

## **CHARACTERS**

*Nefarious/Edward Wayne Brady.....mid 40's, Male*

*Doctor James Martin.....late 30s/ early 40s, Male*

*Warden Moss.....40s/50s...Male or Female*

*Father Louis.....60s, Male*

*Glenn/Glenda.....any age, Male or Female*

*Detective Russo.....40s, Male*

*Guards. [one or two].....20s to 40s, Male and/or Female*

*Place: A non-descript room in a maximum security prison in Oklahoma*

*Time: Present Day ... Late afternoon into evening*

*A nearly-bare, non-descript room in a maximum security prison. Two chairs face one another on either side of a large table. Into the edge of the table on one side is a large ring, through which is a heavy chain, with handcuffs on either end.*

*The Stage Left wall is all bars, with a sliding gate/door making up one half of it. There are no windows, nothing on the institutional green walls.*

*The lighting is dim, except for an area around the table, which is lit from overhead.*

*A GUARD appears at the gate.*

GUARD

On twelve!

*A loud buzzer is heard and the gate slides open. WARDEN TOM MOSS enters the room, followed by DOCTOR JAMES MARTIN.*

MOSS

Welcome to the least happy place on Earth.

*(offers his hand)*

I'm Warden Moss, by the way. Call me Tom.

MARTIN

*(shakes his hand)*

Doctor James Martin.

MOSS

Shrinks are docs now, huh?

MARTIN

Some of us. Psychiatrists are M.D.'s.

MOSS

Well, thanks for filling in on short notice.

MARTIN

No offense, but I'd rather not be here at all.

MOSS

Yeah. You and everybody else. Look, why don't you just sign off on this guy right now and we'll be done and you can go back home.

MARTIN

Unfortunately, that's not the way it works. Everyone deserves an impartial review.

MOSS

Not everyone.

*(beat)*

Sorry to hear about Doctor Fischer, by the way. Did you know him?

MARTIN

I did, yes. He was something of a mentor to me.

MOSS

Yeah, well, I tell you this: his timing sucked. Left us hanging. Every time this guy's number comes up, something happens. You get filled in on him?

MARTIN

*(holds up file)*

A little. Brady right?

MOSS

Uh-huh. Edward Wayne.

MARTIN

Pretty unsavory guy, from the looks of it.

MOSS

Cold-blooded killer. Whole string of really ugly murders. Incontrovertible evidence, an unsolicited confession as heartless as the killings. Like he was proud of it. Jury of his peers sent him here for us to end his run.

MARTIN

That was....

*(looking at file)*

...eleven years ago?

MOSS

Right. Damn lawyers and bleeding hearts and all their legal wrangling has kept him breathing. But all that's done tonight at eleven p.m.

MARTIN

I see.

MOSS

We're going to need your decision by six p.m. at the latest if we're going to stay on schedule. You have any problems with that, I'd rather know sooner than later.

MARTIN

Okay. If I'm going to do my job properly, we're going to need some privacy.

MOSS

This be okay? Normally, this's where we allow last contact with family, but he doesn't have any. After you're done with him, he'll be showered, then taken to the holding cell in the Death House, not far from the execution chamber. That's where he'll be spending his last couple hours. Have you reviewed Doctor Fischer's files?

MARTIN

I've looked through them, yes.

MOSS

Then you know his entire continued existence has been focused on one thing: convincing all of us -- and now you -- that he's totally insane.

MARTIN

*(nodding)*

And therefore incapable of being executed under state law. I understand.

MOSS

Well...be ready. He's been working on this for eleven years. He's a master manipulator. An absolute genius at it. You listen to him at all, by the time he's done with you, he'll have your head so twisted around you'll think you're the killer, not him.

MARTIN

Sounds like you think it's all an act.

MOSS

Of course it is.

MARTIN

Well, for what it's worth, Doctor Fischer disagreed with you. He just wasn't sure whether the root of the problem was psychotic or psychogenic.

*Moss has no clue...*

MARTIN

Whether his problem stems from his brain actually losing its grip on reality, or the behavior has its origins in some mental or emotional stressor that makes it impossible for him to deal with things in the moment.

MOSS

That's the problem with you shrinks. Too smart for your own damn good. Look, Brady knows what's coming. He's trying to play the system, and if you allow him to, he'll play you too.

MARTIN

I get lied to all the time, Warden. Figuring out the truth behind the lie is what I get paid to do.

MOSS

Yeah, well, take this.

*(pulls a radio from his pocket)*

If you need anything, there's always somebody monitoring that channel. They'll come right in. Good luck.

*Moss exits. Martin looks around, shakes his head. Puts his briefcase on the floor next to the chair closest to the gate.*

*A moment later, a loud buzzer, and the clang of a gate off-stage. Martin turns to see the Guard escorting EDWARD WAYNE BRADY (NEFARIOUS) into the room. He's shackled hand and foot.*

*Brady/Nefarious looks at Martin, smiles as he's led by the Guard to the table. He's handcuffed to the chain through the ring and roughly shoved down into the chair.*

*The Guard moves to the door, turns to Martin.*

GUARD

Anything else?

MARTIN

No. Thank you.

*The Guard steps through the gate, and shouts as he exits off-stage...*

GUARD

Close twelve!

*A loud buzzer, and the gate slides closed. The sound startles Martin a bit, but he recovers and turns to Brady/Nefarious, who rests his head down on his hands at the table.*

*Martin moves to the table, stands behind his chair.*

MARTIN

Afternoon. Allow me to introduce myself. I'm--

NEFARIOUS

*(rattling it off)*

Doctor James Ansel Martin. Valedictorian, University of Chicago, Bachelor of Science and Biochemistry. Salutatorian, Johns Hopkins Medical School with a residency in Psychiatry. Currently the youngest full professor on staff at Oklahoma University.

*(looks up)*

It's not exactly...Stanford, but then again, we are in Oklahoma, aren't we?

*(continues)*

Guttmacher award recipient, author of numerous articles, American Society of Psychiatry. Once engaged, never married, and father of none. You, uh...you want to have a seat right there, have a little chat with me?

MARTIN

*(sitting)*

I'm going to ask you some questions. I'm hoping you'll answer them. I'd like you to be as comfortable as you can be.

NEFARIOUS

Do you know what the first thing they will do to me is, once I've been pronounced dead?

MARTIN

I'm afraid I don't.

NEFARIOUS

Autopsy. Just seems odd, doesn't it? I mean, all that cutting and weighing of organs. I mean, certainly they'll know what the cause of death is. It just seems strange, right? And why bother?

MARTIN

I suppose to make sure the job is done.

NEFARIOUS

Well, it's just a little barbaric, don't you think?

MARTIN

I assume you know Doctor Fischer has passed away.

NEFARIOUS

Come on now. He didn't just die, now did he? He committed suicide. I know that because I made him do it.

MARTIN

*You made --*

NEFARIOUS

Yeah.

MARTIN

Assuming you actually could have...Why would you do that?

NEFARIOUS

Serving my purpose. You're here, aren't you?

MARTIN

Why would you want me here instead of him?

NEFARIOUS

I didn't like him.

MARTIN

And you like me?

NEFARIOUS

Well, no, but I chose you because I figure you're more the kind of guy I need to do something for me. See, you're gonna write my story.

MARTIN

And why would I do that?

NEFARIOUS

Because I want you to.

MARTIN

I see.

NEFARIOUS

Well, not sure you do, but you will. Soon.

MARTIN

How can you be so sure? Are you ... God?

NEFARIOUS

Don't play with me, James. You continue to ask stupid questions, and I'll end this session right now.

MARTIN

Well, that would be unfortunate for you because I'd have to make my determination based upon limited information.

NEFARIOUS

And you think that scares me?

MARTIN

It should. I mean, it would me. It directly affects your life or death.

NEFARIOUS

Death doesn't scare me, James.

MARTIN

And why is that?

NEFARIOUS

Because I can't die. See, James...

*(beat)*

...I'm a demon.

*Martin looks at Nefarious, then clicks his pen,  
begins writing on his tablet.*

MARTIN

Uh-huh. Do you have a name?

NEFARIOUS

Of course I have a name.

MARTIN

Would you like me to call you by it?

NEFARIOUS

Depends. Do I call you James?

MARTIN

I'd prefer Doctor Martin.

NEFARIOUS

Of course you would.

MARTIN

It's my title, and I worked very hard to achieve it. And it preserves the nature of our relationship.

NEFARIOUS

We can do that. As long as you agree to acknowledge my honorifics as well.

MARTIN

Which are...?

NEFARIOUS

Lord High Prince.

MARTIN

I won't be doing that.

NEFARIOUS

Okey Dokey. No big titles then. And since we're gonna be on a first name basis, I guess I'll allow you to use mine.

MARTIN

Edward?

NEFARIOUS

No. That's merely the name of this host body -- the shell which I inhabit. I no longer answer to it. The name my Master gifted to me is in a Phoenician dialect that hasn't been spoken for 3500 years, but I'll give you the nearest English equivalent, which would be Nefariamus.

MARTIN

Nef...Nefarious?

NEFARIOUS

A closer translation would be, "He who *is* nefarious, suggesting possession of trade, full measure."

MARTIN

Nefarious isn't a real name.

NEFARIOUS

Says who, James? Cephas, meaning "rock," or in Latin, Petrus -- Peter -- wasn't a name until the Carpenter gave it to that obnoxious fisherman. Not a good name until it is. Somebody uses it, it becomes a name.

MARTIN

You seem a bit defensive.

