

# Grosse Pointe Blank

by

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screenplay presented by



FADE IN:

ROLL CREDITS OVER:

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAWN

VARIOUS EXTRA CLOSE-UPS of this luxurious patchwork of brilliant greens:

A POLISHED BRASS SPRINKLER HEAD

pops up from the ground and begins to water the already dew-soaked lawn.

FLEET OF DUCKLINGS

No mother in sight, cruise through the thrushes.

GRAVEYARD OF GOLF BALLS, UNDERWATER

At the bottom of a water hazard.

PALM FRONDS

After a beat they sway, revealing the barren desert that surrounds the artificial oasis. The sun already bakes the air. We hear the opening guitar strains of the Kim Deal-Kurt Cobain suet of "WHAT I DID FOR LOVE," as we CRANE DOWN the palms to A BRAND-NEW TITLEIST 3 BALL.

Just on the edge of the rough. A pair of yellow trousers moves in. An iron confidently addresses the ball, and chips it out. The trousers walk out after it.

HANDS

Digging dirt out of the grooves of the iron's face with a golf tee, while on the way to the green. Both hands are gloved, instead of one, and the gloves are black.

YELLOW TROUSERS

In a squat over the ball, sizing up the curvy, fifty-foot journey to the hole. The figure positions himself and the putter above the ball, then pops the ball lightly. The ball rolls and bobs with purpose toward the hole, dodging hazards and finding lanes, until it finally falls off of the green and into the hole.

THE GLOVED HAND

Sets the ball on the next tee. The figure moves to a leather golf bag.

The hands pull the wipe rag off of the top of the bag and drop it on the ground, reach into the bag, drawing out a compact SNIPER RIFLE, affixed with a long silencer. The figure drops one knee down onto the rag, the other foot firmly setting its spikes. We move the figure to see the face of the sniper, concentrating down the scope in his half-squat. He is MARTIN BLANK.

We SWING AROUND behind his head to look down the barrel with him. Four-hundred yards away, on another part of the course, another green is barely visible through groves of trees and rough. Three miniscule, SILVER-HAIRED FIGURES come into view. One of them, in a RED SWEATER sets up for first putt. He could be an investment banker, or an arms trader.

MARTIN'S ARM

Flinches, and a low THUNK reports from the rifle. A second later in the distance, the

RED SWEATER'S HEAD

Seems to vanish from his shoulders into a crimson mist. His body crumples to the green. MARTIN Returns the rifle to the bag, pulls out a driver, moves to the tee and whacks the ball. He watches its path and whispers absently...

MARTIN

Hooked it.

INT. CLUB HOUSE PATIO - LATER

The outdoor post-golf luncheon area of an elite Texas golf club. Martin sits in on the fringes of a conversation between a group of executive types. CLUB MEMBER #1 has a Buddha-like peace in his eyes through the philosophical talk.

CLUB MEMBER #1

I'd come to the realization that everything I'd based my life on was false. And that my life had no meaning.

CLUB MEMBER #2

(to Martin)

He gets this way when he hits over eighty-five.

CLUB MEMBER #1

It seemed like my life was slipping away, somehow. I was a knot in the middle of a wet rope. Everything was futile and nothing had value.

CLUB MEMBER #3

That's the way life is. The only meaning and value is what we create. Through structure, and discipline. Though they seem to limit our freedom, they actually give us great comfort. Your problem is you're looking for some great answer. Some ultimate truth. When what you really should do is go to work and go home.

CLUB MEMBER #2

And take golf lessons.

CLUB MEMBER #1

That's a tragedy. Can I finish my story please? I began my search for meaning. I was a Catholic, Jew, Scientologist, Sufi, Buddhist. I went to a Psychologist, psychiatrist, herbalist, nutritionist, a shaman, and a psychic. And they all pretty much say the same stuff.

CLUB MEMBER #2

A Jew, a shaman, and a herbalist are telling you the same thing? You're insane.

CLUB MEMBER #1

Basically the same thing. In a very evolved, esoteric way.

CLUB MEMBER #2

Insane.

CLUB MEMBER #1

To make a long story short...

CLUB MEMBER #3

--Thank God--

CLUB MEMBER #1

...at last I found the holistic system of systems that opened up the doors of heaven for me right here on earth. And everyday I see the world through the eyes of a child. A world of creation and wonder.

CLUB MEMBER #2

Jesus...

CLUB MEMBER #1

Overflowing with love.

MARTIN  
Tell me about it.

Club Member #1 turns to Martin.

CLUB MEMBER #1  
P. P. P. Personal Pan Power. All the secrets of your universe are divided up into eight easily digestible slices.

Club Member #1 pulls a laminated card from his wallet and hands it over to Martin. In the distance, sirens begin to wail. CLUB MEMBER #1 See, see. It's in the accessible and everyday shape of a pan pizza. Each day you have a little slice of peace...

INSERT - WALLET-SIZE P. P. P. CARD

A pizza-shaped diagram showing six "sections".

MARTIN  
Oh I see. You got your individual slices of hope, dignity, confidence, self-love, justice, and harmony.

CLUB MEMBER #1  
You open 'em up and there's the sayings, stories, little bites of insight. It's the P. P. P. Six Day Week.

MARTIN  
So you eat-- read it everyday?

CLUB MEMBER #1  
Yes.

MARTIN  
And these pan pizzas have opened up the doors to heaven?

CLUB MEMBER #1  
Correct.  
(re: the card)  
That's for you. Keep it.

Sirens are getting louder, closer to the club.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - DAY

The source of the sirens are almost upon us. Martin walks toward his rented Town Car as the VALET pulls it up. He meets the Valet by the trunk, where he trades tip for keys.

## MARTIN AT CAR

He fishes out the laminated "Personal Pan Power" card, looks at it, and tosses it onto the ground. Police cars, now visible in the distance, wind into the long club driveway. Martin gets into his car and pulls away.

## LAMINATED CARD

As it lays on the asphalt. The wheel of a police car rolls to a stop on it.

