

The Shades Within

By

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Principal characters:

Bill Wilson - Don Cheadle type. Strong, confident.

Tom Clark - Billy Bob Thornton type. Strong, Confident, Sharp wit.

Dr. Rossi - Quiet, Older, Wiser.

Bob Clark - Tom Clark's father, Kevin Costner type, stern.

Eve Clark - Tom Clark's mother - Grace Zabriskie.

Fade In.

EXT. FARM - DAY 1960

You see a farmhouse and barn with fields of grass beyond the barn.

EXT. FARM FIELD - DAY

There are two African American boys running through the field carrying fishing poles.

RONNIE is in the lead. Ronnie is older and taller. Ronnie stops to wait for his brother BILLY. Ronnie calls to Billy.

RONNIE

Come on Billy, hurry up.

Billy is running through the field as fast as he can, but he just cannot keep up. As he runs, Billy waves to JOE CLARK, their white neighbor who is plowing the field atop his big green tractor on the farm next to theirs. Joe Clark looks but does not wave.

EXT. RIVER'S BANK - DAY

Billy makes it to the bank on the river. Ronnie has already dug up some worms and is preparing to bait his hook.

BILLY

Ronnie, can you put the worm on my hook?

RONNIE

Kid, sooner or later you're not going
to have me around to do things for you.

Billy walks up to Ronnie and holds out his fishing pole. Billy takes the hook and puts a worm on it. Ronnie picks up his fishing pole and they both walk to the river's edge.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Both boys cast their lines into the water and they both sit down on a log close to the water.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Fishing is slow this afternoon and the only other fishermen on the river are two older gentlemen on the other side who aren't paying attention to their poles but seem intent on arguing over a baseball game.

The day is warm with a light breeze blowing. Billy is sleeping with his head propped up on the log. Billy is awakened by someone calling his name. Billy sits up and tries to get his bearings when he is scared by Joe Clark running by him in a flash.

Joe Clark runs down along the river as fast as he can. Joe Clark reaches the river's edge and dives in.

Billy stands up to see what is going on.

Billy watches as Joe Clark swims at a furious pace downstream. Billy sees what looked like a branch in front of Joe Clark's path and just as it sinks below the surface Billy sees what it is, a hand and fingers.

Billy frantically looks around for his brother Ronnie. Billy realizes that the hand he saw must belong to Ronnie.

Billy looks down river, but Joe Clark has disappeared around the bend. Billy takes off running down along the river's edge.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE OTHER SIDE - DAY

The two men on the other side are watching as Joe Clark swims below the surface of the river. Moments later Joe Clark surfaces holding onto Ronnie. Joe Clark begins to swim towards the river's edges when the two men lose sight of him.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Billy rounds the bend in the river and stops. Billy does not see Joe Clark. Billy hears something and looks down along the riverbank. A ways down river, at the edge, Billy sees Joe Clark with a look of fear on his face. Joe Clark is kneeling next to Ronnie. Joe Clark is holding Ronnie in the sitting position and slapping Ronnie on the back. Billy watches as Ronnie begins to cough up water as Joe Clark slaps him on the back.

EXT. RIVER'S EDGE - DAY

Billy comes running up to where Joe Clark and Ronnie are at the river's edge. Ronnie is awake but still coughing. Billy drops to his knees next to Ronnie.

BILLY

Ronnie, you Ok?

RONNIE (STILL COUGHING)

I think so. What happened?

Billy looks at Joe Clark and Joe Clark looks back, but now Joe Clark is angry, and he lashes out at Billy.

JOE CLARK (LOUDLY)

You kids should not be playing near the river. Do you know what kind of trouble this can cause?

Joe Clark stands up and looks down at Billy who is speechless.

Billy watches as Joe Clark turns and storms off over the riverbank.

INT. TRAIN - DAY - YEARS LATER

Billy now much older goes by the name Bill. Bill sits in his seat staring at the farm fields and a river as the train passes over it.

All you see is a view of the river. The view is moving, and you can hear the wheels of the train rolling down the tracks. The camera zooms back until you see the view out through the window frame.

Bill has been talking to an older African American gentleman about his trip and why he is going south.

The older gentleman exits the bathroom and returns to where Bill is sitting. The Older Gentleman sits down in the seat across from Bill.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

Boy I really needed to go to the bathroom.

The Older Gentleman leans forward and motions for Bill to come closer. Bill leans forward.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

There was a time when you and I would not be allowed to sit here amongst all these white people and use the same bathroom.

The Older Gentlemen leans back and so does Bill.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

You were saying you are headed south to do research.

BILL

Yes, I have a grant to study genes of people from all over the country.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

What are you looking for?

BILL

Well, it's quite difficult to explain.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

Son, I have a doctorate in behavioral science. Give it a try.

Bill pauses and looks at the man for a few seconds. Then Bill looks around the train car. Bill leans forward and motions for the Older Gentleman to lean forward also and he does.

BILL (WITH EXCITED WHISPER)

I'm trying to isolate the gene or genes that cause people to become racist.

The Older Gentleman with a surprised look on his face leans back. Bill leans back also.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

They gave you money to study that?

BILL

Well, not exactly, the grant is for the study of genes and the effects they have of a person's personality and behaviour. My goal is to isolate genes that cause some of the most negative personality traits such as aggression, hatred (in a whisper) and racism.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

Well, I have to say, in my experience you will not find them.

BILL

I beg to differ. Some of the most exciting discoveries to be made in gene research and gene therapy are still ahead of us.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

I believe you are right there, but on the other matter, I think you are wrong.

A voice comes over the intercom announcing the station ahead. The Older Gentleman gets up, reaches in his pocket, and pulls out a card. He holds the card out to Bill.

OLDER GENTLEMAN

Let me give you my card.

Bill takes the card and looks at it.

The name on the card reads "Dr. Alex Rossi".

OLDER GENTLEMAN

I'm very interested in what you find if you don't mind contacting me. But son, I think you have hold of a stick of dynamite with fuses lit at both ends.

The Older Gentleman turns and heads down the train aisle as the train is pulling into the station. Bill sits there with a puzzled look on his face. Bill places the card in his briefcase.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Bill is walking down the main street. Bill stops in front of a deli, looks at the sign and smiles. Bill walks in.

INT. DELI - DAY

It's lunch time and the deli is busy. Bill makes his way to the counter and orders.

GIRL BEHIND COUNTER

Can I help you?

BILL

I'll have a number 2 with mushrooms.

The Girl takes Bill's money, hands Bill a receipt that reads 18 and a cup. Bill walks to the soda machine and fills the cup then waits. A minute later, the girl slides a tray across the counter.

GIRL BEHIND COUNTER

18?

Bill walks over, places his cup on the tray, picks up the tray and makes his way to a booth.

A white Man about Bill's age, sitting at a table close by, looks at Bill as he sits down.

Bill begins to eat but notices as the Man looks at him a few more times. Bill looks at the man.

BILL
Can I help you?

MAN
Well that all depends.

BILL
Depends on what?

MAN
Do you like fried chicken?

BILL (WITH ADDITUDE)
EXCUSE ME?

The Man has finished his meal. The Man picks up a napkin and wipes off his hands. The Man gets up and slides into Bill's booth across from Bill.

BILL
I didn't ask you to join me.

MAN
I thought if you liked fried chicken,
I'd share a recipe with you.

BILL
Who the hell do you think you are?

MAN
I'm the man with the recipe to the best
fried chicken you've ever had.

BILL
What the hell are you talking about?

The Man leans back and looks at Bill who is now angry. The Man slides his John Deere hat back on his head.

MAN
I'll tell you what, you meet me at the
basketball courts at the downtown park,
and if you can beat me at a game of one

on one. I'll share my fried chicken
with you.

BILL
You want me to what?

The Man just sits there staring at Bill with a grin on his
face.

MAN
You don't know who I am do you?

BILL
You're the guy that's about to get his
ass kicked.

MAN
Well Billy, you can try it if you want,
but I'd rather kick your ass on the
basketball court.

Bill sits back in his seat.

BILL (SURPRISED)
Who are you?

MAN
I'm the guy who kicked your ass every
time we played one on one. I'm the guy
who taught you how to make a hook shot.
I'm the guy who brought fried chicken
to school for lunch and ended up
watching you eat most of it.

Bill's face relaxes and a slight smile appears on his face.

BILL
Tommy, Tommy Clark?

The Man reached out his hand to shake Bill's hand.

TOM CLARK
It's Tom now.

Bill reaches out and shakes his hand.

BILL

Man, I have to tell you, I thought you were some redneck that I was going to have to fight.

TOM CLARK

What are you talking about, I am a redneck and so were you at one time.

BILL

What?

TOM CLARK

You never got your neck sunburned working in the farm fields as a kid?

BILL

Yes, yes I did.

TOM CLARK

You know at one time, people were proud to be called rednecks. It meant you worked hard on the farm. Somehow, it's been twisted into meaning you live in a rural part of the country and you're stupid.

BILL

How the hell are you? What have you been doing all these years?

Tom Clark reaches over and grabs his cup from the other table and Bill goes back to eating.

TOM CLARK

Well, after school, I got a commission and went into the Army. I served my time and came back home. Pop passed and I took over the farm. I got married, have two kids and we live on the farm with Mom. How about you? Married? Kids? I heard you went to college after your family moved up to Chicago.

BILL

No, I'm still single. I work for the University of Chicago. I'm doing research in the Department of Human Genetics.

TOM CLARK

Wow, you know I took a biology class in high school.

BILL (SMUGGLY)

Well, this is a little bit more complicated than biology.

TOM CLARK

No shit Sherlock. You used to know sarcasm when you heard it.

Both men begin to laugh.

TOM CLARK

No, really, that's incredible. The University of Chicago is one of the schools on my Son's list. What are you in town for?

BILL

I'm here to collect samples for research. I'm doing a study on human genes. I'll be here about a week.

Tom Clark looks at his watch.

TOM CLARK

I have to go. Meet me tonight at the downtown basketball courts at 7pm. I'll bring the ball.

BILL

Are you serious?

TOM CLARK

Absolutely, the courts are empty. These kids can't put their cellphones down long enough to pick up a basketball.

BILL
I'll be there.

Tom Clark stands up, shakes Bill's hand but holds on.

TOM CLARK
Seeing you made my day.

Tom Clark and Bill both smile. Tom Clark leaves.

INT. HOTEL FRONT DESK - DAY

Bill walks up to the front desk.

FRONT DESK CLERK
May I help you Sir?

BILL
Yes, I need to buy some clothes to
workout in. Is there somewhere around
here I can go?

FRONT DESK CLERK
Well Sir, there's a Walmart on the
outside of town.

BILL
I don't have a car. Is there something
closer I can walk too?

FRONT DESK CLERK
Well Sir, there is a place down on the
other side of the street called Harris
Sporting Goods, but I've nn been in
there, so I don't know what they have.

Bill holds his hand up to stop the Front Desk Clerk.

BILL
I know where that is, thank you.

FRONT DESK CLERK
You're welcome sir.

Bill walks to the front door and exits.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

It's early in the evening. Bill comes walking down the outer fence towards the bleachers where Tom Clark is sitting waiting. Tom Clark sees Bill coming and begins to smile. As Bill walks around the corner of the fence Tom Clark begins to laugh out of control. Bill is wearing a yellow t-shirt with green shorts, yellow striped tube socks, black converse sneakers, and to top it off, yellow sweatbands around his wrists.

TOM CLARK

You have got to be kidding me. Have you lost your mind? Did you walk here dressed like that?

Bill stops, holds his arms out and turns around to show off what he is wearing.

BILL

Take it in, take it in.

Bill stops turning and puts his arms down.

BILL

Isn't this what we had to wear for every practice?

TOM CLARK

It is. Have you kept them all these years?

BILL

Hell no. I didn't pack anything to play basketball in. I bought these this afternoon.

Tom Clark points at Bill with his mouth open.

TOM CLARK

No?

BILL

Yes Sir. I bought these at Harris Sporting Goods a block from the hotel.

Both men begin to laugh. Bill walks over and sits down next to Tom Clark.

BILL

Do you remember old man Harris?

TOM CLARK

I do. He sponsored the team and bought us uniforms. He never missed a local game.

BILL

No he didn't. Do you remember the argument that old man Harris got into with the coach when you were benched for the last two games of the season? I thought the old man was going to take a swing at the coach. I still can't believe you punched out the other team's coach at the last away game and got suspended.

TOM CLARK

That was our junior year, you moved away that summer. I got suspended for a week and had to ride the bench for the last two games.

BILL

I really hated that. Not that we were going to win a championship or anything, but it was always more fun with you playing.

BILL

What did the coach say to you?

TOM CLARK

What do you mean, when he benched me?

BILL

No, the other team's coach, the one you punched out.

TOM CLARK

You were standing ten feet away. You didn't hear him?

BILL

No, I didn't. You and I were double-teaming that six-footer on the other team. He elbowed you and sent you backwards right at the other team's coach. All I heard was the whistle blow for the foul.

TOM CLARK

I thought you heard him.

BILL

No, I didn't.

Tom Clark looks around to see if anyone is close by and then looks back at Bill.

TOM CLARK

He grabbed my arm as I fell into him. Then he shook me and pointed at you. He said, "That's a nigger, why are you" and that's all I remember hearing before my fist hit his face. He went down and the other team rushed me. The next thing I know, you and the other guys are pulling me out of a pile and the coach walked me to my dad's truck.

BILL

Wow, I didn't know that. That must have been an interesting ride home. What did your dad say?

TOM CLARK

My dad asked me what happened, so I told him what had happened and what the other coach had said. He didn't say another word the whole way home. That night we were watching TV and they were talking about the Martin Luther King assassination. My dad pointed to the TV and looked at me. He said, "They can't kill civil rights by killing him and you can't fight racism by punching out a coach". That's all he ever said about it.

BILL

Well, let's see if you can still play ball.

Tom Clark picks up the basketball and both men walk onto the court. Bill places his hand on Tom Clark's shoulder as they walk.

BILL

I can't tell you how good it is to see you. But, I'm still going to kick your ass.

Bill slaps the ball out of Tom's hands and begins dribbling it across the court.

TOM

Okay, so that's they way you want to play it, let's see what you've got.

They begin playing basketball.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

The court lights are on. Bill and Tom Clark come walking off the court after playing basketball. Both men are sweaty and breathing heavy. They sit down on the bench and begin drinking water. Tom Clark looks over at Bill.

TOM CLARK

Is that it, are you done?

BILL

I'm done.

TOM CLARK

But we're tie, we can't leave it at that.

BILL

We're gonna have to, other wise you'll be calling an ambulance for me.

Tom Clark reaches into his bag and pulls out his cellphone. Tom Clark flips it open and begins awkwardly typing.

BILL

What the hell are you doing?

