BAD INFLUENCE

by

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* 5/9/89 - PINK PAGES
* 5/23/89 - BLUE PAGES
* 5/31/89 - YELLOW PAGES
* 6/5/89 - GREEN PAGES
* 6/7/89 - GOLDENROD
* 6/12/89 - LILAC PAGES

* 1 INT AN APARTMENT NIGHT 1 *

Rain falls through an open window, PATTING softly on the carpet. There is the low RUMBLE of gathering thunder.

A MAN stands in front of a fan, cooling his face. ALEX is about twenty-six, handsome in a rough sort of way. It must be quite hot; he's in a tee shirt and still sweating.

The thunder BREAKS and ROLLS as Alex turns and looks around the darkened bedroom. A NAKED WOMAN stirs on the bed. She's tangled up in a sheet, sleeping the uncomfortable sleep of an oppressive summer night.

Quick images:

A COUPLE OF SHIRTS are pulled out of a closet and tossed into a large duffle bag.

A HEAVY LEATHER COAT hangs over a chair. Alex puts it in the bag.

CLOSE ON a photograph tucked in the corner of the bathroom mirror. Alex and the Woman in Bed are on the shooting range of what looks to be an upscale gun club, holding shotguns. The Woman is smiling at the camera, Alex appears unaware of the photographer.

He snatches up the photo and tosses it into the duffle bag.

ALEX'S HAND moves across the bathroom sink, picking up a toothbrush, a razor, a comb. He puts these in a backpack, smaller than the duffle.

Alex stands in the doorway and looks over at the Woman in Bed. She stirs in her sleep again. As we look back to the doorway --

-- Alex is gone.

CUT TO:

* 2 EXT STREET DAWN 2 *

The sun is just coming up on a downtown street in the middle of a large Eastern city. It's still pouring rain and the street is wet, ugly, industrial.

WORKERS load trash in the back of a garbage truck. They dump the last can and throw the lever to start the compacter.

ALEX walks past the truck. He flips the duffel bag high, over the heads of the Workers. It lands in the back of the truck and is immediately CRUNCHED by the heavy metal teeth.

Alex continues down the street, backpack over his shoulder.

CUT TO:

3 OMITTED 3

4 EXT LOS ANGELES DAY 4

Downtown. Buildings, freeways, smog.

CUT TO:

* 5 INT A RECEPTION AREA DAY 5 *

An incredibly busy place. WORKERS scamper officiously in and out past the RECEPTIONIST, who monitors the BEEPS and WHISTLES of a busy phone system. A sign behind her announces the firm of "Maas, Collins & Wilbur."

RECEPTIONIST
Maas, Collins & Wilbur, please hold.
(another line)
Maas, Collins & Wilbur, please hold.
(another line)
Maas, Collins & Wilbur, good morning.
Mr. Boll? One moment.

She punches a button.

CUT TO:

6 INT MICHAEL BOLL'S OFFICE DAY 6

LESLIE is about thirty-five, earthy, wearing a blousy cotton dress and large, bizarre earrings. There's an openness in Leslie's face; she exudes warmth and sincerity.

Right now she's sitting at a large computer terminal -- uptight. She looks at her BUZZING phone in annoyance and answers it.

LESLIE
Michael Boll's office. Um, can he call you back? Thanks.

* She hangs up and looks at the computer in frustration. *

CUT TO:

7 INT BATHROOM DAY 7

MICHAEL BOLL is in his late twenties, conventionally handsome, bespectacled. Most striking is his careful grooming -- his natty suit and close-cropped hair give an impression of order and consistency.

Right now he looks ill -- pale, sweaty, fragile. He splashes water over his face and studies himself in the mirror, trying to gain composure.

* MICHAEL *
(a mumble)
I will not be sick. I will not be sick.

He takes a deep breath, steels himself, and opens the door.

CUT TO:

8 INT MICHAEL'S OUTER OFFICE DAY 8

MICHAEL comes across the hall from the bathroom and stops at Leslie's desk, which is in his outer office.

He leans over LESLIE at the computer terminal.

MICHAEL
Did you run a directory?

LESLIE
Twice. It's just gone.

MICHAEL
Try running a tree.

LESLIE
Um -- a what?

MICHAEL
A tree. It shows everything in the whole system.

LESLIE
(news to her)
Oh.

MICHAEL
Leslie, do you read the manuals I put on your desk?

LESLIE
I intend to.

MICHAEL
Let me try it.

She moves aside and he types in a few commands, attacking the keyboard like Beethoven.

LESLIE
I hate computers. My ex-husband said computers were --

MICHAEL
It is gone. You must have erased it. It's not in the system.

LESLIE
I didn't! Honestly!

MICHAEL
Well, it's not here.

LESLIE
It wasn't me! Swear to God!

MICHAEL
(struck by a thought)
Fenwick.

He strides out of the office briskly.

CUT TO:

9 INT ANOTHER OFFICE DAY 9

MICHAEL comes into an outer office and approaches BRITT, a secretary, businesslike as hell. As Michael speaks to her, his tone rises in anger and panic.

MICHAEL
I have to see Fenwick.

BRITT
He's in a meeting, Michael.

* MICHAEL *
The third quarter schedule forty-seven -- it's gone. Off the computer. The back file too.

BRITT
Well, I don't have it.

MICHAEL
It had seventy million in currency purchases outlined and it's gone. The only people who have access to that file are you, me, and --

The door to the office behind Britt opens and FENWICK steps out. Fenwick is in his late twenties -- handsome, expensive suit, slicked back hair. He puts a file on the desk in front of Britt.

FENWICK
What's going on?

MICHAEL
Put it back.

FENWICK
Put what back?

MICHAEL
The schedule forty-seven. It's gone. I have to trade from it Monday morning and I can't possibly do another one by then. Just put it back.

FENWICK
(sympathetic)
Look, Michael, if you didn't get the forty-seven done in time, I'm sure I can get Howard to pull me off what I'm doing and give you a hand. Why don't I go up and talk to him and --

MICHAEL
You sabotaged me, you son of a bitch. You're trying to make me look bad in front of Howard, and we both know why. Just put it back!

FENWICK
(soft, hard)
Look -- I don't know what you're talking about and I'm in a meeting.

He turns and goes back into his office, closing the door behind him. Michael watches him go, powerless.

CUT TO:

10 INT MICHAEL'S OUTER OFFICE DAY 10

MICHAEL returns to his office. LESLIE is at the outer desk.

LESLIE
Did you find it?

MICHAEL
No calls, okay?

He heads into his office.

LESLIE
Michael -- Michael, your --

But he closes the door on her.

CUT TO:

11 INT MICHAEL'S OFFICE DAY 11

MICHAEL leans against the closed door, visibly drained. Someone in the office SPEAKS and he jumps a foot.

RUTH
Forget it was Thursday?

Michael looks over at RUTH FIELDING, mid-twenties, blonde, pretty in a boring sort of way. She is impeccably dressed in a conservative business suit, not really much different from Michael's. A briefcase hovers at her side like a small child.

MICHAEL
You scared me.

RUTH
Sorry. Are you ready for lunch? I have to get back.

MICHAEL
Lunch? Oh, God.

RUTH
You're not going to cancel?

MICHAEL
I'm not -- feeling very well.

RUTH
(checks her watch)
That's fine.
(realizing)
I mean -- it's not fine that you're sick. But I should work through lunch.

She goes to him and touches his forehead tenderly.

RUTH (cont.)
You are hot. Think you'll feel up to dinner with my parents tomorrow?

MICHAEL
Yes. Of course. I want to.

RUTH
I know they're kind of a drag, but they have been sweet about the wedding arrangements. Which reminds me -- I'm having second thoughts.

MICHAEL
What?

RUTH
Oh God, that sounded terrible. No, I just meant that October might not be good for me. How's November for you?

MICHAEL
Fine. November's fine.

She puts her arms around him.

RUTH
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to scare you.
(kissing him)
I absolutely, positively want to marry you.
(another kiss)
This year.
(another kiss)
And I absolutely, positively want to have a baby.
(another kiss)
Next year.

Michael is hit by a bolt of pain in his stomach. He doubles over.

MICHAEL
Ah! Oh, Jesus!

RUTH
What is it?

MICHAEL
My stomach!
(another stab hits him)
Oh, Christ! It's like I can't breathe!

She helps him to the sofa. He holds his stomach, trying to catch his breath but unable. He gets panicky.

MICHAEL (cont.)
I can't -- I can't --

RUTH
Just take it easy, Michael. Take it easy.

He breathes deeply a few times, trying to settle down.

RUTH (cont.)
Do you want me to call my father at the hospital?

This seems to make it worse. Michael puts his head between his knees.

RUTH (cont.)
Okay! I won't! It's okay -- breathe -- breathe.

He does. Calmly. He begins to return to normal.

RUTH (cont.)
Better?

Michael nods. Ruth stands and SIGHS.

RUTH (cont.)
Michael, I know you better than you know yourself --

He doesn't answer, just gets to his feet and staggers to the window, which is twenty floors up. He stares out, not really listening to her. Across the street is a large parklike area with black patches here and there.

RUTH (cont.)
-- and I just know these attacks of yours are work related. They have to be. You put yourself under too much stress.

Michael looks up, higher. Off in the distance, he can see the vibrant blue water of the Pacific Ocean, shining like diamonds in the afternoon sun.

RUTH (cont.)
You're not even thirty, and you're going to be named senior analyst.

MICHAEL
(correcting her)
Someone is going to be named senior analyst.

RUTH
Oh, you know it'll be you. You're successful, for God's sake. Try to relax and enjoy it. Christ, I have to get back now.

She moves for the door. Michael continues to stare at the water -- shimmering, beckoning.

RUTH (cont.)
Michael?

He turns back to her.

RUTH (cont.)
Call me tonight?

MICHAEL
Sure.

She leaves. He turns back to the window.

CUT TO:

* 12 EXT BEACH DAY 12 *

* A BOTTLE OF BECK'S BEER plunks down into the sand on the beach. MICHAEL plunks down next to it, still dressed in his business suit.

He sips the beer, looks out at the ocean, and tries to relax, without much success.

He looks around him. Nearly everyone in the immediate vicinity is staring at him; they in their swimwear, he in his office wear. He forces an uncomfortable smile.

CUT TO:

* 13 INT BEACH BAR DAY 13 *

A HAND spins an empty shot glass on a tabletop in a dark beachfront bar. A WAITRESS bends down and speaks to the unseen CUSTOMER.

WAITRESS
(flirtatious)
Sure I can't get you something else?

Behind her, MICHAEL comes into the bar, squinting as his eyes adjust to the darkness. He sits on a stool at the bar and looks around. The place isn't so much seedy as lived-in. Sea memorabilia hang from the walls; sand has
* been tracked in on the floor. The Waitress walks behind * the bar and sets down her tray.

* MICHAEL *
(to the Waitress)
Beer.

She gets the beer. Michael gives her a ten and leaves his wallet on the bar. As he drinks, an attractive young WOMAN dressed in business clothes comes into the bar, looking harried as hell. She sits on a stool two down from Michael.

WOMAN
Bourbon and water.

* The Waitress turns to get the drink. The Woman starts digging through her purse, looking for her wallet. Michael watches surreptitiously as she MUMBLES, getting more and more frustrated. *

The Waitress returns with the drink.

WAITRESS
Two seventy-five.

WOMAN
I can't find my damn wallet.

She upends the purse on the bar. Michael catches the Waitress's eye and holds out three singles. The Waitress takes the money and rings it up.

The Woman looks up.

WOMAN (cont.)
(to Michael)
Thanks.

Michael nods. She drinks, slugging back almost half the bourbon.

Michael sips his beer, summoning his nerve.

MICHAEL
Looks like you're having the same kind of day I am.

WOMAN
For your sake, you'd better hope your day is <u>nothing</u> like mine.

Pause.

MICHAEL
Supposed to be at the office, huh?

WOMAN
Yeah.

Michael nods understandingly, trying to foster a sense of complicity between them. She downs the rest of her drink in one gulp.

Pause.

MICHAEL
Should have gone to Disneyland.

WOMAN
Huh?

MICHAEL
You know. Disneyland. Just take off, right from the office. That's what we both should have done.

She raises an eyebrow. Not the response he'd hoped for, but he's in this far, so --

MICHAEL (cont.)
When I was a kid, I wanted to get off the boat in the middle of Pirates of the Caribbean. You know, and just live there.

She gives him a tight lipped smile, then her face goes completely pale.

WOMAN
Son of a bitch.

She's looking at something over Michael's shoulder. He turns. A MAN stands in the doorway -- thirtyish, tan, dressed in jeans.

The Man walks into the bar. He steps up between the Woman and Michael. He speaks to the Woman calmly.

Too calmly.

MAN
You can't just walk away from this, Karen.

WOMAN
Not -- here.

The Man notices Michael is staring. He looks him up and down, then turns back to the Woman.

MAN
What's he looking at?

WOMAN
Take it easy, Willie. He's just some drip.

MICHAEL
Now wait one second here!

WOMAN
He just bought me a drink.

The Man does not like this. He turns to Michael.

MAN
Why don't you take a hike, pal?

Michael looks at him, hard. He talks tough, but his voice trembles a little.

MICHAEL
This is a public bar. I can have a drink here.

The Man looks away and sighs. Then in one quick motion, he snaps back toward Michael, wraps one arm around his neck in a headlock and pulls him forward, off the stool.

WOMAN
Jesus, Willie, not again!

As the stool CLATTERS to the floor, the Man shoves Michael's head down on the bar. He pushes down, hard, mushing Michael's face into the bar.

Several heads turn in the bar. From the front corner, the CUSTOMER in the booth stops the spinning shot glass.

The Man presses Michael's face into the bar even harder, speaking softly and menacingly.

MAN
You should have taken a hike, pal. Now it's too late.

Michael tries to speak, but can barely move his mouth.

The Customer walks across the room and sets the shot glass on the bar. He picks up the beer bottle which is sitting next to Michael's wallet. He pours the rest of the beer into a glass, then SMASHES the bottle on the end of the bar.

Every eye in the place turns toward --

-- ALEX. He holds the broken bottle out menacingly.

ALEX
(to the Man)
Back off.

MAN
Yeah? What are you gonna do?

ALEX
(smiles)
Let's find out.

The Man thinks for a second, then releases his hold on Michael's neck, grabs the Woman's arm, and drags her out the back.

Michael straightens up. He turns around to thank Alex, but Alex is already gone. The door to the bar stands open.

CUT TO:

* 14 EXT BEACH BAR DAY 14 *

MICHAEL comes out of the bar and looks up and down the street. Alex is nowhere to be seen.

CUT TO:

15 OMITTED 15

16 OMITTED 16

17 EXT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT BUILDING DAY 17

A newish four story apartment building stands in contrast to the older mid-Wilshire neighborhood that surrounds it.

* The security gate to the building's garage slides open with an electronic WHIRR. MICHAEL'S CAR whizzes down the road and disappears into the garage. *

The gate closes after it.

CUT TO:

* 18 INT GARAGE FOYER DAY 18 *

A COUPLE argues in the garage foyer. MICHAEL enters.

MAN
There's nothing going on! I work with her, for Christ's sake. I can't be rude to her.

WOMAN
You could! You could if you loved me!

MAN
We're not even to the car yet and you're fighting already. Do you want to have dinner or not?

Michael goes past them, to the elevator.

CUT TO:

19 INT MICHAEL'S HALLWAY DAY 19

MICHAEL gets off the elevator and walks down the hallway to his apartment, carrying his mail. An attractive WOMAN IN SWEATS is unlocking the door to an apartment. She carries groceries. She sees MICHAEL and is flirtatious.

WOMAN IN SWEATS
Hi, Mark!

MICHAEL
(for the fiftieth time)
It's Michael.

* WOMAN IN SWEATS *
Oh, right! I knew that. I knew that.

Michael continues down the hallway to the next apartment.

CUT TO:

20 INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT DAY 20

His apartment, like him, is well ordered and well furnished. A desk with a computer is set up on one side of the living room, part of a work area. A climbing
* exercise machine stands in a corner. There's lots of * expensive stereo equipment, a big television, a VCR, a video camera on a tripod, and other gadgets.

It's obviously the home of a single, successful apartment dweller -- anyone with a family or a larger place could never afford such toys.
* *

Michael punches a button on his answering machine and listens to his messages while he flips through his mail.

* MAN'S VOICE *

Michael, it's Howard. Fenwick seems to think there's some problem with the schedule forty-seven. That's not true, is it? Where were you this afternoon?

BEEP. Michael opens an envelope that contains a new Diner's Club card. He snaps it out of its cardboard wrapper.

* RUTH'S VOICE *

Hi sweetheart. Just wanted to see if you were feeling better. Call me later, okay?

* Holding the credit card, Michael reaches to his back * pocket for his wallet, but it's not there. He quickly feels his other pockets, then CURSES, remembering he left it at the bar.

BEEP. A very tentative man's VOICE comes on the the machine.

VOICE

Hello? It's Pismo. Are you there? I have to ask you something.

Michael GROANS at the message. He drops the credit card on the table.

* VOICE (cont.) *
I'm comin' over.

CUT TO:

* 21 INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT DAY 21 *

A FACE. Giant. On the television screen. Michael's video camera is set up on a tripod. PISMO BOLL, mid-thirties, a pasty, frightened version of Michael, mugs into the lens, making faces and turning slowly from side to side, watching himself on the screen.

MICHAEL comes out of the bedroom in his stocking feet, pulling on a sweatshirt. He searches the room for his shoes.

PISMO
(of the camera)
When did you get this?

MICHAEL
I don't know. Couple weeks ago.

PISMO
Why did you get this?

MICHAEL
It was on sale.

PISMO
Do you need it?

MICHAEL
That's not the point.

PISMO
Better give it away to somebody.
Cut your losses.

Michael looks at him.

MICHAEL
That doesn't make sense.

PISMO
Of course it doesn't. Your life makes too much sense already. At this rate you'll have a home espresso machine by the end of the year.

Michael throws a quick look to the kitchen.

MICHAEL
What did you have to ask me? I gotta go.

Still not having found his shoes, he goes up the stairs to a loft area above. Pismo follows.

CUT TO:

21A EXT DECK DAY 21A

MICHAEL comes through the loft and out a sliding glass door, onto a fourth floor deck. Several tall office buildings are visible in the immediate area. Michael finds his running shoes on the ledge and bangs the dirt out of them.

PISMO
What's the rush all the time?

MICHAEL
I left my wallet at the beach.

PISMO
Hmmm -- better get your credit cards back. Might not be able to charge any more video cameras.

MICHAEL
I really have to go, Pismo. What do you need to ask me? You need money again?

Michael sits down and laces up the shoes.

PISMO
Why do you immediately assume I need money?

MICHAEL
Do you?

PISMO
Yes.

MICHAEL
Fine. I'll write you a check.

He goes to the door. Pismo follows and cuts him off.

PISMO
You know what drives me nuts? You don't respect me. I'm your older brother, your only brother, and you don't respect me.

MICHAEL
Oh, no. Don't start this.

PISMO
It's true!

MICHAEL
I just think you could do better, that's all.

PISMO
Does that mean I have to? Just because I could? And who says I could, anyway? I couldn't get a decent job to save my life, and you know perfectly well why.

MICHAEL
Pismo, it was eight years ago! Six months for possession? Nobody gives a damn.

PISMO
It was dealing, and these people don't forget. Hey, I'm out there trying. I see the looks on their faces.

MICHAEL
You are not out there trying. You hardly leave your apartment.

PISMO
My business is in my home. And you're no better. You live here --

He gestures to a tall black building in the distance.

PISMO (cont.)
-- you work there, and you eat down there. Your world's no bigger than mine.

MICHAEL
At least I answer my phone.

PISMO
I like to screen my calls.

MICHAEL
Nobody calls you but me. Look, do we have to do this every single time I loan you money? It's no big deal, okay? I'll write you the check.

He goes out the door. Pismo sighs.

CUT TO:

* 21A INT BEACH BAR DAY 21A *

MICHAEL is at the bar in the beach pub he was in that afternoon. The same WAITRESS is there, but the place is busier.

WAITRESS
I'll call you if it turns up. But don't hold your breath.

CUT TO:

* 22 EXT FISHING PIER DAY 22 *

MICHAEL comes out of the bar. He jogs off, past the pier and down the boardwalk. The sun is just setting behind the pier.

CUT TO:

23 EXT BOARDWALK DAY 23

MICHAEL runs along the boardwalk, past HOMELESS people, ROLLER SKATERS, and a group of PEOPLE lingering and laughing outside a sidewalk cafe. He doesn't seem to notice any of it.

He reaches the far end of the boardwalk and turns around, heading back the other way.

CUT TO:

24 EXT FISHING PIER NIGHT 24

MICHAEL returns, finishing his run. He's really hauling ass now, sprinting for all he's worth. It hurts, you can just see how much it hurts, but he pushes himself, running past a Jaguar XKE now parked at the entrance to the long concrete fishing pier.

He breaks stride and turns onto the pier, slowing to a walk, hands on hips, catching his breath.

At the end of the pier is a small wooden building, a fishing supplies store. Coming around it, Michael startles a COUPLE embracing.

* A STYLISH EURASIAN WOMAN in her thirties, pretty, well dressed, is facing Michael. She looks up, annoyed at being interrupted. The MAN doesn't turn around. *

Michael turns, embarrassed, and stares out at the water. He can hear snatches of their conversation.

STYLISH WOMAN
I want to. I'm happy to.

MAN
Thanks.

Michael turns over his shoulder and sees the Stylish Woman hand the man an envelope. She kisses him, then turns and walks away down the pier, her heels CLICKING.

Michael turns around. The Man, still with his back turned, stuffs the envelope in his jacket pocket. He looks out at the ocean.

MICHAEL
Sorry. I didn't think anyone was out here.

The Man turns around.

It's ALEX.

ALEX
Don't worry about it.

MICHAEL
Hey, it's you.

Michael steps forward. Alex steps back.

ALEX
You know me?

MICHAEL
Today, in the bar. You saved my ass.
(putting out his hand)
I'm Michael.

Alex remembers. He shakes, looking Michael up and down.

MICHAEL (cont.)
Why'd you take off so fast? I wanted to buy you a drink.

ALEX
I didn't want to stick around for the "thank you's".

MICHAEL
Well, thank you anyway.

ALEX
What did I just say? Nobody ever listens.

A pause.

Alex turns and stares out at the water again. Michael racks his brain, searching for something to say.

* MICHAEL *
You live around here?

* ALEX *
Not really.

Alex continues to stare at the sea. Michael watches him for a second, then turns to go. Alex calls after him without turning around.

* ALEX (cont.) *
Why didn't you back down?

MICHAEL
What?

* ALEX *
In the bar. Guy told you to take a hike. Why didn't you?

* MICHAEL *
I don't know. It was like there was this little guy inside me that said "stand your ground." I usually don't listen to that guy, but today I did. That sounds stupid, I suppose.

ALEX
I'm like that. Except I always listen to him.

Michael laughs.

ALEX (cont.)
Name's Alex. Hey, you want to get a beer?

MICHAEL
No, I really can't.

CUT TO:

25 INT SECOND BEACH BAR NIGHT 25

MICHAEL and ALEX sit at a bar. Not much of a crowd. There are a few empty glasses in front of them and it's obvious they're a bit drunk.

MICHAEL
He's a conniving bastard, that's what he is. And he gets ahead. That's what pisses me off.

ALEX
Of course he gets ahead. That's the way it works and he knows it. He pulled that stunt today to show you he could. That you'd let him get away with it.

MICHAEL
Just because he's childish doesn't mean I should --

ALEX
Childish? He's sitting pretty at the office, you're sitting in a bar calling him names. I'd call you the little kid.

MICHAEL
Maybe. But I refuse to lose my dignity over a computer file.

ALEX
You already have. And it won't be a computer file next time. It'll be your biggest account. Or your girlfriend. And you won't do anything about that either. Same principle, just a bigger scale. He understands that. I like this guy. What's his name?

MICHAEL
Fenwick.

Alex lifts his glass in toast.

ALEX
To Fenwick.

Michael looks at him, dumbfounded.

ALEX (cont.)
Come on. To Fenwick.

Shaking his head, Michael lifts his own glass and CLINKS it up against Alex's. As he raises it to his mouth, Alex's hand suddenly darts out and he SLAPS the glass from Michael's hand. It CRASHES to the floor, sending shards of glass flying all over.

BARTENDER
Hey!

PATRONS look up, surprised and annoyed.

Alex grabs Michael by the collar and pulls his face close.

ALEX (cont.)
Don't you ever. Don't you ever. What kind of man are you, that you drink to your enemies?

MICHAEL
Let go of me.

He looks around nervously. People are staring.

MICHAEL (cont.)
Come on, this isn't funny.

Alex still holds him. Michael shakes him off roughly. Alex smiles at the slight violence in Michael's gesture.

ALEX (cont.)
There. Show Fenwick that face. Beat him at his own game.

Alex grins at Michael, then starts to laugh. Michael, after a moment, drops his petulant face and smiles too.

Alex looks down at a copy of the "L.A. Reader" that he has folded open to the personal ads.

The Bartender puts the bill on the bar in front of them, a broad hint. Michael feels his pockets.

MICHAEL
I, uh -- don't have any money.

ALEX
Don't worry about it.

He reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out the envelope the Older Woman gave him. He pulls a wad of cash out of it, pays the bar bill, and pockets the rest.

He looks back at the paper, apparently finding what he was looking for.

ALEX (cont.)
Hey, you going into town?

MICHAEL
Uh -- yeah.

ALEX
Good. There's a band I'd like to see.

MICHAEL
Oh, no. I can't.

ALEX
Come on. I get the feeling you don't get out much.

MICHAEL
Sure I do. I just have to be up early. I honestly can't.

CUT TO:

* 25A EXT AN ALLEY NIGHT 25A *

MICHAEL and ALEX walk down a deserted alley. A GUY sits on top of a garbage can next to a door. He looks to be doing nothing at all. Alex steps up to him.

ALEX
Dominant, athletic woman.

The Guy gets up and opens the door. MUSIC pours out of the building. Alex leads Michael inside.

CUT TO:

26 INT CLUB NIGHT 26

A crowded, raucous club. MICHAEL and ALEX make their way through the wired, frenetic crowd. A BAND is playing at the front, loud. Their music is jarring and discordant. The crowd loves it. Michael SHOUTS in Alex's ear.

* MICHAEL *
Who are these guys?

* ALEX *
(band name)

* MICHAEL *
I kinda like 'em!

* Alex gives Michael a "sure you do" look and leads him to the bar. At the bar, a BURLY BARTENDER fills orders. He turns to the Guy in front of Alex, a chicly dressed CLUBGOER. He points to a navy medal on the Clubgoer's shirt.

* BARTENDER *
You in the navy?

* CLUBGOER *
No, not exactly.

* The Bartender reaches out and TEARS the medal off, taking a chunk of the shirt with it.

* BARTENDER *
My brother's in the navy. He can wear that. You can't.

* Michael is shocked, as is the Clubgoer. Alex smiles and steps forward. He signals for two beers.

Michael looks around. At the other end of the bar is CLAIRE, about twenty-one, dark, wearing a carefully cultivated Dangerous Character look. She drinks a beer with a friend, a lady ROCKER in a leather jacket.

Michael taps Alex and tilts his head in the direction of the Women at the end of the bar. Alex grins. The drinks arrive. Alex nudges Michael forward, toward the Women. Michael resists. Alex nudges again and Michael finds himself next to Claire.

Michael, terribly uncomfortable, says something to Claire but it is mostly lost under the band. She turns and looks at him. He smiles feebly. She turns back to her friend. Michael walks back to Alex.

* ALEX *
You didn't use the Disneyland line, did you?

Michael shrugs. Alex walks over to Claire. He says something in her ear. She laughs. The Lady Rocker looks at Michael fiercely.

Alex grabs Claire's hand and leads her out onto the packed dance floor.

Michael looks at the Lady Rocker with apprehension. He smiles. She holds up her empty shot glass and raises an eyebrow at him expectantly.

Michael understands. He signals to the Bartender, points to the empty shot glass, and holds up two fingers.

The shots are delivered. The Lady Rocker tosses hers back in one gulp. Michael watches and does the same.

BARTENDER
HEY PAL!

Michael looks at the Bartender, who gestures for money, holding up five fingers. Michael remembers he has no money.

MICHAEL
WAIT A SECOND!

He looks around for Alex, but can't see him. He turns back to the Bartender, who is growing annoyed.

MICHAEL (cont.)
I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

Michael goes out onto the dance floor, which is jammed with people -- sweaty, seething. The music isn't right, but the crowded conditions are producing a kind of slam dancing, and Michael is buffetted around as he searches for Alex.

Nowhere to be seen. Michael takes a few hard knocks from out of control dancers. He absorbs them and continues on.

ACROSS THE CROWD,

he sees the Bartender coming out onto the dance floor, following him.

Michael takes a particularly hard shot, almost knocking him over. Briefly enraged, he SLAMS the nearest person. Then he's slammed again, and soon he's CRASHING into people with everything he's got -- getting into it.

The Bartender draws close. Michael sees him and plows through the crowd to the exit.

CUT TO:

27 EXT BAR NIGHT 27

The street is empty and quiet, then the door bursts open, letting out a flood of NOISE -- and Michael. The door slaps shut behind him and all is abruptly quiet again.

Michael stands on the sidewalk, breathing heavily, sweating, spinning.

He turns and walks toward home.

CUT TO:

28 INT MICHAEL'S OUTER OFFICE DAY 28

LESLIE is awkwardly applying liquid paper through the keys of a typewriter at her desk in Michael's outer office. She looks up at a clock and CALLS off to Michael.

LESLIE
Michael! It's eleven o'clock.

MICHAEL (o.s.)
What?

LESLIE
You asked me to tell you when it was eleven.

He appears at the doorway to the office, smiling, eager.

MICHAEL
Oh. Right.

He straightens his tie, grinning, and walks out of the office. She watches him, curious.

CUT TO:

29 INT CORRIDOR DAY 29

MICHAEL stops outside a door marked CONFERENCE ROOM. VOICES can be heard inside. Michael looks through a narrow window that runs along the side of the door.

CUT TO:

30 INT CONFERENCE ROOM DAY 30

FENWICK is at one end of the table. HOWARD NEIL, early * forties, gray at the temples, is at the other end. * There are also two BANKERS in their forties at the table. All are somber looking men. The table is snowed under by a mass of papers and charts.

Serious meeting.

BANKER 1
-- which is why we decided to try your firm's more conservative approach.

HOWARD
Most of our pension fund clients do appreciate that.
(to Fenwick)
Can we look at the sixty day figures?

FENWICK
Of course.

He turns to a video display terminal on a swivel table to his right and swings it over closer to him. He types in a few commands expertly and looks at the screen, waiting. A statistic pops up on the screen:

WADE BOGGS, 1988 -- .342

Fenwick's face drains of most of its color. He retypes the commands. Another statistic comes up:

DAVE WINFIELD, 1985 -- .338

Fenwick's face drains of the rest of its color. He looks up, panicked. He turns and looks to the door.

MICHAEL stands in the window, staring at him.

FENWICK
(cool, to the others)
Could you excuse me for a moment?

CUT TO:

31 INT HALLWAY DAY 31

FENWICK bursts out the door. MICHAEL leans nonchalantly against the wall.

FENWICK
What have you done?!

MICHAEL
What do you mean?

FENWICK
You know damn well what I mean! There are batting averages in my section report!

MICHAEL
(correcting him)
Batting <u>championships</u>. Not a sports fan, huh?

FENWICK
I am in a <u>meeting</u>, you swine, with Howard and two pension fund administrators. Where's my section report?!

MICHAEL
Where's my schedule forty-seven?

HOWARD NEIL pokes his head out of the meeting room.

HOWARD
Fenwick? Everything all right?

FENWICK
Yes, Howard. Fine. One minute.

HOWARD
Michael, what's this I hear about the schedule forty-seven?

MICHAEL
I don't know. It's all set. Ready to roll.

HOWARD
Oh. Good. So are we, Fenwick.

Howard goes back into the meeting room. Fenwick pauses, seeing he is beaten. He strikes a conciliatory tone.

FENWICK
I'm not admitting I did anything, of course --

MICHAEL
Of course.

FENWICK
-- but if you give me mine back, I'll see if I can get you yours back.

MICHAEL
Nah. Forget it.

He turns and walks away. Fenwick rushes up and spins him around.

FENWICK
What do you want?

MICHAEL
I want you to walk down to your office --

FENWICK
I'm in a <u>meeting</u>!

MICHAEL
-- down to your office and get my report back on line in sixty seconds. <u>Then</u> I'll see if I can find it in my heart to forgive you.

A looooooong pause while Fenwick considers it.

MICHAEL (cont.)
(taps his watch)
Sixty seconds.

Fenwick turns and hurries off down the hall. Defeated.

CUT TO:

32 INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT NIGHT 32

MICHAEL sits on the couch, speaking on the telephone with a hoarse voice that sounds suspiciously affected.

He kicks off his black leather loafers and unwraps a box of new shoes as he speaks.

MICHAEL
No, I just don't want to have a relapse, that's all.

He takes the shoes out of the box and puts them on -- a * trendy pair of black shoes. *

MICHAEL (cont.)
Ruth, I swear I'll be fine. Give them my apologies and I'll call you in the morning. I love you too.

CUT TO:

33 EXT CLUB NIGHT 33

Michael's car pulls up and parks across the street from the club, the same one he was at the night before. MICHAEL gets out. His dress is an odd mixed bag -- blue jeans and clubbing shoes, but also a white button down shirt and a jacket.

Grinning in anticipation, he tugs open the door to the club.

CUT TO:

34 INT CLUB NIGHT 34

The place is empty -- at most maybe a dozen people sitting at the bar nursing beers, but no band, no * dancers. A scratchy record plays on the jukebox. *

Michael takes off his shades and looks around in disappointment. He goes to the bar and is met by the same BARTENDER as the night before.

BARTENDER
Get you something?

Michael puts a five on the counter.

MICHAEL
Here. I owe you that from last night.

BARTENDER
(not remembering)
If you say so.
(pockets the five)
You want a drink or what?

MICHAEL
Light beer.

Michael looks around at the few scattered patrons as the Bartender cracks open the beer.

MICHAEL (cont.)
Little slow.

BARTENDER
No band.

* MICHAEL *
Listen, I'm lookin' for a guy --

A VOICE suddenly comes from directly above Michael.

VOICE
MICHAEL!

Michael looks up. ALEX is at the upstairs railing, grinning from ear to ear. In one move, he swings out over the railing, drops down onto the bar, and jumps onto the floor next to Michael.

BARTENDER
(to Alex)
You know him, Tony?

ALEX
Sure. He's cool.

BARTENDER
Looked like a cop to me.

Alex slaps Michael on the back.

MICHAEL
Tony?

ALEX
Old joke. Tony's a guy I hate.
Hey, you got a car?

MICHAEL
Yeah.

ALEX
Let's get out of here.
(to the Bartender)
Don't wait up, sweetheart.

MICHAEL
You're staying here?

* ALEX *
For a while. Upstairs. Kurt and
I go way back. You don't mind if
I drive, do you?

* MICHAEL *
(yes, very much)
No, not at all.

CUT TO:

35 INT MICHAEL'S CAR NIGHT 35

ALEX drives, fast. MICHAEL has a nice car, which he is presently riding in with something close to terror.

MICHAEL
You should have seen his --

Alex takes a hard turn. Michael lurches against the door.

MICHAEL (cont.)
They, uh, told me to take it easy
the first five thousand miles.

ALEX
I'm burning the carbon off the
plugs. You should thank me.

MICHAEL
Uh huh. Anyway, you should have seen
his face. I wish I had it on film.

ALEX
You watched?

MICHAEL
Through the doorway.

ALEX
Perfect. Always gotta stick around to watch the fun. Watch 'em squirm.

Alex guns the car through a yellow light. Cars HONK.

MICHAEL
So how'd it go with that girl?

* ALEX *
Got very strange. We started talking about Kirkegaard and she suddenly turned into a complete theist. It was kinda sad. Pissed me off. Hey, you know anything about art?

CUT TO:

* 36 EXT DOWNTOWN STREET NIGHT 36 *

The car pulls to a stop in front of a large downtown building -- a big place, at one time dignified. MICHAEL is curious as a VALET appears, gives him a ticket and takes the car. Michael follows ALEX into the building.

CUT TO:

* 36A INT BUILDING NIGHT 36A *

ALEX and MICHAEL cross the dilapidated old lobby and come to a door at the top of a stairway. A BOUNCER waits at the door.

ALEX
(to the Bouncer)
Divorced white male.

The Bouncer opens the door. Michael gives them both a curious look.

MICHAEL
(to Alex)
What's the deal with that?

Alex doesn't answer. They go down the stairs and through a basement corridor. As they hear the PARTY SOUNDS ahead, Alex stops.

* He takes a smallish amulet from his jacket pocket. He cracks it open and inhales deeply. He offers it to Michael. *

ALEX
Decongestant?

MICHAEL
I, uh -- I don't have a cold.

Alex laughs and puts the amulet away.

ALEX
Neither do I, pal.

CUT TO:

37 INT INDOOR POOL AREA NIGHT 37

* MICHAEL and ALEX round a corner and come into the indoor *
* pool area. The pool, long empty and a little run down, *
* is now home to a performance art exhibit. Alex surveys *
the party, which is populated with chic, trendy types. He breathes the air.

ALEX
A party's like a battlefield, don't you think?

MICHAEL
Yeah. Sure.

ALEX
Let's see -- who should you be?

Not hearing, Michael turns and looks down at the performance below.

ALEX (cont.)
Never mind, I'll improvise.

Michael turns back, pointing down.

MICHAEL
Geez, will you look --

Alex is nowhere in sight. Michael wanders into the party alone, a little boy lost.

He catches a snippet of conversation.

WOMAN IN BLACK
Didn't you hear? He's dead.

MAN IN BLACK
Dead? Ridgely?

WOMAN IN BLACK
Hans killed him. Ridgely asked him to. He was going to do it himself anyway.

MAN IN BLACK
I'm shocked.

WOMAN IN BLACK
Oh, don't be naive.

MAN IN BLACK
Well, I didn't mean shocked, exactly.

Michael keeps walking and reaches a bar.

MICHAEL
(to the BARTENDER)
Light beer.

* Michael looks down at a newspaper, the L.A. Reader, folded open on the bar in front of him. One of the "personals" ads is circled: *

"Mayflower Apartments.
Basement vacancy.
After 10 Thursday only."

He looks up as the Bartender brings his beer.

* MICHAEL (cont.) *
What's the name of this place?

* BARTENDER *
Used to be the old Mayflower Hotel.

* Michael looks back at the paper, at the ad directly above the one he just read. It begins, in bold faced type, "Divorced White Male seeks -- " *

Michael grins, pleased with himself.

DISSOLVE TO:

38 INT PARTY LATER 38

MICHAEL stands at the bar. A VOICE booms out from behind him.

VOICE
Dominick!

Michael does nothing.

VOICE (cont.)
DOMINICK!!

Michael turns to see who's making the racket. It's ALEX, headed straight for him with a young woman on his arm -- CLAIRE, the girl from the bar the night before, looking chic in black thrift store clothes.

Alex reaches him and speaks with a bizarre accent.

ALEX
Ciao, Dominick! Comment te va?

MICHAEL
Uh, fine.

Alex leans into the bar to get a drink, passing close to Michael's ear and whispering.

ALEX
I'm Franco.

MICHAEL
Franco?

ALEX
(with a heavy accent)
Dominick! Look who is here! Claire is the woman I was before telling about to you. I think you met last night, no?

CLAIRE
Yes.

MICHAEL
You remember?

CLAIRE
Of course. I'm very sorry.

She is looking at Michael strangely, probingly -- as if she had a great deal of compassion for him. It makes him uncomfortable.

MICHAEL
(puzzled)
Don't worry about it.

CLAIRE
So what do you think of the pieces?

MICHAEL
Well, I -- perdon.

He turns abruptly to the bar, speaking to Alex in a whisper.

MICHAEL (cont.)
Am I foreign too?

Alex laughs -- heartily, falsely.

ALEX
No, Dominick! No, of course not!
(to Claire)
He won't give his opinions so easily. He thinks the pieces are -- how do you say in English? Derivative. And cynical; without hope.

CLAIRE
Without hope.

MICHAEL
(warming to this)
Well, if one hasn't hope -- then what?

CLAIRE
That's lovely. And that somebody in your -- I'm sorry, it's none of my business, but your positivism is inspiring.

MICHAEL
(confused)
Thank you, I -- don't know what to say.
(with a look at Alex)
Really.

ALEX
Well, I think we've seen all there is to see here.

He looks pointedly at Claire.

CLAIRE
I know I have. Hang on. I have to free myself from an entanglement.

She turns and moves through the crowd. She talks to a GUY who doesn't seem pleased by what she says. Alex turns to Michael.

ALEX
Try to look grief-stricken.

MICHAEL
Why?

ALEX
She thinks your wife just died.

MICHAEL
She what? You just tell anybody anything, don't you?

ALEX
Lighten up. They're gonna fuck a fantasy anyway. Might as well give 'em a good one.

Claire appears at Michael's side.

CLAIRE
Let's go, Dominick.

MICHAEL
Bueno!

They walk off. Alex stifles a laugh and follows.

CUT TO:

* 39 INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT NIGHT 39 *

Keys RUSTLE in the lock and the door swings open, revealing MICHAEL, ALEX and CLAIRE. They are all drunk, loud and animated.

Michael steps in and flicks on the lights. Alex looks around the place.

ALEX
Nice.

Michael goes into the kitchen.

MICHAEL
(gaily)
Who wants espresso?

CLAIRE
Don't you have anything to drink?

She follows him into the kitchen. Alex continues to size up Michael's apartment and furnishings. He checks out the expensive stereo equipment, the video camera on the tripod, and the other gadgets around the room.

ALEX
(softly, to himself)
Very, very nice.

Michael and Claire return from the kitchen, drinks in hand. Michael gives Alex a beer.

MICHAEL
(to Claire)
Want a tour?

CLAIRE
Sure.

He leads her up the stairs to the loft. Alex starts to follow them, but hears a soft KNOCK at the door -- a low, persistent rapping.

He looks up, ahead. Michael and Claire have gone out onto the balcony and didn't hear it. Alex answers the door.

It's PISMO, looking like he just ate a jar of instant coffee.

PISMO
(instantly suspicious)
Who are you?

ALEX
Friend of Michael's. Who are you?

PISMO
I'm fine. Is Michael here?

There is a burst of LAUGHTER from upstairs.

ALEX
He's busy.

PISMO
Tell him it's his brother. Tell him I've got the Fear.

ALEX
I said he's busy.

Pismo is taken aback by this.

PISMO
Oh. Okay. Actually, I'm perfectly fine. Fine. Shit, yes, no problem.
(pause)
You sure I can't see him?

Alex smiles and shakes his head no. He starts to shut the door. Pismo stops it.

PISMO (cont.)
Who are you? What are you doing here?

There is another burst of GIGGLING from upstairs. Alex looks up, then back at Pismo.

ALEX
Helping Michael.

Alex closes the door and goes upstairs to the loft. A box filled with computer discs sits next to a desk top Rolodex. Alex looks at Michael and Claire out on the deck, then flips through the Rolodex, whizzing through the "B's" and stopping at the card with the name PISMO BOLL. An address and phone number are printed on it.

CUT TO:

* 40 EXT DECK NIGHT 40 *

MICHAEL and CLAIRE are on the balcony. Claire is pointing at a building off in the distance.

CLAIRE
The big black one?

MICHAEL
No, the one next to it.

CLAIRE
What do you do there?

MICHAEL
I'm an analyst for a portfolio management firm.

CLAIRE
What's that mean?

MICHAEL
It means I handle big chunks of other people's money. What do you do?

Claire shrugs as ALEX comes out on the balcony.

ALEX
You got any family, Dominick?

MICHAEL
Not really. Just Pismo.

CLAIRE
What's a Pismo?

MICHAEL
My brother. He designs video games that nobody can figure out how to play. He's sort of a recluse.

CLAIRE
What do you mean?

MICHAEL
He got busted for pot in college and he's been holed up ever since. Always thinks the cops are following him. Kinda weird, but he's all I've got.

CLAIRE
That's too bad. Even I have a mother. Somewhere. In Barbados, last I heard.

Alex looks at Michael. Thinking.

CUT TO:

41 INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT NIGHT 41

MUSIC is on. It's late. Quiet. CLAIRE and MICHAEL are asleep on the couch.

ALEX sits down in a chair across from them. He stares at Claire. After a few seconds, her eyes flicker open and lock on his. They look at each other for a moment, then he gets up and walks out of the room.

CUT TO:

42 INT BEDROOM NIGHT 42

A shaft of light from the hallway spills across the floor. ALEX walks into the room and goes to the bed.

He walks to the bedroom window and looks out. He runs his hand over the top of a set of golf clubs leaning up against the wall. He waits a few seconds, standing there as if expecting --

-- CLAIRE's arms. They snake around his waist from behind. He smiles. He turns and her arms go around his neck. He kisses her.

ALEX
(sexy)
Can I ask you something?

CLAIRE
I don't have it.

ALEX
Have what?

CLAIRE
Your accent. You must be looking for it by now.

She laughs. Alex grins engagingly. He kisses her again.

ALEX
He told you.

CLAIRE
I knew anyway. He didn't want to say anything. It just came out. He's still upset about Jasmine's death.

Alex turns her around, pushing her up against the wall, kissing her harder. She responds.

ALEX
Do you like him?

CLAIRE
He's okay.

They kiss some more, then Alex abruptly pulls away.

ALEX
Look, I -- no, forget it.

CLAIRE
What?

Pause.

ALEX
I just -- I just want you to know I like you very much.

CLAIRE
(suspicious)
What are you going to ask me?

Alex turns and looks through the open door into the living room, where Michael is asleep on the sofa.

ALEX
It's Dominick.

Long pause. She looks at him and he looks back, into her eyes.

CLAIRE
Okay.

ALEX
(hopeful, sweet)
Okay?

CLAIRE
Yeah. I want to. I think it'd be good for him. Tell him to come in here.

ALEX
No. The couch.

He sits down on the bed.

ALEX (cont.)
I might as well get some sleep.

She touches his cheek. Alex smiles.

CUT TO:

43 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 43

CLAIRE comes back in and sits on the couch next to MICHAEL. He wakes and sits up.

MICHAEL
Oh. Hi.

CLAIRE
Hi.

She looks at him purposefully. He looks away.

Then he looks back. She's still looking at him.

She smiles. She looks around the room.

CLAIRE (cont.)
You've got a lot of stuff.

MICHAEL
Yeah. You know how it is. Once people find out you like stuff, that's all you ever get for Christmas.

She laughs, enchanted.

CLAIRE
Funny.

Michael looks around, still uncomfortable with her gaze.

MICHAEL
Where's Alex?

CLAIRE
Asleep.

MICHAEL
Oh.

She laughs to herself.

MICHAEL (cont.)
What?

She shakes her head, not answering.

CLAIRE
Another drink?

Michael finally turns and looks her fully in the eyes. It's a smokey look, a look loaded with meaning which he finally grasps.

MICHAEL
You sure he's asleep?

CLAIRE
Positive.

MICHAEL
Okay.

She smiles, gets up, and goes into the kitchen. Michael swallows.

CUT TO:

* 44 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 44 *

It's mostly dark, but the sleeping form of MICHAEL on the couch is illuminated by the flickering light of the television.

Sounds come from the TV. Moaning. Breathing.

Michael stirs a little, disturbed by the noise. Slowly he wakes up and squints at the TV, trying to figure out what it is.

All at once he recognizes the images -- it's a home video of him and Claire making love on the couch. He looks to the left of the TV, straight into the lens of the video camera on the tripod, now pointed directly at him.

He sits bolt upright and flicks on a light. ALEX is sitting in a chair watching the television, vastly amused. He flicks an empty condom packet at Michael.

ALEX
Did you know you make a really funny face when you come?

Michael lunges for the VCR and pulls the tape out. It's a bulky VHS size. He looks around, not sure what to do with the tape, then shoves it in the center drawer of his desk.

ALEX (cont.)
Aw, come on, turn it back on. You were just getting good that time.

Michael is horrified. He turns and sees CLAIRE, who has walked out of the bathroom, pulling her hair back in a pony tail.

CLAIRE
Lighten up, Dominick. You looked pretty good. I looked gross.

ALEX
(supportively)
No, you looked good when you were on top.

CLAIRE
Oh, thanks.

Michael stares at them both in absolute disbelief.

From outside, a car HONKS its horn several times.

CLAIRE (cont.)
That's my cab.
(kisses both on the cheek)
Thanks, guys. See ya.

She grabs her bag from the couch and heads for the door.

Michael follows.

MICHAEL
(to Alex)
You wait right here!

CUT TO:

44A EXT BUILDING NIGHT 44A

CLAIRE walks out of the building and toward a cab that waits at the curb. MICHAEL hurries out after her.

MICHAEL
Hold on! I'll give you a ride.

CLAIRE
(still walking)
That's okay!

MICHAEL
Would you wait a second?

She stops at the door of the cab. Michael catches up.

MICHAEL (cont.)
I should -- at least let me give you cab fare.

CLAIRE
It's cool. I have money.

MICHAEL
Well -- can I have your phone number?

CLAIRE
Why?

MICHAEL
Why? Well, I mean, we just --

CLAIRE
Look, Dominick -- we felt like it, so we did it. Relax.

MICHAEL
I just thought you might want me to call you. That's all.

She smiles at him in bewilderment and touches his cheek.

CLAIRE
You are so sweet.

She gets in the cab and closes the door. She waves out the window as it pulls away.

CUT TO:

* 44B INT MICHAEL'S APARTMENT NIGHT 44B *

MICHAEL comes back into the apartment, furious. ALEX still sits in the chair, feet on the table, shit-eating grin on his face.

There is an open bottle of tequila, some limes, and a shaker of salt on the table too.

MICHAEL
I can't <u>believe</u> you did that!

* ALEX *
Hey, I gave her to you. You could try saying thanks.

He pours a shot of tequila and shoves it across the table at Michael.

MICHAEL
You <u>gave</u> her to me? What are you talking about?

ALEX
Wasn't hard. She felt sorry for you. Incidentally, I don't mind you giving away my "Franco" thing. Smart to keep the dead wife, though. Confess to one lie and keep up another. Confuses the hell out of 'em. Come on, drink this.

Michael is still put off, but it's praise from Caesar. He sits on the sofa.

ALEX (cont.)
You know, I think she would have gone for you without me. She said we seemed like brothers.

MICHAEL
She did?

ALEX
Sure.

MICHAEL
I knew you must have done something. That never happens to me.

* ALEX *
It does now. Drink.

Michael drinks the shot, chasing it with the lime.

MICHAEL
Where are you from, anyway?

ALEX
Why does nobody ever let you just be who you are? They always want to know who you used to be.

MICHAEL
I didn't ask who you voted for, I just asked where you were from.

Alex smiles. Michael pours a shot for him and holds it out to him. Alex drinks it.

ALEX
East coast. North Carolina.

MICHAEL
You like it?

ALEX
Not really. Friend of mine set me up for something he did. I'm a wanted man.

MICHAEL
Get the fuck outta here.

ALEX
I'm serious. Shouldn't ask questions if you don't like answers.

MICHAEL
That's really weird. Why don't you tell the cops?

ALEX
Wouldn't do any good. One thing I know for sure about Tony is he'd take me down with him.

* Michael looks at him, not sure what he means. *

ALEX (cont.)
Beat me. That's the thing with Tony. He doesn't quit until somebody wins.

MICHAEL
What was the crime?

ALEX
Nickel and dime shit. Easier to just not go back to North Carolina. Rains too much anyway.

He leans forward, suddenly animated.

ALEX (cont.)
Tell me something you want, Mick.

MICHAEL
Mick?
(he says it to himself)
Mick.

ALEX
Tell me something you want, Mick, and tell me something you're afraid of.

MICHAEL
Come on.

ALEX
Do it. For fun. Tell me. Tell me what you're afraid of, Mick.

Michael thinks.

MICHAEL
I guess -- I guess I'm afraid of getting married.

ALEX
Simple enough. Don't.

MICHAEL
Well, I'm engaged.

* ALEX *
Why?

* MICHAEL *
(shrugs)
Didn't want to lose her, I guess.

* ALEX *
That's not an engagement, it's a patent. Is she nice?

MICHAEL
Yeah. She is.

ALEX
Nice is boring. "Safe" is boring. But I bet she's pretty --

MICHAEL
Yeah.

ALEX
-- in a boring sort of way.

MICHAEL
Come to think of it, I'm fucking terrified of getting married.

ALEX
Fine. Done. Now tell me what you want. More than anything else, what do you want?

Michael thinks.

MICHAEL
This guy Fenwick -- he and I are both up for senior analyst. And I want that job. I want it so bad I can taste it. I mean, if I had to take orders from that son of a bitch --

Alex pours two more shots. He holds one up in a toast.

ALEX
Then drink to it. Make it happen.

Michael starts to pick up the other glass. He hesitates, remembering the last toast Alex made.

ALEX (cont.)
It's okay this time.

They CLINK glasses and drink.

MICHAEL
Make it happen.

CUT TO:

* 45 INT TRADING ROOM DAY 45 *

MICHAEL is on the phone at his station in the trading room.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
You can give me that quote on the whole order?

VOICE (o.s.)
Michael, I said I could. Twice. My finger is hovering over the "enter" button. Do you want the buy or not?

HOWARD walks past. FENWICK is with him.

HOWARD
Michael? Lunch?

Michael turns and puts his hand over the phone, acting as if he's been caught at something.

* MICHAEL *
Can't. I'm up to my ass. And I said I'd meet somebody.

HOWARD
Fine. Oh, nice work on the bi-monthly. When have you had time to sleep the last couple weeks?

Michael shrugs modestly. Howard walks off. Fenwick walks after him, tossing a dirty look to Michael.

Michael checks his watch.

* MICHAEL *
(into phone)
I'll call you back.

CUT TO:

46 EXT LA BREA TAR PITS DAY 46

A huge IMPERIAL MAMMOTH stands stuck in a bubbling pit of tar, TRUMPETING in panic to its mate and child, who stand helplessly on the shore.

* On the observation platform above the exhibit, a BLACK WOMAN is reading a placard aloud to her two CHILDREN, describing the plight of the prehistoric creatures. *

ALEX stands a short distance away, listening. MICHAEL comes running up the steps to him.

MICHAEL
Sorry I'm late. Here. Leave 'em under the seat, okay?

He tosses a set of car keys to Alex and turns to go.

ALEX
Thanks. Sure you can't come? Beautiful day.

* MICHAEL *
The track? No, I really can't go play the ponies right now, thanks.

* ALEX *
Jesus, you're uptight.

MICHAEL
Sorry. It's a thing at work.

ALEX
What? Tell me about it.

MICHAEL
No, it's -- it's too complicated.

ALEX
(raising an eyebrow at that notion)
Too complicated?

CUT TO:

47 INT GEORGE C. PAGE MUSEUM DAY 47

* A TEACHER leads a group of GRADE SCHOOLERS through the museum, which is loaded with the skeletons of animals that got stuck in the tar and didn't get out. *

MICHAEL and ALEX pass in front of them, stopping in front of a wall display lined with the skulls of hundreds of wolves.

MICHAEL
The trade figure comes out at three o'clock. It's going to be down. Significantly. I know it.

ALEX
How do you know?

MICHAEL
I just know. I feel it. It's my job to know. But policy is I'm not supposed to buy until after the figure is released.

ALEX
What happens if you buy before?

MICHAEL
If I'm right? I'm ahead of everybody, the client cleans up, and I'm a genius.

ALEX
So you can make them money and it's not illegal. What's the problem?

MICHAEL
It's a little more complicated than that. It's a question of judicious business.

ALEX
It's not a question of judicious business, it's a question of balls. You got the juevos or don't you?

Michael looks at him, hard. He turns and walks for the door, his step lively with purpose.

MICHAEL
(calling back)
Pick a winner for me!

Alex watches as he leaves.

CUT TO:

48 INT MICHAEL'S OFFICE DAY 48

The clock on Michael's desk says 3:04. MICHAEL stands at the window, staring out at the ocean nervously. LESLIE calls from offscreen.

LESLIE
Michael? The trade figure's out!

She hurries into the room. Michael doesn't turn around, just stares out the window, gritting his teeth.

MICHAEL
Yeah?

LESLIE
Down almost three points.

Michael closes his eyes in relief. Offscreen, the phone RINGS. Leslie hurries out to answer it. Michael goes and sits behind his desk, immensely pleased with himself. He puts his feet up.

LESLIE (o.s.)
It's a Mr. Juevos on one.

Michael smiles and snatches up the phone eagerly.

MICHAEL
(into phone)
Down three! I was right, damn it, I was right!

ALEX (o.s.)
Hey, let's celebrate. There's a party tonight --

MICHAEL
Can't. I have to go to Ruth's parents' for dinner. It's their anniversary party. Very formal.

ALEX
Sounds like a riot.

MICHAEL
I can't get out of it. Dr. Fielding would be crushed.

ALEX (o.s.)
Suit yourself. Nice work, Mick.

He hangs up.

CUT TO:

49 INT OUTER OFFICE DAY 49

LESLIE hears Michael hang up the phone. She pushes the intercom button.

LESLIE
Do you want to return these calls now, Michael? Oh!

MICHAEL is standing behind her, grinning ear to ear.

MICHAEL
Later. And Leslie -- I'd prefer if you'd call me Mick from now on.

She breaks out into laughter, then stops when he doesn't laugh along.

LESLIE
Oh. Sure. Okay.
(trying it)
"Mick."

He walks out of the office, WHISTLING to himself.

CUT TO:

* 50 INT TRADING ROOM DAY 50 *

MICK walks through the trading room. Struts, actually. He passes FENWICK, who is bent over a computer terminal with BRITT. Fenwick eyes him suspiciously.

Mick continues past. He winks at a FEMALE TRADER.

Mick reaches a station at the end of the trading room where HOWARD is working.

MICK
Howard! Good news.

CUT TO:

* 51 OMITTED 51 *

52 EXT RUTH'S PARENTS' HOUSE NIGHT 52

MICK gets out of his car in front of a large Beverly Hills home. He's dressed in a tuxedo and has just a touch of gel in his hair.

A VALET takes the car and gives Mick the ticket, which he stuffs in his jacket pocket.

CUT TO:

53 INT HOUSE NIGHT 53

Delicate STRINGED INSTRUMENTS play in the other room. ELEGANT GUESTS in tuxedos and gowns engage in sparkling conversation.

MICK strides into the room and surveys the place. RUTH goes to him and gives him a kiss. She touches his hair, surprised.

RUTH
Look at you! I like it. A little greasy, but nice.

MICK
This for me?

He takes a glass of champagne from her hand and drinks.

RUTH
You're late. Everything okay at the office?

MICK
Couldn't be better.
(surveying the crowd)
A party's like a battlefield, don't you think?

RUTH
Whatever you say, sweetheart. Come on. Francois is already here.

MICK
Francois?

He follows her into the other room.

CUT TO:

54 INT PARTY ROOM NIGHT 54

RUTH and MICK approach a small group of GUESTS who are gathered around a television set, chatting animatedly in French.

RUTH
(to Mick)
You didn't tell me you'd invited a friend. Francois?

One of the men excuses himself in French and turns. It's ALEX. He looks splendid, dressed in a gorgeous tuxedo. He breaks into a spectacular grin.

ALEX
(with a perfect accent)
Bon soir, Michel!

Mick is dumbfounded. Ruth nudges him.

MICK
(regaining)
Uh -- Francois! What a -- I'm surprised you made it.

ALEX
Yes, I was fortunate.
(for Mick only)
I couldn't let you celebrate without me.

A man appears next to Mick -- HENRY FIELDING, Ruth's father, an imposing, impressive man.

FIELDING
How are you, Michael?

* MICK *
Congratulations, Dr. Fielding.

Fielding holds up his hand, displaying a tiny gold wedding band on an enormous fist.

FIELDING
Thirty-five years. Guess I'll be coming to these things for you pretty soon.

MICK
I guess so.

RUTH
(to Mick)
You didn't tell me you were working with someone from the Paris office.

MICK
(searching)
Oh, yes. Yes.
(still searching)
Yes.

ALEX
Mais oui, I've been here for several weeks.

MRS. FIELDING breezes up and kisses Mick on the cheek.

MRS. FIELDING
(not a question at all)
How are you, dear. We were just about to look at the promotional campaign you and Francois put together for the new French office.

MICK
Oh?

ALEX
Yes.

Henry Fielding turns and flicks on the television. He pushes "play" on the VCR.

ALEX (cont.)
Will you excuse us? Meek and I, we have of course seen these promotions a thousand times.

The small group nods its assent and turns to the screen.

RUTH
(in Mick's ear)
He's charming!

She turns to the television as well.

Alex takes Mick by the arm and leads him around the corner into the front hallway.

CUT TO:

55 INT HALLWAY NIGHT 55

ALEX and MICK stop. Alex starts fishing through Mick's pockets.

ALEX
Don't be mad.

MICK
I'm not mad, I'm astounded. Where'd you get the tux? Where'd you learn to speak --

ALEX
You'll be mad in a second. But before anything happens, I want you to know I did it for you. Ah.

He finds Mick's parking stub in his jacket pocket and goes to the front door with it. He gives it to the VALET.

MICK
Did what for me? What --

From the other room, all conversation abruptly stops. The Stringed Instruments strike a sour note and stop.

MICK (cont.)
That tape -- oh God, you didn't --

ALEX
(from the doorway)
Just the highlights. It's for the best. Really.

From the other room comes a female SHRIEK, followed by the CRASH of glass and VOICES rising up in anger and shock.

VOICE (o.s.)
Turn it off! Turn it off! For God's sake, someone turn it off!

Mick runs to the door to the party room just in time to see a fleeting image of himself making love to Claire on the couch in his apartment.

Ruth stands in shock in front of the television, a shattered glass of wine on the floor at her feet.

Henry Fielding snaps off the television and sees Mick in the door. He advances on him.

* FIELDING *
(the voice of a murderer)
Come here.

* From outside, a car horn TOOTS. Mick turns. Alex is standing in front of the house, next to Mick's car. *

Mick bolts for the door.

CUT TO:

56 EXT HOUSE NIGHT 56

ALEX slips behind the wheel. MICK jumps in the passenger side. The car races off down the driveway as a small crowd of angry PARTYGOERS and SERVANTS gather in the doorway.

CUT TO:

57 INT CAR NIGHT 57

ALEX drives. MICK rides, eyes glued to the road.

ALEX
You're mad at me, aren't you?

MICK
Don't speak to me!

ALEX
I just want to know if you're mad.

MICK
Do <u>not</u> speak to me!

CUT TO:

* 58 EXT ABANDONED MANSION NIGHT 58 *

Mick's car skids to a stop at the end of a road up in the Hollywood Hills. MICK gets out and stalks toward some sagging iron gates. ALEX follows. They are still wearing their tuxedos.

ALEX
You asked me to! Don't you remember?

Mick ignores him. As Mick reaches the gates, a MAN stands in front of him, blocking his way. Alex steps forward and says something to the Man, who steps aside and admits them.

Mick storms ahead, climbing an old stairway in the hill. They come out at the ruins of an old mansion. A large party is in progress on the abandoned tennis court. A bonfire burns, there are garbage cans filled with beer and ice.

Mick grabs a can of beer and rips the top off. He upends the can, drinking at least half of it in one swallow.

Alex follows him, staying a safe distance away.

Mick cruises around. He sees CLAIRE and goes to her.

She is tipsy and greets him enthusiastically.

* CLAIRE *
Dominick!

MICK
That's not my name. He made that name up. My real name is -- is --

She's waiting. Mick throws a look at Alex, who watches them both through the fire.

* MICK *
Kirk. My name is Kirk.

* CLAIRE *
Kirk. Uh huh. And I suppose your wife's not dead either, is she?

* MICK *
No. She's not even my wife.

Claire laughs, in spite of herself.

MICK (cont.)
You should be pissed.

CLAIRE
Being pissed is boring. I don't feel like it.

MICK
What do you feel like?

She smiles. He leans over and whispers something in her ear.

Mick suggests something and Claire nods. Making sure Alex is watching, Mick leads her off to the side and they sit down.

They talk animatedly. She offers him a joint. He smokes some.

They laugh.

A short distance away, Alex watches them through the fire, not listening to some people who are talking to him.

Mick and Claire move closer. She's drunk, he's getting there.

Mick leans in and kisses her. She kisses back.

Alex watches, through the fire. The kiss grows passionate, almost fierce. Mick runs his hand into her hair and pulls her head back, kissing her hard on the neck. She's turned on and runs both her hands over his chest. He leans her back and kisses between her breasts.

Mick turns his head, makes sure Alex is watching.

Claire slides one hand down to Mick's crotch -- surreptitiously, so no one sees.

Alex sees.

Mick looks up, making eye contact with Alex as he kisses Claire.

Alex drops his beer and walks over to them. He stands above them.

Claire looks up, startled.

MICK
(to Alex)
Yeah?

* Alex reaches into his jacket and pulls out an amulet, the same kind as he had the other night. He breaks it open, inhales deeply, and offers it to Mick, a challenge. *

Mick takes it defiantly. He takes a deep, hard snort, then shakes his head at the powerful effect.

ALEX
Forgive me?

Mick stands. He looks at Alex, eye to eye.

MICK
Hell with that.

He grabs Alex roughly.

MICK (cont.)
I owe you.

He hugs him -- not tenderly, but hard. Like men do.

Mick goes back to Claire and they move off into the dark.

DISSOLVE TO:

* 59 EXT PARTY NIGHT 59 *

MICK and CLAIRE walk out of the shadows and rejoin the now smaller party. Mick is out of himself -- drunk, stoned, wired. Claire is writing something on a book of matches. She hands it to him.

MICK
What's this?

CLAIRE
My number. Don't you want it?

MICK
(smiling)
Why?

She smiles back, charmed.

CLAIRE
Funny.

She tucks the number in his shirt pocket.

CLAIRE (cont.)
It's good for a couple days.

ALEX, who was standing to the side watching, steps forward.

* ALEX *
Come on, let's get outta here.

MICK
Sure.

He turns to say goodbye to Claire, who is already spinning away, off into the party. She gives him a small wave and smile and is gone.

Alex pulls the amulet out of his pocket and takes a hit.

* ALEX *
You tired?

He extends the capsule to Mick, who also takes a hit.

MICK
No fuckin' way.

CUT TO:

60 INT HAMBURGER JOINT NIGHT 60

TWO DISGUSTING HAMBURGERS are slid off the grill and onto two disgusting buns. The COUNTER GUY, a heroin addict in his thirties, shovels them into a brown bag and scoops up a mess of french fries.

MICK is roaming around the hamburger joint, which apparently was the scene of a kids' party. Torn crepe paper hangs from the ceiling, paper junk overflows the garbage can. Mick notices some party masks on top of the trash. He laughs and pulls them out.

ALEX is at the counter, waiting for the food. Mick calls from behind him.

MICK
Hey! Check it out!

Alex turns. Mick is wearing one of the masks.

ALEX
(smiling)
Perfect.

Mick starts to pull off the mask.

ALEX (cont.)
No -- leave it on.

MICK
(holding one out)
There's one for you too.

ALEX
I don't need one.

The Clerk steps up to the counter with a brown bag and slides it at Alex.

CLERK
Eight forty-two.

The smile vanishes from Alex's face. He turns to the Clerk and, in one motion, pulls a gun from his cummerbund and moves forward, pressing it against the Clerk's forehead.

ALEX
Close your eyes.
(a shout)
CLOSE 'EM!

The Clerk does.

MICK
Oh, Jesus, oh God, what the hell -- ?

ALEX
Shut up.
(to the Clerk)
Come out here. Come on.

He pulls the Clerk out over the counter, gun still at his head.

ALEX (cont.)
Empty the register, Dominick.

Mick doesn't move.

ALEX (cont.)
EMPTY IT!

MICK
How?!

ALEX
Press "no sale."

Mick leans over the counter, panicky, willing to do anything that will get them out of there as fast as possible. He searches the keyboard on the modern cash register.

ALEX (cont.)
Lower left.

* Mick extends his finger toward the button, then thinks * * better of it and pushes it with his knuckle instead. * The register springs open. Mick grabs another bag and fills it with cash.

ALEX (cont.)
(to the Clerk)
Lie down.

CLERK
Don't shoot, man.

ALEX
It's not your money, right? So don't die for it, right? RIGHT?!

The Clerk lies face down on the floor. Mick turns and bolts for the door with the bag of money. He pauses, seeing Alex isn't following him.

MICK
Come on!

He races out the door. Alex bends down over the Clerk, who is face down on the floor, shaking with fear. Alex puts the gun to the back of his head. His finger tightens.

His face is rigid. Sweat runs down his cheek.

Outside, a car backs up and stops in front of the door. Mick is inside. He throws open the passenger door.

Alex leans even closer to the Clerk on the floor, so his mouth is next to the Clerk's ear.

ALEX
(softly)
Bang.

He pulls back, grabs the bag of hamburgers off the counter, and races out of the restaurant.

CUT TO:

61 EXT STREET NIGHT 61

ALEX runs out of the store and jumps in the car. It SCREAMS away from the curb.

CUT TO:

62 INT CAR NIGHT 62

MICK drives, ALEX rides. The radio blasts. Hamburgers and french fries fly, not so much eaten as revelled in.

Alex lets out a war WHOOP. Mick echoes it with one of his own.

ALEX
You were great, man! You were great!

* Mick shakes his head, trying to clear it. *

* MICK *
This is bad. This is very bad. What the -- I feel -- I feel dizzy.

* Alex cracks a capsule and takes a deep hit. Mick *
* reaches for it and takes a hit too, a big one. He's *
* gone, over the edge. *

MICK (cont.)
Oh shit.

He suddenly slams on the brakes.

ALEX
What are you doin'?

The car stops. Mick piles out and falls to his knees in the bushes. He vomits.

Alex comes and leans over him.

ALEX (cont.)
You alright?

MICK
I'm fine. I'm fine. It's just the way I react to things.

He looks up, wild eyed, still on his knees.

MICK (cont.)
Let's do another one. A 7-11. I always wanted to do a 7-11.

Alex looks at him, surprised. Mick's jaw is set, he's grinding his teeth like mad.

ALEX
(shakes his head)
They got cameras.

MICK
A donut shop, then! I love donuts!

ALEX
A donut shop?! Why not just stick up a police station? Come on, get up.

CUT TO:

63 EXT LIQUOR STORE NIGHT 63

A seedy hole-in-the-wall liquor store on a side street. Mick's car SQUEALS to a halt just down the street and ALEX and MICK pile out. Mick grabs Alex by the arm.

MICK
Who am I this time?

ALEX
Tony. You're Tony.

MICK
Tony.

Mick puts his mask back on and they go into the store. We see the entire action from outside, through the glass windows.

Alex takes care of the CLERK while Mick goes for the register. The action is frenetic -- after he gets the money, Mick swings himself over the counter and grabs a bottle from a shelf.

Alex pulls back from the Clerk and they both race out of the store.

CUT TO:

64 INT CAR NIGHT 64

If possible, the RADIO is louder, their moods higher. MICK is shaking his head, trying to get some feeling back in it as he laughs uncontrollably. He takes a deep pull from the bottle of rum he stole and passes it to ALEX, who does the same.

MICK
I feel weird, man. It's like I could either run a marathon or pass out, right now.

He lets out another WHOOP, then his head lolls back against the seat. Alex slaps him lightly.

ALEX
Uh-uh. Don't go. Don't fade on me now.

MICK
Just let me sleep a second.

ALEX
(holding out the bottle)
Have another blast.

Mick twists in his seat, trying to read the street signs as they whiz past.

MICK
Hey! Levering! You know where we are? Fenwick lives around here! Fenwick!

ALEX
(not the least bit surprised)
Really?

He takes a drink from the rum and tosses the bottle out the window. It bounces once in the street and SMASHES on a curb.

Their taillights recede in the distance.

CUT TO:

65 INT MICK'S BEDROOM DAY 65

MICK wakes up in bed with the inescapable feeling that a manhole cover is resting on his head.

He GROANS and rolls over to look at the clock next to him. It's 6:45. He throws the blankets aside and is surprised to see that he's still dressed in his tuxedo shirt and pants.

He lugs his guts out of bed. He heads toward the bathroom but stops in the doorway of the bedroom, looking out into the living room. The place is a mess, snowed under by junk food wrappers. There are two piles of money on the coffee table -- wrinkled fives, tens and twenties. ALEX is asleep on the sofa.

Mick remembers.

He goes into the bathroom.

CUT TO:

66 INT BATHROOM DAY 66

MICK turns on the shower. He goes to the sink and turns on the cold water tap. He feels a sharp pain in his right hand and he looks down at it.

It's slightly swollen. A purplish bruise is spreading across the knuckles, which are cut and skinned. There is some dried blood on them. He flexes his fingers painfully, then plunges his head into the cold water.

CUT TO:

67 INT LIVING ROOM DAY 67

ALEX is asleep on the couch. A hand SLAPS him lightly on the face. He wakes up.

MICK is standing over him, fully dressed in a business suit.

MICK
I have to go to work.

ALEX
So?

Mick stares at him.

ALEX (cont.)
Aw, come on -- let me sleep.

Mick checks his watch. He doesn't like it, but doesn't want the fight.

MICK
Lock up when you go.

He turns and heads for the door.

ALEX
(calling after him)
You were somethin' last night, Mick.
A changed man.

* *

Mick doesn't answer. He opens the door to leave.

ALEX (cont.)
(cheery)
Give my regards to Fenwick.

Mick pauses in the door for a moment to consider the meaning of that, then goes out.

Alex rolls over.

CUT TO:

* 68 INT LOBBY -- MICK'S OFFICE BUILDING DAY 68 *

MICK comes into the lobby of his office building, wearing sunglasses to hide his hangover. He walks past the security guard's desk and toward the elevator.

A VOICE calls from behind him -- hard, commanding.

VOICE
Mr. Boll!

Mick turns, alarmed. RITO, the security guard, thirtyish, stands at the guard station.

MICK
Yes?

RITO
Aced it!

MICK
What?

RITO
My accounting test. Third highest in my class. Thanks for your help.

MICK
Oh. Sure, Rito.

He turns and gets into the elevator.

CUT TO:

69 INT OFFICE KITCHEN AREA DAY 69

A few WORKERS are in the kitchen area, getting coffee, talking, starting the day. LESLIE is seated at a table, talking to BRITT, Fenwick's secretary.

MICK comes in, still wearing the sunglasses, and goes directly to the coffee pot.

LESLIE
Morning, Mi -- Mick.

Mick nods and pours a large cup of coffee, finally taking off the glasses. Leslie turns back to Britt.

LESLIE (cont.)
That's just awful.

BRITT
Can you imagine? This city is getting just ridiculous.

MICK
Where's the sugar?

LESLIE
Oh. Here.

She holds out the dispenser. Mick goes over to them and she dumps some sugar into his cup.

* LESLIE (cont.) *
Did you hear about Fenwick?

MICK
What about him?

BRITT
He got mugged last night.

MICK
What?

BRITT
Assaulted. Can you believe it?

LESLIE
God, Mick, what did you do to your hand?

He spills his coffee.

MICK
Oh, shit.

LESLIE
Are you okay?

MICK
I'm fine. Fine.

He grabs a stack of napkins and starts blotting at the coffee. He looks up at Britt.

MICK (cont.)
Where? Where did it happen?

BRITT
I'm not sure.

MICK
Who was it?

BRITT
I don't know. He didn't seem to want to go into it.

MICK
Well, is he okay?

BRITT
I think so. I mean, he was beaten up. Pretty badly.

LESLIE
(to Mick)
Can you believe it? I swear, it makes me want to move back to Seattle.

Mick doesn't bother to answer her, just gets up and hurries out of the kitchen. Leslie watches him go. She and Britt exchange a look.

CUT TO:

70 EXT MICK'S APARTMENT BUILDING DAY 70

Mick's car pulls to a stop in front of his building. MICK gets out and hurries inside.

CUT TO:

* 71 INT MICK'S APARTMENT DAY 71 *

ALEX is sitting on the sofa, his feet up on the coffee table, reading the morning paper. There is a box of donuts in front of him and he's eating one. MICK bursts into the apartment.

MICK
What happened last night?

ALEX
What do you mean?

MICK
Last thing I remember we were driving around Fenwick's neighborhood. This morning I go into the office and find out he got beat up and I'm standing there in the middle of everybody with dried blood all over my hand.

Alex gets up and goes to Mick. He takes Mick's injured hand, holding it like a doctor.

ALEX
It's not broken, is it?

MICK
Did we go to Fenwick's last night?

ALEX
Yes. We went to Fenwick's.

MICK
Oh, Jesus. I didn't hit him, did I?

ALEX
You didn't just hit him, Mick, you beat the shit out of him.

MICK
What the hell were you doing?

ALEX
(simply)
Holding him down.

Mick looks at him, the shock settling in. He turns and paces.

ALEX (cont.)
Hey, don't worry. I won't tell anybody.

MICK
I'm not worried about you telling anybody. For God's sake, the guy's a colleague of mine!

ALEX
He won't say anything either. He knows you'd kill him if he did.

MICK
Kill him?

ALEX
Yeah. And if you didn't kill him, I would. That's what I told him this morning. When I got the donuts.

Long pause. Mick stares at Alex. This situation has just completely defined itself; has just settled over him with the weight and clarity of a Big Mistake.

MICK
Get out.

ALEX
What?

Mick walks to the door and opens it.

MICK
Get out of my house, get out of my life. Get out.

ALEX
You got what you wanted.

MICK
Get out. Get out of my life! Get out!

Alex stares.

He picks up his jacket and puts it on calmly, without a word. He walks to the door and leaves.

Mick closes it softly behind him.

CUT TO:

* 72 INT TRADING ROOM DAY 72 *

MICK is at his station in the trading room. He works feverishly, as if to block out all other thought. LESLIE appears in front of him.

LESLIE
Mick? Howard wants to see you in his office right away.

Mick stares at her. He swallows, then gets up, trying to stay cool.

MICK
He say what it was about?

LESLIE
Nope. Just said right away.

MICK
Yeah, I heard you.

CUT TO:

73 INT HOWARD'S OFFICE DAY 73

MICK pokes his head in the open door of Howard's office. He TAPS on the door.

MICK
You wanted to see me?

HOWARD looks up from behind his impressive desk.

HOWARD
Yeah. Sit down.

Mick comes in and settles into a chair opposite Howard.

Howard finishes signing two letters in front of him. He takes his time. There is a long pause. Mick shifts in the chair.

Howard finally caps his pen and looks up.

HOWARD (cont.)
I just got off the phone with Fenwick.

MICK
Oh?

HOWARD
Yes.

MICK
(trying to maintain)
I see.

HOWARD
He's withdrawn himself from consideration for senior analyst.

MICK
He -- he has?

HOWARD
Said he doesn't want the pressure. Personally, I think he's just overreacting to what happened to him last night. You know about it?

MICK
I heard.

HOWARD
Uh huh. Well, if Fenwick's out, that makes you far and away the leading contender. I just wanted to let you know.

MICK
I -- I understand.

HOWARD
You don't seem pleased.

MICK
Well, I'm sorry it happened this way.

HOWARD
Me too. But don't let it obscure the fact that you've worked very hard for this -- and you deserve it.

Pause.

MICK
If that's all, I -- I've got a ton of paper on my desk.

HOWARD
Fine.

Mick forces a tight smile, gets up, and leaves the office. Howard watches him go.

CUT TO:

74 INT MICK'S BUILDING HALLWAY NIGHT 74

MICK steps off the elevator. The WOMAN IN SWEATS is locking her apartment.

WOMAN IN SWEATS
Hold that elevator, Mark!

Mick doesn't bother to correct her. He pauses, holding the door. She hurries past him, into the elevator.

WOMAN IN SWEATS (cont.)
Thanks. I'd love to see how everything looks when you're finished.

MICK
What?

WOMAN IN SWEATS
When you're finished. With your redecorating.

MICK
(covering)
Oh. Right.

She smiles and the elevator doors close. Mick turns and looks toward his apartment door. He walks to it quickly.

CUT TO:

75 INT MICK'S APARTMENT NIGHT 75

Mick enters and flicks on a light.

The place is empty. The furniture is gone, the TV and stereo equipment are gone, even the carpet has been pulled up and left in a roll in the corner. Mick's briefcase slips to the floor with a THUD.

* He walks numbly into the apartment, wandering to the bedroom. *

* Same story there. He flings open the closet -- all his clothes are gone. Empty pigeonholes for pairs of shoes stare at him. *

* He goes back into the living room. He hurries to a wall phone near the kitchen doorway, picks it up, starts to dial, then abruptly changes his mind. He SLAMS the phone down and rushes out of the apartment. *

CUT TO:

* 76 INT CLUB NIGHT 76 *

MICK bursts into the club, the dance place he and Alex came to the night they met. The place is mostly empty again. Mick goes quickly to the BARTENDER.

MICK
Where's Alex?

BARTENDER
Who?

MICK
Tony. Whoever. The guy who's staying upstairs.

BARTENDER
Re-upped.

MICK
What?

BARTENDER
Re-enlisted. In the navy. He and my brother were shipmates.

MICK
That son of a bitch!

BARTENDER
Hey, you watch your mouth! Tony happens to be a hell of a guy!

Mick looks at him, decides not to bother, and leaves.

CUT TO:

77 EXT CLUB NIGHT 77

MICK walks to his car, livid. He has just put the key in the door when he hears a VOICE behind him.

VOICE
You know why I took your stuff?

Mick whirls around, startled. ALEX stands behind him.

ALEX (cont.)
To show you I could. To put things back in perspective for you.

MICK
Back in perspective for me? What kind of game are you playing with my life? This is my life! I'm going to the police.

ALEX
What are you going to tell them? That this guy you knocked off a Fatburger with stole your stuff?

MICK
I want it back. It's mine.

ALEX
Yeah, just like the promotion is. And Claire is. You think you would have got any of that without me? Huh?

MICK
(pause)
Keep it.

Alex looks at him, not ready for this tack.

MICK (cont.)
Keep the stuff.

He turns and gets into his car. As he tries to pull the car door shut, Alex grabs hold of it.

ALEX
Oh. So the stuff makes us even. Is that it?

Mick pulls at the door again. Alex still holds on.

ALEX (cont.)
I just want to know one thing. At the party the other night, when you were with Claire -- you wanted to hurt me, didn't you?

MICK
Yes.

ALEX
What?

MICK
Yes. I wanted to hurt you.

* ALEX *
Okay. Good. I just wanted to be clear on that.

Mick SLAMS the door shut and pulls away. Alex watches.

CUT TO:

* 77A EXT PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 77A *

MICK's car pulls to a stop in front of Pismo's building.

CUT TO:

* 77B INT LOBBY -- PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 77B *

PISMO, who looks as though he was just awakened, stands in the front entrance to his dingy apartment building. He has just admitted MICK.

PISMO
What do you mean, you want to stay here?

MICK
I just do.

PISMO
What's wrong with your place?

MICK
Nothing.

CUT TO:

* 78 INT PISMO'S APARTMENT NIGHT 78 *

Pismo's place is a one room furnished bachelor with a hotplate. PISMO watches curiously as MICK flops on the ratty sofa and pulls a blanket up to his neck.

* PISMO *
Are you okay?

MICK
Fine. I'm fine.

PISMO
Hey -- let me show you what I'm working on. A very moralistic video game. Completely non-confrontational. Let me punch up the first level.

MICK
(trying to sleep)
Pismo --

PISMO
Oh. Sorry.
(pause)
Are you sure you're okay? You don't look okay.

MICK
I'll be fine.

PISMO
You wanna even out a little bit? I've got some.

MICK
I thought you weren't going to do that any more.

PISMO
Sometimes I have to. When I think they're gonna close me in again.

MICK
They're not, Pismo.

PISMO
When I get the Fear I can hear that door closing and I try to tell them what that place will do to me, but they won't listen. I'll do anything not to think about it. You can understand, can't you?

Mick rolls over and looks at him. The terror in Pismo's eyes is almost palpable.

MICK
Yeah. Yeah, I guess I can.

Pismo smiles. Michael rolls over again.

PISMO
It's nice to see you.

MICK
(into pillow)
Nice to see you.

Pismo tucks the blanket around Mick's feet and turns off the light.

CUT TO:

* 79 INT RECEPTION AREA -- MICK'S OFFICE DAY 79 *

MICK steps off the elevator at the office. He wears yesterday's clothes. He sees FENWICK coming the other way, wearing a bandage across his nose and a pair of sunglasses to hide a bruised eye. Mick quickly steps back out of sight.

* After Fenwick passes, Mick steps forward and walks past * the RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST
Uh, Mr. Boll? There are some --
uh -- gentlemen here to see you.

Mick looks up. A BLACK MAN and his PARTNER wait off to the side. Both are large and incredibly official looking.

FIRST MAN
Michael Boll?

MICK
Yes?

FIRST MAN
We're from the district attorney's office.

MICK
Yes?

The Second Man reaches into his coat and pulls out an official looking pink piece of paper.

SECOND MAN
This is a court order prohibiting you from harassing or attempting to make contact with a Miss Ruth Fielding.

Mick looks around to see who might be within earshot. LESLIE is standing at the mouth of the hallway.

SECOND MAN (cont.)
This order has been duly executed by Judge Howard Blanc of the County of Los Angeles and a copy is on file in our office. Do you understand?

Mick nods.

SECOND MAN (cont.)
Sign it.

He extends it to Mick, who signs at the bottom.

FIRST MAN
Have a nice day.

They head for the elevator. Mick, humiliated, walks quickly down the hall to his office. He hurries past Leslie without saying a word.

CUT TO:

80 OMITTED 80

* 81 INT MICK'S OFFICE DAY 81 *

MICK is with a FEMALE EXECUTIVE in his office. They're working at his desk, papers spread everywhere.

* EXECUTIVE *
You know, we still have to get to the June account analysis today.

* MICHAEL *
We may get to it, but I took a peek at the compensating balances. They're way off.

* EXECUTIVE *
Are you serious?

LESLIE calls from offscreen.

LESLIE (o.s.)
Excuse me, Mick -- call on line one. She said it's urgent.

MICK
Who said it's urgent?

LESLIE (o.s.)
I don't know. She wouldn't say.

MICK
(to the Executive)
Excuse me.
(into phone)
Michael Boll.

ALEX'S VOICE comes over the wire, a high falsetto.

ALEX (o.s.)
Now don't pretend you don't remember me, sweetheart.

Mick swivels his chair to face the other way. He speaks in a low voice, trying to keep cool.

MICK
What the hell do you want?

ALEX (o.s.)
(normal voice)
Take it easy. I'm doin' you a favor.

MICK
I don't want a favor.

ALEX (o.s.)
I did what you said. Your stuff's gone. Sold. But there's a bunch of shit that's no good to anybody. Computer discs, your passport, some pictures. You want it?

MICK
(trying to stay cool)
Yes, that's a good idea.

ALEX (o.s.)
You know the oil fields off La Cienega? It's in a box by well number eight.

Mick looks up, out his window, toward a brown, hilly patch off in the distance.

MICK
That's not exactly convenient.

ALEX (o.s.)
Take it or leave it, pal. It's on my way out of town. I'm pullin' up stakes. You won't see me any more.

MICK
When will it be there?

ALEX (o.s.)
It's there now. I wouldn't wait too long. Oh, your wallet is there too.

MICK
My wallet?

ALEX (o.s.)
Yeah. You left it on the bar, remember? I think your American Express is expired. Adios, Mick.

He hangs up. Mick SLAMS the phone down. The Executive looks at him.

MICK
I have to go somewhere. Can we pick this up in the morning?

EXECUTIVE
Sure. Everything okay?

Mick doesn't answer. He heads out of the office, livid.

LESLIE
Where should I say you went?

MICK
It's personal!

LESLIE
(a mumble)
Sorry I asked.

CUT TO:

82 EXT OIL FIELDS DAY 82

The sun is setting over the oil fields near Baldwin Hills. MICK approaches one of the wells. There is a medium sized cardboard box a few feet from the well. Mick looks around, but there's nobody in sight anywhere. He opens the box and sorts through the stuff inside.

CUT TO:

* 83 EXT MICK'S BUILDING NIGHT 83

MICK'S CAR comes down the street and turns into his garage.

CUT TO:

84 INT CORRIDOR NIGHT 84

MICK walks down the corridor outside his apartment. He fishes out his keys and unlocks the door to his place.

CUT TO:

85 INT MICK'S APARTMENT NIGHT 85

MICK comes into his empty apartment, tired and pissed off. He drops the box near the door and goes down a little hallway to his bedroom.

He tries the door. The knob turns, but it doesn't open. He pushes on it, puzzled. It won't give.

Looking around the edges of the door, he finds it has been nailed shut by a half dozen spike nails.

MICK
Oh, for Christ's sake.

He turns and goes back into the living room. Now he sees it -- in one corner of the room, his VCR and television set are stacked neatly, the video camera beside them.

Mick approaches them cautiously, circling them like they could strike out at him at any moment.

He pushes the "eject" button on the VCR. A cassette slides out. He slides it back in, turns on the television, and presses the "play" button.

ON TAPE,

ALEX's FACE comes to life on the screen, in close-up.

ALEX
I want you to remember one thing, Mick. You asked for this.

There is a KNOCK at the door to the apartment. Alex turns.

ALEX (cont.)
Stay tuned.

Alex goes behind the camera and turns it so it faces the door. He goes to the door. As he gets further from the camera, we can see he is wearing the jacket Mick wore to the gallery opening.

Alex opens the door. It's CLAIRE.

ALEX (cont.)
Come on in.

CLAIRE
Is he okay? Where's all his stuff?

ALEX
He's in the bedroom. He wants to talk to you.

CLAIRE
Is he moving or something?

ALEX
Sort of. Come on.

She comes in and goes back to the bedroom. As Alex passes the camera, he winks and turns it so it is facing the open bedroom door.

CLAIRE
Isn't that his jacket?

ALEX
He's loaning it to me.

They go into the bedroom.

IN THE APARTMENT,

Mick snaps his head and looks at the bedroom door. He runs to it.

He tugs at the door knob, but the nails hold. He kicks at it, which splinters it some but not enough to get in.

ON THE TAPE,

The VOICES of Alex and Claire can be heard, but the camera can't quite see all the way into the bedroom.

CLAIRE (o.s.)
Where is he? What's going --

* She starts to SCREAM and there is a sudden SMACKING sound. *

AT THE DOOR,

Mick hears the sounds on the tape and, as if he could still do something, he resumes kicking the door. It starts to come loose.

ON THE TAPE,

* there is another SMACK, followed by a dull THUD -- and then it is abruptly quiet. *

AT THE DOOR,

Mick is throwing everything he has into it. A few of the nails are starting to pull out of the wood.

ON THE TAPE,

* Alex staggers back, out of the room. There is a spatter of blood across the jacket he wears. He leans against a wall, reaching up to it for support. *

AT THE DOOR,

* Mick sees this action and turns to look at the wall behind him. There are a few finger smears streaked on the wall in blood. He pulls away. *

Mick hurtles himself into the door one final time and this time it gives -- two of the nails pull out of the wood and the door splinters in half.

Mick falls into the room.

CUT TO:

86 INT BEDROOM NIGHT 86

* CLAIRE is on the floor, dead. One of Mick's golf clubs is lying next to her, bloodied. *

MICK staggers back out of the room.

CUT TO:

87 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 87

ON THE TAPE,

Alex is looking into the camera, still breathing heavy.

ALEX
You thought we were even before?

But his lips haven't moved. MICK snaps his head and
* sees ALEX standing above him on the loft, next to the open door to the deck. He's still wearing Mick's blood stained jacket. *

ALEX (cont.)
<u>Now</u> we're even.

* Alex talks as he comes down the stairs. *

ALEX (cont.)
Before you do anything stupid like go to the police, think it through, buddy. I've covered all the bases.

Mick lunges at Alex, throwing a wild punch that Alex neatly avoids.

Alex strikes, landing three consecutive jabs to Mick's face. Mick falls back to the floor, staggered by the blows, his eye bruised and his lip bleeding. Alex goes to the VCR and extracts the tape. He uses his right
* hand, on which he wears Mick's golf glove. *

* He goes to the door of the apartment. He takes off the * blood stained jacket and looks back at Mick.

ALEX
I'm a ghost.

He drapes the jacket casually over his shoulder so the blood doesn't show. He smiles.

ALEX (cont.)
Pooof. I'm gone.

He leaves. Mick stands, his legs shaky. He turns a half circle, in a daze.

He goes to the door to the bedroom and looks inside. He can't bear it. He turns and staggers back into the empty living room.

He paces, more turning in little circles than walking in any direction. He is alone. And panicked. He sinks down to the floor and pushes with his feet, sliding across the room until he is up against the wall.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 INT MICK'S APARTMENT NIGHT 88

MICK is still on the floor, but now he's lying curled up against the wall, eyes wide open.

Thinking.

Outside, he hears someone walking down the hallway. His eyes dart to the door.

CUT TO:

89 INT MICK'S HALLWAY NIGHT 89

PISMO walks down the hallway and stops at Mick's door. He KNOCKS and waits. There is no response. He KNOCKS again.

PISMO
Michael?

No answer. He KNOCKS a third time.

PISMO (cont.)
Michael, it's me!

The door opens a crack, held by the chain lock. MICK looks out, his face pale and gaunt.

* PISMO (cont.) *
Hey, are you all right? I thought you didn't want to stay here.

* MICK *
Go away, Pismo.

He starts to close the door. Pismo stops it.

* PISMO *
What do you mean, go away? What's goin' on?

* MICK *
I don't want you in here.

He starts to close the door again, but Pismo insists.

* PISMO *
I'm your brother, damn it, now tell me what the hell is going on!

Mick pauses and looks at him. Deciding, he closes the door enough to take off the chain lock. He opens it a foot or two and nods for Pismo to come in. He closes the door after him.

CUT TO:

* 90 INT MICK'S APARTMENT NIGHT 90 *

MICK stands at the window in the living room, staring outside without seeing much. PISMO is behind him, pacing, JANGLING his car keys nervously.

MICK
Could you please stop that?

Pismo drops the keys on the floor and slides down the wall, sitting on the floor. When he speaks, he mumbles, more to himself than to Mick.

PISMO
Just a matter of time --

MICK
(thinking aloud)
He did it in my apartment. With my golf club.

PISMO
-- get in bed with the devil, sooner or later you have to fuck.

MICK
He made sure I stormed out of the office pissed off after getting a phone call from a woman.

PISMO
I can't be in this.

MICK
He sent me someplace where nobody could possibly see me.

PISMO
I can't be here. I gotta get out of here.

MICK
And he's even got my jacket. If I call the cops --

This is the first sentence Pismo hears clearly.

PISMO
No! You can't call the cops!

MICK
-- if I call the cops, my blood stained jacket suddenly shows up in the trunk of my car, or in the dumpster outside my office. He said he'd covered all the bases --

PISMO
Listen to me, Michael -- the cops won't believe this guy exists. Don't even <u>think</u> about calling them. Promise me that. Promise me you won't.

MICK
Then you tell me, Pismo. What do I do?

CUT TO:

* 91 INT APARTMENT NIGHT 91 *

Quick images: A DRAPERY ROPE is cut and ZIPPED out of the curtain rods.

THE BEDROOM DRAPES are unhooked and pulled off. The drapes float gently down, covering CLAIRE'S BODY.

HANDS tuck the fabric around her body and tie cinches around the ends of the bundle with the drapery rope.

THE GOLF CLUB is wrapped up in newspaper.

MICK and PISMO stand in the middle of the living room. The body, wrapped up in the drapes, is between them.

MICK
It'll have to be your car. Mine's too small.

Pismo nods reluctantly.

PISMO
If anything happens -- if the cops find out -- I can't promise what I'll do. I don't want to let you down.

Mick nods, pats him once on the shoulder in thanks, and goes to the door to the apartment.

CUT TO:

* 92 INT HALLWAY NIGHT 92 *

MICK creeps out of the apartment and down the hallway.

He opens the door to the stairwell. A MAN and a WOMAN, the same ones as before, are having a violent argument one floor below. As Mick listens, he can see a gesticulating arm and the top of the Woman's head.

MAN
I told you -- I did not fuck her!

WOMAN
You put it in and you took it out. To me, that's fucking.

MAN
Okay, once. I fucked her once.

Mick ducks back into the hallway. He pushes the button for the elevator.

CUT TO:

* 93 INT ELEVATOR NIGHT 93 *

MICK and PISMO step into the open elevator, carrying Claire's body.

Mick punches the basement button and the doors slide shut. As the elevator starts to move, Pismo turns to him.

PISMO
What if somebody gets on?

Mick looks at him, then turns and looks at the indicator panel over the door. He stares at the lighted numbers, praying they continue to move past the floors.

The light moves past "L" and stops at "B." They draw their breath in as the doors slide open to reveal --

-- an empty garage.

CUT TO:

* 94 INT GARAGE NIGHT 94 *

MICK peeks out, sees the garage is deserted, and he and PISMO hurry out with the body.

MICK
Bring it around.

Pismo pales.

PISMO
My keys! I left 'em upstairs!

Mick gives him an exasperated look.

PISMO (cont.)
I was distracted, okay?

Mick tosses Pismo his apartment keys.

MICK
Hurry up!

Pismo dashes back into the elevator and jabs at the buttons. The doors close.

Mick looks around. He's standing in the middle of the parking garage with a body wrapped in drapes on the ground in front of him. He starts to pick the body up to move it to a less obvious spot when he hears it --

-- a woman's VOICE. From the stairwell. Close.

WOMAN (o.s.)
Wait! Come back!

MAN (o.s.)
Not until you start trusting me!

FOOTSTEPS approach as someone charges down the steps.

Mick looks around, panicked. He gets a solid grip on the body and starts to drag it down the row of cars.

The steps get closer. Now the woman's VOICE shouts again, and you can tell by how loud it is that they're right outside the stairwell door to the garage.

WOMAN (o.s.)
Trust you?! You just admitted you fucked her!

The stairwell door flies open and BANGS against the wall as the ARGUING MAN bursts into the garage.

MAN
Yeah, but you wouldn't even know that if I hadn't told you!

At the second he enters, Mick turns and drags the body between two parked cars, staying just out of sight.

The Man stalks off across the garage. The Woman, furious and confused by this line of reasoning, SLAMS the stairwell door and STOMPS back upstairs.

Mick sucks his breath in. Looking underneath the car to his right, he can see the Man's footsteps approaching -- headed straight for him.

Mick lowers his head, trying to make himself invisible as it becomes apparent the Man is going to walk right past him.

The FOOTSTEPS come closer and closer and --

-- walk past.

The Man goes to the car on Mick's left, which is backed into the stall, and starts to open the driver's door.

Mick raises his head just an inch to see, and suddenly something moves in the back seat of the car, something big and black and very, very fast.

WHAM!!

A BLACK DOG lunges at Mick's face in the right rear window, SNARLING, GROWLING, slobbering spit and absolutely scaring the crap out of Mick.

Mick stifles a SCREAM as the dog continues to SNAP behind the glass.

MAN
Shut up, for Christ's sakes.

He gets into the car and tears out. The Black Dog stares at Mick out the back window, baring its teeth.

Mick breathes a sigh of relief as the car pulls out of the garage. He is left exposed, crouching next to the now empty parking spot with the body beside him.

BANG!!

Mick jumps as the stairwell door SLAPS open again.

It's PISMO. He holds up his car keys.

CUT TO:

* 95 OMITTED 95 *

* 96 OMITTED 96 *

* 97 OMITTED 97 *

* 98 OMITTED 98 *

* 99 OMITTED 99 *

* 100 OMITTED 100 *

101 EXT AN ALLEY NIGHT 101

The car stops next to an enormous pile of trash in another alley. MICK gets out of the car, looks both ways, and stuffs the golf club, wrapped in newspaper, into the bottom of the pile.

CUT TO:

* 102 EXT LOS ANGELES NIGHT 102 *

Pismo's car turns into a parklike area in downtown Los Angeles. It passes a sign: LA BREA TAR PITS.

Further in the park, MICK opens a gate and throws it wide. PISMO drives through and parks the car. He gets out.

* Mick and Pismo carry the body across the grounds, past a small excavation with stacks of oil drums along the side. *

They come through some brush and reeds and emerge at the edge of the main pit. The darkness makes it impossible to see much. They set the body down.

Mick picks up a rock and tosses it into the middle of the blackness. The rock SPLASHES in the pond, but it's a single, thick splash.

And then it's silent. Mick and Pismo look at each other.

CUT TO:

103 INT MICK'S OFFICE DAY 103

MICK sits at his desk, trying to slog through paperwork. LESLIE slides a pink sheet of paper across his desk.

* LESLIE *
It's from personnel. My transfer.

* MICK *
Your what?

* LESLIE *
My transfer. I'm moving down to financial services.

MICK
Why?

LESLIE
You tell me, Mick. Something's obviously wrong and has <u>been</u> wrong. You've barely even spoken to me for days. I can't take this. I'm sorry.

She turns for the door.

MICK
Wait.

She turns, waiting.

MICK (cont.)
It's not you. It's -- it's --

He stops, his attention drawn to something across the room.

LESLIE
Yes?

But Mick isn't hearing her anymore, his attention is sqaurely focused on an object that is resting innocently in the corner of the office near the window.

His golf club. Clean and shiny.

LESLIE (cont.)
What?

MICK
Forget it. Nothing.

* LESLIE *
See you later, "Mick."

She leaves the office. He looks at the club.

CUT TO:

104 INT MICK'S OFFICE DAY 104

MICK is on the phone, speaking frantically, but trying to keep his voice down. He paces, the phone in hand.

* MICK *
I'll tell you exactly what it means, it means he followed us! It means he knows where we put the body, he knows everything. This isn't going to end, he's -- calm down, damn it! I had to tell you! I --

He stops in the middle of his sentence as something out the window catches his eye. He looks out, down across the street, at the Tar Pits.

A crowd is gathered around the main pit. A half dozen
* POLICE CARS, a HOOK AND LADDER TRUCK, and an AMBULANCE *
are also assembled and the whole area is roped off with yellow tape.

MICK (cont.)
I'll call you back.

CUT TO:

105 EXT LA BREA TAR PITS DAY 105

MICK runs across the street and elbows his way to the front of the crowd. He can see the CREW in the middle of the pit performing some kind of extraction. Mick steps up next to a white-coated museum EMPLOYEE.

MICK
What's going on?

* EMPLOYEE *
A body in the tar pit. Looks like a girl.

* MICK *
How'd they find her?

* EMPLOYEE *
A pit this big is mostly water. As soon as the stomach bloated, a body would just float up.

Mick is in shock. He stares out at the pit, and now he sees it -- a CORPSE pulled out of the water. He turns his head, not wanting to see, and looks directly at --

-- ALEX.

Staring at him from across the pit. Smiling. Enjoying it. Mick takes a step forward toward Alex. TWO PARAMEDICS step in front of him and he moves to the side.

When the Paramedics pass, Alex is gone.

CUT TO:

* 106 INT PISMO'S APARTMENT DAY 106 *

MICK paces like a madman, PISMO sits in a chair, stunned, staring straight ahead.

MICK
This is what he does! He's watching me squirm. And if I'm not squirming enough, he'll just give me another jab.

PISMO
I can't go back to jail. I'll die there. I swear to God.

MICK
What do you want me to say, damn it?! This thing is completely out of control. I'm going to fucking hang and there's nothing I can do about it! Except --
(pause)
-- kill the son of a bitch.

PISMO
You're thinking like him. You don't want to be in his world, we want to find a way to bring him into our world.

MICK
His world.
(an idea)
You got the new issue of the "Reader?"

CUT TO:

* 107 INT PISMO'S APARTMENT -- CORRIDOR NIGHT 107 *

PISMO pokes his head out the door of his apartment. A COUPLE OF MEXICAN KIDS SHRIEK from behind him and he jumps a foot. They continue down the hall, playing. The coast clear, Pismo creeps out. He carries a newspaper, folded open to a page.

MICK appears behind him.

PISMO
You'll have to wait here. You know that?

MICK
Yeah. No problem.

PISMO
I mean, if he sees you, everything's fucked up.

MICK
I understand.

PISMO
Good. So you'll wait here till I call. Right?

Mick nods his agreement and goes inside, closing the door behind him. Pismo takes off down the steps. After a moment, the door opens again. Mick looks out.

CUT TO:

108 EXT DOWNTOWN CLUB NIGHT 108

PISMO walks up to the front entrance of a downtown club. He checks an address in the newspaper with the address on the building and goes past a line of CLUB-GOERS to
* the BOUNCER at the door. *

* PISMO *
(to the Bouncer)
Uh -- fun loving couple seeks --

* The Bouncer pulls a velvet rope aside and admits Pismo. *
The Club-Goers in line shout their objections.

CUT TO:

* 109 INT DOWNTOWN CLUB NIGHT 109 *

PISMO moves through the crowded club. A ROCK BAND, the same band that played in the club Mick and Alex went to the night they met, is playing at the front. Some people dance, others are crowded around tables.

He edges his way through the crowd, searching. Several PATRONS bump into him. He recoils, trying to move without actually touching anyone, finding it nearly impossible.

Getting fed up, he pulls out of the crowd, off to the side of the room.

And sees ALEX. He's sitting at a table across the room with a STYLISH EURASIAN WOMAN, the one who was with him on the fishing pier.

The Woman is fascinated with Alex. They laugh, drink. She hangs on his arm, brushes his hair back a bit on the sides. He's charming and relaxed. They are clearly a couple.

Pismo watches them, edging forward to get a better look. As he moves, someone else is revealed, someone behind him --

-- MICK.

He's standing in a corner of the club, looking dark, ragged, crazy. Watching Pismo. Seeing Alex.

As Pismo watches Alex and the Stylish Woman, it becomes clear they're not only making eyes at each other, they're also looking at someone at another table.

* He follows their gaze to an ATTRACTIVE GIRL sitting two tables away from them. She returns their look coquettishly, as if this has been going on for some time. *

Alex grins at her. She grins back, then looks away.

Pismo looks at Alex again. Alex picks up a bottle of beer and takes a long, seductive drink. He fixes his gaze on the Girl, a look that has real purpose. She turns back and returns it willingly, now completely ignoring the others at her table.

Michael stays in the shadows, watching Pismo as he watches the activity between Alex and the Girl.

Now the Girl gets up. She walks over toward the table of Alex and the Stylish Woman, moving as if she is going to speak to them -- but instead she keeps going, dragging one finger across their table as she cruises past them and into the ladies' room.

Alex and the Woman turn and watch her go, then have a quick, whispered conference. The Woman gets up and follows the Girl into the bathroom.

Alex waits a moment, taking another sip of his beer. Pismo focuses on the bottle as Alex slowly sets it down on the table, next to two other bottles. Pismo looks at the bottle, an idea forming in his head.

Alex gets up and walks to the door of the ladies' room, pauses to see if anyone is looking, and slips inside.

Pismo moves. He heads over toward their table, eyes fixed on Alex's beer bottle, trying hard to keep it separated from the others.

As he moves, we see the space where Mick was standing.

He's gone.

Pismo draws close to the table. Suddenly, a DRUNK bumps into the table, sending the bottles reeling. Two of them fall over and CRASH on the floor. The third, Alex's, stays on the table but wobbles dangerously, rocking back and forth on the edge, moving closer and closer until --

-- a FINGER comes down into the top of the bottle and steadies it.

Pismo's finger. His finger stuck in the top, he picks up the bottle and delicately slips it into his inside jacket pocket.

His mission accomplished, he smiles and turns to go. As he turns he notices the Stylish Woman's jacket hanging over the chair. The edge of a black leather wallet is just sticking out.

Pismo throws a quick glance toward the ladies' room. He bites his lip, torn.

He goes for it. He moves up behind the chair, getting between it and the bathroom, and sidles over near the wallet. He prods it out a tiny bit more with his finger, then edges it open.

The Stylish Woman's driver's license is in the middle of the wallet, behind a plastic cover. Pismo's lips move silently as he commits her address to memory.

Satisfied, he edges the wallet back into the pocket, turns around to go --

-- and walks directly past ALEX.

Both of them keep going, as it doesn't register at first, but then there is a slight hitch in Pismo's step as he realizes who it was.

He continues on to the door, trying like hell not to break into a run.

Alex continues walking to his table, slowly, as if a thought is spinning in his head.

Then suddenly he whirls around, his eyes wide, just in time to see Pismo disappearing out of the club.

He gives chase, fighting his way through the crowd and out the front door.

CUT TO:

110 EXT CLUB NIGHT 110

ALEX comes out of the club and looks up and down the street. No sign of Pismo.

CUT TO:

* 111 INT LOBBY -- OFFICE BUILDING NIGHT 111 *

RITO, the security guard, zips up his jacket and walks past the NIGHT GUARD who is taking over his station.

RITO
'Night, Victor.

He walks down the lobby a good distance and turns down a short hallway, where MICK is waiting for him. They speak quietly.

RITO (cont.)
I feel kind of funny about this, Mr. Boll.

MICK
(smiling, charming)
I swear I'll get it back to you first thing Monday morning. As soon as I make the deposit.

RITO
I don't know.

* MICK *
Rito, I screwed up. I'm sitting on forty thousand dollars cash for the weekend and all I've got at home is a butter knife and a tennis racket. I wouldn't ask, but there's nobody else I can turn to.

Rito sighs and takes a look around. He pulls his .38 out of his holster and gives it to Mick.

RITO
If it was anybody but you -- just be careful, okay?

MICK
Right. Will do.

As Mick turns away, his smile vanishes and his face hardens. He tucks the gun into his belt.

CUT TO:

* 112 EXT CENTRAL POLICE STATION NIGHT 112 *

PISMO walks down the sidewalk in front of police headquarters. He looks up at the imposing building, steeling himself.

He starts up the steps, then sees TWO BIG COPS coming out the door. He ducks off to the side, letting them pass, trying to hide his face.

After they go, he takes a deep sigh and trudges up the steps.

CUT TO:

113 INT POLICE STATION NIGHT 113

PISMO walks into the busy precinct room of the police station, shaking like a leaf. He edges his way up to the front desk. The DESK COP hardly looks up.

DESK COP

Yeah?

PISMO
You know the policeman who was shot on Alameda last Tuesday?

DESK COP
Yeah?

PISMO
I think I saw the guy who did it.

DESK COP
("not this again")
Oh really?

PISMO
Yeah. I was at this club -- and I saw this guy, and he looked like the sketch in the paper.

DESK COP
You know who he is?

PISMO
Not his name. You guys are supposed to find out who he is. That's why I'm here.

The Cop sets down her pen.

DESK COP
Five or six times a night, somebody comes up to this desk and tells me they saw the Cop Killer. They give us some bogus description, we ask them a few questions, and eventually they break down and admit they never saw anybody, they just wanted a little attention. Now what is supposed to make me think you're any different?

PISMO
I got his fingerprints.

He puts the bottle on the counter with a CLUNK. The Cop looks up at him over the top of her glasses. Her expression changes completely.

DESK COP
Wait here.

CUT TO:

114 EXT DOWNTOWN CLUB NIGHT 114

MICK pulls up across the street from the downtown club Alex and Pismo were at. He parks across the street, watching as some people trickle out.

He holds the gun in his lap. He shakes some bullets out of a box and begins loading it.

CUT TO:

115 INT POLICE STATION NIGHT 115

PISMO now sits at a desk in the police station. Alone. Waiting. Nervous.

A plainclothes DETECTIVE comes to the desk. He sits down opposite Pismo and stares at him. Pismo stares back, waiting for him to do or say something.

The Detective looks from Pismo to the form he filled out.

DETECTIVE
Mr. "Smith"?

PISMO
Yeah. Did you find out who he is?

DETECTIVE
You left your address blank.

PISMO
Oh. I must have forgot it.

DETECTIVE
Does your phone really have a "555" exchange?

PISMO
That's just my handwriting.

DETECTIVE
Uh huh.

A VOICE calls from offscreen.

VOICE
Richard!

The Detective turns. TWO MORE DETECTIVES wave to him from an office surrounded by glass windows. He gets up and goes over to join them.

Pismo is really a wreck now. He watches the Cops through the glass. They confer excitedly, then the First Detective looks up and points to Pismo. They all turn and look, then look back at each other.

Pismo slides his chair back from the desk slowly.

CUT TO:

116 INT DETECTIVE'S OFFICE NIGHT 116

The DETECTIVES are huddled around a computer screen.

SECOND DETECTIVE
Anthony Robert Newcombe is his real name. Look here -- another state, another alias, another murder. The guy's federal. You better get your witness in here.

The FIRST DETECTIVE turns and goes to the door. He looks out at the desk where Pismo is.

Was.

CUT TO:

117 EXT CLUB NIGHT 117

MICK is still parked across the street from the club, waiting in his car. The gun is in his lap. He looks up and tenses as he sees the STYLISH WOMAN come out of the * bar with the ATTRACTIVE GIRL. He watches them. No * Alex.

They walk down the street, get into the Stylish Woman's Jaguar, and drive off.

Mick is perplexed. He gets out of the car, tucks the gun in his belt, pulls his jacket over it, and goes to the club.

CUT TO:

118 INT CLUB NIGHT 118

MICK comes in the door to the club. It's now much less crowded than before, as the band has finished its set.

Mick looks around. Alex is nowhere to be seen. He leaves.

CUT TO:

119 INT PISMO'S APARTMENT NIGHT 119

CLOSE ON Pismo's answering machine as it picks up the ringing phone.

PISMO'S VOICE
This is Pismo. I'm out. Uh -- out of the country, actually. I probably won't even get this message, so don't count on anything.

BEEP. PISMO'S VOICE comes over the machine, sounding desperate.

PISMO (o.s.)
Michael, it's me. Pick up, damn it! I got his fingerprints, but I can't deal with the cops. Stay put! I'm coming right over.

He hangs up. A finger pushes the "stop" button on the machine. ALEX.

CUT TO:

120 EXT PISMO'S APARTMENT BUILDING NIGHT 120

Seen from above, PISMO pulls up in his car and stops in front.

Running down the walkway to his building, he goes past a planter with a decorative railing around it. There are about half a dozen evenly spaced wrought iron rods in the railing, each about eighteen inches long.

One is missing.

CUT TO:

* 121 INT PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 121 *

PISMO steps out of the elevator on the fourth floor.

He walks down the hall to his apartment. He unlocks the deadbolt, turns the knob, and steps into the doorway.

* 122 INT PISMO'S APARTMENT NIGHT 122 *

PISMO stops with the door halfway open. He looks into the apartment. It's dark.

PISMO
Michael?

No answer. Pismo notices the bathroom door is hanging open slightly. Something's not right.

He looks a little to the left, to the window across the room. He can see a reflection in the window, a person behind the door, and something's moving, moving very fast right at his head. Instinctively, he ducks.

