

3.32

BETTER CALL SAUL

"Klick"

Episode #210

TEASER

OVER BLACK:

We hear a BEEP... BEEP... BEEP... the sound is measured, unintrusive -- yet it's unmistakable and ominous. It's the tone of a monitored HEARTBEAT, pulling us to...

FADE UP ON:

1 CLOSE: a CARDIAC MONITOR. Jagged lines rising and 1
falling in cadence with someone's pulse. Marking the somber
passing of moments in...

INT. ILLINOIS HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY (FLASHBACK)

In the OUT-OF-FOCUS FOREGROUND: a COMFORT CARE NURSE checks the vitals of the unmoving PATIENT, who is wired to the monitor. She administers something (morphine, for those who need to know) into the patient's IV tube.

We can't make out who the patient is, but whoever it is isn't doing well. At all. The nurse is solemn as she turns away from the bed.

COMFORT CARE NURSE

Father Brady's in the chapel. Just
push the call button if you want to
see him.

We may clock the nurse's Midwestern accent as we pan to realize she's talking to...

... JIMMY, who sits near the bed, keeping silent watch over this patient. Jimmy looks tired. Wracked. Unshaven and ruffled.

Jimmy barely nods to the nurse; it's all he can muster. As she goes, we stay on him. And to the close viewer, he looks... different. It's his hair, maybe. But most of us are busy wondering: *who is this patient?*

Oh. Is it Chuck, after we saw him collapse in the copy shop in Ep. 209?

WIDE TO REVEAL: No. CHUCK sits near Jimmy, his exhausted, unmoving eyes also on the person in the hospital bed. He's just as affected, been here just as long. These two brothers are together, drained and helpless, and this patient is...

... their mother. RUTH MCGILL. On her deathbed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And yes, apart from the stress, the boys do look different -- because we're in BERWYN, ILLINOIS (not far from their hometown of Cicero), somewhere around 1999.

(NOTE: This place looks and feels like a small, local hospital. The room has personal touches -- as it would be with patients who have had extended stays with no promises of recovery.)

Jimmy and Chuck are silent, deep in their own thoughts, until Jimmy finally speaks to his brother.

JIMMY

When was the last time you ate?

CHUCK

What?

JIMMY

Food. Have you had any lately?

It's as if Jimmy's asking about the results of the latest NASCAR race. Not only foreign to Chuck, but circumstantially inappropriate. Chuck shakes his head, wanting to put a stop to the conversation.

CHUCK

I'm fine.

JIMMY

(straightens)

Come on, let's go over to Novi's. Stretch our legs, get some air, couple hoagies.

Chuck is galled by his selfish brother.

CHUCK

You want a sandwich? Now?

JIMMY

Just a thought.

But Jimmy just wants to help. Someone, somehow. And right now, what he can do is look after his big brother. Or at least try to make him feel better. He looks to Ruth, reaches for a memory that will connect them.

JIMMY

Remember when I accidentally invited Cheryl and Kathy to Mom's surprise party? Kinda tricky on the dance floor.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I woulda pulled it off if Grandma didn't get it in her head that they were one person named Shirley. Talk about a surprise party.

(chuckles)

That was a fun night.

CHUCK

All I remember is the whole family cleaning up after you. And Mom leaving her own birthday party early to take one of them home.

They sit in silence a moment; then, Jimmy tries again.

JIMMY

("okay, back to basics")

Seriously, we gotta eat, Chuck. Mom's gonna be fine for a few minutes. It's been three days, it could be three more. I mean...

(shrug)

Okay? Come on, buddy.

CHUCK

Fine, Jimmy. You want to eat? Go eat. I'm staying with Mom.

JIMMY

I'll bring you something then. Roast beef, no tomato, Italian on the side?

(off Chuck's silence)

Okay. I'll be back.

Jimmy gives Chuck a reassuring pat on the back as he stands. Jimmy leaves, and we stay with Chuck. His eyes are on Ruth, unmoving in her bed.

And then, Chuck's fixed eyes fill with tears. Here it is, the emotion that proud Chuck always restrains so carefully. Usually so controlled, so guarded.

Not now. No more restraints. Just Chuck and his dying mother.

Chuck slides his chair a little closer to her bed. His tears threaten to spill over as he watches her.

The seconds pass. The only sounds are the halting surge of oxygen from the cannula into her nose. And that fucking monitor keeping time like some sadistic metronome.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

And now, Chuck's jolted breath as he tries a last-ditch effort to be strong for her. He reaches to her, gently takes her hand. He holds it a moment...

And then... BEEP-BEEP... BEEP-BEEP... the rhythm of the heart monitor changes.

Ruth STIRS. Her eyes flicker. Chuck tenses with hope.

CHUCK

Mom?

RUTH

Jimmy.

CHUCK

No. Mom. It's me... Chuck.

Ruth's eyes focus on Chuck. But it's not Chuck she sees. And that cuts Chuck to his very core.

RUTH

Jimmy...

She closes her eyes. Exhales. Peacefully.

CHUCK

("What?! No!")

It's me. It's --

BEEP... BEEP... BEEEEEEP -- the monitor flatlines.

CHUCK

Mom!

The nurse steps in, having received the monitor's alert at her station. She looks at Ruth, then at Chuck. The nurse checks Ruth's pulse. Chuck's emotion is gone as suddenly as it came. He's blank, matter-of-fact as he watches the nurse.

CHUCK

("Can you do something?")

So this is it, then?

COMFORT CARE NURSE

(nods)

I'm sorry. She's got the DNR.

Chuck nods, understanding. For all we know, he's the lawyer who wrote it up in the first place.

COMFORT CARE NURSE

Is your brother in the building?

We can use the intercom.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

CHUCK

No.

The nurse nods. She checks the monitor, then pushes a button to print a ten-inch strip of paper. She turns to Chuck.

COMFORT CARE NURSE

(gentle)

Charles. Anyone you'd like us to call before I... shut everything off?

Chuck shakes his head. -- No. No one else to call.

With that, the nurse disconnects the machines, finally putting the monitor to rest.

She gives Chuck a supportive smile, but he's locked in on Ruth. The nurse leaves to notify a doctor.

Off shell-shocked Chuck...

TIME CUT TO:

2 INT. IL HOSPITAL - ELEVATOR LANDING - LATER (FLASHBACK) 2

An O.S. DING! -- the sound of an elevator door opening. Jimmy walks into frame and down the hallway away from us, toting a paper bag with his and Chuck's hoagies.

Jimmy's making the best of a bad situation. Although he can't snap his fingers and make his family suddenly healthy and happy, he can help a little by bringing lunch. He even got a couple of those deli pickles Chuck likes.

3 INT. IL HOSPITAL - WAITING AREA - CONTINUOUS (FLASHBACK) 3

Chuck sits rigid, emotionless. In the b.g., Jimmy crosses toward his mom's room, not noticing his brother.

Jimmy opens the door to Ruth's room, disappears inside. Chuck remains vacant and still.

A moment later, Jimmy rushes out of the dark room, freaked. He looks around, finally spotting Chuck. He darts frantically to his brother.

JIMMY

Chuck! Chuck, where's Mom?!

(off unmoving Chuck)

What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHUCK

She's gone.

JIMMY

What? When?

But Chuck says nothing. Jimmy sinks into a seat next to his brother, the bag of hoagies and pickles falling to the floor.

JIMMY

How did... did she wake up? Did she say anything?

Now, Chuck looks at Jimmy. And lies.

CHUCK

No.

Off the McGill brothers, side by side, we...

END TEASER

ACT ONE

4 EXT. 24-HOUR COPY CENTER - NIGHT 4

Jimmy stands frozen in place, as we left him at the end of Ep. 209, witnessing the aftermath of Chuck's meltdown and subsequent collapse.

Chuck just went down hard. And he ain't movin'.

Jimmy edges forward out of the darkness. He's torn -- knowing Chuck could be badly hurt, but also knowing that if he goes to help, his cover will be blown and his plan to help Kim with Mesa Verde will go down in flames.

Maybe Chuck will snap out of it? Or maybe Ernie and the copy boy will have the presence of mind to call for help.

Jimmy watches from across the street, gut sinking as ERNESTO kneels next to Chuck, helpless, and COPY BOY steps forward, offering a TISSUE to Ernie.

JIMMY
(quietly)
What are you doing? Call 911.

The two FEMALE UNM STUDENTS are glued in place where we left them last week. Gawking.

In the hands of this crew, Jimmy knows his brother's in serious trouble.

Jimmy steps forward, louder:

JIMMY
Call 911...

But inside, Jimmy sees Ernie nudging Chuck as if trying to wake him from an afternoon nap. Meanwhile, copy boy has grabbed a bottle of water and set it on the ground next to Ernie, scooting it closer. Just in case Chuck's thirsty?

Fuck this. Jimmy can't take it. That's his brother in there, and he needs help. Off Jimmy, running toward the copy shop...

CUT TO:

5 INT. 24-HOUR COPY CENTER - CONTINUOUS 5

The door swings open. Jimmy rushes in, man on a mission.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JIMMY

Call 911!

Not caring that his presence may be a felonious admission, Jimmy is fully committed and ready to take charge.

As copy boy picks up the phone, Jimmy drops to Chuck's aid, kneeling next to him. As Jimmy feared, Chuck's out cold.

Jimmy ignores Ernie's surprise at seeing him here. Instead, Jimmy's focused on the GASH on Chuck's head from when he fell against the copier. It's BLEEDING profusely and looks pretty serious.

JIMMY

Jesus. Get me paper towels!

Ernie numbly offers the Kleenex copy boy gave him.

JIMMY

Does he have a runny nose? Paper towels, Ernie!

(to copy boy)

Paper towels! You got any?

Copy boy, on the phone with a dispatcher and bumbling through the shop's address (POCKET DIALOG to come), points Ernie toward the restroom. Ernie scurries away.

Jimmy looks around, clocking the array of electricity coming at Chuck from all directions. He looks to copy boy, who's still on the phone.

JIMMY

We gotta kill the lights!

Jimmy rushes to the nearest light switch, flips it off.

COPY BOY

What the hell are you doing?

JIMMY

I need all the lights off.

COPY BOY

(into phone)

This just keeps getting weirder. Now he's turnin' off the... no, he's still on the floor.

(listens; then)

Yeah, he's breathing, I think...

(CONTINUED)

Jimmy hops up, rounding the room, unplugging every plug he sees. The heretofore dumbfounded college girls lose whatever settings they had on their copier.