TOM CLARK

I'm texting my wife to let her know I'll be home soon and that I didn't die on the basketball court.

BILL

Where did you get a flip phone? I didn't think they still made those.

TOM CLARK

Hey be nice. This phone does everything I need it to do. It makes calls, takes pictures and last month my son showed me how to send text messages.

BILL

Can it add 2 plus 2?

TOM CLARK

What do you mean?

BILL

That doesn't look like a smart phone to me.

Tom Clarks puts his phone away.

TOM CLARK

No, it's not, but these kids today all have them. My son has been to computer camp the past five years. I can't get him to pick up a basketball. (pause) Don't get me wrong, when it comes to working on the farm, he's right there when I need him. But these kids can't put their cellphones down.

Tom Clark gestures towards the courts.

TOM CLARK

When we were growing up, these courts were filled every night during the summer, now they're empty. The technology seems to gain speed every

year and half of us can't keep up. Is it like this in Chicago?

BILL

Are you kidding me, they're testing driverless cars in the city.

TOM CLARK

I don't know about driverless cars, but my tractor almost steers itself. It's guided by GPS. Where's the world going?

BILL

Don't ask me. So, we good, we're leaving it at a tie?

Tom Clark slowly stands up and stretches his back.

TOM CLARK

I think we better. How about a rematch in a few days?

Bill pulls his wallet out and opens it. Bill pulls out a business card and hands it to Tom Clark.

BILL

Here's my card, it has my cell phone number on it. Give me call.

Tom Clark takes the card and looks at it.

TOM CLARK

Wow, you have a business card. I can remember when you brought your gym clothes to school in a paper bag.

BILL

So, did you.

Tom laughs.

TOM

We were a pair weren't we.

Tom Clark reaches out his hand and Bill shakes it.

TOM CLARK

Good game. Do you need a ride to the Hotel?

Bill stands up slowly and stretches.

BILL

No, I think I'd better walk.

TOM CLARK

Ok then.

BILL

Bye.

Both men walk away in opposite directions.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Bill is walking slowly down the sidewalk because he is sore from last night's game. Bill walks it to an office building. Bill's phone beeps. Bill pulls his phone from his pocket and swipes. You can read the screen, "Good game last night, let's do it again, Tom". Bill puts his phone back into his pocket.

INT. DOCTOR OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks in and up to the receptionist desk.

RECEPTIONIST

May I help you?

BILL

Yes, I am here to see Dr. Osborne. I'm Bill Wilson.

The receptionist points towards the door.

RECEPTIONIST

Yes Mr. Wilson. Make a right and it's the second door on your left.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S PRIVATE OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks into the doctor's office and Dr. Osborne is sitting at a desk.

BILL
I am Bill Wilson. I'm here to see Dr.
Ozborne.

DR. OZBORNE
That's me.

Bill looks around the office.

BILL
This doesn't look like a doctor's
office.

DR. OZBORNE
No, this is my private office. The
general office and exam rooms are
across the hall.

Dr. Ozborne gestures towards a chair.

DR. OZBORNE
Please sit down.

Bill walks to the chair and sits down placing his briefcase
on the floor.

BILL
Did you have time to read over the
materials?

DR. OZBORNE
Yes, I did. You're here doing a blind
study and want to collect DNA samples
from some of my patients. How will
this work?

BILL
It's quite simple really. I've got a
week to collect 50 samples along with
their surveys.

DR. OZBORNE
I mean, how will you do this?

BILL

I'm sorry. How many patients do you see a week that are eighteen and older?

DR. OZBORNE

I would say around forty.

BILL

Wow that few.

DR. OZBORNE

Well, this is not a large town, but we do stay open until 8pm three nights a week. I have an intern from the hospital that works with me.

BILL

Well it's quite simple. With forty as our group size, we'll ask every patient to participate. They get ten dollars if they do. I can work along side your receptionist if that's Ok?

DR. OZBORNE

Is this a written survey or do you ask the questions?

BILL

Let me explain the process. If they agree to participate, I swab the inside of their cheek. Each swab container has a barcode with an ID in the barcode. I scan the barcode ID with the tablet and the survey pops up. They answer 25 questions on the tablet computer with a choice between Yes and No. Once they complete the survey it's stored without us knowing who took the survey attached to the sample. The ID gives us the ability to tie the sample to the answers.

DR. OZBORNE

I don't see any problems with that. The ten dollars, is that in cash?

BILL

Yes, it is.

DR. OZBORNE

Good. Let's get over to the general office and get you setup.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill is sitting at a small table in Dr. Osborne's waiting room. The tablet computer laying on the table with a cardboard screen setup around the tablet to keep anyone from watching while the survey is taken. Dr. Osborne walks up.

DR. OZBORNE

So, are you all set?

BILL

Yes, I am, thank you.

DR. OZBORNE

Well, patients will be coming in soon enough.

BILL

Actually Doctor, if you don't mind, can I take your DNA sample.

The doctor gives Bill a long questioning look.

DR. OZBORNE

Sure, why not.

Bill pulls a sample from the box, picks up the table and scans the barcode. Bill places the table on the table and the survey pops up. Dr. Osborne sits down. Bill pulls the swab from the container and holds it up. Dr. Osborne opens his mouth and Bill swabs the inside of Dr. Osborne's cheek then places the swab back into the container.

BILL

The first 3 question are general questions about you. Age, Race and Sex. Once you answer them the other questions appear. Read the questions and with you finger choose the answer Yes or No. No one can tell your

answers from anyone else's so please
answer the questions honestly.

DR. OZBORNE

Even this first question, Age.

Dr. Osborne smiles at Bill and Bill smiles back. Dr.
Osborne answers the questions and clicks the Complete
Button.

DR.OZBORNE

I'm done.

BILL

That's all there is to it.

Dr. Osborne stands up and looks at Bill.

DR. OZBORNE

Aren't you forgetting something?

Bill looks up at Dr. Osborne with a puzzled look.

BILL

No, that's all there is to it.

DR. OZBORNE

My ten dollars?

Bill reaches into an envelope in his briefcase and hands
Dr. Osborne a ten-dollar bill. Dr. Osborne folds the ten
dollars bill and sticks it in his white coat pocket then
walks into the back area of the office.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill spends the day trying to talk patients into providing
samples. But is only able to take a few samples.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

End of the day, Dr. Osborne walks up.

DR. OZBORNE

Well how are things going.

BILL

Not as good as I had hope. I only took three samples.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill is collecting a sample from an older woman.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill is talking to a young woman and you can see her shake her head no.

INT. DOCTOR OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

It's Friday evening. Dr. Osborne walks out ready to go home.

DR. OZBORNE

Well how's it going?

BILL

I have to say, your patients are reluctant to allow me to take samples. I've only collected ten so far. I haven't had that problem at other facilities in the north. I'm starting to wonder why.

Dr. Osborne sits down in one of the waiting room chairs.

DR. OZBORNE

Mr. Wilson, are you suggesting what I think you are suggesting? That it has something to do with you being black?

BILL

Well, I may have been thinking it.

Dr. Osbornes sits back in the chair and looks at Bill. Dr. Osbornes looks over at the office window to see if the nurse is there.

DR. OZBORNE

Yes, you are in the south, but don't let that influences you. I'd venture

to say that if you look at the surveys you have collected, there are surveys from whites, blacks and Hispanics. I'd also ventures to say that it's more about trust than the color of your skin. That's something I think I can help you with come Monday. What are you plans for the weekend?

BILL

I was not planning on being here, so I did not rent a car. But since I am, I think I'll rent a car and drive around the area. I used to live here when I was a kid. My family owned a farm, so I thought I would drive out and see the farm.

DR. OZBORNE

Well you have a nice weekend.

BILL

You too doctor.

Dr. Osborne gets up and walks out of the office. Bill packs up and leaves also.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Bill wakes up with the sun shining on his face. Bill rubs his eyes and turns on to his back. Bill stares at the ceiling. Bill takes a deep breath and pops out of bed.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - DAY

Bill exits the elevator and walks towards the door. The hotel clerk is behind the front desk.

HOTEL CLERK

Have a nice day Sir.

BILL

You too.

Bill walks out the front door.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Bill stops, pulls out his phone, presses the screen a few times and says, "car rental". A moment later Bill presses the screen again then looks down the block. Bill puts the phone away and begins walking down the sidewalk.

EXT. ENTERPRISE CAR RENTAL OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks up to and enters an Enterprise car rental office.

INT. CAR - DAY

Bill is driving down a country road looking at houses. Bill picks up his phone and presses the screen a few times and says.

BILL
Church Road

Bill looks at the screen and drives on.

INT. CAR - DAY

Bill pulls up to an intersection and looks at the road sign. The sign reads Church Rd.

Bill looks to the right and then to the left. Bill makes a left turn onto Church Rd. Bill takes notice of one house as he drives by. Bill drives a few minutes and stops as he comes to a bridge crossing a river. Bill looks around then makes a three-point turn and drives back in the direction he came.

Bill approaches a large oak tree standing in a field and slows down. Bill see a place to pull off the road and he does. The area Bill pulls into is only long enough for a car or two and looks like an old driveway. There's a post sticking out of the ground on the edge of the driveway that looks like it once held a mailbox. Bill stops the car and gets out.

EXT. CAR - DAY

Bill walks up to the tree and stops. He looks up at the trees branches then walks up and places his hand on the tree. Bill turns around and looks around the field as if

he is looking for something. Bill stands there for a minute and then walks back to the car. Bill gets in, start the car and backs out onto the road.

INT. CAR - DAY

Bill drives back the way he came and slows up at the house that caught his attention before. Bill looks at the mailbox and it reads "Clark". Bill pulls in and drives slowly up the driveway. As Bill pulls up next to the house and stops, he sees Tom Clark setting in a chair in the side yard. Tom Clark gets up and begins walking towards the car.

EXT. CAR AT TOM CLARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Bill turns the car off and gets out as Tom Clark walks up.

TOM CLARK

Hi Bill, what are you doing out here?

BILL

I thought I'd drive by the old farm.

Tom Clark looks in the direction that Bill drove in from.

TOM CLARK

Come on over and have a seat.

Bill and Tom Clark walk over to where Tom Clark was sitting. There is a ring of chairs around a fire pit. Bill and Tom Clark sit down. Tom Clark reaches over to a cooler and opens it up.

TOM CLARK

Can I offer you a beer or bottle of water?

BILL

Sure, water, please.

Tom Clark pulls out a bottle of water and tosses it to Bill. Bill opens it and takes a drink.

BILL

The old oak tree is still standing but the house and barn are gone.

TOM CLARK

Yes, they are. A few days after you and your family headed to Chicago, the house and barn caught fire. We're so far out, that by the time the fire department got here, there was nothing they could do.

BILL

They burned down?

TOM CLARK

Ya, didn't your father tell you?

BILL

How would he know?

TOM CLARK

A week or so later your father came back to see my father and they talked about it.

BILL

I don't remember that.

TOM CLARK

Your Father drove in, me and my Father were sitting right here. My Father bought the farm for the land and he was going to rent out the house, but it burned down. Your Father came back to sign the papers.

BILL

I don't remember that.

TOM CLARK

Your Father didn't seem upset about the house, but he did get frustrated when my Father would not take the insurance money.

BILL

Insurance money? What insurance money?

TOM CLARK

Your Father had an insurance policy on the farm. Before he came out, he stopped in town and picked up the insurance check for the settlement on the fire. Your Father had cashed the check and had an envelope full of money.

BILL

Why was he trying to give it to your Father?

TOM CLARK

Your Father had been paid for the farm but he had not signed the deed over to my Father, That's what he came back for. Your Father said that they had shook hands and the deal was done before the house and barn burned down. He said my Father owned the house when it burned down so the money should go to him for what he had lost. My Father argued that your Father paid the policy and had not signed the deed when the house burned down, so your Father still owned it. I remember them sitting here like two stones after my Father said he was not taking the money.

BILL

My Father could be stubborn like that.

TOM CLARK

So could mine.

BILL

What happened?

TOM CLARK

Your Father ask what was going to happen to the farm? My Father told him what was left of house and barn needed be bulldozed. They sat here like stones for about five minutes until your Father stood up with the envelope of money in his hand. My Father stood

up and I thought they were going to go at it again. Then your Father said, "you're right, it was my house when it burned down, and I feel responsible to clean it up". Then he reached into that envelope and pulled out a stack of bills. Your Father reached out to hand it to my Father and said, "I have to head back to Chicago and can't see to it. Would you do me a favor and see that it's cleaned up for me?" My Father said "I can do that" and took the money your Father was holding out.

BILL

Boy those old guys could be stubborn.

TOM CLARK

Yes, they could, but your Father came up with a way that they could both keep their pride intact.

Bill hears a vehicle driving up from the back of the farm and looks to see what is coming as the vehicle drives up and stops.

TOM CLARK

Some of my Friends use the farm road to get down to the river to fish.

HARRY gets out of the truck, walks up and plops down in a chair.

TOM CLARK

Would you like a beer?

HARRY

I sure would.

Tom Clark reaches into the cooler. Tom Clark points to Bill.

TOM CLARK

This is an old friend. We used to play ball in school.

HARRY
Basketball?

TOM CLARK
Is there any other kind?

Tom Clark points in Bill's direction.

TOM CLARK
Harry this is Bill, Bill, Harry.

HARRY
It's nice to meet you.

BILL
Same here.

HARRY
You never told me you played ball in college.

TOM CLARK
No, it was back in junior high and high school. Bill was my only brother growing up. (proudly) We made a good team on the court. Bill is down here doing research for the University of Chicago.

HARRY
Wow, all the way from Chicago. What are you researching around here?

BILL
Well, actually, I'm just collecting samples to takefccc back to Chicago.

HARRY
What kind of samples?

BILL
DNA samples.

HARRY
How do you do that?

BILL

I swab the inside of volunteer's mouth's, have them take a survey then pay them ten dollars.

HARRY

Well hell, I could use ten bucks.

BILL

You want to volunteer?

HARRY

Sure, ten bucks is ten bucks.

BILL

Ok, give me a minute.

Bill walks over to his car, gets his briefcase and returns.

Bill sits his briefcase down on the chair and opens it. Bill pulls out a sample and the tablet. Bill scans the barcode and walks over to Harry with the sample and tablet. Bill sets the tablet down on a chair, opens the sample and pulls out the swab then looks at Harry.

BILL

Open your mouth.

Harry opens his mouth and Bill swabs the inside of Harry's cheek, then Bill puts the swab back into the container. Bill picks up the tablet and hands it to Harry.

BILL

Here you go. Just read the questions and use your finger to choose the answers. Then at the end push the Complete button.

HARRY

Is this a touch screen like a phone?

BILL

Yes.

Harry goes through the questions, answers them, and hands the tablet back to Bill. Bill sits back down in his chair.

HARRY

Ok, where's my ten bucks.

Bill puts the sample and tablet back into his brief case and retrieves a ten-dollar bill. Bill hands the ten-dollar bill to Harry.

BILL

There you go.

HARRY

Boy that was easy, can I do it again for another ten bucks?

BILL

No, I only need one from each volunteer.

HARRY

How about you Tom?

TOM CLARK

He doesn't need my DNA.

BILL

Actually, I do, if you don't mind. I've been having a hard time getting volunteers around here.

TOM CLARK

Sure, but you can keep the ten dollars.

Bill pulls another sample from his briefcase, scans the barcode with the tablet and takes Tom Clark's sample. Bill then hands Tom Clark the tablet. Tom Clark begins to take the survey.

While Tom Clark is taking the survey, Bill pulls a pen from his briefcase and places a small mark on the corner of the barcode of Tom Clark's sample. Bill does the same thing to Harry's sample but in a different place on the label. Tom Clark finishes the survey and hands the tablet back to Bill. Bill puts everything away and closes his briefcase. Bill places the Briefcase next to the chair he's sitting in. Bill hears another vehicle coming up through the field. This truck is loud and as it stops Bill notices the confederate battle flag license plate on the front.

HARRY

This ought to be fun.

JOHN gets out of the truck, walks up and flops down in a chair.

JOHN

I could sure use a beer.

Tom Clark reaches into the cooler, pulls out a beer and tosses it to John. John opens the beer and takes a drink. John looks at Bill.

JOHN

And what do we have here?

TOM CLARK (STERNLY)

This is an old friend of mine from Chicago. John this is Bill, Bill this is John.

BILL

It's a pleasure to meet you.

JOHN

Yep.

Everyone can sense the tension John has brought to the group.

HARRY

Bill here will give you ten dollars if you let him run a cotton swam in your mouth and answer some questions.

JOHN

What kind of questions?

HARRY

Simple yes or no questions.

JOHN

Well hell, why not, ten dollars will pay for my beer tonight. Let's do it.

Bill pulls a sample and tablet out of his briefcase. Bill scans the barcode on the sample, gets up and carries the sample and tablet over to John. Bill opens the sample.

BILL

I need to swab the inside of your
cheek.

John opens his mouth and Bill takes the sample. John is looking intensely into Bill's eyes the whole time. Bill puts the swab back into the container and hands John the tablet. Harry leans over.

HARRY

Your press the answer on the screen
with your finger.

JOHN

I know how to work it.

Bill returns to his chair.

Bill pulls a pen out of his brief case and marks the barcode on John's sample in a different place than Harry's or Tom Clark's. Bill places the sample in his briefcase.

JOHN

Do I click the Complete button when I'm
done?

BILL

Yes.

John presses the screen and hands the tablet to Harry who hands it to Tom Clark who hand it to Bill. Bill places the tablet back in his briefcase. Bill pulls a ten-dollar bill from the briefcase. Bill hands the ten dollars to Tom Clark who hands it to Harry who hands it to John.

JOHN

Well thank you very much. Harry, Bill,
have a good evening.

John gets up, walks to his trunk, and gets in. John drives down the driveway and turns on to the road. The men can hear the loud truck as it drives away. Tom Clark looks at Harry.

TOM CLARK

Boy, are you crazy asking John to do that?

HARRY

What, I thought it would be fun.

BILL

What's wrong?

TOM CLARK

John's one of the last, good old boys we still have around here if you know what I mean?

BILL

I understand. You can't miss the confederate battle flag license plate on the front of his truck.

HARRY

I never met a good old boy who wouldn't do anything for beer money.

All three men laugh.

EXT. CAR AT TOM CLARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Bill and Tom Clark are walking up to Bill's car.

BILL

Thanks for letting me hang out.

TOM CLARK

It was good having you. Sorry about some of the company.

BILL

That's Ok, I've seen it before.

TOM CLARK

Hey, if you don't have any plans, why don't you come back tomorrow evening around 6 For dinner. We bring the food out to the screened in patio and eat

outside. It'll just be me, my wife and mom.

BILL

I could not impose.

TOM CLARK

Sure you can. It will give you a chance to meet my wife. I've told her all these stories of our basketball games. (pause) I know what will make you say yes. (pause) We're having fried chicken?

Bill looks at Tom Clark and smiles as Tom Clark smiles back.

BILL

Wow, you're not giving me a choice. (pause) I'll be here.

TOM CLARK

Great, I'll see you tomorrow.

Bill reaches out his hand and Tom Clark shakes it. Bill gets into his car and backs out of the driveway.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is sitting at a desk. Bill has three sample containers on the desk. Bill pulls a note pad from the pocket of his open briefcase. Bill uses his cell phone app to decode the barcodes on the samples one by one. After decoding each, he adds the number and name of the volunteer to the note. You can read the note when he is done. 1 - Myself, 2 - Debbie, 2453 - Tom Clark, 2454 - Harry and 2455 - John. Bill places everything back inside his briefcase.

EXT. JOHN CLARK'S HOUSE - DAY

Bill drives up the driveway, stops and gets out. Bill pulls out a box from the back seat. Bill walks towards the back of the house. John Clark's wife JOANN comes out of the back door carrying a tray of food and sees Bill.

JOANN (SOUTHERN ACCENT)

Hi, you must be Bill?

BILL

Yes, I am.

JOAN

I'm Joann, Bill's wife, it's nice to meet you.

BILL

It's nice to meet you. Thank you for having me, I brought you a pie.

JOANN

Thank you.

As Joann walks, she motions towards the screened in patio.

Bill and Joann walk up to the screened in patio.

JOANN

Do you mind getting the door for me?

Bill opens the door. Joann walks into the patio area and Bill follows her. Bill looks around.

INT. SCREEN PATIO - DAY

The screened patio has a few chairs sitting around the outside, a cooler in the corner and a picnic table in the center. The picnic table has red and white checkerboard tablecloth and is set for dinner.

BILL

This is nice.

Joann places the tray of food on the picnic table. Bill places the pie next to the tray.

JOANN

It is, isn't it? Bill built the roof over the patio to provide shade in the summer, but the bugs were a little bit much, so he screened it in. It's such a nice place to sit and relax or have a meal.

Joann points to the cooler.

JOANN

Please, help yourself. I have to go back in and get some more. Bill will be right out.

Joann walks over to the door and opens it. Tom Clark comes through the open door carrying a tray of fried chicken covered with a thin cloth. Tom Clark holds the tray up and looks at Bill.

TOM CLARK

I have what you're looking for.

Joann looks at Tom Clark and gives him a nasty look.

JOANN (IN A WHISPER)

BILL!

Tom Clark walks over to the table and places the tray in the middle. Tom Clark turns and looks at Joann.

TOM CLARK

Honey, would you tell Mother dinner is ready and bring out the last tray please.

JOANN

Sure, I'll be out in a minute.

Joann closes the door and walks back to the house. Tom Clark sits down at the picnic table where he put the tray. Bill walks over to the cooler and pulls out a bottle of water.

TOM CLARK

Would you grab us two bottles of water please?

Bill pulls two more bottles of water from the cooler and walks over to the picnic table. Bill places the bottles on the table and sits down. Joann and Tom Clark's mother EVE come walking in. They walk over to the picnic table and sit down. Joann places the last try on the picnic table.

TOM CLARK

Mother, I don't know if you remember Bill, he grew up down here. He lived on the farm next to ours when he was younger.

Eve reaches across the table to shakes Bill's hand.

EVE

You were much smaller. Didn't you have an older brother? His name was Ronnie?

Bill shakes Eve's hand.

BILL

I do. It's nice to meet you.

JOANN

Now Bill, don't be shy, you're our guest, please help yourself.

BILL

Don't mind if I do.

Bill reaches for the tines, picks up two pieces of fried chicken and places them on his plate. Everyone begins spooning food onto their plates to eat. Tom Clark looks at Joann sitting next to him.

TOM CLARK

See, I told you he likes fried chicken.

Joann elbows Tom Clark.

JOANN (IN A WHISPER)

BILL!

TOM CLARK

Wait until you see what she has for dessert. Nice big pieces of watermelon.

Joann places her hands over her face in embarrassment.

JOANN

Oh my God Bill.

TOM CLARK

What?

Joann takes her hands away from her face.

JOAN

I'd like to apologize for my husband.
He doesn't know what he's saying. He
wasn't born here.

BILL

He knows exactly what he's saying.

Tom Clark and Bill break out laughing.

BILL

Joann, don't worry about it. He used
to bust on me all the time for liking
fried chicken. I know there's not a
prejudiced bone in his body.

Tom Clark stops eating.

TOM CLARK

That's not true. I am prejudiced. I'm
prejudiced against assholes. I think
you met one here yesterday.

EVE

Who are you talking about?

TOM CLARK

John Peters.

EVE

My lord, that boy has some nasty
issues. I think that boy grew up on
the wrong side of smart. Besides, I
don't know what you're all fussing
about. I grew up in New York City, I
love fried chicken and watermelon.

Everyone begins laughing.

EVE (LOOKING AT TOM)

Now, your father's uncle, he grew up
down here. There was a man who had a

nasty side for anyone who was any other color but white.

TOM CLARK

I don't remember him.

EVE

You wouldn't. The only time I met him was when your father and I were traveling through, and we stopped here. That man had no problems about voicing his opinions. He insisted we spend the night and by the time we got in bed your father had had enough. He had me up at 5am before anyone was awake and we hit the road. I still don't understand why he left this farm to your father when he died. Or why your father wanted to move down here.

TOM CLARK

Pop loved it down here. Remember the trip to St. Louis. The only time he was happy was when we were at the arch.

EVE

You're right, he didn't like big cities. He loved living in the country.

Eve looks at Bill.

EVE

Now Bill, was that you or your brother that almost drowned in the river?

Bill looks up with a surprised look on his face.

BILL

That, that was my brother.

Tom looks at Bill.

TOM CLARK

You never told me about that.

BILL

My brother and I never told anyone. I didn't know anyone else knew.

TOM CLARK

What happened?

BILL

My brother and I were fishing down by the river. I fell asleep. Something woke me up and your father came flying by me running at full speed. He dove in and pulled my brother out.

Bill stops talking for a moment and stares straight ahead.

I remember when I first saw your father on the edge of the river trying to revive my brother, he looked scared. But when I got to them, your father was pissed. He yelled something at me about the trouble we could have caused and stormed off. It scared us so bad that me and my brother hung out down by the river until he was dry enough to go home. We never told a soul and I never understood why your father was so mad.

EVE

I do.

TOM CLARK

Why?

EVE

You father had to do business with and rely on men that lived in this area. Men like his uncle. Some of them would have treated your father differently if they know your father saved his brother from drowning.

JOANN

Are you saying those men would have preferred his brother drown? That's terrible.

Eve looks directly at Tom Clark.

EVE

Your father didn't sleep right for a month. That's what sent him back to church.

Tom Clark looks directly at Bill excited and points his finger.

TOM CLARK

So, it was you.

BILL

Me?

TOM CLARK

Well your brother. I was just starting to skip church Sunday mornings to work on the farm with my father. After that, no one was allowed to skip church on Sunday morning. I hated being drug to church every Sunday.

JOANN

You hated it?

TOM CLARK

Yes, I did.

JOANN

You met me at church.

TOM CLARK

(pause) Well maybe it wasn't all bad.

Everyone begins laughing.

EXT. TOM CLARK'S HOUSE - DAY

The sun is going down and dinner is done. Tom Clark and Bill are walking to the chairs around the fire pit. Tom Clark has his arm around Bill's shoulder.

TOM CLARK

Now was that good food, or what?

Bill places his hands on his stomach.

BILL

That was good food, and I ate way too much.

Tom Clark and Bill walk into the circle and sit down.

Bill notices Joann carrying items in from the patio.

BILL

I like your wife, she's nice. She seems a little up tight, but I like her.

TOM CLARK

You know, I was messing with her last night when her and my Mother got home. I walked into the house and told my Mother that we had a black man coming to dinner and she needed to cook some fried chicken. Boy I thought my wife was going to hit me with a broom. I told her I was joking, but I ended up sleeping on the cold side of the bed last night. She came in the house after meeting you and I thought she was going to have a heart attack. She said "O my God I though you were joking. He is black and we're serving him fried chicken".

Both men begin to laugh.

TOM CLARK

Are people like this up in Chicago?

BILL

What do you mean?

TOM CLARK

All crazy over being politic correct and all?

BILL

Oh, I'd say they're worse.

TOM CLARK

Really? I don't know anymore. I though I would be much older before I started thinking young people are crazy. White people cannot say the N-word but some rappers use it a dozen times in a song. What's that about?

BILL

I don't know. Do you believe what you mother said about some of the people your father had to do business with?

TOM CLARK

Who knows. When we were going up, I would say thirty percent of the people around here had issues, both black and white. The rest didn't care what color a person's skin was. Now a days, there's only a few like John left, the guy you met Yesterday.

BILL

Ya, he was a real character.

Tom Clark looks at Bill for a moment.

TOM CLARK

You can say it. He's a racist.

BILL

Well, I didn't want to step over the line.

TOM CLARK

Wow. There's a line?

Bill shrugs his shoulder.

TOM CLARK

When we were growing up there wasn't any line was there?

BILL

No, there wasn't. But now, with things like CRT out there.

TOM CLARK

How does that affect us now?

BILL

Well, like Yesterday when you said, "I was the only brother you had growing up". You used the word Brother.

TOM CLARK

Do you mean like a black friend?

BILL

Well, yes.

TOM CLARK

Huh, do you remember the first time we met?

BILL

No, not really.

TOM CLARK

I do. I had been left back a grade because of my reading. First day in school, the only empty seat was in the back row next to you. Class started and I was lost. We were reading in a book, I could not keep up and I lost my place. You saw me struggling and pointed out the page I should have been on. We became best friends after that.

Bill smiles.

BILL

We did. There wasn't anything we didn't do together.

TOM CLARK

You told me how your brother Ronnie had been sent up north to live with relatives and that you missed him. I told you how I didn't have a brother.

TOM CLARK

Because of that, I always thought of us as Brothers.

The smile leaves Bill's face.

TOM CLARK

I've done a little reading on this Critical Race Theory. Am I supposed to think of you as oppressed? You grew up next door on a farm just like me. Went to college, just like me. You're now doing research at the University of Chicago and I'm a dirt farmer. Does that make me a racist?

BILL

Tom, you took that the wrong way. I didn't mean you were a racist.

TOM CLARK

You were the only brother I had growing up and it had nothing to do with the color of your skin. Is that what CRT does, it separates brothers by the color of their skin?

INT. BILL'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is sitting on his bed thinking. Bill picks up his phone and dials.

BILL

Pop, it's me.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

How you doing?

BILL

I'm fine. I'm down south doing research. You'll never guess where I am?

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

Where?

BILL

I'm in Smackover Arkansas, our old town.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

No, how are things looking down there?

BILL

Not much has changed. Do you remember Tom Clark?

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

You mean Tommy Clark, the boy who lived next door?

BILL

That's him. I ran into him and we've been spending some time together.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

How's him and his family doing?

BILL

Good, his father died.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

That's a shame. He was a good man.

BILL

Pop, why was Ronnie sent up North to live?

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

You don't remember him getting into trouble?

BILL

No.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

He got in with a group of boys hell bent on getting into trouble. So, we sent him to live with your uncle. He straightened Ronnie out.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

Why do you ask?

BILL

Tom and I got into a little bit of a discussion and it didn't turn out good.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
About Ronnie?

BILL
No, it was about Tom introducing me to one of his friends as his brother.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
I don't understand. You two were best friends growing up. He was more of a brother to you than Ronnie. What's this about?

BILL
Well, I sort of insinuated that he called me brother as a black man.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
Son, are you going crazy like some of these other folks up here in the city? Did we ever treat that boy like anything other than family?

BILL
No.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
And how did his father and mother treat you?

BILL
Like family.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
And didn't we go to the same church?

BILL
We did.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)
I don't understand what's happening. We have people pulling down statues and they don't know why. We have politicians who what to do away with the police. And we have this organization called Black Lives Matter

who don't give a damn about all the black people being killed in cities like Chicago.

BILL

I know.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

You're not becoming part of this craziness are you.

BILL

No.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

Then why would you think Tommy Clark would have something against you because of the color of your skin?

BILL

I don't know Pop. I'm sorry I'm getting you upset.

BILL'S FATHER (V.O)

Son, I know you well enough to know you're the one that's upset. Is there anything I can do?

BILL

No Pop. I'm good. You take care and I'll see you in a week or two.

INT. BARN - DAY

Tom is working on a tractor in the barn when his phone beeps. Tom takes his phone out of his pocket and opens it.

A text message from Bill reads "Basketball tonight at 7?". Tom types "Yes" and replies. Tom puts the phone away and goes back to work.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY

The sun is going down. Bill is waiting at the bleachers when Tom walks up.

Bill gets up and gives Tom a big hug. Tom is a little reluctant to hug Bill back, but he does.

Bill steps back.

BILL

Look, I'm sorry about last night.

TOM CLARK

Okay.

BILL

With all that's going on right now, I don't know what I was thinking.

TOM CLARK

We're good. I'm sorry, is that a black phrase?

Bill smiles a big smile.

BILL

You asshole.

Tom Clark smiles a big smile and looks at what Bill is wearing.

TOM CLARK

I see you found something more up to date to wear.

BILL

After dinner the other night, I stopped at Walmart on my way back into town.

TOM CLARK

Ya, Walmart. They just about killed all the stores on Main Street when they opened.

BILL

Main Street seems to be doing Ok?

TOM CLARK

Now it is. But it's restaurants, ice cream and art stores. I think Harris Sporting Goods is the last old store

that is still in business. You ready to play?

TOM CLARK

I am.

Tom Clark and Bill walk toward the courts.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURTS - NIGHT

Tom Clark and Bill come walking off the courts all sweaty.

Bill pumps his fist several times.

BILL

I did it. I did it. I finally kicked your ass.

TOM CLARK

It was that hook shot. I never should have taught you how to shoot a hook shot.

Both men sit down and drink water and lean back on the benches.

TOM CLARK

Hey look, the other night, when I told you what that coach said, did I insult you or offended you in some way?

BILL

No, if I had heard it when that coach said it, I would have been.

TOM CLARK

Well then what happened?

BILL

You got me thinking the other day. Do you remember the day we were playing one on one in the gym and the coach started yelling at me to watch what I was saying? I was calling you peckerwood and white cracker.

TOM CLARK

I remember that. We were both talking
shit.

BILL

Yes, but he only yelled at me.

TOM CLARK

Ya, he was pissed. What are you
saying, you think maybe the coach had
issues?

BILL

I think so. But I think it pissed him
off more when you walked up to me, put
your arm around my shoulders and said,
"let's get out of here".

TOM CLARK

Maybe. All I know is it's getting
scary.

Tom Clark looks over at Bill.

TOM CLARK

Can I tell you something?

BILL

Anything.

TOM CLARK

I always felt blessed to be born when I
was. I always thought I was lucky to
be able to watch, as racist finally
died. But, with what's happening now I
don't know. How can kids pick up such
an ugly part of our history and try to
bring it back to life?

BILL

You should talk to a girl I know. She's
all over CRT.

TOM CLARK

That's just my point. It's a theory.

BILL

So?

TOM CLARK

Let me tell you why unproven theories should not be used to teach children. Back in the 60s there was a theory that made its way into the schools. It was called ITA, Initial Teaching Alphabet. It was a whole new alphabet with its own books, and someone had a theory that kids would learn faster being taught with this alphabet. Well I was one of those kids. And it worked, the class I was in did learn faster until the second year. The second-grade teachers had no idea how to convert us back to the regular alphabet. We had not been taught the basics of spelling. I before E and all that. By the third grade none of the kids in my group could keep up. We simply did not know how to read. It was a complete disaster, so they swept it under the rug and forgot about the kids it permanently damaged.

BILL

Man, I'm sorry.

TOM CLARK

That's why I was left back a year. That's how I came to be in your class. From then on, learning was an overwhelming task. I can't tell you how many nights I cried thinking there was something wrong with me. And then, when I got to college, all I did was study, and my grades were some of the lowest in the class.

BILL

So, you think CRT is like that.

TOM CLARK

Didn't racism as a concept fail?
Didn't most people come to realize that

discrimination against someone because of their race, religion and color was wrong? Christ, didn't the civil rights act of 1964 mean anything. I got to tell you, I think we're going backwards, we're repeating history.

BILL

I don't know. It's all about power. Most politicians can't be trusted to speak their mind. They don't tell you what they are thinking or how they really feel. How can you tell if they are racist or homophobic? I don't know.

TOM CLARK

Neither do I. Maybe we're getting too old. Or maybe we're both starting to wake up on the wrong side of smart.

Both men begin to laugh. Tom looks at his watch.

TOM CLARK

It's getting late. I need to get home.

BILL

Ok. Good game.

TOM CLARK

You're only saying that because you won.

Bill and Tom Clark both laugh.

TOM CLARK

I'm counting on the rematch, tomorrow night 7pm?.

BILL

You got it.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is lying on his bed watching TV. His cell phone rings. Bill reaches over and picks up the cell phone

sitting on the night table. He looks at the phone as he unplugs the charger. It's DEBBIE, Bill's on again off again girl friend.

BILL

Hey what up?

DEBBIE (V.O)

Nothing, I haven't heard from you in a while.

BILL

Ya, I'm bouncing around the country gathering samples for my study.

DEBBIE (V.O)

Where are you now?

BILL

I'm so far south I can just about smell the gulf.

DEBBIE (V.O)

You need to be careful down there.

BILL

Really?

Bill slides off the bed and begins to pace as he talks.

DEBBIE (V.O)

I'm not saying anything, I don't want to get into it.

BILL

No, you should say it. That's just the point. I need to know what you think. I ran into a guy down here that I grew up with and played high school basketball with. The guy talked to me so openly it was like he's my brother. We got to talking about a basketball game we played in back in high school. He told me that the coach on the other team called me a nigger.

DEBBIE (V.O)

See, that's what I'm saying. There are people down there...

Bill cuts her off.

BILL

There you go. You're not listening to me. This guy is white. I mean born in NY, raised in the south white.

DEBBIE (V.O)

And he said nigger in front of you? Did you call him on it?

BILL

No, he was telling me what someone said.

DEBBIE (V.O)

You should have called him on it. People down there...

Bill cuts her off.

BILL

People down here, do you hear yourself? Did you see the news today? A group of protestors defaced a statue of Matthias Baldwin in Philadelphia. They painted "Murderer" and "Colonizer" on the statue. The man was an abolitionist and advocated for the education of black children. What is wrong with people.

DEBBIE (V.O)

See, that's what causes us problems. You don't see people like I do.

BILL

You're right. You're right. Look, I have to go. I'll talk to you later.

Bill pushes the button on the screen to end the call. Bill throws the phone on the bed and paces some more.

INT. DR. OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill walks in and sets up to take samples. Dr. Osborne walks in.

BILL
Morning Dr. Osborne.

DR. OZBORNE
Morning.

Dr. Osborne walks up to the front desk where the nurse is sitting.

DR. OZBORNE
This young man is going to need our help, or he'll be here all summer. Go through the appointment book and mark every patient who is over 18. When they come in, ask them to participate in this young man's study. Tell them that if they do, we'll give them ten dollars off their visit today.

Dr. Osborne turns and looks at Bill.

DR. OZBORNE
Will that be Ok?

BILL
Sure, if you think telling them they'll get ten dollars off their visit will help.

DR. OZBORNE
It's not the ten dollars. They trust her, they don't know you.

Dr. Osborne proceeds to the back of the office and Bill sits down.

INT. DR. OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill is taking a sample for a woman and two more people are standing near Bill's table waiting to give samples.

INT. DR. OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Dr. Osborne walks out on the back on the office in his plain cloths.

DR. OZBORNE

Well how did we make out today?

BILL

Very well. Your nurse was able to get me more than half the volunteers I need. If tomorrow is just as productive, I'll finish tomorrow.

DR. OZBORNE

I'm glad she could help.

Dr. Osborne looks at the nurse.

DR. OZBORNE

Did he pay you for each patient?

NURSE

Yes.

DR. OZBORNE

Good, put that money into the Vet's envelope. Have a good evening.

Dr. Osborne walks out of the office. Bill puts everything away.

Bill walks over to the front desk to talk to the nurse.

BILL

What's the Vets envelope?

NURSE

We keep an envelope in the drawer. Every few days Dr. Ozbone will walk in and tell us to use the Vets envelope. On those days, any cash payments are put into the Vets envelope. At the end of the year, Dr. Osborne picks a veteran's organization and donates all the money that was put into the Vet's envelope.

BILL

That's very generous. You have a nice night.

NURSE

You too.

Bill walks out of the waiting room.

INT. DINER RECEPTION'S STATION - NIGHT

Bill is standing at the hostess stations. From behind, Bill hears a voice.

DR. OZBORNE

Are you here for dinner?

Bill turns around and sees Dr. Osborne.

BILL

Yes.

DR. OZBORNE

I'm eating alone, would you like to join me?

BILL

Yes, thank you.

Bill turns back around to see the hostess.

HOSTESS

How many?

BILL

Two please.

HOSTESS

Follow me.

Bill and Dr. Osborne follow the Hostess to their table and sit down. The hostess places menus in front of them and they begin to look over the menus.

DR. OZBORNE

So, you had a good day?

BILL

Yes. Your nurse was very helpful.

DR. OZBORNE

It was her idea. She saw how you struggled last week and suggested to me that she talk to the patients about volunteering.

BILL

Either way, it was much easier. She told me about the Vets envelope.

Dr. Osborne lowers his menu to look at Bill.

DR. OZBONE

She did?

BILL

Well, I overheard you. So, I asked her about it. That's very generous of you.

Dr. Osborne goes back to looking at the menu.

DR. OZBORNE

Well everyone should do something to give back. I'm just very aware of what our veterans have to go through. I have treated a lot of veterans over the years starting with Vietnam. They were the worst. Some of those young men bore physical and mental wounds from that war. Then they were not treated very well when they returned.

BILL

Just the same, that's very generous of you.

The WAITRESS walks up.

WAITRESS

What would you like for dinner?

BILL

You go ahead, I'm still deciding.

INT. DR. OZBORNE'S WAITING ROOM - DAY

Bill has just finished taking a sample from a gentleman and the gentleman is answering the questions. When the gentleman finishes, he looks up at Bill.

GENTLEMAN

Is that it.

BILL

Yes, it is. Thank you very much.

The gentleman gets up and leaves the waiting room. Bill begins packing up. Dr. Osborne comes out from the back of the office as Bill is finishing packing.

DR. OZBORNE

The nurse says you're done?

BILL

Yes, I am. I want to thank you and your staff for all your help.

DR. OZBORNE

I'm glad we could help. Are you heading back to Chicago now?

BILL

No, I've made plans for this evening. I'll be heading back in the morning.

Dr. Osborne reaches his hand out.

DR. OZBORNE

Well, good luck.

Bill takes Dr. Osborne's hand and shakes it.

BILL

Thank you doctor.

Bill picks up his brief case and leaves the office.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Bill walks up to Tom Clark and they shake hands.

BILL
I'm ready.

TOM CLARK
Let's play.

Both men enter the court and begin to play basketball.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BASKETBALL COURT - NIGHT

The lights are now on at the courts. Both men walk off the court sweaty and exhausted. They walk over to the bleachers and sit down. They're breathing heavy.

BILL
I guess that's it.

TOM CLARK
I guess so. Man, tied. It doesn't feel right leaving it with a tie score.

BILL
You want to keep going?

TOM CLARK
No, I'm done.

BILL
Well, maybe you can come up to Chicago for a rematch.

TOM CLARK
Chicago? Like my father, I'm not keen on big cities.

Both men sit there resting. Tom Clark picks up a bottle of water and takes a drink. Tom Clark offers the water to Bill and Bill takes it. Bill raises the bottle and looks at the mouth of the bottle as if there is something wrong with it and he does not want to drink after Tom Clark. Bill then looks over at Tom Clark. They pause.

TOM CLARK
You asshole.

Both men begin laughing and Bill takes a long drink from the bottle of water then hands it back.

TOM CLARK

I've got to tell you, it's nice spending time with you. It's like we were kids again. Best friends back together making fun of the world as if the rest of the crap around us doesn't matter.

BILL

I know what you mean.

TOM CLARK

You know my wife gave me a talking to the other night.

BILL

About what?

TOM CLARK

About the way we were acting.

BILL

I got the feeling she was a little uptight. I spent a lot of time over the past few days thinking about it.

TOM CLARK

About what?

BILL

How nice it was to be able to talk to someone without all the crap as you call it getting in the way.

Tom Clark stands up and Bill stands up.

TOM CLARK

Well, it's been great seeing you.

Tom Clark reaches in the backpack sitting on the bleachers and pulls out a piece of paper. Tom Clark hands the paper to Bill. Bill takes the paper and looks at Tom Clark with a questioning look on his face.

BILL

What's this? Is this the recipe to
your Mother's fried chicken?

TOM CLARK

Hell no, it's my email address. You
want that recipe you'll have to talk to
Mom.

