would you do about it if placed in my shoes?

LAX
If placed in your shoes, I'd put a smart lipped Yankee in charge, sir.

SEAN GALL
What are you saying, boy?

LAX
I would like to apply as Captain of this outfit, sir.

SEAN GALL
Captain?

LAX
I can also understand why you might want to put somebody else, someone local, ahead of me, sir.

SEAN GALL
Dougie-Dogg? He's too stupid to lead sheep.

LAX

Sir?

SEAN GALL

I saw the way you beat JC in there. I know what he called you, but even so, don't you think that was a bit excessive?

LAX

I just snapped. It won't happen again.

SEAN GALL

Snapped? Bullshit! You wanted me to see that you have what it takes to lead this outfit. Someone insults you, you show them what happens. I respect that.

LAX

I thought you might.

SEAN GALL

You have a real way with the brothers. They look up to you.

LAX

Thank you Mr. Gall.

SEAN GALL

So I'll tell you what we do. Tonight, me, Dougie-Dogg, JC, and some of the boys will take you out for an initiation ceremony.

LAX

Excuse me?

SEAN GALL

Congratulations, son. You are the new Captain of the U.A.B.A., SS. Say it with me now.

SEAN GALL

The United Aryan Brothers
of America, Surville
Section.

LAX

The United Aryan Brothers
of America, Surville
Section.

SEAN GALL

How does it feel?

INT: PRISON VAN - MORNING

Close on the Driver's face.

DIVER
How does it feel?

LAX
What?

DIVER
Being a traitor to your race. How
does it feel?

Lax ignores his question and looks out the window. *A
lot of music goes on in his head, most
of it discordant.*

EXT: IOWA STATE PRISON - ESTABLISHING

The van pulls in past all the press.

INT: IOWA STATE PRISON LOBBY - MORNING

Lax and Jacob walk through metal detectors as
is inspected by a guard.

INT: PRISON HALLWAY - MORNING

Lax and Jacob are led down the hallway to the

INT: STAIRWAY - MORNING

Lax and Jacob climbing the stairs to the third

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - MORNING

Lax and Jacob enter and sit down in the room. It is a medium
sized room with one table in the middle and two chairs.
Jacob starts setting up his equipment.

PRISON GUARD
I'll go get him. If you're ready.

LAX
We're ready.

INT: PRISON HALLWAY - MORNING

Prison guard walking down the hallway. He stops at a cell.
We do not see who is inside.

PRISON GUARD
Howards. You ready to be famous
you piece of shit?

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - MORNING

(Throughout the interview we will be switching POV between
Jacob's camera and the real camera.)

Lax and Jacob sit in the room waiting for Herman. Lax stares
at Herman's empty chair.

JACOB
What are you expecting?

LAX
Evil.

The door opens.

POV of Jacob's camera (POV JC)

Herman enters. For the first time, we see all of
is now, at age sixteen. His hands are cuffed.
five seven. Stringy blond hair that comes down to
and is then cut short in a buzz. His chin is small
him a beakish quality. Eyes as blue as the Iowa
blank look on his face, but there is something wrong
it. Hate. The raw kind that no one is born with.
to acquire it.

POV of real camera (POV RC)

LAX
(continuing)
Hello Herman, I'm Lax Morales,
this is my camera man.

HERMAN
How much money do I get for
talking to you?

LAX
That's up to your mother, she
signed the contract with *Query*. I
don't have anything to do with
that.

HERMAN
How much?

LAX
I thought you wanted to tell your
story. Besides, I don't know
what the standard would be for a
story like yours.

Why?

HERMAN

That's because there is no standard for what I've done.

LAX

True. No one as young as you has ever killed so many people during a time of peace.

HERMAN

What do mean during a time of peace? No one has done something like this ever!

LAX

(Smiles. He's already getting under the kid's skin)

When Hitler was running out of troops toward the end of World War II, he enlisted children about your age, a little younger, into his army. Those children killed thousands of soldiers, but they were doing it in the name of their country. They were in battles. Why did you do it?

POV JC.

HERMAN

What the fuck is that stuff on your tie?

LAX

Dodo birds.

We see the tie, then back to Herman.

HERMAN

Why are you wearing a Dodo bird tie?

Jacob's camera zooms in on Herman's chin to reveal a scruffy patch of blond hair. Goofy looking. Then back out.

LAX

Did you get picked on a lot at school, Herman?

HERMAN

Why do you have Dodo birds on your tie?

LAX
Because they look stupid. But
they're really smart.

HERMAN
Okay. That's cool.

POV RC.

LAX
Did you get picked on at school?

HERMAN
Everyday.

LAX
Tell me about it.

HERMAN
The Jocks called me names cause
I'm small. They'd give me
wedgies. Push me around. Stuff.
One time I was at one of the
urinals and two asshole hockey
players came in and pushed me up
against it. I got piss all over
my pants. They laughed. I wanted
to cry but I sure as Hell wasn't
about to let them see that. I
just sat there on the floor
looking up at them. Then one
said, "Spare some change?" I
didn't have any. So he kicked me
in the stomach. They walked out,
left me there. I had to wait for
the bell to ring so everyone would
be in class and I could run home.

LAX
Spare some change?

EXT: NEW YORK CITY STREET - THE VILLAGE - DAY

A bunch of kids are sitting on the street holding out their
hands, asking for change. Big healthy looking kids, 17, 18.

HERMAN (V.O.)
It's MTV. They were doing this
show about kids who leave home and
go live on the streets in New
York. They ask people if they can
spare some change. If the person
says no, or ignores them, they
beat him up.

The kids start beating on a man.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - MORNING - POV RC

LAX

Why don't they just get jobs?

HERMAN

Why get a job if you can make just as much begging? Especially after that show. People all over were scared to say no to them. That's why people around here do it, they want to be like the kids in New York. If someone around here asks you that, and you don't give them anything, you'll get jacked up.

LAX

Would you have ever thought to do what you did if Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold hadn't done it first in Colorado?

HERMAN

But they did.

LAX

I know, Herman, pretend they hadn't.

HERMAN

Come on, they became real famous afterwards. Everyone knows who they are. They put my generation on the map. I just took it one step further. For the new Millennium.

LAX

You look at them as heroes?

HERMAN

Yeah.

LAX

Why?

HERMAN

They said Fuck You to the assholes. After Colorado, nerds started getting respect. Now that I've hit the scene, they'll be running the schools. I gave them a weapon.

LAX

You feel like you started a revolution?

POV JC.

HERMAN

You'll see. All over the country, kids are going to start doing what I did until you assholes finally realize that *we are here*. We matter, Lax.

LAX

What about the twenty-four kids you shot and killed in cold blood, Herman? Are they not part of your revolution?

HERMAN

Fuck them. They grouped me in with the nerds.

(He chuckles)

They thought I didn't count.

LAX

Well, Justin Martin was considered a nerd and you killed him anyway.

HERMAN

I did that fat bastard a favor. Look, I didn't say I wanted to be grouped with losers. Those asshole jocks grouped me in with them. I didn't have shit to do with those nerds. I'm an individual! Don't forget that! You think just anyone could go into school and do what I did? No sir. There's only one Herman Howards, and now history will remember me!

As Herman goes off on this, his face gets very red and for one moment his eyes actually turn red. There is a pause.

POV RC.

LAX

Have you ever played "DOOM"?

HERMAN

Of course.

LAX

What would you say is the goal of the game?

HERMAN

To shoot everyone up and get lots of points.

LAX

Now, how about "POSTAL", have you ever played that game?

HERMAN

I own it.

LAX

Explain it to me, Herman. I haven't had a chance to play.

The video game: POSTAL . As Herman talks, the game does what he says it does.

HERMAN (V.O.)

You're a postal worker. You go into the office one day cause you've had enough of people's crap, and you shoot them up 'till they're all gone.

LAX (V.O.)

It sounds easy.

HERMAN (V.O.)

Well, you've got time limits, and you get more points for hitting people in the face than in the stomach or the legs or the back of the head.

LAX (V.O.)

Do you "shoot up" women and children too?

HERMAN (V.O.)

You get less points for them.

LAX (V.O.)

That's nice.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

LAX

Your mom supports you in playing games like POSTAL?

HERMAN

I don't think she knew anything about it.

LAX

But she *bought* it for you?

HERMAN

I downloaded it off the web.

LAX

Would you say that playing these games has numbed you to violence?

HERMAN

I don't get your question.

LAX

Would you say that playing these games made it easier for you to go into your school and kill your peers?

HERMAN

Of course it did. How do you think I got to be such a good shot?

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DAY

HERMAN (V.O.)

At one point I was getting ready to kill this little prick, Eddie, who had back from the jocks. This girl started running for the door. She was about fifty feet from me,

POV of Herman's camera. We see the little girl running and the gun pointing at her exactly like "DOOM".

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

HERMAN

But I clipped her right in the back of the head and her face exploded all over some kid.

Herman breaks into laughter.

LAX

That's funny?

HERMAN

You had to be there. I mean here was this girl that thought she was home free because she was so far from me. And she's running, about to get to the door when all of a sudden, "OOPS! THERE GOES MY FACE!" and lands all over this tiny little kid in glasses. I mean, can you imagine what that kid must have been thinking when that happened? Jesus, that's worse then getting shit on by a bird! Sucker! I mean, what are the chances?

LAX

Do you even know the girl's name?

HERMAN

She was background. Not a key player.

LAX

It was a game, wasn't it?

HERMAN

It's all a game, Lax. Wasn't it a game when you bashed that nigger's face in?

LAX

What did you say?

HERMAN

Down in Georgia, when you bashed that nigger's face in. Did that seem real to you?

LAX

Never happened.

HERMAN

Well, all eight people that were there say it did.

LAX

What makes you say that?

HERMAN

WWW.KKK.com, Georgia faction. When you won the Pulitzer, they had a few things to say about you.

LAX

You make it a habit to surf hate-sites?

HERMAN

I have respect for anyone that's willing to stand up for their beliefs. Besides, you learn a lot about people from their websites. That's where you really learn stuff, Lax.

JACOB

I need to change disks.

LAX

Do it quickly.

He starts changing the disks.

HERMAN

So, how am I doing? Do you think it's going to look cool?

Jacob slips the new disk in.

JACOB

Roll on.

LAX

(Angry)

I'm not here to turn you into a rock star, Herman. There's a world outside that thinks you're a monster. They think you should be electrocuted at age sixteen. A lot of them want to broadcast it. On TV. That's a story. I'm a journalist. I don't give a shit if you look cool or not.

HERMAN

You don't give a shit about me, fuck you.

LAX

You're a story. I care about all my stories.

HERMAN

I'm nobody's story! Alright!? I'm me.

LAX

Cherish this time you have with me, Herman. Even if they don't execute you, the moment they transfer you to Population, someone's gonna' get you.

HERMAN

(huge grin, yellow teeth.)

They will never transfer me to Population. I'm too important.

LAX

Yeah, you're important. But you're worth more to them dead than alive, kid. Remember Jeffrey Dahmer.

HERMAN

Don't compare me to that freak.

LAX

You think *you're* all right?

HERMAN

I think I'm genius.

POV JC. Herman stares straight at the camera.

POV RC. Lax takes out a cigarette and looks at Jacob with a slight grin.

POV JC. Lax takes a moment to light his cigarette before he continues.

LAX

When you were eleven, your sister was hurt in a hit and run, right?

HERMAN

Right.

LAX

Then she died a few days later.

HERMAN

Yep.

LAX

Were you close to her?

HERMAN

We had our moments.

LAX

You want to tell me about one?

HERMAN

It's not nice to talk to strangers
about dead people who you cared
about.

LAX

So, you did care about her.

HERMAN

She was my sister.

LAX

Were you home when it happened?

INT: BY THE FRONT WINDOW OF THE HOWARDS' HOME - AFTERNOON

Herman, age nine, staring out the window at his sister being
placed in the ambulance.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

HERMAN

Yeah.

LAX

It happened right outside your
house.

HERMAN

You've done your homework.

LAX

Did you go out and help her?

HERMAN

No.

LAX

Why not?

HERMAN

Because I was nine. There wasn't
a whole Hell of a lot I could have
done, now was there?

LAX

Did you call your mom?

HERMAN

What?

LAX

Did you call your mom when you found out what had happened?

HERMAN

Did it feel good when you smashed that nigger's face in?

LAX

I'm asking the questions, Herman.

HERMAN

No.

LAX

No what?

HERMAN

No, I didn't call my mom.

LAX

Why not?

HERMAN

Because it didn't occur to me. What would she have done, anyway?

LAX

I imagine she would have rushed home.

HERMAN

You really don't get it, Lax.

LAX

Tell me about your relationship with your father.

HERMAN

What about it?

LAX

Was it a good one? Did he play ball with you as a small child? Or did he molest you and your sister in the closet while making you smoke cigars? Tell me about it.

HERMAN

(Laughs)

He was all right. Just a dad. He left when I was eight. I haven't seen much of him since.

LAX

What's the most memorable thing he ever said to you?

HERMAN

Make your mark, son.

LAX

When did he tell you that?

HERMAN

Right before he got in the car and moved to Chicago with his girlfriend.

INT: THE HOWARDS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Herman is eight and his sister is five. They are playing in the living-room. Gale is in the kitchen. **Frank Howards** enters. He is in his early fifties, a big man.

FRANK HOWARDS

Dad's home.

YOUNG HERMAN

Dad's home! Dad's home!

Both kids run to greet their father.

GALE HOWARDS

I thought you said you were going to have to work late tonight.

FRANK HOWARDS

I lied.

GALE HOWARDS

You lied?

FRANK HOWARDS

I guess I managed to get my priorities straight.

Frank and Gale exchange a little smile. This is something they've talked about.

FRANK HOWARDS

(continuing)

Go and put shoes on, kids. We're going to a very special place today.

GALE HOWARDS

Frank, where are we going? I've got beans cooking.

FRANK HOWARDS
Let them simmer. We're going to
John Wayne's birthplace, near
Winterset.

YOUNG HERMAN
Awesome!

GALE HOWARDS
Are you sure you don't want to
just take Herman?

FRANK HOWARDS
Sure. I want to do this as a
family. More things as a family,
right?

GALE HOWARDS
I'll grab my purse.

The phone rings.

YOUNG HERMAN
I'll get it.

FRANK HOWARDS
Let it go, Herman.

YOUNG HERMAN
(picking up the phone)
But what if it's important? Hello,
Howards' residence, Herman Howards
speaking...Dad, it's some lady for
you. She's crying a lot.

Frank takes the phone and goes into the bedroom. Gale looks
ill. Herman tries to take her hand, but she is limp. Frank
re-enters.

FRANK HOWARDS
Something came up at the office.
I have to get over there. We'll go
to Winterset another day.

Frank exits.

HERMAN (V.O.)
Two weeks later he packed his
bags. I never did get to see John
Wayne's birthplace.

INT: COMPUTRON NEWS NETWORK - DAY

Chet Clarkson reporting live.

CHET CLARKSON

The Supreme Court will convene this afternoon to decide the fate of Herman Howards.

The speed with which this case has moved is nothing short of extraordinary. Quite frankly, I think the administration should be commended for the reforms they have made in the system...That is not the opinion of Computron, of course. We're not really supposed to take political sides while on the air. I didn't mean to suggest...Aww, to Hell with it. I think the little bastard should fry and I think we all should be allowed to watch!

Chet is replaced by the Computron Logo.

VOICE (O.S.)

We are experiencing technical difficulties. We will resume our normal programming shortly. Thank you for your patience.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - AFTERNOON

LAX

What's your favorite movie?

HERMAN

That's a hard question.

LAX

Don't tell me *Natural Born Killers*.

HERMAN

That's an awesome movie. But I guess my all time favorite is *KIDS*.

LAX

Tell me about it.

HERMAN

Well, for one thing, that's really what it's like. Kids are doing some things that parents don't have a clue about. That's why the movie got so much shit.

LAX

What sort of things?

HERMAN

Fucking without condoms, smoking pot, drinking forties, taking X, getting into fights, that sort of thing. Straight shit. Parents want to close their eyes and pretend it's still 1955 and everything is hunky-dory. It's just not like that.

LAX

But that movie was about kids growing up in New York. Are you saying Iowa is like that?

HERMAN

After the movie came out, it got a lot closer.

LAX

I saw the movie. It does not have a happy ending.

HERMAN

When the theatres wouldn't show it, and parents forbid their kids to see it even on tape, they automatically made it cool. That's the nature of rebellion; always do what they think you're incapable of doing. Until they notice you.

LAX

You think that parents should have sat down and watched it *with* their kids?

HERMAN

Sort of.

LAX

Sort of?

HERMAN

Kind of. Yeah.

LAX

Well, Herman, I think we may agree on something.

HERMAN

I think we see eye-to-eye on more than that, Lax.

(He stares at Lax and lets out his chuckle)
But that's not why it's my favorite movie.

LAX

Why then?

HERMAN

Because the main kid says what's up.

LAX

What's up, Herman?

HERMAN

When you're a kid, you have to find something you care about and stick to it, cause that's all you got.

LAX

What's the one thing you care about?

HERMAN

I don't know, I'll tell you when I figure it out.

(laughs hard)
You know what I really miss, more than anything?

LAX

What?

HERMAN

My Nintendo sixty-four. Man, if I could just get one more game in, I'd be happy.

LAX

Is that really what you miss most?

HERMAN

Yeah, ain't it fucked up?

LAX

Do you follow politics, Herman?

HERMAN

What for?

LAX
Believe it or not, politicians
change the world.

HERMAN
How do they do that?

LAX
They make the rules. They break
the rules. They change the rules.
Do you know who your governor is?