COLLEGE STUDENT

Hey!

JIMMY

Come back tomorrow, half price.

With that, he ignores the students. As he continues his plug-pulling operation, Ernie returns with a roll of paper towels.

ERNESTO

I have paper towels.

JIMMY

Good.

(grabs them; to copy boy)
I need a cushion or something.
(off copy boy's confusion)
For his head. Something for his head.

Copy boy, still on the phone, reaches behind the counter, gives Jimmy a roll of BUBBLE WRAP. Fine, that'll work.

Jimmy takes the towels and bubble wrap to Chuck, propping Chuck's head with the bubble wrap and doing his best to staunch the wound with paper towels.

Now... Chuck's eyes flicker OPEN. They wander, stopping on Jimmy. *Is he awake? Does he register Jimmy?*

But then, Chuck's eyes focus and answer. Yes. He recognizes Jimmy. And now without a doubt, he knows his theory about Jimmy's Mesa Verde sabotage to be true.

Jimmy knows what Chuck knows, but none of it matters now. Chuck's hurt.

JIMMY

Chuck? You with us, buddy? We're going to the hospital. Everything will be all right.

Chuck stares at Jimmy a moment or two longer, until his eyes flutter closed.

Off Jimmy, knowing that everything is not all right...

6 EXT. 24-HOUR COPY CENTER - MINUTES LATER 6

Looking through the window of the now substantially darker copy shop, we hear SIRENS approach. From inside, Jimmy and Ernie hear them, too. An ambulance pulls to a stop at the curb, two EMTs inside.

Off Ernie stepping out to greet the EMTs, as Jimmy remains inside, kneeled next to his brother...

7 INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WING - HALLWAY - NIGHT 7

A bright STRIP OF FLUORESCENT LIGHT glides past a white b.g.

We are ON THE MOVE, looking up at a ceiling. Again... FLASH... and again... FLASH... as we move under more lights.

We are in Chuck's DAZED POV as he's rolled through the hallway of the hospital. One of two EMTs leans into frame.

EMT

Hang tight, Charles. Almost there.

ANGLE ON Chuck, eyes open but lolling around unfocused. He has a NECK COLLAR on (a preventative measure by the EMTs due to possible neck injury) and an IV TUBE running from his arm. His wound is covered by a full HEAD WRAP, blood spotting through.

If we look closely, we may see EKG WIRES running out from under Chuck's shirt.

The EMTs turn the gurney and Chuck toward a door, rolling him into...

8 INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY WING - ROOM - CONTINUOUS 8

... an emergency patient room, where TRICIA (the ER NURSE), a TECH and DR. TOPOLSKI (the ER DOCTOR) prepare for Chuck's arrival: setting the IV stand and the CARDIAC MONITOR, etc.

The EMTs, Tricia and the tech transfer Chuck from the paramedics' gurney to the ER COT, careful not to move his head or neck, as:

EMT

This is Charles McGill, late fifties. He had a syncopal episode in a print shop, witnessed by an employee. Loss of consciousness estimated one minute. His vital signs are stable.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EMT (CONT'D)

He's got a laceration to the forehead that appears to need suturing.

Tricia shines a PENLIGHT in Chuck's eyes -- even groggy, Chuck recoils.

TRICIA

Charles? How're you doing tonight; can you talk to me?

But he can only respond with a GROAN.

DR. TOPOLSKI

(to EMT)

Seizure activity?

EMT

Not in the transfer and none reported. No urinary incontinence.

TRICIA

Do we have any family members?

EMT

There's a brother in the waiting room.

DR. TOPOLSKI

(re: IV)

How much fluid did you give him?

EMT

(nods at bag)

This is the first liter.

CHUCK

(softly)

The lights.

TRICIA

(leaning in)

What was that, Charles?

CHUCK

(louder now)

The lights... you have to turn out the lights.

Tricia goes to work on Chuck's head wrap, unraveling it in preparation for the sutures. To her it seems like this is an old guy who got dizzy and fell down. He's confused now, or maybe he always is. She deals with this type all the time.

(CONTINUED)

TRICIA
(slightly condescending)
We can't do that right now. You
fell and hit your head. We'll have
to give you some stitches and run
some tests, okay? We need the
lights on to help you.

Tricia snaps an OXYGEN PROBE onto one of Chuck's fingers --
to him, it's an ugly piranha with electric teeth.

CHUCK
No.

TRICIA
Just checking your oxygen there,
Charles. Do you have any
allergies?

But Chuck's squinting through the light at his finger.

TRICIA
Are you on any medications?

Nothing. Tricia looks to the doctor -- *this guy's more than
a little confused*. But they don't know if it's from the
injury or from whatever caused his collapse. So the
questions can wait. He needs tests.

TRICIA
Okay. Charles, I'm going to touch
your arms and legs. You tell me if
anything hurts.

DR. TOPOLSKI
(to EMT)
Where are we with the EKG?

EMT
He's on a five-lead now. We didn't
get a twelve-lead.

DR. TOPOLSKI
(to nurse)
Can we get the twelve-lead, please,
Tricia?

This registers with Chuck. He struggles against the neck
collar to see a MESS OF WIRES running off the cot... and the
EKG MACHINE on a nearby table.

CHUCK
No. No EKG.

(CONTINUED)

TRICIA

Yes, Charles, we need to do an EKG.

But Chuck's following those wires to see that they're attached... to his own body.

CHUCK

No! You don't understand. I have a condition. I have a hypersensitivity to electricity.

TRICIA

Okay. You've got to lie still, Charles, until we examine your head and your neck and make sure your heart's all right.

CHUCK

You do not have a right to do this. I do not consent to this.

TRICIA

The more you move around, the longer this will take. Try to relax.

No way in hell. Panicked, he starts pulling at the wires.

CHUCK

Get these off me!

Tricia, still calm, takes the electrode pads he's pulled and reattaches them to him.

TRICIA

You can't pull those off. We need to monitor your heart.

They teeter-totter: Chuck yanks a wire, Tricia reattaches.

TRICIA

(*"little help here?"*)
Dr. Topolski?

DR. TOPOLSKI

Charles, we need you to cooperate. This is no big deal, alright? We're going to draw a little blood, suture your wound. A simple CAT scan. It'll be quick and easy.

But Chuck is not going to cooperate. He's becoming more panicked, pulling off more wires.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

No! No CAT scan. Absolutely not!

Chuck THRASHES. The tech and the EMTs try to help hold him down, to no avail. One hand ripping wires, one hand trying to pull off the neck collar, legs kicking -- this is an all-out FIT.

CHUCK

No scan!

DR. TOPOLSKI

Tricia. We're going to need some restraints.

Tricia nods to the tech, who hurries out of the room. Off the bewildered staff witnessing Chuck's frenzy...

CUT TO:

9 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - HALLWAY - NIGHT 9

Jimmy's GHOSTLY REFLECTION wavers on a pane of GLASS.

We RACK THROUGH THE GLASS to see what Jimmy sees: Chuck, in a darkened hospital room, wrist restraints anchoring him to his bed. There are no wires now, and the gash on his forehead has been sutured and is covered by a square bandage. He's still wearing a neck collar, but it's different than the one we last saw. This isn't the ER and there's a different DOCTOR inside talking to Chuck.

Yet... this all looks familiar. That's because we remember Chuck in this same place in Ep. 105 (after he stole his neighbor's newspaper and was tasered by the police). Yes, Chuck is once again under the care of DR. LARA CRUZ.

ANGLE ON: Jimmy, who doesn't take his eyes off that window. Behind him, Ernie sits in the b.g., worried and unsure of what to do with himself.

THROUGH THE GLASS: Chuck seems much calmer than last we saw him. However, he's far from content. He disagrees with whatever Dr. Cruz is saying -- vigorously. And her frustration shows us she's been trying to argue her point for quite some time (POCKET DIALOG to come).

They'll remain in disaccord. Dr. Cruz leaves Chuck's bedside, headed our way. In the hallway, she joins Jimmy, who anxiously awaits an update. She ushers Jimmy away from the door to ensure Chuck can't hear them.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY
How's he doing?

DR. CRUZ
I'd love to be able to tell you,
but I really can't know for sure
until we do those tests. You know
what I'm going to say.

JIMMY
Can't you just go old-school? Look
at his pupils, use a stethoscope,
that kinda thing?
(*"Please?"*)
He doesn't want to be here.

Here with all the electricity. Here where Jimmy put him.

DR. CRUZ
What he wants and what he needs are
two very different things, Jimmy.
We don't know if he lost
consciousness because of a heart-
related issue, or if it was a mild
stroke. We don't know if his spine
has been injured, if his brain is
swelling. He likely has a
concussion at least. These are all
very real possibilities.
(off Jimmy's silence)
But without your help, yes, he's
free to go.

JIMMY
Without my help.

He repeats her words, but his have so much guilt and
frustration behind them.

DR. CRUZ
Chuck is once again refusing all
these tests because they involve,
in his words, "being bombarded by
electricity."
(helpless shrug)
Nothing's changed since the last
time he was in here. He remains a
danger to himself.

Dr. Cruz considers how to better explain this. *Round and
round with these McGill boys. First Chuck, and now his
brother.*

(CONTINUED)

DR. CRUZ

Look, I don't know how to explain
this any clearer --

JIMMY

I'm not committing him.

(beat; then)

But what about a Temporary
Emergency Guardianship?

This pulls Dr. Cruz up short. She's astounded this idea came
from Jimmy, and furthermore that she didn't think of it
herself. Off her surprised silence, Jimmy continues:

JIMMY

I mean, he fits the parameters,
right? You're telling me there's a
need for medical care so urgent we
can't wait around on court
procedure.

DR. CRUZ

Most certainly.

JIMMY

And Chuck, he's not able to
understand the consequences.

DR. CRUZ

Absolutely. A judge will see it
that way, too -- and appoint you to
allow these tests.

JIMMY

And then I take him home and it's
over?

DR. CRUZ

Pending positive results and proper
treatment, yes.

(treading carefully)

I know a judge we can call right
now.

Jimmy mulls this over -- what he's done for, and against, his
brother. But there's no denying Chuck is in real, physical
danger now. Jimmy nods sadly:

JIMMY

Just let me be the one to tell him.

Jimmy turns to Chuck's room. Off him putting his phone and
electronics in the plastic FOLDER SLOT outside the door and
stepping forward, hating what he's going to have to say...

