

INT. SAL'S BAR - NIGHT

Matt stares at Jason who sits in a booth across the room, a chess board set up in front of him. He gestures to the empty seat across from him.

Matt walks toward him, his hand rests on the handle of his 9mm, tucked under his shirt.

JASON

Do you play chess?

Matt surveys the room. Sal and the several old men in the bar are staring. Jason spins the chess board. It startles Matt who whips around, hand on pistol.

The white pieces are now in front of him.

JASON (cont'd) (CONT'D)

I'll let you make the first move.

Matt sits, not taking his eyes off Jason. He slips the gun out of his pants, holds it under the table. He draws back the hammer with a CLICK. Jason glances down.

MATT

Why here?

JASON

It's your turn you know.

MATT

Answer my Goddamned question.

JASON

Fine, I'll go first.

Jason spins the board back around. Moves a pawn. Underneath the table, Jason slips a ring on his finger. He removes a cap revealing the tiny needle.

JASON (CONT'D)

The key to this game Matthew, is to evaluate the material strengths of your opponent... and plan accordingly.

MATT

Let's cut the bullshit, Jason. I know you didn't get me here for a game of chess...

Matt looks around.

MATT (cont'd) (CONT'D)

And I'm not quite sure how you're planning on killing me in front of all these people.

JASON

Matthew don't you get it? You and I are the same.

MATT

I'm nothing like you.

JASON

You're exactly like me. You and I both have strong prajna... insight into the emptiness of reality.

MATT

You don't know anything about me.

Jason leans in toward Matt.

JASON

I know everything about you.

MATT

If you know so much, than why murder so many innocent people?

JASON

This isn't about them Matthew.

Matt is stunned by this.

MATT

It's not about them? They're dead because of you.

JASON

Is that what you think?

Matt places his free hand on the table. Jason glances at it. He turns the ring so the needle points down.

MATT

Is that what I think? You sit here showering me with this philosophical bullshit, while you're nothing more than a barbaric killer.

Jason finds this amusing.

JASON

Barbaric? No, I don't think so. That means marked by lack of restraint. If that were that case, you'd already be dead.

MATT

Is that so? Well what's stopping you?

JASON

I don't wish you dead Matthew.

MATT

Is that right? Than why try to kill me?

JASON

Because someone else does.

Matt takes this in.

MATT

So that's it? You just do what someone else says?

JASON

We're both playing the same game Matthew. We just see the rules differently.

MATT

Rules? What rules? You have your own will don't you?

JASON

Yes, Matthew I do. But my will has nothing to do with this.

Matt is baffled.

MATT

Well, how does it work then? Your rules... Because the way I see it, you're trying to kill me, so you want me dead. At least have the balls to admit it.

JASON

That's not true.

MATT

Of course it is. You also wanted Gordon, Julie, Jim and everyone else you murdered... dead.

Jason places his hand with the ring on the table, waiting for his opportunity to strike.

JASON

You don't understand what you're talking about Matthew.

MATT

No, I think I understand perfectly. You're a coward hiding behind some sort of existentialist bullshit that if someone pays you to kill....You, in that sick mind of yours are no longer responsible. Your victims cease to exist as human beings...

JASON

Okay, Matthew enough-

MATT

...People with feelings and emotions and families. Once you're paid, they become non-human, objects, targets. Right Jason-

Several of the older men in the bar, notice the commotion.

JASON

I'm not going to say it again Matthew-

Matt grips his gun. Sal looks over. Jason waits for his opportunity.

MATT

I think you enjoy it Jason. I think you enjoy killing. That's why you do it.

JASON

Lower your voice.

Matt sees that Jason is flustered. Pushes ahead.

MATT

You just can't accept that, can you?

JASON

I said enough!

Sal walks over.

SAL

Everything all right here?

JASON

It's fine.

Jason looks from Sal to Matt, but he is already out the door.

EXT. SAL'S BAR - NIGHT

Jason bursts through the door of the bar into the pouring rain to see Matt five yards away, his gun aimed at Jason.

Jason is pleased with the situation. The two yell to be heard over the rain.

MATT

What the fuck are you grinning at?

Jason raises his arms in stigmata-like fashion. The ring still on his finger.

JASON

You're the one that needs to accept it Matthew.

MATT

Accept what?

JASON

Your fate. Pull the trigger Matthew. You can end it all right here. Right now.

Matt braces the pistol with his other hand.

JASON (cont'd) (CONT'D)

You don't have a choice. It's who you really are. You have to do it... It's quite simple actually. If you pull the trigger, you will have accepted your enlightenment. Your loss to your demons.

Jason starts walking toward Matt, hands in the air.

JASON (cont'd) (CONT'D)

If you don't pull the trigger, I will hunt you down. And next time, I will not exercise such restraint. So you have a choice...

Matt stares at him, gun pointed. Jason closes in.

MATT

Don't come any closer.

JASON

You're running out of time. Make a choice. It's not just about you anymore Matthew...

Jason gets closer.

MATT

I said don't come any closer. What are you talking about?

JASON

You're trying to fight the inevitable.

MATT

Stop Jason, I mean it!

JASON

You didn't mention you had a fiancée-

Jason Lunges!

Matt fires! BOOM! Hits Jason in the arm.

Jason recoils. Matt stunned at his own action, darts down the street.

Jason aims his pistol. Fires. SNAP! SNAP! SNAP!

Matt ducks down an alley. Jason runs to his car.