HERMAN
No.

LAX
Do you know your Senator?

HERMAN
No.

LAX
Do any of the kids in Iowa?

HERMAN
They know who I am.

LAX
I guess they do. What's your
fondest memory of childhood?

HERMAN
I'm not that old.

LAX
Early childhood.

HERMAN
Shit, I don't know. Maybe...I
guess there was this one day when
my family took a trip to the beach
in New Jersey.

EXT: THE BEACH IN NEW JERSEY - DAY

The Howards are playing. The action follows what Herman is
saying.

HERMAN (V.O.)
My dad had relatives out there.
I guess I was five, my sister was
two. Me and my dad kept trying to
get my mom to go in the water.

Gale is playfully resisting.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)

Finally he picked her up and put her over his shoulder. He was much bigger than mom. He walked out to his belly, and threw her in. My sister started crying.

Julia is scared of their father.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)

She thought he was hurting her. My mom came running out of the water, picked her up. Telling her "It's okay, daddy hasn't hurt mommy."

Then a crab bit my dad and we all started laughing.

Frank grabs his toe and howls in pain. Gale, Julia, and Herman all laugh.

GALE HOWARDS
Isn't your daddy funny?

Young Herman giggles.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT: OUTSIDE THE HOWARDS' HOUSE - DAY

Herman's face, eight years old.

ZOOM OUT TO:

Frank putting the final touches on a fully packed station wagon, his new girlfriend inside.

FRANK HOWARDS
Well, that about does her. What do you think, Herman, could a man get anything else in there?

YOUNG HERMAN
I guess not.

Herman is trying to hold back his tears.

FRANK HOWARDS
What are you blubbering about?

YOUNG HERMAN
I'm not.

FRANK HOWARDS

Listen to me. Now that I'm gone,
you are the man of this house.
Men don't blubber. They deal with
what they're given. Are you up to
this? Because if you're not, I'm
going to have to find someone who
is.

Herman almost explodes into tears. Frank notices Gale staring
at him from a window.

FRANK HOWARDS

(continuing)

Keep it together. You're a tough
kid. You're going to do important
things.

Frank gets into the car and rolls the window down.

FRANK HOWARDS

(continuing)

Make your mark, son.

He takes off. Herman's eyes watch him. The tears stop
falling and a blank expression forms on his face.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT: BATHROOM IN BROOME HIGH - DAY

Herman is fourteen, a freshman. We hear a toilet flush.

ZOOM OUT TO:

Michael Ray and Michael Green exiting their stalls.

MICHAEL RAY

Hello Herman. Spare some change?

HERMAN

Just leave me alone. I've got to
go to class.

MICHAEL RAY

Just leave you alone? Hmmm. Not
today.

The two boys grab Herman and force his head into one of the
toilets.

MICHAEL RAY

(continuing)

See, this way you don't have to
listen to him bitch and moan.

They laugh.

Mr. Phelps, a science teacher, enters the room holding a box of Fig Newtons and a carton of milk. He is in his mid-forties, nerdy.

MR.PHELPS

What the Devil do you boys think
you are doing?

They instantly let Herman go, then look at the floor.

MR.PHELPS

(continuing)

What are your names?

MICHAEL GREEN

Michael.

MICHAEL RAY

Michael.

MR.PHELPS

Michael and Michael what?

MICHAEL GREEN

Michael Green.

MICHAEL RAY

Michael Ray.

MR.PHELPS

Is that their real names, Herman?

Herman says nothing. He has the same blank look on his face.

MR.PHELPS

(continuing)

Do you boys have any concept as to
the danger of what you were doing?
Do you realize how many different
strains of bacterium reside in
these toilet bowls? A fourteen
year old boy's face is most
susceptible to infection. If
severe enough, the infection could
be lethal. Herman could have been
killed. Killed for God's sake! Do
you understand? Now you two get
out of here, go to the principal's
office and tell him what you've
done. I'll be up shortly to make
sure you tell the truth. You two
should be ashamed to call
yourselves Broome students,
picking on a boy half your size.

The boys exit.

MR.PHELPS

(continuing)

You're a Freshman, right Herman?

Herman nods.

MR. PHELPS

(continuing)

I remember when I was your age, the older boys would treat me the same way. But don't worry about it. In a few years, things like that will all be fond memories of high-school. You'll probably be friends with those boys next year. I know it sounds crazy, but some of the greatest friendships start as fights. Take me and my best friend...

HERMAN

Mr. Phelps? Can I go now?

MR. PHELPS

Yes. Yes of course.

HERMAN

Thank you.

Herman exits. Mr. Phelps looks in the mirror, pats down a wild eyebrow hair.

MR. PHELPS

Poor little guy, he'll always be a nerd.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - AFTERNOON

POV JC

Lax and Herman are in the same positions.

HERMAN

Can I have a cigarette?

Lax hands him one. His cell phone begins ringing.

LAX

Excuse me a moment.

He answers it.

LAX

(continuing)

Morales.

VOICE (O.S.)

We haven't forgotten about you, Yankee.

We hear a click followed by a dial tone.

DOUGIE-DOGG (O.S.)

The guard opens the door.

GUARD

Time's up.

LAX

It's early.

GUARD

Time's up.

LAX

Why don't we stop here for today.
We'll come back tomorrow morning.

HERMAN

Whatever.

INT: PRISON HALLWAY - A FEW MOMENTS LATER.

Lax and Jacob head toward the exit.

JACOB

What are your thoughts?

LAX

Get a drink.

JACOB

A drink with Sheila?

LAX

A drink alone. Then, read the rest
of Sheila's background.

JACOB

Quite the user, aren't we?

LAX

What are you an angel? I'm not
concerned with Sheila Williams.
I've got other things on my mind.
Besides, what I need from Sheila
Williams is all right here.

He holds up the envelope.

JACOB

Who called you in there?

LAX
Old friends.

JACOB
Are they gonna' stop by, pay you
a visit?

LAX
They didn't say.

JACOB
You don't seem too concerned.

LAX
My concern lies with Herman
Howards. One thing at a time,
little buddy.

JACOB
Whatever you say, old chum.

INT: THE HOWARDS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gale and Sheila sit across from one another. The TV is on, but only static plays. All the drapes are closed. Gale is knitting a pair of small socks. She does this as she talks. There is something slightly desperate about the way she pulls through each thread.

GALE HOWARDS
They all blame me. Every last one
of them looks at me like it's my
fault. As if I *told* him to do it.
As if I never gave him any
guidance as a child. As if I
wanted this!

SHEILA
I'm not blaming you for anything.
I'm trying to give you a chance to
explain your side of this. That's
all.

GALE HOWARDS
He was my little boy once. He was
my little boy who had a sweet
smile. God did he have a sweet
smile. We were a happy family. I
don't know. My husband left when
Herman was eight, Julia was five.
She stayed the same, but Herman,
something happened to Herman.
He'll tell you that's not the
truth, but it is.

SHEILA

Who will?

GALE HOWARDS

Frank. He'll tell you Herman was happy and nothing was wrong, but it was. Herman's whole concept of the world was ripped away from him when he was eight years old. But it's not my fault. I didn't leave. Frank and I had a decent sex life.

(she nods vigorously)

It was good.

SHEILA

Immediately after the incident, you were quoted as saying: "Herman is a happy, healthy, teenager with a promising future. I can't understand why he would do such a thing." It seems you've changed your mind. Have you?

GALE HOWARDS

I said that because I had to. Legally I had to.

SHEILA

Legally?

She stops knitting and gives her full attention to Sheila.

GALE HOWARDS

I talked to my lawyer before the news people got to my house.

You think I'm a cold woman. That I don't care about what happened to all those children. No one understands until they're put in this position.

Look, I'm not a doctor. My official statement is that I don't know why he did it. All I know is one minute he's happy, the next minute he's depressed, the next minute I'm asking my friend about a doctor, you know what kind, and before I blink, he's gone completely insane. My child. Do you have children?

SHEILA

No.

GALE HOWARDS

I didn't think so.

SHEILA

Let's change gears for a second. What do you do for a living now that Frank is gone? Does he give you alimony?

GALE HOWARDS

I'm assistant-head advertising and marketing advisor at Computron's main office branch. I've been there eight years since Frank left.

SHEILA

You were promoted quickly.

GALE HOWARDS

Thank you. I made it my top priority.

SHEILA

Did Herman give you any clues as to what he might be up to?

GALE HOWARDS

Nothing.

SHEILA

Did you monitor his Internet time, keep him from watching R-rated movies?

GALE HOWARDS

If I had forbid those kinds of movies in my house, he would have gone to a friend's house and I would have seen him even less. Same deal with the Internet. If you had a kid, you'd know that.

Sheila squints to see her pad.

GALE HOWARDS

(continuing)

I apologize for the darkness. I've been keeping the drapes closed because I got tired of camera men popping up and taking a flash shot. I almost threw a frying pan at one. I'm not kidding.