10 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS 10

Jimmy gently approaches Chuck's bed. Chuck's open eyes do not move toward his visitor.

JIMMY

Hey, buddy? How you doing? Chuck?

When Chuck finally answers, he does so without looking at his brother.

CHUCK

Well, if it isn't Johnny-On-The-Spot.

JIMMY

What? What does that mean?

Now Chuck moves his eyes. But past Jimmy, to the DOOR.

CHUCK

Is Ernesto out there?

JIMMY

Yeah. Can I get you something?

CHUCK

(ignores Jimmy)
Ernesto! Come in here, please.

Jimmy looks from Chuck to the door: *What does he want? Something from home?* Jimmy moves to get Ernie, but Ernie has heard Chuck and enters, timid.

ERNESTO

How are you feeling, Mr. McGill?

CHUCK

(skipping the pleasantries)
Ernesto, how long was I unconscious in that print shop?

ERNESTO

I'm... not sure.

CHUCK

Thirty seconds, a minute? Two minutes?

ERNESTO

I'd say maybe... about a minute? You were kinda in and out.

(CONTINUED)

CHUCK

And how long was I lying there
before the ambulance arrived?

ERNESTO

About ten minutes, I think. But I
didn't look at the clock.

Chuck's done with Ernesto. He finally looks at Jimmy. Hard.

CHUCK

And yet you were there.

Jimmy knows exactly where this is headed and tries to cut it
off at the pass.

JIMMY

Chuck, can we just --

CHUCK

There's only one way you could have
gotten there that quickly. You
never left.

JIMMY

You're getting yourself all wound
up. Just maybe, like, take some
deep breaths.

CHUCK

(achingly bitter)
You bribed him! That kid at the
counter. Between the time Ernesto
left and I showed up. You paid
that half-wit to swear he'd never
laid eyes on you.

Jimmy's taken aback. Again Chuck has all the details right.
Just like in Ep. 209 when Chuck explained Jimmy's Mesa Verde
sabotage to Kim. And what's the use of Jimmy denying it
anymore?

But if Jimmy was about to cop to this fact, we'll never know.
Because now, Ernie interrupts.

ERNESTO

Mr. McGill?

CHUCK

(ignoring Ernie; to Jimmy)
Then you stuck around. To watch.
Why? Just to see me suffer?

ERNESTO

Mr. McGill?

CHUCK

(still ignoring him)
Just to have a big laugh at my
expense?

ERNESTO

(softly)
I called him.

Jimmy and Chuck turn to him, equally taken aback.

CHUCK

What?

ERNESTO

I called Jimmy earlier, before I
picked you up. He showed up when
he did because I called him.

What the fuck is he talking about? Where's this coming from?

ERNESTO

I was worried about you, and I
just... I called him. I'm sorry.

Chuck looks from Jimmy to Ernesto, disgusted. Stymied, yet
again. *Everyone covers for this asshole. Et tu, Ernesto?*

CHUCK

Get out. Both of you.

Ernie goes, tail between his legs. He's not sure whether
he's made things better or worse, but he's relieved to be
getting out of this room. Jimmy takes a step after him, but
turns back to Chuck. He still has the bad news he came in
here to break.

JIMMY

Chuck. There's something I have to
do. And I'm sorry... I'm really,
truly sorry... but I gotta do it.
For you.

CHUCK

Temporary Emergency Guardianship.

Jimmy planned on at least being able to explain that he's
worried, that he loves Chuck, that this is for Chuck's own
good. But again, Chuck's ahead of the curve. And to him
this is just another cold manipulation on Jimmy's part.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

10

CHUCK

There's nothing you won't stoop to,
is there?

(bitter as hell)

You've finally got me where you
want me.

Off Jimmy, leaving, nothing left to say...

11 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER 11

Jimmy approaches Ernie, who waits down the hall, looking lost. Jimmy feels for the poor guy -- Ernie's spent several months way outside the call of duty. Not even counting the shitshow he's been through tonight.

JIMMY

Hey. You look beat. Why don't you
go home and get some sleep.

ERNESTO

I'm fine to hang out. You know,
whatever you need.

JIMMY

(truly appreciative)

Really. We're good here, Ernie.
Go on home.

Okay, then. Ernie smiles, nods goodbye, happy to withdraw himself from this situation. But as he starts down the hall, Jimmy stops him.

JIMMY

Hey, Ernie? Why'd you say that?
About you calling me?

The truth is, Ernie even surprised himself by what he did. So the words come slow and they're tough to find.

ERNESTO

I don't know, man.

Jimmy's gonna need more of an answer than that.

ERNESTO

Look, I didn't want to say
anything. But your brother, the way
he's been talking about you lately,
it's like... he's really out to get
you, Jimmy.

(beat; shrugs)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

ERNESTO (CONT'D)

And, I don't know. You're my friend.

Holy shit. Ernie lied for Jimmy. Apart from Kim, and Marco in Cicero (whom Jimmy lost in Ep. 110), Jimmy's "friends" are few and far between. So it both touches and hurts him that this show of friendship had to come in a lie to get them out of a mess Jimmy made.

It feels like thanks are in order. Yet all Jimmy can manage right now is to pat Ernie on the back.

JIMMY

I'll call you tomorrow.

Ernie nods, but before he leaves...

ERNESTO

I just want to go back to the mail room.

With that, he walks away. Off Jimmy in the hallway, left alone to wrestle with his guilt...

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

12 INT. NACHO'S VAN - MOVING - DAY 12

CLOSE ON: DUCT TAPE wrapped tight on flesh, which JOSTLES as this van drives across bumpy terrain.

Paired with O.S. MUFFLED GRUNTS, we can guess that someone is bound and gagged and in a bad way.

WIDE TO REVEAL: it's our familiar ICE CREAM TRUCK DRIVER. We remember seeing him bound in a different configuration -- then by Mike -- in the Teaser of Ep. 209. This guy can't catch a fucking break.

And now he's hog-tied and bumping around in the back of a VAN driven by NACHO VARGA. ARTURO is in the passenger seat. With nothing but desert horizon through the windshield in front of them, we can guess this driver's not headed to a happy place.

Nacho doesn't feel good about his part in this. It's like he told Mike in Ep. 209: he's under pressure from the cartel -- namely Hector Salamanca -- to get information out of this driver. Whatever it takes.

If the driver saw something that can ID Mike, his "information" will be a death sentence for Mike and Nacho. If this guy's got nothing, Nacho still has to work him over and then some. They're not amigos, but they're not strangers either. And Nacho's not keen on torturing colleagues.

No matter Nacho's peace with it or lack thereof, he's gotta play it cool and get the job done.

Nacho brings his van to a stop. He glances back at his prisoner. Satisfied the guy's sufficiently immobile, Nacho nods to Arturo. Arturo climbs out and...

13 EXT. ISOLATED ROAD - COW GATE - DAY 13

Arturo unlocks and opens a cow gate. He waits for Nacho to drive the van through.

Arturo scans the road in both directions -- yeah, they're all alone out here. He locks the gate and gets back in Nacho's van. We stay at the gate as the van heads down the dirt road on the other side, disappearing into the distance.

And now we're all alone out here.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

13

Then, from the same direction the van came... a beater CAR we've never seen before. Maybe someone out for a country cruise?

No... as it comes to a stop, we see -- it's MIKE EHRMANTRAUT, and he's looking past the cow gate in the direction Nacho drove. But the van's long gone. *So what's he looking at?*

14 INT. ND CAR - CONTINUOUS

14

Mike, professional that he is, has been trailing Nacho unnoticed this whole time. And now he's eyeing the dust cloud kicked up by the O.S. van's tires.

Mike notes the cow gate and scans the area. He considers the plan he's got boiling.

15 EXT. ISOLATED ROAD - CONTINUOUS

15

Instead of following the van, Mike makes a U-turn and drives back from whence he came.

Why did he come all this way just to turn around, and where's he headed now?

Off the beater headed toward the horizon...

16 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - PATIENT ROOM - MORNING

16

CLOSE ON: a SYRINGE, injecting its straw-colored contents into an INJECTION PORT.

CHUCK (O.S.)

Are you familiar with the Hippocratic Oath? You should be. One of the oldest binding documents in history. *Primum non nocere.* First do no harm. The actual phrase is "I will utterly reject harm and mischief."

WIDER: Chuck is rambling nervously at a PSYCHIATRIC NURSE, who doses him with sedative under the watchful eye of Dr. Cruz.

Not getting anything from the nurse, Chuck turns to Dr. Cruz.

He's not combative. The deed is done and there's no use fighting. Jimmy has called a judge, and Chuck no longer has any say on decisions affecting him.

(CONTINUED)

That doesn't mean Chuck isn't scared. He's being forced into the CT scan, which will cram 200 times more electromagnetic radiation into his brain and neck than one regular x-ray. The equivalent of a claustrophobe with an appointment to be buried alive.

CHUCK

This is not the way to treat my condition. It's as if I had a... an allergy to penicillin. And yet you persisted in treating my infection with it.

DR. CRUZ

I appreciate the analogy, Charles, but I don't think it quite fits.

(pats his arm)

We'll have you in and out of radiology before you know it, all right? Then we can see about getting that neck collar off, get you moving around.

The sedative works quickly; Chuck's response is incoherent. As his eyes get heavy, he sees Jimmy looking in through the window in the door.

Chuck holds Jimmy's anxious gaze as long as he can. Then, completely stripped of his agency, Chuck's eyes close.

CUT TO:

Chuck (in a gown and the neck collar) is strapped onto a narrow, motorized table, covered in portable EKG wires that will accompany him through this hellish machine.

His eyes open, piecing together glimpses of the lurking donut-shaped torture chamber and the wires snaking off him.

The female voice of the RADIOLOGY TECHNICIAN floats to him through a speaker from an adjoining room.

TECHNICIAN

The scan is starting now, Charles. The bed's going to move. You're going to hear a noise that may seem loud to you, but it's nothing to worry about.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

The motorized table begins moving helpless Chuck into the machine. A LASER-LIKE LINE moves across his face, helping the technician position him correctly.

Then... the CT machine WHIRS to life -- a high-pitched sound grows to a SHRIEK -- like an adrenaline-infused fan. Even with the sedatives, Chuck tenses every muscle in his body, bracing against the onslaught of radiation.

He tries to call out in protest, but he's too groggy and muddled to be understood.

TECHNICIAN

I need you to relax, Charles. The noise will die down.

