

TRAFFIC

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EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Cars drive past a large sixteen-wheel semi truck.

INT. JAMES' SEMI - DAY

JAMES ACKER, 30s, gruff, drives while he munches a pretzel. He gets cut off and scowls.

JAMES

Oh, come on. Asshole.

James finishes his pretzel and tosses the wrapper onto the passenger seat, where it bounces to the floor.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I swear, that's like the third time today.

He continues to drive.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

James drives more and gets cut off again.

INT. JAMES' SEMI - DAY

James snarls, outraged.

JAMES

Damn it! That's it. Next one's really gonna regret it.

He reaches to turn the radio on. A rock song begins, but another car zooms in front of him, denying him a turn.

James turns red-faced.

JAMES (CONT'D)

What-- Okay, you asked for it, jackass!

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Another car comes up besides him and tries to cut in front. Instead, James sharply turns his own vehicle toward it.

The car and truck collide, the former bounces off into another.

A domino effect is achieved as more and more cars slam into each other.

INT. JAMES' SEMI - DAY

James panics and holds onto the steering wheel.

JAMES

Oh shit!

Everything goes black.

EXT. HIGHWAY PILEUP - DAY

It's a mess. Smashed cars choke the highway.

James' truck is upside down.

James crawls out, dazed, and stands up, sporting cuts and scrapes.

JAMES

Damn-- h-holy--

He holds his head.

ALEX (O.S.)

You! You're responsible for this!

James turns to see ALEX, 28, handsome, police officer. Alex glares at James.

ALEX (CONT'D)

I saw your truck slam into them!

James shakes his head.

JAMES

The hell are you talking about?

ALEX

Hands up, you're under arrest!

James goes wide-eyed and dashes off instead.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Hey! Get back here, criminal!

James ignores him and runs down the wrecked highway in a full sprint.

Alex moves after him.

James attempts to lose Alex through the sea of wrecked cars. He jumps over a roof, narrowly avoids slamming into open doors, and avoids injured people in his way.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Damn, this guy's persistent.

Alex keeps moving while pulling out a radio and turning it on.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
All officers in the area, I have a suspect evading arrest on the highway! I need backup in catching this guy!

James looks back to see Alex coming after him. He looks forward to see the way becoming easier to traverse.

JAMES  
I'm not letting them take me. No matter what.

James pours on the speed.

ALEX  
I repeat, all officers in the area, you are ordered to hunt down the suspect! Use of force is authorized!

Alex shuts off his radio and puts it away before resuming the chase.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
You can't run forever, criminal. Sooner or later, I'll get you and make you pay for hurting all those people.

EXT. JUNCTION BRIDGE - DAY

James starts to slow down as he reaches the junction. He glances back again to see Alex following still.

He looks forward again to see police cars up ahead, forming a blockade.

JAMES

Crap.

He looks around for an escape route. Running over to the side of the bridge, he looks over the edge and sees solid ground below.

ALEX (O.S.)

Suspect is cornered! Maintain your position!

James sighs, before quickly hopping over the side of the bridge. He hangs over it, before releasing his grip and dropping down.

Alex rushes over to where James jumped, and sputters.

ALEX (CONT'D)

What the hell? The suspect just jumped!

EXT. UNDER THE JUNCTION - DAY

James lands on the grass and dirt beneath, and grunts loudly as he tumbles over in a heap.

He struggles to his feet and winces, looking down to see his ankle twisted from the fall.

JAMES

Okay, that was a bad idea.

He looks up to see Alex and other police officers staring down in disbelief.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Just gotta keep moving. Keep going. Can't stop.

James hobbles away as fast as he can.

EXT. JUNCTION BRIDGE - DAY

Alex runs a hand over his face and sighs while his fellow policemen converse behind him.

ALEX

Good God. Surprised he didn't kill himself.

He feels a tap on his shoulder, and turns to see a RECRUIT, nervous young adult, standing there.

RECRUIT

Uh, Sergeant Hammond, sir, I dunno if we can catch the perp now.

Alex frowns and looks away, a hand on his chin. He has a serious and thoughtful expression.

EXT. UNDER THE JUNCTION - DAY

James hobbles along, wincing and swearing quietly. He tries to fight through the pain.

He notices what looks like a field of trees in the distance.

JAMES

Trees. I can probably lose those guys in there. Just gotta get there first.

James stays on the move, gritting his teeth.

EXT. JUNCTION BRIDGE - DAY

Alex suddenly grins as he gets an idea. He turns to the recruit.

