

San Bruno Noir

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TEASER

INT. SAN BRUNO BART STATION, SAN BRUNO, NIGHT

FADE IN as we take the down escalator in the middle of the station. The escalator, lights, fading, all convey some kind of liminal "transitioning from life to death" feel. We don't know this yet, but we're in the Mayor's POV.

CUT to a woman standing in the middle of a Bart train. Ruth, 60s, is frightened. Her gaze is affixed on the train's Stop Display, which ticks from "Daly City" to "South San Francisco."

Platform: We get off the escalator and look side to side. Another train on the other side leaves, and as it departs we take its noise and use it throughout this scene as a tension building piece.

Train: Terror creeps into Ruth as the destination sign switches from "South San Francisco" to "San Bruno." She breathes so rapidly, she's almost hyperventilating.

Platform: We lean over the edge and we see the end of the tunnel LIGHT UP as the train approaches.

Train: Ruth, hands shaking, holds her car keys, closes her eyes, and steels herself. *I have a job to do.* (Maybe keeps eyes closed till the train opens).

Mixed shots of the train and platform view of the train docking. The train docks, and it feels like the doors are closed for an eternity. Then, they open, and Ruth AND the Mayor book it! The music becomes louder and more pronounced.

Ruth leaves the back of the train and immediately heads towards the escalator, mounting it rapidly. We chase after her from the middle of the train platform.

She pays the fare and gets through the gates. She runs for the elevator, taps the button, looks back and panicked ditches the slow elevator and takes the stairs. We chase after her.

Ruth hides for cover, and the mayor/ us looks around, but doesn't spot her. He walks away. With the coast seeming clear, she runs with keys in hand, unlocking the car, but the Mayor appears behind a pillar. He raises one hand and shoots her. Although dead, her eyes look up at the murderer whose shadow looms over her, and we CUT to reveal Matheus's face. Music screams.

EXT. CRIME SCENE, SAN FRANCISCO, DAY

A chalk outline in a silly pose gets obscured by two shadows.

MARIN (O.S.)
Whaddya think, sir?

LOW ANGLE LOOKING UP AT MARIN AND BENSON.

Benson, 20s male, is a hardened private detective and our hero. He wears a typical hard-boiled detective outfit, dark. MARIN, 20s, is the SFPD contact charged with bringing Benson up to speed.

BENSON
You said SFPD thought this was foul play?

MARIN
Yessir. Apparently he had a fight with his neighbor up on the roof. He might have tripped, or his neighbor pushed him...

Benson scoffs and walks to a new location.

MARIN (CONT'D)
What?

BENSON
Look behind us.

Marin looks and sees:

BENSON (CONT'D)
(Improv deduction of how the guy died; it's incredibly contrived and stupid, yet Benson is incredibly confident in this.)
(gets a call)
Y'ello?

MARIN
(background)
Incredible...

Benson's expression grows serious as he listens on the call.

BENSON
OK.

He closes the phone and walks away.

MARIN

Hey! Where are you going?

BENSON

I got a job to do.

Benson walks off to his car.

END TEASER.

TITLE: SAN BRUNO NOIR

ACT ONE

INT. BENSON'S CAR, DAY

Benson drives to San Bruno, and we see his face through the windshield of his car in the typical cheesy old fashioned driving shot.

BENSON (NARRATION)

San Bruno. "The City with a Heart."
What a dumb name. I wasn't sure how
to feel. It had been years since I
last set foot in that city. We had
a history, you could say. It didn't
end well, but when a man calls in a
favor, you listen.

EXT. SAN BRUNO ON EL CAMINO, DAY

Benson drives past the "Welcome to San Bruno" sign on the median by San Felipe and El Camino.

EXT. VARIOUS SAN BRUNO SITES, DAY

As Benson drives around to himself, he notes that things don't quite look the same.

BENSON (NARRATION)

The suburban jungle. This place was
always weird, but now it seemed off
in a different way.

He passes by something lame and dead.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Deforested.

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK, DAY

Benson drives by and notices the eerily empty park.

FEZ, early 20s and Benson's old friend and favor-caller, is sitting on the Crestmoor memorial statue waiting for Benson to arrive. He looks preoccupied with worry, but snaps back as Benson walks up.

FEZ

Hey! Long time no see!

The two hug that "long time no see" male friend hug.

BENSON

Ah, nice to see ya.

They start to stroll around the park. Benson looks around-
it's completely empty, and sad.

BENSON (CONT'D)

So how have you been?

FEZ

I've been... better, honestly. But
I'll get to that. How've you been?

BENSON

Eh, same old same old. Checking out
a murder here, a robbery there.

(re: empty park)

I gotta say, it's... interesting to
be back.

FEZ

It looks like shit, huh?
(off Benson's silence)

FEZ (CONT'D)

Would you believe me if I said
Music in the Park starts in 10
minutes?

BENSON

No way.

FEZ

Yeah, that's kind of what I wanted
to talk about.

BENSON

I thought this was about a murder
case?

FEZ

It is, but it's also about more.
I'm not kidding when I say the San
Bruno that we know and love may be
at stake.

They've arrived at Fez's car parked at El Crystal. Use
"ascent imagery" for this. He opens the door for Benson, who
looks uncomfortable, but gets in.

INT. FEZ'S CAR, DAY

Benson launches the question as Fez gets in.

BENSON

Whaddya mean when you say the fate of San Bruno may be at stake? Is there gonna be extra heat on this case?

FEZ

You'll see.

Fez starts driving to San Bruno Bart.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

We get a classic Tarantino trunk-shot of Fez and Benson overlooking the chalk outline of the murder from the teaser, reminiscent of Benson and Marin in the beginning.

BENSON

What was the official cause of death?

FEZ

Accident.

BENSON

This wasn't no accident.

Cut to reveal- another silly chalk outline.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Who dies right in front of an elevator? More importantly, who dies heading to an elevator in a parking garage? And why does such an obvious murder get filed as an accident? And who would dare to murder in front of a goddamn police station?

Benson turns to look at Fez, and gets serious.

BENSON (CONT'D)

What are we dealing with here?

Fez grows serious, and seems a little bit relieved to share his burden that he was dealing with earlier.

FEZ

A lot. Did you see El Crystal? The Park?

Cut to flashbacks of them as Benson drove in. *Yeah, I did see them. They were weird and empty.*

FEZ (CONT'D)

Someone's sabotaging us. This runs all the way to the top, Benson.

Benson groans and turns away- *Jesus*.

(off Benson's reaction)

Please Benson! This new mayor is really bad. He keeps doing all these weird things- and me and some other people are trying to do something about it, but I just know we won't get anywhere without connecting this to him!

BENSON

(trying, and failing, to patiently explain)

I'm not here, for this kind of heat. I don't tangle with top down corruption like this.

(this is hard to say)

I can't do it.

BENSON (CONT'D)

And neither should you. It's not good for us. It's best if we all just walk away.

FEZ

C'mon man! Think of San Bruno!

BENSON

It ain't worth the risk, friend.

FEZ

You owe me a favor.

BENSON

It can't be that. I'm sorry, but it's too much to ask!

On cue, he starts to head to the car. Benson reaches the car door, but Fez doesn't give up.

FEZ

This is just like that thing from your past!

Benson stops dead in his tracks, furious. He turns around and addresses Fez.

BENSON
Don't you dare bring up that thing
from my past!

FEZ
It's the exact same!

BENSON
(emotional)
OK! So it is! What's done is done!

FEZ
You can't fix the past, but you can
fix the present. Come with me. Do
the right thing.

Benson takes a second to compose himself. *Maybe salvation will come from service.*

BENSON
Alright. I'm in.

Benson looks outside and notices Tanforan right there.

BENSON (CONT'D)
Hey, what's up with that?

FEZ
That was the big gun.

BENSON
The past thing wasn't?

Fez shakes his head no.

FEZ
Come on, let's check it out.

