

FADE IN:

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Lights flicker in a stark, metal elevator.

A young man, AUGUST, and a middle-aged woman, MARCH, stand next to one another in the elevator. Their monochrome, smart-casual attire perfectly matches the elevator's décor.

The WHINE from the elevator's light fills August's ears. March is talking, but her words are drowned out by the whine.

August's hand shakes at his side. He closes his eyes.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

An older man in purple dressing gown lies impaled on a large, black, spiked fence on a deserted city street.

A bloody note nailed to his stomach reads 'MURDERER'.

MARCH (O.S.)

August?

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

August opens his eyes.

March has her hand on August's arm. She looks down at August's shaking hand as he quickly balls it into a fist.

MARCH

Are you okay? I know you wanted in on this, but if you're not ready, I can get someone else.

AUGUST

No, I'm fine.

She looks at his face. It's pale and beads of sweat are collecting around his hairline.

MARCH

You sure?

AUGUST

Yeah.

He smiles meekly at March.

Faint BASSY MUSIC grows as they descend.

March rolls her eyes.

MARCH
(under her breath)
Fucking November.

The elevator JUDDERS to a stop, letting out a DING.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

The elevator doors open and the pair are immediately recoil at DEAFENING MUSIC.

March leaves the elevator first, her calls drowned out by the music. She holds a toolbox in one hand and a file under her arm.

August emerges from the elevator into a dark interrogation room. A bright light is focused on the middle of the room. Beneath it, a middle-aged man sits with his eyes shut, his arms tied individually above his head. This is THE SHRIKE. An empty table and chair are opposite him. Beside the table are two large speakers.

A plume of smoke dances into the light, drawing August's attention to the side of the room. There, a figure stands, cloaked in shadow. He's NOVEMBER, a 30-something male in similar monochrome clothes, but wearing an apron. He appears to be staring right at The Shrike. The yellow glow of his cigarette flares up, lighting the features on his face momentarily.

March marches over to a large stereo on a countertop near November and FLICKS the music off. November turns to her, taking protective ear gear off his head, and putting his cigarette out.

NOVEMBER
Hey.

MARCH
Anything?

NOVEMBER
Nope.

March nods, placing the toolbox on the nearby countertop. She walks up to the table and takes a seat.

She turns to August, who's still stood near the elevator. She motions for him to come closer.

As he does, she turns back to The Shrike. His eyes remain shut.

She places the file on the table.

MARCH
Look at me, Stuart.

The Shrike opens his eyes. His gaze flicks from March to November and back to March. He doesn't even look at August.

MARCH (CONT'D)
Stuart Cartwright. History teacher.
Not as ominous as 'The Shrike', is
it?

The Shrike SMIRKS, his eyes fall on the file.

MARCH (CONT'D)
Why did you do it?

A beat. The cogs turn in The Shrike's mind.

THE SHRIKE
Well, I wanted to blow up
parliament, didn't I? But you saw
to that.

He flashes a sarcastic smile at her. March's gaze doesn't leave The Shrike. Her face completely still.

MARCH
What's your next target and who is
the deliverer?

The Shrike shakes his head, looking down at the file.

MARCH (CONT'D)
What's your next target? Who is the
deliverer?

He doesn't even react.

She looks over her shoulder and motions to November. He places a thick glove over his left hand, opens the toolbox, and takes out a pair of pliers.

The Shrike glances at November, straightens himself, and takes a DEEP BREATH.

November walks over to The Shrike, forcing his left hand into his mouth. The Shrike tries to bite his fingers off but the glove is too thick.

November grasps his jaw in his gloved hand, grabs hold of one of The Shrike's back teeth with the pliers, and pulls it out with SICKLY SNAP.

The Shrike tries to contain a SCREAM, forcing his lips shut. He BREATHEs QUICKLY through his nose.

November places the tooth on the table and walks back to the countertop.

MARCH (CONT'D)

You think keeping your mouth shut makes you safe? Understand you'll live every moment of your life in this room in utter terror. We won't let you die, but every time those doors open you'll wish you were dead. You'll scream out and no-one will hear you. Bit by bit we'll pick and pull you apart. What is the next target, and who is the deliverer?

The Shrike SPITS blood out onto the file.

THE SHRIKE

It doesn't matter. Telling you one won't stop the rest. There's thousands of us, now. You can't stop this.

MARCH

The next target. What is it? Who's the deliverer?

The Shrike LAUGHS, COUGHING UP more blood.

THE SHRIKE

I've seen the camps, the piled corpses, the bodies in the Thames. But you didn't get all of us.

March leans forward in her chair.

MARCH

You think impaling people on spikes makes you any better?

The Shrike smirks.

THE SHRIKE

Every one of those fucking vultures deserved to die. Pocketing every penny while the people waste away.

March turns to November.

MARCH

Nails.

THE SHRIKE

Passing laws that fuck us to
protect them. Corporate interest.
Sending our children to fight their
wars.

November takes two nails and a hammer from the toolbox. The Shrike raises his voice.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

You think you're on the right side
of this?

MARCH

August, hold his hand on the table.

THE SHRIKE

August? You don't even know each
other's names, do you? You're
fucking drones. Puppets.

August walks behind The Shrike, untying one of his hands. November approaches the table.

MARCH

Where is the next target? Who is
the deliverer?

THE SHRIKE

You'll die like the rest of them.

August places The Shrike's hand on the table. Finally their gaze meets. The Shrike's eyes intense.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

Killing our families? Taking
everything from us?

August looks away. The Shrike doesn't struggle.

November places the nail over The Shrike's hand. The Shrike looks back at March.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

You're nothing!

November swings the hammer down on the nail, PIERCING The Shrike's hand.

The Shrike SCREAMS. Moments later, he rocks back and forward in pain, his eyes clasped shut.

MARCH
Where is the next target? Who is
the deliverer?

The Shrike is despondent.

MARCH (CONT'D)
Where is the next target? Who is
the deliverer?

March looks at August, who's wide eyes haven't left The Shrike's hand.

MARCH (CONT'D)
And the other hand.

August is transfixed on The Shrike's pierced hand.

MARCH (CONT'D)
August?

August nods, untying The Shrike's other hand and placing it on the table.

The Shrike LAUGHS nervously.

MARCH (CONT'D)
Where is the next target? Who is
the deliverer?

The Shrike ignores her, BREATHING deeply.

March motions to November, who walks around the table to the other hand.

MARCH (CONT'D)
It's not going to stop. Not until
you tell me. What is the next
target? Who is the deliverer?

November places the nail on the back of The Shrike's hand, raises the hammer and SLAMS it down.

The Shrike again tries to hold his pain through clenched teeth, but eventually SCREAMS, hanging his head.

November puts the claw of the hammer in The Shrike's mouth and holds his head up to face March.

March waves him off. He takes the hammer out and approaches the countertop. The Shrike's head sinks down again.

MARCH (CONT'D)
You need to tell me--

THE SHRIKE
How do you sleep at night?

March's stoic gaze is unfazed.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)
What does your wife...or your two
boys think...of what you do.

March's frozen face cracks a little.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)
Have they had dinner already? Or
are they all tucked up in bed...at
41 Barnsbury Avenue...

March's eye's widen, her stern visage completely broken.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)
I've lost track of time.

March stands up, pushing the chair out from under her with a
SCREECH.

MARCH
What...

THE SHRIKE
I think...

She pulls a pistol from beneath her jacket.

MARCH
What did you...

THE SHRIKE
Now you'll understand.

March reaches over and grabs The Shrike by his hair. Pulling
his head up, she forces the pistol barrel into his mouth,
CRACKING his teeth.

MARCH
What have you done!

The Shrike GAGS on the gun barrel.

NOVEMBER
March, not yet! We need the name
and location.

MARCH

Tell me what you've done!

NOVEMBER

March!

She pulls the gun barrel out of The Shrike's mouth as she turns to November.

MARCH

They're my fucking family! He's got
my fucking-

The Shrike HEAVES his nailed hand out of the table - the nail stuck inside.

March turns back towards The Shrike as he PLUNGES his nailed hand into her face.

A beat. The world stops as the realisation hits March.

She SCREAMS, dropping the gun.

The Shrike pulls his hand out and plunges it back into her face. Blood sprays onto his face.

NOVEMBER

March!

Again and again he stabs her face. November runs over to her, wrestling her away from The Shrike's hand. She falls to the floor.

November tries to restrain The Shrike, forcing him down onto the table and repeatedly SLAMMING his head onto the surface.

BANG!

A bullet SMACKS the back of November's head. He slumps down over The Shrike before toppling to the floor.

March lies almost foetal, SOBBING and SPLUTTERING through blood.

August holds the pistol up, his hands shaking.

The Shrike raises his head, blood running from his nose and a cut on his forehead. He's clearly dizzy.

THE SHRIKE

Help me get...these out.

August goes over to The Shrike and, one by one, he pulls the nails out.

The Shrike GASPS each time, before steadying himself and standing up, putting his hand on August's shoulder.

INT. CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The Shrike and August are sitting in a car at night. The Shrike's hand is on August's shoulder.

August nods, getting out of the car and SHUTTING the door.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

August looks at The Shrike.

AUGUST
You good?

The Shrike SMIRKS, COUGHING.

THE SHRIKE
Yeah.

March SQUIRMS, drawing The Shrike's gaze.

He slides the pistol over to August.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)
Kill her.

INT. FLAT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

A KNOCK on an opulent front door. A MAN in a purple robe answers. August is on the other side.

The purple-robed man looks August up and down, nodding. He leaves the door open and walks away. August follows, shutting the door.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

August takes the pistol off the table, aiming it at March.

MARCH
(pained)
August...please...

He hesitates.

THE SHRIKE
Come on.

INT. FLAT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The purple-robed man lies bloody on the floor of his apartment. August drives the sign into this stomach with a nail.

THE SHRIKE (O.S.)

Hey!

The purple-robed man crashes through a large window, falling through the night sky. Glass trails in his wake.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

The Shrike grabs the pistol from August.

BANG! BANG!

He shoots March twice in the back, her head slumping to the floor.

The Shrike hands August back the pistol.

THE SHRIKE

We embedded you for too long. Get *them* out of your head.

The Shrike stumbles past August to check the bodies of the two agents.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

Never forget that they drowned your family.

He turns to August.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

Just like mine.

August nods.

THE SHRIKE (CONT'D)

Right. Now, you've got to get me out of here.

FADE TO BLACK.