Both men smile. Tom Clark steps forward and hugs Bill.
Bill hugs Tom Clark back.

BILL

You take care brother.

TOM CLARK

You too.

Both men step back.

TOM CLARK

Did you walk here?

BILL

Yes, I'm heading back to Chicago in the
morning, so I returned my rental car.

TOM CLARK

Can I give you a ride?

Bill racks his head back and forth then stretches.

BILL

No, I better walk.

TOM CLARK

I'll see you.

Both men walk in opposite directions.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Bill is riding on the train back to Chicago. This time
there is no one sitting near him. Bill looks out the window
in thought as the train travels through the countryside.

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - DAY

Bill walks in with his briefcase and walks up to a desk in the lab. SAM a lab tech is sitting at the desk.

SAM
You're back.

BILL
Yes, I am.

Bill places his briefcase on the desk, opens it and hands Sam a large envelope.

BILL
Here they are. These are the last of the samples for my study.

SAM
So, how many samples did you take?

BILL
Fifty from each of the fifty states. They represent nearly a year of my life.

SAM
Well you're done now. It will take a few days, but we'll email you the full results from all the samples.

BILL
I'll be watching for it.

Bill closes the briefcase and leaves the lab.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bill is putting dishes in the sink. He walks over to the kitchen table and picks up his cell phone. He presses the screen a few times and holds the phone to his ear.

DEBBIE (V.O)
Hello?

BILL
Hey, it's Bill. I'm back in town. I'm heading out to get coffee. Do you have time to meet me at the coffee shop?

DEBBIE (V.O)
Sure.

BILL
I'll be there in 10 minutes.

DEBBIE (V.O)
Ok.

Bill presses the screen to end the call.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Debbie is waiting. She is sitting at an outside table as Bill walks up and sits down.

BILL
Thanks for meeting me.

A WAITER walks up.

WAITER
Can I get you something?

BILL
Yes, a large regular decaf.

The waiter walks away.

DEBBIE
When did you get back?

BILL
Yesterday. I turned in the final samples for my study.

DEBBIE
So, you'll be in town for a while.

BILL
Yes. I'm so tired of living in hotels.

DEBBIE
What's next?

Bill tenses up and looks at her with a questioning look.

BILL
What do you mean? (pause) For us?

DEBBIE
No, for your study?

Bill relaxes again.

BILL
I have to wait for the results and
begin analyzing. The results are going
to take a few days.

A man walks by on the sidewalk and Debbie looks at him as
he walks by. Bill notices.

BILL
Who's that?

DEBBIE
I don't know. I've seen him like four
times this week.

BILL
He must live around here.

The Waiter walks up and places Bill's coffee on the table.
Bill picks the cup up.

DEBBIE
Why did you think I was asking about
us?

BILL
Well, I have not talked to you in a
while when you called the other night.

DEBBIE
I just wanted to see how you were
doing.

Debbie and Bill sit drinking their coffee.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Bill walks up and enters the building.

Bill does not see the man who passed them at the coffee shop sitting on a bench across the street.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill is sitting on the bed. He's cleaning out his briefcase. He's throwing out spare packets of salt and other things he has gathered while traveling. He picks up the card that the gentleman on the train gave him. Bill notices that the address is Lemont Il.

BILL

Huh, Lemont, that's not far from here.

Bill places the card in the pocket of his briefcase. He also comes across the piece of paper that Tom Clark had given him. Bill opens it and it has Tom Clark's name, and email address. The email address is for AOL.

BILL

AOL, who still uses AOL.

Bill folds the paper and places it in the same pocket as the card. He takes the briefcase and places it on the floor between the bed and night table. The handle of the brief case is laying on the bed side of the briefcase.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks in. There are a few desks in the office. SARA is sitting at her desk reading a magazine. Bill places his backpack next to a desk and sits down. Bill taps the space bar on the computer keyboard and the screen comes to life. There is a message on the screen that reads, "this computer is locked until further notice". Bill spins around and looks at Sara.

BILL

My computer is locked.

SARA

They all are. IT locked them all. I heard that somebody tried to hack us, whatever that means. IT is going from office to office. They're next door right now.

Bill turns back around, opens his backpack and pulls out the tablet. Bill begins working on it. Bill cannot connect with WIFI. Bill turns to Sara.

BILL

The WIFI is down also?

SARA

Everything is down, why do you think I'm reading a magazine.

Two young men walk in.

BILL

Can I help you?

SARA

They're from IT.

YOUNG MAN 1

We need to update the computers in this office.

BILL

Go ahead.

Bill gets up and Young Man 1 sits down at his desk. Young Man 1 puts a thumb drive into Bill's computer and pushes the power button until the PC reboots. Once the PC boots up Young Man 1 pulls the thumb drive out of the PC and stands up. Young Man 2 is working on Sara's PC.

YOUNG MAN 1

That is, you're done.

BILL

What about WIFI?

YOUNG MAN 1

I would not expect the WIFI to be back online the rest of the day.

BILL

Our WIFI network was hacked?

Young Man 1 looks over at Young Man 2 working on Sara's PC.

YOUNG MAN 1 (IN A LOW VOICE)

That's why the WIFI is down. Someone was able to connect to the WIFI and hack their way onto our network. As far as we can tell, they didn't download anything. But the head of the department wants all PC's physically updated. You're good.

Young Man 1 walks back to the other deck in the room and begins working. Bill sits down and logs in to his PC. Bill begins to check his emails. The Young Men finish and leave. Sara goes back to work.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Bill is sitting at a table on the campus grounds. He's eating lunch and reading some papers on the table. Behind him, sitting on a bench, is the same man that was outside his apartment building.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is sitting at his desk working on the computer when an email alert pops up. Bill opens the email and reads it. Sara is working at her computer.

BILL

Huh, France.

SARA

What?

Bill turns around and faces Sara.

BILL

I just got an email from some professor at the University of France. He's

going to be in town and wants to talk to me about my study.

SARA

Wow, France.

BILL

Ya, France. I wonder how he heard about my research.

Bill turns back around and goes back to work.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is sitting at his desk working on the computer. It's been a few days since he turned in the samples. An email alert pops up. Bill opens the email and reads it. "Mr. Wilson, Can you come to the lab Today? Sam". Bill gets up and starts to leave.

BILL

Sara, I'm heading to the lab. If anyone is looking for me, I'll be back in a while.

SARA

Ok.

Bill leaves the office.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Bill is walking between buildings. The same man that was outside his apartment is sitting on a bench watching from a distance. Bill walks up the steps and into a building.

INT. UNIVERSITY LAB - DAY

Bill walks in and walks up to a desk in the lab. Sam, the lab tech, is sitting at the desk.

SAM

Hey Bill.

BILL

Do you have my results?

SAM

Yes, but I wanted to talk to you about it.

BILL

What's up?

SAM

Your study called for 2,500 samples. We double checked the samples and there are 2505. We counted twice.

BILL

Yes, I pulled a few extras. Did you run them all?

SAM

Yes we did.

Sam reaches in his desk and pulls out an envelope. Sam hands the envelope to Bill. Bill opens the envelope and pulls out a document and a thumb drive. Bill holds up the thumb drive.

BILL

What's this?

SAM

That's your results, it's stored on the thumb drive.

BILL

Why didn't you just email it to me?

SAM

New policy, no files leave this office without being encrypted.

BILL

Is this the only copy?

SAM

No, we have a copy on the server, but our server is now encrypted. Only the three PC's in this lab can access the files. There's a number on that thumb drive. To access the file, you'll have

to call IT and give them the number.
They'll give you the password to the
thumb drive.

BILL

When did this new policy go into
effect?

SAM

Just the other day when the computers
were locked down. IT was in here for
three hours working on our server and
computers. You'll have to sign the
consent form.

BILL

What's the consent form for?

SAM

It gives us permission to destroy the
samples. It stops us from destroying
samples without the study manager
knowing about it. Gotta cover my ass.

Sam and Bill both smile. Bill signs the form and hands it
back to Sam. Bill leaves the lab carrying the thumb drive.

EXT. UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Bill exits the lab building and begins walking back to his
building. The same man is watching from a distance.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks into the office and sits down at his desk. He
plugs the thumb drive into his computer and tries to open
the folder on the thumb drive. A prompt pops up asking for
a password. Bill picks up the phone on his desk and dials.

IT (V.O)

IT department.

BILL

Yes, this is Bill Wilson. I'm trying
to open a thumb drive from the lab.

IT (V.O)

Yes Mr. Wilson, can you read me the number on the side of the thumb drive?

BILL

Yes, 6658762.

IT (V.O)

Just a moment. (pause) The password is T7*#\$ic7Rc.

Bill writes the password down on a piece of paper.

BILL

Thank you.

Bill hangs the phone up and types in the password then clicks the Ok button on the screen. There's only one file on the thumb drive. Bill copies the file to his PC and opens the file. The results are in a spreadsheet format. Bill removes the thumb drive and places it on his desk. Bill opens a drawer in the desk and pulls out another thumb drive. Bill plugs it into his PC and tries to open it but cannot. Bill removes the thumb drive and plugs it in again with the same results. Bill removes the thumb drive. Bill turns and looks at Sara.

BILL

Do you have a thumb drive I can use, mine is not working?

SARA

None of them work. I called IT yesterday and they told me that you cannot connect anything to the USB ports unless it's issued by the IT department.

Bill takes the lab's thumb drive and plugs it into the Tablet and a prompt pops up asking for a password. Bill types in the password that the IT tech gave him and presses the Ok button but gets an Access Denied message. Bill tries again but gets the same message. Bill picks up the phone and calls IT back.

IT (V.O)

IT can I help you?

BILL

Yes, this is Bill Wilson again, I called a few minutes ago.

IT (V.O)

Yes Mr. Wilson.

BILL

I tried to open the lab thumb drive again, the one I called you about earlier, and the password no longer works.

IT (V.O)

Yes Sir. That password is only good for one time. Once you enter the password we give you, it generates a new password on the thumb drive.

BILL

So that's why I got an access denied message.

IT (V.O)

You got an Access Denied message?

BILL

Yes.

IT (V.O)

Was the thumb drive plugged into your university PC?

BILL

No, a tablet I'm using for my study.

IT (V.O)

That's why you received an Access Denied message. Those thumb drives can only be used on university PC's. They will not work on any other device. Were you able to access the files on the thumb drive the first time?

BILL

Yes, I copied the file from the thumb drive onto my PC.

IT (V.O)

That file is also encrypted, it cannot be used on any devices other than university PC's.

BILL

Ok then I guess I'm done. Thank you.

Bill hangs up the phone and looks at Sara.

BILL

Boy they really have things locked down.

SARA

I guess so.

Bill turns back around and opens the file.

BILL

If I can use the file, can I use the content?

Bill opens a new spreadsheet. He selects the data in the original spreadsheet and selects Copy. Then he opens the new spreadsheet and selects Paste. Bill selects Save As and saves the new spreadsheet with the same name in a different folder. Bill opens a new email and enters his outside Gmail account. He types samples in the subject lines and attaches the new file to the email. He presses send. Then Bill picks up the tablet and opens his Gmail account. The new email appears, and he opens it. Bill clicks on the attachment and the spreadsheet opens.

BILL

There's more than one way to skin a cat.

Bill begins working on the results.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is still working on the results. Sara gets up and heads to the door.

SARA

Ok, I'm out of here. Have a good evening.

BILL

I'm right behind you. Have a good evening.

Bill finishes up and puts the tablet in his backpack. He gets up and walks over to the door. He opens the door and turn out the lights as he leaves.

EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS - DAY

Bill exits his building and walks over to the bike rack while putting his backpack on. Bill unlocks his bike, gets on and begins to ride through the university grounds.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Bill pulls up on his bike. A car slowly drives up from behind and parks on the street. Bill picks up his bike and carries it into the building.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

Bill enters the apartment. Bill notices a sheet of paper on the kitchen table. Bill walks over and sets his backpack on the table. Bill picks up the paper and reads it. "Sorry for any inconvenience, there was a water leak in a utility closet above your apartment. We entered your apartment to look for water damage on the ceiling. Appt. Manager". Bill sets the letter down and walks into the bedroom.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

Bill walks in and over to the bed. The handle of the briefcase is laying on the night table side of the briefcase. Bill picks up the briefcase, opens it, removes the sheet of paper from the pocket and places the paper in his pocket. Bill places the briefcase back between the bed and night table. The handle of the briefcase is laying on the bed side. Bill walks out of the bedroom.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT KITCHEN - DAY

Bill walks in and his cell phone beeps. Bill takes his cell phone out of his pocket and swipes it. It's a text message from his friend SCOTT.

SCOTT (TEXT)

Heard you were back in town. A few of us are going to the pub for dinner at 6-6:30. Do you want to meet us?

Bill types on his cell phone.

BILL (TEXT)

I'll be there.

Bill walks back into the bedroom. The camera pans around the apartment as if someone is there. Bill comes back out a minutes later with a different shirt on. Bill exits the apartment.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT - DAY

It's late in the afternoon. Bill walks out of the apartment building and begins walking down the street. The car that parked on the street earlier is still there.

INT. PUB - DAY

Bill walks up to a table where a few people are sitting.

SCOTT

Hey look, Bill's back in town.

Bill shakes everyone's hand and takes a seat at the table.

SCOTT

How was your trip?

BILL

Good, good. I ran into an old friend and played a few games of basketball.

SCOTT

I didn't know you played basketball. I would have asked you to join me at the courts.

BILL

We played back in high school and I really haven't played since then.

SCOTT

We'll have to get you out on the courts.

A waitress walks up.

SCOTT

Order something to eat.

Everyone is talking and having a good time. Bill talks to the waitress.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT

Bill and Scott come walking out and begin to walk down the street.

SCOTT

So, where do you go next?

BILL

I'm done, that was my last trip.

SCOTT

Great, we can do this more often.

Scott stops walking and Bill stops with him.

SCOTT

Sorry, I'm parked in the other direction. Next time, you pick the place and it will be just us.

BILL

Sounds good.

Scott walks back towards the Pub and past the same car that was sitting outside Bill's apartment. Bill walks down the sidewalk in the opposite direction.

INT. BILL'S APARMENT - NIGHT

Bill walks in, turns on the lights and locks the door behind him. Bill walks towards the bedroom.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill enters the bedroom and turns on the lights. Bill walks into the bathroom, turns on the lights and begins brushing his teeth. The camera pans around the bedroom as if someone is there. Bill turns the lights off in the bathroom and returns to the bedroom. Bill walks to the night table and picks up the remote. Bill lies down on the bed. Bill aims the remote at the TV and presses the button. The TV comes on.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT 2:15AM

Bill is awakened by his cell phone beeping. Bill struggles to get awake. The TV is still on. Bill pulls the cell phone from his pocket and swipes. It' a text message.