INT. TANFORAN MALL UPPER LEVEL FOOD COURT, DAY

Benson and Fez stand in a completely empty Ghost Town of a mall. Where there would normally be children shrieking in play and Edgars bothering people, now there's absolutely silence.

BENSON
What the hell happened here?

FEZ
Like I said. Sabotage.

Benson barely hears Fez through the shock. We see what he's seeing- memories of his youth in Tanforan.

He looks at the escalator to the upper level of the food court, and we see a young woman get off it and a young Benson greet her. His first date. He looks around the Happy Lemon area and sees young Benson walking with friends, smiling as he talks to them. The audio and visuals will be tweaked to be more dreamlike.

FEZ (CONT'D)

Nothing happens anymore. There are no group gatherings anymore, and people are leaving en masse- the community is de-

BENSON

We have to get this guy.

FEZ

You serious?

Benson gives him a look. Yeah, he's serious.

ACT 2

INT. FEZ'S COMPOUND, DAY

Fez stacks various documents on a table- blueprints, city legislature, newspapers, and candid photos of suspect people. Then, he starts pinning them onto a corkboard, with string connecting.

Fez pins a candid picture of Mayor Calvin Cross. Early 30s, and old fashioned.

FEZ (O.S.)

Mayor Cross. The sick sonofabitch ruined everything. The main culprit, and the one we want to take down.

A picture of El Crystal.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The first casualty.

A picture of San Bruno City Hall.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The mayor's main stomping grounds, and where you're likely to find him.

BENSON (O.S.)

Why not just kill him?

FEZ (O.S.)

One, ew. Two-

Fez pins a copy of a city council bill.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)

"Any city council member deaths with mysterious circumstances result in a 20 year legislative freeze."

BENSON (O.S.)

Jeez.

FEZ (O.S.)

This war is purely legal. And that's why we have you on this.

A picture of the Youtube CEO, Bobby Womprel.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Bobby Womprel, CEO of Youtube. He's
 been known to have a somewhat...
 interesting business relationship
 with the mayor.

Fez then pins a real news clipping about the weird tax
 situation with the mayor.

Fez pins a picture of the Bart murder victim, RUTH SAMUELS.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Victim, 61 years old, Ruth Samuels.
 Who is she? Why did she die?

Fez pins a picture of another old woman, and of an old man.

FEZ (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Garth Samuels, widower. And Sonia
 Rocks, sister. I've already talked
 with her, and supports the cause.

Pull back to reveal the full board with pictures and pins and
 string, and Fez and Benson looking on. The corkboard is very
 neat currently, and will get messier the messier the case
 gets.

EXT. SAN BRUNO CITY HALL, NIGHT

Someone leaves the building and goes to their car. Benson
 emerges from a bush and beelines for the door after they
 drive away. He's about to pick the doorknob with a lockpick
 and flashlight, when he notices a flashing red alarm above.

He runs back to the bush. Note that for the rest of the
 scene, we only see the bush.

We hear some leaves rustling as Benson takes out his phone.
 We hear the ringtone as he calls Fez.

BENSON (O.S.)
 Fez! What the fuck!

FEZ (O.S.)
 What's up man?

BENSON
 They have an alarm system rigged!

FEZ
 Uh yeah, I thought you knew that?
 Isn't that common?

BENSON

Usually people tell me! Now I
wasted a whole day waiting in a
bush!

FEZ

Chill, chill. I know a guy. I'll
see what I can do. Just do
something else in the meantime.

Benson walks away and grumbles.

EXT. A MODEST HOUSE IN THE HEART OF SAN BRUNO, DAY

Knock-knock-knock! Benson stands expectantly at a door. Where
the heck are we?

RESIDENT (O.S.)

I told ya, I'm not interested in
any snowglobes!

There's noise in the background as she bumbles around.

BENSON

I ain't here to talk about
snowglobes, sir. I'm here to talk
about Ruth.

The noise stops.

RESIDENT (O.S.)

(contempt)

Press ain't welcome either.

BENSON

Not press either, sir. Just a
curious individual trying to
understand why the things that
happened to your late wife did.

(a beat)

I'm not part of the city, either.
I'm from Hayward.

This does it. GARTH SAMUELS opens the door. 60s, male, and
burdened by his wife's recent murder.

He's anxious because so much has gone so wrong recently, but
cautiously optimistic because he senses this guy is gonna do
more than the bought-out city cops.

GARTH

I need help finding my gnome.

EXT. GARTH SAMUELS' BACKYARD GARDEN, DAY

Benson appraises his large backyard garden. (Note: This, and Garth's houses' facade could be shot at my house.)

BENSON

Where did you say you thought you
lost it?

Benson searches as Garth takes advantage of the fact that he has a captive audience.

Old people are lonely, especially new widows. He almost seems... happy? To have someone competent on his side, and an ear.

GARTH

I worked at the pencil factory for
20 years. Best time of my life.

Benson continues his search, half listening as Garth monologues. If he's bothered by this, it doesn't show. He seems lost in happy memories.

GARTH (CONT'D)

That was, of course, until we had
to move. There was another job,
this time at a pen factory, and it
just made more sense to move here.
Better neighborhood for starting a
family. Good spot to retire.

BENSON

You have a kid?

GARTH

(not hearing him)
I loved it. She did too!

Benson stops for a second, wipes the sweat from his brow.

BENSON

What did you say this gnome looked
like again?

GARTH

Ah it's just the cutest little
gnome you've ever seen!

Benson mentally rolls his eyes. *Big help.* Whatever. Since there's a lull in the conversation right now, he makes the leap.

BENSON

So what happened to her, do you think? What was she like when she got here? Did she piss anyone off or anything?

Garth's expression darkens as he remembers. The facial equivalent of clouds overtaking a sunny sky.

GARTH

Yeah... it's hard to recall.

As Garth starts to remember, Benson looks around and notices an area he hadn't checked before. Where the yard appeared to end, it continues behind tall foliage. He walks over and slides through, and starts rummaging around while Garth continues. The more Garth remembers, the worse the story gets.

GARTH (CONT'D)

I think- I think she might have been a little upset when we moved. She liked the town we were in. And she wanted the family to be just us. Oh yeah, that was what we fought about. She didn't want kids. After then, she stopped talking. That was around when she started to run for city council.

After much rummaging around behind the hedges, Benson uncovers a very dirty garden gnome, perfectly synchronized with Garth's reveal.

Benson pauses for a second to process. He's very interested, but doesn't want to press too hard.

BENSON

She was trying to join city council?

GARTH

(distracted)

Yeah. And she was going to get it, too.

BENSON

Did she tell you anything about why?

Benson picks up the gnome off the ground and gives it Garth.

GARTH

No, she didn't talk to me much by then.

Garth turns it around and reveals the name "Reginald" written on it in tape. (The implication being that Ruth didn't want kids, so Garth sought different, unsatisfactory avenues of filling that need.) Garth hug-cradles the gnome, sad that all he has left is the symbol of the thing that destroyed his marriage.

Benson looks up and notices a flashing red light thing.

BENSON

(re:light)

What's up with that?

GARTH

The alarm? Those are all over San Bruno. I need to fix that. It's been broken for awhile.

BENSON

Broken?

GARTH

Yeah. The red light means it's off.

EXT. GARTH'S PORCH, DAY

Benson walks to his car, having already said goodbye. His phone rings and he picks it up-

FEZ (PHONE)

Yo man! My contact hooked me up. I can get us an EMP and disable the alarm systems!

BENSON

Eh. It's not necessary now. Also, I have some intel on the body.

EXT. SAN BRUNO CITY HALL, NIGHT

Benson walks right on in. Doesn't even have to lockpick.

INT. SAN BRUNO CITY HALL, NIGHT

Benson looks the dark office building, scouring desk tops until he finds the mayor's. He gingerly opens the cabinets, and finds various manila folders.

He starts spreading the documents on the desk and taking pictures of them with flash on his phone.

INT. FEZ'S COMPOUND, DAY

Benson slams photocopies of the stolen documents in front of the table where Fez is eating breakfast.