## INT. AIRLINER - DAY

Martin sits in a first class seat, the tray table flipped down. On the left side of the tray is a stack of magazines of all kinds - Sports Illustrated, Mademoiselle, Wired, Rolling Stone, National Review, Spin, National Geographic, and on. He draws one off the top, and flips through it, impassively taking in images and reading nothing. When he is done with one, he discards it into the empty seat next to him and draws another-- Martin's way of instantly and massively uploading the world around him:

Toothless hockey player in triumph, Sony product parade, crouched starving child with vulture in the background, supermodel in suede, Tic Tacs, living former Presidents, arm in arm, smiling, etc.

## INT. HIRED CAR, NEW YORK - DAY

The livery weaves out of the arrival lanes at Kennedy airport. Martin reclines in the back seat, a conversation having already begun.

DRI VER

How was your day, today, sir?

MARTIN

Effective. But to tell you the truth, I've lost my passion for work.

DRI VER

Do you like the people you work with?

MARTIN

I work alone.

DRI VER

That's it then. That's it. I've always been alone. That's why I'm a good driver. I can handle it. See, I can think on my feet. I survive, I'm a thinker. And I can sit there in front of your house for two hours and it

D R I V E R

don't bother me. Some people can't do it! Some people are ranting and raving, "Tell them fuckin' people to get out here and get in this car, I can't-- I want a go!" Where you gonna go? You're gonna wind up back in your garage at seven o'clock at night. You ain't going nowhere. You leave your house in the morning you get back to your house in the evening. What's the big deal, right?

M A R T I N

You understand the psychology of the job.

D R I V E R

I do. Some guys can't adjust to it; they can't handle it.

I N T. C A R - M A N H A T T A N S T R E E T S - L A T E R

The car cuts through the upper east side. Martin and the Driver exchange looks through the rear-view mirror.

D R I V E R

You look like you're far away. Far away and thinking about other things. I'm right about that, aren't I?

M A R T I N

No.

D R I V E R

Well, let's just say that sometimes I'm right. Sometimes you are.

M A R T I N

Sometimes I am. Sometimes. It's only natural.

D R I V E R

(Laughs to himself at  
this great truth)  
It's only natural....

The Driver pauses for dramatic emphasis

D R I V E R

I been looking at you, and I've decided that I want to share something with you.

MARTIN

Okay.

DRI VER

Because your problem is you're bored.  
And you have a very big mind.

(beat)

I am part of what I call a brain  
syndicate.

No reaction from Martin.

DRI VER

I am part of a network of minds, a  
group of five people who are all  
connected, over hundreds, even  
thousands of miles, through the mind.  
We can think with each other, think  
for each other. I can be driving  
somewhere, sleeping with a woman--  
whatever it is-- and at the same  
time be thinking a thought in someone  
else's mind, far away. Running someone  
else's brain.

MARTIN

(indicates)

Up on the right.

DRI VER

And when you think of it, it's not  
so surprising that a small group of  
people control the whole world, is  
it?

INT. HOTEL ROOM, NEW YORK CITY - DAY

A sedate and well-appointed four-star suite on the Upper East Side. Martin stands in front of one of the open windows watching the canopied entrance of an elegant high-rise across the street. He lifts an eye rinse cup to his eye and tilts it back. A cellular phone RINGS, interrupting him. He moves to the desk and draws one of three phones from his briefcase, depresses a scrambler module, flips it open, and listens for a moment.

MARTIN

If it's not there, I can't proceed.  
Tell them.

Martin hangs up. Picks up another phone and dials. As he waits for an answer, he goes to a Fed Ex blueprint tube lying on the bed.

MARTIN

Tom. I've been waiting for an answer.  
I'm only in town tonight.

He breaks the shipping seal and pulls out a series of finished metal parts including a long thin barrel, a scope, and a silencer.

MARTIN

What's different this time than the  
last time? I have to be down front...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - SAME

Martin stands in front of the window, phone in one hand, the scope in the other. Next to him, the assembled rifle rests across the arm of a chair.

MARTIN

...I don't bother to call anyone  
else because you always take care of  
me.

He glances over to a second window to his left, which offers a view further down the street. He goes to it. He raises the scope and sees

MARTIN'S P. O. V. /SCOPE- WINDOW #2

A few blocks down, small even through the high-powered scope, is your average BICYCLE MESSENGER dressed in lycra racing gear, weaving through traffic toward us. Slung low across his right hip is a black canvas bag. The Messenger's hand is hidden in it. The other phone begins to RING.

MARTIN

Hold on a second, Tom. I got my hands  
full here.

He sets down the phone and answers the other, still watching the messenger.

MARTIN

Good. Account number 3649367, transfer  
to account number 96-546-38739-47825.  
Ask for Mr. Sanchez, tell him it's  
Mr. Duckman. If there are any  
problems, access file 673594638-10-  
98, and look at it.

Martin drops the phone and moves away from Window #2 to the rifle. He mounts the scope and he looks out Window #1 at the high-rise.

MARTIN' S P. O. V. /SCOPE - W I N D O W #1

Of a DOORMAN opening the door for a group of five men in suits. Four BODYGUARDS form a perimeter around the fifth man, a tall, avuncular figure in his forties dressed in Saville Row finery. MARTIN Takes a step back into the shadows of the room, and raises the rifle toward Window #2.

MARTIN' S P. O. V. /SCOPE - W I N D O W #2

of an empty street. The bicycle messenger flashes past.

MARTIN

concentrating, tracks the path of the Messenger, leading him left to right across the blind spot of the hotel room wall between Window #2 and Window #1.

STREET

the bicycle Messenger bears down on the group of men, drawing a Mac-10 submachine gun from his bag. The group see him-- just as Martin's sniper FIRE explodes the Messenger's chest. Two of the Bodyguards collapse onto their boss. The other two open fire on the Messenger as he wipes out horribly into a parked car in front of them.

MARTIN

withdraws from the window, and picks up the phone again and begins to break down the rifle.

MARTIN

Sorry Tom. But look, I know it's the playoffs. That's why I'm offering a thousand dollars for one seat...

Martin listens patiently as he works.

EXT. STREET - SAME - INTERCUT

DOORMAN' S HANDS

unbuttoning his double-breasted long coat.

MARTIN

just finishes packing.

MARTIN

...Well let me ask you, Tom. What do I have to do to get courtside tickets for the Knicks...?

## STREET

The two bodyguards kick at the Messenger's body. The other two begin to move off of their boss, who rises cowering. The Doorman stands behind it all, unbuttoning his coat.

## DOORMAN

a tall, dark, sharp-featured man in his forties, wearing a handlebar moustache. He moves toward the group of men as he flips open his coat back over two huge chrome .44 Magnum Charthouse Bulldog revolvers and OPENS FIRE on them.

## MARTIN

is closing his bag when he hears the gun-thunder.

## MARTIN

Never mind. I gotta go.

Martin drops the phone, grabs his scope, and spins to the window.

## MARTIN'S P. O. V. /SCOPE

of the Doorman kicking through the pile of dead bodyguards. He gets to the man at the bottom-- their boss. The Doorman FIRES both guns.

## MARTIN

reacts, surprised to see a second shooter. He pulls himself from the window, puts away his scope, and accelerates his exit.

## HIGH-RISE FOYER

Outside, we see the doorman drop both guns on the pile of bodies. He walks back toward us through the glass doors and makes his way through the building toward the service exit. He sheds his uniform and stuffs it into a plastic bag. MARTIN has his two parcels in hand, exits out the side door of the hotel and walks down the street.

## DOORMAN

now wearing rich man's sweats, hops off the loading dock, walks to a Lincoln Town Car, and drives off.

## INT. MARTIN'S AND GROCERS CARS - DAY

Martin rolls down FDR Drive in a Lincoln Town Car once again on the cellular.

MARTIN  
 ... Tell them that's not my problem.  
 I was paid for one job-- the cyclist--  
 not two. See you tomorrow, Marcella.

MARCELLA  
 Wait. I have Mr. Grocer for you.

MARTIN  
 Patch him through....

Martin notices another Town Car appears in the next lane. We recognize the Doorman behind the wheel, phone in hand. He is GROCER.

MARTIN  
 What do you want?

GROCER  
 I'm setting up a concern that would  
 enable those of us in our rarefied  
 profession to consolidate our efforts.

MARTIN  
 Like a union?

GROCER  
 Like a club. Work less, make more.

MARTIN  
 Thank you, no.

GROCER  
 We could be working together, making  
 big money, killing important  
 people... I'm willing to let you in  
 on the ground floor.

MARTIN  
 And you could be... sort of like...  
 a father figure to me....

Grocer ignores this.

GROCER  
 It's a free-market evolution. You'll  
 wake up to it... c'mon Kid. We used  
 to run together when you were a  
 rookie. I don't want to run against  
 you. This thing's real. Everybody's  
 in.

MARTIN  
 Not me. So don't paw at me with your  
 dirty little guild.

GROCER  
I'm gonna get you, kid.

Martin hangs up and pulls away.

INT. AIRLINER - DAY

Martin sits in first class, wiping his face and hands with an airline hot towel. He folds the wet cloth and once again speeds through the images from a thick stack of magazines. He looks up as he hears

PILOT (V.O.)  
It's seventy-six degrees and partly cloudy in Chicago this afternoon...

INT. APARTMENT, CHICAGO - NIGHT

Martin walks into a sparsely furnished apartment. He wearily drops his carry-on bag and briefcase in the hall.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Martin sits on a futon couch watching MTV with no sound. On the coffee table in front of him is a phalanx of vitamin bottles. Martin takes some capsules from each and washes them down with a reddish-orange beverage.

INT. LIVING ROOM - LATER

Martin lies on his back on the hardwood floor. His eyes are closed and he wears a set of headphones as he absently taps his chest.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
"Dear Alumni: Can you believe it's been ten years? Where are you now...?"

After a moment, his eyes open, alerted. His head turns to the side, and his hands lightly cup the headphones.

CLOSE-UP: WIRE

from the headphones as it winds to a small metal box, with one unmarked switch and one amber light- definitely not a walkman. The wire continues out of the other side of the box, across the floor, connecting to a suction cup stuck to the floor.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
... Are you guiding an Outward Bound canoe trip like Brook Stinson? Or perhaps in charge of appearances for the NFL like Leslie Gunther...?

MARTIN - A MINUTE LATER

draws a pre-cut section of the floor, the width of a pencil and twice as long, by a string.

VIDEO MONITOR - A MINUTE LATER

The greenish Starlight (night vision) image of a young, HUSKY MAN sleeping on his back, as seen from above. A fine thread snakes from behind CAMERA to just above the man's slack mouth. We PULL BACK to reveal a Sony Watchman that holds the IMAGE. KEEP PULLING to reveal Martin watching it as he maneuvers the thread down past the fiber-optic cable through the hole in the floor.

MARTIN - A MINUTE LATER

concentrates as he applies three drops of blue liquid on the thread. As the drops run down along the thread through the floor, his attention shifts to the

VIDEO MONITOR

The drops, huge in the foreground, become smaller as they make their way down the line toward the sleeping man.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... Could it be that you're like Chip  
 Longfellow, at the trade-relations  
 tank in Washington. Sandy Glasser  
 owns a cheese shop...!

MARTIN

adjusts the thread minutely with one hand, and lowers the fiber-optic cable with the other.

VIDEO MONITOR

The face begins to fill the screen as the fiber-optic follows the drops toward it. Suddenly, the man snorts and turns his face...

A DROP FALLS

It misses the man's mouth and hits his cheek.

VIDEO MONITOR

The man's eyes snap open in terror as he looks directly into CAMERA. His image falls away as the fiber-optic is jerked back up through the hole in the floor.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... Looking at yearbooks and pictures  
 evokes so many memories...!

MARTIN (V.O.)  
 (hushed)  
 Fuck!

MARTIN

stuffs the apparatus into an open duffel bag, and flies out  
 of frame.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... Some good. Some bad. But all  
 interesting...

INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

A BODYGUARD sits outside an apartment door. A muffled but  
 dire scream is heard from within and he is on his feet, gun  
 in hand. An exit door in the hallway slams open revealing  
 Martin, his gun already pointed at the Bodyguard. The  
 Bodyguard levels his at Martin.

MARTIN  
 Freeze! Police!

The Bodyguard hesitates just long enough to get double-tapped  
 through the head.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... As a graduate of the class of  
 1984, you are someone special...

Martin moves to the dead Bodyguard, and locates a retractable  
 key chain on his belt. He unreels the ring of keys and opens  
 the door. He lets the keys retract back to the belt and drags  
 him into the apartment.

INT. HUSKY MAN'S APARTMENT - SECONDS LATER

Martin moves silently down the hall in a crouch. He comes to  
 the bedroom and slips across the threshold.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... Whenever news of you filters back,  
 the school is excited and proud of  
 your accomplishments...

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Martin crouches down outside the bedroom door. He points the  
 gun at the door, and reaching up turns the knob.

As the door opens, the Husky Man FIRES wildly over Martin's head. Martin returns with one shot to the hut which sits the man down on the floor.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... We hope Grosse Pointe High prepared  
 you well to lead the kind of life  
 that makes an impact on the world...

Martin kicks the gun away from the fallen man, and raises his barrel to the man's forehead.

WOMAN (V.O.)  
 ... Remember, "there's no where you  
 can go that you haven't learned how  
 to go in time... It's easy..."

HUSKY MAN  
 (in severe pain)  
 Whatever it is that I'm doing that  
 you don't like I'll stop doing it.

MARTIN  
 It's not me.

Martin cocks the gun....

EXT. EAST-WEST HOLDING COMPANY, LOS ANGELES - DAY

The perpetual sun shines down on a small lot of pre-fab office bungalows.

INT. BLANK HOLDING COMPANY

A small suite of dry-walled offices. EAST-WEST HOLDING COMPANY is stenciled on glass doors behind Martin who stands in front of a young woman reading from some kind of invitation. She is MARCELLA MAYES.

MARCELLA  
 ... So come on back to the old oak  
 tree, acorns. Signed, the reunion  
 committee."

Marcella holds up the mauve envelope and smiles slyly. For the first time, Martin looks scared.

MARTIN  
 Throw that away.

MARCELLA  
 Thi s?

MARTIN  
Don't tease me. You know what I do  
for a living.

MARCELLA  
It's from one of those P.O. Boxes.  
How was the trip?

MARTIN  
Tedious. I now authorize you to  
throw away all personal mail.

MARCELLA  
All of it?

MARTIN  
And not show it to me. Ever again.

MARCELLA  
That's going to cost.

MARTIN  
I'll pay.

Martin begins to walk past her into his office, but Marcel la  
stops him.

MARCELLA  
They're not happy, sir.

MARTIN  
I'm not happy.

MARCELLA  
They say their friend was suppose to  
have a heart attack and die in his  
sleep.

MARTIN  
He didn't.

MARCELLA  
They blame you for the compromise.

MARTIN  
And they want me to make up for it.

MARCELLA  
In Detroit. This weekend.

MARTIN  
Tell them that's impossible. I need  
my normal lead time.

MARCELLA  
They were very upset.

MARTIN  
Would you describe their position as  
inflexible?

MARCELLA  
Intractable, sir. You leave tonight.

Marcella looks concerned.

MARCELLA  
And sir, I also get that broken-  
mirror, black-cat, Friday-the-  
thirteenth kind of feeling about  
this one....

MARTIN  
There's nothing to be done about it.

MARCELLA  
I liquidated the last account in  
Zurich, and split it into two new  
ones in Estonia.

MARTIN  
Good. What else? Anything interesting?

MARCELLA  
Mmm, not really. But you're gonna  
love this one.

She hands him a piece of paper. He scans it.

MARCELLA  
Enough?

MARTIN  
Never enough.

MARCELLA  
But it a Greenpeace boat. It'd be so  
easy.

Martin looks at her wearily. He puts it into the paper  
shredder at the side of her desk.

MARTIN  
I have scruples. Next.

MARCELLA  
Paperwork on the Detroit thing. It's  
a full dossier. Very comprehensive.

She raises a thick brown dossier from the top of her desk and puts it down again. Martin moves through a door to his private office.

MARTIN'S OFFICE

Martin goes into his office and sits at his desk. On the walls are a couple of boring prints of tall ships. A bookshelf holds trappings of a loose attempt at a cover-- a few shipping manifests, sealane tables, and other specialized reference books on import/export. He sits and stares. NEW ANGLE Time has passed, and Martin still sits at his desk massaging his gums with a rubber-tipped dental pointer.

C. U. MARTIN'S TEETH

The dental tool jumps across the gaps between his teeth like a hummingbird.

MARCELLA  
(off-screen)  
You should get going....

MARTIN

pulls back his jacket lapel and fits the utensil into a pocket protector that is also home to a toothbrush, emery board, tweezers, and comb. He stands and walks out of his office.

FOYER

Martin moves toward the door. As he passes Marcella she hands him the mauve envelope and a travel portfolio.

MARCELLA  
Don't forget your identity.

MARTIN  
See you next week.

Martin stops short as he reaches the threshold. He holds up the envelope, and stares a dagger through it. On his way out, over his shoulder...

MARTIN  
Tell Dr. Oatman I'm on my way.

INT. DR. OATMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Martin slouches on a leather couch. He holds the mauve envelope, now open.

DR. OATMAN (V.O.)  
Why don't you want to go to your  
high school reunion?

MARTIN

It's in Michigan. Honestly, what do I have in common with those people? Or with anyone?

DR. OATMAN sits in the window. He is Kris Kringle-esque, and wears a sheepskin vest, rough-hewn shirt, faded Levi's, and old Frye boots. Oatman nods with the suave understanding of a man happy to collect fifty thousand in fees before asking a tough question.

DR. OATMAN

You went to school with these people.

MARTIN

Come on.

DR. OATMAN

We've spent a lot of time discussing those years. Remember we said that fear is a transfer of the bodily hurt associated by experience with the thing feared, to the thought of the thing. Thus we fear a dog without distinctly imagining its bite.

MARTIN

Shouldn't you be taking notes?

DR. OATMAN

Tell me about your vision of the reunion.

CLOSE-UP - MARTIN

CUT TO:

MARTIN'S P. O. V. - FROM ABOVE

Of a crowded gymnasium. The alumni below stops what they are doing and look up at Martin, DRAWING GUNS OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES AND OPEN FIRE ON MARTIN. THE UNITED FORCE INSTANTLY DISINTEGRATES, AND ALL 400 PEOPLE TURN THEIR GUNS ON EACH OTHER. A BLOODBATH ENSUES. ONE ALUMNI SHOOTS HER OWN HEAD OFF, ANOTHER MOWS DOWN THE BAR, ETC. CUT BACK TO:

MARTIN AND OATMAN

MARTIN

It'll be depressing.

DR. OATMAN

How do you know?

MARTIN

I just know.

DR. OATMAN

Say more.

MARTIN

They'll have husbands and wives and children and houses and dogs... made themselves a part of something. And they can talk about what they do. What am I going to say?

(sarcastic)

"I killed the President of Paraguay with a fork."

Oatman twitches nervously, almost spilling his coffee.

DR. OATMAN

You needn't be so frank with me about your work.

MARTIN

Why not. I trust you. You couldn't turn me in because of Doctor-Patient privilege... and I don't want to be "withholding"... and I know where you live.

DR. OATMAN

You know where I live?

MARTIN

We're both professionals, Oatman.

DR. OATMAN

I think what you fear Martin is domesticity. It's the greatest fear that men have who belong to Western Culture. It's centuries old. Like King Phillip, in the 11th or 12th century who decided one day that he was so bored with his dreary life at home with his wife he thought, "Well, wouldn't it be great if we hit the road and fought... oh... the Saracens." So he put the word out and was amazed when a million men signed up and all of them wanted to go and fight in distant lands and do terrible things to people rather than stay at home with their families.

MARTIN

So you're saying that Ulysses--  
everything he said to his queen when  
he came back--everything was a lie?  
He just wanted to fuck around?

DR. OATMAN

Yes.

MARTIN

Mmm.

Beat.

DR. OATMAN

And how have you been feeling about  
your... work lately?

MARTIN

Uneasy. Dispassionate. Bored. It's  
just getting hard to go to work in a  
good mood. I'm starting to think  
I've been in the business too long.  
Last week I did a guy younger than  
me.

INT. CHURCH -

SERIES OF QUICK SHOTS:

MARTIN

From the back of the darkened empty church, we see him mount  
the altar.

MARTIN (V.O.)

A priest in fact.

MARTIN'S HANDS

open the gilded doors to reveal the chalice. He removes it,  
squirts a clear liquid into the cup, and swishes it out. He  
returns the chalice to the cabinet. MARTIN V.O.

The church seems to be purging itself of its pedophile.

MARTIN

Sits in the back pew of the church, now crowded for Mann. He  
watches the PRIEST lift the chalice into the air, murmur a  
prayer, and drink from it. The Priest collapses behind the  
altar.

MARTIN (V.O.)

It's a bull market.

C. U. OF ALTAR CARPET

The chalice bounces free from the Priest's hand as it hits the ground.

MARTIN (V.O.)

Anyway, that never use to happen. I was always the prodigy. Now I'm just one of the guys.

DR. OATMAN (V.O.)

Maybe some of the discomfort you're feeling is... guilt. Remorse. Over the innocent people you've killed.

INT. OATMAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

MARTIN

If I show up at your door, chances are you did something to bring me there. I don't care about that stuff, anyway.

DR. OATMAN

What stuff?

MARTIN

(dismissive)  
Morality.

Oatman's glad the session's just about over.

DR. OATMAN

Go to your reunion, Martin. See those people and discover what they mean to you. Try not to kill anybody for a few days, see how you feel.

MARTIN

If I get antsy I'll kill a few small animals.

OATMAN

Now we're making progress.

INT. COMDO - NIGHT

Very dark. No pictures or plants. Almost no furniture, and what he does have is black. The only sign of life is a CAT. The cat watches on as Martin sorts through a cardboard box, finally coming to a photo album.

CAT

Meow.

MARTIN

Just a minute.

INSERT-ALBUM

A teen-aged Martin Blank: shy boy with a nervous smile. He poses with his mother, an older woman with a kind smile... but her eyes are dark; aged by a life of work and worry. On the opposing page is a gilt funeral announcement that reads: "IN LOVING MEMORY... VICTOR ALLEN BLANK...."

MARTIN

turns the page.

INSERT-PHOTO ALBUM

A photograph of a tall, thin girl: a bright smile from within a bulky winter coat. A girl he's always wondered about: DEBI NEWBERRY. Handwritten on the photo in girlish loops: "Would you rather...?!"

CAT

Meow!

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Martin pulls himself away from the album and the cat follows him, moaning hungrily--

MARTIN

Food soon...

Martin opens a restaurant-style refrigerator. It holds various bottles of vitamins, spirulina, wheatgrass, digestible hydrogen peroxide, fluoride treatment, oxygenated mouth rinse, and thirty cans of CATFOOD. MARTIN Tuna or liver?

CAT

Meow.

MARTIN

Tuna it is.

He opens a can for the cat and a bottle for himself. While the cat eats, he returns to the cardboard box. Finds a YEARBOOK. Flips it open...

INSERT-YEARBOOK

A picture of a senior class "Blues Brothers" party: a group of teens mug to the camera in Blues Brothers get-ups. Sprinters race for a finish line, their chests stretching for the tape.

DEBI NEWBERY' S SENIOR PICTURE

A more mature version of the girl in the album. Her name appears under his picture. . .

INT. GROCER' S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Track light fills the gourmet-rustic kitchen. GROCER stands, wearing a burgundy Fila sweat suit, pushing beets into a vegetable juicer. Next to the juicer are piles of celery and carrots, as well. A low-key BLIP is heard from another room. Grocer tops off the glass and takes it out of the kitchen.

INT. GROCER' S GREAT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Grocer enters the main room of the villa-style A-frame. He moves to an antique oak desk and sits in front of a COMPUTER.

ON-SCREEN GRAPHICS

"Click OK for remote access caller"

OK is clicked.

"Availability for two days in Detroit area"

"Terms"

"\$560,000"

"WHEN"

"Now"

"OK/ FAX materials"

Grocer leans back in his chair and sips the juice. After a moment, the FAX machine on the desk rattles. The computer beeps.

"confirmation number of wire transfer#: AJ6687-0199471"

Grocer hits the return button after taking in the number. A graphic appears:

"Connection is terminated/ Status idle"

Grocer's FAX begins to moan and chatter. Grocer raises his juice glass to the computer in a lazy toast.

INT. PLANE - NIGHT

Martin reclines in first class, soaring toward the Midwest on the red-eye. He has already scanned his magazines and they are piled in the empty seat next to him.

He sets aside a Powerbar. Martin reads Kill Without Joy. After a moment, he sets the book down and takes up Iron John.

INT. DETROIT AIRPORT TERMINAL - EARLY MORNING

At the edge of the airport bar sits LARDNER and MCCULLERS, two Government Spooks, agency unknown. They are both in blazers, no ties, early thirties, and they watch the passing crowd. LARDNER You always say that. You always say that. I'm telling you, you never met the man.

MCCULLERS

Seventeen months ago I was posting a walk in Lisbon, and he was there. He never saw me. But I saw him, though.

LARDNER

Lisbon?

MCCULLERS

In Portugal, yes.

In the background, Martin passes by them as he walks down the hall. Without directly regarding him, the two stand, drop some cash on the bar, and begin to leave.

LARDNER

Here's the news: He hasn't been in Portugal since '90. I know that from the file. Why don't you read the file, man?

MCCULLERS

In fact, I think I talked with him, in Bonn.

Lardner can neither confirm nor deny this.

LARDNER

You always say that. You always have to know everybody. Why don't I just take the weekend off and let you kill him. Since you two are so close.

They exit.

EXT. EXIT RAMP, DETROIT AIRPORT - MORNING

INSIDE MARTIN'S CAR

Martin, in a black Lincoln Town Car, veers off of the airport artery and on to a turnpike. The radio broadcasts the news.

BROADCAST (V.O.)  
 ... with highs today in the upper  
 seventies. Related stocks on Wall  
 Street today as scandal continues to  
 rock the joint U.S. -Japanese Tech  
 Center...

MARTIN'S CAR

blows past CAMERA and on down the road. After a beat, a mid-eighties Ford Country Squire station wagon follows, occupied by two figures.

INSIDE THE COUNTRY SQUIRE

are Lardner and McCullers. They listen to the same broadcast.

BROADCAST (V.O.)  
 .... An unknown "whistle-blower" has  
 leaked a number of critical flaws in  
 the safety designs of next year's  
 models to authorities that could  
 cost millions in recalls....

MARTIN

flips through the dial, pausing on Rush Limbaugh who waxes fascistically.

MARTIN  
 Mein hero.

... and then turns the dial again and cuts in on "Armageddon Time," slow reggae vibe by The Clash.

EXT. HIGHWAY

Martin drives down the roadway... headlong into his past.  
 Digi t...

INT. MARTIN'S CAR

Martin turns up the volume as he reacts to a familiar voice....

FEMALE DEEJAY (V.O.)  
 (on radio)  
 --this is WFRN, all vinyl, all the  
 time. Oldies from the eighties. It's  
 a cold summer day in Grosse Pointe--

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP - A FULL, FEMALE MOUTH

lit only by dime slivers of sunlight, in front of a microphone. Stray, gossamer strands of hair hanging in her face move in front of her mouth as she speaks. . . .

FEMALE DEEJAY

--and I'm ready for some good tunes  
and angry talk. Or angry tunes and  
good talk--

CUT TO:

MARTIN

Looking somewhere far away, beyond what is before him in the windshield. . .

FEMALE DEEJAY (V.O.)

--Or maybe we'll just play the Cocteau  
Twins and get over the goo-angry-  
talking music. As you know--

CUT TO:

THE DEEJAY'S HANDS

as they distractedly toy with the wire at the base of the mic.

FEMALE DEEJAY

--for some moments in life there are  
no words, and a little nonsense now  
and then is relished by the wisest  
man--

CUT TO:

MARTIN

still rapt, makes a sharp turn into a shopping district.

CUT TO:

HER MOUTH

FEMALE DEEJAY V.O.

--The Cocteau Twins, though also a  
band of the nineties, will be aired  
due to the fact that they created  
their own language to sing by--

CUT TO:

MARTIN

slows on a quaint street of cute shops. He creeps up to a storefront on his right and stops, staring through the passenger window....

CUT TO:

DEBI NEWBERRY

the female deejay. She sits slumped in a well-worn executive chair, her back to the studio console and the picture window behind it that opens to the street....

DEBI

--Now that's freedom--

she swivels in the chair to face the street....

DEBI'S P.O.V.

of Martin's Town Car outside, Martin silhouetted in shadow.

DEBI

Her brow furrowed as she peers at the car, something summoned by the dark figure. Her words falter almost imperceptibly.

DEBI

--The best I can do is a rhyme: Where are all the good men dead? In the heart or in the head? Back later....

MARTIN

Shaken from his trance by her stare, pulls back into the street and disappears....

INT. MARTIN'S CAR - MORNING

Martin drives, listening to the radio. He turns the corner with an expectant look on his face. Suddenly his face drops as he slows and pulls over....

MARTIN'S P.O.V. - 7-11 STORE

Martin looks left of the store, then right, behind him, then back at the store. Bewildered, he gets out of the car.

WIDE SHOT

of Martin as he walks with purpose. He halts in the middle of the lot. He puts his hands on his hips, stares, then moves in.... We stay wide as he enters the store and addresses the clerk inside. MARTIN What are you doing here?

CARL, the store clerk tries to get a grip on this question.

CARL  
A double shift. What's it look like?  
(softening)  
Can I help you with something?

Martin's head pans the room, processing.

MARTIN  
I don't think so.

EXT. 7-11 PAYPHONE - MORNING

Martin continues to gaze at the structure as if it's a lunar landscape.

MARTIN  
(into phone)  
Dr. Oatman. Dr. Oatman. Please pick  
up if you're there... It's Martin  
Blank. It's gone. My house. It's not  
here. My house is gone and now there's  
a 7-11 here... And that's  
unfortunate... You can never go  
home again, Dr. Oatman.

Martin hangs up. He watches one-stop shoppers come and go.

MARTIN  
(to himself)  
But I guess you can shop there.

INT. NURSING HOME - DAY

MARTIN'S P.O.V.

of a NURSE leading him down a drab, anti-septic hallway. She banks into the sunlit room where a wispy woman in her late fifties sits expectantly on the edge of the bed clutching her purse in one hand, a filterless Pall-Mall in the other, a light coat on. This is MARY BLANK. She suffers from Alzheimer's or something just as debilitating.

NURSE  
Mary, your son's here.

The nurse gently eases Mary up. Martin hugs Mary stiffly and pats her shoulders. Mary takes hold of Martin's arm. They start out of the room.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

They walk past a school-yard park fitted with a set of swings, baseball diamonds, and a small grove of trees. She smokes and hacks.

MARY  
I bought a new rug.

MARTIN  
That's wonderful, Mom.

MARY  
What's a revival tent?

MARTIN  
It's a place where religious people--

MARY  
(knowingly)  
Marlin Perkins and Jim!

MARTIN  
Jim?

MARY  
His assistant. He acted like Marlin's son, only he wasn't. At least they never said he was... I bet they were lovers, faggots. Yes, gay lovers. Wild Kingdom my ass!

Mary coughs horribly.

MARTIN  
It's good to see you. I'm sure you're curious about what I've been doing.

MARY  
I spoke to your father the other day.

MARTIN  
I imagine that'd be rather difficult.

MARY  
Nature made him then broke the mold.

Martin decides to change the subject.

MARTIN  
They told me you're taking lithium, mom.

MARY  
Yes, they give me headaches. I have  
a headache.

MARTIN  
You have a headache?

MARY  
I have a headache. You have a  
headache?

MARTIN  
No, I don't have one.

MARY  
You don't have a headache. I have a  
headache.

Mary leans in close, smiling.

MARY  
We had a good laugh, didn't we?

MARTIN  
Yeah. I guess we did.

EXT. NURSING HOME - DAY

As they head toward Martin's car, Mary stops and points to  
it.

MARY  
Why don't you return this car and  
borrow mine? Have Debi follow you to  
the rent-a-car so you can get a ride  
back.

MARTIN  
I think I'll go see Debi today.

MARY  
Of course you will.

MARTIN  
I can't think of anything to say to  
her that seems appropriate given I  
left and never said goodbye to her.

MARY  
Take care of her. She's a keeper.

MARTIN  
Yeah. . . .

MARY

And a leader. Didn't she meet Castro  
on foreign exchange?

MARTIN

I have always thought about her and  
missed her.

A nurse approaches with a wheel chair.

MARY

Separate the wheat from the chaff  
and you've got the candle cat.

Together, Martin and the nurse help Mary into it. Mary gazes  
at Martin, taking him in.

MARY

Remember no matter how impossible  
your problems feel. I've known people  
without a chance in the world. And  
all of a sudden, they have lives.  
Time allows miracles. Let yourself  
breathe, son.

Martin bends down and kisses her on the cheek. The nurse  
spins the chair around and heads toward the building. He is  
somewhat fatigued from the experience, but he tries once  
more to connect.

MARTIN

Mom. . .

The nurse stops and turns Mary around to face him. Mary looks  
up at Martin and brightens. She starts to sing out like Ethel  
Merman, arms out Broadway style.

MARY

"What's up doc/ what's cookin' ?/  
What's up doc?/ Are ya lookin' ?/  
Hey! Look out! You're gonna hurt  
someone, / with that old shotgun, /  
Hey... what's... up... Doooooc... !/  
We really mean it!"

Mary stops short, and squints at Martin.

MARY

Hey, you're a handsome devil. What's  
your name?

EXT. GRAVEYARD ROAD - DAY

Martin stops the car and looks out the window at the sea of  
headstones. He jerks his hand in a stiff wave. . .

MARTIN

Hey Pop... You got off easy. The house is a 7-11. Mom's a psycho-pharmacological punching bag and I murder for cash. If you were here I think you'd be proud.

HE DRIVES OFF. INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - DAY

The room features a big square bed, dresser and television. Martin enters, kicks a leather bag under the bed, and grabs the steel-sided briefcase.

MARTIN

pries out a wall vent, slides in the case and replaces the vent.

EXT. MAIN STREET - DAY

Lardner and McCullers are staked out along the main strip of town. Lardner snores, face pressed up against the passenger window. McCullers lays back in his seat, a to-go cup in his lap. He taps the cup with one finger as he absently sings his favorite Bob Seager song to himself...

MCCULLERS

"...Against the wind... just a young man running... Against the wind... let the cowboy's ride!... Blame on it the thuuunder! Night moves..."

McCullers catches of Martin's Town Car coming down the street. He nudges Lardner, and points.

LARDNER AND MCCULLERS P. O. V.

of Martin pulling into a space on the street outside the radio station. He gets out, looking nervous.

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Debi flips on the "ON-AIR" switch and prepares to speak into the microphone. Martin walks in. Debi sees him. They stare at each other. The song ends. Dead air. After a moment...

DEBI

(on air, groping)  
WRFN playing all vinyl, all the time. Oldies from the eighties. That was ah... the Specials. Doing... one of their songs...

Debi turns to turntable B and finds it empty. She turns back to turntable A and lets the record roll on.

DEBI  
... and here's another.

Debi swivels around to face Martin.

MARTIN  
"Oldies from the eighties?"

After a long pause....

DEBI  
I just play my own collection.

MARTIN  
It's nice to see you again.

Debi says nothing, just stares at him, in shock.

MARTIN  
How long has it been?

DEBI  
Since you stood me up on prom night  
and vanished without saying a word?

MARTIN  
Ten years, I think. What I miss?

Debi slowly grooves into irony, her best defense.

DEBI  
Well, let me see... they tore down  
the George Orwell monument and put  
up a bust of George Michael. Main  
Street's a four-laner, no left turns  
four to seven. I was married and  
divorced. And Grosse Pointe is now  
officially the new sister city to  
Lower Hutt, New Zealand. We have  
fiber-optic town meetings every two  
months.

MARTIN  
Here is now there. There is here.

Their eyes lock on each other....

DEBI  
Those are the headlines.

The request line buzzes.

DEBI  
Hold that thought.

DEBI  
 (into phone)  
 WRFN FM, Grosse Pointe. All vinyl,  
 all the...  
 (pauses)  
 No Pearl Jam. Call back in ten years.

Beat. Debi makes the move.

DEBI  
 Tell me about yourself.

MARTIN  
 I'm in California most of the time.  
 Traveling a lot on business. That's  
 about it, really.

DEBI  
 That's it?

MARTIN  
 Not much else.

DEBI  
 What's your business?

MARTIN  
 I'm a professional killer.

DEBI  
 Professional killer. Do you get dental  
 with that?

Beat.

MARTIN  
 Well, I'm in town for a few days,  
 anyway.