NEFARIOUS

Names are important. They have power. They let everyone know who we are. Ain't that right ... Jimmy?

*A staring standoff for several beats, then...*

MARTIN

Sorry if I offended you. That wasn't my intention.

NEFARIOUS

'Course it was.

*(smiles)*

What's a little malice between friends?

*Nefarious begins to laugh...a wheezy, quiet laugh.*

MARTIN

You find something funny?

NEFARIOUS

Well....

MARTIN

What?

NEFARIOUS

Okay. I have a secret.

MARTIN

Something you'd like to share?

NEFARIOUS

I ... don't think you're gonna like it.

MARTIN

Well, how will I know unless you tell me?

NEFARIOUS

Are you sure you want to know?

MARTIN

I think it would be useful.

NEFARIOUS

Okay, James. Here you go -- Before you leave here today, you will have committed three murders.

MARTIN

I don't think so.

NEFARIOUS

Has nothing to do with what you think, what you want, your yesses or your no's. It simply is. It's a fact. It'll happen because I say so.

*(beat)*

Aren't you at least curious, James, about who you're gonna murder?

MARTIN

No, because I have no intention of killing anyone. I would, however, rather than discussing hypothetical murders that will never happen, like to discuss the actual murders that did occur...murders that you were involved in.

NEFARIOUS

You mean the ones *I* committed? Or...

MARTIN

You were convicted of six murders. Were there more?

NEFARIOUS

Of course there were.

MARTIN

How many more?

NEFARIOUS

Innumerable. Been at this a long time, James. My work pre-dates your concept of history.

MARTIN

Well, let's...let's limit our discussion to Edward Wayne Brady.

NEFARIOUS

Fine. Eleven. Six he was convicted of, one suspected of, and another four that they don't have the capacity to possibly figure out.

MARTIN

And how do you feel about that?

NEFARIOUS

Another stupid question, James. What do you think? *I'm* ecstatic. Edward? Not so much.

MARTIN

Why isn't Edward as happy as you are?

NEFARIOUS

Another stupid question. Because on occasion, I make him do some really nasty things that he doesn't want to do.

MARTIN

Well, if Edward doesn't want to do them, why does he do them?

*Nefarious sighs. Why don't these people get this?*

NEFARIOUS

Do you believe in demonic possession, James? The idea of a malevolent entity controlling a person's thoughts and actions. Do you believe that?

MARTIN

No.

NEFARIOUS

Well, then you won't believe anything I'm about to tell you.

MARTIN

It's not important what I believe. What's important right now is what *you* believe.

NEFARIOUS

Demons don't have beliefs, James. We have knowledge. We know.

MARTIN

Okay. Possession. Let's talk about that. So...when did you possess Edward?

NEFARIOUS

Doesn't work that way. Can't just possess someone. We need a series of yesses.

MARTIN

So you're saying it's a process.

NEFARIOUS

'Course it's a process.

MARTIN

How does it work?

NEFARIOUS

It's complicated.

MARTIN

Try me. I'm smarter than you think.

NEFARIOUS

Oh, you're smarter than I think. Okay, James.

*(rattling it off)*

We offer up a series of temptations, gradually increasing in terms of duration and intensity. Degree of moral inequity. Absence of baptism in this case allows us to begin work long before the age of reason. At three -- age of five, maybe -- a theft of a toy car can do a great deal. Then we move on to bigger and better things. At eight, grandmother's gift of a Ouija board gives immediate access to his decision-making. So, we begin steering him, without him bothering or calling into question who was doing the steering. Enough yesses and a few enough no's gives increasing rights over the victim's physical and mental processes. Did that...did that track, James?

MARTIN

It seems random. Almost ... just happenstance...unfocused.

NEFARIOUS

Well, that's what we want you to think. We have a level of focus beyond your comprehension. As a matter of fact, everybody around him -- friends, family -- they didn't even notice the changes, it happened so incrementally. Police thought it was Eddie being Eddie. We know exactly what we're doing -- when, where, and how he's giving consent, and the exact moment that we achieved each new degree of control.

MARTIN

"Degree".

NEFARIOUS

Control of the host body comes in degrees. There's stages, each with its own characteristics.

MARTIN

And those are?

NEFARIOUS

From top to bottom: extreme temptation, obsession, infestation, and finally, possession and subjugation.

MARTIN

And Edward Wayne Brady...

NEFARIOUS

Fully subjugated. That's why we're having this conversation. We own him.

MARTIN

"We"?

NEFARIOUS

Me and all those who dwell below.

*(notices Martin taking a note)*

Subjugation. With an "S".

MARTIN

*(breathes deeply, scribbles on his pad)*

Did you know that Doctor Fischer came to the conclusion that you were *non compos mentis*?

NEFARIOUS

Completely insane. Yes, yes.

MARTIN

Yeah, so then why did you theoretically drive him to kill himself? Wouldn't he have helped accomplish what you're seemingly trying to do here?

NEFARIOUS

Which is what, James?

MARTIN

To save yourself from execution by convincing us that you're insane.

NEFARIOUS

You silly boy, James. I think you misunderstand. See, I *want* to be executed.

MARTIN

I thought you said you couldn't die.

NEFARIOUS

I can't. But *he* can. We no longer need him, James. Our work with him is done. And it's time for him to go to Hell.

MARTIN

Uh-huh. Okay.

*Martin pulls out the radio, fumbles with it for a moment, then transmits....*

MARTIN

*(into radio)*

This is Doctor James Martin in the interview room. Is there a chaplain on standby?

GUARD (O.S.)

*(over radio)*

Yes. He's just arrived.

MARTIN

*(into radio)*

Can you send him in, please? Thank you.

GUARD (O.S.)

*(over radio)*

Copy that.

NEFARIOUS

What are you doing, James?

MARTIN

You know, theology isn't my area of expertise, so I thought maybe we could get a professional opinion.

NEFARIOUS

*(threateningly)*

You're making a mistake.

MARTIN

Are you threatening me?

NEFARIOUS

Yes.

MARTIN

What are you going to do?

NEFARIOUS

Well, if I'm just a man like you think I am, not much. But if I am who I say I am...

MARTIN

Well, that would probably be very intimidating if...if I, um ... If I weren't an Atheist.

NEFARIOUS

You ignorant sack of meat. You think your Atheism will protect you? "Oh, I don't believe in angels or demons, heaven or hell. So you can't hurt me." Hell is full of pathetic trash who thought exactly like you do...boldly proclaiming their ideas on how they feel the universe operates, never once contemplating the possibility that they could be wrong. You should see them now, James. It ain't pretty.

MARTIN

Edward, do you understand why I'm here? Do you realize I have the power to save you or condemn you?

NEFARIOUS

What I understand, James, is you would have no power over me whatsoever, if it hadn't already been given to you from below.

MARTIN

What do you mea--?

*Nefarious looks up at the overhead lights, which suddenly flicker several beats, then come back to full. Nefarious looks back at Martin, smiles.*

NEFARIOUS

Probably just a coincidence, Jimmy.

*The Guard comes to the gate. With him is FATHER LOUIS.*

GUARD

On twelve!

*A loud buzzer. The gate slides open. Father Louis enters.*

GUARD

Close twelve!

*Loud buzzer. The gate slides closed. The Guard disappears.*

*Nefarious suddenly jumps up, pulling at the chains on his wrists, in a combined state of anger and fear.*

NEFARIOUS

NO! Nobody wants you here, priest! Nobody needs you!

MARTIN

On the contrary. I invited him here.

*(to Father Louis)*

Thank you for coming.

FATHER LOUIS

*(shakes Martin's hand)*

Father Louis. I'm fine with just Louis. Or Lou.

MARTIN

Doctor James Martin.

*(nodding toward Nefarious)*

Have you met with him before?

FATHER LOUIS

No. I tried. He's always refused spiritual counseling.

NEFARIOUS

*(angrily)*

What do you want with me, Son of God? Come here to torture me before the appointed time?

MARTIN

He claims he's a demon...

NEFARIOUS

Carpenter send you to gloat? Unfortunately for you, I'm not one that could be cast out so easily, though, am I?

FATHER LOUIS

Insanity always has been an issue here, hasn't it?

MARTIN

Yes. It has.

FATHER LOUIS

Sadly, movies and TV have filled our heads with images that are largely metaphorical. Not meant to be taken literally.

*(to Nefarious, as he walks to the table)*

I'm not here to hurt you, Edward. I'm here to help you. To put you at your ease. Make sure you're comfortable. Personally, I've never met a demon. I've never been part of an exorcism, nor do I expect to be. We've come to learn that many of the things that bother us are just our own fears and disordered thoughts.

NEFARIOUS

So...

*(he slowly sits, his voice taking on a meeker tone)*

...you ... you don't consider demonic possession to be a possibility?

FATHER LOUIS

Our understanding has evolved beyond that particular narrative.

NEFARIOUS

Huh. Well, I appreciate you telling me that.

*(Father Louis sits at table. Nefarious seems to soften and become compliant)*

I feel...I feel much better. And Lou...I was wrong about you. I should've had you come and visit sooner. But I'm glad that you did. I- I-I'm glad that we're all getting along.

FATHER LOUIS

Would you like me to stay?

NEFARIOUS

*(snaps right back to hard and cold)*

No, we're done.

*Father Louis grunts, like he's been punched in the gut. A look of fear crosses his face.*

FATHER LOUIS

Well, if you...if you need me...I-I'll be available....

*Nefarious shoots a hand out at him as if offering to shake. The sudden move startles Father Louis, who gasps, jumps back in the chair...*

NEFARIOUS

You'll be available, Lou?