CRUNCH!

ALEX appears from behind the door and SLAMS the iron rod into the door frame just over Pismo's head.

Pismo, who is crouching low, lunges forward, hitting Alex about hip high and knocking him backwards into a stack of newspapers.

Pismo turns and races out of the apartment. He slams the door and turns the key, relocking the deadbolt.

Alex scrambles to his feet.

CUT TO:

* 123 INT STAIRS NIGHT 123 *

PISMO races down the hall to the stairs. He stops at the top, changing his mind, and darts around a corner.

ALEX rips open the door to the apartment and races after him. He flies down the stairs.

Pismo hears him THUNDER past and turns and hurries down the hallway in the other direction. He goes out a door and onto the fire escape.

CUT TO:

* 124 INT THIRD FLOOR NIGHT 124 *

ALEX stops on the third floor landing. He leans over and looks down the stairwell. Pismo is nowhere to be seen. He listens. Nothing.

He turns and looks down the hallway. At the end of the corridor, there is a red light bulb next to the door to the fire escape.

CUT TO:

* 125 EXT FIRE ESCAPE NIGHT 125 *

PISMO climbs down the narrow fire escape ladder, from the fourth floor to the third.

He's nearing the third floor landing when the third floor fire door SLAMS open, SMASHING a few of the panes of glass.

ALEX stands in the doorway.

Pismo SHOUTS and falls backwards. The railing catches him in the knees and he falls over it. His hands lock onto the railing at the last second, preventing him from falling, and he hangs there, helpless.

Alex steps toward him.

Pismo hears a SOUND from the alley below. MICK pulls up in his car.

PISMO
Michael! Help!

Alex sees Mick. Mick looks up and sees Pismo hanging. He jumps out of his car and runs into the building.

Pismo turns back to look at the doorway. Alex is gone.

CUT TO:

* 126 INT STAIRWELL NIGHT 126 *

MICK races up the stairs.

CUT TO:

* 127 EXT FIRE ESCAPE -- HALLWAY NIGHT 127 *

PISMO grits his teeth and pulls himself up, over the railing and onto the fire escape.

MICK runs out the door and helps him up. Pismo collapses against the railing, gasping for air.

PISMO
He's here! He tried to kill me!

MICK
Here? I didn't see him. Did you find out anything?

PISMO
No -- just the address of his friend.

Pismo starts to pull a slip of paper out of his pocket. Mick snatches it away.

MICK
Manhattan Beach? That's where I met him! That's not just a friend, that's where he's staying!

He turns and hurries back into the building.

PISMO
Hey! Wait!

CUT TO:

* 128 OMITTED 128 *

* 129 EXT PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 129 *

Down on the street, ALEX stops next to Mick's car, which is parked in the alley. Using the iron rod, he punches out Mick's left taillight.

CUT TO:

* 130 INT LOBBY -- PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 130 *

MICK comes down the stairs and hurries across the lobby, PISMO in pursuit.

PISMO
Would you wait up?

He catches up to Mick, grabs him by the arm, and turns him around. As he does, Mick's jacket is pulled open, revealing the .38 tucked in his belt.

PISMO (cont.)
Jesus Christ! Where the hell did you get that?!

MICK
Don't worry about it.

He turns for the door.

PISMO
What are you going to do?!

MICK
I'm going to take care of him.

PISMO
You what?! Wait!

CUT TO:

* 131 EXT PISMO'S BUILDING NIGHT 131 *

MICK storms out of the building. PISMO follows him as Mick heads for his car.

PISMO
Would you just <u>stop</u> for a second?!

MICK
Go back inside. It's my problem.

He walks around the end of his car, Pismo behind him. They walk past the left tail light, not noticing it has been smashed.

As Mick walks along the length of the car, he also fails to see the wire from the tail light, which has been pulled out and runs along the left rear quarter panel --

-- and into the gas tank.

Mick opens the driver's door and sits behind the wheel of the car. He pulls his car keys out of his pocket.

PISMO
Give me the gun.

MICK
Don't fuck with me, Pismo. You don't know me anymore.

PISMO
Yes, I do.

He reaches into the car and grabs the gun by the barrel. Mick tenses his grip on it and there is a brief struggle.

PISMO (cont.)
Give it to me, Michael, before you hurt somebody.

Mick looks him in the eye, thinks, and releases his grip on the gun. Pismo pulls it away.

MICK
Keep it. There are other ways.

Mick jams the key in the ignition and turns it. The car turns over a couple of times, not starting.

Pismo looks away in disgust. And he sees the wire. Eyes wide, he turns back to Mick and SCREAMS at the top of his lungs just as the car ROARS to life.

PISMO
STOP!!!

Mick turns, surprised. The car idles. Pismo speaks, pale faced.

PISMO (cont.)
Do not -- step -- on the brake.

Mick looks at Pismo, curious. He gets out of the car and follows Pismo's gaze to the gas tank. He pulls off the gas cap, which was only loosely attached, and very delicately pulls the wire out of the tank.

The smashed light bulb housing hangs at the end of it. Mick stares at it, fascinated.

MICK
Touch the pedal.

Pismo reaches into the car and pushes the brake pedal with his hand. A tiny, malevolent spark CRACKLES in the empty socket.

Mick RIPS the wire from the car, SLAPS the gas cap back on, and gets in the car.

MICK
See? You see? This won't be over till it's over.

PISMO
Let me help you.

MICK
You <u>can't</u> help me. You never could.

He slams the car door.

PISMO
If you do it -- if you do this thing, Michael, he really does win. Once and for all.

Pause. Mick stares straight ahead.

CUT TO:

132 OMITTED 132

133 EXT BEACH HOUSE NIGHT 133

A modern three story house directly on the beach. Curtains blow in a second floor window.

CUT TO:

134 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 134

The curtains of the second story window waft into a plush, white-on-white living room, dark except for the light of the full moon over the ocean.

From upstairs, up at the top of a winding staircase, comes the SOUND of people making love.

CUT TO:

135 INT BEDROOM LOFT NIGHT 135

A framed photo on a night table shows the STYLISH WOMAN Alex was with in the bar and a handsome man in his fifties in a nuptial pose.

Over on the bed, ALEX makes passionate love to her, the moonlight spilling over them, their arms and legs entangled, gliding over one another, moving gracefully and beautifully, as if there were almost too many arms and legs.

And, in fact, there are. The ATTRACTIVE GIRL from the bar is in bed with them as well, kissing, touching, sliding in between them.

The lovemaking increases in passion and rhythm, building to a climax.

Alex rolls off both the women and lays back on the bed. They all catch their breath.

Alex sits up on the edge of the bed. The Girl runs one hand across his chest.

GIRL
(softly)
Me.

ALEX
In a minute. You want a drink?

GIRL
Yeah.

ALEX
Be right back.

He gets up and pulls on a pair of blue jeans and a tee shirt. He walks across the room, toward the staircase that leads down to the second floor.

His backpack sits on the floor at the head of the stairs. As quietly as possible, he picks it up and goes down the stairs with it.

CUT TO:

136 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 136

ALEX comes down the winding staircase, turns for the kitchen -- and stops. He turns, a look of concern flitting across his face. He looks across the room. A potted plant beneath the window has been tipped over, spilling dirt on the white carpet. He tenses.

A gust of wind blows in through the window. The curtains brush across the leaves of the plant, spilling some more dirt. Alex relaxes and heads for the kitchen.

CUT TO:

* 137 INT KITCHEN NIGHT 137 *

ALEX strains, reaching for something on the floor behind the refrigerator. He catches hold of it and pulls it out -- a small garbage bag. He puts it and the pack over his shoulder.

He opens the refrigerator and scans the contents. He opens a bin and rummages through it, but finds only lettuce, celery, and other health shit. He closes the bin and looks up top.

A lone bottle of beer is in the back, stuck behind some carrot juice. He pulls it out. He closes the door -- and nearly jumps through the roof.

MICK stands on the other side of the door, his eyes dark and hollowed, a huge butcher knife in his hand. Before Alex can even react, the knife moves up, fast, straight at Alex's throat. It stops there, the point just pressing against the soft skin under Alex's chin.

MICK
You make a really funny face when you come. Anybody ever tell you that?

Alex doesn't answer. Mick nods toward the backpack.

MICK (cont.)
Goin' somewhere?

Still no answer. Mick's eyes go to the garbage bag.

MICK
My jacket, huh? Where were you gonna plant it? In the dumpster at my office?

ALEX
(cool as ice)
Under the dumpster. At your apartment, actually.

He gives Mick a tiny, conspiratorial grin. But Mick's having none of it -- he presses the knife a little harder into the skin, just pricking it, drawing a trickle of blood. Alex GASPS.

MICK
Put the beer down.

Alex does.

MICK (cont.)
Walk.

He steers Alex out of the kitchen and into the living room, the knife still at his throat.

CUT TO:

138 INT LIVING ROOM NIGHT 138

MICK walks ALEX into the middle of the living room.

* ALEX *
You and I need to talk.

MICK
No talking.

He flicks the knife again, drawing a little more blood.

MICK (cont.)
You're just going to die. With your mouth shut.

ALEX
(pause)
Then do it.

* MICK *
I will. I want to watch you squirm first. That's what I'm supposed to do, remember?

They stare each other down. Alex laughs mockingly.

ALEX
You can't.

MICK
Oh, yes I --

ALEX
No. You can't because I never showed you how. You don't have it --

But he cuts himself off and throws his head back, away from the knife. The motion draws a little more blood, but his arm quickly flashes up, catching Mick by the wrist, slapping the knife away.

Alex lunges at Mick and they both hit the floor with a THUD. The knife lands a few feet away.

Alex dives for the knife. Mick, seeing he's lost the advantage, rolls the other way, toward the window. A VOICE comes from upstairs, alarmed.

VOICE (o.s.)
Maxwell?

Alex stands, holding the knife in front of him.

* ALEX *
Don't worry, Mick. <u>Now</u> I'm gonna show you how.

Mick turns and runs for the window. He jumps.

CUT TO:

139 EXT BEACH NIGHT 139

MICK flies out of the second story window and hits the sand, hard. He rolls, then scrambles to his feet and starts to run away, fast, across the sand.

Behind him, ALEX sails out the window, hits the sand, and gets to his feet, not far behind.

And gaining.

Mick runs, terrified, staggering, kicking up a spray of sand behind him.

CUT TO:

140 EXT FISHING PIER NIGHT 140

MICK comes tearing down the beach. He looks back over his shoulder, frantic, trying to see how close ALEX is.

He turns back to face forward, but not soon enough to see --

-- A SHOPPING CART, packed with blankets and dirty clothes, apparently parked there by a homeless person.

Mick CRASHES into the cart, sending it flying and falling to the ground, twisting his ankle.

He gets to his feet. He's standing at the mouth of the fishing pier he and Alex met at that first night. Disoriented from the crash, he takes off down the concrete pier, limping badly.

ALEX, now not far behind, breaks into a grin. He reaches the pier and starts down it, slowing to a trot.

Near the end of the pier is a small wooden shack with a "FISHING SUPPLIES" sign on the top. Mick races past it. A streetlight casts a single pool of light over the end of the pier.

Mick reaches the railing -- nothing but sea beyond.

Alex comes past the store and stops. He twirls the butcher knife expertly.

ALEX (cont.)
Guess I got you now, Mick!

In one smooth motion, Mick reaches up under the railing and, with the distinctive sound of Velcro RIPPING, pulls out his .38 handgun.

MICK
Guess again.

Alex blinks. This is a new wrinkle. Mick circles around him so Alex is the one with his back to the sea.

MICK (cont.)
Drop the knife.

ALEX
What's goin' on? You wanted to kill me, you would have killed me back there.

MICK
The knife! Drop it! No -- throw it in the water!

Pause.

ALEX
Why?

MICK
Because I've got a gun!

ALEX
So you've got a gun. So what? You're not gonna use it.

Alex starts to walk forward, toward Mick, knife in hand.

MICK
GET BACK! Into the light. Where I can see you.

Alex keeps coming forward, knife in hand. Mick FIRES a warning shot that ricochets off the pier near Alex's feet.

Alex steps back into the light, but keeps the knife. Silence for a second.

ALEX
I'm sorry.

* MICK *
Fuck you.

ALEX
I'm sorry, okay? I said I'm sorry.

* MICK *
Fuck you! You killed Claire and now you say you're SORRY?!

ALEX
Yeah.

MICK
You think that covers it? What about everything else? What about Fenwick? I beat up a guy while you held him down. Are you sorry for that too?

Alex laughs.

ALEX
You didn't beat up anybody. I beat up Fenwick. You were passed out the whole time. I whacked your hand on the pavement to fuck with you.

MICK
To fuck with me.

ALEX
I didn't make you do anything that wasn't in you already. You guys make me sick. Such fucking hypocrites. You walk through life playing innocent until the day you die. But you're not innocent, and I had to show you that. That's why I killed Claire, Mick.

Long pause.

MICK
(exhausted)
My name is Michael. Did you get it?

ALEX
What?

MICHAEL
Did you get it?

The door to the fishing supplies shack swings open and a FIGURE steps out -- PISMO. He's holding Michael's video camera on his shoulder, pointing it squarely at Alex.

PISMO
Every word.

Alex is shocked. Michael looks at him and manages as much of a triumphant grin as he can.

Michael turns to look back at Pismo, and as he does, Alex moves. With one quick motion, the knife flashes up from his side, a quick, hard, underhand toss.

Michael sees him move and FIRES. His shot hits Alex, sending the knife flying off its mark.

Alex THUDS back against the railing and tumbles over it, dropping down toward the ocean, vanishing into the night air.

Michael and Pismo rush forward to the railing, leaning over it, racing up and down, looking for any sign of Alex.

There is none. Only the dark, choppy, swirling waters far below.

DISSOLVE TO:

* 141 EXT BEACH DAWN 141 *

At least a dozen POLICE CARS and LIFEGUARD TRUCKS are parked at the fishing pier. OFFICERS comb the beach, a HELICOPTER flies overhead, and a BOAT offshore patrols the ocean waters around the pier as the sun comes up.

The DETECTIVE who spoke with Pismo at the station stands at the end of the pier with MICHAEL, watching the operation, which is apparently without result so far.

PISMO stands behind them, down the pier, a safe distance away from the cops.

A UNIFORMED COP steps up to the Detective.

COP
Sir?

The Detective turns. The Cop holds up Alex's backpack and the garbage bag containing Michael's jacket.

COP (cont.)
It was right where he said.

The Detective nods and turns to Michael.

DETECTIVE
Well -- the fact that you came clean -- they'll take that into consideration. Might go easier for you.

MICHAEL
If I wanted it easy, I wouldn't have called you.

The Detective nods to the Cop next to Michael. The Cop pulls out a pair of handcuffs.

DETECTIVE
We have to do this.

Michael nods. The Cop reaches to take the tape from Michael, but Michael pulls it away, not wanting to let it out of his hands.

A HAND reaches in from the other side and takes the tape gently from Michael's hands. Michael turns. It's PISMO.

PISMO
I'll carry it.
(to the Cop)
I'm coming with.

Michael gives Pismo a tight-lipped smile of gratitude as the Cop cuffs him.

The Detective casts one more look out to the water.

DETECTIVE
He must have drowned.

MICHAEL
Yeah.

He looks out at the water.

MICHAEL (cont.)
Maybe.

The Detective starts off down the pier. The Cop leads Michael by the arm. Pismo is at Michael's side.

For support.

CUT TO:

* 142 INT SAN FRANCISCO BAR DAY 142 *

The rolling hills that drop off sharply to the San Francisco Bay are visible out the window of this downtown bar.

A GUY, an executive in his late twenties, sits morosely at the bar, nursing a huge tumbler of bourbon, the sweat stains on his starched white shirt showing the kind of day he had. An unlit cigarette is in his mouth.

A SHADOW passes over him and somebody sits down on the next stool.

The Guy pats his pockets, looking for a lighter.

There is the CRACKLE of a match being lit and a little tongue of flame is touched to the end of his cigarette.

He turns to his left, the source of the match. ALEX, sitting at the bar, touches the match to his own cigarette.

GUY
Thanks.

Alex waves it off and signals to the BARTENDER.

ALEX
(to the Guy)
Tough day, huh?

GUY
Tell me about it.

The Bartender arrives.

GUY (cont.)
Another double bourbon and --

He gestures to Alex.

ALEX
Beer.

The Bartender goes. Alex reaches for his wallet, but the Guy stops him.

GUY
Let me get this.

ALEX
No, I couldn't.

GUY
I insist.

He pulls out a twenty and puts it on the bar.

ALEX
Well -- all right. Just this one.

FADE OUT.