

This is TOM.

BZZZZZ. His cellphone VIBRATES across the DASH. Tom picks it up, looks at the WORD on his TEXT DISPLAY -- "Incoming."

Now, he looks up through the WINDSHIELD as ANOTHER CAR pulls into the station. STOPS thirty yards away. FLASHES THE BRIGHTS. Tom FLICKS the KNOB, FLASHES BACK. And then --

The passenger door of the other car opens and out hops a MAN. Tom leans over and opens the door as the guy hops in, SOAKED. Late fifties. Despite the weather, he wears SUNGLASSES and a baseball hat. His name is WITTEN and he seems very PUT OUT --

WITTEN

Jesus... How many more cars am I going to have to get in and out of?

TOM

This is it, Congressman. Uh... Is it cool if I call you that?

WITTEN

I don't give a shit what you call me. Just drive, kid.

Tom isn't bothered by this asshole... almost as if he's dealt with this many, many times --

TOM

You have something for me?

Witten shakes his head, unzips his jacket pocket. Pulls out a THICK ENVELOPE. Hands it to Tom, who takes a peek inside -- It's FILLED WITH HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

TOM

Cool. Thanks. Would you mind giving me your phone, please?

WITTEN

Why?

TOM

Because that's how it works.

Witten, PERTURBED, reaches into his inside pocket and extracts his BLACKBERRY. Tom takes it, slides off the casing, expertly pops the SIM CARD OUT --

TOM

I promise you'll get it back once you've talked to him.

"Him?" Who the fuck is HIM? Tom drops the cell into a plastic BAGGIE which he places in the glovebox, takes out a folded BLACK BANDANA --

TOM  
You mind?  
(off Witten's look)  
It's a blindfold.

WITTEN  
Are you fucking serious?

Tom just SMILES. No response necessary. And we CUT TO:

INT. VAN - DRIVING - LATER

THE WIPERS streak back and forth as Tom and the BLINDFOLDED WITTEN drive down a COUNTRY ROAD. Hou Reed ENDS... Tom ejects a cassette, FLIPS it over to the B-side. Hits PLAY.

WITTEN  
Is that a cassette player?

TOM  
Yeah... Old school.

WITTEN  
Old school sounds like shit.

Tom smiles, amused by this guy. Drives on. A few beats.

WITTEN  
How long have you worked for him?

TOM  
Couple years.

WITTEN  
You in college?

TOM  
I was. Not anymore.

WITTEN  
Why not?

A QUICK AND JARRING JUMPCUT -- THREE SECONDS LONG

*We are looking at a SNOW-COVERED QUAD -- New England Campus -- all through a FROSTY WINDOWPANE -- And suddenly -- A BODY FALLS PAST IT -- Then ANOTHER, arms FLAILING as they DROP --*

Tom blinks.

TOM  
I didn't see the point.

WITTEN  
Your folks must be so proud.

Tom shakes his head. Knows what's going on here. SIGHS --

TOM  
Y'know, Mr. Witten... just because  
you're scared, that doesn't mean  
you have to be a dick.

WITTEN  
Maybe I'm a dick because I'm being  
treated like a Sixty Minutes  
Reporter going to meet the Aya-  
Goddamn-Tollah.

Tom just drives. Calm. Then --

TOM  
You're gonna forget you ever felt  
this way.

WITTEN  
Felt... what way?

TOM  
Burdened.

A BEAT. Yes. That's exactly right. Witten absorbs it.

WITTEN  
You say that to everyone you drive?

TOM  
Nops. Sometimes I say "Abandoned."

Witten shakes his head. Likes this kid. Now. Softly --

WITTEN  
Wayne... he's the real deal?

WAYNE. Well THAT'S someone we can't wait to meet. As for  
Tom? His smile returns. Absolutely confident --

TOM  
He's as real as it gets.

Huh. All right then. And as they drive on, we CUT TO: