

DEEP COVER

Written by

Michael Tolkin and Henry Bean

Story by

Michael Tolkin

SHOOTING DRAFT

EXT. CLEVELAND STREET - NIGHT (1970)

rattles
black
JOE

Rain. Christmas lights. A rusted out '56 Lincoln
down the bleak boulevard. In it: JOE STEVENS, an angry,
man in his late 20's, beside him his 10-year-old son,

JR.

buildings,
down a
silence:

Joe Jr. stares out the window at passing: boarded
whores with raincoats over their heads trying to flag
john, a black Santa, a knot of drinkers. Breaking the

JOE STEVENS

Your mother okay?

JOE JR.

Yes, sir.

snort a

They stop at a light. Joe Stevens tries to furtively
little something. He spots Joe Jr. watching.

JOE STEVENS

(firm, without irony)

Don't you do this shit, boy. Don't
you ever fuckin' touch it, you hear
me?

Joe Jr. stares, silent; Joe Jr.'s about to hit him.

JOE STEVENS

(continuing)
You hear me, goddam it?

The boy nods. Satisfied, Joe Sr. draws in the stuff. It makes him feel good, strong, worried and determined all at once.

JOE STEVENS
(continuing; charged up)
What do you want for Christmas?

JOE JR.
I don't know.

JOE STEVENS
(light changes; he accelerates)
You don't know?? You gotta know what you want, boy, if you ever expect to get it.

A sudden charm to his bravado. Joe Jr. smiles uncertainly. Joe Sr. grins back, pulls up in front of a liquor store.

JOE STEVENS
(continuing)
Wait here. This won't take a minute.

Joe Jr. doesn't notice or doesn't remark that his father, just before entering the store, draws a handgun from beneath his coat.

The boy gazes dreamily at the street. The lunatic Black Santa marches by, ranting to himself ("Then the white man say..."). The RAIN HAMMERS on the roof and windshield. Joe Jr. breathes on the glass, fogging the scene.

From the store: MUFFLED GUNFIRE.

Joe Jr. looks that way. Another GUNSHOT, then: His father comes out the door clutching money in one hand.

doesn't

He strides toward the car with a reckless pride. He
notice:

The liquor store door opens behind him.

car
his

A SHOTGUN BLAST. Joe Stevens' guts splatter onto the
windshield. A look of terrible amazement; he sinks to
knees.

JOE JR.

Daddy!!

He jumps from the car, kneels by his father.

The STORE OWNER (47, Slavic) drags the gun toward them,
bleeding profusely.

STORE OWNER

(enraged, almost to
tears)

Fuckin' niggers... fuckin' niggers...

JOE STEVENS

looks at the money in his hand: two 20's, two 5's.

JOE STEVENS

Fifty bucks... fifty goddam bucks.
(looks up at his son)
I'm sorry...

pocket

He stuffs the blood-soaked bills in the boy's shirt
and dies. Joe Jr. looks up at...

THE STORE OWNER

boy

Bloody, nearly unconscious, he aims the shotgun at the
who is too frightened to move.

JOE JR.

Please, Mister...

pulls the

The man dies on his feet. As he falls backward, he
trigger, the BLAST shattering the car windows.

drawn,
motionless
HIS

Cop cars SQUEAL up. Uniformed cops leap out, guns
survey the scene. Then one notices Joe Jr., staring
at his father and the store owner, dead together. ON

EYES:

DISSOLVE TO:

THOSE SAME EYES

a
-- but older, harder, colder. They're concentrating on
paper before him.

TITLE: 17 YEARS LATER

INVENTORY

CLOSEUP - THE MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY

Hundreds of TRUE/FALSE questions...

practices.
1.) I have never indulged in any unusual sexual

(T/F)

2.) I have often felt that strangers were looking at me
critically. (T/F)

3.) When I was young I occasionally stole things. (T/F)

to:
Joe Stevens marks these TRUE, FALSE, FALSE then comes

4.) A person's station in life is at least partially
determined by his race. (T/F) We are:

INT. A ROOM - DAY

uniform,
eyes at
Joe,
Thirty-seven Black Cleveland police officers (many in
including Joe) are taking the MMPI. Some roll their
the questions. Some try to copy answers. Others, like
work with rapid concentration.

Marks it
But he gets stuck on #4. Marks it false. Erases it.

hear true. Erases that. Ponders. Goes on to: #5. At times I
so well it bothers me. (T/F) He marks that true.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

a GERALD CARVER, 36, an ambitious government lawyer with
relaxed, vaguely hip manner, looks over the file of the
him. ingratiating BLACK OFFICER sitting across the desk from

CARVER

Officer Leland? You know the
difference between a black man and
nigger?

the Leland is startled, insulted, but doesn't want to blow
interview. He smiles weakly, shakes his head no.

CARVER

(continuing; pleasant
smile)
Yeah, most niggers don't.

aside, Stung, Leland tries to laugh. Carver puts his file
picks up another.

CARVER

(continuing)
Nice to meet you.

INT. SAME - ANOTHER INTERVIEW

file. A SECOND BLACK OFFICER is powerfully built, politically
conscious, takes no shit. Carver's leafing through his

CARVER

So, Winston, what's the difference
between a black man and a nigger?

finished, Winston is out of his chair before the question is
and drags Carver by the shirt front halfway across the desk
hisses into his face:

WINSTON

Who the fuck do you think you're

talking to?

Carver smiles cheerfully past Winston's cocked fist.

CARVER

Thanks for coming in.

Carver
Nonplussed by this cool dismissal, Winston stalks out.
picks up the next file, unfazed.

INT. SAME - ANOTHER INTERVIEW

for
finds
Joe Stevens watches Carver reading his file and waiting
an answer. When none is forthcoming, Carver glances up,
Stevens looking right back at him.

STEVENS

The nigger's the one who falls for
your bullshit.

smiles:
He says it pleasantly, without belligerence. Carver
he's found his man. He offers his hand.

CARVER

Gerald Carver, United States District
Attorney. Call me Gerry.

INT. A DARKENED ROOM - DAY/NIGHT

time
light
and
ON A TV SCREEN: a grainy black-and-white tape, date and
stamped at the bottom. A grungy street, palm trees. The
from the monitor dimly illuminates Carver and Stevens.
On SCREEN the CAMERA finds: A MAN in jeans, sneakers
sweatshirt on a street corner.

STEVENS

He ought to be wearing a sign.

CARVER

You can tell he's a cop?

Stevens laughs: it's obvious.

got
Cop's
go.

A real DRUG DEALER joins the cop. UNDERCOVER COP: "You
it?" DEALER: "In the motel, right over here..." The
uneasy, keeps glancing back toward the CAMERA as they
go.

STEVENS

He keeps looking for his back-up.
Now, the other guy knows it, too.

CARVER

Then why's he taking him to the room?

STEVENS

(why else?)
To rip him off.

Carver studies Stevens in the darkness, impressed.

hear
UNDERCOVER

ON SCREEN: The figures disappear into the motel. We
their voices. DEALER: "Here, try some of it."

COP: "Uhh... No, I don't..." DEALER: "Why not, you
sonofabitch?" Two bursts of SOUND DISTORTION.

bolts
CAMERA

A plainclothes cop, TAFT, (black, stocky, powerful)
from behind the CAMERA, sprints toward the motel. The
wobbles after him.

STEVENS

(continuing)
Too late.

motel

ON SCREEN: The CAMERA (jerky, hand-held) nears the open
door. Taft is bent over the Undercover Cop's body.

TAFT

Oh, Bobby... Jesus, Jesus...
(to the CAMERA)
Get an ambulance -- and back up.
Now!

pushes the
Taft's

He slams the wall, starts past the CAMERA. Carver
pause button; the tape freezes on a jerky image of
face.

STEVENS

(focussed on Taft)
Who is he?

CARVER

Charles Taft. LAPD Narcotics.

STEVENS

He's a good cop.

CARVER

He's a great cop. Two [names citation]
and a [another citation]. As tough
as they come and twice as honest.

Carver watches Stevens watch Taft, smiles at something.

STEVENS

But the cops aren't getting it done
here, are they? Gotta try something
new...

desk:
He opens a manila envelope, dumps the contents on the
driver's license, social security card, high school
transcript, prison records... all in the name of
William G.
Hull. No photos.

STEVENS

(continuing)
Who's John Hull?

CARVER

You are. If you want to be.
(off Stevens)
Most undercover guys don't know what
they're doing because it's a day
gig.
(indicates dead cop
on TV)
I need somebody who goes under and
stays there; six months, a year,
five years...

STEVENS

What does he have to do?

CARVER

Buy drugs. Sell drugs. Feed me
information.

STEVENS

He's a snitch.

CARVER

He's a drug dealer. A criminal. A scumbag. But for the right side.

(beat)

I want you to come to Los Angeles on loan to the Justice Department as a federal agent. Your experience there will be credited toward your seniority here. And you'll come back to Cleveland a P3 or higher.

STEVENS

(uncomfortable)

I can't do that. I've got a wife and kids.

CARVER

You're separated from your wife, she's filled for divorce. You see your kids every other weekend.

Stevens takes a breath: this is awkward to explain.

STEVENS

(almost a confession)

All my life I've stayed away from that stuff. I've never touched drugs.

CARVER

(tolerant)

Come on, a little grass...?

STEVENS

Not grass. Not nothing. I never even had a drink.

(his motto)

Never have, never will. You don't understand. I made a choice in my life.

CARVER

What's to understand? You saw your father killed when you were ten, and you decided you wouldn't be like that.

(off Stevens' surprise,
Carver grins)

I'm God, I know everything. You wanted

to be a good boy, so you became a cop. Hiding out in uniform... That's why you got the hard-on for Taft.

STEVENS

It's not that simple.

CARVER

(opening Joe's file;
as if reluctantly)
I'll tell the truth, Joe. You're never going to be a Taft.

STEVENS

I don't believe that.

But he does.

CARVER

(looks at MMPI results)
You ever take a look at your psychological profile? You score almost like a criminal.
(reading)
"Resents authority..."

STEVENS

I do not.

CARVER

"...Exaggerated moral standards, but with no underlying value system." Look at the anger, the repressed violence, it's almost off the scale...

STEVENS

Let me see that...

Carver hands him the scores which are, of course, just clusters of numbers. Stevens is upset, though oddly unsurprised, as if this only confirmed his secret

fears.

CARVER

Why'd you join the force?

STEVENS

(awkward, but felt)
I wanted to be of use.

CARVER

Well, now you can be. You won't be

Taft, but maybe you'll be something more... interesting.

(sits back)

There's a man named Ramon Gallegos who supplies 60% of the cocaine to the West Coast. He's smart, smooth, and sufficiently elusive that we don't even have an adult photograph of him. However, his uncle is Hector Guzman, an important Latin American political figure. Gallegos uses Uncle's connections to get product into the country, and everyone we've sent after him has ended up like that...

Indicates dead body on TV.

STEVENS

Why would I be different?

CARVER

You already are, that's the point...
(indicates file, test scores)

You've got the ability and the personality to go underground and blend in completely. That's what the others couldn't. Some part of them showed. That's why they're dead. See, there's only one rule in this game.

Stevens raises his eyebrows: what?

CARVER

(continuing)

Don't blow your cover.

EXT. WORKING CLASS CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Stevens parks outside a small, well-maintained house.

As he

gets out, he spots a GROUP OF KIDS (black and Hispanic) playing down the street. He's not pleased about that.

STEVENS

(calls to them)

Joe-J, Carmen...

him

A BOY, 7, and a GIRL, 5, (both light-skinned) run to

shouting, "Daddy," jump into his arms, competing for attention, as if they haven't seen him in ages.

STEVENS

What were you doing with those kids?

JOE-J & CARMEN

Playing...

STEVENS

(displeased)

Your mom lets you play with them?

JOE-J & CARMEN

Yes, sir... Yes, sir.

His strictness has already sobered their enthusiasm.

Sensing

this, he attempts to embrace them which he can do only awkwardly.

Meanwhile, his wife, TERRY (Southern white) has come

out the

screen door. She and Stevens bristle at each other.

STEVENS

I thought we talked about this. The older brother up there's got a sheet with --

TERRY

Lay off it. They're just kids...

Both are ready to fight, but restrain themselves. A big Polynesian, TITO comes out the door.

TITO

Hey, Joe.

STEVENS

Tito...

A moment of surprise, then he gets it. He looks to

Terry.

She gives a little shrug, refusing to be embarrassed.

INT. KITCHEN - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Stevens is trying to seem interested in Carmen's little drawings.

STEVENS

They're real nice, honey. Is that a horse?

CARMEN

(exasperated)

Daddy! It's a bunny...

She puts her arms around him.

CARMEN

(continuing)

I don't want you to go away, Daddy.

STEVENS

It's my work. I've got to.

Joe-
this

Over her shoulder he sees Terry sitting with a subdued J. Her face seems to say, "See, I told you..." Avoiding accusation, Stevens notices a bruise on Carmen's arm.

STEVENS

(continuing)

What happened to you there, baby?

CARMEN

Tito did it.

STEVENS

(instantly outraged)

He hit you?!

(up in a fury)

God damn it, what's he doing touching her? I'm gonna...

Terry intercepts him on his way out of the room.

TERRY

She was running behind his chair when he got up. It was an accident.

(he's uncertain)

A complete... total... accident.

his
sympathetic

Stevens looks at Carmen who giggles. He's humiliated by own temper, attempts to calm himself. Terry puts a hand on his shoulder.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - AERIAL SHOT - DAY

the
The immense sprawl, the arterial flow of the freeways,
blinding light. We DESCEND...

INT. TRAIN STATION - UNDERGROUND - DAY OR NIGHT

now
People getting off, among them the former Joe Stevens,
known as JOHN HULL. He's carrying a suitcase.

INT. TRAIN STATION/EXT. STREET - DAY

Hull goes up the stairs onto a downtown street.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

selling
ease,
belongs
among
South L.A. neighborhood. A 13-year-old BLACK YOUTH
drugs through a car window. Hull walks by. He's at
looking around, his manner subtly announcing that he
here, just as in the train station he seemed to belong
the commuters.

EXT. TRANSIENT MOTEL - COURTYARD - DAY

shoes)
A fat BLONDE WOMAN (61, large white glasses, tiny
leads Hull down a corridor.

BLONDE WOMAN

Television mostly. I was on "Sky
King" twice, "Ramar of the Jungle."
That was a silly show. The jungle
was mostly flats...

his
nails and
They pass an open door where a 6-year-old boy, JAMES, a
latchkey, sits on the stoop playing Gameboy; inside,
mother, BELINDA, a broken down whore, is doing her
drinking Pepsi. She looks up, bats her lashes at Hull.

BLONDE WOMAN

(continuing)

You want my advice, I'd stay away
from that bitch.

Hull
lounges
She opens the door to the room across the hall. A dump.
walks in, drops his duffle: he'll take it. The Blonde
in the doorway. He closes the door.

INT. ROOM - DAY

money,
mirror. He
expressions.
Hull empties his pockets on the dresser. Looks at his
room key, identification. Looks at himself in the
touches his clothes, his face, tries on different

himself
(NOTE: Throughout the film, Hull continually checks
out in mirrors, both to adjust his appearance to the
circumstances and as if in an attempt to recall who he
"really" is.)

EXT. 79TH AND FIGUEROA - TWILIGHT

people
new
On the seam between South-Central and USC. Lots of
out: children, students, dealers, whores. Hull with a
haircut.

EXT. ANOTHER, SIMILAR CORNER - DAY

transactions.
Dealers (most in mid-teens) meeting cars, making
All this casually observed. EDDIE comes up the street,
reciting his version of an old street toast.

EDDIE

On the day of the King's castration,
all the counts and no accounts were
down on the deck with Georgia Tech
taking turns in the back seat...

never
drugs for
money.
Those dealers not at car windows, gather around. He
speaks to them, goes on declaiming as he exchanges

appearance
Hull watches, talking to another street person. His

continues to change: clothes, posture, walk, gestures
subtly conform to the environment, a bit like Zelig.
Throughout the film his appearance shifts, depending on who he's with.
We always recognize him, but each time he's different.
going. He walks up to a dealer, makes a quick buy and keeps
But he sees them and is seen.

INT. AN OFFICE - NIGHT

Hull drops eleven foil balls on a green blotter. Carver
counts out money for him.

INT. HULL'S MOTEL ROOM - DAY

He sits at the window, eating a burrito, watching
little James play in the courtyard.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Hull approaches another Dealer, the 13-year-old seen
earlier (angelic face). Like Hull, he's trying to act tough.

HULL

Whatta you got?

13-YEAR-OLD DEALER

(voice just changing)

Nickel rock, dime rock. Excellent
shit.

Hull exchanges a folded twenty for two foil balls. He
walks off. He has gone twenty feet when...

RED RANGE ROVER

SQUEALS to a stop opposite the Dealer.

A huge young black man, IVY (23, all in red with a red
the headband), leans out the passenger window, shouting at
13-year-old.

IVY

What the fuck I tell you about being here?

Everyone turns to look, but Hull's view is blocked.

13-YEAR-OLD DEALER (O.S.)

No, wait...

IVY (O.S.)

Too fuckin' late.

POPPING noises. Ivy is waving an automatic weapon. Everyone on the street but Hull has hit the ground.

IVY

(enjoying it, shouting)

Get down, motherfuckers!

Ivy laughs and fondles a girlfriend as the car ROARS off. He sees Hull, pretends to fire, laughs as Hull, too, ducks. When Ivy's gone, he runs to where a CROWD has gathered around...

THE 13-YEAR-OLD

lying in the street, a bullet hole in his head, eyes open. He twitches and kicks, blood pulsing from the neat wound. Then he's dead. The faces around him (young, old, many races) watch with a variety of emotions.

CROWD

Who is he?... Why'd they shoot him?... Ivy did him, man... He's in the wrong fuckin' place... That poor boy... Get his beeper...

Cops push through to the body. As the crowd disperses, Hull can't take his eyes off the boy. When he finally does, he sees Eddie, drink in hand. Their eyes meet, and Eddie, a rapper, raises his eyebrows in brief acknowledgment of sorrow.

EDDIE

(sadly)
He done done, ain't he?

EXT. LEWAZZ - NIGHT

TITLE: TWO WEEKS LATER

A bar with a neon bird for a sign. Hull enters.

INT. LEWAZZ - NIGHT

birds
(long
red nails) greets him familiarly.

BARTENDER

How's it going, John?

HULL

I'm in there.

long
become
his
Without being asked, she sets him up a Dry Sack with a
red straw. (NOTE: He never touches the drink.) Hull's
appearance has continued to change. His clothes have
flashier, he has an earring, the start of a goatee.
Eddie approaches the bar compulsively reciting one of
toasts.

EDDIE

(to himself)

"Where's the Queen," said the King.
"She's in bed with laryngitis." "Is
that bastard still in town?... Fuck
the Queen," said the King, and ten
thousand knights straaaained at their
utmost...

(to the bartender)

Pina colada times two and a white
wine.

like
he
He goes on muttering under his breath, tapping his foot
any crankhead. He notices Hull, greets him as someone
can't place but knows he's seen around.

EDDIE

(continuing)

How you doin', Dudley...

Tries to remember name.

HULL

John.

EDDIE

John, man, right...

Clasp hands. Eddie takes his drinks, carries them to...

A TABLE

where he rejoins a white man, DAVID ELIAS (30s, slick, powerful) and a well-dressed BLACK WOMAN (mid-20s,

good-

looking). She gets the wine.

her

Elias rises to let her out. As the woman passes Hull on

perfect

way to the restrooms, their eyes meet: an instant of

for

chemistry. He's struck. Her features open, grow sensual

like,

a moment, but then, as if seeing something she doesn't

there.

her eyes flick away, and she walks by as if he weren't

INT. CARVER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

room,

(NOTE: Hull invariably meets Carver in this anonymous

the

distinguished only by the green blotter and a view of

psychiatrist,

city. This simple regularity suggest visits to a

out.

Carver probing, testing, teasing, trying to draw Hull

torment.)

And they feel like therapy, at once a respite and a

a

More foil balls on the blotter beside boxes of 3x5 photographs. Photos of Eddie and David Elias are up on

corkboard, the beginning of a pyramid.

HULL

Eddie something... a motormouth...

he supplies the street dealers...
buys from him...
 (reads name on back
 of photo)
David Elias... who apparently buys
from a guy named Barbolla or
something. But I haven't seen him.

pins
Carver produces a photo of a handsome Latin in his 50s,
it on the board above Elias.

CARVER

Barbosa, Felix.

HULL

There was also a woman, but she's
not here.

 (as Carver reaches in
 a drawer)

I saw a kid killed. Twelve, thirteen
at the most. Turf war.

of
Carver shrugs: these things happen. He hands Hull a lot
cash, much more than expected. Hull does understand.

CARVER

Get to Elias. Then to Barbosa.

HULL

You can't rush this stuff.

CARVER

Rush it, please. I want art, John,
not reality. Budget hearings start
in April, and I need Gallegos by
then. They won't give us funding for
three ounce buys.

HULL

We're not just doing this for the
funding, are we?

CARVER

Without funding, we aren't doing it
at all.

TITLE: TWO WEEKS LATER

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

curtains.

Tom

year-

automobile

notice

his

each

Virtual darkness save splinters of light between the

Pipes burn here and there in the gloom. Ten or fifteen crackheads huddle around a battery-operated TV on which

Brokaw is narrating an NBC documentary on drugs. A 12-year-old sits against a wall too stoned even for television.

Hull approaches Eddie, regally installed on an bench seat-cum-sofa, a lit pipe in one hand. We barely notice the redhead kneeling between his legs, face buried in his crotch. He greets Hull from wrecked bliss. They know each other now.

EDDIE

My man, Dudley, he's so fud-ley...

onto

Brokaw,

Hull greets Eddie, some of the others, drops familiarly an adjacent auto seat. The patrons are making fun of laughing, exchanging fives.

HULL

Eddie, man, I need...

concentration.

Eddie holds up a hand telling Hull to wait. His mind is elsewhere. His features contract in brief

CHORUS OF COMMENTS

Whatever happened to that Drug Czar motherfucker?... He gave up 'cause he finally realized he didn't know nothing about any of that shit...

off

More laughter, etc. Eddie's concentration peaks, breaks into a sigh and a smile.

Eddie sings a satisfied little song...

a

pretty a

The redhead rises from Eddie's crotch, and we see it's a boy, seventeen going on death; he might have been year ago.

for
mouth
laughs,
the

Eddie passes him the crack pipe, lets him suck greedily
a few seconds before ripping it out of his scabrous
and offering it to Hull, who, with a grimace that gets
declines. The others continue to watch and comment on
speech.

EDDIE

So what is it you need so bad, blood?
Need, need, need??

HULL

A whole K, quick as you can get it.

EDDIE

(impressed, a trace
of envy)
Comin' in the world, Dudley.

HULL

(winning grin)
All because of my man...

Eddie likes that, holds out a hand. Hull hits it.

EDDIE

Give me a day.

Hull nods, rises.

EDDIE

(continuing)
Stick around, let the bitch Hoover
you, too.

Indicating redhead.

horror,
with a

In all these scenes, Hull acts indifferent to the
but here the effort costs him. He masters his disgust
joke.

HULL

Only if you Clorox him first.

Everyone laughs, even the boy.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

immediately
his mid-
Eddie comes out the back door of a building, is
collared by Taft (the cop on the videotape). He's in
40s, stocky, balding.

TAFT

(cheerful, gregarious)
Eddie Shitface! Where you been, boy?

crumples.
Eddie breaks free, runs three feet before HERNANDEZ (a
muscular Mexican) knees him in the groin. Eddie

TAFT

(continuing)
Eddie, I don't think I introduced
you to my new partner, Michael
Hernandez...

HERNANDEZ

Pleased to meet you, Mr. Shitface...

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

sit
him
Eddie folded over his wounded nuts. Hernandez and Taft
on crates to either side. The drugs they've taken from
are neatly arranged on a garbage can lid.

HERNANDEZ

You have the right to remain silent...
You have the right to an attorney...
You have the right to go back to
Ontario for eight-to-ten on a second
offense...

EDDIE

(in several kinds of
pain)
Oh, man, I can't go back in there, I
just can't.

TAFT

(soothing)
'Course you can't, child, 'course
you can't. That's why you're gonna
start giving us some help.

EXT. DAVID ELIAS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

house.
A pleasant, Santa Monica neighborhood. Spanish style

INT. ELIAS'S HOUSE - NIGHT

the
estate
his
the
Pleasant, tasteful. Elias's wife, NANCY, (dressed like
attorney she is) sits in an alcove-study reading a real
contract through half-glasses. Elias himself is helping
daughter, MIRANDA, 7, with her homework. He is 38, with
body and bearing of a powerful man.

ELIAS

Again. Three times four.

MIRANDA

Seven.

uncomfortable
Elias is not a sweet Daddy. It should make us
to watch him push his daughter.

ELIAS

No. You're adding again, you have to
multiply. Three and four is seven.
Three times four is...

MIRANDA

Twelve.

ELIAS

Three times five.

The DOORBELL.

NANCY

Can you get that?

MIRANDA

Eight.

ELIAS

(getting up; more
about the answer
than the door)
Damn it.

MIRANDA

Why can't I just use a calculator?

INT./EXT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Carver's
he's
paranoid,
high-voiced
dwarfs,
can
Hispanic

Three men: FELIX BARBOSA (whose photo we saw in office). Barbosa is a veteran of the coke business, but doing too much of the drug now; he's sweating, unstable. With him is GOPHER, early 60s, a wizened old con who Barbosa keeps the way Spanish kings kept for amusement and luck; like the court jester, Gopher say anything he wants without fear. Behind them is an kid, CHINO, 17, a thug.

his

Elias knows them all, but is not happy to see them at door.

ELIAS

What are you doing here?

BARBOSA

We've got a problem, David.

ELIAS

Call me on the phone.

BARBOSA

Your friend Eddie just started bending over for the cops.

"Shit..." and

This is very bad news. Elias murmurs a shaken, steps outside, half-closing the door behind him.

BARBOSA

(continuing)

They busted him, and he's dealing to save his ass.

GOPHER

Which is how he'll lose the skinny little thing.

ELIAS

Did he give us up?

BARBOSA

Not yet, but he will if he has to,
and eventually he'll have to.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

Daddy! I thought we were doing my
homework.

ELIAS

I don't think he'd talk about us.
He'd try not to.

BARBOSA

If we whack him, he definitely won't.

MIRANDA (O.S.)

Daddy!!

ELIAS

(to Miranda)

Just a second.

(to Barbosa)

Not yet. Let me check on this, first.

BARBOSA

(taunting)

Nobody said you had to do the dirty
work, David. I'll take care of --

ELIAS

Felix, if he's a problem, we'll kill
him. I'll kill him myself.

just
look
does,
herself

He doesn't realize until it's too late that Nancy has
then opened the front door to see where he went. They
at each other, a terrible moment: she knows what he
hates it, can't bring herself to leave him, hates
for that.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Nancy, get out of here.

NANCY

For you; it's Eddie.

door. She hands him a cordless phone, goes inside closing the

BARBOSA

You got a tasty wife, David. No wonder you don't want us coming here.

ELIAS

(warning him)

Don't talk about her that way.

Barbosa laughs.

GOPHER

He can't help it, David, it's his nature.

ELIAS

(into phone, chipper)

Eddie... Sure, man, what do you need?

INT. A BOXING GYM - NIGHT

guys Elias joins Eddie and Hull to one side. In the b.g. two sparring.

EDDIE

David, this is John, John, David. Eddie, this is Eddie. Everybody ready?

HULL

(to Elias)

So what's this, you want to meet me?

ELIAS

(charming, touch of mockery)

I like to know the important customers.

am. Hull makes a show of weary patience, gestures: here I

ELIAS

(continuing)

You're taking a lot of weight for a guy we hardly know. Where're you moving this stuff, John? We haven't seen you around. We like to have a sense who your customers are.

HULL

Ah, come on, man, do Macy's tell the Gimbel motherfuckers?

ELIAS

(beat; watches him)

Eddie, forget this guy, he's a cop.

He gets up, walks away.

ON HULL

He's blown it. He's been made. The crushing failure. He rallies himself to indignation.

HULL

What is this shit, Eddie? I thought you were the man.

Eddie's sickened, wants to get paid, owes Taft a bust.

EDDIE

Nobody's the fuckin' man. Go to your place. I'll call you.

EXT. GYM/INT. A VAN - CONTINUOUS TIME

looks Taft and Hernandez, watching the gym. Hull comes out, up and down the street carefully. Taft sits up, pays attention.

TAFT

This is our collar?

Hernandez grunts.

TAFT

(continuing)

Who is he?

HERNANDEZ

Some scumbag...

about Hull cop's
But Taft clearly thinks there's something different Hull. He's not sure what, but it troubles him. (NOTE: makes a little move that Taft will later realize was a move. For now he can't quite place it.)

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS TIME

Eddie pleading his case to Elias.

EDDIE

He's no cop, David. He's an animal.
You see his eyes? You never see a
cop with those eyes. I know this
shit, man, you don't.

ELIAS

(giving him an opening)
What's going on, Eddie?

EDDIE

Twenty-six thousand cash is what. We
need it, David. We're behind.

he's
envelope
Elias studies Eddie: is he a rat? Elias hopes not, but
going to find out. He hands a fat Federal Express
through the window.

ELIAS

(a warning)
I want him to get it all, Eddie.

Eddie bows in gratitude, hurries off.

EXT./INT. HULL'S MOTEL - NIGHT

across
watches,
Hull's unlocking his door when Belinda, the hooker
the hall, comes out to talk. Her 6-year-old, James,
silent.

BELINDA

(a crackhead)
Mr. Hull... Mr. Hull...

HULL

(wearily)
What's happening, Belinda?

BELINDA

Now you know, Mr. Hull, I was to the
welfare this afternoon, but the bus,
you know what I'm saying?... the one
bus, and then the other, and when I
got there they'd gone and changed

the time on me, without notification. They's supposed to give notification, ain't they? They said I got a thing in the mail, but I don't remember, I don't think they sent it, so now I'm off the welfare, plus I forgot to take James for his shot... for the school? Which otherwise they let him go. And he's gotta learn, he's gotta learn, don't he, Mr. Hull, you tell him, so's he can better hisself.

