

LEVINE
What happened?

TALBOTT
I thought for sure my wife was
cheating on me

Start

FLASHBACK

EXT. TALBOTT DRIVEWAY - DAY

A civilian Talbott pulls up in his jalopy, to find a late-model, lemon-yellow Plymouth in the driveway of his modest home. He charges into the house.

INT. TALBOTT KITCHEN - DAY

NORMA TALBOTT, 20s, pregnancy showing, stands at the drainboard drinking lemonade with a handsome man, SAM DICKSON, 30s.

TALBOTT (V.O.)
When my wife told me she was pregnant,
I had this voice in my head that
kept telling me the baby wasn't mine.

Talbott bursts in, catching them off guard.

TALBOTT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Then, one day I came home early from
work to surprise my wife.

NORMA
Mike!

The man starts to leave, but Talbott blocks him.

TALBOTT
Who the hell is he?

SAM
(extending his hand)
Sam Dickson of the Electrovac Comp—

He grabs Sam's hand, and violently twists his arm. Sam yells.

NORMA
He's just a salesman. We weren't
doing anything.

Norma grabs Talbott.

NORMA (CONT'D)
Stop!

He releases Sam long enough to fling Norma aside.

TALBOTT (V.O.)
I don't remember what happened next.
I blacked out.

Sam attempts an escape, but Talbott lunges at him.

BLACKOUT

INT. TALBOTT KITCHEN - DAY

Chairs knocked over...

A curtain torn...

Blood smeared across the linoleum....

A dazed Talbott hulks over the badly beaten corpse of Sam Dickson, motionless in a fish-eyed stare.

Panting with exhaustion, he uses a bloody hand to wipe the sweat from his brow.

Norma is huddled in the corner crying.

NORMA
I told you he's just a salesman. He
was showing me a vacuum. See?...

She gestures toward the corner, where sits...

A BLOOD-SPLATTERED ELECTROVAC CANISTER VACUUM CLEANER.

NORMA (CONT'D)
My God, Mike, is he dead?

He slowly turns, taking in the gruesome scene, in disbelief.

EXT. TALBOTT DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

THE OPEN TRUNK OF SAM'S PLYMOUTH

Talbott puts Sam's body, rolled-up in a rug, into the trunk and closes the lid.

INT. TALBOTT KITCHEN - NIGHT

A BUCKET contains pinkish suds, into which Talbott dips a scrub brush. He scrubs the last of the blood from the linoleum floor.

INT. TALBOTT KITCHEN - NIGHT

The vacuum sits in the corner where we last saw it. Talbott snatches it up.

INT. SAM'S CAR (IN DRIVEWAY) - BACKSEAT - NIGHT

Talbott opens the door and tosses the vacuum onto the floor.

INT. SAM'S CAR (IN DRIVEWAY) - NIGHT

Talbott looks at himself in the rearview mirror. Noticing the smear of dried blood on his forehead, he uses his handkerchief to try to wipe it off. When this fails to remove the stubborn bloodstain, he spits into his dry hanky, and uses it to aggressively rub out the damned spot.

TALBOTT

(to himself)

It's gonna be ok. Everything's ok.

After taking a deep breath, Talbott turns the engine over and puts the car in reverse.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Talbott drives past in the Plymouth, kicking up stones and a cloud of dust, illuminated in the light of a full moon.

EXT. A RESERVOIR - NIGHT

Across the reservoir is the Plymouth crossing the dam until it reaches halfway across, where it stops.

EXT./INT. THE RESERVOIR/SAM'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Talbott maneuvers the car to face the reservoir, cuts the engine, winds down the windows, puts the car into neutral, and gets out.

The moon shines through the windshield. There is the crunch of the gravel under the tires, as the car edges forward. With a couple of bumps, the view of the moon suddenly swings up and away and is replaced by a view of the reservoir filling the windshield.

WHOOSH... GURGLE... GLUB... GLUB... Water fills the car as it swiftly descends into the reservoir's murky depths.

EXT. THE RESERVOIR - DAM - CONTINUOUS

Talbott stands watching as...

...the car disappears into the shadowy waters.

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT

Talbott plods along in the moonlight.

When a pickup truck approaches, he thrusts out his thumb. The truck slows to a stop.

TALBOTT
Thanks, buddy.

Talbott hops inside the cab.

INT. TALBOTT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Norma moans and thrashes about in fitful sleep, as Talbott stares at the ceiling.

TALBOTT (V.O.)
I didn't sleep at all that night. I
was worried the water was too shallow
to hide the car in the daylight.

EXT. THE RESERVOIR - AERIAL SHOT - DAY

FROM HIGH ABOVE...

WE SEE Talbott, as he stands on the dam in the pounding rain.

TALBOTT (V.O.)
But God took pity on me and helped
me cover up my sin.

Mud flows down the embankment, into the reservoir. There is no visible trace of the yellow Plymouth.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. THE RESERVOIR - AERIAL SHOT - DAY (MONTHS LATER)

The, now receded, reservoir sparkles beneath a sunny sky.

TALBOTT (V.O.)
My grandmother used to say, "What
the Lord gives, He takes away." A
few months later, we had a dry spell.

The car is covered with sediment, but is still clearly visible.

THREE BOYS swim directly above it.

TALBOTT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
It was the driest summer in memory,
and the reservoir dropped. My secret
was still there waitin' to be exposed.

EXT. THE RESERVOIR - UNDERWATER - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

The boys' legs dangle mere inches above the submerged car.

The vacuum floats against the ceiling. As the water is agitated by the boys, the canister wobbles close to the open window.

EXT. THE RESERVOIR - ON THE SURFACE - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

As the boys play, the canister vacuum suddenly shoots out of the water.

BOY
Whoa! Would ya look at that!

The swimming boys converge on the vacuum.

INT. JIM'S BARBER SHOP - DAY

JIM, a barber in his 60s, works on a customer, ROLAND, 50s, as Talbott ambles in.

JIM
Just finishin' him up. Have a seat.

Talbott grabs a newspaper and sits.

ROLAND
It was a Plymouth, you say?

JIM
Yella. Late model. Kids found it.

Talbott is alert to the conversation, as he opens the paper.

INSERT

Headline: BODY DISCOVERED IN SUBMERGED CAR IN RESERVOIR

BACK TO SCENE

The blood drains from his face as he urgently scans the story.

JIM (CONT'D)
He was a salesman from Rossville.
They found a pad in the man's pocket
where he made notes of the last
addresses he'd been to. State police
are going house to house right now
retracing his steps.

Talbott bolts out.

END OF FLASHBACK

~~EXT. THE DECK RAIL OF THE USS. RESERVE DISK~~

~~Levine is riveted to Talbott's story.~~

Thank you for reading.
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Stop