FEZ

You work fast. What's it say?

BENSON

It looks like there is an established point of contact between the mayor and the CEO of Youtube. They mostly talk about construction in the north.

FEZ

Any mentions of the victim?

BENSON

Yep, check this out- "RS is going to be a problem. If she gets on the board, she could switch things up. -Mayor Cross."

FEZ

Huh. You going to visit the sister?

BENSON

Yep.

Benson looks over at the corkboard with the picture of the sister, Sonia Rocks. Benson pulls out a cigarette and lighter from his jacket and starts to smoke it. As he takes it out, Fez freaks out.

FEZ

AH!

(calms down)

Oh, sorry. I thought you pulled out a gun.

Benson gives him a "what-the-fuck-are-you-saying" expression.

FEZ (CONT'D)

Anyway, you might enjoy this. She's already making some progress herself.

Benson turns and leaves.

EXT. CHERRY AVENUE SIDEWALK BY YOUTUBE, EVENING

Benson walks up and gets into a car parked perfectly in the shot, with the Youtube building in the background.

INT. SONIA'S CAR, EVENING

Benson sits shotgun next to SONIA ROCKS, sister of dead Ruth Samuels. 50s, and has mom energy.

SONIA

Hi! Benson?

Benson normal moodiness looks exaggerated compared to her energy. He looks around for any mics or cameras that might be recording him- he doesn't want to get caught in a sting.

BENSON

Yep. Sonia?

SONIA

The one and only! It's nice to meet you. Granola bar?

BENSON

Get that out of my sight immediately. And nice to meet you. You have any information?

SONIA

Well, the night before Ruth died, she called me and said that "the Youtube CEO is key."

BENSON

Interesting. Did she tell you anything else?

SONIA

Nope! Next thing I know, the police are calling me, asking if I know anything.

Benson scoffs at this.

SONIA (CONT'D)

What about you? Do you know anything?

BENSON

Fez told you everything I know. So, any reasons why you took this case on? Besides the fact that... y'know.

SONIA

Ah. No! That's why I'm here. If it were up to me, I'd be long gone.

BENSON

Oh yeah?

SONIA

Yeah! I hate it here. I feel so trapped all the time. And it's way worse now.

BENSON

Oh. That sucks.

SONIA

Yeah. Sorry if I bummed you out. What about you? Why are you here?

BENSON

I owe a favor.

SONIA

You're doing all this for a favor? You're nicer than me!

This irritates Benson.

BENSON

(musing)

A parking garage. Who would risk their life to go to a car?

Sonia feels offended at the implication that Ruth's actions were unfathomable.

SONIA

You think what she did was dumb?

BENSON

I didn't say that. Look!

As she's about to interrogate, Bobby Womprel appears. They both look and see him. He looks out at the street from the top of the Youtube building platform, and walks down, and gets into a car.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Is the car ready?

SONIA

Yeah.

Bobby drives, and they follow. Bobby makes a left at Cherry, hitting a yellow light and flooring the turn, which they miss. Benson throws his hands up in exasperation. They pull over.

SONIA (CONT'D)

Ok, so, what do we do next?

BENSON

We think of something else.

(frustrated)

Stupid. Who goes on the run and doesn't take their car?

SONIA

Maybe she had a reason! And you only think it's stupid because you don't care about anything!

This gets through to Benson a little.

BENSON

I can understand a measured risk. But putting your life on the line for no reason? I just don't understand that.

This, in turn, gets through to Sonia.

SONIA

Me neither. Why would she not take a cab? She was brave Benson, and she was smart. I can't believe she would have died for nothing.

BENSON

She chose to go to the car, knowing the risk.

SONIA

There's something in the car.

BENSON

Let's go find it.

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART STATION PARKING GARAGE ENTRANCE

Sonia is stopped at the entrance, clutching to the wheel for life.

She hates this place for what it did to her sister, and her instincts are screaming at her to split. Benson picks up on this-

BENSON

I can go myself, if that's easier.

SONIA

(steels herself- just like
Ruth on Bart)

No. I can do this.

They drive up into it.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART STATION PARKING GARAGE, DAY

They enter the 3rd floor, and approach Ruth's car. Benson hotwires it open, and they look around inside. Benson pops open the glove box, and pulls out a LETTER addressed to Bobby Womprel. The text is spelled with newspaper clippings- very stylistic.

BENSON

"To Bobby..."

He gives Sonia a look, who nonverbally gives him permission to open the letter. Inside is just a picture of the Mayor (or an email of his) looking shady.

BENSON (CONT'D)

(astounded at the reveal)
Why did she do all of this?

SONIA

She just wanted to see San Bruno fixed. To see the bad guys in jail, and things work out.

Benson looks at Sonia, gauging her well being. She's doing ok, but this is clearly taking a massive toll on her.

BENSON

I promise we'll get him. What do you say? Continue the stake out tomorrow?

Sonia nods. They get into the car, and start to drive off.

INT. SONIA'S CAR, EVENING

They drive back on Huntington Ave, Benson staring out the window with a lot on his mind.

What would it take for him to risk his life? Is it bad of him to not know? Amidst this, Sonia notices something...

SONIA

Benson. Benson!

Benson snaps to-

BENSON

Oh my god.

Bobby Womprel is walking and talking to someone on the phone on the sidewalk DIRECTLY IN FRONT OF THEM. Sonia drives very slowly behind him, the pair eavesdropping.

BOBBY

Gee, I sure am glad that peanut tree- which I'm deadly allergic too- didn't discourage me from my daily walk. Anyway, the plans. So I want to go forward with SBC. And, I was thinking, we gotta do something about that eyesore of a mountain.

(listens to caller)

It'll be harder since someone wacked that woman- but it's possible.

Benson listens intently, finally getting the scoop. He looks at Sonia, reading the fury in her eyes at the suggestion of her sisters complicity. She's holding a granola bar in her hand. His eyes go wide with fear. He pleads to her with his eyes to not do it, but she isn't listening.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Well, that was all I had to say.

All of a sudden, a GRANOLA BAR hits his arm. He screams in agony, and clutches his arm like he got shot.

BENSON

Sonia! What the fuck!?

Sonia just looks angry. Bobby failed to protect Ruth. A BYSTANDER calmly walks up and rolls up his sleeves.

BYSTANDER

Step aside folks. I'm a doctor.

The doctor checks his pulse, and delivers the verdict. Bobby intermittently whines/ groans in pain.

DOCTOR

(sighs)

Just as I thought. An allergic reaction. Every second he's not treated is another week in the coma.

(frustrated)

If I had just been one second earlier, he'd be verbal. I'm gonna live with that the rest of my life.

(snaps back)

Anyway, don't you guys worry. I'll get cops and paramedics.

The doctor walks away and Benson just looks at his surroundings in disbelief. But then he realizes how it'll look-

BENSON

Sonia! You have to leave!

SONIA

But- the mystery-

BENSON

You must. Do it for yourself, damn it!

Sonia gets in her car and drives away. Benson watches her, then gets a call from Fez.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Hey Fez. What's up?

FEZ

The city just declared Ruth's death as a murder, and sold Tanforan!

BENSON

Fuck!

ACT THREE

EXT. TANFORAN MALL, DAY

We could use some beautiful B-Roll of Tanforan as we hear a car engine in full gear. Fez and Benson arrive and RUSH out of Benson's car to the entrance by the food court. They encounter a PLAQUE that reads- *This iconic San Bruno monument and it's sale is dedicated to Ruth Samuels sacrifice, and the diligent citizens who unearthed the greater truth.* There's also a mayor pin/ memorabilia that Benson picks up.

Benson is LIVID. This was punitive.

BENSON

How could he do this? Is nothing sacred?

(a beat)

They were planning to build the North, and they sell the biggest attraction?

Fez, who was reading something else, pipes up.

FEZ

It gets worse.

Fez hands him a pamphlet about the sale, and points out a section about Bill 69, which sold Tanforan to South San Francisco.

FEZ (CONT'D)

This part. "Bill 69 removes limits on the number of bills City Council members may propose."

BENSON

So?

FEZ

It's bad, Benson. What happens if the mayor gets a majority on the board?

(thinks)

That's his next step. It *cannot* happen.

BENSON

(a beat)

I don't know how much investigating will help.

FEZ

It scared them. But I agree, it has its limits. No, he wants to fight legally, let's fight legally.

BENSON

What are you thinking?

Off Fez's determined face, and a plan boiling in his mind-

EXT. SAN BRUNO ON EL CAMINO, DAY

A fancy car SPEEDS through the "Welcome to San Bruno" sign.

INT. SAN BRUNO BUILDING - DAY

Polished loafers walk calmly and confidently. People notice and hide shock. Cut to reveal GAVIN NEWSOM. (played by Myles)

Since no one is gonna understand the revelation-

RANDOM PERSON

Mr. Newsom? May I help you?

GAVIN NEWSOM

I'm looking for a man. Goes by the name Cross.

INT. THE MAYOR'S OFFICE- DAY

A nervous assistant walks in while the mayor is busy at work.

MAYOR CROSS

(talking to secretary on phone)

Do you have the files? The important ones?

ASSISTANT

Mr. Cross?

MAYOR CROSS

(busy)

What is it?

ASSISTANT

The governor would like to see you...

The mayor stops what he's doing and pauses. *Aw fuck.*

EXT. BECKNER SHELTER - DAY

Benson and Mayor Cross stand side by side in front of a bench table, each holding an envelope, and Gavin Newsom walks into frame and sits on the tabletop.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Mr. Cross, you're aware of why I've called you here?

MAYOR CROSS

I believe so. This man, and those he represents, believe I, and maybe others, are engaging in malpractice. What exactly it is I am accused of doing, I am not sure.

BENSON

(enraged)

Colluding with big social media.
Selling out your town to the man!
Killing a woman for standing up to you!

Gavin holds up his hands to stop the fighting. A skilled politician, he knows how to control an audience.

GAVIN NEWSOM

You two noticed where we're meeting. This election is tight. The slightest whiff of controversy can send it all spiraling down.
(to Mayor Cross)

GAVIN NEWSOM (CONT'D)

As a fellow public servant, I understand the significance of our duty to the public. These accusations are not to be taken lightly.
(to Benson)
But I also won't get him removed on baseless accusations. Present your evidence.

BENSON

Let me tell you about a woman named Ruth Samuels. She was in her 60s, and running for board. Then, all of a sudden, she ditches her campaign and moves to Fresno. One day, she comes back.
(looks at Cross)

BENSON (CONT'D)

She doesn't make it 5 minutes off
Bart before she gets shot and
killed.

Mayor Cross doesn't look back, he stays stoic and holds
frame.

BENSON (CONT'D)

The investigation was a joke, to
put it lightly. The coroner report
labeled it a suicide. Next-

GAVIN NEWSOM

Hold on. I'd like to give Mr. Cross
some time to respond.

MAYOR CROSS

Thank you, Mr. Governor.
(to Benson)
Mr.?

BENSON

Benson.

MAYOR CROSS

Mr. Benson over here tells a tall
tale. A sad story. Abandoning a
successful campaign. But doesn't
that sound like the kind of thing a
sad person would do? And being back
in that city, with that painful
memory, would be unbearable!

MAYOR CROSS (CONT'D)

Ruth was a kind woman, who had her
demons. This tragedy deserves more
than this farce.

BENSON

Liar.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Benson, you mentioned social media
collusion. Tell me about that.

Benson is still giving the Mayor the stinkeye from that awful
lie.

BENSON

Sure. Mayor Cross and Bobby
Womprel, CEO of Youtube, are
engaged in corrupt business
practices.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Bobby gives Cross some influence here, an ad campaign there, and Cross gives him tax advantages. Illegally. Also, they colluded to disappear Ruth, because she threatened their grip on the city's local politics.

Gavin motions for Mayor Cross to respond.

MAYOR CROSS

San Bruno is home to the most important website in the world. Of course we're going to keep them here! They give millions. But nothing illegal. And for Ruth, that's a conspiracy. Spurious accusations with no foundation in reality.

BENSON

Sonia Rocks, the sister of Ruth Samuels, and a doctor, and I will all testify under oath that we heard the Youtube CEO admit as much.

GAVIN NEWSOM

People can lie under oath. I'm going to need more.

MAYOR CROSS

He doesn't have more, because there is nothing to this.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Anything else?

BENSON

One more thing. Cross and Bobby talked every night about Ruth. How to get rid of her.

MAYOR CROSS

Complete lie. We never spoke about her.

BENSON

You guys spoke every night about the board and how to use it for your interests.

MAYOR CROSS

Not true! We never spoke about the board!

GAVIN NEWSOM

Benson, you're going to need some evidence for any of these claims.

BENSON

I understand. That's why I have THIS!

Benson pulls out a manila folder and lets Gavin open it. It has the email correspondence between Mayor Cross and Bobby, where they mention Ruth. Gavin mutters as he reads it out.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Huh. Looks like you have been communicating with Bobby about Ruth getting on the board.

Gavin Newsom deliberates a bit before delivering his penultimate judgement.

GAVIN NEWSOM (CONT'D)

Mayor Cross- you've provided decent explanations for each problem thus far. But they fail to convincingly address the portrait of a man using the powers of a system in self interest. Before I conclude, do you have any final statements?

Benson looks extremely satisfied, slowly filling with righteous satisfaction at justice served. Mayor Cross remains steely, but we can see a little desperation under his facade.

MAYOR CROSS

May we have a moment? I have some evidence I'd prefer if he didn't see.

Gavin sighs, annoyed that this guy isn't accepting the obvious conclusion. But he understands how the ruling is difficult to accept, and he does need to minimize risks for the upcoming election.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Yeah.

They walk over to a farther bench. Benson rolls his eyes. *Classic slimey Mayor.*

MAYOR CROSS

Mr. Newsom, I'm rooting for your campaign. I really am. But it's so tight, that the littlest thing could take it apart.

Exactly what Gavin was trying to avoid. He needs to nip this in the bud.

GAVIN NEWSOM

Let me stop you right there. Whatever you think you have-

MAYOR CROSS

I wasn't finished.

Mayor Cross produces a folder and some documents from his jacket. Gavin, recognizing what it is, is stunned.

GAVIN NEWSOM

How did you-

Cut to reveal the document is a summary of EARLY POLLING DATA for the gubernatorial election- and it shows San Bruno leans heavily against Gavin.

MAYOR CROSS

If I recall correctly, only a couple cities are going to decide this election. Governor Gavin Newsom, do you want to win this election?

GAVIN NEWSOM

Yes.

MAYOR CROSS

Then help me.

GAVIN NEWSOM

What do you need?

We don't hear the mayor's response, we just see Gavin and Mayor Cross split from the table. Gavin gives his final address before as he leaves.

GAVIN NEWSOM (CONT'D)

It seems like I made a mistake. The new evidence you showed me was remedies all previous qualms. Benson, I ask you give him some patience as he proceeds, and stop levying false, harmful accusations.

BENSON

(furious)

What?

(at Mayor Cross)

What the fuck did you say to him?

MAYOR CROSS

(gloating)

Sometimes, the public doesn't know everything they think they do. But that won't be a problem anymore.

The governor and the mayor walk away, leaving Benson standing still, unsure of what to do next.

INT. FEZ'S COMPOUND KITCHEN, DAY

Benson walks in on Fez eating lunch.

FEZ

Hey! How'd it go?

Off Benson's silence, Fez realizes something went wrong.

BLACK. Out of the darkness, something fades in. Slowly, we realize it's a BILL passed by Gavin Newsom, very official looking, that reads "Bill 98.6: In cities between South San Francisco and Millbrae, elected officials must establish new city council member limits."

CUT to show the bill tacked on to the center of the corkboard, ever so slightly fluttering in a breeze. The area around the corkboard looks messy too. The investigation is, currently, abandoned.

EXT. TANFORAN MALL, SUNSET

Pulling up in his car, Benson looks at Tanforan longingly and concerned.

FADE TO BLACK.

ACT FOUR

EXT. TAQUERIA MI DURANGO OUTSIDE AREA, DAY

The screen is black. We hear a clinking noise and normal bar HUM.

BENSON (O.S.)

MAS!

Fade in to reveal a very day-drunk Benson passing the time bothering the staff at Mi Durango. Also, he's wearing two jackets.

The bartender places a shot down and Benson downs it quickly.

BENSON (CONT'D)

MAS!

BARTENDER

Has tomado mucho, amigo. (You've had enough, friend.)

BENSON

Ah!

(a beat)

He won!

Barely in frame and no visible face, someone new walks in to the bar. They sit next to Benson. This is SOUTH CITY PI. He strongly resembles Benson.

SOUTH CITY PI

Hey.

BENSON

Hey yourself.

South City PI produces a manila envelope and slides it across the table to Benson. Wasted Benson processes this with a good 5 second delay.

SOUTH CITY PI

You're slacking. This place is your territory, and I already have enough to deal with.

BENSON

Who are you? Are you in the union?

SOUTH CITY PI

This concerns more than just the San Brunoids.

SOUTH CITY PI (CONT'D)
(re: folder)
Use this. And it goes without
saying, this never happened.

BENSON
OK?

South City PI walks out just as smoothly as he walked in. It's like he was never there. Benson looks at the documents, just beginning to comprehend the interaction that just occurred. He puts the folder in his jacket.

As he does this, a pair of San Bruno police walk in and approach Benson.

BENSON (CONT'D)
Is this a party?

SAN BRUNO COP 1
Sir, we need you to come with us.
Are you wearing two jackets?

BENSON
Says who?

Benson turns and looks, and sees they're cops.

BENSON (CONT'D)
I didn't do nothin.

SAN BRUNO COP 1
Yes sir, you did. Please come with
us.

BENSON
What did I do!?

SAN BRUNO COP 1
Trespassing, sir. Please come with
us.

BENSON
Trespass? I didn't trespass
nowhere!

SAN BRUNO COP 1
I am no longer asking.

The cop flashes a gun on his hip. Benson's eyes widen.

BENSON
Ok. Ok. Let me just do this one
thing...

Benson slowly reaches for his inner-jacket pocket, making sure the cops know he's compliant. He pulls out 3 JUGGLING BALLS. He starts juggling to the cops' delight.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Yeah, you like that? Give it a try.
I'm gonna take a leak.

He tosses them the balls; they barely catch them. He walks outside and a car PULLS UP immediately. It's FEZ, here to rescue! He takes 1 minute to park, and when he does, he screams-

FEZ

GET IN!

Benson gets in the car and the cops realize what's happening and run outside.

INT. FEZ'S CAR, DAY

Fez clutches the steering wheel for dear life and wasted Benson slouches shotgun.

EXT. NEWELL'S BAR, DAY

The cops get in THEIR car and follow them.

EXT. VARIOUS SAN BRUNO SITES, DAY

We have a little chase sequence from San Mateo Avenue to El Camino to San Felipe Avenue up to El Crystal/ San Bruno Park, but they're entirely respectful of the rules of the road.

(stopping at stop signs,
yielding to pedestrians,
etc.)

Fez notices Benson's outfit, and incredulously says-

FEZ

Are you wearing two jackets?

EXT. EL CRYSTAL ENTRANCE, DAY

Fez parks there, and Benson and Fez rush out. The cops FOLLOW seconds later. (important that we get shots of the Fez and Benson running down the slope for the 'descent' imagery.)

Extra Wide Shot: The "Caution: City Park" sign in the foreground, with Fez and Benson running in the background, trailed closely by the cops.

EXT. PAVED PATH TO JUNIPERO SERRA ENTRANCE, DAY

Benson, wasted and exhausted, is about to get caught by a cop, when Fez turns around and screams-

FEZ
Take off the jacket!

Benson does so, revealing his underjacket and gaining the speedboost to make it in.

EXT. JUNIPERO SERRA ENTRANCE, SAN BRUNO PARK, DAY

Benson and Fez SPRINT up the entrance. The cops catch up but stop outside, out of breath.

SAN BRUNO COP 2
They're getting away!

SAN BRUNO COP 1
This is Lion territory. They'll be gone before nightfall.

EXT. JUNIPERO SERRA PLATEAU, EVENING

Fez and Benson walk up to that first area where the trees run out and the airport is visible. Fez has a big lead at this point, and waits for a slightly more sober, but very out of breath Benson to catch up. Once Benson catches up, they pause to look at the view, then go on.

EXT. JUNIPERO SERRA PEAK, EVENING

The two make it up to the peak, and drop the stuff they've been holding.

EXT. JUNIPERO SERRA, NIGHT

The two seem to have made themselves at home. They chill at a small fire, and throw a small Junipero Serra brochure in as tinder. Since it's been a while, Benson figures it's OK to ask Fez his question.

BENSON

They said I was under arrest for trespassing. Do you know what that's about?

FEZ

(sigh; fuck the mayor)

Yep.

Fez reaches into his jacket and pulls out an official looking map and hands it to Benson.

BENSON

(reading it)

"Revised Map of San Bruno..."

INS. MAP

Tanforan is no longer in San Bruno territory, and... there are tiny white dots interspersed sporadically on the map. The legend says "White areas = Property of City of San Bruno."

BENSON

"White areas equal property of the City of San Bruno"?

FEZ

That sonofabitch spot-evicted us.

Benson is flabbergasted.

BENSON

How the hell...

FEZ

He's got all the power. He's the only one making any laws.

Benson is crushed by regret.

BENSON

I should have never gotten involved.

(a beat)

I should have listened to my gut and ignored you.

Fez is wounded, but understands.

FEZ

We couldn't just let him get away with it.

BENSON

We could have, and we should have!
And by the way, what is this "we?"
It seems like I'm the one doing all
the work!

FEZ

Hey! I got the contacts, I got the
EMP, and I got you aware about what
they were doing to Tanforan! You
should be thanking me.

BENSON

Tanforan is DEAD because of us! We
pushed him, and look what happened!

FEZ

No, no, no. We're on the backfoot
right now, but-

BENSON

Backfoot?! We're FUCKED!

As he says this, do an Office style zoom-out and reveal the
massive woods they're hiding in.

BENSON (CONT'D)

And it's because of YOU.

Benson can't cope with the psychological pressure of the
results. Fez's patience has run out at this point.

FEZ

Well, maybe if you never left San
Bruno, this never would have
happened!

Fez has hit the sorest spot. Fez just spoke aloud Benson's
quietest fear.

BENSON

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE
TALKING ABOUT!

(crying/ regretful; a
beat)

This is just like that thing from
the past...

Benson's deep sadness and regret cuts through Fez's inflamed
ego.

FEZ

Benson, what happened man?

BENSON

I had to leave. I couldn't stay.
The shame. Horrible, horrible
shame.

(a beat)

BENSON (CONT'D)

I was investigating a corruption
case. Bank of America. And I kept
pushing, and my partner said "stop,
they're gonna hit ya back" I didn't
listen.

FEZ

What'd they do?

BENSON

They took all our money! And he
said it was my fault, and he was
right! The lesson I learned was to
never fight the big guys.

FEZ

Damn... I didn't know the
details... I'm sorry that happened,
but if you're doing something for
good, it's gonna hurt.

FEZ (CONT'D)

That doesn't mean you just let bad
have it's way.

(a beat)

We're not just gonna let the mayor
get away with this. This isn't the
same. This has a good ending.

Benson grudgingly gives.

BENSON

We have nothing to go off of, no
idea how to strike back-

As he says this, he remembers the envelope that that strange
guy at the bar gave him. He gingerly pulls it out-

BENSON (CONT'D)

- except for this. So at the bar, I
fought 10 people, and got this.