ALEX

I know this place better than he does. He's likely to try and hide in the forest. We can beat him there.

RECRUIT

Really? Does that mean we'll be able to get him for real?

Alex nods.

ALEX

Yeah. I'll definitely make sure he pays.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

James stumbles into the forest, grunting with every step.

JAMES

Ugh, shit. This wouldn't have happened if-- ugh, those assholes cut me off all the time.

He avoids tripping over a piece of rock on the ground, and groans, wiping sweat off his forehead.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Best to hide somewhere. Hope they go away. Maybe I can actually make a plan, then. Heh.

James walks on.

EXT. FOREST ENTRANCE - DAY

Alex approaches the trees, with other police officers flanking him. He turns toward them.

ALEX

Remember, this guy is injured, but he's still responsible for that death and destruction. Use your tasers if absolutely needed.

A chorus of "yes sir" is given.

Alex smiles wide.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Good. Let's get this monster.

He turns towards the forest.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Fan out and search the place! I want him alive!

Alex heads inside with officers in tow, beginning the search for James.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

James pants and groans in pain, tired. He's made it this far, but he's running out of energy.

JAMES

Damn-- Just-- Gotta keep moving.  
Can't stop.

His foot catches on a fallen branch, and he falls down a steep hill into a clearing.

EXT. FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

James tumbles down, landing in a battered heap. He gets up and hisses in pain.

He looks down to see that both of his ankles are twisted. He's also missing a shoe, the bruises on his ankle visible now. He's totally immobile.

JAMES

God damn it.

He struggles to crawl himself against a large rock, and rests himself against it.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Alex and the police continue their search. He mutters in frustration.

ALEX

He can't be far. Just have to keep  
looking.

He notices a shoe next to a steep hill, and stops to pick it up. It looks just like Alex's shoe.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Huh, didn't he wear one of these?

Alex looks to the side, seeing disturbed leaves and dirt, before seeing the clearing.

He spots Alex.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah. Can't run now, asshole.

He turns on his radio and speaks into it.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Sergeant Hammond to all officers,  
I've found the suspect. Fall in on  
my position, over.

Alex goes down the hill.

EXT. FOREST - CLEARING - DAY

James closes his eyes. He breathes quietly. He starts to drift off, but the sound of shouting wake him up.

He sighs.

JAMES  
So much for outrunning them.

Alex and other police officers surround him, all of them pointing tasers at James.

Alex steps forward, smirking.

ALEX  
Well, well, well. Looks like this  
chase ends for you, buddy.

He kneels before James, leaning in. James turns his head away, frowning.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Oh, what's the matter? Afraid of  
the police, are you?

JAMES  
Get bent.

Alex's smirk turns into a frown, and he punches James. Blood runs out of James' nose as he blinks his eyes, recoiling.

ALEX  
You know, I could kill you right  
now. Just put a bullet in your  
brain and leave you here without  
anyone knowing about you.

James stays silent, glaring defiantly.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Silent treatment, eh? Figures. Try  
to act all tough when you know  
you're screwed. It's cute.

James is still quiet. Alex stares at him, before sighing and standing. Alex faces his comrades.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Arrest this man and lock him in a cell.

James attempts to speak, but Alex interrupts him with another punch in the face.

Everything goes black again.

INT. POLICE STATION - HOLDING CELL - DAY

James wakes up to discover his new surroundings. He groans and holds his head, before sitting up in his cot.

JAMES  
God, what happened?

A clanging sound rings out, and he looks up. Alex stands before the bars of James' cell, grinning.

ALEX  
Look who's awake, mister silent treatment. Hope you enjoyed the nap my fist clocked you into.

James growls and stands up slowly, clenching his fists.

JAMES  
Let me out of here, bastard.

Alex laughs.

ALEX  
Nope! No can do, buddy. You're gonna be facing some real punishment after what you did. Believe me, it's gonna be great.

James rushes forward and attempts to grab Alex. Alex moves back out of his reach and wags a finger at him.

ALEX (CONT'D)  
Ah, ah, ah. You need to behave, mister. Like a good boy.

James grips the cell bar and snarls.

JAMES  
Fuck you.

ALEX

You're not my type.

Alex swings the keys to James' cell around in his hand, chuckling.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Hope you think long and hard about what you did, because it's all your fault. Ciao.

Alex walks away.

James sinks down onto his knees, staring down at the floor. He sighs.

JAMES

All my fault-- all my fault--

He looks at his scraped hands, letting out a heavy sigh.

Overcome with guilt, James hides his face in them, trembling.