Gale starts to laugh a little. Sheila joins her for a moment. Then Gale bursts into sobs.

GALE HOWARDS

(continuing)

I just want to wake up from this nightmare! Want so badly to wake up. Wake up, wake up, wake up. Wake up, wake up, wake up.

SHEILA

I should go.

GALE HOWARDS

No, don't go. As pathetic as it seems, I don't have anyone else to talk to. The office told me not to come in because they couldn't afford the press hounding the building, something about their stocks. Frank won't have anything to do with me. Says it's my fault. My friends can't speak to me because the parents of the victims are their friends as well and, well, there's only one me and twenty-five them. You do the math. It's a logical equation.

She laughs to herself.

SHEILA

Excuse me?

GALE HOWARDS

If you take one woman living in The middle of America, break her family apart, force her to work harder to get ahead in her career than any man would, force her to live with the knowledge that her daughter was killed while she was at WORK, trying to make money to pay for food on the table; then have her son lose his mind and...and massacre twenty-five people...massacre children...make sure nobody talks to her, nobody listens to her side; and then fire her. In an equation like that, how long would it be before she goes completely and utterly insane, all alone in here? I'm all alone in here.

She turns away from Sheila and starts knitting again.

INT: LAX'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lax and Jacob are finishing off a joint.

JACOB

Can I ask you something?

LAX

Sure.

JACOB

What happened down in Georgia?

LAX

Now? You ask me this now? When I'm high and just forgot about Herman Howards for the first time tonight? Now you ask me this?

JACOB

Yeah, ain't it fucked up.

LAX

I told you, I spoke to the Feds, they told me I had to become a Captain to gain access to the files they needed

EXT: A DARK STREET IN SURVILLE GEORGIA - NIGHT

Lax, Sean Gall, Dougie-Dog, Jim-Carl (with black eyes and a broken nose) and **three other Skinheads** walk down the street. Dougie-Dog has a bat.

LAX

What are we going to do?

SEAN GALL

Initiate you.

LAX

How do we do that?

A young black kid walks around the corner and into the light. He sees the skinheads, pauses for a second, then continues to walk towards them.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Well, looky what we got here.

Gall looks at Lax and smiles.

Lax is uneasy. The kid reaches them and tries to get by. The skinheads stand in his way.

KID

Get out my way. I'm going home.

DOUGIE-DOGG

You don't know how right you are.
Grab him!

The three skin heads and Jim-Carl grab the kid and duct-tape his hands behind his back. A strip covers his mouth as well.

CLOSE ON:

The kid's eye. It is the same shot we have seen before.

Dougie-Dogg extends the bat to Lax.

SEAN GALL

Beat the boy.

Lax does not move.

DOUGIE-DOGG

You know, it's funny; for all the big talk he gives us about bashing niggers with garbage cans, I ain't never seen him beat on nobody but JC here.

SEAN GALL

Your loyalty must be proven, Vic. Now you beat this boy and become Captain of my outfit, or it's going to be you tied up on this street.

Lax takes the bat and moves up to the kid.

CLOSE ON:

The kids eye.

Back to Lax. He trembles as he looks at the kid.

SEAN GALL

Do it now!

Lax raises the bat and swings down.

SMASH CUT:

INT: SHEILA'S CAR - DAY

CLOSE ON:

Sheila's face.

SHEILA

Did you have a choice?

INT: COMPUTRON NEWS NETWORK - DAY

Gary Walters reporting live.

GARY WALTERS

Gary Walters, standing in for Chet Clarkson, reporting live.

The vote is in on the People vs. Herman Howards. The Supreme Court has decided that Howards will be executed. The question now: Will the execution be televised?

Here with us tonight, Senator John Cox of Iowa. Senator Cox, what are your thoughts on televising the execution.

SENATOR JOHN COX

It is crucial that the good people of our America see first hand the true power of justice. I guarantee that anyone who has thoughts of committing a crime such as this, will have those thoughts eradicated from their system when they see what happens to a fair-skinned boy like Herman Howards as four thousand volts of electricity shoot through his veins. Thank you.

INT: LAX'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lax turns off the TV. Jacob is reading a porn mag. Lax picks up Sheila's book of interviews and opens up to the next one.

CLOSE ON:

The page Lax is on: **Sharon Cribb** .

INT: PAUL BLAKE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Sheila walks towards Ms. Cribb's room with a **Doctor** , early forties, nice guy, on the edge of insanity.

DOCTOR

I, uh...It's harder than you would imagine seeing a human being in this...state.

*Be careful
- I think
there was a
senator John
Cox from
Iowa. Actually
it's John Carlson*

SHEILA

I think I can handle it.

DOCTOR

That's what everybody says, but even so we've had to yank three visitors from this case. They think they know what it's going to be like when they see her. "Oh, it's just a woman who's missing her jaw. No big whoop." Well it is a big whoop. Normally I wouldn't even allow an interview to take place with a patient in this condition, but she *insisted*, and if she's strong enough to insist, she's strong enough to do the interview. What I don't need is you reacting in such a way as to remind her how she looks. Am I making myself clear?

SHEILA

I don't see how you could make it any clearer.

DOCTOR

Good, so long as we see eye-to-eye.

SHEILA

I'm not going in there to make her feel bad, doctor. I'm going in to get her story. Can she talk?

DOCTOR

Yes, but if you don't know what to listen for, it won't make any sense.

SHEILA

Do you have anyone who could translate for me?

DOCTOR

I could do the translating. If you don't mind being in my company.

SHEILA

I don't mind, doctor.

DOCTOR

Jim.

SHEILA

Doctor Jim.

DOCTOR

Here we are.

They enter the room.

INT: CRIBB'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Sharon Cribb is in a hospital bed and gauze is wrapped around her face. She is missing her lower jaw.

SHEILA

Hello Ms. Cribb, I'm Sheila
Williams. I got your message.

CRIBB

(Speaking is real
work for her.)

Ichs ochay. Aaaaaa heee hiss-hus-
hed hoo.

Sheila looks to the doctor.

DOCTOR

(translating)

"It's okay, I'd be disgusted too."

SHEILA

You don't disgust me Ms. Cribb.

CRIBB

Harren.

DOCTOR

"Sharon."

SHEILA

You don't disgust me, Sharon. I
came to hear what you want to tell
me.

CRIBB

He's evil

DOCTOR

"He's evil."

SHEILA

Got that one, thanks. Who's evil,
Herman Howards?

Cribb nods.

SHEILA

(continuing)

Why did he shoot you?

Cribb starts chortling.

SHEILA
(continuing)
Is she all right?

DOCTOR
She's...uh...She's laughing.

Her laughter turns to tears.

CRIBB
Why!? Why!? Ahd hlike hoo ho.

DOCTOR
"I'd like to know."

CRIBB
Ahh hagr ha hirl honce. A *hoohehul*
hirl.

DOCTOR
Um..."I had a girl once. A
beautiful girl."

CRIBB
Hhees hone. Heft he.

DOCTOR
"She's gone. Left me."

CRIBB
Ah han't heat hanheehing hat
hoeshont hit hew a hraw.

DOCTOR
I...uh..."I can't eat anything
that doesn't fit through a straw."

CRIBB
Hand ah haf ho hihea hy hiss
hahhen.

DOCTOR
"And I have no idea why this
happened."

CRIBB
Han hoo hell he? Hrease!
HAN...HOO...HELL...HE...HY?!

She lurches in the bed, exhausted and overwhelmed with emotion. The doctor holds her down as she tears at the gauze on her face. Frantic.

Too much?

DOCTOR
Nurse! Code two!

A nurse comes running in and injects her with a sedative.
Cribb eases into sleep. The doctor takes Sheila outside.

INT: HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Sheila is shaken up.

SHEILA
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

DOCTOR
It's not your fault. She falls
into those outbursts two times a
day. Post traumatic anxiety
disorder. The shrinks will find a
little yellow pill for her. To
make it easier.

SHEILA
You don't talk like a doctor.

DOCTOR
That's because what I've seen
since Herman Howards decided to
become famous, I wish I wasn't a
doctor. Welcome to my world, Ms.
Williams.

SHEILA
Sheila.

DOCTOR
Ms. Sheila.

SHEILA
Doctor Jim.

DOCTOR
Adieu.

She's about to go, then...

SHEILA
Oh, you didn't happen to catch the
last thing she said before
she...before the episode started,
did you?

DOCTOR
"Can you tell me? Please. Can you
tell me why?"

EXT: OUTSIDE THE BROOME DINER - DAY

It is a dirt lot. Herman stands alone, kicking pebbles around. Lax is across the road. He sees Dougie-Dogg walking up to Herman. Lax screams in a vain attempt to get Herman's attention. Herman looks at Lax and smiles, but cannot make out what he is trying to tell him. Dougie-Dogg grabs Herman from behind and runs off with him. Lax is left by the side of the road, unable to do anything.

SMASH CUT:

EXT: A DARK STREET IN SURVILLE GEORGIA - NIGHT

CLOSE ON:

The black kid's eye.

SMASH CUT:

INT: LAX'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lax wakes up from the nightmare. The window is open and a cool breeze is coming in. Jacob is nowhere to be found. He gets out of bed and goes to the bathroom.

INT: THE BATHROOM - CONTINUING

Lax splashes water on his face than looks in the mirror. He sees Herman's face looking back.

HERMAN

You're a super star. Yes you are.
Yes you are. Goodnight super star.

INT: LAX'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lax wakes up for real this time. He looks over and sees Jacob sleeping in the twin bed next to his. The porno mag draped across his belly.

LAX

That's disgusting.

He notices that he has fallen asleep with Sheila's interviews on the bed. He moves the book to the table and her card falls out. Contemplates it for a moment then dials her number.

SHEILA (O.S.)

Um...Hello.

Lax hangs up.

LAX
What do you think you're looking
for?

The phone rings. He picks it up.

LAX
(continuing)
Sheila?

VOICE (O.S.)
We're watching you right now.

LAX
You chicken-shit bastards! You
want a piece of me! Come and get
it! I'll piss on you and all your
fucking brothers! You got nothing!
Nothing...

Dougie-Dogg hangs up. The yelling has stirred Jacob.

JACOB
Everything cool?

LAX
Yeah, man. Everything's peachy.
You want to shower first, or can I?

JACOB
Go ahead.

INT: A TAXI CAB - MORNING

Lax and Jacob are in the back seat heading through town to
the prison.

JACOB
I thought she was supposed to pick
us up.

LAX
As did I.

JACOB
I like her.

LAX
As do I.

Lax looks out the window and sees what appears to be Dougie-
Dogg in a diner. He shakes it off.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - MORNING

Lax and Jacob enter the room. The guard brings Herman in.

HERMAN
Morning, Lax.

LAX
Hello Herman.

HERMAN
Sounds like a TV show. "Hello Herman!" starring Herman Howards and Lax Morales. I get top billing? I mean it is my show.

LAX
Tell me more about the day you did it. You had rounded up all the kids in the gym, then what happened?

HERMAN
Jumpy this morning, aren't we.

LAX
I don't have forever to spend on this story.

HERMAN
What if this story has forever to spend on you?

LAX
You don't.

HERMAN
There are others.

LAX
Others?

HERMAN
(smiles)
I'd better not talk about that.

LAX
Talk about what?

HERMAN
Phone calls.

LAX
Have you been calling me, Herman?

HERMAN

No.

LAX

Why don't I interview you now.

HERMAN

Go ahead.

LAX

You'd rounded up all the kids in the gym, then what happened?

HERMAN

A couple of teachers had come in also, I guess to see what was going on. It was Mr. Phelps and Ms. Cribb, the phys-ed teacher.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera. The kids all still think that an assembly has been called. They laugh, joke around, revel in no third period. We see Mr. Phelps, an English teacher, come in with Ms. Cribb, a stalky gym teacher with hair cut real short. Herman goes over and puts the chains on the doors, locks the locks, and throws the keys under the bleachers.

HERMAN (V.O.)

I went to the top of the bleachers and took out the UZI. Fired a couple of shots in the ceiling and told everyone to get down on the floor. They didn't know what the Hell was going on, but they heard the shots. They got down. I called up Paul Schrewber, the captain of the football team.

"Paul! Paul Schrewber! Today is your lucky day, Paul! Because you are so *valuable* to our school, you get to live! Now, come on up here, take a bow and get the fuck out of my gym, Paul." He slowly got up and started walking toward the door. When he got a little closer, he began to run. "Paul! You forgot to take a bow." He kept running, so I shot him in the knee. He fell down and I could see his bone was shattered and sticking out of his leg.

(more)

HERMAN (cont'd; V.O.)

I took one of the pipe bombs out of my bag and shouted: "The first person to move without me saying, gets a pipe bomb up their ass!"

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - AFTERNOON

POV of Jacob's camera. extreme close-up on Herman's eyes, we have seen this shot before. It zooms out to reveal his entire head. He is in ecstasy reliving the story. It was the happiest moment of his life.

HERMAN

I walked over to Paul. He was crying and screaming. I told him to shut up and shot him in the gut.

LAX

Sounds like you hated him.

HERMAN

He was nasty.

LAX

What did he do?

HERMAN

Same shit as all the others. It got so bad I started skipping school.

INT: BOB'S ARCADE - DAY

Herman plays one of the pinball machines. A man comes up to him. We cannot see the man's face, only Herman's reactions to him. Herman continues to play.

MAN

Shouldn't you be in school, boy?

HERMAN

What are you a cop?

MAN

No, brother. I'm a friend.

HERMAN

I quit going to school.

MAN

Why's that?

HERMAN

Cause of all the assholes.

MAN

You ever plan on going back?

HERMAN

Never.

MAN

That's a stupid thing to do.

HERMAN

How you figure?

MAN

Cause of all the pain you could
inflict on all the assholes.

Herman looks at him in bewilderment.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera. Picking up where he left off with Paul.

HERMAN (V.O.)

Mr. Phelps came walking toward me slowly telling me there was still time for me to stop this madness because I hadn't killed anyone yet. I told him to sit the fuck down, that I didn't want to kill him, but he kept walking toward me. I had to shoot. He would have grabbed me if I didn't. I shot him in the collar bone and it splintered everywhere. He started to kind of fall toward me, so I shot him in the eye. He looked so stupid with nothing but red for his right eye and no collar bone. I almost started laughing, but he was an alright teacher, I mean he gave a fuck, so out of respect I didn't.

The camera stays on Mr. Phelps corpse for a moment.

HERMAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

I asked "Are there any other teachers in the room!" I knew Ms. Cribb was there. No one came forward, so I called up three kids who were laying on the floor near me. That was Susan, this dumb girl who no one really liked,

Herman's hand holding the gun beckons to Susan. She gets up.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
James Hankley, the editor of the
school paper,

James Hankley , nerdy. He gets up.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
and Marsha, the fucking hottest
girl in our grade.

He beckons to Marsha. She stares at Herman for a second, "How can you do this to me?". Herman beckons again. She gets up and joins her friends. The three kids are standing in a line.

CLOSE ON:

Marsha.

ZOOM OUT TO:

INT: BROOME COMPUTER LAB - DAY

It is one year ago. Herman is working on a computer program. Marsha comes up to him.

MARSHA
Can you help me for a second? I
need to print this essay and it
won't do it.

HERMAN
Is it a Mac disk?

MARSHA
Yeah.

HERMAN
You can use this one right here.

He pops the disk in, clicks a few things with the mouse and the printer next to them starts printing the essay.

MARSHA
Wow.

Herman goes back to his program.

MARSHA
(continuing)
What are you doing?

HERMAN
Writing a program for a game.

MARSHA
A game?

HERMAN
Yeah, you know, like a video game.
Haven't you ever played one?

A goofy laugh slips out of his mouth which he quickly gets control of. Marsha looks at him for a second and then laughs herself.

MARSHA
No, I've never played a video game. Duh, of course I have. My brothers play all the time.

HERMAN
Duh?

MARSHA
(playful)
Stop it.

HERMAN
Stop what?

MARSHA
Making fun of me.

HERMAN
(also playful)
I wasn't making fun of you.

MARSHA
Yes you were.

HERMAN
No, I wasn't.

MARSHA
You were.

HERMAN
No...All right, I was a little. I just hadn't heard...

MARSHA
What?

HERMAN
I just didn't expect that to be the word to come out of Marsha Dixon's mouth.

MARSHA

Why not?

HERMAN

I don't know.

MARSHA

So what, do you do this all the time? Make computer games?

HERMAN

You ain't going to be laughing when I'm rich and famous next year because of this game.

MARSHA

You really think you can sell it?

HERMAN

Oh, yeah. Definitely.

MARSHA

No way, that is awesome.

HERMAN

Yeah.

MARSHA

Like, how much could you make if you sold it?

HERMAN

Enough to be one of the youngest billionaires around. But there's more and more popping up each year, so I've got to get this out there by the first quarter of 2002. Otherwise I'll just be another dime-a-dozen.

MARSHA

I didn't even know you could talk.

HERMAN

You never talked to me before.

MARSHA

Don't get snotty.

Susan enters and beckons to Marsha.

HERMAN

What do you do on friday nights?

MARSHA

I gotta' go.

She grabs her essay and runs over to Susan.

PAN TO:

Susan as Marsha approaches her.

SUSAN
Did you actually talk to him?

MARSHA
Yeah.

SUSAN
Why would you talk to him? What do you, like him?

MARSHA
No! Eeeew! What a creep.

They break into laughter and exit the computer center.

PAN TO:

Herman left sitting there.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DAY

POV Herman's camera. Still on Marsha.

ZOOM OUT TO:

Susan, Marsha, and James Hankley standing in a line. Herman approaches them.