But there's no relaxing. And with a WHIR! WHIR! WHIR! -- this beast shows no interest in quieting.

Off Chuck, without the ability to fight or even speak against this agony...

18 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - WAITING AREA - DAY

18

It's many hours later. Jimmy is tousled and despondent, seated in a waiting room. A BRIEFCASE is on the floor nearby; some will realize that it isn't Jimmy's.

From his appearance, we can gather that he's been here awhile. TVs drone in the b.g., but Jimmy's focus is elsewhere.

A take-out CUP of coffee is set down into frame on the table in front of him. This comes courtesy of KIM WEXLER. She wouldn't think of leaving him here to wait this out by himself.

Jimmy nods -- *thanks for the coffee* -- as Kim sits down beside him.

KIM

Still no word?

Jimmy shakes his head "no." He's not just tired; he's frustrated.

JIMMY

Jesus, how long is this gonna take?
She said the whole test would be
like ten minutes.

KIM

Maybe they had to start over.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY

What, twenty times?
 (not Kim's fault)
 I'm sorry. It's just, he should be
 out by now.

Kim rubs Jimmy's arm. She's not here to chime in but rather to offer quiet (and hopefully calming) support. A beat as Jimmy tries to hold back his frustration. No use.

JIMMY

He should be at home! He's okay at home.

KIM

Jimmy. You're doing the right thing.

He may not completely believe this, but he appreciates it. And neither of them is bringing up the hows and whys of what landed Chuck here in the first place. Right now, Jimmy's here to help Chuck, and Kim's here to support Jimmy. All else can be addressed later.

JIMMY

Thanks.

Kim doesn't need apologies or thanks. There's nowhere else she'd be. She kisses him on the cheek.

JIMMY

(indicates briefcase)
 Get your work out. Please. God knows how much longer we'll be here and I'd feel better if you do something... unhospital-y.

KIM

Unhospital-y. I'm on it.

They exchange small smiles. Kim pulls her briefcase onto the table and opens it. Jimmy drums on his knees for a moment; he can't take it anymore.

JIMMY

You know what? I'm going to go ask for an update.

Kim opens a file, half-listening...

KIM

Yeah, good idea.

Jimmy heads for the desk. Kim's focus is on her work as...

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY (V.O.)

You are the greatest generation.

KIM

I what?

She looks up, at where Jimmy was standing. But he's not there. *Huh?*

It takes her a half-beat to realize Jimmy's voice is coming from the TV.

KIM

Jimmy? Jimmy!

Jimmy hurries back from the desk.

JIMMY

What?

KIM

(points)

Look!

And here it is unveiled -- the wondrous work of advertising beauty that is JIMMY'S COMMERCIAL (actually, unveiled in full in our POCKET DIALOG). As promised, it plays just after a juicy cliffhanger on a morning rerun of "Diagnosis Murder."

Yes, he built it one shot at a time with a rag-tag UNM student crew: first, he snuck into an air base with a fake military vet/actual public masturbator (Ep. 208), then he trespassed on elementary school property with a fantastic Rupert Holmes documentary tale (Ep. 209).

And he even put in a call to a familiar ELDER for a cameo, emphatically touting his new slogan: *Give me Jimmy!*

Truth be told, it's pretty damn good. Considering his schedule and budget? Jimmy McGill may be the only guy who could pull this off.

Kim watches, genuinely impressed, unaware that beside her...

... Jimmy's mood sinks lower and lower hearing his own voice chirp painfully ironic daggers: *someone looking out for you... someone you can trust...*

He makes himself watch to the bitter final image: Jimmy positioned heroically in front of a waving American flag with his phone number and the words: "**Jimmy McGill, a lawyer you can trust.**"

(CONTINUED)

Once it ends, Kim finally looks away from the TV. She realizes immediately how Jimmy feels about it.

KIM

(soft)

It's really good, Jimmy. You made a really good commercial.

Even her compliment makes him queasy. He nods, forces a smile.

There are no "magic fingers" this time. No wishing and willing his phone to start ringing. Actually, the opposite. Jimmy takes his cell phone out of his pocket and turns it off. New clients may call or not; he doesn't want to know. Or maybe he doesn't think he deserves them.

As he tucks his phone away, Dr. Cruz approaches, putting a blessed end to any further commercial discussion.

KIM

(noticing the doctor)

Jimmy --

JIMMY

(noticing her now, too)

Finally! How is he?

DR. CRUZ

The good news is that physically, he's okay. The radiologist said everything looks normal with Charles' head and spine. So we took his neck collar off. His head wound will heal just fine. We gave him a tetanus shot because his immunization records were not current. I'm sure that's no surprise to you.

JIMMY

And his heart?

DR. CRUZ

Strong. The EKG is normal. As far as losing consciousness, my best guess is Chuck had what's called a stress-related syncope. Basically, a panic attack. No signs of a stroke or cardiac event.

Jimmy knows there's another side to all of this.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY

You said "the good news." So..?

DR. CRUZ

There was a... complication.

Off Jimmy wondering: what "complication" now..?

Dr. Cruz and Jimmy stand over Chuck, who is back in bed and in a much different state than when we last saw him in the scan room. He's catatonic. His eyes are open but vacant. It's as if he's left his body. (We've seen him like this once before, in Ep. 105 when he was brought to the hospital after being tasered.)

Kim lingers at the doorway, wanting to be there for Jimmy without potentially upsetting Chuck after their Ep. 209 confrontation.

Jimmy is quietly horrified to see his brother in this state yet again. Nonetheless, he plasters on a pleasant smile as he gently tries to get a response from his brother.

JIMMY

Chuck? Hey, buddy, it's me. They said everything looks good. Let's get you outta here, whaddya say?

Nothing. He even rubs Chuck's arm, a rare physical connection between the two. Still nothing.

Jimmy turns to Dr. Cruz. His frustration with her is nearing its boiling point. She maintains patience and composure.

JIMMY

What's wrong with him? Whatever it was you gave him, it should've worn off already. Right?

DR. CRUZ

We watched him for several hours, and we even gave him what's called a reversal agent. So, yes, the sedative wore off. This is something else.

JIMMY

Well, what happened?

DR. CRUZ

We think it's a state of self-induced catatonia.

JIMMY

"We." Always with the "we." Well I think it's you. You're the only doctor in this room! So I think you fried his brain with that machine!

DR. CRUZ

The CT scan is perfectly safe. We've never had a response like this. It appears to be a psychosomatic unresponsive state, induced by Chuck himself.

JIMMY

Speak English. Like, what, he's willed himself into a coma?

Dr. Cruz shrugs, nods -- *Yeah... pretty much.*

DR. CRUZ

If your mind believes something strongly enough, your body can follow. He believed that the CT scan could hurt him, and therefore, it did.

JIMMY

Wow! Brilliant deduction, doctor! Who coulda seen that coming?

KIM

(gently)

Jimmy.

Jimmy just had to get it out of his system. He knows Dr. Cruz is on their side. He knows she cares. He's just so frustrated.

JIMMY

Sorry, I just... so, what now?

DR. CRUZ

When I first treated Charles, he was in a similar state. Wouldn't you agree? I have to believe it's just a matter of time before he comes out of it.

Jimmy grabs a chair and drags it next to Chuck's bed.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY
(off Cruz's look)
Matter of time. Fine, I'll wait.
Right here.

Off helpless Jimmy, looking to Kim -- and Kim looking just as helpless, having no answers to give him...

CLOSE ON: swaying in the breeze, the silhouette of a sniper's TARGET staked in the ground.

ON THE TARGET: ZZIP! A small HOLE appears a few inches to the left of the bullseye.

Then, a distinct BOOM -- the echo of a high-powered rifle. It travels from about a hundred yards away, where we find a familiar SPOTTER...

SPOTTER (PRE-LAP)
Shot left, point five minutes.

It's LAWSON giving the adjustment, lying on a shooting mat, not lifting his eye from the spotting scope.

Last we saw this illegal arms dealer in Ep. 204, he showed Mike an array of long-range bolt actions which Mike ultimately left unpurchased. That's because Mike wasn't ready to kill for hire then...

... but here's Mike now. Our sniper, lying on a mat next to Lawson. Mike's eye stays on a different scope -- a Leupold Mark 4, mounted to his weapon of choice, that familiar M40 Vietnam-era rifle (with A1 upgrades) both men know so well. Now, it rests on a bipod before Mike. His finger is still on its trigger.

With these two pros talking meters and minutes of angle, it's clear Mike's had a change of heart about this M40. *But what's he planning to do with it?*

For now, we're gonna have to wait on the answer to that question. First things first: Mike's focused on making this shot. And he trusts his own aim, so what gives?

MIKE
How many rounds've gone through the tube?

LAWSON

For a seven six two? You can put thirty-five hundred through her and never know. It's about how tight she shoots. And this one's tight as they come. I'd say there's a breeze picking up downrange.

(beat; then)

Your barrel gonna be cold?

Lawson can deduce that when Mike takes this weapon out on his own, he'll need to make the first shot count.

MIKE

Let's suppose so.

LAWSON

You'd better get it dialed in, then.

MIKE

(nods)

I'd better.

Mike respects this man and realizes he knows what he's talking about. Mike cranks the adjustment onto the scope with his windage knob:

MIKE

Adjusting right, point five minutes.

Mike looks through his scope; Lawson through his. Mike exhales, steady. Still. Ready for his spotter's command.

LAWSON

Send it.

Mike squeezes the trigger. BOOM!

The men are unmoving on their mats and without fanfare as Lawson confirms.

LAWSON

Hit. Center hit.

Mike nods -- *Well, that's more like it.*

23 EXT. ISOLATED CLEARING - DOWNRANGE - LATER 23

On the target, a few more holes on the bullseye.

We know this for sure: Mike's dialed in. One adjustment was all he needed. And when he pulls that trigger again, he's gonna hit his target, whatever -- or *whomever* -- that is.

Dead center.

24 EXT. ISOLATED CLEARING - VEHICLES - LATER 24

CLOSE ON: an open NYLON RIFLE CASE. Inside and safely padded lies the M40.

In the f.g., Mike's HAND enters frame, passing a sizeable STACK OF CASH to Lawson's. (We're thinking in the neighborhood of \$10k.)

WIDER: the men stand behind Lawson's vehicle -- an old PICKUP TRUCK with a camper shell, the rifle case resting on its open gate. The shooting mats are rolled up next to it. Mike's Chrysler is parked nearby.

