

Kansas plates. Dean pops the trunk, and we catch a glimpse inside-- like Sam's suitcase, only much more so. Shotguns. Crucifixes. Chainsaws. God knows what else.

Dean roots around, before coming up with a faded LEATHER JOURNAL. Sam's both surprised and displeased to see it.

SAM

He left the book behind?

Dean nods, grim. We can tell-- this is a bad sign.

SAM

So tell me everything.

EXT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY - MAIN QUAD - NIGHT

CLOSE ON THE JOURNAL. The book is jammed with dense writing, yellowed obituaries. We see the FINAL entry-- a taped newspaper article, from the SANGER HERALD:

CENTENNIAL HIGHWAY: 4th DRIVER DISAPPEARANCE

DEAN

...it's this stretch of two-lane blacktop, just outside Sanger, California... few hours from here, actually. Anyway, these drivers. They just vanish. No bodies, no cars, nothing. It's like Interstate Bermuda Triangle.

Sam reads from the journal. As the two brothers walk through Stanford's main quad. Dark. Empty. Atmospheric stone arches, ornate libraries.

DEAN

Dad went to check it out last Monday, haven't heard from him since.

SAM

Why didn't you go with him?

DEAN

I was working my own trip. This voodoo thing, in New Orleans.

SAM

Dad let you go on a hunting trip by yourself?

DEAN

I am 26, dude.

SAM
 Not emotionally.
 (anyway--)
 It's only been a week. Maybe he's
 on radio silence.

DEAN
 You know him. Not for this long.

SAM
 So. What's your plan?

DEAN
 (taken aback)
Our plan is that we shag ass to
 Sanger, California and find Dad.

Sam's emotions bubble and roil beneath the surface. But for now, he keeps them to himself.

SAM
 Look, whatever's going on here, Dad
 can handle it. He eats this kind
 of thing with his Wheaties.

DEAN
 Um. What don't you understand? We
 have to find him. You have to help.

SAM
 ...why do you need my help?

DEAN
 He's your father. You're his son.
 What more do you need? We're
 supposed to be family here--

SAM
 News to me--

DEAN
No way you're bringing that up now.

SAM
 He tossed me out on my ass. And
 you practically locked the door
 behind me--

DEAN
 I seem to remember a few choice
 phrases coming out of your mouth
 that night--

SAM

--and I haven't heard word one from you guys in, what, a year? That sound like family to you?

Dean lays his cards out.

DEAN

You know. You're even more of a selfish, stuck-up, hair-gelled punk than I remember.

SAM

Oh. Am I?

DEAN

Yeah. I mean, I know things have been rocky lately, but still... he's Dad. And after everything he's done for you...

SAM

Everything he's done for me?!

DEAN

Yes--

SAM

All he's done for me, us, is set the land speed record for f'd up childhoods!

DEAN

Don't be overdramatic--

SAM

Dean. When I told him I was scared of the thing in my closet, he gave me a .45!

DEAN

Well, what was he supposed to do?

SAM

He was supposed to say-- ghost stories are just stories! He was supposed to say-- don't be afraid of the dark!

DEAN

But... you should be. You know what's out there in the dark. You should be friggin' terrified.

SAM

I know. But still...

DEAN

Sammy, should I be prepping for a point here anytime soon?

SAM

The point is... I never asked for it. The occult homework. And melting the silver into bullets. And the family roadtrips-- hunting down all those freaky-ass things. I never wanted any of it...

DEAN

You can't pick your family.

SAM

No, but I can live my own life. And all our gory dysfunction-- I buried it, man, I swore I was done with it. For good.

DEAN

You know as well as I do. Nothing stays buried.

Beat. Sam wills himself to believe--

SAM

Look. Dad'll be okay. He'll be home in a few days. You'll see.

DEAN

He's in real trouble, if he's not dead already. I can feel it, and I know you can too.

(then)

So the only question is: you coming with me or not?

||
OFF Sam, torn and conflicted--

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jessica sits on the bed. Waiting for Sam. When he enters. And begins to throw clothes into a backpack.

JESSICA

Everything alright?