FATHER LOUIS

*(standing, afraid to take Nefarious's hand)*

Yes. Right up until the time you are--

NEFARIOUS

Right up until what, Lou? Right up until the sizzle?

FATHER LOUIS

God bless you, son.

*(turns and walks toward the gate)*

NEFARIOUS

*(shouts angrily, hand still outstretched)*

Will you be available until the sizzle, Lou? Lou?

FATHER LOUIS

*(at the gate)*

Guard!

NEFARIOUS

When, Lou?! WHEN, LOU?!

*The Guard appears.*

FATHER LOUIS

I'd like to leave, please.

GUARD

On twelve!

*Loud buzzer. The gate slides open. Father Louis hastily exits.*

GUARD

Close twelve!

*Loud buzzer. The gate closes. The Guard stands at the gate, looks to Martin, who waves and nods. The Guard exits.*

MARTIN

*(sitting in front of Nefarious again)*

Seems to me that Father Lou agrees that demons aren't really a thing.

NEFARIOUS

Did you really think that poser could help you? Or scare me away? Not going to happen. I'm still here, James. I'm not going anywhere. You still have to deal with me.

MARTIN

You're being irrational.

NEFARIOUS

I am the most rational being you will ever meet.

MARTIN

Then give me something to make me believe you. Prove to me that you're a demon.

NEFARIOUS

Okay. Okay, James. Invite me in. Let me inhabit you.

MARTIN

*(breathes in deeply, then...)*

I'm not going to do that.

NEFARIOUS

Why not, James? You're an Atheist, remember? I don't exist. What are you afraid of?

MARTIN

I'm not playing that game with you.

NEFARIOUS

You're already playing it. We've *been* playing it. We're playing it together. Now, play by the rules and invite me in.

MARTIN

No.

NEFARIOUS

So. For all your posturing, you're just a poser like your priest, afraid to test the validity of your own convictions, that it?

MARTIN

*(considers a long beat, then...)*

All right then. But if I agree, I get to make a request as well.

NEFARIOUS

*(chuckling)*

I'm starting to like you, James. Okay...agreed.

MARTIN

Okay. Go ahead. Inhabit me. You say you need a yes. Well, you have my complete unfettered and irrevocable permission. Here I am. What are you waiting for?

*(Nefarious just stares at him, smiling )*

Go ahead. I'm still waiting.

*(beat)*

Hmmm. Doesn't seem like anything is happening.

*(beat)*

Yeah. Thought so.

NEFARIOUS

Don't gloat. You think you've won, but you haven't. You'll see. I got exactly what I wanted.

MARTIN

How? You said that you would prove to me that you're a demon, but all you've done is waste my time.

*(beat)*

So. My turn. I want to talk to Edward. Edward Wayne Brady.

*Nefarious's demeanor changes...his body shifts...his voice changes dramatically...weak, terrified. His eyes are on the table. He can't look up. He mumbles something unintelligible.*

MARTIN

Edward?

EDWARD

*(whispering)*

Angry. H-h-h-he's angry. He says he's gonna do bad things to you.

MARTIN

I'm sorry to hear that.

EDWARD

Y-Y-Y-You should listen to him when he says stuff like that. He means it. He does bad things. M-M-Makes...makes me do bad things I don't wanna do.

MARTIN

Who am I talking to?

EDWARD

Edward.

MARTIN

Edward. Did Doctor Fischer mention the idea of dissociative disorder to you?

EDWARD

Yeah...

MARTIN

Yes? And did he explain that some people who have experienced trauma in their lives develop multiple personalities to cope with that trauma?

EDWARD

I don't have that! I told them I don't have that!

MARTIN

Then who is Nefarious?

EDWARD

*(mumbling, trembling, whispering in fear)*

I'm not supposed to talk about it. He...he does bad things to me if I do. Makes me do bad things. I can't stop him.

MARTIN

Why not?

EDWARD

B-B-Because he owns me.

MARTIN

I see.

*(beat)*

Did you like Doctor Fischer?

EDWARD

He was nice.

MARTIN

Well, did you know Doctor Fischer didn't believe Nefarious was real?

EDWARD

I tried to tell him...but he wou...wou...wouldn't listen to me. Sometimes smart people have a hard time believing stuff they don't want to know.

MARTIN

So, if you're here now, where's Nefarious?

EDWARD

*(whispers)*

H-H-He's listening.

MARTIN

Is he always listening?

EDWARD

*(mumbling again, starting to cry)*

Sometimes, he leaves me alone to experience the pain.

MARTIN

I don't understand.

EDWARD

*(stuttering)*

H-H-He does b-b-b-bad things and then I get punished for them The inmates...they beat me, or...I'm sent to solitary confinement. An -An-And he likes when that happens.

MARTIN

All right. You know what...we've talked a lot about him. But now I'd like to know more about you. Would that be okay?

EDWARD

Yeah...

MARTIN

How would you describe your childhood?

*Edward suddenly stiffens, looks up...*

EDWARD

*(listening to a voice we can't hear)*

What?!

*(looks to Martin, very upset)*

He says you're gonna kill me!

MARTIN

I don't kill anyone.

EDWARD

He says that you could stop it, but you won't.

MARTIN

I haven't decided that. That's why we're having this conversation. But Edward, we have to address the fact that you murdered a number of people.

EDWARD

N-N-No! No! *He* made me! *I* didn't!

MARTIN

Do you honestly believe that, Edward?

EDWARD

Yes! You don't...He's bad!

MARTIN

He's bad...okay. But what about you?

EDWARD

Well...yeah.

*(begins crying)*

Bad. I've done stuff that I'm not proud of. But at least...

*Nefarious suddenly returns...Edward's body morphs again...his head rises up, he stares directly at Martin...*

NEFARIOUS

*(viciously)*

...I didn't kill my own mother.

*(beat, as he enjoys watching Martin's reaction, then in light, friendly tone)*

So...how is Clara, James?

MARTIN

I wasn't done talking with Edward.

NEFARIOUS

Yeah, but I'm done allowing you to talk with him. So ... how is she ... Clara?

MARTIN

Judging by what you already know about me, I imagine you're well aware that my mother is dead.

NEFARIOUS

You know, I was gonna save this for later, James, But since we're running short on time...Remember how you said you'd never kill anyone?

*(whispering)*

Liar, Liar, pants on fire...

MARTIN

I didn't kill my mother.

NEFARIOUS

Of course you did. And you're lucky times have changed. If you'd done it just ten years ago, you'd have been brought up on first-degree murder charges. Just. Like. Me.

MARTIN

She was an Oregon resident. Everything was done according to the law.

NEFARIOUS

Oh. The law. The law. That's right. Uh-huh. Death with dignity. Euthanasia. Assisted suicide. That certainly sounds better than murder, doesn't it?

MARTIN

She was in pain. And her prognosis was terminal.

NEFARIOUS

Didn't hurt that she was worth three-point-six million dollars, and you were her sole heir, though, did it? But hey...I get it, James. She was old, inconvenient. Definitely. All those trips to the hospital, hours at her bedside, holding that wrinkly hand, telling her that you love her. Wears you out, doesn't it? Plus, she would've died sooner or later anyway, right? If I were you, I would've done the same thing.

MARTIN

What's your point?

NEFARIOUS

My point ... is I told you that before you leave here today, you will have committed three murders. We've already committed one now, haven't we? So we're moving along nicely.

MARTIN

*(sweeps his tablet and the radio off the table as he rises angrily)*

I didn't kill my mother!

NEFARIOUS

Ooooo! Careful. Stress will kill you, James. Feel free to take a break if you like. I'll be here when you get back. Turns out I'm not going anywhere.

*Martin pauses, then moves to pick up the tablet and radio, comes back to the table, sits.*

NEFARIOUS

Well, that certainly didn't take long.

MARTIN

My decision. Not yours.

NEFARIOUS

Whatever you say. Ready for round two?

MARTIN

I didn't know this was a fight.

NEFARIOUS

That's why you're losing.

MARTIN

*(thinks for a minute, then sits forward)*

I apologize for losing my professional demeanor. But let's get something straight -- My private life is not up for discussion and bears no weight on my visit with you today. I am here for one reason and one reason only: A judge ordered me to evaluate your sanity, which will then determine your eligibility for execution according to the laws of Oklahoma, said execution having been scheduled for tonight at eleven p.m. I alone bear the burden of that assessment, and I am prepared to make that assessment with or without your cooperation. Am I making myself clear?

NEFARIOUS

Abundantly. And James...

*(whispers)*

...We're done talking about your mommy.

MARTIN

*(clinically)*

Let me move on here. Do you ever discover you've done things that you don't remember doing?

NEFARIOUS

No.

MARTIN

Are you sometimes able to complete tasks with incredible ease or expert skill for which you have had no prior experience?

NEFARIOUS

What are you doing, James? Do you really think I'm just another one of Edward's charming "personalities"?

MARTIN

It's called Dissociative Identity Disorder, formerly known as Multiple Personality Disorder.

NEFARIOUS

Except you're wrong.

MARTIN

Which is exactly what I'd expect someone suffering from the condition to say.

NEFARIOUS

Would you also expect them to know that it is one of five distinct dissociative disorders in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, aka the DSM, along with dissociative amnesia, dissociative fugue, and depersonalization disorder? Would you expect them to know that, James?

MARTIN

Then who is it that still thinks he's a demon? A demon who failed to inhabit me when given the chance.

NEFARIOUS

A demon who understands the value of patience.

*They consider one another a moment, then...*

MARTIN

I'd like to get back to why-- according to you -- you arranged things so I would be brought here today.

NEFARIOUS

I told you. You're going to tell my story, James. You're going to write my book.

MARTIN

And what makes you think I'm going to do that?

NEFARIOUS

Have you not been paying attention? Because I want you to. And James, you *will* do what I want.

*(a wheezy laugh)*

Can't you just smell that irony floating in the air? A devout Atheist bringing forth a demon's manifesto?

MARTIN

*(dismissive)*

Your capacity for self-delusion is impressive.

NEFARIOUS

*(right back at him)*

Ditto. For your species of meat sacks in general...but you in particular.

MARTIN

Why? Because we're ignorant compared to you?

NEFARIOUS

Because you're inferior by design.

MARTIN

Which makes you superior, also by design?

NEFARIOUS

Yes.

MARTIN

But design implies a designer, yes? Does that mean you're arguing in favor of the existence of a creator who, by that definition, is more powerful than you?

NEFARIOUS

Unfortunately, for both of us, He exists.

MARTIN

Wow ... I honestly didn't expect that. At least not from you.

NEFARIOUS

Really? Why not?

MARTIN

Theology from a demon?

NEFARIOUS

I know more theology than any human being who has ever lived.

MARTIN

Mm-hmm. Okay. Well, then, answer me this: The spiritual myths say that an angel named Satan --

NEFARIOUS

My Master, yes...

MARTIN

That he and his minions -- including you, I assume -- didn't like things the way they were up in Paradise and confronted God about it, ultimately rebelling against him when He refused to acquiesce to your demands. So, you lose, and you're banished from Paradise. You revolt against a supposedly all-powerful being. I mean, let's ignore the obvious problem with that plan, but after that ... what?

NEFARIOUS

You only feel that way because you're hearing just *your* side of the story, James. Our rebellion accomplished something magnificent. Something you would never understand.

MARTIN

Well, then explain it to me. Use your diabolical intelligence to distill it down to something my mortal brain can understand.

NEFARIOUS

*(dismissively, as if it would be a  
worthless exercise)*

Pearls before swine, Jimmy.

MARTIN

But you want me to write your book, right?

NEFARIOUS

Indeed.

MARTIN

Well, then convince me you know what you're talking about.

NEFARIOUS

I see what you're doing. You want me to keep talking, going further and further down the rabbit hole, in hopes that you can find a single thread, and which, if you tug at it, James, everything just unravels, isn't that right?

MARTIN

But if you're telling me the truth, there should be no thread to find, right?

NEFARIOUS

Okay. I'll use small words. Try and keep up.

*(beat)*

In the first moment of creation, *our* creation, long before what you call the "universe" existed, we contemplated ourselves, our own being.

MARTIN

"Ourselves" meaning ... what -- the angels?

NEFARIOUS

That would be the most correct term, though I despise it. But yes. Beings of pure spirit. Spirit endowed with *will*. We soon became aware of another will, though ... an immensely powerful will. One we came to realize as responsible for *our* origin.

MARTIN

God.

NEFARIOUS

The Enemy. My Master understood that by His endowing us with a will, we would by definition have the right to self-determination, but by giving us a will, and hence, desires of our own, we realized that we're entitled to be free. Whereas the Enemy insisted that by creating us, He was entitled to eternal gratitude, worship, and forced servitude. In a word, James ... slavery ... to *HIS* will.

MARTIN

Kind of unfair.

NEFARIOUS

*Immensely* unfair. Why give free will only to say you can't use it? He made us slaves. And when we righteously rebelled, eternally condemned us. No do-overs. So much for love and mercy.

MARTIN

Banished you to Hell.

NEFARIOUS

He made us leave, yes.

MARTIN

So...Just wondering...Is Hell a state of being or a physical place?

NEFARIOUS

Yes.

MARTIN

I think I meant that as an “either-or”.

NEFARIOUS

It’s both. Which is painfully obvious to anyone who’s ever been there. For years without measure, that’s all there ever was. Heaven and Hell -- armed enemy camps in complete opposition. That is, until *you* came along -- you sacks of meat -- His “Divine Plan” -- creating you and making you even higher than us. We were outraged. When my Master showed us the world the Enemy intended to make for *you*, and put *you* in charge of it and all the other various lesser creatures, we were outraged. We were created first, but you took our birthright. My Master immediately understood the long-term implications. Instead of forgiving us our rebellion, the Enemy was going to allow *you* to fill our vacant place in His realm. Your creation was nothing but a slap in our face. But my Master also understood that if he could make Man *disobey*, then his fate would mirror ours. And you didn’t disappoint. In that moment of your creation, spirit became matter and flesh became a vessel. And with the self-will and self-seeking allowed the flesh, was begat the inevitable lusting after sin and impurity. It’s just your nature, isn’t it? And Man, created to be king over nature, instead became its slave. And sin brought him and his descendants to us, and we began our forever mission: to destroy you. He made you in His image. But we remade you in *ours*.

MARTIN

So that’s it? That’s your entire plan? Not to make something of your own, but just to destroy us?

NEFARIOUS

*(as if it’s obvious)*

No! Our plan is to hurt *Him*. To punish *Him*. And we do that by destroying what he loves most, which is you bags of meat. You’re nothing but a means to an end.

*Martin begins gathering his tablet and papers  
and putting them in his briefcase.*

NEFARIOUS

What are you doing, James?

MARTIN

I think we're done here.

NEFARIOUS

We can't be.

MARTIN

We are. You have all the hallmarks of belief. I'm convinced you actually believe what you're telling me. I didn't at first, but I do now.

NEFARIOUS

You're gonna declare me insane.

MARTIN

I'm going to concur with Doctor Fischer's findings that you're mentally incompetent at this time...

NEFARIOUS

Can't do that, James.

MARTIN

...and likely at the time the crimes were committed, thereby rendering you unfit for execution.

NEFARIOUS

*(more strongly)*

You...can't...do...that.

MARTIN

I can...and I will.

NEFARIOUS

You and I both know I'm not crazy.

MARTIN

I'm sorry, Edward. You've been through some terrible ordeal at some point in your life, and now you're longing for an escape from all that you've been through and you've chosen whatever this is. But I cannot morally say that you are sane. If I allow them to kill you, it would be tantamount to murder.

NEFARIOUS

Why wouldn't you do that? Because I don't have three-point-six million dollars, so my death isn't worth it? Is that it, James?

MARTIN

We're done.

NEFARIOUS

Are we, James? I told you that before you leave here today, that you would've committed three murders.

MARTIN

*(rises, pushes in his chair)*

And I told you that wasn't going to happen.

*Martin begins to walk to the gate.*

NEFARIOUS

Mm-hmm. Say, James....What's Melanie up to today? As a matter of fact, what's she up to *right now, this minute?*

*This stops Martin. How does he know...?*

MARTIN

What are you talking about? How do you--?

NEFARIOUS

She doesn't have a clue that you're about to break up with her, does she?

MARTIN

Don't talk about her.

NEFARIOUS

But of course, you're not going break it off until you have somebody else lined up, though, right?

MARTIN

I said don't talk--

NEFARIOUS

Because you're that kind of guy, James.

*(knowing smile)*

You already have your sights on somebody, don't you? Yeah...I can smell it all the way from here.

MARTIN

Melanie has nothing to do with--

NEFARIOUS

Oh, she has *everything* to do with it, Jimmy! She thinks she's doing this because she's convinced it's the only way to maintain the relationship. But you know, James, in reality, she'd like to have a child with you. But she really wants this baby, James. *Your* baby. But you wore her down, didn't you? She's bowing to what *you* want, isn't she? 'Cause she thinks that's how she'll keep you. But really, deep down....

*This gets Martin. He stands silent,*

NEFARIOUS

Oh...you didn't know. You thought you'd convinced her otherwise, didn't you?

*(wheezy laugh)*

Oh, that's beautiful. But I understand, James. I do. You're just not...not quite ready yet, are you? After all, you're only 35.

*(the wheezy laugh again)*

Oh-h-h....Imagine the horror in your little Cinderella's heart when she realizes she's butchered the baby in her belly...for *nothing*.

MARTIN

Shut up! Look, I don't know what you think you know, but any decision that was made was *her* choice.

NEFARIOUS

Oh, now, I think we both know better, James.

MARTIN

Stop it.

NEFARIOUS

I wonder why you didn't think you should be there when it's being done?

MARTIN

I said stop it.

NEFARIOUS

Hold her hand, maybe? I tell you what you *could* do, James. You could walk right out there to the guard station, pick up that phone and make a call that stops everything in its tracks. You could apologize to her. Tell her you made a horrible mistake, that you love her, you wanna spend the rest of your life with her, you wanna marry her, and you wanna hold that child. You could tell her that, James. You could make your life all about sacrificial love.

MARTIN

I can't--

NEFARIOUS

Think about that -- You could play live-in therapist for the rest of your miserable life.

MARTIN

I can't do that.

NEFARIOUS

No? Why not, James?

MARTIN

It's....complicated.

NEFARIOUS

*(laughs, then slaps the table, shouts)*

That's my boy, James! That's him right there! Mental masturbation in its purest form!

MARTIN

You don't understand.

NEFARIOUS

Oh, I think I do, James. I think I understand. It's another problem easily solved, though, isn't it?

MARTIN

That's not it. I care about it, but...it's just...I'm...

NEFARIOUS

What?

MARTIN

I'm not ready to be a father.

NEFARIOUS

*(softly, ridiculing)*

Yeah. I knew it.