Lawson flips through the bills -- a cursory check, but these guys share a mutual respect and old-school code of ethics. So unlike the Pryce/Nacho exchanges we've seen, we don't wait for Lawson to count it all. He knows it's there.

Lawson pockets the cash and slides a heavy duffel bag from the bed of the truck. He unzips it next to the rifle case. It's filled with AMMUNITION BOXES.

LAWSON

I suggest you don't change up your ammo, stick with the one-sixty-eight grain boat tail hollow point. If it's an open shot, that is.

Lawson treads carefully here. He doesn't want to know the details of Mike's plan. Both men know that Mike's not gonna be firing at a paper target staked in dirt next time he takes aim.

LAWSON

If you gotta shoot through a heavy window, I'll up you to a one eighty. But as you know, you'll need to re-calculate the shot.

MIKE

(considers; then)
One-sixty-eight'll do it.

(CONTINUED)

LAWSON
(nods)
How many boxes?

Mike doesn't need to weigh his options here.

MIKE
Just the one.

Very well. Mike offers a bill for the box, but Lawson holds up a hand: *no charge*.

LAWSON
On the house.

Like Lawson said in Ep. 204, he runs on repeat business. And Mike's now a customer.

Mike puts the ammo in the rifle case and starts to close it.

LAWSON
One last thing.

Lawson takes a GUN CLEANING CLOTH from the ammo bag. He uses it to wipe down the weapon and its gear.

LAWSON
No offense.

An unspoken acknowledgement. Mike's about to cross a line, and Lawson will be staying on this side of it. Situation reversed, Mike would do the same thing.

MIKE
None taken.

Off Mike watching Lawson clear his prints from the weapon, we...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

25 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAWN 25

To establish. Not much traffic out here. Night is turning into day.

26 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCH WING - PATIENT ROOM - DAWN 26

It's quiet out on the ward. The only source of light here in the room is the sunrise which slants in through the window. It lights half of Chuck's face. He still lies here, catatonic -- his eyes open but unseeing.

Only now... he BLINKS. Once... twice. What's this? Is he snapping out of it?

He is. His eyes close for a beat, and when they re-open, he's back amongst the living. Barely. He sucks in a ragged breath and tries to focus. Weak and disoriented, he glances around and notices...

... Jimmy is here with him. Propped uncomfortably across two visitor chairs and fast asleep, Jimmy has clearly spent the entire night beside his brother.

Chuck works his jaw, eventually managing to form words.

CHUCK

Jimmy..? Can I get some water..?

His voice is soft and hoarse as hell -- but it's enough to rouse Jimmy, who is overjoyed by what he sees.

JIMMY

Chuck! Hey Buddy, you're back with us..? Hey! How you...

(Chuck waves at his throat)

Yeah, yeah, water -- you got it!

Jimmy grabs a nearby cup and races into the bathroom, where we glimpse the LIGHT briefly flick ON.

JIMMY (O.S.)

Oh, shit. Sorry!

Click -- just as quickly, OFF goes the light. We hear the faucet run, then out Jimmy races, back into view. Jimmy props Chuck's head up, helps him drink.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY

Just take it slow. Just... yeah.
(when Chuck finishes)
There you go. Want some more?

Chuck nods. His vocal cords lubricated, he stops Jimmy on his way back to the bathroom sink.

CHUCK

The last thing I remember was that machine they put me in. How long was I out?

Guilt-ridden Jimmy checks watch, does the math.

JIMMY

Fifteen hours.

The look on Jimmy's face says it all: *I'm sorry.* Back into the bathroom he goes for a quick refill of Chuck's cup.

As he gently helps Chuck drink...

JIMMY

Alright... next order of business: let's get you the hell outta here.

CHUCK

(dripping bitterness)
Where to next? Some insane asylum in Las Cruces? Someplace you can really tuck me away, but good?

Jimmy blinks, stung to the core by the accusation. Quietly:

JIMMY

Home, Chuck. You're going home.
(off his reaction)
Your heart's okay, and so is that crack on your head. That's all I wanted to know.

He shrugs -- *you're done here.* Chuck is still wary.

CHUCK

What about the T.E.G.?

JIMMY

The "T" stands for "temporary," right?
(heads for the door)
Lemme go find somebody -- start working on getting you outta here.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: (2)

26

Out the door Jimmy goes -- glancing left and right, then disappearing up the hallway. Chuck stares after him, more than a little surprised. And deep in thought.

Is he softening toward Jimmy? Hard to read. Off this:

27 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - DAY

27

It's several hours later. Jimmy helps Chuck the last few steps into his living room. Jimmy carries an opaque plastic draw-string bag marked "Patient belongings." Cloaked inside his familiar space blanket, Chuck moves like he's ninety years old. He's really been through the wringer these past few days. Jimmy sets the bag down, turns to his brother:

JIMMY

Sure you don't wanna go to bed?

CHUCK

No. It's cooler down here.

Jimmy helps Chuck get seated on his sofa.

JIMMY

What can I get you?

(Chuck shakes his head)

How 'bout some tea..? The good stuff, not that brown water they had at the hospital.

CHUCK

I'm fine.

JIMMY

I'll make you some tea.

CHUCK

(stopping him)

Jimmy. No. Just... you've done your duty. You can go now.

This hurts. Chuck can see it in Jimmy's face, and he grudgingly backtracks a little.

CHUCK

That came out a bit... harsh. Look, I've been zapped and poked and prodded, and I just... I wanna be left alone. So...

Chuck shrugs. *Please? Whaddya say?*

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY
If things start going south for you
again, how am I gonna know?

CHUCK
I am fine. I promise.
(unwraps from his blanket)
See? Better already.

JIMMY
(hinting)
I mean, I don't even have a key.
(Chuck doesn't offer one)
Can I get Ernie back here? Wouldja
let me do that for you, at least..?
You're gonna need somebody looking
in on you. You gotta eat, right?

Chuck thinks about it, gives in. Jimmy nods -- good. He glances around the place, reluctant to leave. He wishes there were some magic words he could say to put things right between them.

There aren't, unfortunately. The best he can manage is:

JIMMY
Feel better, Chuck.

Jimmy exits. Chuck watches him disappear into the kitchen, then listens to hear the mud room door open and close.

Left alone, Chuck marshals his energy. He sits here chewing something over. It's an idea he's been considering for the past several hours.

Now, finally, he reaches a decision. Stiffly rising to his feet, he carries his space blanket with him as he heads for the kitchen.

28 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS 28

CLOSE ON a DRAWER being pulled open into frame. Chuck fishes through a tangle of cooking implements until he finds what he's looking for. Out comes a long pair of TONGS. He tucks them in the back of his waistband.

He strikes a match and lights a nearby COLEMAN LANTERN. Weird. It's broad daylight outside, with plenty of sun streaming in through the windows. Why does he need this?

Chuck pulls his ring of HOUSE KEYS from his pocket -- identifying, then readying one particular KEY in hand.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

He peers out through the window of his mud room door. Outside, Jimmy's car is gone. The coast is clear.

Chuck wraps himself in the space blanket, peeking out from beneath his mylar hood. He sucks in a deep breath, girding his loins for what comes next.

Jesus. After all he's been through, is he seriously going outside again?

29 EXT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

29

Yes. The mud room door flings open and out Chuck scurries, carrying his lantern. He half-limps, half-runs along the side of his house, beelining for...

... His detached GARAGE. He squats down and fumbles the key into its lock, then works to lift the heavy door. He has to really yank at it, as nobody's been in here for over a year and the springs have gotten sticky.

30 INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS

30

Chuck moves his lantern inside and strains to close the big door behind him. Blinding sun abruptly cuts off, and we're left in dim lantern light. Much more comfortable for Chuck, who sighs in relief and shrugs off his space blanket.

It's dark and spooky in here. There's floor-to-ceiling clutter of household stuff, with a heavy accent on APPLIANCES and ELECTRONICS.

So, this is where Chuck's former electric-powered lifestyle wound up. Makes sense he'd keep his fridge, TV and stereo for the glorious future day when a cure is found for his electromagnetic hyper-sensitivity.

Chuck lifts his Coleman lantern, which throws eerie shadows around the place. He gets to work searching for something.

After a bit of fumbling around, he moves aside an espresso machine (or somesuch) to discover a box tagged "Home Office."

Bingo. Chuck lifts the lid, holding the lantern close and using its light to peer inside.

LOW ANGLE - LOOKING UP OUT OF THE BOX

Chuck retrieves his salad tongs, using them to reach down toward us into the out-of-focus contents of the box.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: 30

Yes, indeed... we can tell by his expression that he's found what he's looking for. Off his tongs coming straight at us, gripping us tightly:

31 EXT. DESERT - PLAINS - DAY 31

Miles and miles of high desert bake beneath a deep blue polarizer sky. We're wide and cinematic as hell. No sound but the loud, constant CHITTER of a billion unseen CICADAS.

Below us, a tiny figure hikes into view. It's a man in black, carrying a long, dark case. Johnny Cash, perhaps?

CLOSER - VARIOUS ANGLES

Nope. Cooler still -- it's Mike. And that's not a guitar he's hauling, but his new RIFLE CASE.

Mike's boots crunch across the dry mud and caliche.

We FOLLOW behind him as he takes us through the badlands.

We PULL Mike along. Soon, he slows to a stop, squinting into the far distance ahead. He's closing in on his destination. Time to move a bit more cautiously.

Mike hunkers low and slips past us out of frame.

32 EXT. DESERT - VANTAGE POINT - DAY 32

We're down on the deck, staring into some thick, low scrub. Now, from behind it...

... That rifle case gets slid into view toward us.

It is followed by Mike, who crawls into frame on his belly. Taking his time, he pushes the case across the ground ahead of him, then crawls a foot or two to meet up with it.

In this careful and deliberate manner, he moves the final few yards into position (PRODUCTION NOTE: let's have a really good photo double available to us on this day, so that we save some wear and tear on Mr. Banks).

Having reached a choice spot, Mike stays low, remaining on his belly while he unzips the rifle case and reveals...

... His new M40 RIFLE.

He extends the two bipod legs -- one, then the other. He flips open the protective caps on both ends of the scope -- one, then the other.

(CONTINUED)

He lays out his one box of AMMUNITION, opens it and removes the 20-round tray. He turns one single round in the tray RIGHTSIDE-UP.

Every movement he makes is a memory from a lifetime ago. Practiced and efficient. There's almost a ritual to it all, as if we're watching some grim Japanese tea ceremony.

What it really is is Mike psyching himself up to do something he hoped he'd never do again.

His M40 ready (but unloaded), Mike settles in with it, snugging the stock into his right shoulder.

BIRD'S EYE VIEW - STRAIGHT DOWN ON MIKE

He lies prone and peering through his rifle scope. We TILT UP from him to include what he's surveilling. Down below us in some lowlands, a good half-mile or more away...

... Is a small, nondescript CABIN. Barely distinguishable with the naked eye. It squats in the dusty ass-end of nowhere. No other houses for miles.

Way out there, nobody can hear you scream.

CLOSE - MIKE'S EYE

Is magnified HUGE through the front lens of the scope, staring at us impassively. Taking us in.

MIKE'S POV - THROUGH THE RIFLE SCOPE

This is one hell of a telephoto -- a thousand millimeters or more. Seen through wiggly HEAT WAVES, the cabin practically FILLS FRAME. No dice seeing in through the windows. The curtains are drawn.

Our view smoothly pans to reveal...

... Nacho's van, parked out front. And next to the van is a familiar, copper-colored 1960 IMPALA.

CLOSE - MIKE

He allows us a glimpse of baleful satisfaction. Hector's car being here tells us Hector is here. And in case we haven't figured it out yet -- Mike intends to assassinate the evil son of a bitch.

Clearly, the time for half-measures has ended.

MIKE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

We pan off the Impala, arcing left and right in search of our prey. Everybody must be inside that cabin. Nobody's visible out here. That is, until...

... Is that a flash of MOVEMENT? We zero in on...

... Arturo.

He's off about fifty yards to one side of the property. Visible only from the shoulders up, he's DIGGING A HOLE.

It's hot, hard work. He pauses to wipe his forehead with the back of his hand. However, he's almost done. A few more shovelfuls of dirt, then -- Screw it. Deep enough.

He tosses his shovel aside and scrambles up out of the hole. Swiping the dust off his pant legs, he ambles toward the cabin. He swings his elbows behind him, cracking his neck and loosening up his shoulders.

Arturo opens the door and disappears inside the cabin.

ANGLE - MIKE

It's showtime -- or soon will be. His eye on the scope, Mike smoothly slides the rifle's BOLT, unlocking the receiver.

His shooting eye still trained, he sightlessly reaches with his right hand, and...

... Without fumbling for it, he lands his index finger atop that lone, upturned RIFLE ROUND. Perfectly, without looking. Damn, this guy is cool.

MACRO-CLOSE - THE RIFLE ROUND

The pad of Mike's trigger finger rests atop the jacketed 7.62mm BULLET, which GLINTS in the sun. Mike grips it in two fingers and withdraws it from its tray.

MACRO-CLOSE - THE M40

Mike's fingers load the round into the RECEIVER. He closes the bolt, shutting the lockwork like it's the vault door at Fort Knox.

CLOSE - MIKE

Locked and loaded, Mike doesn't intend to use more than this single bullet. He'd consider it a personal failing to need a second one.

(CONTINUED)

He stares, motionless, waiting for Hector to show himself.

We hear a faint buzz, and a FLY lands on Mike's cheek (VFX). Mike doesn't twitch, doesn't so much as blink. He's in the zone, and will brook no distractions.

Mike waits. And waits. A half-mile away, the cabin sits inert. The door stays shut. No movement.

Until finally... as seen through the front of the scope, Mike's magnified SHOOTING EYE squints almost imperceptibly. He's spotted something.

MIKE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

The cabin door is opening. Out steps Arturo. Behind him, stumbling into view and squinting into the harsh sun like a mole-rat, is our familiar Regalo Helado TRUCK DRIVER.

Even though we know him to be a scary cartel member, it's hard not to feel sorry for the guy. His arms are trussed behind him. His face looks like it's been parked in front of a pitching machine for the past two hours. There's dried blood down the front of his shirt.

Apparently, Hector had a great many questions for him concerning his involvement in that truck hijacking. And it would seem that the time for such questions is over.

Behind the driver... our deadly COUSINS, MARCO and LEONEL, exit the cabin, stepping into view. Of course we can't hear him from here, but the panicked driver talks fast, begging them for his life.

He might as well beg a wall. These two push him toward that freshly dug hole in the distance. When he refuses to go, they each take an elbow and casually frog-march him along. Arturo strolls behind, absently scratching some itch.

CLOSE - MIKE

We can guess Mike regrets what's about to happen to the guy, as it was Mike who put him in this jackpot. However, there's nothing to be done about it now. Nothing, unless...

... Mike's target, Hector, chooses this very moment to show himself.

With that hope in mind, Mike keeps a sharp eye on the cabin. And yes, indeed...

(CONTINUED)

MIKE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

... Out steps HECTOR, standing here on the cabin's stoop. Wow, what perfect timing! Well, then again, Hector is the type who enjoys watching his enemies get murdered.

He takes in some fresh air and stretches his arms over his head, working out the kinks in his back. Torturing people is hard work.

It's hot out here, so he stays within a step or two of the open cabin door. Nonetheless, he's inadvertently presented himself as a nice, clean TARGET. Here we go -- this is it. The CROSSHAIRS line up on Hector's head.

CLOSE - MIKE

He's ready, willing and able. His right thumb eases up...

... And takes off the rifle's SAFETY with a faint CLICK.

He inhales through his nostrils, holds his breath. CLOSE ON his fingertip taking up the slack on the trigger.

Time to do the whole world a favor.

But just as Mike is about to pop Hector's head like a zit -- *Oh crap, what's THIS?!*

MIKE'S POV - THROUGH THE SCOPE

Nacho steps out of the cabin. And as Murphy's law would have it, he lands right between Hector and Mike's rifle.

CLOSE - MIKE

Mike blinks. *Fuck! MOVE, you dumbshit!*

Obviously, this is a complete fluke. Nacho doesn't have any idea Mike is out there. INTERCUT BETWEEN Mike's rising angst and his view through the rifle scope. He pans the scope from Nacho/Hector to...

... The cousins, Arturo and the driver, who have made it to the edge of the hole. If Mike can get a clear shot at Hector, maybe the rest of these guys will forget about killing the driver (not that saving this guy's life is number one on Mike's to-do list).

Mike scans the scope back and forth, keeping an eye on both parties. Hector remains maddeningly BLOCKED. And on the next pan back to the driver, who cringes on the edge of the hole, frantically begging for his life...

(CONTINUED)

... Either Marco or Leonel (we'll flip a coin) raises his pistol and dispassionately SHOTS him in the head. The man flops backward, lifelessly Nestea-plunging into his grave.

Tough and hardened as Mike is, he can't help but flinch. Silently tamping down his revulsion, he turns his attention -- and his rifle -- back to Hector.

Hector's reaction to the shooting has all the emotion of a guy glancing at his watch. Already, he's turning to Nacho and barking orders. We can't hear a word -- and it's probably in Spanish, regardless. But we get the gist: *find those fuckers who robbed my truck!*

All this time, Hector is *ju-uuust* out of reach of Mike's bullet. Occasionally, half his face appears on one side of Nacho's head or the other... but these are taunting glimpses, not opportunities.

Talk about The Devil's Luck. Unless Mike is willing to shoot this man straight through Nacho, thus killing them both (which he is not), he's going to have to remain patient.

He does. He stays on station, ready to fire at any instant. Unfortunately, soon...

... Hector turns on his heel and steps inside the open door. Nacho follows him into the cabin.

And just like that, the bear is back in his cave.

Shit.

However, as we know, Mike is nothing if not determined. He'll lie here all day, as long as it takes. He knows that eventually, Hector will step outside again. And when he does, Mike will be waiting for him.

As seen through the rifle scope, the cousins make their way back to the cabin, leaving Arturo to bury the body.

One of the driver's feet remains in view, its heel caught on the lip of the grave. Annoyed with his job, Arturo kicks the corpse's foot into the hole and starts shoveling dirt.

Mike watches Arturo for a beat, then pans his rifle back to the cabin. He uses his scope to pore over every inch of the place -- *is there any seeing inside it? Have any curtains opened since last Mike checked? Will Hector poke that smug face of his back into view..?*

Mike has come a long, hard way this past year. He was always a tough guy -- but he wasn't a stone-cold murderer. He wasn't an assassin. That thought isn't lost on him now.

(CONTINUED)

He's not happy about this turn of events. It's not what he hoped his retirement would be. And if he could roll back the clock, he would. He'd do things differently -- not wind up here in the middle of nowhere, peering through a rifle he hasn't held in forty years.

But make no mistake: he's having no second thoughts about Hector. As soon as that motherless bastard shows himself, Mike's gonna put him down. Hard. Nobody threatens Mike's family and gets away with it.

In the meantime, it's just Arturo shoveling away in the distance and Mike out here in the weeds, getting his eardrums numbed by the BUZZ of a billion goddamned cicadas.

Only now... the cicadas go QUIET.

We notice it when Mike does. Weird. That's a little eerie, isn't it, how they all just suddenly went dead like that? Mike takes his eye away from the scope and ventures a glance around him.

Nothing else amiss. Not that he can see. But now, as he settles back into his M40, once again taking aim --

-- He hears the sound of a distant CAR HORN.

We're not talking honk-honk. This is a constant blaring. It's not particularly loud, because it's a good ways off. But it just keeps going. It doesn't stop.

Through his scope, Mike scans the only two vehicles in sight: Nacho's van and Hector's Impala. Nobody is anywhere near them. The honking isn't coming from there. Furthermore...

... As seen through the rifle scope, Arturo doesn't react -- he just keeps shoveling earth into the grave. No one sticks their head out of the cabin, either.

Those guys are a half-mile further away from the horn and can't hear it at all. Which means the sound is coming from BEHIND Mike, not in front of him.

Mike lifts his eye from his rifle, glancing around him. *Who else is out here? Where the HELL is that coming from?!*

There's something familiar about the sound of that horn. Mike begins to get a bad, sinking feeling.

Hector and the cabin momentarily forgotten, Mike very quickly tucks his rifle back in its case and zips it closed. He slings the strap over his shoulder and backs away from the cabin on hands and knees. When he gets a bit more distance, he rises up into a low crouch and hurries away.