HERMAN (V.O.)
I asked again "are there any other teachers in the room? Hello! If you are a teacher in this room, would you be so kind as to please come forward and take a bow?"

I took out the forty-five and walked up to Susan. "Oink."

She is confused.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
"Oink! Like in *Deliverance* .
Squeal."

She tries, but is crying too much.

HERMAN (V.O.)

(continuing)

Then she gave up and began to say something like "Jesus, please protect me."

(She lips the words while we hear Herman say them.)

Over and over again. I started to laugh. "Not today." I shot her through the cheek, but up, at an angle so the bullet could go through her skull and blood would splatter all over Marsha.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Lax, Jacob, and Herman hold the same positions as before.

LAX

Why did you want the blood to hit Marsha?

HERMAN

To show that bitch that her shit wasn't all that! She walked around those halls like she owned the place. And why? Because she was a nice looking piece of ass? You think that's gonna' fly in the New Order?!

LAX

What New Order?

HERMAN

Like you don't know. Brother.

LAX

What do you know about it?

HERMAN

Shit's going down. Being some sweet piece of ass, or some hot-shot reporter ain't gonna' cut it. It's the ones like me are going to run the show.

POV JC.

HERMAN

(continuing)

I made damn sure to kill more people than they did in Colorado. You know why?

(more)

HERMAN (cont'd)

Because you have to reset the precedent. Sure, the precedent was set in Colorado, the nation freaked out. But people didn't freak out when that kid brought a gun into his school in Georgia, back in June, 99. T.J. Solomon was his name. You know why people didn't freak out? Cause he only wounded six students. He didn't even kill anybody. How can you expect the world to take notice if you don't up the ante? People looked at that incident and all they said was "At least it's not as bad as Columbine." Not with me, Lax. I wasn't about to settle for some rinky-dink school shooting. Oh, no. I blew that fucking fat bitch's head off and made sure a little got on James Hankley as well. But I was never going to kill him. I wanted him to live, so he could write about the day in his precious paper. Marsha on the other hand, she didn't have a chance.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera, where we left off.

HERMAN (V.O.)

Before I could waste her, though, Ms. Cribb came running up to the front, crying and begging me to stop. I shot her right in the mouth from about twenty feet away. Shut that bitch right up. Really tough shot. I would've gotten like two-thousand points if it were *Postal*. I don't even think she died. Isn't she at the hospital or something?

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Same as before.

LAX

Intensive care.

HERMAN

Have you seen her, Lax?

LAX

No, I haven't seen her.

HERMAN

But you heard something?

LAX

They had to amputate her lower jaw. What was left of it. She'll have to be fed intravenously.

HERMAN

Awesome! She deserved it.

LAX

Why?

HERMAN

That bitch gave me a C- for gym class. Can you believe that? A C- in fucking gym? Unreal. Lax? Lax, you still with me?

LAX

Yeah, I'm still with you.

(pause.)

Why don't we take a break? I need some...coffee.

HERMAN

Whatever.

Lax gets up and knocks on the door twice. The guard opens and he exits.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

POV of Jacobs camera on Herman while Lax is gone. He is looking at the camera, loving every minute of it. He smiles, blows kisses, sticks his tongue out, etc.

INT: PRISON BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lax is looking at himself in the mirror. He is sweaty. Deranged.

LAX

(Looking in the mirror)

My God. Not human.

INT: SEAN GALL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Crashing noises are heard, followed by shouting.

FBI MAN (O.S.)
FBI! Sit the fuck down!

Lax enters.

SEAN GALL
Vic. What the Hell is going on?

LAX
The Feds are here.

SEAN GALL
Do they have a search warrant?

LAX
They do.

SEAN GALL
Don't just stand there! We've got to burn these files before they get in here!

LAX
That won't do any good.

SEAN GALL
What the Hell are you talking about?

LAX
It won't do any good, because I've already given them the files.

SEAN GALL
Why would you do that, Vic?

LAX
I was planning on doing that before I shook your hand the first time.

SEAN GALL
You bullshittin' me, boy?

LAX
No, Sean. I'm proud to say I'm not.

SEAN GALL
All this time?

LAX
Every Godforsaken minute of it.

SEAN GALL
You are one slimy bastard, Vic.
A real rat. Huh.

LAX

My name is Morales. Louis Anthony
Xavier Morales.

SEAN GALL

You can call yourself what you
want, boy. But there is a reason
I trusted you. I seen it in your
eyes. Deep down you know it too.

Outside the door we hear the Feds.

FBI MAN #2 (O.S.)

Is this it?

FBI MAN (O.S.)

This one. Locked. Use the Ram.

LAX

Good-bye Sean. I hope you enjoy
getting fucked in prison.

SEAN GALL

Boy, you don't know how it works.
I'll be seeing you. Don't you
worry your pretty little head
about that. One way or another,
you'll see me.

INT: PRISON BATHROOM - DAY

Lax looks at himself in the mirror.

LAX

Keep it together, Asshole. You
just keep it together.

SMASH CUT:

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON:

Herman's face.

FLASH CUT:

INT: BROOME DINER - DAY

CLOSE ON:

Dougie-Dogg's face.

FLASH CUT:

INT: LAX'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Lax getting the prank call. He realizes it is Dougie-Dogg's voice.

DOUGIE-DOGG

We're watching you right now.

INT: PRISON BATHROOM - CONTINUING

Lax still looking at himself in the mirror.

LAX

He didn't do it alone. Those bastards are here.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Lax enters the room. Herman is laughing to himself.

LAX

What's the joke?

HERMAN

I don't think you'd find it very amusing.

LAX

Try me.

HERMAN

James Hankley is one of the smartest kids in school, right. He's head of the paper, gets really good grades and all that.

LAX

And?

HERMAN

When I blew Susan away, some of her brains landed on him.

(Herman starts laughing hard.)

She was the dumbest kid in class.

LAX

What did you do next, Herman?

HERMAN

Next? Oh, I told Hankley to take his clothes off. He did and then I told him to sit down. Marsha was still up there covered in blood.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

Flash of Marsha standing with blood on her dress. James is seated beside her, he is in his white jockey shorts. Susan lies dead on the floor next to them.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - AFTERNOON

LAX

You let James live because you wanted him to write about the day?

HERMAN

Yeah, do you have a cigarette?

LAX

No.

HERMAN

I can see the pack in your shirt pocket.

LAX

No, Herman.

HERMAN

That's a shitty thing to do to a fellow smoker.

LAX

What happened next?

HERMAN

I'd be able to think a lot clearer if you gave me one of those cigarettes.

LAX

Forget about it. Those things will kill you.

HERMAN

Think I'm afraid of dying, Lax?

LAX

Yes.

HERMAN

Why say that?

LAX

(As he takes out a
cigarette and lights
it.)

Because you weren't man enough to
do yourself in like your buddies
Eric and Dylan.

HERMAN

Hey, I'm prepared to pay the
price for what I did. That takes
more balls than just offing
yourself.

you're

LAX

Sure not paying the price for
someone else?

HERMAN

What are you talking about?

LAX

Are you sure this is what you
wanted? Not somebody else.

HERMAN

You don't know what you're talking
about.

LAX

You know, they would be a lot
easier on you if you were to turn
in any accomplices.

HERMAN

I did it alone, all right? It was
my plan. Mine. I didn't help.
You getting this?

LAX

(enjoying each drag)

Do you believe in karma?

HERMAN

I don't know much about it.

LAX

Well, Herman, in your language I
think the closest translation
would be "What goes around, comes
around."

HERMAN

What, I'm gonna' pay for my deeds
in the after life? Some kinda' go-
fuck-yourself-afterlife?

LAX
Something like that.

HERMAN
You know what I think? I think
that when you die, it's game
over. Nothing. Blackness.

LAX
What about "Reset"?

HERMAN
When you hit "Reset", the game
you played before doesn't have
shit to do with the next one. All
the characters come back to life.

LAX
That's not how it works in
reality. Once a kid is killed,
he does not come back to life.

Herman doesn't speak. His face changes. It is as if he is
beginning to worry.

LAX
(continuing)
What are you thinking about?

HERMAN
I haven't been able to sleep well.
(The blank expression
returns.)

LAX
Why not?

HERMAN
Nightmares.

INT: HERMAN'S CELL - NIGHT

Herman wakes up from a bad nightmare. He is sweaty and
scared. A kid's voice comes from the darkness.

KID'S VOICE
Hello Herman.

Herman jumps.

HERMAN
Who's there?

KID'S VOICE
(as he steps into the
light.)

You don't even know me, do you?

He is a fifteen year old boy with multiple bullet wounds in his chest.

HERMAN
Who are you?

KID'S VOICE
I was background. Not a key
player.

HERMAN
I killed you?

KID'S VOICE
Your sister is with us you know.

HERMAN
Is she all right?

KID'S VOICE
No, Herman. She's in a lot of
pain.

HERMAN
But she never did anything wrong!

KID'S VOICE
You don't know how it works.

HERMAN
Tell me.

KID'S VOICE
If your evil deeds are more than
can be paid for with one soul,
the souls who loved you pay your
price as well.

HERMAN
My sister...?

KID'S VOICE
You'll help her pay soon enough.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

LAX
What kind of dreams?

HERMAN

(pause)

You want to hear what else happened? Or not?

LAX

I want to hear, Herman. I want to hear. You sure you don't want to tell me about your dreams?

HERMAN

Yes. Where was I?

LAX

Marsha was covered in blood.

HERMAN

Right. I, uh, I told Hankley to take his clothes off...

LAX

You already said that, Herman.

HERMAN

Shut up! I'm fine! I don't remember what happened next. I think I started firing into the crowd...No, that happened after the police came to the door. Yeah, that's how it happened. The police came to the door and all the kids began to scream because I threw a pipe bomb into the middle of the crowd and a whole bunch of people scattered. It got crazy.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MORNING

POV of Herman's camera. The students are running around everywhere, but no one can get out. It is anarchy. The action follows what Herman is saying.

HERMAN (V.O.)

The kids ran towards the door, the police ran into the gym, and I was just running around shooting people left and right. There were only three cops at first, and I was able to pick them off right after they stormed the gym. The idiots only got one door open, so with all the kids trying to get out, no more cops could get in. It was anarchy. Awesome.

(more)

HERMAN (cont'd; V.O.)
I ran up behind Marsha and put the
forty-five in her back. "Ready to
die, prom queen?" Then I shot
someone who was running right next
to her.

He does so. The kid he shoots is the same one from his dream.

HERMAN (V.O.)
(continuing)
She screamed and fell to her knees
begging me not to kill her. Isn't
it funny? She was ashamed to be
caught talking to me before that.
Now she was practically spreading
her legs. Do you know what that
kind of power feels like, Lax?

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - DAY

POV JC.

LAX
We're not interviewing me.

HERMAN
You mean you don't know what that
feels like?

LAX
What did you do next?

HERMAN
You've never felt that sensation
of power, Lax? That
almost...Well, you know what I'm
talking about.

LAX
Do you want to keep going? Or
have you had enough today?

HERMAN
Let's keep going.

LAX
Then go.

HERMAN
I shot her down low, where it
counts, bashed her nose with the
butt of my gun, and left her
there to bleed. I hope she
survived.

LAX

Why?

HERMAN

Because I wanted her to learn what life is like when you're not the prettiest girl in school.

LAX

You're a teacher?

HERMAN

People needed a lesson.

LAX

What did they learn, Herman?

HERMAN

Maybe they learned to be a little nicer to each other.

LAX

Maybe they will be. Maybe we all will be.

HERMAN

I doubt it. The world's gonna' see more kids like me before they finally get it. That's okay, they will.

LAX

They'll finally get it?

HERMAN

No, Lax.

(he grins)

The world will see more kids like me.

LAX

Are you ready to spend the rest of your life in jail, or would you *prefer* to be executed, Herman?

HERMAN

It really doesn't matter. Jail has been all right so far. I don't care if I die. It's gonna' get harder if they transfer me to population, though.

LAX

Yeah, it's going to get harder.

HERMAN

Look, if I can blow away twenty-nine people, I think I can handle myself in prison.

LAX

That's what a lot of kids your age think. That's why a lot of kids your age are getting locked up these days.

HERMAN

Your compassion is breaking my heart.

LAX

See that's the thing, Herman. I don't know that I even give a fuck anymore.

HERMAN

What?

LAX

Part of me thinks you kids are the whole problem, and we should just lock all you little bastards up and throw away the key. Goddamnit if you're old enough to plan and carry out a massacre of twenty-five children and four adults, you're plenty old enough to know what kind of a person does something like that.

HERMAN

What kind of person, Lax?

LAX

Evil.

HERMAN

Were you evil when you bashed that nigger's head in?

LAX

Yes! Yes I was. I had to be.

HERMAN

So did I.

LAX

I was saving lives! It was war. In war, when it comes down to lives, you go back to basic arithmetic.

(more)

LAX (cont'd)

I let one boy die so thousands
could live. One life for a
thousand! That's why I had to do
it. That's why I allowed myself
to do it. Why did you allow
yourself to become evil

HERMAN

Hypocrite!

LAX

Fuck you!

HERMAN

You Hypocrite. You are just like
me.

LAX

You haven't started in on dope,
have you Herman? Because not only
does it make you delusional, it's
also a good way to get killed.
Don't you know how to stay alive
in prison?

HERMAN

You start by having friends.

Herman lifts up his sleeve to reveal a freshly burned scar in
the shape of a swastika.

HERMAN

(continuing)

I believe you and me have some
friends in common.

LAX

It was Dougie-Dogg. Wasn't it?

Herman laughs.

LAX

(continuing)

What do you think you're laughing
at you piece of shit?

HERMAN

You should be nice to me. I'm the
guy who's keeping you alive.

LAX

You're in no position to threaten
me.

HERMAN

Aren't I? I get to be interviewed by you. That was the deal. He gave me the guns, I did the work, I become famous. But once the interview is over, they get to kill you.

Cherish this time you have with me, Lax.

LAX

You met him when you were skipping school, right?

HERMAN

So what?

LAX

It was in an arcade, wasn't it?

HERMAN

You don't know anything.

LAX

They go to diners, arcades, pool halls. They look for kids like you. Kids they can do what they want with. They like to use kids who run away. Run away from Home, run away from school, run away from their fear. They like to find kids like that because they can tell them what they want to hear and make them do anything because of it. They nab you when you're at your lowest. They make you believe they're your friends. You think they care about you; they have your back.

The reality is they've sucked the last little bit of life from your cheeks and pumped you full of hate. You were set off like a time bomb. Lone-wolf teenage time-bomb.

INT: A DINER IN BROOME - DAY

Herman and Dougie-Dogg sit in a booth.

DOUGIE-DOGG

I want you to know that you can always come down and talk to me.
(more)

DOUGIE-DOGG (cont'd)
If anything is troubling you or
you just want someone to pal
around with. I mean it.

HERMAN
Thanks Double-D.

EXT: WALMART - DAY

The same shot we saw earlier of Dougie-Dogg holding a shotgun
on his shoulder.

INT: A DINER IN BROOME - CONTINUING

DOUGIE-DOGG
There's some other guys I'd like
to introduce you to. They'd be
damn glad to meet you.

HERMAN
Cool.

Herman notices a TV in the background.

CLOSE ON:

The TV. Computron News Network. Gary Walters reporting.

GARY WALTERS
In other news today, twenty-four
year old journalist, Lax Morales,
famous for his independent
undercover story on the Aryan
Brothers of America, in which he
supplied the FBI with enough
evidence for fifteen arrests with
convictions, was thrown out of
Poomba's, A posh restaurant in
lower Manhattan after apparently
assaulting some rather notable
guests.

Pan back to Herman and Dougie-Dogg.

DOUGIE-DOGG
(to the TV)
You best grow eyes in the back of
your head, Morales.

HERMAN
Why's that? He's famous. Everyone
in school loves him. No one can
touch a famous person. They're
like gods.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Shit's going down. Being some hot-shot reporter ain't gonna' cut it. It's the one's like you and me are going to run the show in the New Order.

The most important thing in this world, is friends. You know who your friends are, don't you Herman?

HERMAN

Yeah. Sure.

DOUGIE-DOGG

That's why we're going to do this tomorrow.

HERMAN

tomorrow? Holy shit! we're really going to do this.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Best dam video game of your life. Your end in order?

HERMAN

Made the pipe bombs, got the chains.

DOUGIE-DOGG

The camera?

HERMAN

Stole my mom's.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Good. Now go on back to school and act cool. Don't let anyone know what's coming tomorrow.

HERMAN

No one?

DOUGIE-DOGG

I'm not fucking around! Don't let anyone know what you're up to. And for damn sure don't tell anyone about me. You haven't, have you?

HERMAN

No.

DOUGIE-DOGG

Good boy.

HERMAN

I get to be on Laxmorales.com.
Right?

DOUGIE-DOGG

Sure. e-mail him the clips and
he'll throw you right on.

INT: LAX'S APARTMENT - DAY

FLASH CUT:

Lax checking his e-mail and seeing Herman's clips for the
first time.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - CONTINUING

HERMAN

You want to talk about war. Every
day for me was a war at that
school. Every day I was made to
feel like nothing. I didn't ask
for a war, I was thrown into one.
I spent every day scared and
hiding for sixteen years. And you
ask me why I allowed myself to
become evil. Pretending you don't
know the answer. You know why.

LAX

No Herman, I don't.

HERMAN

Because it felt good. Because for
one moment in my nothing life, I
actually got to know what it feels
like to be God.

INT: BROOME HIGH-SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - DAY

Herman shooting children as the crowd runs around frantic.

INT: PRISON QUESTIONING ROOM - CONTINUING

HERMAN

And - it - feels - good. You
don't have to say it, Lax. I know
you understand. You have that look
in your face. You tasted it.