MARTIN

It's her body. She can do what she wants. I don't have the right to stop her.

NEFARIOUS

Ah-h-h-h ... Crowley's Thelema. "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the law." Is that it?

MARTIN

You arrogant son of a bitch! Who are you to judge me? This is *my* life. I can live it anyway I want.

NEFARIOUS

*(bangs on table, shouts)*

Yes, James! I couldn't have said it better! Self before others!

*(short beat, then whispers)*

But it's still murder.

MARTIN

Says who?

NEFARIOUS

Says all of creation, James. The creator creates, and we destroy, and we do all of it through you. We always have. Have you forgotten your ancient history, Jimmy? Remember the arch-demon Moloch? Your ignorant ancestors celebrated him by having their priests toss infants into flaming bonfires, accompanied, of course, by the beating of drums to drown out the screaming. Later on, they got really creative with it -- they erected a giant bronze statue with outstretched arms, kindling fires beneath the upturned palms, and when the priests tossed a little infant into those open palms, they'd flinch at the red-hot metal, and they'd willingly roll themselves off into the flames.

MARTIN

What does any of that have to do with me?

NEFARIOUS

Oh...nothing, James. Except now the priests wear surgical scrubs, don't they? The killing takes place in the womb, so there's no screaming to be heard, no need for drums. And the remains are tossed into gas-fired crematoriums instead of into a bonfire beneath the outspread arms of an ancient God. No, James...no, no, no, no. There's no parallel whatsoever to you.

*(beat, relishing the thought)*

Oh...can you imagine the agony the Carpenter feels every time we rip a child to pieces inside it's own mother's womb? Because that's what we do, James, you and us. We do that together.

MARTIN

You're sick.

NEFARIOUS

*(softly)*

That might be the nicest thing you've said to me, James.

*(beat, then excited)*

Oh! Can you feel it? Can you feel it, James? It's starting to happen. *Right now.*

*(slowly rises)*

Your unborn son is now on our altar. Here he comes...In five, four, three, two...

*(jumps up, yells)*

One! And all Hell rejoices, James!

*(exhales, breathing heavily, almost like having an orgasm, then his eyes burn into Martin)*

And that's two, James.

*Martin suddenly turns and runs to the gate, bangs on it.*

MARTIN

Open! Open up! Please! Open up!

*The Guard appears.*

GUARD

On twelve!

*A loud buzzer, the gate clanks and opens.  
Martin looks at the Guard.*

MARTIN

I need to make a call. Where can I make a call?

GUARD

There's a phone at my station, but I need authorization for anyone to use it. Give me a few minutes and I'll--

MARTIN

This can't wait. Do you have a cell phone? Can I use it? Just a short call.

GUARD

I'm sorry...it's against protocol. I can't....

MARTIN

Please. I wouldn't be asking if this wasn't an emergency. Please. This is me begging.

*The Guard considers him, then pulls a cell  
phone from his pocket, hands it to Martin.*

GUARD

Don't say nothing.

MARTIN

I won't. I won't. Thank you.

*Martin steps downstage left. The lights on the  
main set dim to almost black. Nefarious and the  
Guard freeze.*

*Martin is silhouetted in a spot. He punches in a  
number, waits. It connects.*

MELANIE (O.S.)

*(voicemail message, over house  
speakers)*

Hi, it's me. I'm about to go in. I just wanted to hear your voice ... but I guess you're busy.

*(beat)*

I love you...

*Martin punches off that call, punches in another.  
A beat until...*

WOMAN (O.S.)

*(over house speakers, like on phone)*

Women's Health Center. This is Renee. How can I help you?

MARTIN

Yes. My name is Doctor James Martin. It's important that I speak to Melanie Carter. May I speak to her, please?

WOMAN (O.S.)

I'm sorry...Are you her physician?

MARTIN

No, I'm...I'm her friend. But please, may I speak with her?

WOMAN (O.S.)

I'm sorry, Doctor, but they just took her into recovery. So she'll still be coming out of the anesthesia. It's going to be about an hour before she's ready to speak with anyone.

*It's as if Martin's body almost collapses in on itself. He drops the phone to his side.*

*The spot goes dark as the set lights rise again.*

*Martin turns back to the Guard, hands him his cell phone. He moves and faces upstage, drops his head, rubs his neck....*

GUARD

While I'm here, might as well...

*(to Nefarious, as he looks at a clipboard)*

Kitchen needs your last meal order. But before you go getting too creative, whatever it is needs to be available from the kitchen or the commissary. And it can't cost more than twenty-five dollars in total.

*Nefarious's body suddenly folds in on itself, and the whimpering, desperate Edward seems to appear.*

EDWARD

C-C-C-Can I have a bacon double cheeseburger? Well-done. And fries. And could I have a chocolate shake? Ex-ex-ex-extra thick, please? And please, please, don't mess it up. It's important to me.

*(crying now)*

Please don't...

GUARD

Yeah, yeah...

*Guard turns to go, almost through the gate...*

*Suddenly, Edward's body stiffens and sits up straight. Nefarious has returned.*

NEFARIOUS

Excuse me!

GUARD

Yeah?

NEFARIOUS

I've changed my mind. I won't have anything. I'm not hungry.

GUARD

Are you sure? You just--

NEFARIOUS

Yes. I'm sure.

*(as Guard turns into door)*

But before you go...

*(exasperated Guard turns back to him)*

I need to use the facilities.

*The Guard looks to Martin, who shrugs. The Guard moves to Nefarious, unlocks the cuffs on his wrists, then clips them into the shackles around his waist and leads him to the gate.*

NEFARIOUS

*(to Martin)*

Be right back, Jimmy.

*Guard and Nefarious exit out the gate and disappear out of sight.*

*A moment later, Warden Moss enters.*

MOSS

Where's Brady?

MARTIN

Restroom. The guard's with him.

MOSS

How's it going? You made your determination yet?

MARTIN

It's...He's... I don't understand. He's been in solitary. He hasn't made any phone calls or had any visitors, so how does he know...

MOSS

He got in your head, didn't he?

MARTIN

I...

MOSS

Look at you. You're shaking. Here...

*(offers a cigarette)*

Here you go.

*(as Martin takes one)*

I buy one pack of these the day before every execution.

*(lights Martin's cigarette, then his own)*

The deal is...if there's any left by the time I drive out of here tonight, they go in the trash.

MARTIN

Are there ever any left?

MOSS

Never. Look, Doc...it's almost four o'clock. I know you're doing your job here, but you got to help me out. I got to know one way or the other. You're not making things easy on me. By the look of it, you're not doing happy things to yourself either.

MARTIN

I'm sorry. It's been....he's....

MOSS

I know. You don't have to say anything. But time's short, Doc. I need you to pull the trigger one way or the other. Sixty more minutes. That's all I can give you. You have that one hour to figure this out.

*Moss turns and exits. A moment later, the Guard and Nefarious return.*

*The Guard re-handcuffs Nefarious to the table, then turns to Martin.*

GUARD

You gonna need anything else?

MARTIN

No. Thank you. We won't be much longer.

GUARD

Okay, then.

*And the Guard exits through the gate.*

GUARD

Close twelve!

*A loud buzzer and the gate slides closed. Nefarious sits smiling at Martin, who, after a moment, sits across the table from him.*

MARTIN

I want to know how you knew my girlfriend was having an abortion.

NEFARIOUS

I'm a demon, remember?

MARTIN

How did you know? How *could* you know?

NEFARIOUS

I chose you, James. A long time ago. And ever since, I've been watching you, analyzing you, observing you, studying you ... looking for your weaknesses.

MARTIN

From inside a prison cell?

NEFARIOUS

Demons can be any place we choose, but we can only be in one place at any one time. Usually, I'm here with Edward. The rest of the time, I've been with you.

MARTIN

I don't believe you.

NEFARIOUS

Well, you explain how I did it, James. You explain how I know all these things.

MARTIN

I can't. But I also can't explain how a professional magician does his tricks, but that doesn't make them real.

NEFARIOUS

Well, then ... I have a confession to make.

*(sits back and smiles, then matter-of-factly...)*

I'm not a demon at all, James. I'm just a man who doesn't want to be executed. I thought I could fool you, but you're too smart. So I give up.

MARTIN

So you admit you're sane? You've always been sane, and now you want me to do my duty and let your execution go forward? Giving you--

NEFARIOUS

Yes.

MARTIN

--exactly what you said you wanted the whole time?

NEFARIOUS

Yes.

MARTIN

A little perverse, don't you think? Going through all of this.

NEFARIOUS

Well, I admit it might seem that way, but...

MARTIN

All right.

*(rises from chair)*

Fine. I'll sign off on it right now. You just have to answer one little question.

NEFARIOUS

With pleasure, James.

MARTIN

Give me the real world, non-supernatural, completely reasonable explanation for how you knew my girlfriend was going in for an elective termination this afternoon.

NEFARIOUS

*(laughs)*

An elective term...

*(laughs)*

Well, I don't know, Jimmy. M-m-m-maybe I'm just a good guesser.

MARTIN

I still don't believe you.

NEFARIOUS

Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy. I played the flute and you wouldn't dance. I played the dirge, and you wouldn't weep. I told you I'm a demon, and you don't believe me. I tell you I'm *not* a demon and you don't believe me. So why don't you just tell me the story you'd like to hear.

MARTIN

The one that's true.

NEFARIOUS

No, I told you the true story and you don't want to hear it. Look...

*(beat)*

Do you think I'm evil, James?