Hull slouches in the doorway, fingers to his eyes.

HULL

(to James)

You had any food today, James?

JAMES

(disclaiming any need)

I had Ding-Dongs.

HULL

(sighs, gives him
money)

You go to the Mexican place over there, and get the chicken tostada or the beef and bean burrito or both. And a milk.

JAMES

I don't like milk. I want a --

HULL

(an order)

You get the milk! And get something for your mother, too.

(to Belinda)

What do you want?

BELINDA

Now, Mr. Hull, if you just --

HULL

(to James)

Two tostadas, two burritos, two milks.

Gives him another bill. The boy runs off.

BELINDA

You now, I look out for my James best I can, Mr. Hull, but it's hard.

Now you like the boy, don't you?

Hull grunts.

BELINDA

(continuing)

I know you do. And I was thinkin' if you wanted to take care of him, that might be good for him. Give him a male figure to look up to.

HULL

Look, Belinda, I can't...

BELINDA

If you could just give me something for him. Say five thousand dollars...

(off Hull's shock)

Or maybe four thousand. I couldn't give up my boy for less than four thousand...

PHONE. Hull is rescued from this horror by the ringing PAY

He runs down the hall, grabs it.

HULL

It's me. I'm here... Where?... five minutes.

He dashes past Belinda into his room.

BELINDA

Or you could just give me a part now...

from He closes the door, takes the money Carver gave him out
by: behind the mirror, dashes back outside. As he rushes

BELINDA

(continuing)

Let me do somethin' for you, Mr. Hull. Let me do a little somethin' for you.

He keeps going. The Blonde Woman addresses Belinda.

BLONDE WOMAN

No solicitin' in the halls. I told you that before.

BELINDA

(spunkier than we've
seen)

I ain't doin' shit. Bitch...

EXT. TACO STAND - VENICE AND LA BREA - NIGHT

distant
money
the
sudden
voice

A handful of customers under a mud sky. The THROB of a helicopter. Hull pulls into the lot beside Eddie's BMW. He climbs into the BMW, tosses Eddie a brown envelope; spills onto his lap. Eddie does a quick count, produces Fed Ex envelope. The usual white stuff. Hull's about to taste when the chopper swoops in with a blinding overhead light. A BULLHORN booms down like the voice of God.

AMPLIFIED VOICE

This is the police. Remain inside the vehicle. Place your open hands against the windshield so that they are clearly visible...

HULL

Christ...

EDDIE

(a strategy)

Spread the floor, Dudley.

(rap sound effects
with rhythmic head
spasms)

A-ga, a-ga, a-ga, a-ga...

door
stand.
runs

Eddie starts the car, and Hull rolls out the passenger as the BMW races across the lot. Two black-and-whites and an unmarked converge on the stand. Hull can't reach his car. He vaults a metal rail and runs off between two buildings.

Taft Hernandez jumps out of an unmarked and races after him.
speeds the car out onto the street.

HULL

Ex running. Police and SIRENS pursuing. He hurls the Fed
him. envelope into a dumpster. HELICOPTER light sweeps over

right As he cuts around a building, Taft opens a car door
into his face. Hull goes down hard.

TAFT

(into car radio)
Thank you kindly...

Hull He waves at the helicopter which goes away, kneels over
air. who is twitching spastically on the ground, gasping for
Hernandez arrives carrying the Fed Ex envelope.

TAFT

(continuing)
How you doin', child?...

him, Hull is astonished to look up and see Taft looming over
speak: the man he remembers from the videotape. He tries to

HULL

(barely audible)
You...

TAFT

(briefly puzzled)
Me? Of course, it's me. You know me?

Hull shakes head, winces.

TAFT

(continuing)
Hurts, huh?

Hull tries to curse.

TAFT

(continuing)

Here, I want to show you something.
You have kids?

two
He takes out his wallet, opens it to pictures of his
children, a boy and a girl, seven and eight.

TAFT

(continuing)

These are mine. Aren't they the most
beautiful children you ever saw?

in his
Hull groans, twists in pain. Taft sticks the pictures
face. Hull is affected by the children despite
everything.

TAFT

(continuing)

Yeah, I know, they kind of leave you
speechless. So let me ask, if someone
put a gun to your baby's head,
wouldn't you kill him if you could?

Hull just looks up.

TAFT

(continuing)

Me, too. And you're the bastard with
the gun.

He takes the Fed Ex envelope from him.

HULL

(hoarse; his first
words)

You know the difference between a
nigger and a black man?

TAFT

Don't jive me, boy.

HULL

The nigger's the one covers Whitey's
ass by puttin' the brothers in jail.

pain.
Taft yanks him hard to his feet; Hull cries out in

TAFT

You ain't my brother.

INT. COURTROOM - NIGHT

is
want
attractive,
Hull is led in with other handcuffed PRISONERS. Carver
here, catches Hull's eye. Hull shakes his head; doesn't
Carver to intercede. A woman PUBLIC DEFENDER (26,
harried) addresses the prisoners.

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Hi, I'm Shelley Weissbrod. This is
only an arraignment, a preliminary
hearing, but if you don't have money
for an attorney, the Public Defender's
office can...

shoulder.
Hull is listening to this when a BAILIFF taps his

BAILIFF

You've got counsel. Over there.

smiles,
Puzzled, Hull sees the back of a suit conferring with a
PROSECUTOR. The suit turns. It's DAVID ELIAS who
offers his hand. Hull is stunned. Elias enjoys that.

HULL

You're a lawyer??

ELIAS

I'm your lawyer.

HULL

Who hired you?

ELIAS

(smiles)
It's pro bono. If you don't want me,
there's Shelley. She's good. She
just can't provide special services...

HULL

Like what?

VOICE (O.S.)

(calling the next
case)
John Hull...

ELIAS

Getting your case called first.

Elias addressing the court.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Your Honor, I believe the preliminary police toxicology report will show that the substance seized from my client was Mannitol, a baby laxative. We move for immediate dismissal.

Hull is surprised at this news. The Judge looks to the Prosecutor who waives objection. Gavel.

ELIAS

(continuing; to Hull)

We're out of here, Dude.

There's
presence,
the

As they walk toward the back, Taft approaches Hull. already a deep pull between these two, and in Taft's Hull can't sustain the tough street act. We almost see little boy inside him.

TAFT

(to Hull, amused)

Baby laxative, they sold you some bad shit.

DRUNKEN PRISONER

(to Hull)

You have a constipated baby, and you're in jail? What kind of a father are you?

TAFT

A father who don't know his own children, ain't that right?

Hull's
of
sleeve.

A long look between them, broken when Elias takes arm, leads him away. Elias cheerfully greets a couple hookers waiting arraignment. Hull furtively grabs his sleeve.

HULL

(under his breath)

You sold me Mannitol, motherfucker.

ELIAS

(under his)

If it hadn't been, asshole, you'd be in jail right now... Come on, I want you to meet some people.

EXT. LEWAZZ - NIGHT

the
After hours. The place is closed. A couple of cars in lot. Elias's BMW pulls in.

INT. LEWAZZ - NIGHT

Gopher
Elias
Deserted except for one table where Eddie, Barbosa, and Chino are eating shrimp. They look up as Hull and approach. Eddie's astonished to see Hull.

EDDIE

Dudley, Dudley, Fo-Fudley...

ELIAS

Surprised to see him, Eddie?

Eddie looks around, uneasy.

ELIAS

(continuing)

John got busted and kept his mouth shut. Can't say that for everybody, can we?

EDDIE

What are you saying? Are you saying me? Are you saying something about me?

GOPHER

Tell the truth, Eddie. Be honorable. It's all you got left.

EDDIE

Shut up, you little faggot.

ELIAS

The cops made you give them somebody. We know it.

considers

Eddie looks around. Everybody's looking at him. He lying, but realizes it's pointless.

EDDIE

All right, so what? I mean, so what, man? You got the money. Twenty-six G. Twenty-six, David. Count it.

ELIAS

Next time you might trade us.

EDDIE

Never.

(turns to Barbosa)

Never, Felix, never. Come on, man, you know I'd never...

Hull observes Barbosa become the power center.

BARBOSA

(softly)

I know you never will.

EDDIE

Felix, no. Don't be... I'm worth money to you. Let me give you money.

BARBOSA

Why? You don't owe me anything.

EDDIE

Another twenty-six grand... Just to show you... Fifty.

BARBOSA

Why not a hundred?

EDDIE

(that's so much)

A hundred??? Felix...

Barbosa's impassive.

EDDIE

(continuing)

Okay, a hundred.

BARBOSA

Give it.

EDDIE

Tomorrow. Twenty-four hours.

BARBOSA

Now. Ten seconds.

EDDIE

Felix, I need time. I --

BARBOSA

One... two...

EDDIE

I don't have it right now. But I can --

GOPHER

(sadly)

Then goodbye, Eddie. I forgive you
for what you said to me.

EDDIE

(pleading)

Twelve hours. Tomorrow morning.

BARBOSA

Six... seven...

(to Elias)

You want to do it, David?

Elias looks stricken. Barbosa laughs. Eddie jumps up.
turns away, can't bear to watch this.

Hull

BARBOSA

(continuing)

Nine...

EDDIE

grabs the first thing he lays eyes on, a tiny snail
plunges it into Barbosa's neck.

fork and

As if it were a fly bite, Barbosa flings the table
and, with a long knife already in his hand, guts Eddie
groin to breast bone. Eddie falls like a suddenly
sack.

aside

from

emptied

Elias can't help gasping.

Hull looks away, hiding his horror.

Barbosa rips the fork out of his neck and hurls it at
the
body.

BARBOSA

Piece of shit!

Elias stares at Eddie's body, transfixed. Horrified,
fascinated, afraid, in awe. Barbosa turns to Hull.

BARBOSA

(continuing)

What'd you think?

HULL

At least it was clean.

BARBOSA

(pleased, to Elias)

What about you, bar mitzvah body?
First time you saw somebody die?

ELIAS

(eyes fixed on the
body)

No.

(catching breath)

At camp... when I was fourteen... a
friend of mine was water skiing...
The motorboat ran him over... A junior
counsellor was driving.

BARBOSA

You should kill a man some day, David,
it's liberating...

(walking out)

Summer camp. I'm in business with
somebody who went to summer camp.

Everyone else is silent, grave.

INT. ELIAS'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - EARLY MORNING

Through sliders we see a small pool. Elias and Hull sit
over
uneaten omelets. Both still shaken by the previous
scene.

ELIAS

Eddie, man... He was always nice to

my daughter.

HULL

How'd a guy like you get into this?

ELIAS

The way most drug lawyers do: clients paid me in product, and I had to move it. Soon I was doing more dealing than law. But this was '83, '84, there was so much money we thought it would never end.

HULL

Yeah. And now...?

ELIAS

The road gets rougher. Cocaine's a dying business.

HULL

Then what are we doing here?

ELIAS

People are always going to want to get high. Every society has ways to alter consciousness.

HULL

Because they can't bear reality.

ELIAS

(smiles)

We all need our delusions, only the means change: psychedelics, opiates, prayer, orgies, human sacrifice...

HULL

What's next?

Elias puts a finger to his lips.

HULL

(continuing)

Why aren't you selling it?

ELIAS

I know how to make it and market it. But I need capital. That's the only reason I'm hanging out with an asshole like Barbosa.

(feels his hatred of

Barbosa)
And because I can't get to the big
guys.

HULL

Who are the big guys?

ELIAS

Gallegos, et cetera.

HULL

(reacts to the name)
Why can't you get to them?

ELIAS

What do you care?

Hull shrugs: he doesn't.

ELIAS

(continuing)
Anyway, designer drugs have a bad
name: ice, ecstasy, tar -- there's a
limited market for Parkinson's
disease. But what about completely
safe, almost legal, terrific shit
you can go to work on and do your
job better than you ever did it
straight?

HULL

Sounds like a dream.

They hear someone coming.

ELIAS

(closing the subject)
In dreams begin responsibilities.

HULL

Tell me about this new shit.

ELIAS

Some other time, John, when we know
each other better.
(as Miranda enters
kitchen)
Hey, bunnela.
(she snuggles against
him; Elias enjoys it)
Five times two.

MIRANDA

It's too early. Don't bother me.

than He hugs her, kisses her, much more openly affectionate
Hull was with his own children. Hull notices that.

MIRANDA

(continuing; head in
her father's chest)

Seven.

Elias whispers in her ear.

MIRANDA

(continuing)

Oh, yeah... Ten... Who's he?

ELIAS

That's my friend, John. This is
Miranda.

HULL

Hi, Miranda.

the Miranda gives Hull a shy greeting. Nancy hurries into
kitchen, handsome, busy, ready for work.

NANCY

Come on, honey...

ELIAS

Nancy, this is John.

Miranda Nancy nods briefly in Hull's direction. Elias kisses
go who grabs the back-pack her mother proffers, and they
out. When they're gone:

ELIAS

(continuing; on Nancy's
chilliness)

That's not about you. It's, she's...
judgmental about what I do.

to He When they're gone, he opens louvered doors onto a
washer/dryer, takes a sports bag off a shelf, gives it
Hull. Hull looks inside. White powder. He tastes. Real.

hefts the bag.

HULL

That's more than I bought.

ELIAS

Half we owe you. The other half's on consignment. A token of our esteem.

HULL

You're having trouble moving it.

Elias doesn't deny it.

HULL

(continuing)

Make me your partner. I'll help you get your capital.

ELIAS

I don't need a partner. I need a salesman.

INT. CARVER'S OFFICE - DAY

crack
Now in daylight. Two separately wrapped kilograms of cocaine on the green blotter.

CARVER

I can't buy this much shit. I haven't got it in the budget.

HULL

What am I supposed to do with it?

CARVER

You're a drug dealer, John. Deal drugs.

Hull just looks at him. Carver doesn't blink.

HULL

You know how this goes, Gerry. It won't stop here. You know what they're going to ask me to do pretty soon, to prove I'm down. What am I supposed to do then?

CARVER

Don't blow your Carver.

saying. Hull: a moment of horror as he realizes what Carver is

MUSIC -- A DRUG DEALING SEQUENCE

INT. HULL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's He's filling glass vials with crack. Hundreds of them.
can't tedious work. He spills some, curses. He stops. He
believe he's doing this. He goes on doing it.

CARVER (V.O.)

You're still thinking like a cop,
John. Forget that. Cross the line.
Be what you are. You're a criminal.
You don't give a shit about other
people. You're just trying to survive.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Eddie. Hull doling out vials to DEALERS seen earlier with

HULL (V.O.)

I can't do this shit. I just can't.

EXT. A STREET - DAY

Hull's DEALERS going up to cars as before, only now they're
BMW. dealers. A well-dressed Black businessman buys from his

CARVER (V.O.)

But you want to be of use. You want
to get drugs off the street, don't
you?

HULL (V.O.)

That's why I'm here.

EXT. SAME - ANOTHER TIME

Another sale: Teenagers on foot.

CARVER (V.O.)

Well, this is the cost. Pay it or go
grow flowers someplace.

EXT. HULL'S MOTEL - ANOTHER TIME

seen
He comes out of the motel talking to a Dealer we've
above.

HULL

You can't back down with them. You've
got to project strength, from inside,
you know?

The Dealer nods. Across the street Hull sees:

little
A blue sedan. Taft and Hernandez. Taft gives Hull a
nod and grin.

EXT. STREET - ANOTHER TIME

Hull sitting in an aging Trans Am, making entries in a
notebook. Across the street he watches:

from
A PREGNANT WOMAN (19), a squawling baby in arms, buying
one of his Dealers.

He kicks the dash in frustrated anger. Under the MUSIC:

HULL

Cocksucker...

Dealer,
As soon as the woman's gone. He goes over to the
slaps his head, slaps it again. Under the MUSIC:

DEALER

(hurt, confused)
What'd you do that for?

HULL

(walking off)
'Cause I can, motherfucker, 'cause I
can.

EXT. SAME - ANOTHER TIME

baby
A white housewife making a buy from a new mini-van, a
in the car seat.

EXT. STREET - TWILIGHT

hassling
curses.

Two USC football players (letter jackets, huge)
BIJOUX, a woman dealer, pushing her, she pushes back,

up

Suddenly Hull comes running up, shoves them apart. He's
yelling, pointing a finger in their faces. Elias comes
behind, calmer.

as

Hull is smaller than either USC kid, but they back down
he curses them. Under MUSIC:

HULL

...Touch her again, motherfuckers,
I'm gonna mess you up.

him
Hull

A brief scuffle. Hull decks one USC, and Elias pulls
off. The kids leave. Elias doubles over with laughter.
yells at Bijoux and walks off.

EXT. APARTMENT HOUSE - DAY

It's
skimpy
thinks

Hull (looking at written address) knocks on a door.
opened by a beautiful, dark-skinned black woman in a
robe. She looks at him with disarming frankness. He
he must be in the wrong place.

HULL

Is David Elias here?

ELIAS (O.S.)

Momentito...

stepping
woman

Through the door we see him emerge from a bedroom
into his loafers, buttoning his shirt. He gives the
along, dark kiss, caressing her body.

ELIAS

Jacqueline, ho-ney...

She laughs, closes the door. As he and Hull walk to the
street, Elias sings happily to himself:

ELIAS

(continuing)

"Who's making love to your old lady...
while you're out make love...?"

(cheerful)

How come I like balling black chicks
so much?

HULL

'Cause you're a racist asshole. You
feel like you're fucking a slave,
and it gets you off.

ELIAS

Oh, don't mau mau me with the Malcolm
X shit. Tell me you're not chasin'
white pussy every chance you get.

HULL

I don't dig white women.

(knowing that's a lie)

Even if I did, it wouldn't mean the
same thing.

ELIAS

Sure, it'd be the slave fucking the
master. Hegel talks about it. Just
like me, but the other way around.

HULL

Fuck Hegel. Who the fuck is Hegel?
Some smart-ass kike that talks
backwards?

Elias laughs, gets into Hull's car. Hull's angry, takes
a beat before he gets in.

ELIAS

Everybody digs the other, John. They
dig their own, and they dig the other.

HULL

Does your wife dig black guys, David?
Did she fuck Eddie? Does she want to
fuck me?

ELIAS

(mock-terrified)

Ooo... you mean with that great big
purple dick of yours? I hope not.
She'd never be impressed with my

little thing again.

HULL

You think what impresses her now is your dick?

ELIAS

(musing)

What does impress her?

Hull can't help laughing. He starts the car.

EXT. BETTY'S STORE - DAY

wearing
Elias and Hull approach. Hull's carrying a satchel and a new leather jacket.

INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY

and
American
As they go in, Elias switches the OPEN sign to CLOSED turns the latch. The store is filled with Latin folk art, particularly masks which line the walls.

comes
dress the
BETTY STONE, the woman Hull saw with Elias at the bar, out from the back. She is 27, a bad girl trying to way she thinks a banker who went to Vassar dresses for success. She's also a little strung out.

reprise
gaze.
She and Hull recognize each other at once, (a brief of that moment of perfect chemistry) but she avoids his

ELIAS

Betty, this is John, my new associate.

MCCUTCHEON

Your new Eddie. I hear the old one wore out.

ELIAS

Factory recall. John's going to be a good customer. He does a lot of wash.

won't
Hull puts the satchel on a display case. Betty still

She
test

look at him, opens the satchel, begins a quick count.
does this with a speed and sureness that suggests high
scores.

HULL

So how's this place work?

Betty doesn't answer, so Elias covers the awkwardness.

ELIAS

Betty wires the money to a store in
Aruba in payment for things they
never sent her. They deposit the
money in a bank there that turns
around and loans her money she never
has to repay. That way it doesn't
turn up as income for the IRS. Welcome
to the laundromat.

MCCUTCHEON

David, you talk too much.

ELIAS

She doesn't trust you.

looks in

Hull has taken down a mask, puts it over his face,
a mirror.

HULL

How much is this?

MCCUTCHEON

More than you can afford.

HULL

I'll take it.

Elias.

She produces a vial of coke, looks questioningly at

ELIAS

By all means.

She draws out six lines. Elias does two.

MCCUTCHEON

(offering him the
straw)

Come on, Eddie 2... you're up.

HULL

No, thanks.

refusal
first,
a
more
violence
the
attractive.
seems
hates

NOTE: Betty is acutely attuned to Hull, and in his she senses -- albeit unconsciously -- two things: that he doesn't trust himself on drugs, therefore, he's dangerous guy and, therefore, exciting; and, second, important, the refusal bespeaks a repudiation of the and danger and, thus, a longing for goodness. Despite seeming contradiction, she finds this even more But because she feels herself to be bad, his goodness only a judgment against her, and so she thinks she hates him.

MCCUTCHEON

Who is he, my mother?

HULL

(smiles)

Never have, never will.

Betty ignores him, does her lines.

MCCUTCHEON

(taunting Hull)

Ooh... Cocaine, I love it and I hate it and I love it. The disease is the cure.

She and
Elias are stoned; he's not.

She can't help looking at Hull who's looking at her.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

Don't look at me. Elias, tell him not to look at me. I don't like the fucker.

But Elias is too busy vacuuming up Hull's leftovers.

ELIAS

(sniffling)
John's an ascetic Negro; he wants to
make sure you know he's not a jungle
bunny.

HULL

Watch your mouth, David.

ELIAS

But he's got another side. You should
seen him on the street the other day
with these two USC kids. Do the spade
bit for her, John.

(black accent)

I'm gonna mess you up, muthafugga...

the He sticks his finger in Hull's face just like Hull with
boys.

HULL

Don't call me a spade. And don't
tell me to play black.

He says it gently, but Betty hears the edge.

ELIAS

(hurt, disappointed)

Come on, John, you do it so well.

(falling into it)

Ah ain't playin', muthafucka. Ah
ain't playin'.

Hull glares; Elias refuses to be intimidated.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Don't fuckin' dis me, muthafucka.
Fucka... fucka... fucka a... fucka
b... fuck b-hive... fucka, fucka,
fucka...

Elias dances around repeating "fucka" until it's almost
musical.

Hull picks him up and slams into a wall.

HULL

Say it again, and I'll kill you.

strong Elias throws Hull back against a display case. He's

and unafraid. They're ready to fight.

MCCUTCHEON

Grow up, assholes!

slowly

This half snaps them out of it. Still glowering, they relax, release each other.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

watching the
story.
may

Hull sits in the Trans Am eating a sandwich and street as a DEALER leans in the window telling his sob story. There's an authority to Hull's manner that tells us he may not like this job, but he knows how to do it.

DEALER

...The guy ripped me off, man, so I don't got the money, I don't got the stuff and --

HULL

(eyes on street)
You gotta pay anyway.

DEALER

Oh, but, man...

As he raps on, comical pathos, Hull spots in his side mirror...

THE RED RANGE ROVER

the
streetlight.

coming slowly this way. Ivy in the passenger window, barrel of an automatic weapon glinting in the

HULL

Shit...

to

Hull glances up: Bijoux is selling on the next corner. The Range Rover passes the Trans Am. Ivy leans out. Hull flings open the Trans Am door, throwing the Dealer to the ground. He jumps from the car:

HULL

(continuing)

Bijoux!!

the
bounces
She turns. Sees Ivy. She puts out her hands to block
shots. The SOUND of the gun is inaudible. The barrel
slightly. Bijoux sprawls backward.

from
Bijoux: dead on the sidewalk, limbs askew, bleeding
many wounds.

Hull, standing over her, covers her face.

EXT. SAME - MUCH LATER THAT NIGHT

Elias
down.
The body has been taken away, the crowd has cleared.
sits on the hood of the Trans Am. Hull stands, staring

ELIAS

It wasn't your fault.

(no response)

What could you have done?

HULL

She worked for me. I'm supposed to
protect her.

Elias knows that's true, and it leads to another truth.

ELIAS

We have to kill him.

Hull looks up.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Or we lose all authority with the
other dealers. And one of them'll
kill you.

Hull looks up, startled.

ELIAS

(continuing)

You've got to assert now, or you're
dead.

Hull sees the truth of that and slowly nods.

ELIAS

(continuing)

And if we kill Ivy, we control this whole territory.

HULL

That guy who works for Barbosa can do it, Chino.

ELIAS

No. If we use Chino, it's Barbosa who's asserting. It'll be Barbosa's territory.

(again: his hatred of Barbosa)

It's gotta be us.

HULL

Right.

ELIAS

And if it's us, it's gotta be you.

Hull's Meaning he can't do it. Hull knows that. A long beat on face as he reaches the inevitable decision.

HULL

(to himself)

Don't blow your cover.

ELIAS

What?

HULL

If I do this, we're partners. Equal partners on everything.

resolve. Elias offers his hand. Hull stands up, a sudden

HULL

(continuing)

Let's go.

ELIAS

(afraid)

Now...?

But Hull is already moving.

EXT. STREET/INT. ELIAS'S CAR - NIGHT

park
Hull and Elias driving, looking for Ivy. Elias double parks by two prostitutes.

keeps
We STAY in the car with Hull who's silent, frightened, trying to warm his hands.

prostitutes.
Outside, Elias is talking and laughing with the We see them point. He gives them money, kisses. They laugh.
He gets back in the car.

EXT. A DANCE CLUB - NIGHT

MUSIC
The Range Rover parked in front. Elias's car stops. pounds from inside. Then one CONTINUOUS SHOT:

same
They pass the club, other store fronts... Turn at the corner... Turn into an alley... Down the alley past the buildings... The rear door of the club... To the next street... Turn... Turn... onto the original street, back to the front of the club. They stop again.

HULL

Go wait around back.

Elias nods. A beat. They look at each other.

ELIAS

I want to see you in that alley.

submitting
Hull's so terrified he seems calm. With an air of himself to fate, he gets out and walks into the club.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

and
Crowded and BOOMING and strobe lit. Hull pays the cover climbs a staircase to a...

CIRCULAR BALCONY

with its

that overlooks the dance floor. On stage: a RAP ACT
throbbing beat and below Hull a sea of dancers.

--

in

Hull circles the balcony. It isn't hard to pick out Ivy
he's all in red, dancing with the woman we saw him with
the Range Rover the first time.

his

next

the

Hull reaches the steps again and starts down, keeping
eye on Ivy. The number ends. In the pause before the
one, Ivy can be seen excusing himself, heading toward
rear of the club.

way

The next number begins. People dance. Hull pushes his
through the dancers to...

INT. REAR OF CLUB - A SHORT HALLWAY - NIGHT

leading toward the rear door they saw from the alley.

MOVING DOWN THE HALL

A woman's room. A men's room. Hull goes into...

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

take

unable

Ivy is peeing into a urinal. He's so huge he seems to
up all the space in the tiny room. Hull stares at him,
to look away.

MUSIC.

He notices Hull. All dialogue is UNDER the POUNDING

IVY

What're you looking at?

Hull stares at Ivy's face. Ivy considers this rude.

IVY

(continuing)

You want to suck it, bitch?

(offers his dick)

Or drink it?

doesn't Laughing, he turns, urinates on Hull's pants. Hull
move.

IVY

(continuing;
recognizing him)

Oh, I know you. You're the bitch
whose whore I wasted tonight, ain't
you?

it Somebody pushes on the outside of the door. Hull holds
closed with his back.

IVY

(continuing)

I gotta take care of you, too, huh?

He reaches into his pants for the butt of a gun.

Hull is frozen.

Ivy starts to draw it out.

hand Hull steps forward, grabs Ivy's gun arm. With his other
jacket, he clumsily pulls a silenced .22 from inside his
Ivy's puts it in the underside of Ivy's jaw and SHOOTs twice.
straight to brains spray upward onto the wall, and he slides
the floor. Hull steps out into...

INT. SHORT HALL - NIGHT

and An Hispanic busboy coming out of the kitchen sees him
the gun in his hand, freezes.

we Hull walks past him and out the back door. From inside
fall see Hull go down three steps, stumble in the drive and
to his knees, the gun CLATTERING away from him.

A couple that had been making out, stops, looks.

the It takes Hull a moment to gather himself. He picks up
gun, gets into Elias's car. It drives away.

INT. HULL'S MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

doesn't

Alone, he looks at his face in the mirror. As if he know the person there.

wooden
onto

With a knife, he draws out something hidden inside the backing of the mirror. A manila envelope. He empties it the dresser:

blood-
picks

Mementos among which we see, carefully preserved, the soaked bills his father gave him. Hull ignores them and up...

PHOTO OF HIS CHILDREN

fix

He smooths out the folds, stares at it as if trying to this in his thoughts.

EXT. MOTEL COURTYARD - PAY PHONE - DAY

Hull on the phone. He's unusually excited, even moved.

HULL

...Carmen, it's me. It's Daddy...

INT. HULL'S HOUSE - CLEVELAND - DAY

excitement.

Carmen on the phone, jumping up and down with

CARMEN

Daddy!!

HULL (V.O.)

(through phone)

Hi, baby. How are you? I miss you!

CARMEN

What?

HULL (V.O.)

I miss you...

CARMEN

(thrilled)

I miss you, too, Daddy...

EXT. MOTEL COURTYARD - DAY

his
Hull pressing the phone to his face, trying to master
emotions.

GRAINY 16MM FILM - A LABORATORY MAZE

head,
things.
A lab rat with a metal electrode protruding from its
is running a maze at high speed. A VOICE explaining

VOICE

(young, nasal, too
smart)

The maze leads in two directions. At
one end the rat can obtain a food
pellet. At the other...

(pointer indicates
each end)

...it receives electrical stimulus
to a very specific area of the
cerebellum...

is
the
route.
The rat reaches this second destination, pushes a bar,
stimulated. A lab worker (white coat, gloves) picks up
animal, replaces it at the start. It runs the same

VOICE

(continuing)

This rat, like 86% of the others in
the experiment, chose the electrical
stimulus repeatedly and exclusively.
It continued to do so until it died
of malnutrition.

ANOTHER SHOT -- the rat dead.

INT. A LABORATORY - DAY OR NIGHT

department
electrical
A 21-year-old RENEGADE from the Cal Tech chemistry
(red hair, freckles, glasses held together with
tape), a brilliant nerd. He picks up...

A MOLECULAR MODEL

Colored balls stuck together with wooden dowels.

CAL TECH

This is an addictive amphetamine with time-space distortion, delusions of grandeur -- or maybe they're real -- tending to be impulsive, sometimes violent behavior. Psychotropic adaptation for late monopoly capitalism. It's illegal, and you can buy it on any street corner.

He tears off some of the balls, sticks on new ones.

CAL TECH

(continuing)

This increases energy, attention, cognitive powers, yet with a smooth, almost opiate-like emotional surface. Ideal for the post-political, post-rationalist global marketplace and 24 hour lifestyles. It's completely legal and can only get it here, in my lab.

ELIAS

(to Hull, proudly)

Randy's a genius. His professor told him he could win the Nobel prize.

CAL TECH

Nobel prizes are for wussies.

HULL

What does this shit do to you?

CAL TECH

I'm on it now. It's like cocaine only better.

(offers him powder on
a slide)

Want some?

HULL

I don't take drugs.

CAL TECH

(unoffended)

Your mistake. This is designed for the top end of the market. For people

who want to master reality, not avoid it. Because it's synthetic, you don't grow it, refine it, or -- best of all -- import it.

ELIAS

What would it take to manufacture this stuff in quantity?

CAL TECH

With a million dollars, I could produce enough for a limited market at about two bucks a pop.

(makes a face: fair)

But then with five million, or better yet ten, the cost would drop to thirty cents, and we'd have enough for the whole world.

ELIAS

I'm going to put two hundred fifty thousand into your corporate account. You cheat me, Randy, I'll use your bladder for a bagpipe.

(to Hull, with a vengeance)

We're going to put Barbosa out of business.

Elias is very happy. He leads Hull out.

INT. CARVER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ivy's
board
lost in

On the pyramid chart there's a black border around photo, as around Eddie's. A photo of Hull is now on the beside the one of Elias. Hull stares out the window, thought.

CARVER

(dismissive)

Synthetic shit?? Sounds like a 20/20 segment...

his

Hull shrugs: it's not that important. Carver turns to real interest.

CARVER

(continuing)

So, what was it like?

HULL

(still looking out)
What was what like?

CARVER

Popping Ivy...

HULL

You knew.

CARVER

I'm God, remember?

HULL

(looks back out)
Then you should know how it was.

Carver smiles, but he's non-plussed by Hull's new detachment.

CARVER

You didn't clear it with me. You're getting independent. That's good.

Hull smiles.

CARVER

(continuing)
How're we coming on Gallegos?

HULL

He supplies Barbosa. To get to him we'll have to take quantity.

CARVER

Then you've got to --

HULL

That's what killing Ivy did. I'll get to him soon.

Carver's impressed.

HULL

(continuing)
Is that it?

CARVER

(seeing him to the door)

I want you to get a new apartment.
Something expensive.

HULL

I like where I am.

CARVER

That shithole? You're big time now.
Act it. And get some clothes. Spend
money. Have fun. That's an order.

INT. HULL'S MOTEL - OFFICE - DAY

Woman

Hull in a new, expensive suit, gives the big Blonde
cash.

HULL

Whether I'm here or not, no one else
uses that room. And change the linen
twice a week, just like now.
(starts to go, stops,
more money)
And make sure James gets what he
needs. And something for you.

He adds another bill. She smiles.

INT. A RENTED CONDOMINIUM - DAY

another

Views, open space, expensive furnishings. Hull (in
fancy suit) is hanging a couple of Betty's masks. He's
meticulous about their placement.

Elias wanders out from the other rooms, looking around.

ELIAS

(impressed, envious)
Nice place. Nice suit.

checks

Hull has a moment of self-consciousness about the suit,
himself out in a mirror -- a private moment.

coffee

Elias flops on a couch, puts his feet on an antique
table.

HULL

Hey...!

brushes
Elias is

He hurries over, lifts Elias feet to the floor. Hull
the wood, inspects it carefully, fusses, worries...
amused.

ELIAS

You pick all this shit out yourself?

HULL

A Jewish lady in the store helped
me.

ELIAS

(mock touched by racial
harmony)

Aw... Very nice. Understated. I'm
impressed.

He's

Hull starts to place stacks of cash in a briefcase.
momentarily mesmerized by all the money.

HULL

(to himself)

Fifty bucks, fifty fucking bucks...

ELIAS

You sold it all?

Hull nods.

ELIAS

(continuing)

I'll order a couple more keys from
Barbosa.

HULL

Order ten.

ELIAS

Ten??

HULL

Better twenty.

ELIAS

(afraid of that)

I don't want to push it.

HULL

I do. We've got a bigger territory,

we need more product. I want to deal directly with Gallegos. It would save us money.

ELIAS

Barbosa'll never let us near him.

Hull closes the briefcase, ushers Elias toward the door.

He's going out, too.

HULL

If we buy twenty, Gallegos'll come to us himself.

ELIAS

How do you know?

HULL

When I bought a key from Eddie, you came to me.

Elias laughs, surprised, afraid.

HULL

(continuing)

Who's above Gallegos?

ELIAS

Guzman, but he's... Don't ask so many questions.

HULL

How else will I learn?

(hint of a threat)

Call Barbosa, David, put in our order... Because we have to split this, and there isn't enough here for both of us.

Elias feels the threat.

EXT. BETTY'S JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

Despite the CLOSED sign, a light's on inside. Hull knocks.

No response. He keeps knocking without let-up until:

BETTY'S VOICE

(annoyed)

Nobody's home, go away.

stopping
of
off.

He knocks harder. Finally she appears in the doorway,
short when she sees it's him. She's immediately aware
white streaks on her grey suit. she tries to brush them

MCCUTCHEON

(doesn't want to let
him in)

Look, I'm tired, why don't you...

door.

Hull holds up the briefcase. She sighs, unlocks the

INT. BETTY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

fixedly to

A bill counter totting up the cash. She watches it
avoid looking at him, but she feels the chemistry.

MCCUTCHEON

Why do you look at me like that?

HULL

How do I look at you?

MCCUTCHEON

Like you know something I don't.
Like you're better than me.

candor

That catches Hull off-guard, and he responds with a
she didn't expect.

HULL

I don't think I'm better than you. I
don't think I'm better than anybody.

to

She's startled by this remark and instinctively drawn
him.

HULL

(continuing)

But I do know something... You can't
stop thinking about me.

his
him.

Embarrassed, she looks away. He takes her hand, and at
touch something yields to her. She lets him draw her to

on

His kiss is strangely tender, searching. It turns Betty
incredibly. She melts into him.

MCCUTCHEON

Let's go back here...

She leads him into...

THE SMALL OFFICE

He's

a

on a

She's sweet and loving, but her sweetness scares her.
all over her, but she pulls back for a moment. There is
couch and before it a coffee table with coke scattered
plate.

MCCUTCHEON

(indicates coke)

Do this... do it with me.

She offers him a straw. He doesn't take it.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

This is where I'm at. You want to be
with me, it's gotta be there.

HULL

I don't do that.

MCCUTCHEON

Never have, never will.

HULL

It's for fuck-ups.

MCCUTCHEON

What do you think, you're not a
nigger? You're a nigger as much as
me.

HULL

More.

feels he

Finally

She's angry, hurt, confused, wants to love him, but
won't let her, or she won't let herself. It's torment.

she's released by a KNOCK on the door. She goes out
to...

THE FRONT OF THE STORE

Lets in Elias. He smells the tension.

ELIAS

(amused, jealous)
Having fun?
(neither answers; to
Hull)
I talked to Barbosa. He'll see us
now.

of
Elias
Hull turns to Betty. Both want to go that way instead
this, but events are leading somewhere else. He follows
out.

EXT. A SALSA CLUB - NIGHT

MUSIC pouring into the darkness.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Kids dancing to a live STAGE ACT. High in a wall: a lit
window.

INT. THAT ROOM - NIGHT

bar,
below.
Chino and
Very different from the club. A comfortable room with a
tables, filled with men much older than the dancers
Barbosa and Gopher at the bar with Elias and Hull.
other SHADOWY FIGURES lurk in the room's depths.

BARBOSA

Ten kilos? You're always late on
two.

HULL

Not ten... twenty.

Barbosa's impressed.

HULL

(continuing)
The more we have, the more we can

move. There're markets we can't open
because we don't have the inventory.

Barbosa's coked to the eyeballs, mean and dangerous.

BARBOSA

Finally some balls on this team...
(taunting Elias)
Come work for me, John. I'll give
you your own franchise. You can supply
Elias, lean on him when he's late.

ELIAS

Go fuck yourself.

Barbosa laughs.

HULL

I'm with David.

BARBOSA

Why? He give you his "designer drugs"
pitch. He's never going to do it.
He's a shmuck.

ELIAS

Don't talk to me that way.

BARBOSA

I'm not talking to you at all. I'm
talking to John.

GOPHER

It's the cocaine. Don't listen to
him. Felix, you've had enough...

BARBOSA

Shmuck.

Chino Elias goes for him. He's fast and strong, and it takes
and Hull to pull him off.

GOPHER

Praise God they don't let guns in
here.

CALMING VOICES

"None of that in here..." "Take it
outside..."

own

Barbosa's laughing, but his cheek is flecked with his blood, and his eyes are dead.

BARBOSA

David, you've been working out, you're getting strong. Are you quick, too?
(shadow boxes)
Come on, I'll give you a shot at me.

ELIAS

Any time, any place.

BARBOSA

Right here, right now. Do this.

He puts his hands out, palms up.

ELIAS

This? What is this?

BARBOSA

You know, you slap me, I slap you.
(mimes that game)
Come on, it's fun. Like summer camp.

guidance.

It doesn't look fun. Elias glances at Hull for

HULL

Don't waste your time.

BARBOSA

Stay out of this.
(to Elias)
Come on, you can do it, David, you're not a shmuck.

with

thick

wedding

Elias puts his hands out, palms up. Barbosa covers them his own. ON THE HANDS: Barbosa's broad, muscular with gold rings and a Rolex; Elias's paler, slighter, a band and a slim watch.

BARBOSA

(continuing)
Slap my hands. Just slap them.

snake,

Elias looks Barbosa in the eye. He's trying to be a

tries

but he's more the mouse. He looks away and as he does
to...

Slap him with both hands but hits only...

big

Air. The room breathes. Barbosa turns his rings so the
surfaces point down.

BARBOSA

(continuing)

Now it's my turn.

GOPHER

It's Barbosa's turn. He's gonna kill
the white boy.

ELIAS

One more.

BARBOSA

No, you went, Davey, now it's my
turn. First to four wins, like the
World Series.

Elias covers Barbosa's palms with his own.

GOPHER

Oh, God, I can't look.

back.

ON THE HANDS: Barbosa tenses his hands. Elias yanks
Barbosa's hands haven't moved.

BARBOSA

You remember the rules? If you flinch,
I get to hit you.

knife

He slaps Elias across the face. Hull starts forward. A
appears. He stops.

BARBOSA

(continuing)

Again, shmuck.

holds

Elias covers Barbosa's hands. Barbosa tenses. Elias
firm, and Barbosa quickly slaps both hands, hard. Elias
doubles over, holding his hands in pain.

GOPHER

One.

ELIAS

That was two.

BARBOSA

No, this is two.

Hull,
He slaps him again, a stinging crack. Elias looks to
but they're across a canyon. Hull lowers his eyes.

GOPHER

Oh, and it hurts. Mercy, it hurts.

Elias
sound
silent.
he
ON THE HANDS. Barbosa moves his hands a millimeter, and
flinches again. Barbosa smacks him across the face. The
reverberates through the room. Now even Gopher is
Tears run from Elias's eyes, blood from his mouth, but
doesn't move.

GOPHER

(continuing)

Three.

A VOICE

Felix! No mas. Finito.

A MAN

30's,
accompanied
someone
steps forward out of the shadows. He is young, mid-
handsome, European features, beautifully dressed,
by a guard we'll know as MOLTO. Someone murmurs to
else:

SOMEONE

Gallegos...

Hull reacts. Their eyes meet.

GOPHER

The fight is over! The Ambassador
from the South has spoken!

ELIAS

(refusing any mercy)

One more.

Barbosa shakes his head, ashamed now in front of Gallegos.

ELIAS

(continuing)

One more! We're not finished!

(people are silent)

Four was the match.

He holds out his hands. Barbosa resumes the stance, then waits, waits, waits, and finally brings both hands down, terribly hard, the sound of the slap is awful.

BARBOSA

Four.

HULL

Okay, that's it. Get away.

Hull leads Elias to the door right past Gallegos. Their gazes meet again. As they go out they hear Gallegos BERATING Barbosa in furious Spanish.

INT. STAIRCASE - NIGHT

Trembling, Elias holds his bloody hands against his chest, as Hull leads him in silence down the steps.

ELIAS

Look at me. Look at me, damn it!

He barely whispers, but it's like a shout. Hull, who'd been avoiding his gaze, forces himself to look. Elias's humiliation is so profound it almost ennoble him. Finally:

HULL

Why did you do it?

ELIAS

I needed it. They taught me what I needed to know. That I'm not part of

them, and I never will be. That they don't respect me. That I don't deserve respect. Because I'm a shmuck, John. I'm a shmuck...

and
death,
He laughs a terrible laugh. The door behind them opens, Barbosa appears with Gopher. Everyone is ready for but:

BARBOSA

David, I'm sorry. It's a crazy time, and... you know... I'm doing a little too much coca... I'll buy your kid a pony... anything you want... Let's forget about it.

never
them
face.
He comes down the stairs, offers his hand. Elias will forget about it, but he silently takes the hand, holds in his own bloody paws, looking directly into Barbosa's

Elias
to
Barbosa becomes uneasy, manages to extract his hand. and Hull continue down and out the door. Gopher gushes Barbosa.

GOPHER

I am so proud of you. You can be cruel, and you can be kind. And just now you were kind. Proud, proud, and more proud. That's me.

BARBOSA

Shut up.

INT. BOXING GYM - NIGHT

know
talking.
Barbosa, Gopher with Hernandez, Taft's partner. Now we Hernandez is corrupt: that's how they knew Eddie was

BARBOSA

I got nothing to give you, my man. I'm an il-liquid son of a bitch.

HERNANDEZ

Felix, I keep telling them, "I have informants down there, I'm working guys, I can't say who..." If you don't have money, give me busts, or they're gonna start wondering about me.

GOPHER

They're already wondering.

BARBOSA

(deadpan)

You can have Gopher.

GOPHER

Oh Gawd...

BARBOSA

How about a lawyer?

GOPHER

(knows who he means)

Felix, don't do this.

HERNANDEZ

(he knows, too)

Great, lawyers are great, Jewish is best. But I need spades, too. The politicians want dark facts to scare the suburbs so they'll vote Republican.

BARBOSA

Lawyers and spades; I got the trifecta: two dealers and a girl who does their wash. Two niggers and a kike; all Democrats.

HERNANDEZ

You're my man. And afterwards...

Hernandez rubs thumb against fingers.

BARBOSA

When this is over, I'll send you to Hawaii, Maui. It's very beautiful in Maui, it's a very spiritual place.

HERNANDEZ

I just want money.

And he's gone.

GOPHER

I wouldn't trust that man when he's
out of rifle range.

Barbosa looks tired.

GOPHER

(continuing;
premonition of
disaster)

Don't do this, Felix. It'll go wrong.
Kill Elias if you have to, honey,
but don't set him up for this. It
damages your prestige.

Barbosa faces his cocaine. He tries to resist the pull,
then
yields. He does another line. It's his friend. He loves
it.
He picks up a cellular phone, dials.

BARBOSA

David, you're awake, I'm impressed...
I'm sorry about what happened...
Listen, I'll get you twenty boxes,
like you wanted. You were right, you
should have what you need... Tomorrow
night... Bring your partner and that
girl with the store, Betty... I need
her advice on something. I want us
to have fun, like we used to. We'll
go to that shrimp place, okay?...
Good... Me, too, David.

(hangs up; does another
line; drawing it
deep into him)

Yes!

INT. CARVER'S OFFICE - BEFORE DAWN

Hull jacked up, excited, pleased with himself. As he
paces,
Carver observes his beautiful suit, shoes, expensive
watch.
He looks much better than Carver.

HULL

We're getting twenty kilograms
tomorrow.

(notes the lightening
sky)

Tonight. I made it happen. I pushed Elias, now he doesn't make a move without me.

CARVER

You run Elias.

HULL

I control him. Barbosa's selling it to us because he thinks I can move it...

(now the big news)

And last night I met Ramon Gallegos.

Carver sits up fast. Hull likes that.

HULL

(continuing)

We're getting the dope from him; it's still coming through Barbosa, but Gallegos will approach me soon on his own. We're going to get him, Gerry. We're going to bring him and the whole thing down.

Carver sits back, grimaces.

HULL

(continuing)

What's your problem?

CARVER

(looking out window)

My problem? My problem is that you don't really know what's happening.

HULL

(sardonic)

Oh, so, tell me what's happening, Gerry.

CARVER

Barbosa is setting you up tonight.

HULL

Bullshit.

CARVER

He's dealing you to Taft and Hernandez. You're going to be taken down as you receive the drugs. They're putting together the arrest team

right now.

That rocks Hull. He is up, pacing.

HULL

What do we do?

CARVER

You stay away. We're going to take them down.

HULL

Who? Elias and Betty? Don't be silly.

CARVER

My boss wants a bust right now. He goes before the oversight committee next week. He needs something to justify the budget.

HULL

(imploring)

I'll get him something. Give me ten days, and I'll get him Gallegos on a plate.

CARVER

Too late. The whole thing's set up.

HULL

Gerry, what are you telling me? I need Elias... and Betty. You arrest them, and you're throwing away everything I've set up.

CARVER

It's out of my hands.

Hull walks out.

CARVER

(continuing)

John, don't go near that bust.

EXT. 96TH STREET NEAR THE AIRPORT/INT. A CAR - NIGHT

Elias (no sleep) driving. Betty in front. Hull in back.

HULL

We shouldn't go to them. Maybe they come to us.

ELIAS

He wouldn't.

They pull into the lot of a boarded up restaurant where Barbosa and Chino stand outside of a limousine.

EXT. BEHIND AN AIRPORT MOTEL - NIGHT

gym
scopes.
Taft and Hernandez in the same van that was outside the earlier. They're watching THROUGH BINOCULARS, night They spot Elias's car.

HERNANDEZ

(whispering into radio)
Here they are. Nobody move until we see the green suitcase.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

kiss.
The two groups meeting. Barbosa gives Betty a courtly

BARBOSA

(flirtatious)
I'm sorry for dragging you out so late, but I have to be careful.

MCCUTCHEON

It gives me confidence.

HULL

knows
watching planes descend into the airport, nervous. He what's coming, but how does he handle it?

HULL

Let's see what we've got.

Chino
day-glo
Elias takes a satchel out of the rent-a-car trunk. opens the limousine's trunk. Inside is an over-sized green plastic suitcase. He is about to pick it up.

HULL

(continuing; spotting
the police van in
the adjacent lot)
Don't touch it.

Everyone looks at him, then the direction he's looking.

BARBOSA

What is this?

HULL

Something's wrong. What's that van doing there?

Everyone looks. They can barely see the van. Hull pulls
a gun.

HULL

(continuing)

This is a bust. The minute we take the stuff, they'll be over us.

BARBOSA

He's crazy, David. I thought you were the crazy one, but it's him.

Hull puts the gun to Barbosa's head, addresses Chino:

HULL

Chino, pick up the suitcase and give it to Elias. I'll only kill him if something goes wrong.

Chino moves to pick up the suitcase.

BARBOSA

No!!

Everyone looks at Hull amazed, even Chino.

ELIAS

(softly)

Fucking A, John...

HULL

Okay, everybody in the car.

He throws the money in the limo truck, slams the lid.
He's running the show now, and everyone knows it. He's
winging it, but confident and strangely calm.

Elias, energized by Hull's command, grabs Barbosa and

throws

him toward the limo.

HERNANDEZ'S POV THROUGH NIGHT SCOPE

TAFT

We have a problem.

HERNANDEZ

Shit! Shit! Shit!
(aiming rifle; Hull
in sights)
Enough of this...

TAFT

No!

EXT. TWO CARS - NIGHT

toward
Hull shepherding everyone into the limo. He glances
the van. On instinct. He pulls Chino to him.

A RIFLE SHOT

Chino's head explodes. Betty screams.

BARBOSA

(screaming at van)
Don't shoot... Don't shoot...

INT. VAN - NIGHT

Taft hurling Hernandez against the wall.

TAFT

Goddam it, what the hell are you
doing?

EXT. TWO CARS - NIGHT

Hull
SIRENS. GUNFIRE. Elias drags Barbosa into the limo.
throws Betty into the front seat. The limo takes off.

EXT. STREET/INT. LIMO - DRIVING - NIGHT

Barbosa in
Windows
Hull driving, Betty up front. Elias with a gun on
back. Hull slaloms the limo through police GUNFIRE.
are blown out. Glass everywhere.

MCCUTCHEON

(weeping)

I asked for this... I asked for it...
It's my fault...

HULL

(calm, eyes on road)

Relax. We'll make it.

She looks at him, stunned yet soothed by his certainty.

BARBOSA

He's a cop. He has to be. How else
would he have known?

HULL

If I was cop, you'd be face down
back there.

MCCUTCHEON

How did you know?

HULL

The whole thing smelled. Changing
his mind about the stuff. Meeting us
way out here. And I'd seen cops in
that van before. Hernandez is dirty,
that's who he's using.

ELIAS

(to Barbosa)

Get out of the car.

He starts to open the door.

HULL

David, not now.

ELIAS

Yes, now!

INT. TAFT AND HERNANDEZ'S CAR - NIGHT

Racing. Taft at wheel, raging at Hernandez.

TAFT

Who are you, man? Who the fuck are
you?

HERNANDEZ

(stonewalling)

I'm me.

INT. LIMO - DRIVING - NIGHT

ELIAS

He traded us to the cops. Just like Eddie. Eddie, who was nice to my daughter, had to die because that's the rule. And you were vulgar about my wife, Felix, so at the very least the same rule applies to you.

BARBOSA

I'll give you money. I'll give you a million. Anything you want.

ELIAS

I want you to get out of the car. Get out of the fucking car. Out of the fucking --

MCCUTCHEON

(near tears)

No, no... we can't do this.

HULL

(turning around from front seat)

Stop it, David, or we're...

Elias wheels on him, sticks the gun in his face:

ELIAS

(in a fury)

Look at my hands!

He holds them up: swollen, black and blue, cut up.

ELIAS

(continuing; to Barbosa, softly)

Get out of the car.

Barbosa's frozen. Elias grabs his hand, SHOOTS a bullet through. Barbosa screams...

MCCUTCHEON

No!

HULL

Goddammit!

other. Elias wheels on them, swinging the gun from one to the

ELIAS

Stay out of this, or you'll die.
You'll both die. Everyone'll die.

the His fury makes anything seem possible. He pushes open
door. Trembling, Barbosa starts to climb out.

The limo enters a tunnel, police still in pursuit.

Halfway out, Barbosa stops.

BARBOSA

I can't...

forward. The Elias SHOOTS him in the butt. He shrieks, jerks
cops are getting close behind.

Other cops waiting at the far end of the tunnel.

lane. Hull hits the brakes, spins a 180 into the opposite

succession Barbosa is flung out of the car and plastered by a
of fishtailing vehicles.

at: Hull speeds back the other way. They're going straight

INT. VAN - COMING STRAIGHT AT THEM - NIGHT

chicken, but Taft and Hull, the two drivers, lock eyes. It's
some more than that. Two men set against each other who, for
reason, want to be friends.

At the last instant, the van swerves away, but:

ELIAS AIMING AT TAFT

Taft sees the gun too late. He can do nothing.

Hull's gaze follows Taft's. He sees Elias, deliberately
swerves, sending the SHOT wild.

INT. LIMO - RACING - NIGHT

ELIAS

I had him!

HULL

You want to kill a cop?? Don't be stupid.

The limo speeds away.

EXT. STREET/INT. LIMO - DRIVING - NIGHT

The windows shot out. Hull and Betty silent, shaken.

Elias

charged up, happy.

ELIAS

Everything is different. We're the Colombians now.

(radiant)

This is the greatest night of my life. Terrible but great. Felix was right...

MCCUTCHEON

(appalled)

About what?

ELIAS

He said I should kill a man. He was right.

MCCUTCHEON

My God.

ELIAS

Barbosa was a roach. Do you miss him? Will anybody in the world miss him?

MCCUTCHEON

Are you a roach, too?

ELIAS

(happily)

Yes. Thank God.

MCCUTCHEON

(to Hull)

What about you?

He's silent, keeps driving. She's had enough.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

Stop the car.

Hull looks at her.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

Stop it!

He brakes to a stop. She jumps out, leans back in.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

No more laundering, no more anything.
I'm finished with this.

And she disappears into the night. Elias watches her

go.

Hull resumes driving.

ELIAS

She knows too much. We have to kill
her.

HULL

No! She's with me. She's not going
to talk.

(looks at Elias)

You touch her, I'll kill you.

ELIAS

She's your responsibility then.

Hull accepts it.

ELIAS

(continuing)

We're going to get the money now,
John. Enough for the new drug. We're
going to be rich. We're going to be
so rich that we're going to leave
the world of ordinary people and
going to a higher realm. I mean that.

HULL

They're going to come after us.

ELIAS

(matter-of-fact)

It's a hardball game. We're hardball

players.

EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET - EAST L.A. - NIGHT

and a
he's
the
SPANISH.

Hernandez comes out of a bodega with groceries, wine
woman. He nuzzles her as he lets her into his car. As
getting behind the wheel, Molto (Gallegos' guard) stops
door from closing. The conversation is entirely in

HERNANDEZ

It wasn't my fault.

MOLTO

It never is.

wheel.

He SHOOTs him in the head. Hernandez slumps against the
The woman screams. Molto walks away.

EXT. AN APARTMENT COMPLEX/INT. BETTY'S APARTMENT - DAWN

through

Hull finds a door, pushes the buzzer. Betty looks
the glass. She's afraid of him.

MCCUTCHEON

Don't kill me. I'm not going to talk.
I swear. Please.

but
her to
on

Then she looks closer and sees not murder in his face,
need. She opens the door. Without a word, he gathers
him. She can't resist him now. Her mouth is everywhere
him.

INT. HER BEDROOM - DAWN

away

Betty gasping in the wake of pleasure, turning her face
from him, she feels so exposed.

MCCUTCHEON

Don't look...

She hides her face in his neck.

INT. SAME - LATER

first
They lie in each other's arms, relaxed together for the
time. A wonderful, unprotected openness.

HULL

(softly)
Tell me about you.

MCCUTCHEON

(half-kidding)
Everything worth knowing you just
found you.

EXTRA
ear.
He laughs. They begin to make love again. Suddenly: AN
HAND stroking Betty's hair. She gasps. A gun in Hull's
Another in her face. Guns all around.

HULL

Don't hurt her.

see
Hands pull him out of bed, leave her there alone. We
Molto, two or three others.

EXT. A CEMETERY - MORNING

grave.
RAMON GALLEGOS lays a bouquet of white lillies on a

He kneels, whispers a prayer, crosses himself.

hold
European
He rises and walks to where Molto and the other guards
Hull and Elias. Gallegos is in his thirties, more
than Barbosa. He has a distinctly mild manner.

ELIAS

Who's grave?

eyed
An impudent question, but Elias seems strangely bright-
despite the guns held on him.

GALLEGOS

My wife's. She died of leukemia three
years ago.

(looks around)
I like to be among the dead. They

never interrupt you.

(turning to them)

Felix Barbosa started out as a skinny fourteen-year-old fucking Yankee businessman in Bogata hotels. He grew up. He made himself strong and rich, but getting there made him sick, and that killed him. So he lost everything for the same reason he'd gotten it in the first place. Now we'll see if you can do as well.

They

A PRIEST going by greets Gallegos who responds warmly.
chat a minute in SPANISH. The Priest leaves.

GALLEGOS

(continuing)

Felix owed me one million eight hundred thousand dollars.

He addresses this to Hull; Elias feels left out.

GALLEGOS

(continuing)

When you killed him, you bought the debt; now you owe it to me; you get to keep thirty percent, like he did. You have three days.

Gallegos turns to leave.

HULL

Who did Barbosa collect from?

GALLEGOS

If you don't know, you shouldn't have killed him.

made of

He notices Hull's earring: two tiny dice, the spots
minuscule jewels. Unembarrassed, he fingers it.

GALLEGOS

(continuing)

Cute... Can I have that?

Hull's ear
fingers

Without waiting for an answer, he yanks it out of
and walks away, leaving Hull bleeding through his
before a stone cross.

EXT. A GHETTO STREET - NIGHT

on
Hull
adjacent

A club on the corner. THROUGH A WINDOW we see a RAP ACT
the stage, their MUSIC pumping out onto the street.
pulls up in a Jaguar. He and Elias go through a door
to the club.

INT. BUILDING HALL/INT. GOPHER'S ROOM - NIGHT

and
closed.

The MUSIC is still audible here, though muffled. Elias
Hull are pushing at door Gopher is trying to hold

GOPHER

I don't want you in here. You killed
the man, and I loved him. I don't
want to have anything to do with
you.

miserable
immense
MUSIC.

Elias kicks it open, and they enter Gopher's tiny,
domain. He's wearing some sort of negligee and an
naked woman fills his bed. We still hear the MUFFLED

GOPHER

(continuing; apoplectic)
I'm a sixty-three-year-old man! I'm
a grandfather! Would you hit a sixty-
three-year-old white man? Would you
hit your own grandfather?

ELIAS

(slaps him against
wall)
Listen, you fucking monkey, you know
who owed him money, and we know you
know. Tell us or --

Hull pulls him off. Elias is angry. They struggle.

HULL

He'll tell us. Gopher, just...

Meaning: deal with me or deal with Elias.

GOPHER

You can't tell anyone it was me.

The MUSIC continues OVER the following sequence:

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Elias arguing with a dealer. He slaps him around.

TIGHT ON HANDS

Money is exchanged. The money is stuffed in a satchel.

INT. A LAW OFFICE - DAY

A well-dressed lawyer (30's) talking with clients, a distinguished couple in their 60's.

restrain
is
politely
moment.

The door BANGS open and a secretary is unable to
Hull and Elias as they charge into the room. The lawyer
up on his feet, but Hull shoves him around as Elias
explains to the clients that this will only take a

TIGHT ON SACHEL

Hull's hands thrust more money in. It's getting full.

INT. A MOTORCYCLE REPAIR SHOP - NIGHT

onto

A biker in leathers on hands-and-knees spitting blood
the cement floor. Hull stands over him, fists clenched.

INT. A CAR TRUNK

another
dumped in.

A satchel stuffed with money is latched, set next to
latched one. A third is opened, money and jewelry

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Hull looking into the trunk. Elias is beat.

HULL

Where the hell is all the money?
We're still a million short.

ELIAS

I gotta get laid.

HULL

David, we've got thirty-six hours.

ELIAS

(slams trunk, moves
toward door)

Pick me up at Jacqueline's in the
morning.

HULL

Sooner than that.

dark
wheel.
Elias gets in the car and drives off. Hull turns and a
American sedan pulls up alongside. Carver behind the

CARVER

(an order)

Get in.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

HULL

(as he gets in)

What are you doing here? You're going
to get me killed.

too,
Carver peels away fast. He's very angry, frightened,
but that's hidden.

CARVER

Where the hell have you been?

HULL

Doing my job.

haven't
is.
There's an indifference to Carver's authority we
heard before. Hull isn't even aware of it, but Carver

CARVER

You violated a direct order to stay
away from that bust. As a result, a
police informant is dead, a state
senator was critically injured in
the tunnel pile up and a city

policeman was subsequently murdered.

HULL

I didn't blow my cover.

CARVER

Don't get smart with me, motherfucker.

HULL

Don't be a shmuck, Gerry. I'm talking to Gallegos. I'm collecting his money. We can set him up right now.

(NOTE: Carver arrives somewhere and parks. To be discussed, but let's say, for now, that we are:)

EXT. SANTA MONICA PARKING STRUCTURE - OVERLOOKING OCEAN

NIGHT

They get out of the car. Carver takes out a flask, has a drink, offers it to Hull who declines.

CARVER

Never have, never will.

(puts the flask away)

I want you to give me your gun. You're coming in right now.

HULL

(doesn't understand)

Coming in where?

CARVER

Your assignment has been terminated. You're not going out there again. If I have to, I'll put you in custody.

HULL

(uncomprehending)

I'm going to have Gallegos in two days.

Carver says nothing. Suddenly Hull understands.

HULL

(continuing)

You're protecting him. You're protecting Gallegos.

Carver snorts: ridiculous.

HULL

(continuing)

No, of course. That's why you wanted to bust Elias and Betty. I was getting close, and you wanted to cut this off then... What is he, the new Noriega? Helps you fight commies, so you let him sell drugs to the niggers. Two birds with one stone.

CARVER

You violated orders, so you're through. Don't make a conspiracy theory out of it.

HULL

(laughs)

I'm through...? Then, I might as well have a drink after all.

Hull
building,
Surprised, Carver reaches for the flask. As he does,
grabs him, pushes him out over the edge of the
holds him there.

HULL

(continuing)

Now tell me the truth or they're going to decide your troubles got the best of you.

dangles.
Carver struggles. Hull pushes him out farther. Carver

CARVER

You're insane.

HULL

All the more reason to do what I say. Jesus, Ger, I'm having trouble holding on...

CARVER

All right!

HULL

Say it!

CARVER

It's the State Department.

drinks
flask

Hull pulls him back in. Carver slumps against the wall,
greedily. Hull lets him for a moment, then takes the
away.

CARVER

(continuing)

I told you, Gallegos's uncle is a
big deal down there.

HULL

Guzman.

CARVER

Guzman, right. Our government supports
Guzman because he's a moderate. That's
a right-winger who's pro-U.S.

(he doesn't like it
either)

If Gallegos got busted here, it would
hurt Guzman's political career there.
It's politics, John, not drugs.

HULL

Drugs is politics. Politics is
drugs...

(sickened)

Christ, Gerry, I dealt drugs. I killed
a man. Others died. What did I do
all this for? For nothing.

CARVER

I'm going to Washington, John. I'll
bring you with me. We'll have clout,
money...

HULL

(outraged)

I didn't do this for clout or money.
You said we were gonna do some good.

CARVER

We tried.

HULL

Trying's for college boys.

(his head on fire)

If all there is is power and money...

If all there is... then what am I doing here? 'Cause I can get more power and money out on the street, I got more there already, than I'd ever get kissing your ass in Washington...

CARVER

But you can't do that, John. It's not you.

HULL

Me? There is no me. We took care of that. First I was a cop pretending to be a dealer. Now I'm just a dealer pretending to be a cop. Why not stop pretending...? Quit the force. Be a dealer.

CARVER

It's not that simple.

HULL

My assignment's already terminated. All I have to do is quit. I hereby quit.

(lifts the flask)

My first one.

(drinks)

Not so bad.

starts He slips the flask in his pocket, gets in the car, engine.

CARVER

Don't blow your cover.

Hull drives off, leaving Carver alone on the roof.

INT. BETTY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She lets him in, sees the distress in his face.

MCCUTCHEON

What's the matter?

the He shakes his head, drops onto the couch. He takes out flask, offers it to her. She shakes her head.

HULL

Who are you, my mother?

He laughs, takes a drink. She's surprised, says nothing.

MCCUTCHEON

Tell me.

HULL

Tell you what?

MCCUTCHEON

What you came to say.

HULL

What did I come to say?

MCCUTCHEON

Then tell me anything. Something about you. Something real.

HULL

(long beat; another drink)

When I was young, I occasionally stole things.

(laughs to himself)

My father died when I was ten. Right in front of me.

The revelation is so sudden it surprises Hull as much as Betty.

HULL

(continuing)

Heart attack. He just fell down. He said, "I love you," then died in my arms.

MCCUTCHEON

Oh, baby...

She holds him, and he lets himself be held.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

Tell me what's going on, John?

HULL

(doesn't want to talk about that)

You're not doing the stuff anymore,
are you?

Pulls playfully at her nose.

MCCUTCHEON

No. Don't change the subject.

HULL

How is that?

MCCUTCHEON

It's hard. John...!

HULL

(trying to tell without
telling)

Things are getting, they're getting
a little... confusing. I had certain
plans, and people haven't come through
exactly as they promised.

MCCUTCHEON

What do you expect with those people?

HULL

(laughs)

It's not just those people. It's...
it's bigger than that. It's of
everybody. Present company excluded.

MCCUTCHEON

You've got to stop this, John, you
know that. You gotta get out.

HULL

I can't.

MCCUTCHEON

Of course, you can.

HULL

(almost angry)

No! This is what I'm supposed to do.

MCCUTCHEON

Supposed to? Who said you're supposed
to?

HULL

The whole fuckin' world. You think I
didn't try something else? But

everything funnels you right back here. Like it's where you had to go all along.

MCCUTCHEON

But you know what you're doing, don't you, selling this stuff? Doing to our own.

HULL

If I tried to get out now, they'd kill me.

MCCUTCHEON

(tortured)

I can't be with somebody's who involved in drugs.

won't
He nods. He knows. He's even happy about it. But she yield. Finally he gets up and walks back out the door.

EXT. GOPHER'S BUILDING - 4 A.M.

Stevens
4
with
daytime
hopeless
The neighborhood is reminiscent of the one where Joe Sr. was killed. The rap club still pumps MUSIC onto the A.M. streets where whores, junkies, children, teenagers beepers and Nikes, welfare mothers roam as if it were anywhere else. Their eyes, yearning, sullen, vital, and hoping stare at...

HULL

Car.
making
him,
Hull's
Everyone knows what he is: the Black Man with the Big Car. They don't remember when he was just another hustler street buys. Now they hate him, revere him, want to be not caring what it entails. Every eye follows as... He and Elias cross the street toward Gopher's door. eyes don't go right or left. He's a driven man now.

INT. GOPHER'S ROOM - NIGHT

face,

Gopher has just been roused from sleep. A light in his
Hull and Elias looming over him.

HULL

There've got to be more. We have a
million two, we owe Gallegos one
eight.

GOPHER

I told you everyone. Everyone who
owed him, everyone he... One eight?
He's lying. Barbosa barely owed him
a million.

Hull and Elias look at each other.

INT. BETTY'S STORE - MORNING

Taft is showing her photocopies of phone bills, bank
transactions, invoices. She's obviously upset.

TAFT

I got every money transfer, every
phone call, all your laundry tickets.

MCCUTCHEON

(miserable)

What do you want?

TAFT

John Hull.

MCCUTCHEON

I can't!

TAFT

Or you'll go away 'til you're a dried
up old woman, and when you come out,
ain't nobody gonna want you.

She covers her face.

EXT. EAST L.A. STREET/INT. CAR - DAY

snickering to
Elias driving a car we haven't seen before and
himself at some private joke.

HULL

What are you laughing at?

into Elias shakes his head: nothing. He laughs. They pull
the lot beside a movie theater.

INT. THEATER - DAY

end. A Technicolor Spanish melodrama is winding to its lurid
Hull A door in back opens, and a burst of daylight reveals
and Elias being brought in by a guard and met by Molto.
Molto and the guard frisk them, take their guns and
money satchels, make them wait a moment until...

The movie ends.

the The house lights come on revealing Ramon Gallegos as
the only spectator in the theater. He beckons. Molto and
guard bring Hull and Elias down the aisle to him.
Gallegos looking in the satchels. A tense moment.

HULL

It isn't one eight.

(off Gallegos)

It's a million one. That's all Barbosa
owed, it's all we're paying.

Gallegos is stern for a moment, then laughs.

GALLEGOS

Big brass balls. Collecting money
makes you strong.

piece Everybody relaxes. Gallegos scribbles something on a
of paper, hands it to the guard who feeds it into a fax
machine.

ELIAS

What's that?

GALLEGOS

I'm telling our suppliers they got
paid. They'll be very happy. I'm
happy.

ELIAS

And we're happy. Everybody's happy.
It's a happy world.

are Elias seems a bit mad, but no one minds. He and Hull
ready to go. He gestures to Molto, wants his gun back.

GALLEGOS

So, how can I express my gratitude
for a job well done?

ELIAS

We want Barbosa's business.

Gallegos gestures to Molto to give them the guns.

GALLEGOS

Done. Of course.

ELIAS

And, also, your business. All this.
Your money, your dope, everything.

Hull looks at Elias; what's going on?

GALLEGOS

(smiles)

You're tougher than I thought, but
not that tough.

ELIAS

How tough is enough?

He brings up the gun and SHOOTS Gallegos in the head.

a
Molto's Hull and the guards are frozen. Then everyone goes for
gun. Elias SHOOTS the guard. Hull has his gun to
head and screams at Elias:

HULL

No!

doing Meaning don't shoot him. But Elias has no intention of
so.

ELIAS

(breathless)

Thank you, John. I couldn't have
done that without you.

HULL

(barely able to speak)
Jesus Christ...

time

He can't believe it: the guy he's been after the whole
is dead on the floor.

ELIAS

You taught me to take my work
seriously.

HULL

What's going on here, David?

ELIAS

We're taking over.

HULL

You're doing too much stuff.

ELIAS

No, I'm very clear. I'm very, very
clear.

(to Molto)

Ahora, usted nos assistamos. Enteiendo?

Molto nods.

EXT. THEATER PARKING LOT/INT. CAR - DAY

Hull, Elias and Molto getting into their car. Molto is
recalcitrant. Elias pistol whips him. Hull stops him.

EXT. SAN FERNANDO VALLEY/INT. CAR - DAY

They

The car passes through a development of suburban homes.
enter a driveway. Two boys play in the yard.

ELIAS

(to Molto)

Donde esta?

feet.

feel

Molto is silent. Elias FIRES a bullet right between his
Molto jumps. The boys turn. Hull grabs the gun away. We
the toll Elias's madness is taking on him.

HULL

What the fuck's the matter with you?

ELIAS

It works, John. It works.

the And, indeed, Molto is pointing to a Winnebago parked at rear of the property.

EXT. REAR OF PROPERTY - DAY

that Winnebago. With a tire iron, Hull snaps off the padlock gushes holds the rear door closed. He opens the door. Money out. He slams it closed.

HULL

Jesus...

up. He, Elias and Molto are on hands and knees scooping it

SAME - LATER

while, Molto tied to a tree. Elias is giving him instructions strangely, removing Molto's shoes and socks.

ELIAS

(to Molto)

Disce a Senor Guzman que...

(his Spanish isn't good enough)

...that we have his money, and we're willing to talk as soon as he comes to town. We'll know how to reach him. Okay?

and Molto just glares at him. Elias smiles, takes the shoes Winnebago, socks and all the contents of Molto's into the and he and Hull drive away, leaving the car behind.

EXT./INT. A PARKING GARAGE/INT. WINNEBAGO - EVENING

attendant, The Winnebago enters the garage, Elias greeting the "Hey, Frank." Frank waves him in.

The garage is filled with various RVs. Hull pulls the

gets

Winnebago into an empty spot beside Elias's car and out. Elias remains in the cabin making calculations.

ELIAS

Approximating the cubic capacity and depending on the denominations of the bills, it's somewhere between fifty million and two hundred million dollars. Right back there.

the
head
report,

As he does, Hull checks his gun, walks around behind the vehicle and prepares to shoot Elias in the back of the head through the open window. Elias finishes his money report, and sits there as if unaware of Hull, but:

ELIAS

(continuing; not turning around)
Think I'm crazy?

HULL

Yes.
(blowing up, gun still on him)
I can't believe you got us into this. All of fucking Latin America is going to be after our asses, including Renaldo Guzman who's friends with fucking George Bush.

ELIAS

I know they're coming after us. I want them to. We'll give them the money, but we'll make a deal for ourselves. We'll get what we need for the synthetic drugs. I've thought it all out. I've been thinking it out for years.

Elias

Hull uncocks the gun, rubs it against his burning face. Elias turns around, embraces him.

ELIAS

(continuing)
We're going to have everything. Don't you want everything, John?

HULL

They're going to get your family,
David. They'll kill your wife and
daughter.

ELIAS

(serene)

Nancy and Miranda left the country
two days ago.

HULL

You knew about this then?

Elias smiles.

HULL

(continuing)

What about Betty?

EXT. BETTY'S JEWELRY SHOP - EVENING

through
things
into
A car SQUEALS to a stop. Molto and three thugs smash
the glass door. They disappear into the store where
can be heard BREAKING. They emerge a moment later, jump
the car.

EXT. SYNAGOGUE - EVENING

building.
Hull's car races up. He jumps out, dashes toward the

INT. SYNAGOGUE SOCIAL HALL - EVENING

run.
Forty PEOPLE on folding chairs. Hull enters on a dead
He stops short when he sees:

BETTY

saying:
at the front. He signals to her, but she's already

MCCUTCHEON

Hi, my name is Betty.

EVERYONE IN THE ROOM

Hi, Betty!