33 EXT. DESERT - CABIN - CONTINUOUS 33

This is our first real look at this place from a viewpoint other than Mike's. No one's in sight in the cabin -- though we can hear Hector inside, bitching in Spanish about the truck robbery. Out here in f.g., Arturo keeps filling the grave, oblivious to all but the task at hand.

Mike must be way up there somewhere in the distant b.g. behind Arturo -- but even though we know where to look for Mike, we don't see him. And Arturo most certainly doesn't.

The point being: these bad guys have nothing to do with that honking horn, which we definitively do NOT hear from here.

34 EXT. DESERT - PLAINS - DAY 34

WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH! There's the horn, getting LOUDER by the second as we head toward it. We FOLLOW behind Mike, who scurries along with his head tucked low. Carrying the rifle case on its strap like a backpack over his shoulder allows Mike to hold his PISTOL in both hands. He aims it ahead of him as he runs, ready to shoot anything that moves.

He hustles through high brush, that CAR HORN getting closer and closer, LOUDER and LOUDER. Mike's at Defcon One as he eases out into a clearing and sees...

... His familiar BEATER. It's parked right here where he left it, its HORN BLASTING endlessly.

Mike spins a cautious three-sixty, aiming his pistol in every possible direction. Nobody's in sight.

Mike slowly steps closer to his car. He clocks something we don't yet see. Reaching in through the open driver's window...

... He removes a STICK which is propped between the steering wheel and the driver's seat, holding down the horn.

The blaring ceases. The sudden SILENCE is both a relief and a source of further anxiety.

This stick is just some gnarled, sunbleached twig somebody found out here on the ground. But who did this, and why? And where are they now?

Mike sets down his rifle case. Still aiming his pistol, he takes one last orbit around -- but there is absolutely no one out here.

(CONTINUED)

Now, Mike notes one final detail: there's a piece of PAPER tucked beneath his windshield wiper.

Holding his pistol in one hand, Mike yanks the paper loose with the other. This is a message, meant solely for him. It is a single word, hand-printed neat and small.

"Don't."

The air leaks out of Mike. Once more, he glances in all four directions -- but there is truly no one around. Whoever left him this message is long gone.

If you ever wondered what Mike looks like when he's unnerved... when he's bewildered and vulnerable and in over his head... well, now you know.

Who sneaks up on James Bond? We're certain it's not Hector and his boys, so then... who?

For the answer, we'll have to wait till season three. Until then, we leave Mike standing here, unsure of what to do.

Off this wide, lonely tableau... as the chittering of the CICADAS slowly returns to full volume...

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

35 INT. WEXLER/MCGILL - RECEPTION AREA - DAY 35

Resting atop a coffee table is a bowl of HARD CANDY. Brach's. The beloved, all-American, old-timey stuff. A hand reaches into frame and picks out a good one. The hand brings us to its owner...

... An ELDERLY WOMAN. She sits on a couch, her purse and a fat sheath of PERSONAL PAPERS close beside her. As the woman unwraps her candy, we WIDEN to REVEAL... we're in the waiting area of Kim and Jimmy's new offices.

There are now a few couches and end tables courtesy of Ikea. However, the place doesn't quite look ready for business -- mostly because there is NOBODY manning the reception desk.

This is tricky, since (counting the lady) there are FOUR ELDERLY CLIENTS patiently waiting here. One of them is accompanied by a CARETAKER, another by an adult SON.

Looks like Jimmy's new commercial worked well. Maybe too well, at the moment.

The door to Jimmy's office opens. Out comes an ELDERLY CLIENT, followed by our hero himself.

JIMMY

Alright! I'll get right on this, and I should have it for you by early next week. Mister Collins, you have yourself a wonderful day!

The man smiles and nods, tottering along. Having walked this satisfied customer to the front door, friendly Jimmy holds it open for him. Mr. Collins stands in the bright sun of the doorway, slo-oooowly donning a huge pair of GLAUCOMA GLASSES.

JIMMY

Yeah, get out your sunglasses. It's bright out there.

It's uncomfortable, holding open the door this long from this angle. Jimmy can't let go till the oblivious old gentleman finishes up and exits.

JIMMY

Gotta protect the ol' peepers. Gotta... yeah, there you go. Looking sharp! Bye-bye now.

(CONTINUED)

The old fella totters off, ready to do some welding. Jimmy wastes no time heading into the lobby. Addressing everyone:

JIMMY

Folks, I am so sorry for the wait. The attention I give every client means that sometimes things get a little...

("what's to do?" shrug)
... Backed up. I promise I will get to each and every one of you in turn.

In b.g., Kim exits her office, headed our way. Meanwhile, Jimmy beams at our original elderly lady.

JIMMY

Mrs. DeShazo, my dear, I believe you're next.

(claps his hands)
But first, may I get anybody some coffee..?

Three hands go up just as Kim arrives. Sotto, to Jimmy:

KIM

Can I talk to you?

JIMMY

Uh...
(to the room)
Excuse me one second.

He and Kim take their leave, moving out of earshot of the lobby. Glancing back at his clients in deep b.g., Jimmy keeps his voice low.

JIMMY

We have got to hire a receptionist. I mean like, yesterday. I --

KIM

-- Jimmy. Howard just called. He says he's been trying to reach you all morning.

Jimmy nods -- he already knew that, and couldn't care less.

JIMMY

Yeah? So..?
(shrug)
Tell him to stop bothering you and leave me a message.

(CONTINUED)

KIM

It's about Chuck. It's important --
that's all he'll say.

Kim's fixed gaze says *I think you'd better call.*

Oh, shit. What's up now? Jimmy considers, lets go a sigh.
He nods with his head -- *come, join me.* Heading back to
address the old folks with Kim in tow:

JIMMY

Unfortunately, I'm told by my
associate that I'm needed for some
brief but pressing legal business.
I'm gonna go make one quick phone
call, and in the meantime... who
was it who wanted coffee?

(hands go back up)

This young lady is gonna get you
coffee. And maybe donuts. If we
have any left.

Kim frowns at him -- *fucking seriously?!* Turning his back to
the clients, Jimmy begs her with his eyes, silently mouthing
"Please?" He ducks around her and heads for his office,
closing the door behind him.

Kim looks to the old folks. The three who want coffee are
still holding up their hands. Mrs. DeShazo now raises hers,
as well.

MRS. DESHAZO

I want coffee. But I don't want
any cream.

Kim blinks and forces a smile. Off her, nodding patiently:

36 INT. WEXLER/MCGILL - JIMMY'S OFFICE - DAY

36

Jimmy's office is freshly painted, and his seven thousand-
dollar COCOBOLO DESK is here. But other than that and a few
sticks of Ikea furniture, the place is pretty bare.

Jimmy stands in the middle of his office, dialing his cell
phone. He holds it to his ear and listens to it ring. Then:

JIMMY

Hi, Jimmy McGill returning Howard's
call. Yeah.

(a beat; then)

Hey. So, what's up?

INTERCUT WITH:

37 INT. HHM - HAMLIN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 37

In his (much, much nicer) office, Hamlin also stands as he talks on his phone. He's anxious and upset -- and not taking his usual pains to hide his feelings.

HAMLIN

One question: are you behind this?

Jimmy frowns, confused.

JIMMY

Am I behind what?

Off Jimmy getting his answer, which we do not hear...

38 INT. WEXLER/MCGILL - RECEPTION AREA - DAY 38

Ten minutes later. CLOSE ON a DAVIS & MAIN MUG of black coffee being carefully set in Mrs. DeShazo's waiting hands.

WIDER. This is the last of four mismatched coffee mugs that Kim has delivered. Mrs. DeShazo peers at it, wary.

MRS. DESHAZO

No cream? I'm lactose-intolerant.

KIM

(the patience of Job)

Black. No cream.

In the meantime, Jimmy's office door swings open in b.g. Out he comes, barreling toward us. Distractedly managing a smile to his clients, he takes Kim aside.

JIMMY

Ms. Wexler, if I may..?

Back Jimmy and Kim go, to their spot across the lobby.

JIMMY

Chuck quit.

KIM

Quit what?

JIMMY

HHM. Quit the firm. Outta nowhere. Typed something up, had Ernie give it Howard. He just...
(a helpless shrug; then)

Howard's flipping out, blaming me. Which, I mean, who gives a shit?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

But I gotta find out what the hell
is going on. So...

Kim stares off into space, wondering at this. Jimmy leans
closer, getting her to re-focus on him.

JIMMY

Look, I will pay you back with
lifetime footrubs if you could just
cover for me here.

(indicates old folks)

Just take down their info, treat
'em nice..? Tell 'em I had a
family emergency?

He's already edging toward the front door. Kim absently
shakes her head, stopping him.

KIM

Jimmy. Wait.

Jimmy presses his hands together in desperate prayer.

JIMMY

Please, Kim -- help me out here.

KIM

It's not that. It's just --

JIMMY

What?

The old folks aren't the issue for her. Kim tries to put it
into words. She's got some feeling, some sixth sense, that
maybe Jimmy shouldn't talk to Chuck right now.

But that's all it is -- a feeling. With Jimmy staring at her
and the clock ticking, she finally shrugs and gives in.

JIMMY

We good?

She reluctantly nods.

KIM

Good. Go.

He smiles gratefully, then he's out the door and gone.

Off Kim staring after him... troubled, but not sure why...

39

CONTINUED:

39

Again, Chuck turns on his heel and exits, leaving Jimmy to let himself in.

40

INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

40

Jimmy shuts the door behind him and enters the kitchen. Chuck is already out of sight. Jimmy follows after him.

JIMMY

It's not right, me not having a key to this place! Now, what's all this about you... quitting...

Jimmy trails off upon reaching the entrance to the great room. Normally, it's a straight shot through the open pocket doors -- but now, the threshold has been covered with MYLAR. We can't see inside.

Jimmy squints at this, confused.

JIMMY

Chuck..?

No answer. Jimmy reaches out a hand and discovers there's a gap in the middle. He steps through the Mylar like a curtain and finds himself inside...

41

INT. CHUCK'S HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

41

... A space that's been TRANSFORMED. The walls, floor and ceiling are almost completely covered in SHINY SILVER.

Jimmy stands motionless, blinking and staring and looking all around, wide-eyed. He is wondering, as are we...

... What the FUCK is going on in here?!

There are more space blankets on display than REI sells in a year. There's also Reynolds Wrap and AtticFoil and every other type and texture of aluminum insulation known to man. It's all held in place with duct tape and staples (and it all needs to be as WRINKLY as possible, so as not to make our set into one gigantic, crew-reflecting MIRROR).