Benson opens it, and Benson climactically pulls out a single
piece of paper. It reads: "North or north?"

FEZ
 (reading it)
 "North or north?" What does he
 mean?

Benson is puzzled, and desperately, thinks. He opens his eyes and sees the burning Junipero Serra brochure and it's text referencing "San Mateo County." We do a triple zoom in on that. Benson's incredible detective mind kicks in gear.

BENSON
 Oh my god. "North" like "South..."

FEZ
 Huh?

BENSON
 -"San Francisco!"

FEZ
 You lost me.

BENSON
 Don't you see! The correspondence
 between Calvin and Bobby!

Flashback to when Benson was taking pictures of The Mayor's documents in City Hall, and the INS.

shot of the message Benson showed to Fez about the mayor talking about developments in the north.

BENSON (CONT'D)
 And there was one detail, I had no
 idea what to make of it. Back
 during the stakeout, Bobby
 mentioned something called SBC, and
 turning the mountain into a
 racetrack-

FEZ
 Benson, what are you talking about?

BENSON
 And the secession documents! They
 weren't talking about north of San
 Bruno, they were talking about
North San Bruno!

Fez starts to realize.

BENSON (CONT'D)
 A.K.A....

Insert a shot of South San Francisco, from the top floor of the Bart Parking Garage.

BENSON (CONT'D)
South San Francisco.

FEZ
Hol.y. Shit.

BENSON
And SBC. SAN. BRUNO. COUNTY. They want to take over San Mateo County. San Mateo, Burlingame, everything!
(impressed)
And they were gonna secede once they did. Imagine, owning Youtube, Walmart, SFO! You could force California to make yourself a state. These guys are fucking crazy. And giving Tanforan to them... San Bruno never really loses it if South City just becomes part of it.

FEZ
But how is he actually going to get it?

BENSON
I'm not sure. Plans within plans with these people. If we waited I'm sure we'd see.

FEZ
"If" we waited. But we don't have the time. What do we do?

Benson starts to think aloud.

BENSON
If you just became king of your city and you want to take over your neighbors, what would you do?

FEZ
I'd probably be doing lots of set up. Passing lots of bills.

BENSON
Where would you do that?

FEZ
The Senior Center. But he has lots of security there.

(MORE)

FEZ (CONT'D)

We're gonna need serious firepower
if we're gonna tango with him
there.

BENSON

We're not going to. We're not
fighting him on his terms again.

INT. THE MAYOR'S HOUSE, DAY

The mayor stands dignified, looking out a window. He picks up
his phone and calls his police chief.

MAYOR CROSS

Did you catch them yet?

POLICE CHIEF (PHONE)

No.

MAYOR CROSS

Look harder.

The mayor ends the call, and we match cut him to-

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE ROOF, DAY

A plane flies over his head, with him in the exact same
position he was at before. He looks over the construction
crew, supervising their progress. The mayor is ostensibly
here to oversee the transition of Tanforan to South City, as
well as observe South City as a prospective city to control
over.

A man walks into frame. NEDGE HEDGE, City Attorney, 30s, and
assistant to the mayor.

NEDGE

Mr. Cross, the doctors report that
Womprel is stabilizing.

NEDGE (CONT'D)

And the police found evidence that
people were resting at Junipero
Serra, but they didn't catch the
others.

MAYOR CROSS

Alright. Anything else?

NEDGE

You got any granola bars?

MAYOR CROSS

What? No!

EXT. STAPLES SIDEWALK AREA NEAR CONSTRUCTION, DAY

A person outside the fenced off construction area waves his hands and tries to get the attention of the construction workers.

ANONYMOUS PERSON

Hey!

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE ROOF, DAY

Mayor Cross looks out at the landscape a bit more, but then he sees SOMETHING wrong. A bunch of construction workers are all leaving one area. Cross frowns.

MAYOR CROSS

Nedge. What's going on in the site?

NEDGE

I don't know, I'm trying to find out.

(talks to an on-site worker on his phone)

Hey you! Yeah, you! What's going on? Why are you leaving?

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

Benson and Fez hide behind a car on the 4th floor, backs to the walls of the building. They both hold a box. They listen to the drama above.

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE ROOF, DAY

The construction worker gives a response that we don't hear. Silence, prompting the mayor to ask-

MAYOR CROSS

Nedge?

NEDGE (PHONE)

Uhh, they're leaving because of some old guy.

MAYOR CROSS

Well tell them they can!

NEDGE (PHONE)
(to construction workers)
Hey! You guys can work here!
(a beat)
Yeah, they're not listening to me.

Mayor Cross silently curses, but calmly response-

MAYOR CROSS
I got it.

As the mayor departs from his roof, we reveal he had 1 cop standing next to him the whole time. The cop follows the mayor.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

Fez's eyes are shut as he listens, and Benson realizes the mayor is leaving and elbows Fez to get alert.

INS. Benson opens his box revealing DONUTS

New shot: that one corner of the 4th floor visible from the 5th, for a very cool shot.

From this shot, Benson practices his donut throwing technique like an Olympic discus thrower and launches it up.

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE ROOF, DAY

A donut LANDS on the level. (note that no matter what angle Emon throws the donut at, we're gonna pretend they all land. Emon could clearly throw the donut AWAY from the building instead of up to the floor above it, but we'll add an insert shot of the donuts landing perfectly next to each other every time.)

The cop immediately and unquestioningly turns his entire body away from following the mayor and walks toward the donut.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

Benson launches a couple more, doing silly techniques.

EXT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE ROOF, DAY

The cop cautiously picks up a donut, then goes to town.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

Breaking away from that sexy pocket shot and back to the first one, Benson gives Fez a nod. Fez nods back and Benson starts to run away. After a minute, Fez pulls the lever on his box, the EMP, shutting off electronics.

EXT. STAPLES SIDEWALK AREA NEAR CONSTRUCTION, DAY

The mayor walks to a concealed individual. We don't know this yet, but it's someone we know.

MAYOR CROSS

Hey! You know this area is under construction, right?

ANONYMOUS PERSON

Yes.

They have a familiar old and husky voice.

MAYOR CROSS

Ok. And did you know that interfering with city proceedings is a crime?

DOLLY to reveal the person causing the disruption is GARTH SAMUELS.

GARTH

Oh, forgive me. I've been hot tempered lately.

INT. SAN BRUNO BART PARKING GARAGE, DAY

Fez watches the mayor talk to Garth.

EXT. STAPLES SIDEWALK AREA NEAR CONSTRUCTION, DAY

MAYOR CROSS

Well, we can't just stop development because you're upset. Do you mind doing that somewhere else?

GARTH

I really wouldn't be doing this if I had someone to talk to.

MAYOR CROSS

Find that somewhere else. Not here.
Are you gonna leave or am I gonna
have to call the police on you?

Garth doesn't respond, pulling a power play. He knows the mayor doesn't have the police, and he's letting the mayor realize Garth is calling his bluff.

GARTH

5 minutes. All I ask, and I'm gone.

MAYOR CROSS

Fine. 5 minutes.

GARTH

Thank you.

Garth looks at the parking garage where his wife was murdered by the mayor.

GARTH (CONT'D)

My wife passed away recently.

MAYOR CROSS

I'm sorry to hear that.

GARTH

I thought I was doing everything
for us, but turned out it was just
for me. And I never saw that, and
she resented me for it.

(a beat, pointed question)

Do you have regrets?

MAYOR CROSS

I don't believe in them.

GARTH

Heh, I used to be the same. Regret
is everywhere, and if you ignore it
you blind yourself to everything.

MAYOR CROSS

I disagree.

GARTH

Hmmm.

Garth realizes that young Garth would never have listened to the advice of old Garth. Thus, although it was his fault that he neglected his wife's feelings, he wasn't capable of being better, and since he couldn't have done different, he stops kicking himself for his mistakes.

As he realizes this, we hear some noise from the construction site. The mayor looks over, and sees some disgruntled construction staff grumbling and visibly exasperated.