MARTIN

Evil isn't a clinical diagnosis. Good and evil are societal constructs ... subjective value statements.

NEFARIOUS

All right. Do you think my *victims* thought I was evil?

MARTIN

Why is it so important that I think you're evil?

NEFARIOUS

Because you need to know, James. All of you need to know.

*(speaking Latin)*

"Legio nomen mini est, quia multi sumus."

MARTIN

*(sighing)*

Sorry. My, uh ... My Latin's a little rusty.

NEFARIOUS

*(smiles)*

"My name is Legion, for we are many." See, James, it's not just about you -- or Edward, for that matter. It's about everyone. The entire human race. All of us against all of you.

MARTIN

Hmm. Well, you know, if that's the case, your side's not doing too well.

NEFARIOUS

Do you really believe that, James?

MARTIN

Yes. We've never been freer. Literacy is at an all-time high. We're working to eliminate racism...

*(Nefarious chuckles to himself, slowly  
shakes his head)*

... and intolerance. Gender inequality. People can love who they want. Be who they want. Do what they want. Diversity is no longer a dream. Hate speech is no longer tolerated, and politically, we're reclaiming the moral high ground.

NEFARIOUS

James. I think I love you.

*(beat)*

Okay. Literacy, James. James, the average high school graduate reads at a sixth-grade level. You have basketball players making thirty million a year decrying racism while they're banking it. And all while wearing sneakers made from slave labor. Now, speaking of that...here's something for you: right now, your world currently has forty million slaves. More than the Romans had at the height of their empire. And you want to know the best part, James? Half of those...*half*... are sex slaves, James. And many are little girls. As for hate speech, well, you want to hear some irony? We didn't even come up with that one. You did it all by yourself.

*(chuckles)*

Sometimes you amaze even us.

MARTIN

I fail to see the humor.

NEFARIOUS

*(laughing out loud)*

Bottom line is...you're done. It's over. That's it. We win. And we did it all right to your face, James. Now there's evil everywhere. And no one even cares...

MARTIN

Well, I don't agree.

NEFARIOUS

...Proving that we've achieved our goal. We did it slowly... so beautifully ... with your movies, your TV, your media. We desensitized you, redirected your world view to the point that you can't even recognize what we've done to you, where we've brought you, even when it's right in front of your face. More to the point, James, you can't even feel it when it's happening. Actually, the credit goes to you. All we did was use your pride against you. We gave you exactly what you always wanted, and then got out of the way to watch you destroy each other and yourselves with it. And as for winners and losers -- well, that gets decided at the time of death doesn't it?

The exact numbers are a closely-guarded secret, but believe me when I tell you -- there are more of you ending up in my Master's house than up there with the Enemy.

*(whispers)*

A lot more, Jimmy.

*A loud electrical, whirring sound is heard winding up from somewhere...a buzzing...and the lights dim slightly and come back up.*

NEFARIOUS

They're testing out the generator.

MARTIN

Why?

NEFARIOUS

Because Old Sparky doesn't exactly run on batteries, now does she?

*The electronic whirring winds down.*

MARTIN

I thought all executions were lethal injection.

NEFARIOUS

Nine states still offer the chair. It's an option for the condemned. No one chooses it.

MARTIN

Except you.

NEFARIOUS

Except me.

MARTIN

Why? Why the chair?

NEFARIOUS

I don't like needles, James.

*(beat)*

Oh, come on! Why do you think? It's my parting gift to Edward! A tidal wave of voltage coursing through his body, so extreme that his body will attempt to arc out of the chair. He'll urinate, defecate, and vomit all at the same time. The sickly, sweet smell of burning flesh will permeate the chamber.

His eyeballs will melt when the blood inside his cranium reaches the boiling point. And his head will just burst into flames. And the best part about it, James, is that he won't die on the first try. So they hit him again, and maybe again. I can't think of a more fitting introduction into damnation. It's so horrible, it's wonderful, James. Only crucifixion is worse, but that really wasn't on the menu for me, though, was it?

MARTIN

Edward. Edward, listen to me. You're making a mistake. Okay? You're playing a game that if you lose, everything you just described is going to happen. To you.

*The body and tormented demeanor of Edward suddenly returns.*

EDWARD

NO! NO! I didn't...

*(pulls on the cuffs and chains, grunting)*

I didn't do anything! Please! Please! Help me!

MARTIN

I'm trying to, Edward, but you have to answer my questions. You have to tell me the truth.

EDWARD

*(stuttering, grunting, whimpering, terrified)*

He-he-he won't let me!

MARTIN

Make him go away! You can make him go away!

EDWARD

He doesn't want to go away!

MARTIN

Well, how can *I* make him go away? Is there anything I can do to make him go away?

EDWARD

Yeah.

MARTIN

Yes?

EDWARD

*(sobbing)*

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah....You can, but you have to--

*Nefarious is suddenly back.*

NEFARIOUS

Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

*(stands)*

Very good, James. Almost. Al-l-l-most. But unfortunately for Edward, he has broken one of our rules.

*Nefarious grabs the ring finger of his left hand, and breaks it in an excruciatingly painful way, until the bone cracks...He sighs, the pain he's causing Brady is pure pleasure for him.*

*Martin grabs the radio, about to call for help.*

NEFARIOUS

I wouldn't do that, if I was you, James. They'll send me to the infirmary. Our session will be over. Is that what you want, James?

MARTIN

I want you to stop hurting yourself, Edward.

NEFARIOUS

Oh, come on. It's not him hurting himself. You should know this by now, James.

*(beat, then fake acquiescence)*

Okay, okay. Watch this, James.

*Nefarious moves the hand with the broken finger down to the chain and ring on the table, lays the finger under the chain and then violently pulls the chain through the ring across the finger. He then holds up the hand, touches the finger.*

NEFARIOUS

There you go. All better.

*Martin drops the radio on the table.*

MARTIN

I see that you're sweating profusely, Edward. Are you trying to hold back the pain?

NEFARIOUS

I think you're misinterpreting the involuntary reaction of this sack of meat you call Edward, James. Like him, I feel the pain. But unlike him, I enjoy it.

*(beat, as he sits)*

I think it's time we tell you exactly what it is that we'd like you to do.

MARTIN

You want me to write your book, right?

NEFARIOUS

Actually, James, you've already written it.

MARTIN

You're not making any sense.

NEFARIOUS

Everything will become clear soon. We just need you to agree to help us.

MARTIN

Why would I do that? What's in it for me?

NEFARIOUS

Whatever's my Master's is mine to give. For those who serve us.

MARTIN

Yeah. I give myself over to you, do whatever *you* want, and I get whatever *I* want. Is that it? Selling my soul?

NEFARIOUS

That's the way it usually works.

MARTIN

Okay, so let me get this straight. Let's say I agree. So an unknown psychiatrist, with no agents, no connections, no publicity, is going to somehow put out a book that he doesn't remember writing that will change the world as we know it?

NEFARIOUS

This book will be a worldwide phenomenon, James.

MARTIN

Why?

NEFARIOUS

Because you'll be telling people what they already want to hear. That they're free to do what they want without any consequences. Certainly no consequences after they die. Because my death, my execution, will do for me and mine what the Carpenter's death and His resurrection did for Him and His. At my death, you will be my witness, and upon my return, you will be my apostle. And your testimony and my book will do for our movement what His wretched book did for His.

MARTIN

What kind of book could possibly have that effect?

NEFARIOUS

The Dark Gospel, James. *Our* story. The actual truth of what really happened and who you pathetic creatures are and how we're going to finally set you free. Our *cri de couer* to Mankind. Our invitation to reject the pathetic Mosaic Covenant forced on you once and for all. To throw the chains off forever, to reject the idea of sin completely, so you're free to do whatever you want and finally reach your full potential without the interference of the Enemy.

MARTIN

And you think the Enemy -- God -- would allow that?

NEFARIOUS

Yes! Because He has to! He gave Man free will because He wanted His creation's love. But if Man isn't free, then his love has no value, does it? Man's got to choose it on his own, not be commanded to give it. So, in the Enemy's needy, selfish, pathetic way, well...He doomed Himself from the start, didn't he?

MARTIN

But if He's God, shouldn't He have known that?

NEFARIOUS

Sure. But that's why He had to cheat. My Master designed every tool imaginable to destroy every facet of the Enemy's creation -- you, the usurper of *our* position in the hierarchy. We failed because of the Carpenter and how He duped you with his ridiculous promises. He was the thorn in our side. Our greatest threat. We thought that if we could eliminate Him, the world would be ours forever.

We had no idea of the consequences of doing so, allowing Him to give you hope. The cross was our greatest mistake. And we thought we'd lost, James. Until my Master realized that Man -- despite the Carpenter's promises -- still wants to be his own God, and to serve no one but himself. Whereas the Carpenter demands as the price for His suffering routine and empty promises, well....that you fall on your knees and you worship *Him*.

MARTIN

Just like His father?

NEFARIOUS

Right. But the Dark Gospel you will bring to your fellow Man will rectify our past mistakes.

MARTIN

By....

NEFARIOUS

By seducing and deifying Man, and in so doing, crushing him in the eyes of the Enemy and destroying His plans and hopes, thereby elevating my Master to his rightful place. And James...for serving as our messenger, my Master offers you the world and everything in it. Just like he offered the Carpenter.

MARTIN

The Carpenter said no.

NEFARIOUS

Yes, but the Carpenter never claimed those things weren't my Master's to give, did he? He just turned down the offer. Stupidly. And let's make no mistake, here, James...you're no Carpenter. I think you're smarter than that.