The whole thing looks like some crazy wrapping project thought up by the artist Christo. For what it's worth, this is neat and exacting work, and kinda fascinating to behold.

But it's not yet complete. Chuck is here working on the wall of French doors into the backyard. And until he finishes, there'll be plenty of sun for lighting.

(CONTINUED)

Having drunk this place in with his eyes, Jimmy finally finds his voice. Becoming a cautious master of understatement:

JIMMY

So. Chuck. What's up?

Chuck says nothing, keeps his focus on his work. SK-KKKKREK! He tears loose a couple feet of duct tape and sticks it in place. Jimmy eases closer, hands in his pockets, keeping things as light and breezy as can be.

JIMMY

Got a little, uh... got a little project going on? Something you maybe wanna tell me about?

(off Chuck's silence)

Chuck, whaddya say? Clue me in.

SK-KKKKREK! More tape. Finally Chuck speaks, half to himself, still not looking at his brother.

CHUCK

These walls are plaster and lath -- completely invisible to the radio spectrum. No protection at all. Might as well be standing in the middle of a pasture. I don't know what I was thinking. Shoulda done this from the start.

JIMMY

Done... this? With the..?

(points around)

No, I think these walls are pretty solid, Chuck. I think they're --

CHUCK

-- What I need is a proper Faraday cage. That's what I need.

JIMMY

No, I think we need to sit down.

Jimmy takes Chuck by the elbow -- but Chuck pulls loose from his grip and picks up a staple gun. KA-CHUNK! KA-CHUNK! He fixes the Mylar to the wood of a French door.

JIMMY

Let's take a break, Buddy. Please?

CHUCK

Don't patronize me, Jimmy. I'm not crazy. I'm just exhausted.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY

I know, I get it! So, how 'bout we take a break? Five minutes. And then, you know, right back at it.

Chuck sighs. Taking the path of least resistance, he reluctantly trods over to the couch, plopping down onto it.

Jimmy joins Chuck. If it isn't readily apparent, know that Jimmy is scared shitless for his brother's mental health. This shiny silver room concerns him profoundly. Unsure exactly how to proceed, he eases into it.

JIMMY

Howard tells me you quit HHM.

CHUCK

I didn't quit, I retired.

JIMMY

Yeah? That's not how it sounded. But you know, regardless. It's kinda... outta the blue. And he's worried about you.

CHUCK

(barely audible)
He should be relieved.

JIMMY

What? Why would he be relieved? You're his Number One Guy. Without you, that whole place goes down the drain.

Chuck gives a bitter snort and a shake of his head -- *yeah, right*. He's in some private hell of his own making, not looking at Jimmy. Not answering.

JIMMY

So, you retired? Not just from HHM, but the law?
(Chuck grudgingly nods)
I don't think that's a good idea, Chuck. The law..? It needs you.

CHUCK

Ugh. Just stop it.

JIMMY

And you need it. What brought this on, exactly? Chuck..?

(CONTINUED)

No answer. Chuck stares off at the wall. Jimmy takes a risk now, leaning in and quietly pressing.

JIMMY

'Cause I don't know what you are if you're not a lawyer.

Wow, that did it. After a moment, Chuck's eyes begin to moisten.

Indeed, they both know Jimmy is right: the law is Chuck's entire life. To end one is to end both. Nonetheless, Chuck works hard to keep the lid on his emotions. He has no desire to put them on display.

JIMMY

So, where's this coming from?
(then; forcing a smile)
How you gonna retire before you get me disbarred? Before you run me outta town on a rail..? Huh? I'll be the only McGill carrying on the family name. Can't have that.

Chuck lets out a ragged sigh. Jimmy is getting to him. Slowly, his cork is inching its way out of the bottle.

JIMMY

Seriously, is this because you lost Mesa Verde?

(senses he's getting close)

So what? Who cares?! And hey, if you truly do think I rat-fucked you on that thing -- which I didn't, but whatever -- then get mad about it! Take action! Don't just hide out in your Faraday-whatever, your... cage thing here.

(off silent Chuck)

I'm sorry, but no retirement for you. At age ninety-nine, you drop dead giving closing arguments to the JudgeBot 3000 -- which will run on electricity, by the way. That's your future. So --

CHUCK

-- I can't do the job anymore.

JIMMY

Whaddya mean? 'Course you can do the job.

(CONTINUED)

Chuck shakes his head no. Softly, his voice cracking:

CHUCK
I made a mistake.

Holy shit. What did the great Charles L. McGill just say..?

JIMMY
What mistake?

CHUCK
A simple, nothing little bank address. 1216 instead of 1261. I screwed it up, I hurt the client. I-I blew it! Completely. Utterly. And then I blamed it on you.

Tears are coming now. Chuck's unshakeable confidence in himself has been obliterated. And Jimmy is stunned beyond words to see his big brother like this.

CHUCK
It's this, it's this-this... goddamned... electricity! It has worn me down, worn down my faculties. My brain, my mind, it used to be...
(thumping his forehead)
It all used to work. And now it doesn't. And people got hurt.
(the depths of misery)
Because of me. Time to end it.

Silence for a beat or two. Maybe just the faint CRINKLE of Mylar in the breeze. Proud Chuck has fought hard not to reveal his shameful weakness. Yet here it is.

Yes, Jimmy is stunned... and overwhelmed with guilt. So much so that he can't help himself. Quietly:

JIMMY
What if I told you...
(starts over; stronger)
What if I told you you didn't make a mistake..?

CHUCK
For Christ's sake, Jimmy, stop humoring me. Stop trying to talk everything right.

JIMMY
I rat-fucked you. I did. I woulda made Nixon proud.

(CONTINUED)

Jimmy shrugs, nods -- *That's the truth. There it is.*

JIMMY

I changed the 1261 to 1216, it was me. The entire thing went down exactly like you said.

(snorts in annoyance)

Exactly like you said. I doctored the copies, I paid the kid at the shop so he'd lie for me. It's insane how you got every last detail right. So you can relax, 'cause that brain of yours is chugging along at, like, one thousand percent efficiency.

(mildly disgusted)

It's practically supernatural.

For Jimmy, this admission is like vomiting up a fifth of Jack Daniels. Coming out, it's unpleasant as hell -- but he feels much, much better afterwards.

Now it's Chuck's turn to stare in stunned disbelief. A beat.

CHUCK

You're telling me the truth?
You're not just saying this to, to,
to make me feel better..?

JIMMY

I am saying it to make you feel better. I sure as shit wouldn't be saying it otherwise.

(then; nods)

But yes. It's the truth.

Chuck gazes upon Jimmy, examining him like an entomologist might study an insect.

CHUCK

You'd go to such lengths to humiliate me?

His sin confessed and his guilt subsiding, Jimmy's ire rises.

JIMMY

I did it for Kim! She worked her butt off getting Mesa Verde in the first place. While you and Howard were sitting around drinking scotch and chortling -- or whatever it is you do. Hamlin Hamlin McGill? More like Scrooge and Marley!

(then)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Kim deserves Mesa Verde -- not you.
Not HHM. She earned it. And she
needs it.

Defending his ladylove has really gotten Jimmy's Irish up.
So much so that he hears the anger and resentment in his own
voice and works to tone it down a little. Softer now...

JIMMY

I wanted to help her. But I
honestly didn't think it'd hurt you
so bad. I just thought...

(he shrugs)

I thought you'd say to yourself,
"Oh crap, I made a mistake." And
then you'd go on with your life.
Like any normal human being. But
oh, no! Wishful thinking!

The last of that anger trickles out of Jimmy. He lets out a
long sigh, scratches absently at his neck and stares off into
space.

JIMMY

So, can I tell Howard you're not
quitting, retiring, whatever? And
then can we take all this shit down
off the walls?

Chuck considers... nods yes. Jimmy heads for the kitchen.

JIMMY

I'll go call him.

CHUCK

Jimmy.

Jimmy stops at the Mylar curtain, turns back.

CHUCK

(quiet and even)
You do realize you just confessed
to a felony.

Jimmy sighs again, tiredly.

JIMMY

Yeah. I guess.
(brightening)
But you feel better, don't you?

Chuck offers a grudging little nod. Jimmy gropes for the gap
in the Mylar curtain, fumbling his way through the stupid
thing. Halfway into the kitchen, he once again turns back.

(CONTINUED)

JIMMY

Besides... it's your word against mine.

With that, he gives Chuck a "go fuck yourself" smirk and disappears. We hear the mud room door open and close as Jimmy heads outside to use his cell phone.

Chuck sits motionless, staring after Jimmy for a moment. Boy, all in all, he really seems to be taking Jimmy's confession pretty well. Is that because Chuck's faith in his own faculties has been restored?

Or is there another reason..?

Chuck rises to his feet. He reaches deep into the cushions of his couch and retrieves... his familiar pair of SALAD TONGS. What the heck were they doing in there?

Tongs in hand, Chuck turns to a pile of aluminum insulation. It's a loose stack of the stuff he's been using on the walls, situated near where Jimmy was sitting and talking. It's been here in plain sight this entire time.

Reaching with his tongs, Chuck eases aside the top layer of insulation, revealing...

... A TAPE RECORDER! We may recognize it from ep. 108 -- when a younger, healthier Chuck used it in his office at HHM. This must be the item Chuck retrieved from his dusty garage.

CLOSE ON the machine's capstan wheels slowly TURNING. The "record" light GLOWS RED. A corded MICROPHONE is propped where it can catch every last spoken word.

Chuck stares down at this rig with deepening satisfaction. And now it begins to dawn on us...

HO... LEE... SHIT. This entire thing was a set-up! Chuck quitting HHM and papering his great room with Mylar? It was all one enormous, complex SCAM!

Jimmy McGill, confidence man extraordinaire, has just been owned by his proudly straight-arrow brother! Chuck's tears, his shaken confidence in himself? It was play-acting, designed to take advantage of Jimmy's soft heart -- which Chuck saw on display during his trip home from the hospital.

Laurence Olivier couldn't have done it any better.

And man-oh-man, what does all this mean for Jimmy's future? What happens when the authorities hear that tape..?

(CONTINUED)

BETTER CALL SAUL #210 "Klick" WGA AWARDS 10/20/15 63.
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Guess we'll have to wait till season three for answers.
Because now, with a press of Chuck's tongs...

... The tape recorder SHUTS OFF. And thus ends SEASON TWO.

END EPISODE