LAX

You felt like God?

HERMAN

Do you miss the feeling, too?

LAX

Fuck you! You think we're alike?
 You think you and me are the same?
 Well, I'll tell you, Herman, I've
 felt like God before. I felt like
 God When I saw Sean Gall slapped
 onto a table, hand-cuffed, and
 arrested. Tell you the truth, it
 turned me on. But I didn't feel
 like God when I hit that child.
 That child, who had been tied up
 and gagged by bullies just like
 the ones you hate, Herman.

Jesus, you're so full of hate,
 you've forgotten who you hate.

I'm going to ask you one more
 time. Do you feel bad in any way
 about what you've done?

HERMAN

Between you and me?

LAX

This isn't about you and me. This
 is about you and them.

POV JC.

CLOSE ON:

Herman's face, cold, blank. Then something changes. For a
 moment he actually looks like a normal kid.

HERMAN

I'm scared. I don't want to be in
 a cell for the rest of my life.
 I'm sixteen years old. Do you
 remember what that felt like? I
 don't know what they're going to
 do to me in State, but I'm damn
 sure I won't like it. That's if
 they don't...Sometimes I wish I
 could take it back. You know, hit
 reset. But I guess I can't.

LAX

No, Herman. You can't.

HERMAN

You know, I never felt responsible
 for this.

LAX

Your mistake.

HERMAN
Until I talked to you.

LAX
I didn't come here to give you
restitution.

HERMAN
You came here to make money.

LAX
Think what you want.

HERMAN
And who's going to give you
restitution?

Lax ignores his question and starts gathering his papers. He
gives Jacob the cue to stop taping.

HERMAN
(continuing)
Hey Lax?

LAX
What?

HERMAN
You think those nightmares will
ever go away?

LAX
No, Herman. I don't.

HERMAN
Yeah, me neither.
(pause)
You think I'm going to Hell?

LAX
I think I have all I need here.
Thank you for your time.

HERMAN
That's it?

LAX
That's your fifteen minutes, kid.
I hope it was worth it.

They knock on the door. A guard enters and takes Herman away.

LAX
(continuing)
Good-bye Herman.

Herman does not respond. He just gives a look. Blank and scared.

EXT: OUTSIDE SHEILA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It is pouring. Lax stands outside her door, contemplating whether to push the doorbell. He is soaked through and thoroughly drunk. Finally he pushes the bell. Sheila answers the door.

SHEILA
You are insane.

LAX
It is without question a distinct possibility. May I come in?

She opens the door all the way.

INT: SHEILA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUING

Lax hangs his coat up; the peg breaks from the water-soaked weight and his coat falls to the floor.

LAX
Sorry.

SHEILA
What can I do for you, Lax?

LAX
I came to give you the exclusive before I fly back to New York tomorrow.

SHEILA
Let me get my tape recorder.

She gets up and goes to her room.

LAX
Can we just talk?

She returns.

SHEILA
No.

She hits record.

SHEILA
(continuing)
Would you like a drink?

LAX
Please.

SHEILA
What would you like?

LAX
Anything.

She moves to the kitchen area.

SHEILA
You can just start talking.

LAX
I don't know where to start.

SHEILA
What did you think of Herman
Howards?

LAX
He's a kid.

SHEILA
That's it?

LAX
He's not unlike most kids. Angry,
confused, poetic, terrified.

SHEILA
That describes most kids.

LAX
Susceptible.

SHEILA
Tell me about Georgia.

LAX
I'm not very popular in that State.

SHEILA
Do you get threats?

LAX
Yeah, but they're only threats.
Their weapon is fear; if you have
none, they're defenseless.

SHEILA
You have no fear?

LAX
Everyone has fear. It's the way
we handle it that makes us special.

SHEILA

Did you bash that child?

Lax wells up with tears.

SHEILA

(continuing)

Tell me.

LAX

Yes. I did.

SHEILA

Did you have a choice?

LAX

There was a choice. I could have given my life for his.

SHEILA

How many men do you think would have done that?

LAX

Not many. Only the heroes.

A flaming brick comes flying through the window. Lax puts out the fire and runs outside.

EXT: OUTSIDE SHEILA'S HOUSE - CONTINUING

Lax sees two guys running away from the house, Dougie-Dogg and another skinhead. He chases after them, not noticing a teenage boy hiding by the porch. Lax manages to tackle the skinhead. Dougie-dogg keeps on running for a moment then stops to decide if he will go back and help his friend. Lax has the man down on the ground and is pounding him.

Dougie-Dogg runs up to Lax and kicks him in the stomach. He falls back, the wind knocked out of him.

Dougie-Dogg continues to beat on Lax while he can. It looks as though he might put him out until Sheila jumps into the scene and gets Dougie-Dogg off him. Lax gains his composure, cracks Dougie-Dogg in the chin with a tremendous right, and proceeds to dominate.

Finally, Lax has Dougie-Dogg right where he wants him...Sheila screams. Her house is on fire. The teenage skinhead hiding in the bushes lit the house.

Lax decides to let Dougie-Dogg go so he can help Sheila put the fire out. All the skinheads run off. Lax and Sheila attack the fire. Fire engines are heard.

EXT: OUTSIDE SHEILA'S HOUSE - DAWN

Lax and Sheila watch as the firemen finish putting out the fire.

LAX

I'm sorry.

SHEILA

You should be.

LAX

I'm more sorry Dougie-Dogg got away.

SHEILA

Why would you say that?

LAX

Because they're going to kill Herman Howards and that bastard is going to get some other kid to do it again someday. At least they'll be able to say justice was served.

SHEILA

Lax, my house is burnt down. I don't want to hear this shit.

LAX

Come to New York with me.

SHEILA

What?

LAX

Come be a part of my show in New York with me.

SHEILA

Are you serious?

LAX

After this story hits, we'll be doing alright.

A fireman comes up to them.

FIREMAN

Ms. Williams? I'm going to need you to sign this.

He hands her a clipboard.

FIREMAN
(continuing)
Hey, aren't you Lax Morales?

LAX
Yeah, I am.

FIREMAN
My kids watch you all the time.

LAX
Good.

FIREMAN
Geez, I should get your autograph
or something.

LAX
Got some paper?

FIREMAN
Yeah.

He rips a piece off from underneath the sheet Sheila is
writing on.

FIREMAN
(continuing)
Here.

LAX
To who?

FIREMAN
Donnie, with an I.E..

LAX
For Donnie, a kid with a good
dad. Lax Morales. Here you go.

FIREMAN
Thanks. The kid's gonna' love
this. Hey, what do you think of
that decision?

LAX
What decision?

FIREMAN
You haven't heard?

LAX
No.

FIREMAN
They're going to show his
execution on TV.

INT: EXECUTION ROOM - DAY

The Execution coverage. In the bottom right hand corner the **Computron News Network** logo is shown. Chet Clarkson is hosting the show. In the background Herman is being strapped down to the chair.

CHET CLARKSON
Welcome back! This is Chet
Clarkson reporting live here at
the execution of Herman Howards,
infamous for "Bloody Broome". If
you're just tuning in, this
execution will be the first
broadcast ever, and from what
they're telling me right now,

He puts a finger up to his ear piece.

CHET CLARKSON
(continuing)
Has already become the highest
viewed event in television
history. An estimated seventy-
four percent of viewers have their
sets tuned to us as Howards is
strapped down to the electric
chair.

Outside, we can hear protesters
chanting.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE PRISON - CONTINUOUS

There are a great many protesters outside chanting:

PROTESTERS
KILLING PEOPLE DOES NOT STOP
PEOPLE FROM KILLING PEOPLE!
KILLING PEOPLE DOES NOT STOP
PEOPLE FROM KILLING PEOPLE!
KILLING PEOPLE DOES NOT STOP
PEOPLE FROM KILLING PEOPLE!

INT: THE EXECUTION ROOM - CONTINUING

Senator Cox walks next to Chet.

CHET CLARKSON
Senator Cox, would you care to
share your thoughts on today's
events with me?

SENATOR JOHN COX

This boy's death is long overdue.
America will be watching and they
will see today that the Government
of The United States will not
allow our children to be in danger
any longer. Killing people may not
stop people from killing people,
but seeing the execution live sure
as heck will. Thank You.

Cox moves on.

CHET CLARKSON

As nearly three quarters of the
nation sits with eyes on the
screen...What?

He puts a finger to his ear piece.

CHET CLARKSON

(continuing)

Oh. They're ready. This is it!

The camera moves to Herman and the **officer** by his side.

OFFICER

Herman Howards, you are about to
be executed by means of the
electric chair, under the
authority of the State of Iowa for
the crimes you have committed. Do
you have any last words?

Herman stares straight out at the camera.

HERMAN

Yes I do. I'd like to say
something to the viewers at home.
You may not like me, but one
thing's for sure; you will never,
never, forget me. Goodbye America.
Good luck.

THE END