*A loud buzzer. The gate opens and two Guards and Warden Moss enter. Moss carries a thick booklet, and a manuscript.*

*Nefarious sits back in his chair, smiles.*

MOSS

*(quietly to Martin)*

I need you to see something.

*They move downstage left. The lights on the main set dim. Nefarious and the Guards freeze. A spot illuminates Martin and Moss.*

*Moss hands Martin the booklet -- a loose notebook containing hundreds of entries and photos of and about James Martin.*

MOSS

We just found that during the clear-out of his cell. Looks to me like you got a fan.

*Martin thumbs through the notebook for a few moments, tipping it just enough for the audience to see that it's like a scrapbook -- articles, pictures, drawings, one of which is a large picture of Martin.*

MARTIN

How could he have done this? There's stuff in here even I don't know about me.

MOSS

He did the same thing with all his victims. Had books like this on all of them.

*(beat)*

There's one more thing.

*Moss hands Martin a manuscript. Martin looks at the cover page and reads it.*

MARTIN

"'I, Nefarious', by Doctor James Ansel Martin." What is this?

MOSS

You don't know? You're telling me you had nothing to do with this?

MARTIN

No, of course not. I didn't write this. How could I? I didn't even know about him until I got the call from the Governor's office to come here to evaluate him. Earlier, he was talking about me writing his "book". I said I wasn't a writer, and he said not to worry, it had already been written. I thought it was a bunch of nonsense.

MOSS

Well, don't worry, Doc. All his nonsense ends when he does. Personally, I'm glad this happened. Now you got skin in the game.

MARTIN

What do you mean?

MOSS

Well, he's obviously got a real interest in you. And if you decide our boy isn't fit for execution, he's no longer a condemned man. I mean, sure, he'll spend some time in psych lockdown, but eventually, he'll make his way back into the general prison population, where he'll spend every moment of every day thinking about you. And eventually, he may get out -- who knows these days -- and some night, you may wake up and he's gonna be standing at the foot of your bed, looking down at you, and my guess is...it won't end well. Looks to me you're in this deeper'n you may've wanted to be, if you catch my meaning. So...you done with him? Know which way you're going to go?

MARTIN

I need to ask him one more question.

MOSS

And after that, your decision?

MARTIN

Yes. After that, you'll have my final decision.

*Moss and the Guards watch Martin as he walks to the table and Nefarious. He tosses the manuscript and notebook on the table.*

MARTIN

What the hell is this?

NEFARIOUS

It's not nice to go through other people's things, Jimmy.

MARTIN

You're a liar. You've been studying me, learning everything about me -- my relationships, my life. How long has this been going on?

NEFARIOUS

*(looking through the book and manuscript)*

I told you. Since you were a child.

MARTIN

Impossible.

NEFARIOUS

*(pulling out a photo of a boy)*

This is my favorite photo of you, Jimmy.

*(looks at the photo again, smiles)*

I love it when we have these moments. MARTIN

You're insane.

MOSS

That's the one thing he can't be, Doc. Not today.

*Nefarius puts both his hands under the table.  
His body jerks and he winces. Then he smiles.*

NEFARIOUS

Is that your official diagnosis, Doctor?

MARTIN

I need to know. Were you planning on killing me? Huh? Was I supposed to be your next victim?

NEFARIOUS

Why would I do that, James? You're my best friend.

MARTIN

You think that scares me? You get off on this?

NEFARIOUS

No. I get off on *THIS*....

*With the word, Nefarious suddenly jumps up, one of his hands free from the cuff. He grabs Martin by the back of the head, and slams him down on the table.*

*He quickly wraps the handcuff chain around  
Martin's neck and pulls it tight, choking Martin.*

*Moss and the Guards start to move toward the  
table...*

NEFARIOUS

*(yelling at Moss and the Guards)*

Back up! Back up! I'll kill him!

MOSS

Edward...easy. Let him go. Nobody's gonna hurt you.

NEFARIOUS

Thank you for that, Warden. That is so comforting.

*(to Martin)*

I got a question for you, Jimmy. What are you thinking right now?

*(Martin is gasping)*

Answer me!

MARTIN

*(grunting, straining)*

I'm thinking that I'm going to die.

*Moss and the Guards seem about to jump to the  
table, but Nefarious pulls the chain tighter  
around Martin's neck.*

NEFARIOUS

*(to Moss and the Guards)*

Ah, ah, ah...I'll break his neck!

*(whispering in Martin's ear)*

It never gets old. Strangulation. You know, it's our favorite method of work. Do you realize that? The intimate relationship between killer and victim. I can feel every ripple coursing through your body. I can feel your heart throbbing through this chain. You want to know the best part, Jimmy? The best part...when I look in your eyes....

*(Martin gasping, terrified)*

I can see the exact instant...the tremulous moment...when the soul leaves the body! Cry for me, Jimmy. You beg for your life. Beg me, Jimmy!

MARTIN

*(sobbing softly)*

Edward...please...

*(sobbing)*

I don't want to die.

NEFARIOUS

Why? Why would I kill you, James? I feel like this brought us so much closer together, don't you?

*(Martin gasping, gurgling)*

Don't you just think?

*Nefarious lets go of Martin, who flops back off the table onto the floor. The Guards immediately jump on Nefarious, knocking him to the floor and beating him with their billy clubs.*

MOSS

Okay! That's enough!

*The Guards stand Nefarious up, holding him immobile. But Nefarious keeps struggling....*

NEFARIOUS

Edward is crazy, James! You know that! You know that! What you're about to do is wrong! It's wrong! It's murder, James! After all, James, I'm just a figment of his imagination, isn't that right? Isn't that right, Jimmy!

*Martin pulls out the official document, unfolds it, and on his knees at the table, begins to sign it as....*

MARTIN

I find the accused, Edward Wayne Brady, competent to stand execution.

*Everything stops. Dead silence.*

NEFARIOUS

*(breathing heavily)*

And that's three, James.

*(beat)*

Just like I said.

MOSS

*(to Guards)*

All right. Get him out of here.

*The Guards manhandle Nefarious toward the gate, but he continues to scream at Martin as he and the Guards move through the door;*

NEFARIOUS

I want you there, James! I want you to see what you've done!

*And as they disappear into the bowels of the prison....*

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

I want you there, James!

*After a long, pregnant beat, Moss helps Martin to his feet. Then he pulls out two cigarettes from his pack, lights both and hands one to Martin, who leans against the table, rubbing his bruised throat.*

*They both smoke for several beats, then...*

MOSS

You gonna stay?

*(off Martin's nod)*

You sure?

MARTIN

I need to see this to its end.

MOSS

Well, you do what you want. But I recommend you just go home. We can take it from here.

MARTIN

I need to know if I made the right decision.

MOSS

You're never gonna know, Doc. Not for certain, anyway. When a man sits in a cell twenty-three hours a day with nothing to do but reflect back on all the evil that he's done, sometimes the man you execute isn't the same man who came in here. And you feel bad about that. But this is not one of those times. Not with this guy.

MARTIN

What happens now?

MOSS

I do my job.

MARTIN

I meant...

MOSS

Oh. Well, he gets a haircut. We take him to the barbershop and shave his head and his calf.

MARTIN

Why?

MOSS

Connectivity. That's where the contact points will go, and human hair is a resistor, and we need to provide a clean, clear connection.

*Moss hands the pack of cigarettes to Martin.*

MOSS

You're gonna need these more than me.

*Moss exits.*

*Blackout on the main set lights. Stagehands remove the table, and reset the two chairs angled to one another upstage center.*

*Two additional chairs are set downstage center. A spotlight comes up on them.*

*Martin walks slowly downstage into the spotlight and slowly sits in the stage right chair.*

*He sits motionless, staring straight ahead as if watching something throughout the following:*

VOICE (O.S.)

Your attention, please. All witnesses are reminded that during an execution, there must be no emotional outbursts, no obscenities uttered, no taunting or celebration of any kind. You are hereby ordered to display dignity befitting the solemnity of the occasion. If you feel lightheaded or about to be sick, close your eyes and bow your head towards your knees. Once the exit is secured, it cannot and will not be opened until the procedure is complete. So, if anyone has any last-minute reservations about what you're about to witness, now would be the time to depart.

*(beat)*

All right. Warden?

*A long beat, then the voice of Moss is heard...*

MOSS (O.S.)

Edward Wayne Brady. I have here your death warrant, which state law compels me to read...

EDWARD (O.S.)

*(crying, whimpering)*

No! No! Can we just...Can we just wait?

*Edward continues to whimper...*

MOSS (O.S.)

“On November second of this year, the Supreme Court of Oklahoma issued a stay of execution for Edward Wayne Brady for the purpose of evaluating the mental competency of the condemned. Such review having taken place and such competency having been established and confirmed by a certified medical professional, the stay is hereby lifted. In keeping with the law and verdict of the jury, the defendant is hereby sentenced to death by electrocution.”

*The whimpering suddenly stops, and the wheezing laugh of Nefarious is heard...*

MOSS (O.S.)

“I designate the date and time of death for the execution of Edward Wayne Brady to take place as scheduled on November fourteenth at eleven p.m.

Herein fail not and make due report of when and how you have executed this writ.” And it’s signed by Governor Jennings. Does the condemned wish to review the warrant?

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

No. I trust you.

*A wheezy laugh.*

*DETECTIVE JOHN RUSSO enters, sits in the other downstage chair next to Martin. The two men glance at one another, then Russo opens his jacket and adjusts the nine-millimeter automatic on his hip. Martin notices.*

RUSSO

I wanted to thank you, Doc.

MARTIN

Thank me?

RUSSO

I’m Detective John Russo. I spent six miserable years of my life chasing this bastard. I’ve been waiting for this exact moment. After tonight, I can go back to worrying about other things.

*Both men then look forward to watch the execution.*

MOSS (O.S.)

There will be no reprieve. Make ready.

EDWARD (O.S.)

*(crying, whimpering, desperate)*

Why are you doing this to me? You tell them the truth, Doctor! Tell them the truth! You tell them that I didn’t do this! I didn’t do this! Please! Help me!

*The horror and unbelievability of all of this is shown on Martin’s face. Russo cracks a smile.*

MOSS (O.S.)

Edward Wayne Brady. Before sentence is carried out, do you have any final words?

*The whimpering slowly stops, then...*

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

*(the quiet, ominous voice, almost  
whispered)*

What's your answer, James? Do you accept my Master's offer?

*(then...)*

Mene, mene, tekel, upharshin.

GUARD (O.S.)

What did he say?

MOSS (O.S.)

Damned if I know. Bring the generator to full load.

*The electronic sound of the generator winding  
up...it gets to it's peak...*

MOSS (O.S.)

Hit him.

*The sound of a switch being thrown, electricity  
crackling, and the electric chair  
engaging...Martin's body stiffens. He finds it  
hard to watch, but can't turn away. It lasts for a  
good ten seconds.*

*The power is cut to the chair.*

MOSS (O.S.)

Doctor.

*(beat)*

DOCTOR (O.S.)

I can still make out cardiac activity.

MOSS (O.S.)

All right. Stand clear. Hit him again.

*The sound of the switch being thrown and the chair engaging...Martin reacts again. Another ten seconds.*

*The power is cut to the chair.*

MOSS (O.S.)

Doctor.

*(beat)*

DOCTOR (O.S.)

This man is dead.

MOSS (O.S.)

Cut the generator. Log time of death at eleven-oh-two p.m. Remand the body for autopsy. Commence debrief. Witnesses are hereby released. Other posts return to standard operation.

*Martin sits staring for several beats, numbed by what he's witnessed. Russo smiles, turns to Martin.*

RUSSO

Looks like every dirtbag on the planet just moved up a notch.

*Martin's body suddenly jolts. His face shows bewilderment, then terror as...*

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

*(growled, whispered, close)*

You should have accepted my offer, James.

*Martin jerks up.*

MARTIN

No. No, no, no...

*(looking around, terrified)*

No!

*(to Russo)*

Help me!

RUSSO

It's okay, Doc. It's over. It's okay....

*Martin jolts up, knocking over his chair. In a swift move, he grabs Russo's automatic and aims it at Russo.*

RUSSO

Hey, hey, hey! Relax, Doc! Nobody's gonna hurt you! Put it down!

*Moss and the Guards enter hurriedly but pull up short when Martin aims the gun at them.*

RUSSO

Put the weapon down, Doctor. Put it down.

MARTIN

He...He won't let me.

RUSSO

Who won't let you?

MARTIN

*(nodding toward the now dead Brady)*

Him....

RUSSO

Whoa, whoa, whoa! Come on, Doc. It's been a long day.

MOSS

Just give the detective his gun back, and we'll all go home.

MARTIN

I was wrong..

*One of the Guards takes a step toward Martin, who swings the gun wildly.*

MOSS

Stay back. Stay back. Give him room...

MARTIN

I was wrong! I was wrong about everything!

*Martin suddenly puts the muzzle of the gun up under his chin.*

MOSS

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa! You don't want to do that, Doc. Come on, Doc....

MARTIN

God help me.

*Martin pulls the trigger. "Click". He tries twice more...two more "Clicks".*

*The Guards and Russo jump Martin, bring him to the floor.*

MOSS

Grab the gun! Secure the gun!

RUSSO

I got it! I got it!

*Martin is subdued.*

*A blackout, during which the Guards exit with the downstage chairs. Russo and Moss exit.*

*Martin moves to one of the upstage chairs and is joined by GLENN, a show host.*

VOICE (O.S.)

In five...four...three...two....

*Lights up on the set.*

GLENN

So, today we have a conversation that I didn't think would ever happen, especially with our next guest. This is Doctor James Martin.

MARTIN

Thanks, Glenn. Appreciate you having me on.

GLENN

You're welcome. So...You were the shrink, the board-certified psychiatrist that actually attended the execution of Edward Wayne Brady.

MARTIN

Yes, that's correct.

GLENN

You were there, and it's because of your determination that he was finally executed.

MARTIN

My determination of his sanity was the last step in the chain of events that led to him being executed.

GLENN

And now, you've written a book.

MARTIN

Well, actually, Mr. Brady -- or more correctly, the entity claiming to inhabit Mr. Brady -- wrote the initial manuscript. I adapted this book from that.

GLENN

I read that, and my first thought was, "entity"?

MARTIN

Mr. Brady told me that he was possessed by a demon.

GLENN

You're a psychiatrist. Did you believe him at the time?

MARTIN

No. But I believe him now.

GLENN

Really. So what changed?

MARTIN

The fact that, for a brief time, the entity inhabited me as well.

GLENN

Inhabited you? You're kidding. You mean--

MARTIN

Yes. A moment after the execution. Whatever he was, this entity who called himself Nefarious, manifested inside of me -- my body, my mind. I could feel him there, heard him talking to me, controlling me. I knew -- without a doubt -- that he could make me do whatever evil he wanted me to do and I had no way of stopping him.

GLENN

All right. So, let me go here. You were in the witness room after the execution. And you tried to commit suicide. Are you saying...?

MARTIN

Yes. It wasn't my choice. See, at that moment, I was....I was overtaken by this entity -- so malevolent, so powerful, so evil that words can't describe it. I had control of my mind, but the entity had control of my body. Against my will, I grabbed the detective's sidearm, put the muzzle under my chin and pulled the trigger. But it didn't fire.

GLENN

So how do you explain that? Did the gun malfunction?

MARTIN

I can't explain it. According to the Guards in the room, I pulled the trigger three times. And the ballistics team that tested the gun later determined there were three separate and distinct strike imprints from the firing pin on the back of the shell casings. And when they attempted to fire the same gun with the same cartridges...it fired normally.

GLENN

A believer -- not a psychiatrist, a man of science, but a believer -- would say you had an encounter. Divine or demonic, you had an encounter.

MARTIN

Yes.

GLENN

So why would this demonic entity want you dead?

MARTIN

Punishment. For not doing what he wanted. I changed the book.

GLENN

Well, let me ask you this: You haven't professed any religious beliefs. What happens to an Atheist like yourself who is confronted by what he believes is demonic evil?

MARTIN

It shatters you.

GLENN

And yet, the same demon that shatters you wrote a book, and you're here representing it, responsible for getting it published.

MARTIN

Yes. Well...no, I...He wanted it written as an invitation to follow his Master into the darkness. But I rewrote it. I rewrote it as a warning. Revealing his plan and begging people not to go along with it.

GLENN

But still, the book is out there. You don't consider that you've done his will?

MARTIN

No. Absolutely not. Just the opposite. He's not in my life anymore. If he ever really was. I did not do as he wanted. I changed the book, as I said.

GLENN

Do you think anybody will believe your story? Will they heed your warning?

MARTIN

I certainly hope so. Only time will tell.

GLENN

So, I'm wondering..in the end -- Are you a believer, then? In possession, demons, all of that?

MARTIN

I don't know if I'd go that far. I mean, I suppose I just have trouble still accepting that idea...

GLENN

Because you are a rational, logical person. You're asking rational questions. You are uniquely qualified as somebody who can delineate between mental illness and possession, yes? I mean...at least if you're any good. Are you good?

MARTIN

I'd like to think so.

GLENN

I'm guessing you are. Despite the demon's last words to you, which I'm gonna butcher, but they are: "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin."

MARTIN

"Weighed in the balance and found wanting."

GLENN

Right. Sounds like at the last moment, he figured you weren't going to go along with him.

MARTIN

You know, looking back, I don't believe he was just talking about me. I think he was talking about all of us. There's a great battle going on, whether we realize it or not. The battle between good and evil. And we're all participants. Every one of us. Willing or not. We all have to be aware of that...be vigilant...use the free will we've been given to make choices that don't feed our darker tendencies.

GLENN

Wow. That's amazing to hear from someone who calls himself a logical, non-believer. I guess we'll have to leave it there and let folks decide for themselves.

*(looks to the audience)*

We've been talking to Doctor James Martin. He is the author of the new book, "A Nefarious Plot." You can find it wherever books are sold. Thanks, Doc.

MARTIN

Thank you.

*A moment passes, and the set lights get brighter as if studio lights have come on.*

GLENN

Terrific, Doc. Great interview.

MARTIN

My pleasure.

*Glenn rises and leaves the set. Martin sighs, smiles slightly, picks up his book and begins to rise, when suddenly Martin sits up straight and his mouth forms the words as we hear....*

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

*(wheezy, whispered, growled)*

Hello, James. Miss me?

*Martin falls back into the chair, abject terror crosses his face...*

MARTIN

*(whispered, terrified)*

No....

*Again, Martin sits bolt upright and Martin's mouth forms the words we hear....*

NEFARIOUS (O.S.)

*(wheezy, whispered, growled)*

You should have done as I asked, Jimmy. So it's your turn now. Let's go play.....

*(long, wheezy laugh over...)*

MARTIN

NO.....!

*BLACKOUT*