MCCUTCHEON

My name is Betty, I'm a drug addict.
And I've been clean for nineteen
days.

back; he The room bursts into APPLAUSE. She sees Hull at the
signals to her, but she goes on.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

I've been using drugs and selling
them, and I've wanted to stop for a
long time, and the only way I did
was because I met a man I loved and
who loved me. I know that's not what
I'm supposed to say. I'm supposed to
say there was a higher power, and
maybe there was, behind it all, but
this man is strong and his love made
me strong enough that I could start,
or at least think about a life that
didn't have drugs in it...

between She's looking right at Hull as she speaks. He's torn
she's the danger he knows she's in and his emotion at what
saying.

EXT. SYNAGOGUE - EVENING

Hull hurrying Betty toward his car. She's protesting.

MCCUTCHEON

I've got to get clothes.

HULL

You can't go back.

INT. HULL'S CONDO - EVENING

his Molto and men pouring through it. In frustration, Molto
smashes the table Hull had fussed over when Elias put
feet up.

EXT. MOTEL COURTYARD - NIGHT

bags, Hull and Betty hurry toward his room carrying shopping
a newly bought suitcase. They see...

COPS

them.
The
They freeze, turn, ready to bolt. But more cops behind
A panic, yet no one's coming after them. They walk on.
cops are going into and coming out of Belinda's room.

INT. BELINDA'S ROOM - NIGHT

sits
The fat Blonde Woman is talking to a policewoman. James
on the bed staring at...

BELINDA

Hull
who lies dead on a floor littered with crack vials.
picks up a vial, holds it up to the Blonde Woman with a
question.

BLONDE WOMAN

(nodding)
She got a fever and just burned up.
She just burned up all of a sudden.
It must have been bad stuff.

MCCUTCHEON

(indicating James)
He shouldn't be here.

BLONDE WOMAN

(takes his hand)
Come on, James, we'll go get a
burrito.

Hull
The boy allows himself to be led out. Betty looks at
who's in a private hell.

EXT. COURTYARD - NIGHT

is
Hull and Betty are about to enter Hull's room. The door
ajar.

INT. HULL'S ROOM - NIGHT

collection of
children.
Taft stands at the dresser. He's found Hull's
memorabilia and is looking at the photo of his

TAFT

Cute kids...

HULL

(angry at the invasion)

Give me that.

it.
to
her.

He snatches away the photo, but not before Betty sees
She reaches out her hand. He reluctantly turns it over
her.

TAFT

Tell me something, who the fuck are
you?

envelope.

Hull doesn't answer, collects the rest of his things,
including the bloody money, stuffs it back in the
envelope.

TAFT

(continuing)

'Cause I don't think you're quite
the asshole you're trying to be.

HULL

Look, Mr. Taft, that's your name,
right? Leave me alone. I got things
on my mind.

TAFT

I'd think you would. You better have
your goddamn life on your mind, or
it's gonna get away from you. It's
gonna burn up like that poor woman
across the way. Like all of you's
gonna burn...

HULL

And what do you do, Mr. Taft, except
chase bad guys up and down the street
with your dirty partner, never
catching anybody important?

TAFT

I do what I can. Do you do what you
can?

(Hull says nothing)

Maybe my partner was dirty. Maybe
the chief's dirty. And the mayor.

And the President. Maybe God Himself's taking something on the side. That's their problem. But I'll bust 'em if I can.

HULL

(without force)

Get out of my room.

TAFT

Don't deny who you are.

photo
to

He leaves. Hull turns to Betty who is still holding the of his children. He gently takes it, looks at it, seems draw both succor and pain from it.

empty.
He gets out Carver's flask and tries to drink, but it's

HULL

They're my children. They live in Cleveland with their mother. I'm divorced from her. I haven't seen them in... some time. I want to, but I haven't been able to arrange it.

MCCUTCHEON

How much else don't I know about you?

HULL

(trying to make a
joke)

Everything else... Everything else is... I don't know.

MCCUTCHEON

Taft has all the evidence about my laundering.

Hull's upset.

MCCUTCHEON

He's going to put me in jail for a long time unless I give you up.

HULL

Do it.

MCCUTCHEON

I can't. So, I've got to get away.
Far away. But I need money.

HULL

(laughs)
Money? I got money...

room
He empties his pockets of all that gushed out of the
Winnebago, empties a satchel as well until it fills the
like snow.

EXT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Hull putting Betty into an airport limousine.

HULL

(to the driver)
International terminal.
(to Betty)
I'll meet you there in a week.

it.
She kisses him. He's about to close the door. She stops

MCCUTCHEON

You know the first time, when I saw
you in the bar...?

HULL

(smiles at the memory)
You wouldn't even look at me.

MCCUTCHEON

'Cause I knew what you were thinking.
You were judging me.

HULL

No, I wasn't, I was...

MCCUTCHEON

You were. Your eyes were like an
angel in my heart telling me I should
be good, and I didn't want to hear
it.

truth,
This news startles Hull, yet, strangely, he senses its
and the sweetness is more than he can bear.

MCCUTCHEON

(continuing)

That's you, too. Maybe this is you,
I don't know, but I know that's you.

She closes the door. The car pulls away.

In an unmarked car up the street, Taft picks up the
radio.

EXT. A LATIN AMERICAN CONSULATE - DAY

A limousine pulls into the gate and disgorges RENALDO
GUZMAN,
55, and his wife, 25. They're shown into the consulate.
The limousine pulls out onto the street and parks.
Gopher
appears, knocks on the driver's window. It comes down.
They
chat briefly in Spanish. Gopher opens up a cellular
phone.

INT. A HOTEL ROOM - SANTA MONICA - DAY

Overlooking the ocean. Hull pacing nervously, Elias
relaxed,
reading the paper.

HULL

What if we forget all this? Take ten
million each and disappear. Leave
the country. New identities, new
lives...

ELIAS

What's the matter, John? Having
doubts?

HULL

Yeah.

A phone RINGS. Elias picks up his own cellular.

ELIAS

Yes... Where?... No! No way... We
pick the time and place... Otherwise
no meet...

(looks to Hull who
nods his agreement)
Got a pencil?

EXT. CONSULATE - LIMO - DAY

walks Gopher hands a piece of paper to the limo driver. He
away...

AROUND THE CORNER

is As he's about to get into a car, Taft grabs him. Gopher
surprised and not pleased.

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Where Hull and Elias left the Winnebago. Guzman's limo
approaches. Frank, the attendant, waves it on.

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

car,
in The limo climbs the ramps until it comes to Elias's
parked where the Winnebago was; the Winnie is nowhere
sight. The limo pulls alongside.

Then Hull and Elias get out. Molto gets out of the limo.
Renaldo Guzman.

ELIAS

We have a proposal to make. We regret
what happened to your nephew...

GUZMAN

Say what you have to say.

ELIAS

We all know that your cousin's
business is coming to an end. Costs
have climbed while profits and the
market --

Guzman waves: get to the point.

ELIAS

(continuing)

We have developed a new product:
simpler, cheaper to manufacture,
superior quality and completely
synthetic. Therefore, no growing, no
refining, no peasants, no importing,
no customs agents... Here's a detailed
prospectus with anticipated cash
flow and so forth.

He hands a copy to Guzman and the lawyer.

GUZMAN

(to Molto, teasing
Elias)

The racist Americans just want to cut us poor Hispanics out of the market.

ELIAS

There are no Americans anymore, Mr. Guzman, you know that. No Hispanics, no Japanese, no blacks, no whites, no anything. There are only rich people and poor people. We're rich, so we're on the same side.

EXT. GARAGE - NIGHT

Taft with Gopher in his car.

TAFT

Do they have money in there?

GOPHER

I don't know.

TAFT

They wouldn't meet here otherwise.

Gopher shrugs; a decision: Taft picks up his radio.

TAFT

(continuing)

Okay, everybody, here's the play...

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

ELIAS

We're prepared to give you 80% of the money. The remainder you invest in our business with proceeds paid out according to the figures there.

looking
He indicates the prospectus that Guzman has been
through.

GUZMAN

This looks interesting. I'd have to confirm everything, of course. Do

you have a sample of the product?

samples Elias produces one. Guzman gestures to Molto. Molto
it. Molto's eyes widen.

MOLTO

Buy it!

GUZMAN

Where is our money?

Molto Elias hands him a key, points to a different Winnebago.
to takes the key, unlocks the back: money. He signals okay
Guzman.

THWACK- Suddenly: SIRENS. Police cars wail into the garage. The
toward the THWACK and sweeping light of a helicopter descend
roof (though we never see the copter).

GUZMAN

(continuing; anger)

You set this up.

HULL

They're after us, not you.

under Everybody scatters. The garage is a labyrinth of cement
see stairwells, ramps, hundreds of RVs to hide between,
and so forth... Lots of NOISE, lights, but mostly we
Hull and Elias dodging here, avoiding the action.

INT. ANOTHER PART OF THE GARAGE - NIGHT

GUNFIRE. Molto caught between the lights. He draws his gun.
He's cut down.

TAFT

(screaming)

Where are the rest of them?

EXT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

Cars with rotating dome lights, but not many cops.

their
cars,
down...

Hull and Elias emerge from a shadowy doorway and make way at a casual pace beyond the perimeter of police quickly mingling with other spectators. They continue

EXT. A QUIET SIDE STREET - NIGHT

Strolling now. Elias elated, uncontained joy.

ELIAS

We did it. Twenty million. Twenty
fucking million. We're going to have
synthetics. We're gonna be rich.
We're gonna...

Hull stops walking and just stands there.

ELIAS

(continuing)

What's the matter, John? Be happy.
Your whole life has just been solved.

VOICE

(behind them)

Stop! Police!

In one motion, Elias draws his gun, turns and FIRES.

The figure goes down. Elias can't believe he hit him.

Hull starts toward the figure.

ELIAS

(heading the other
way)

John, where are you going?

Taft -- on the ground.

HULL

Oh, Jesus, no...

He drops to his knees. Blood oozes from Taft's chest.

ELIAS

John, what the hell are you doing?
Let's get out of here.

Hull tries to hold closed the wound. The posture

duplicates

breath. Hull with his dying father. He feels for a pulse. For

HULL

(distraught)
He's dying.

ELIAS

Let him die. Let him die twice. Come one.

mouth. He pulls at Hull who won't go. Hull does mouth-to-

Taft opens his eyes, looks up at him.

HULL

[Says to Taft whatever a CPR-trained policeman would say in this situation.]

(to Elias)
Get help.

ELIAS

Are you kidding me?

TAFT

(to Hull, getting it)
Oh, man, you're a cop. You're a cop, aren't you?

HULL

(with difficulty, as if against his will)
Yeah, I'm a cop. I'm a fucking cop...

ELIAS

(laughs)
Oh, really? Where's your badge?

HULL

I don't have one. I'm undercover.
Get help, David.

ELIAS

John, that's a cop. He tried to kill you.

HULL

He didn't know.

ELIAS

Oh, he didn't know. I don't know.

Maybe you don't know. Maybe you think you're a cop because... because...

HULL

Drop the gun, put your hands against the car. Spread your legs... Police!

Taft grunts once, stiffens.

HULL

(continuing)

My God! Please...

The pulse is gone. Hull begins to perform CPR.

ELIAS

Okay, let's say you're a cop. Be a cop.

Hull keeps doing CPR.

ELIAS

(continuing)

We've still got the money. We put it into Randy's chemistry set. In five years we're worth five hundred million each, minimum. You'll be one of the richest black men in America. Richer than Cosby. Who gives a shit how you got it? You think the white ones were honest?

Hull keeps working on Taft.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Is this asshole all that stands between you and greatness? Let me do you a favor.

Hull
Stunned, he

He puts a gun to Taft's head and FIRES. In a reflex,
draws his own gun, SHOOTS Elias in the stomach.
wobbles backward a few steps. Sits on the street.

ELIAS

(continuing)

Gee, John, that's kind of an extreme reaction.

the
white

Hull is stunned he did it. And this finally attracts
police who see a black man with a gun who just shot a
man.

off,
Hull goes to Elias who's dead. A POLICEMAN pulls him
beating him with a gun.

POLICEMAN

Fucking nigger...

INT. LOS ANGELES COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Carver.
Hull, bandaged, wearing prison blues, walking with

HULL

What about Guzman?

CARVER

He vanished, thank God, or we'd both
be in deep doo-doo. At least you got
Gallegos.

HULL

Elias did. And everything goes on as
before.

CARVER

That's the drug game. Plus a change...
I want you to come back to work for
me. You'll beat all charges on a
technicality and go back to who you
were.

HULL

Who was I, Ger?

CARVER

Does anyone really know?

HULL

I have other things to do.

CARVER

Like travel? Tangiers, maybe?

Hull looks at him; how did he know?

CARVER

(continuing)
I'm God, remember?

one- He beckons him. He walks him over to a cell. Through a
way window they see:

BETTY

alone in the cell, unaware she's being watched.

CARVER

Go back to work, she walks out of
here. Otherwise, she's up on multiple
counts, and I'll see to it the judge
runs them consecutively.

Hull just looks at him. Carver shrugs apologetically.

INT. ANOTHER ROOM

furniture. Absolutely white. Not a window, not a stick of

The only deviation is Hull in prison blues.

She The door opens, Betty comes in wearing prison yellows.
being sits on a nearly invisible chair. They know they're
watched.

MCCUTCHEON

They want me to testify against you.
I said I wouldn't.

HULL

You have to. It's all set up. That's
how you're getting off.

difficult She shakes her head in cynical understanding. How
it is to get back to an honorable life.

He takes her hand.

HULL

(continuing; with
difficulty)
My father didn't have a heart attack.

She looks at him.

HULL

(continuing)

He was shot robbing a liquor store.
Trying to rob it. I lied about that.

MCCUTCHEON

Baby, why are you telling me this?

HULL

I had to start somewhere... There're
other things you don't know...

AN IRIS SHOT - HULL AND BETTY

Silent. Kissing. Beginning to make love. Hull extracts
himself, gives the finger to the POV and stuffs a bit
tissue in the iris, blocking our view.

EXT. ROOM - DAY

Carver takes his eye from the now obscured peephole.

EXT. A CEMETERY - DAY

A funeral. Taft's wife and children (from the wallet
leave the graveside with the rest of the funeral party.
When everyone is gone, Hull approaches the grave. From
pocket, he removes the four blood-soaked bills his
gave him, and wedges these among the stems of flowers
already cover the plot.

He's silent a moment, then he gets up. He joins Carver
standing with Hull's children. The kids each take his
they walk together.

CARVER

Betty walked out of court free this
morning. That's my side of the deal.

HULL

(to the children)

You two run on ahead.

They do. Hull watches them go.

CARVER

Her probation gets revoked the minute
you fuck up. I want you to stay away
from her altogether.

HULL

You know the difference between a
black man and a nigger?

Hull
Carver smiles, shakes his head. He likes a good joke.
punches him so hard in the stomach that he goes to his
knees.

HULL

(continuing)

The nigger's the one who'd even think
about doing what you tell him.

He walks away. Still on his knees, doubled over, Carver
whispers after him:

CARVER

Don't blow your cover.

FADE OUT.

THE END