TEXT

I'll be in Chicago the next two days,
can we have lunch? Prof. SOOCHI

Bill lays the cell phone down on the night table. Bill searches for the TV remote on the bed. Bill picks up the TV remote and turns the TV off then lies back down. The camera moves over so you can see out the window and the same car is parked on the street again.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill walks in and Sara is not there. Bill walks to his desk, takes the tablet out of his backpack and places the tablet on his desk. Bill puts the backpack on the chair next to his desk. Bill takes his cell phone out of his pocket, connects it to a charger and places it on the desk. Bill sits down to work.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - NOON

Sara walks in. Bill is working on his computer.

SARA

Hi Bill.

BILL

Hi Sara.

Bill looks down at his phone to see the time.

BILL

You're just in time for lunch.

SARA

Just as I planned.

Sara walks to her desk and sits down. She pulls her phone out of her purse and looks at it.

SARA

WIFI is back online?

BILL

I haven't noticed.

Bill stops working as if he has remembered something. Bill picks up his cell phone swipes then pushes the messages icon. It opens on Prof. Soochi's message. Bill reads it again and responds "Ok, what day and where?". Bill places his phone back on the desk and goes back to work. The phone beeps in just a few seconds. Bill picks up the cell phone and swipes. The message has an address with "today at 1pm". Bill looks at the time on his phone then places it back on the desk. Bill does a search for "Soochi University of France" on his computer. When a picture appears in the University of France's website, Bill copies the picture and emails it to himself. Bill picks up his backpack and cell phone and leaves the office.

BILL

I'm heading out to lunch.

SARA

Ok.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Bill is walking down the street and his cell phone announces, "destination 50 feet ahead on your right". Bill stops in front of a pub then walks in.

INT. PUB - DAY

The pub is quite dark. Bill looks at the picture of Prof. Soochi on his cell phone then looks around. No one is making eye contact with him and he does not see anyone matching the picture. Bill approaches the bar, and the bartender walks over.

BILL

I'm meeting a professor Soochi here for lunches.

BARTENDER

No one has said anything to me.
(loudy) IS THERE A PROFESSOR SOOCHI
HERE?

No one replies. Bill looks at his cell phone and it reads 12:52pm.

BARTENDER

I guess there're not here. Take any booth you want.

BILL

I'll just sit here and wait.

BARTENDER

Suit yourself.

The bartender walks away as Bill takes a seat at the bar right in front of the door.

INT. PUB - A WHILE LATER

Bill looks at his watch and it reads 1:21pm. Bill gets up and walks out.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Bill walks down the street and his cell phone beeps. The message reads "Sorry, an emergency requires me to return to

France". Bill looks at the phone with a questioning look and places the phone in his pocket.

EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS - DAY

Bill sits on a bench eating his lunch. The man from before can be seen in the background. Bill's cell phone beeps and he pulls it out of his pocket. The message reads "Hi Bill, Tom Clark here. My son made arrangements to visit the University of Chicago this Friday and Saturday to see the campus. My wife was going to make the trip but cannot so I'm coming with him. Would it be Ok to give you a call? We're coming in late Thursday night". Bill responds "Yes, call me no matter time it is!". Bill places the phone back in his pocket.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill and Sara are sitting at their desks. Bill has compiled all the results and is struggling with what the results are showing. Bill is going back and forth checking and checking. Sara gathers her things and gets up to leave.

SARA
Well, I'm heading out.

Bill is distracted.

BILL
Ok.

SARA
Everything Ok?

BILL
I'm not quite finding the results I was hoping to.

SARA
Whatever your results determine, that's the results.

BILL
I know. Have a good evening.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is sitting on the couch. Bill is still going over the results on the tablet and seems to have resolved that his results are not finding what he wanted. Bill scrolls to the top and notices under the column labeled "Per. Tendency towards Neg. Behavior" for row 1 is 62%. Bill leans back in his chair.

BILL

Sixty two percent, how can that be.

Bill checks a few things then looks again and it still reads 62%. Bill puts the tablet down and goes into the bedroom.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill enters the bedroom and walks to the bed. Bill picks up the briefcase and places it on the bed. He opens it and pulls the note he made from the pocket.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVINGROOM - NIGHT

Bill enters, returns to the couch, sits down and picks up the tablet. Bill copies the results to a new spreadsheet, opens the note and isolates only the numbers on the note. Bill then fills in the names next to the numbers. Bill stares at the screen.

	A	B	C	D
1		Per. Tendency towards		
2		Neg. Behavior		
3	0001	Myself	62%	
4	0002	Debbie	78%	
5	0003	Bill Clark	44%	
6	0004	Harry	48%	
7	0005	John	87%	

Bill's phone beeps and he picks it up from the table. The message reads "Made it to Chicago and to our hotel room Tom Clark". Bill response "Thanks for letting me know".

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill and Professor Lopez are sitting at a conference table viewing Bill's results on a large screen. The display is a

map of each state with the averaged results in percent form for the surveys.

PROF. LOPEZ

I have to say I'm not surprised by the results. But I am sorry that my hometown, NY City, has such a high percentage towards negative behavior. As discussed thou, these survey results are really meaningless because these numbers are per volunteer and are meant to be collated with your sample results.

BILL

I know, I just wanted to share the results with you. I also wanted to show you this.

Bill pulls up the isolated results.

	A	B	C	D
1		Per. Tendency towards		
2		Neg. Behavior		
3	0001	Myself	62%	
4	0002	Debbie	78%	
5	0003	Bill Clark	44%	
6	0004	Harry	48%	
7	0005	John	87%	

PROF. LOPEZ

What are these?

BILL

I recorded these numbers so I could isolate the results after the algorithms were applied.

PROF. LOPEN

Bill you cannot do this in a blind study.

BILL

It's Ok because these numbers were excluded from the overall results. But I have to say I am surprised by my

results and my friend Debbie's results to the survey questions. It says I have a 62% chance of displaying negative behavior and Debbie has a 78% change of the same.

PROF. LOPEZ

The survey questions were selected from blind studies that have been tested and tested again. We in the physiology department have full confidence in their results. But I don't think you are looking at the results in the right way.

BILL

What do you mean?

PROF. LOPEZ

What is the span of all percentages from the study?

Bill sorts through the results for a few seconds.

BILL

The low is 32% and the high is 94%.

PROF. LOPEZ

These results are not based on 1 - 100, they are based on the span. So, in reality, for the study, you fall below 50% and Debbie I would say is somewhere in the mid 60% range. No matter what the results are, you have to publish based on the science.

BILL

I know, I just wanted to share the survey results with you since you provided the survey questions.

PROF. LOPEZ

I appreciate that. I look forward to reading your paper when you publish.

Bill gathers his things to leaves.

BILL
Thank you for your time.

Bill shakes Prof. Lopez's hand and leave.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is working on his computer typing up his paper on the results. His desk phone rings and Bill answers it.

BILL
Hello?

SUSAN TAYLOR (V.O)
Bill Wilson?

BILL
Yes.

SUSAN TAYLOR (V.O)
This is Susan Taylor, dean of academic affairs. Can you stop by my office?

BILL
Yes I can. When?

SUSAN TAYLOR (V.O)
Well, actually now, if that's possible?

BILL
Oh, Okay. Give me about fifteen minutes.

SUSAN TAYLOR (V.O)
Good, see you in a few. Good by.

BILL
By.

Bill hangs up the phone and leaves the office.

EXT. UNIVERSITY GROUNDS - DAY

Bill is approaching a building. Bill walks up the steps and enters.

INT. UNIVERSITY DEAN'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Bill enters the outer area of the Dean's office. There are two men sitting in chairs. Bill approaches the secretary's desk.

SECRETARY

May I help you?

BILL

I'm Bill Wilson, I'm here to see the dean of academic affairs.

SECRETARY

Yes, go right in, they're waiting for you.

Bill gets a questioning look on his face.

INT. UNIVERSITY DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill enters. Susan Taylor and a MAN are sitting across from each other at a conference table. There is a briefcase open in front of the Man. Susan Taylor stands.

SUSAN TAYLOR

Hi Bill, please, come take a seat.

Bill walks over and sits next to where Susan Taylor was sitting.

SUSAN TAYLOR

This is Mr. Barlow and he would like to talk to you about your study.

Susan leaves the office. Mr. Barlow is professionally dressed and has a pleasant smile on his face.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)

Hi Bill, I work for the government agency that's funding your study. How is the study going?

BILL

The study is complete, and I have begun writing my paper on the results.

Mr. Barlow pulls a document from his briefcase and places it on the desk in front of him.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)
That's good. Very Good. Bill, have you discussed or shared the results of your study with anyone?

BILL
Well, yes. I shared the results of the survey with Professor Lopez of the physiology department this morning.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)
How about the results from the sampling that was processed at the lab?

BILL
No.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)
Good. Bill, other than the results file stored on the lab server and the thumb drive the lab gave you, are there any other copies?

Bill is becoming nervous.

BILL
Well yes, I copied the file from the thumb drive to my university computer so I can work on the results and paper.

Bill does not tell him about the tablet. Mr. Barlow looks down at the document on the desk as if he is reading from it.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)
And the thumb drive, where is it now?

BILL
It's in my desk, in my office.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)
The university has assured me that the file cannot be accessed from the thumb drive without a password. But, I'm

going to need you to return that thumb drive to the IT department Today. Okay?

BILL

Ok. Can you tell me what this is about?

MR. BARLOW (IN A LESS FRIENDLY VOICE)

We'll get to that in a minute. Can you tell me if you have been contacted by anyone outside the university about your study?

BILL

Yes, I have. I was contacted by a Professor Soochi from the University of France.

MR. BARLOW (IN A LESS FRIENDLY MANNER)

Can you tell me when and how?

BILL

Well at first by email and then he texted me on my cell phone.

Mr. Barlow looks at the document on the desk.

MR. BARLOW (IN A LESS FRIENDLY VOICE)

Have you talked to him or met with him?

BILL

No, I have not talked to him. And no, I have not met with him. He asked me to meet him for lunch Yesterday, but he was not at the Pub where he wanted to meet when I got there, and he did not show up. I received a text after leaving the Pub that he had to return to France due to an emergency.

MR. BARLOW (IN A LESS FRIENDLY VOICE)

Can you tell me how he got your phone number to text you?

Bill is getting more nervous and agitated.

BILL

I don't know. I've spent the last year traveling the country. By now there's probably a hundred people who have my phone number. Now, can you tell me what this is about?

Mr. Barlow looks at the document on the desk. He picks up the document in front of him and places it in the brief case to retrieve and place another on the desk in front of him.

MR. BARLOW (IN FRIENDLY VOICE)

Yes, your project has been classified by the government agency that is funding your study. I need you to sign this document.

Mr. Barlow slides the document over to Bill and Bill looks at it.

MR. BARLOW (IN FRIENDLY VOICE)

It's a confidentiality agreement. It states from the time you sign it, you will not discuss or share in any way any results from the study. That includes documents, electronic or printed. By violating the confidentiality agreement you can be held responsible and federal charges can be filed against you. Do you understand?

Bill lifts the document.

BILL

And if I don't sign it?

MR. BARLOW (IN LESS FRIENDLY VOICE)

Did you see the men sitting outside the office? They are FBI agents. One will seize all materials related to the study while you wait in here with the other one. And I'm sure that will have a lasting effect on any future work you want to do at this university or any other. Is there some reason you don't want to sign it?

Bill realizing the seriousness of the situation and puts the document back on the table.

BILL

Do you have a pen?

Mr. Barlow reaches into his briefcase, pulls out a pen and slides it across the desk. Bill signs the document, places the pen on top and slides the document back across the table. Mr. Barlow looks at the signature, places the document in his briefcase and closes his briefcase.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)

I want to thank you for your time.

Mr. Barlow stands and picks up his briefcase as Bill stands.

BILL

Can I ask you which government agency is funding my study?

Mr. Barlow walks around the desk to face Bill.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)

Honestly, I don't know.

Mr. Barlow reaches into his pocket and pulls out a business card. Mr. Barlow hands the card to Bill and Bill takes the card.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)

Please, contact me when you are done with the study and I'll come back for the results.

Mr. Barlow holds his hand out to Bill and Bill shakes it.

MR. BARLOW (IN A FRIENDLY VOICE)

I do look forward to working with you in the future.

Mr. Barlow leave the office. Bill follows him a few seconds later.

INT. UNIVERSITY DEAN'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Bill exits the Dean's office. Susan Taylor is talking to her secretary. Both men who were sitting in the outer office are gone. Susan Taylor turns towards Bill.

SUSAN TAYLOR
Did everything go Okay?

BILL
Yes.

SUSAN TAYLOR
Good. Thank you for coming over on such short notice.

Susan Taylor walks past Bill and enters her office. Bill leaves the Dean's outer office.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is sitting at his computer working on his paper. Bill's phone rings. Bill picks his phone up. The phone reads "Tom Clark".

BILL
Hello Tom.

TOM CLARK (V.O)
(pause) Hi Bill

BILL
How's the campus tour going?

TOM CLARK (V.O)
It's going fine, I guess. My son has been assigned a student to show him around and they took off. He's going to spend the night in the dorms guest facility. I've been wandering around for a few hours.

BILL
I'm sure he'll be fine.

TOM CLARK (V.O)
Oh, I'm not worried about him. Hey, they texted me about going to dinner

and I was wondering if you would like to join us?

Bill looks at his computer.

BILL
(pause) Sure, sure I would.

TOM CLARK (V.O)
Good, can you recommend a place not far from the campus?

BILL
Sure, I can. I'll text you the address. What time do you want to meet?

EXT. COLLEGE CAMPUS - DAY

Tom Clark is standing in an open area of the campus looing around.

TOM CLARK
Well, they told me to meet them in front of the statue of Linne at 6pm.

BILL (V.O)
Ok, I'll meet you there, and we can walk to the restaurant together.

TOM CLARK
Okay. Uh, Bill, can you tell me where the statue is?

BILL (V.O)
Sure, it's in front of the library. Just ask any student walking by and they can give you directions.

EXT. STATUE OF LINNE - DAY

Tom Clark, his son and the student (JASON) are waiting when Bill walks up. Tom Clark sees Bill coming. Bill stops when he gets to them.

TOM CLARK

Hi Bill. This is my son Dave and his new friend Jason. Bill reaches out and shakes Dave and Jason's hands.

BILL

Jason.

JASON

Hi Mr. Wilson.

BILL

Jason works as a student in one of our labs. Please call me Bill. Well let's go.

Bill points down the street and all four begin walking. The two younger gentlemen in front.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - DAY

The four are seated at a table. They have ordered their meals.

BILL

So, Dave, how do you like Chicago and the University so far?

DAVE

It beats our little town.