GARTH (CONT'D)

Maybe that's just how it is. We don't ignore good advice, we just can't believe it.

The mayor pulls out his phone and tries to call Nedge, but it's not working (because of the EMP). Having stalled long enough for Benson to reach, Garth pounces.

GARTH (CONT'D)

I must confess. My wife- she didn't pass away. She was murdered.
(points to parking garage)
There.

It clicks for Mayor Cross. This whole thing was to fuck with him- but he doesn't see the punchline.

MAYOR CROSS

I have no idea what you're talking about. And if I did, no court would find anything.
(a beat)

MAYOR CROSS (CONT'D)

You have a wire or something?

Garth looks over the mayor's shoulder, prompting the mayor to turn around and see- BENSON WITH A GUN POINTED AT HIM.

BENSON

We finally got you, you son of a bitch.

MAYOR CROSS

You ain't got the balls to do it!

BENSON

We know about the freeze. This here is a citizen's arrest.

MAYOR CROSS

And how exactly are you doing that?

BENSON

With force.

Benson holds out his hand and the mayor tosses his phone to him. Benson cups his hands around his mouth to make a pseudo-bull horn and squawks.

BENSON (CONT'D)

Ca-kaw!

Benson looks down at the phone, which turns on as Fez powers down the EMP. Benson holds out a pair of handcuffs for the mayor to put on. The mayor puts them on as Benson gloats over this victory.

BENSON (CONT'D)

What was it that I didn't know?

The mayor doesn't indulge. Garth opens the door to the backseat of the car for the mayor.

MAYOR CROSS

You're gonna regret this.

Handcuffs on, the mayor walks into it. Garth gets into it and drives.

Benson pulls out his pipe and tries to light it, having solved the case- but he doesn't have his lighter on him.

Benson can finally stop putting on a strong face since the mayor is taken care of. He squats down on the ground, resting, when we see Fez's shoes enter the frame.

FEZ

I didn't think it would work.

BENSON

Heh, I was 50/50.

FEZ

What now?

BENSON

Well, the city needs a new mayor. I think it's election time.

FEZ

Who do you think they'll pick?

BENSON

I think you're gonna be an irresistible candidate after this.

FEZ

You don't think?

BENSON

Yeah buddy. You got it in the bag.
"The heroes of San Bruno."

(MORE)

BENSON (CONT'D)

(a beat)

I'm just glad Tanforan is safe.

As Benson says that, Fez gives an uneasy look that Benson does not catch.

ACT FIVE

INT. BENSON'S APARTMENT, DAY

We're in a very bare, white, "male living space" bedroom. It's basically empty, save for a mattress and a windowsill with a plant. Benson, dressed in lighter colors with softer edges, opens the door, waters the plant and leaves. It's a little over a month later, and Benson has mostly recovered from the extreme strain of recent events.

We follow Benson as he does his new daily routine- buying groceries at the Mexican market on San Mateo Avenue, running laps at the park. He even stops and looks at Tanforan like he did earlier, but instead of concern in his eyes, it's relief. It really seems like he's put the detective life behind him.

(Note that when Benson runs in the park and visits Tanforan, they're full of people. The curse has been lifted! With the Mayor gone, life has finally returned to San Bruno.)

INT. MEXICAN SHOPPING MARKET, DAY

Benson shops but doesn't look as content as he did before, now he looks a little questioning.

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK, DAY

Benson jogs in the park, his face expressing some slightly growing disillusionment. He STOPS and notices something- the El Crystal bench plaque. He reads it, disturbed as he remembers El Crystal closing, and the fact that he forgot- wasn't San Bruno the most important thing to him?

INT. BENSON'S APARTMENT, DAY

Benson is relaxing and reading "Where the Wild Things Are," when the doorbell rings. He doesn't see anyone outside, but picks up a package with a letter on top. He opens the letter and struggles to read the letter, with Fez's narration taking over.

BENSON
(struggling)
As the new mayor-

FEZ (V.O.)

Dear Benson, I hope you're doing well. As the new mayor of San Bruno, the people have welcomed and accepted me.

FEZ (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I want them to do the same for you. Tomorrow is a new holiday, Democracy Day, celebrating our freedom from Cross's reign. I've sent you a statue to commemorate Ruth Samuels and her sacrifice. Please do our city the honor of installing her statue and creating official Ruth Samuels Memorial. I know you don't like the spotlight, but I think you deserve some credit for all your hard work. Fez.

Benson puts down the and opens the package, and unwraps the bubble wrapped statue to reveal- a hideous and tiny figurine of Ruth. Benson reflects for a second.

EXT. EL CRYSTAL- SAN BRUNO PARK BORDER, NIGHT

The mayor lies down on the basketball court, unable to sleep because he doesn't have anything to do all day. El Crystal is his purgatory. Unbeknownst to him, Benson approaches, setting something down before approaching him.

The mayor notices him, and gets up.

MAYOR CROSS

What are you doing here?

The mayor isn't hostile, he's just surprised. Also, his time in solitude has let him reflect on recent events from a distance, and made him needy for contact. (even if it's someone who screwed him over)

BENSON

(still shaking off seeds)
Hello to you too.

MAYOR CROSS

Are you here to kill me?

Benson menacingly reaches into his jacket and pulls out- A BEER.

BENSON

I want to talk.

A MINUTE LATER.

The Mayor tries to relax on the concrete and take a sip of beer. Benson stays up, in control but also alert- being seen here wouldn't look good.

MAYOR CROSS

So, what do you want to know?

BENSON

Why did you do it?

MAYOR CROSS

You're gonna need to be more specific.

BENSON

All of it. The murder. The plan to take over everything. Why not just be a regular mayor?

MAYOR CROSS

Things were changing too fast. Change is the natural state of things- it takes a lot of force to stop that. A regular mayor couldn't do that.

BENSON

And taking over nearby cities is stopping change?

MAYOR CROSS

I didn't want any of that. That was all Bobby.

BENSON

Prove it.

MAYOR CROSS

(thinks)

Ordinance 98.6. The "Unlimited laws" one. It only works in cities *between* South San Francisco and Millbrae. Bobby wanted to turn South San Francisco into North San Bruno, which would have killed the ordinance. I specifically asked Gavin to word it that way.

No need. Benson remembers this detail from earlier.

BENSON
 (piecing it together)
 You were building an exit. You guys
 weren't getting along.

The Mayor's expression confirms this.

BENSON (CONT'D)
 (realizing)
 That's why you took Ruth out. She
 was gonna tell Bobby. OK, so what
 was so important about not changing
 that you had to do all this?

MAYOR CROSS
 San Bruno. It's beauty.

BENSON
 What? Are you kidding me? You
 destroyed this place. You seriously
 expect me to believe you cared
 about this city?

MAYOR CROSS
 ("how do I explain this?")
 You think San Bruno is a hotel for
 tech transplants to work in San
 Francisco. No, San Bruno is the
 high school you got hit by a bus
 at, the library where you had your
 first kiss.

Something about this resonates with Benson. He remembers how
 scared he was when he thought Tanforan was in danger.

BENSON
 Seriously, no regrets? You were so
 close, if you had just cooperated
 with Bobby you would have won.

MAYOR CROSS
 Compromise is forfeit. I'd win and
 not have what I want. That's not
 victory. I lived my values.

(a beat)
 You asked if I regretted it. Not a
 second.

Benson mulls this over for a second.

MAYOR CROSS (CONT'D)
 You know, we'd have been
 unstoppable if we worked together.

BENSON

This town ain't big enough for the
two of us.

MAYOR CROSS

It's just San Bruno, Benson!

Benson starts to walk away, when-

MAYOR CROSS (CONT'D)

Wait.

Benson stops but doesn't turn around.

MAYOR CROSS (CONT'D)

I didn't tell you this earlier
because I assumed you knew.
Tanforan is on track to get
demolished.

BENSON

What?

(turns around)

The city council is trying to get
it back. And by the way, why did
you even let that happen?