BILL

Well, I would not go that far. You live in the city for a while and you might like going home.

TOM CLARK

So, how's the fried chicken in Chicago?

BILL

I wish I could say good, but I tried several places, and they fall short.

TOM CLARK

you're always welcome to come by if you're in town and we'll cook up a batch of fried chicken.

Dave points towards Bill

DAVE
Is this your fried chicken friend?

BILL
This is him.

Jason's is becoming uncomfortable. Jason whispers to Dave.

JASON (WHISPER)
I know you're from the south, but the way you guys are talking is not cool.

Bill overhears and looks at Jason.

BILL
Relax. Bill and I were best friends growing up and yes, I am his fried chicken friend, but only because I loved his Mother's fried chicken. Not because I'm black. If Dave is anything like his father, I can tell you, these two guys don't have a prejudiced bone in their bodies.

Tom Clark looks at Bill.

TOM CLARK
You're black?

Bill and Tom Clark begin laughing out loud. Dave and Jason give them an odd look.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

All four are walking down a city sidewalk. The two younger gentlemen in front. Tom Clark points to Jason

TOM CLARK
He seemed to get upset, do you think he's Okay?

BILL
I'm not sure. I'll stop by the lab and have a talk with him. I don't want him

to have the wrong opinion about your son.

TOM CLARK

I'm not worried about Dave, he's a good kid and everyone likes him. I want to apologize if he's upset.

BILL

I'd let it go. Some people are treating these things as life and death.

TOM CLARK

Tell me about it. Did you ever see the bronze history marker about Robert E. Lee at the town hall back home?

BILL

Ya.

TOM CLARK

A few months back there was a protest over that marker.

BILL

What?

TOM CLARK

A week later, they had a town meeting about it. One of the town committee members proposed a vote to remove the marker. The proposal was passed 5 to 4. And you know right after that, one of the members that voted to leave the marker up proposed the marker be destroyed. That passed 7 to 2.

BILL

Are you kidding me?

TOM CLARK

Nope. One group voted to remove history from sight and the other voted to destroy it.

BILL

That's just unbelievable. You remember in 5th or 6th grade they had us write an essay on someone we admired from history?

TOM CLARK

I can't remember my 5th or 6th grade teacher's name.

BILL

Well, we were in town to pay taxes and I read that marker. I wanted to know more so I went to the library and got a book on Robert E. Lee. I read that book and was so amazed at his patriotism that I wrote my essay on him. He gave up so much for his believes. His property, his career, his friends, his comrades, all to follow what he believed to be the right path for his country. After he surrendered, he became president of Washington College and dedicated himself to education. He signed an amnesty oath, asking to become a citizen of the United States again and he encouraged confederate soldiers to do the same. He accepted defeat and embraced the path that his country was taking.

TOM CLARK

Bill, the south lost, you have to let it go.

Both men begin to laugh.

BILL

You here tomorrow also?

TOM CLARK

Ya, Dave's spending the night at the dorms and we're going to see some sights tomorrow. After that, we're going to an early dinner with some

other visiting students and their parents. We head back Sunday morning.

BILL

So, what are you doing after dinner tomorrow evening?

TOM CLARK

We have no plans.

BILL

I'm sure there's a basketball in my closet. There are courts in the park right across the street from my place. By 7pm they are usually a few empty courts.

TOM CLARK

Are you talking about a rematch?

BILL

Yes, I am. In fact, I got a dollar that says I can kick your ass.

TOM CLARK

Whoa, now it's getting serious, we're putting money on the game?

BILL

If you have the guts to show up?

Tom Clark throws his arm around Bill's shoulders.

TOM CLARK

I'll be there my friend. I packed my sneaker and shorts. Of course, after I beat you and take your dollar you may not call me your friend anymore.

Both men begin to laugh.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Bill is walking up to the building. The same man is sitting across the street but on a different bench. Bill stops when he sees him and takes notice. Bill proceeds into the building.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is sitting in a chair organizing the results and reviewing them. He stops and sits back. Bill puts the tablet down, gets up and walks into the bedroom.

INT. BILL'S APPARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Bill walks over to the bed and picks up the briefcase. He lays the briefcase on the bed and opens it. He looks in the pocket where he placed the business card but it's not there. He picks up the documents laying in the bottom of the briefcase and notices a card laying face down in the bottom. He picks the card up and looks at it. It's the card the older gentlemen on the train had given him. It reads Dr. Alex Rossi with a PO Box address and his phone number.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bill sits the card down on the table and picks up the tablet. He looks at the screen for a while.

BILL

There's no fighting the facts, no matter what they say.

Bill looks at the card. He puts the tablet down and picks up the card. He looks at it for a moment then picks up his phone off the table. He dials the number on the card.

DR. ROSSI (V.O)

Hello.

BILL

Is this Dr. Rossi?

DR. ROSSI (V.O)

Yes, yes, it is.

BILL

Dr. Rossi, this is Bill Wilson. I don't know if you remember me, but we met on a train a few weeks ago. You handed me your card.

DR. ROSSI (V.O)
You're the young man who is studying
human genes.

BILL
Yes, that's me. I'd like to come see
you and talk to you about what you said
on the train.

DR. ROSSI (V.O)
Son, I'm not sure I can remember what I
said on the train.

BILL
Just the same, if it's Okay, I'd like
to come talk to you.

DR. ROSSI (V.O)
When would this be?

BILL
If you are available, I'd like to come
this weekend?

DR. ROSSI (V.O)
Well, Saturday is out of the question
and Sunday morning I have church. I'll
be here Sunday afternoon after 2:00pm.

BILL
That's fine. I'll need an address.

DR. ROSSI (V.O)
Do you have a pencil and a piece of
paper? I'll give it to you.

BILL
I do.

Bill listens and types the address into the tablet.

BILL
Thank you, Sir, I'll see you Sunday
afternoon.

Bill puts the cell phone down on the table.

INT. UNIVERSITY DINING HALL - DAY

Tom Clark, Dave and Jason are sitting at a table with a group of others. Bill Clark pulls his flip phone out of his pocket and opens it. He begins texting.

DAVE

Are you texting Mom?

TOM CLARK

No, my friend Bill. You met him Yesterday. He and I are going to play some basketball tonight, but I don't have his address.

Bill looks over at Dave and Jason.

TOM CLARK

If you guys aren't doing anything why don't you join us?

DAVE

To play basketball?

TOM CLARK

That would be great, but this is a one on one match for money.

Dave looks at Jason.

JASON

We're done with the university stuff and I don't have anything to do.

DAVE

I guess we're in.

TOM CLARK

Okay then, we'll head over to the hotel so I can change, and we'll go from there.

Bill press the button to send the text.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bill is typing on the tablet. His cell phone beeps. Bill picks up the cell phone and swipes. It's Bill Cark's text "We're on for 7pm but I need an address. The boys are coming to watch me kick your ass". Bill replies "I think I'll be doing the ass kicking. Here's the address 609 east 60th St. Be sure to you bring your money". Bill smiles and presses send.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Bill is standing outside waiting. He's dressed to play basketball and has a basketball under his arm. Bill notices the same man sitting on a park bench across the street. Tom Clark, Dave and Jason pull up in an Uber and get out.

BILL
I'm impressed.

TOM CLARK
What?

BILL
You used Uber.

TOM CLARK
Dave has the App, not me.

BILL
I guess you can't use Uber with a flip
Phone.

TOM CLARK
Just point the way to the courts.

Bill points across the street. All four proceed across the street and into the park. Bill stops and looks back. He watches as the man on the bench gets up, walks to a car, gets in and pulls away. Tom Clark stops when he sees Bill watching the guy.

TOM CLARK
What's up.

BILL
Nothing, let's go play some basketball.

EXT. PARK BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

The lights for the courts are just coming on as the group walks up. Bill and Tom Clark begin to stretch while Dave and Jason take a seat on the bleachers. Bill looks at Tom Clark.

BILL

Are you sure you're ready for this?

TOM CLARK

I'm ready.

BILL

How about you Dave?

DAVE

Ready for what?

BILL

Ready to see your Dad get his butt kicked.

DAVE

I don't know. He said there is money on this game and my dad doesn't lose when there is money on the line. But you go ahead and try and kick his ass.

Tom Clark stops and looks at Dave with a stern look then smiles. Dave smiles back. Tom Clark picks up the ball.

TOM CLARK

Okay, enough talk, let's play.

Bill and Tom Clark walk onto the court and begin to play. This time harder and more aggressive than before.

EXT. PARK BASKETBALL COURTS - NIGHT LATER

Both men walk off the court sweating and tired. They both walk over to the bleachers for water to drink.

DAVE

Well, are you two done? Can we go before someone has a heart attack?

Bill looks at Tom Clark.

BILL
Do we really look that old?

TOM CLARK
I don't know about me, but you do.

Bill looks at Dave.

BILL
There's money on this game. No one
walks away until someone gives up.

Both men walk back on to the court and begin play again.

EXT. CITY PARK BASKETBALL COURTS - NIGHT LATER

Both men are on the court and both are exhausted. Tom Clark has stopped at the top of the key to catch his breath. Bill is catching his breath, waiting. Tom Clark charges, Bill steals the ball and heads to the top of the key.

BILL
You're looking tired old man. Are you
sure you don't want to walk away?
Leave it at a tie?

Bill looks over at the boys who are both bored and on their cell phones.

TOM CLARK
How about this. Sudden death. Next
point wins.

BILL
All right. I'm good with that.

Bill charges towards the net, stops and turns to the outside. Tom charges at him to block the shot but Bill curls his arm and throws a perfect hook shot. The shot drops without touching the hoop.

TOM CLARK
Are you kidding me? No one uses the
hook shot anymore.

BILL
That my friend, is the game.

Both men walk off the court holding each other up. They both flop down on the bleachers and begins drinking water.

DAVE
So, are we done? Can we go now?

BILL
Did you see that? Did you see how I beat him?

Dave pointes to his cell phone.

DAVE
Sorry, I was looking at my phone.

BILL
I beat him with a hook shot. And do you know who taught me how to shoot a hook shot?

TOM CLARK
I did.

BILL
That's right. Some spectators you brought. Didn't even see the winning shot.

TOM CLARK
You have your own spectator.

BILL
What do you mean?

Tom Clark points across the street and down a few cars.

TOM CLARK
The guy you watched get in the car and drive away outside the apartment.

Bill looks over in the direction that Tom Clark is pointing.

TOM CLARK

He drove up right after we got here.
He's been watching the whole time.

The man outside the apartment is sitting in a car watching.
Bill stands up and looks closer and the man looks away.

BILL

What the hell?

TOM CLARK

What's up?

BILL

I don't know.

Bill begins to walk towards an opening in the fence. Tom Clark stands and follow. Once Bill reaches the opening he turns and walks towards the car.

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

BILL

Can I help you?

The man does not look. Bill gets closer.

BILL

Hey buddy, can I help you?

The man closes the window of the car, starts it and pulls away. The car speeds right by Bill standing in the middle of the street. Bill turns and tries to read the license plate, but the license plate is not lit up. Bill notices Tom Clark has followed him.

TOM CLARK

What's going on?

BILL

I don't know.

TOM CLARK

Is everything Ok?

Bill pauses for a few seconds.

BILL

Sure. Let's get the boys and walk back to the apartment.

EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT

The group walks back towards the apartment complex. Bill is looking the whole time for the car or the man. They get close to the apartment complex.

TOM CLARK

Hey Dave, can you get one of those Ubers for us?

Dave holds up his phone.

DAVE

Already done Dad, it's right down the block.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The group walks up in front of the apartment complex and stands there. Tom Clark takes a sniff and looks at Bill.

TOM CLARK

Is that me or you?

DAVE

You both smell. Why do you think we're standing over here?

The Uber driver pulls up.

TOM CLARK

Well my friend, it was good seeing you.

BILL

Aren't you forgetting something?

TOM CLARK

What?

BILL

You know what. Where's my dollar? You lost, pay up.

Tom Clark bends down and pulls a dollar out of his sock and holds it out for Bill.

BILL

Really, you're going to pay me with a sweaty dollar you pulled out of your sock?

TOM CLARK

If you don't want it.

Tom Clark begins to pull his hand back. Bill reaches out and snatches the dollar from Tom Clark's hand.

BILL

You're damn right I do. This is the championship trophy and it's going with me.

Both men laugh.

DAVE

A dollar? You mean you both played that hard for a dollar?

TOM CLARK

You bet.

Bill gives Tom Clark a bear hug and Tom Clark hugs Bill back.

BILL

It was nice seeing you my friend.

TOM CLARK

You too.

BILL

You better go before the Uber driver realizes that smell is you.

TOM CLARK

I hope I see you again.

BILL

We'll see. Have a safe trip home.

Tom Clark joins the boys in the car. Tom Clark waves as the car pulls away. Bill waves back. Bill looks up and down the block then goes into the building.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX LOBBY - DAY

Bill exits the elevator and walks towards the back of the apartment complex.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX LOBBY - DAY

Bill returns carrying his bicycle. Bill exits the lobby.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Bill comes out of the apartment complex with his bike and backpack. He stops and looks across the street then up and down the block as he puts on his helmet and backpack. Bill begins riding down the road. A car parked down the block pulls out and follows.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

Bill rides up to a train station. He gets off his bike, hooks his helmet to his backpack and begins carrying his bike up the stairs to the platform. The car following pulls up and stops. The man inside watches as Bill climbs the steps then the car drives away.

INT. TRAIN STATION CHICAGO SUBURBS - DAY

Bill gets off the train carrying his bike. He exits the station.

EXT. TRAIN STATION CHICAGO SUBURBS - DAY

Bill exits the station, takes his helmet off his backpack and puts it on. Bill pulls his cell phone out of his pocket and clicks it into the handlebar holder. He swipes the screen and starts the map app. Bill looks both ways and rides out onto the street.

EXT. DR. ROSSI'S HOUSE - DAY

Bill pulls up to Dr. Rossi's house. The car that was following Bill is parked down the street, but Bill does not notice. Bill gets off and walks up to the door. Bill

parks his bike and takes his helmet off. He hangs the helmet on the bike and walks up to the door. Bill removes his backpack before ringing the doorbell. Bill press the doorbell. In a few seconds Dr. Rossi answers the door.

DR. ROSSI
Mr. Wilson, please come in.

Dr. Rossi holds the door open as Bill walks in.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S HOME - DAY

Dr. Rossi leads Bill through the house and into a study.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S HOME STUDY - DAY

The house has an old feel to it with dark wood paneling. The study has book-filled shelves. Dr. Rossi motions for Bill to sit in a chair angled towards a couch. Dr. Rossi sits in the chair also angled towards the couch but slightly towards Bill's chair.

DR. ROSSI
So, Mr. Wilson, how have you been?