MAYOR CROSS

(winces)

It was early in my career and I
made a mistake. I thought if I gave
that, I would have the political
capital to start the mission and go
back on it. But there was this
demon staffer, he rallied people
for it so there was nothing I could
do. I fired them, but they already
got this idea out, and it got a ton
of traction.

As he says this, we see brief CUTS of Fez's compound
interwoven-

INT. FEZ'S COMPOUND, DAY

It's hard to tell what's happening at first, but we start to
realize someone is tampering with the evidence corkboard.

BENSON

Well, Mayor Fez will just turn it
down.

MAYOR CROSS

No, Benson. This staffer IS the new mayor.

INT. FEZ'S COMPOUND, DAY

Cut to reveal the tamperer is Fez- and he just removed everything from the corkboard.

EXT. EL CRYSTAL- SAN BRUNO PARK BORDER, NIGHT

Benson is shocked. Fez worked for Mayor Cross and never told Benson?! And he propagated anti-Tanforan law? (Note: Fez never shares any scenes with the Mayor, for this reason)

Benson, troubled and silent, leaves. As he does, we switch to a wide shot of him walking away, and the mayor watching him, then looking down - panning as we follow- and see Benson left the statue of Ruth. Her quiet face judging Calvin eternally. In the end, Benson was able to give her what she wanted- to see the bad guys face justice.

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK, DAY

Various shots of the people of the city of San Bruno at public gatherings, living the community life.

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK, EVENING

Fez is sitting by the benches, listening to the music as he writes notes on a notepad. We can assume it's legislation/city planning. (He's no longer in the Crestmoor dedicated statue, he's sitting on the benches opposite though, indicating the transition from 'mourning' and 'sick' San Bruno to one that's moved on from tragedy. Also, this scene is definitely meant to resemble when they first met at the start.)

Benson walks up and Fez notices.

FEZ

Hey!

BENSON

Hey yourself.

Fez gets up to hug him but Benson holds frame and doesn't oblige. Fez is overjoyed to see his buddy turned into brother-in-arms, while Benson is reserved.

Benson is pissed off, but he doesn't want to play his hand quite yet. Fez picks up on Benson's moodiness.

FEZ
You came just in time! Do you have the statue?

BENSON
Ah, I forgot.

FEZ
Damn... well, what's up?

BENSON
I wanted to talk to you. Alone.

Fez, eager to please-

FEZ
Yeah, yeah we can do that.

They walk off to Beckner Shelter.

EXT. BECKNER SHELTER, NIGHT

FEZ
So, what'd you wanna talk about?

BENSON
(trying to not reveal his hand)
I was just checking in on the progress about Tanforan.

Fez braces himself; he wasn't looking forward to this. But, he has to get it out of the way.

FEZ
About that...

BENSON
What about that?

FEZ
(sighs)
We're not going through with it. It just makes more sense to turn it into housing. It's not helping anyone in it's current state.

A beat.

BENSON

And, you just found this out? Or have you known this the entire time we were working together? Since you worked for the mayor?

Ah, shit. He knows. Fez is beginning to feel really bad.

FEZ

Benson- I'm sorry. But-

BENSON

No. This whole time, you knew I didn't want this, and you used me anyway to get here! You lied to my face this whole time, guilt tripped me, and made me your personal wrecking ball! You have no moral high ground!

(optional: You manipulated me again!)

FEZ

(has to deliver a harsh reality)

Yes I do! And this is what the people wanted, and what's best for them! This isn't about the mall. It's about a healthy San Bruno- and we're so close, dammit!

(extremely frustrated; this is his truth)

We were sick for so long, and we're finally on the right track! Listen, I know you're scared of losing it, I'm going to miss it too, but this is Tanforan we're talking about! Transforming into something new every 30 years is what it does! And think of how many lives we can change with this! Standing in the way of this, is selfish.

BENSON

(weaker, faith shaken)
But I love Tanforan.

FEZ

I understand, but you can't put yourself above others.

BENSON

Cross was ten times the mayor you are.

FEZ

(disgusted)

How could you say that? You know what- this IS just like the thing from the past.

In the span of a few seconds, Benson goes from: wounded, to considering this point, realization it's wrong, and righteous fury.

BENSON

You're right. This is just like the thing from the past! Because that wasn't my fault! And hey, all this "Pheonix" stuff, is bullshit! When something dies it doesn't come back, it's just gone forever!

FEZ

I'm sorry we don't see eye to eye on this. But you will not stop the mission. Even if that means Tanforan getting destroyed.

Benson pauses for a second and turns around. Fez does so too. As he turns around he sees something miraculous in the park-

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK, EVENING

Everyone is still gathered, even though Music in the Park ended a while ago. Groups of San Brunites hanging out with each other in clumps under baseball field lights, still lively even as the light fades from the sky.

EXT. BECKNER SHELTER, NIGHT

Fez checks his watch, and confirms it's an hour past- he can't believe what he's seeing.

FEZ

Music in the Park ended. They're still out?

Fez is shocked by the beauty. The people of San Bruno are hanging out just to hang out. It happened- San Bruno has finally healed.

BENSON

I bet you haven't overturned the
freeze, have you?

Benson draws his gun and points it at Fez.

FEZ

(done with this)
I have a celebration to attend.

BENSON

You were right. This is just like
the thing from the past.

Fez turns around and sees Benson with his gun drawn.

FEZ

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

Fez clutches at his heart. His eyes roll up into his head as he drops to the ground, dead of a heart attack. The fall looks cheesy, fake, and not at all convincing, and we hear the dramatic old movie blaring horns.

LOW ANGLE ZOOM IN on Benson's shocked face, also unconvincing.

We hear people stir in the background, and Benson snaps-to and runs to his car. (This shot is in his POV, emulating the POV shot of the Mayor's murder of Ruth).

EXT. EL CRYSTAL- SAN BRUNO PARK BORDER, EVENING

The mayor stands within the confines of El Crystal in his iconic suit, finally back in his groove, looking out at Music in the Park solemnly, as if he knows he just won. (Get a shot facing him, and an over the shoulder of him behind the fence watching the people. Is he perhaps finally understanding the value of community?)

EXT. SAN BRUNO PARK EL CRYSTAL ENTRANCE

A shot of the people in the park to bookend the scene.

INT. BENSON'S CAR, NIGHT

Sweaty and in shock, Benson drives to Tanforan.

EXT. FOOD COURT ENTRANCE, TANFORAN, NIGHT

Benson parks extremely haphazardly in front of the food court entrance. He enters, and the lights of the mall are dim- Tanforan is not happy to see him. He picks up some trash and throws it away, an apology and a sign he's ready to put in the work to fix things. The lights in Tanforan get brighter, as if to say "Yes, I do!"

INT. TANFORAN MALL, NIGHT

Benson walks through the food court over to the Barnes and Noble area, to the wall of old Tanforan/ San Bruno pictures. This is going to be shot as a love letter to Tanforan.

BENSON (NARRATION)

20 years. I'm sorry I wasn't there more. I shouldn't have tried to forget. But I'm so glad I'm back baby. Being away hurt so much, I made myself forget. It worked, and I'm sorry it did. Those years without you were empty. It's like I was walking around without a heart. But I found you again, and I'm whole now. And it's hard to be here after all this time but I'm so glad I'm here, baby. I was so scared. But I'm so happy I could help you out in the end. I can't believe I almost forgot about you. I don't know if I can forgive myself. But we have twenty years to make up for lost time. I might be going away but I'll never let them take you down.

Benson exits, sits on the bench in front of the Barnes and Noble entrance, takes out his pipe, lights it, and starts smoking. The cigarette after sex. Whatever fate befalls him, Benson is at peace, knowing he saved his darling.

Roll credits as Benson smokes.

After credits, FADE IN: archival footage of 1970's Tanforan, with the text "In memory of Tanforan Mall: 1971 - 2026." The footage slowly turns from black and white to color just for the briefest moment before cutting, as the final note of the song trails before fading to black.

END MOVIE