BILL
Please, call me Bill.

Dr. Rossi motions to himself.

DR. ROSSI
Please call me Alex.

BILL
I have been fine.

DR. ROSSI
How was your trip down south?

BILL
It went very well. I was able to re-establish a relationship with a very old friend.

DR. ROSSI
Yes. What about your research, have you completed the study?

BILL
Actually, I have.

DR. ROSSI
And did you find what YOU were looking for?

BILL
I have to tell you, I was asked to sign a confidentially agreement that does not allow me to discuss my research or the results.

DR. ROSSI
On the train you told me YOU were looking for the gene's that causes someone to be racist. Was that part of the study?

BILL
No, it was not.

DR. ROSSI
So, by asking you if you found what YOU were looking for, I don't think that violates any agreement you signed.

Bill sits back and looks at Dr. Rossi with a questioning look and thinks.

BILL
I guess you're right.

DR. ROSSI
So?

BILL
That's why I wanted to see you. I did not find what I was looking for and wanted to know how you were so sure I wouldn't?

Dr. Rossi takes a long look at Bill.

DR. ROSSI

The study of nature versus nurture began a long time ago. I concentrated on the Nurture part and I've spent most of my life studying behaviour in many different animals including humans. Where you yourself have studied the Nature side.

Dr. Rossi relaxes into his chair.

DR. ROSSI

Fortunately, the more theories we prove on the Nurture side about why animals and people act the way they do, the more questions we have, and the further things advance. But, on the other side, Nature, researchers are always trying to cross over and prove physical theories about why animals and people act the way they do.

Dr. Rossi folds his hands.

DR. ROSSI

Now, I know what you are thinking. And yes, there are people on the Nurture side who also try to cross over. But they tend to limit themselves, and their success rate is not as high as they would like.

Dr. Rossi smiles and so does Bill.

BILL

But Doctor, what if I did discover what I was looking for. With the advancements we make ever year we're able to look deeper and deeper into the physical world.

DR. ROSSI

Please, call me Alex. Do you remember what I told you on the train about having hold of a stick of dynamite?

BILL

I do, you said "I had hold of a stick of dynamite with fuses lit at both ends".

DR. ROSSI

You obviously know about the research into gene splicing. If you had discovered genes that caused bad behaviour or aggression. What do you think could be done with that information? China and Russia have much looser ethics on such research. Not too long-ago gene splicing was used to produce humans that are supposedly resistant to the Aids virus.

BILL

I read about that.

DR. ROSSI

So, if they can splice genes to change physical resistance to disease then splicing genes to make a more aggressive human could also be done.

BILL

Yes, but why would that ever be a goal?

DR. ROSSI

Do you know which government agency funded your research?

Bill sits back in his chair and stares at Dr. Rossi.

BILL

What are you talking about?

DR. ROSSI

If you don't mind, I would like to have someone join us.

Bill looks at Dr. Rossi with a questioning look. Dr. Rossi turns towards the doorway.

DR. ROSSI (LOUDLY)
Professor Soochi, can you join us
please?

Professor Soochi walks in and approaches Bill, Bill begins
to stand. Professor Soochi gets close.

PROF. SOOCHI
Please, sit.

Professor Soochi holds his hand out to shake Bill's hand.
Bill sits and shakes Professor Soochi's hand.

PROF. SOOCHI
My name is Li Soochi, please, call me
Li.

Professor Soochi sits on the couch.

DR. ROSSI
Bill, do you think it was a coincidence
that I was on that train?

BILL
I don't know.

DR. ROSSI
It wasn't. I was there to meet you and
get a better feel for you as a person.
The same way it was not a coincidence
that Li contacted you.

BILL
I'm not sure I understand, Alex?

DR. ROSSI
Bill, have you heard of some of the
secret societies that people join to
effect change for their own purposes?

BILL
I've heard of them.

Bill is now looking back and forth between Dr. Rossi and
Professor Soochi.

DR. ROSSI

Bill, we are members of such a society. But, within our group are smaller groups, all scientists. Our over all goal is towards improving the future for the earth and all living elements on the earth. Li and I work on both sides of the Nature versus Nurture areas of this society.

BILL

I'm sorry, but this is getting a little weird.

DR. ROSSI

Ok then, let me go over what has gone on since right before you began your study. A breakthrough was made that allowed science to look ten-fold deeper into the human genome. That's when you had an interest in attempting to prove a link between genes and human behaviour. So, you requested a grant to fund the research and we looked into getting it approved.

BILL

What do you mean you looked into getting it approved?

DR. ROSSI

I told you, we are members of a society. Someone in our society read your proposal and brought it to my attention. We pushed it to be approved and it was. Our goal was to see new research take place, but make sure the results would not move in a dangerous direction.

BILL

Again, I'm not sure I understand?

PROF. SOOCHI

Bill, do you recall the security lockdowns that were put into place last week on your computer systems. That

was us. We hacked your network and made it look like Chinese agents were trying to breach your network. No one had a good reason for the hack until I contacted you. Some of us scientists are being watched, the same way foreign government agents are watched. When I contacted you, you were flagged. A government agency issued a request for you and your research to be investigated. That's why your research was classified, and you were visited by a gentleman who had you sign a confidentially agreement. Chinese hackers, a scientist with ties to China who is being watched contacts a scientist at the same university, flags are raised, and the results follow.

BILL

So, what you are saying is you, your society got me the funding for my study, but then forced it to be classified so I could not openly publish my findings. Is that it?

DR. ROSSI

Well yes. But Bill, the hack was a real threat. And if you did prove that certain genes were responsible for or control human behaviour such as aggression. Gene spicing would take off in countries such as China and Russia. You see, at a level that you and I cannot reach. Government agencies have been working on developing more aggressive humans designed for battle. This is not science fiction. Bill, a Chinese agent was dispatched to try to obtain the technologies used for your study. That agent was turned back trying to enter Canada on their way to Chicago.

BILL

Wait a minute are you sure?

PROF. SOOCHI

We're sure, a message was channeled from China, to North Korea, to South Korea, to America and on to Canada. The agent was stopped and turned back.

BILL

But there has been a man, I mean, I have seen a man several times in the past two weeks and I would swear he has been watching me, following me.

DR. ROSSI

Yes, we know.

Dr. Rossi turn towards the door again.

DR. ROSSI (LOUDLY)

Mr. Barnes, would you join us please.

Mr. Barnes enters the room. Bill leans back.

DR. ROSSI

It's Ok, Mr. Barnes works with us.

Mr. Barnes walks over and takes a seat on the opposite end of the couch as Li Soochi.

MR. BARNES

I'm sorry if I caught your attention. I began working my way into your area and environment by letting your friend Debbie see me on a few occasions. My shadow saw you intently watch me walk to my car and drive away the other night but my phone had gone dead, so they could not contact me. You spotted me and approached my car before my shadow could find me and let me know.

BILL

Your shadow?

MR. JACKSON

We work in teams, but you'll never know how many.

BILL

But why were you watching me?

PROF. SOOCHI

We tried our best to cover all the bases but when a foreign agent is involved, we cannot be sure that that foreign agent does not have a shadow also.

MR. BARNES

Me and my shadow were following you for your protection. And my name is not Barnes. Now that you know, should we be needed again, you will not know we're there.

BILL

Well I guess I should say thank you.

Dr. Rossi leans forward.

DR. ROSSI

Bill, we would like something more.

Bill looks around the room.

BILL

I'm sorry, but I cannot share my results. I signed a confidentially agreement. If they were to find out, I could face federal charges.

DR. ROSSI

No Bill, we've seen your results. The reason we wanted them classified was so that other scientist with the same study idea will not see them.

BILL

But why?

DR. ROSSI

Think about it.

BILL

If they do not see my results, they are bound to recreate them.

DR. ROSSI

Yes, and in doing so, that will slow their progress. But your research can progress.

BILL

What if I come up with results that put things in jeopardy?

DR. ROSSI

That's exactly why you are here. Let me make things clear. It's not just your research but your personal research we are concerned about. We would like you to keep that aspect also secret. If what you were personally trying to discover came out, I'm sure a leftist activist would use just the idea of your personal research to divide people in this country ever more.

BILL

That seems pretty far fetched.

DR. ROSSI

Really? We don't think so, and that's exactly why you are here. Like I said, we want more. We would like you to take a few days and think about joining us.

Mr. Barnes stands up.

MR. BARNES

Well gentlemen, I'm done. I hope to work with you again in the future. Mr. Wilson, whatever you decide, good luck to you.

Mr. Barnes leaves the room. The front door can be heard to open and close. Professor Soochi stands and holds his hand out to Bill. Bill shakes his hand.

PROF. SOOCHI

Bill, I hope you will join us. This country is vital to the future of many countries like my own. Someone once said, "You cannot conquer a society without first dividing them" and that is just what is happening in your country today. I look forward to seeing you again. I look forward to your future research.

BILL

Well, after I finish the paper on my results, I'm done and will have to begin a new study.

Professor Soochi pauses then smiles at Bill. Professor Soochi shakes Dr. Rossi's hand and leaves the room. The front door can be heard to open and close.

BILL

Dr. Rossi, what did he mean about being conquered?

DR. ROSSI

Our groups are working on many fronts, not just this one. We have groups of scientists working to try and turn back the tide of what is becoming a wave of socialism washing through schools and universities. We have information that even national teacher's unions will be backing initiatives such as Critical Race theory to further divide Americans. The billions of dollars being invested from outside this country in an effort to destabilize are having an effect. What we're talking to you about is just a part of a very large effort.

BILL

I don't know what to say. This is a lot to take in.

DR. ROSSI

Alex, please, take your time, think about it. When you are ready, if you agree, send me a positive message and at some point, in the future, I'll be in touch. If you don't agree send me a negative message and we'll watch from a distance, like we've been doing.

Bill stands up and Dr. Rossi stands up. Bill holds out his hand and Dr. Rossi shakes it.

BILL

Well, Alex, I want to thank you, I think. You'll hear from me.

DR. ROSSI

Good.

INT. DR. ROSSI'S HOME ENTRY - DAY.

Dr. Rossi walks Bill to the front door and opens it. Bill walks out.

DR. ROSSI

Thanks for stopping by, be safe.

Bill waves.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Bill is sitting at his desk and Sara is sitting at her desk. Bill has been working on the final draft of his paper for a few days.

BILL

Well, I'm done. The paper is complete.

Bill saves the file. Bill opens the desk drawer and pulls out Mr. Barlows card, picks up the phone and dials the number.

MR. BARLOW (V.O)

Barlow.

BILL

Mr. Barlow, Bill Wilson University of Chicago. I have finished the paper on my study results.

MR. BARLOW (V.O)

Yes Mr. Wilson. Can we meet Friday 2pm. Susan Taylor's office?

BILL

Yes, I'll be there.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Bill is watching TV but you can tell he is heavy in thought.

INT. UNIVERSITY DEANS OUTER OFFICE - DAY

Bill enters the outer office. Only the secretary is in the outer office, sitting at her desk.

SECRETARY

Mr. Wilson?

Bill nods yes.

SECRETARY

Go right in, they're waiting for you.

BILL

Ok.

INT. UNIVERSITY DEAN SUSAN TAYLOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Barlow is sitting at the conference table with Susan Taylor.

SUSAN TAYLOR

Mr. Wilson, please, take a seat.

Susan Taylor points to the chair across from Mr. Barlow. Bill walks over and sits down.

BILL

I do not have a copy of my final paper. It seems I cannot print the file from my university computer. I can only save it to the network server.

Mr. Barlow picks up a thumb drive from within his briefcase and holds it up.

MR. BARLOW

That's ok, I already have a copy. All other copies of your research documents have been secured on the lab servers or destroyed.

Mr. Barlow puts the thumb drive back into his briefcase and pulls out an envelope. He places the envelope on the table and slides it across the table to Bill.

BILL

What's this.

MR. BARLOW

Your next research grant has been reviewed, approved, and fully funded. The funds are already in the university account.

Bill looks at Susan Taylor and Mr. Barlow.

MR. BARLOW

I wanted to deliver them myself.

BILL

Is this study classified also?

Susan Taylor looks at Mr. Barlow. Mr. Barlow stares directly at Bill.

MR. BARLOW (IN AN ODD TONE)

Of course not, why would you ask?

BILL

No reason, thank you.

Bill picks up the envelope, gets up and leaves the office.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICE - DAY

Sara is sitting at her desk. Bill walks in carrying the envelope and sits down at his desk. He places the envelope on the desk and pulls the tablet out of the desk drawer. Bill presses the on button and the screen flashes then goes black. He tries again and the same thing happens. Bill just sits there. Sara notices him just sitting there.

SARA
Is everything OK?

BILL
Well, the good news is my new study grant has been approved and fully funded.

Bill holds up the tablet.

BILL
The bad news is my tablet has died.

SARA
I didn't know you had applied for a new study grant.

BILL (UNDER HIS BREATH)
Neither did I.

SARA
Take your tablet over to IT, I'm sure they can take care of it.

INT. UNVERISITY IT DEPARTMENT - DAY

Bill walks in carrying his tablet and walks up to the service desk. The PC TECH sitting at the desk looks up.

PC TECH
Can I help you?

Bill hands him the tablet.

BILL
My tablet will not boot.

The PC Tech takes the tablet and plugs it into a cable attached to his computer.

PC TECH
Give me a few minutes.

Bill looks around the room as the PC Tech runs some tests.

INT. UNIVERSITY IT DEPARTMENT - DAY

PC TECH
Ok, I'm done.

Bill steps back up to the desk.

PC TECH
The bios on your tablet is wiped out.

BILL
What does that mean, can you fix it?

PC TECH
I can restore it to the factor defaults but anything that was stored on this tablet is wiped, gone. It can't be recovered.

BILL
You mean destroyed?

PC TECH
I would not say destroyed, but it's gone.

BILL
What could have caused this? Never mind. How long until it's back up and running?

PC TECH
Give me a few hours and stop back by.

INT. BILL'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - DAY

Bill is sitting watching TV. The tablet is sitting on the table and is back up and running. Bill is deep in thought.

EXT. BILL'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

Bill is sitting across the street from the apartment complex on a park bench watching people go by. He looks up and down the street but does not recognize anyone. Bill pulls his cell phone from his pockets and swipes the screen.

Bill pushes the message button then selects Dr. Rossi from the contacts list. He puts the cell phone down for a minute and thinks. Bill picks the cell phone back up and begins typing. "Dr. Rossi, Alex, it was nice seeing you last Sunday. Have a nice Day". Then presses the send button and puts the cell phone down. In several seconds, the phone beeps. Bill picks it up. "Yes. It was nice seeing you also. Have a nice Day." Bill puts the cell phone in his pocket. Bill get up and walks down the sidewalk like a man without a care in the world.

Fade Out.