They run out of words, the moment too big for small talk.  
 Martin gets the fear, breaks it off.

MARTIN  
 Well, I gotta go. But I'll come back.

DEBI  
 Okay.

Martin leaves Debi sitting alone, in disbelief.

EXT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Martin steps out of the storefront station along the  
 fashionable Grosse Pointe shopping district. He stops in the  
 middle of the street with a strained look on his face.

INT. LARDNER & MCCULLERS' COUNTRY SQUIRE - SAME

LARDNER & MCCULLERS' P. O. V.

of Martin standing in the street.

LARDNER AND MCCULLERS

They frown, wondering at Martin's next move.

INT. DEEJAY BOOTH -

Debi lost in thought, still. After a moment, she sits upright and flips the "ON-AIR" switch.

DEBI  
(into mike)  
A man comes to you. He is from the  
past bringing you pain long since  
put behind you. He says peculiar  
things and leaves abruptly. It all  
comes flooding back....

EXT. STREET -

Martin stops in his tracks. His face softens, then becomes determined. He turns and walks back toward the station.

INT. DEEJAY BOOTH -

Debi broadcasting...

DEBI  
It felt like an apparition, or some  
cheap, gruesome Rod Serling time  
warp I'd been thrust back into without  
warning. There's a strangeness in  
the air and I don't mind telling  
you, I'm a little spooked. He was a  
man from my past. A man I loved. A  
man who disappeared.

DEBI'S P. O. V.

of Martin walking back into the station.

DEBI  
A man who's walking back into the  
station.

Martin comes into the booth. The temperature rises as they square off.

INT. COUNTRY SQUIRE -

LARDNER

Well?

MCCULLERS

I don't think so.

LARDNER

Well, remember when Frysal's men paid off the DeeJay in Cairo to announce a bogus press conference in the --

MCCULLERS

--Nooo--

LARDNER

--Yes. And the Munich Olympics in '72. A local radio station started broadcasting news of the massacre two minutes before it happened. McCullers is not to be outdone.

MCCULLERS

That's strictly Baaader-Mei nhof stuff.

LARDNER

It was the PLO.

MCCULLERS

Whatever.

INT. DEEJAY BOOTH

Martin and Debi locked in a passionate embrace. They break away.

DEBI

Sit.

Martin obeys. Debi clandestinely flips the "ON-AIR" switch as she drops into her chair. The "ON-AIR" light bar goes on above and behind Martin. Unbeknownst to him their conversation is put out over the airwaves.

DEBI

All right mystery man. I want some answers. Let's recap. Spring of '84. Two young lovers with frightening natural chemistry. The girl sits in a seven-hundred dollar prom dress at her father's house waiting for the most romantic night of her young

DEBI  
 life. The boy never shows up, until  
 now. So, what's the question?

MARTIN  
 Where have I been?

DEBI  
 More like what happened? What  
 happened, Mr. Blank?

MARTIN  
 I don't know exactly. I could venture  
 a guess but it would sound like a  
 rationalization... I thought you  
 know... maybe seeing you, some  
 friends, my house... of course now a  
 7-11--

DEBI  
 --Torn down in the name of convenience--

MARTIN  
 --and I guess, sure, seeing you would  
 be part of that whole equation... I  
 suppose the most important thing,  
 really. I don't know. Anyway, this  
 whole thing's my therapist's idea.  
 It's my shrink, really.

DEBI  
 Ohhh. You're in therapy too, Marty?

MARTIN  
 You see someone?

DEBI  
 Uh, no. So you're back now, a decade  
 later, and you want to sort things  
 out with me. The question now is, do  
 I allow you... access... to my being?

Martin says nothing.

DEBI  
 All right then. Would you like to  
 share any more deeply personal  
 thoughts with our listening audience  
 before we go to our phone poll and  
 see how the folks in radio and come  
 down on this one?

A beat as Martin realizes he's been had. He seems about to  
 bolt.

DEBI  
Should a broken-hearted girl give a  
guy a second chance at love....

Debi jabs a phone line on the console.

DEBI  
(hard)  
You're on the air.

Martin deflates.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE  
I think this young man has avoided  
the question completely. Has not  
discussed "what happened" nor if  
he's sorry for what he has done.  
Therefore, I don't see any reason  
why you should see him until he fully  
discloses his intentions and feelings.

DEBI  
Thank you caller.

Stabs another line.

DEBI  
You're on the air.

DUMB GUY VOICE  
Are you there?

DEBI  
Yes.

DUMB GUY VOICE  
No, the guy.

Martin looks up, humiliated.

MARTIN  
Yeah....

DUMB GUY VOICE  
Uh... when you guys use to go out...  
Did you guys ever... heh heh heh  
heh... ever fuckin', ever totally  
fuckin' heh heh heh-

DEBI  
Next caller.

GUFF MAN VOICE

I don't know, Debi. Sounds like bad gas to me. I would not allow him access to your being.

DEBI

Thank you. Grosse Pointe Michigan, I hear you loud and clear: "If you love something set it free. If it comes back to you it's, well...

She turns to him and shrugs apologetically.

DEBI

... Broken...."

Martin has his answer.

EXT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Martin leaves the station, alone and beaten down.

MARTIN

Dammit. Never trust my instincts.

He scans the main strip.

MARTIN'S P.O.V.

A MAN walks down the street. He is FELIX, a bookish, forgettable man in his forties, wearing Le Coq Sportif sweats and shoes. He looks as if he has a dark cloud over his head. Martin's seen him somewhere, and doesn't like what he remembers. Martin's POV TRACKS him.

FELIX'S P.O.V.

As he walks down the street, he spots the Country Squire, and eyes Lardner and McCullers in the front seat.

MARTIN'S P.O.V.

follows Felix's eyes to Lardner and McCullers and catches their look. Their eyes lock, neither wanting to betray that they've made each other. They all do a pretty good job. His P.O.V. swings to a square-jawed, hale fellow wearing dark sunglasses who is approaching directly and only a few feet away. The man is going for something in his breast pocket...

MARTIN

reaches into his own jacket, most likely for a gun....

THE MAN

pulls out a glasses case, and takes off his shades-- He is  
PAUL SWIDERSKI.

MARTIN AND PAUL

Martin relaxes.

PAUL  
(grinning ear-to-ear)  
Hell, I would've voted for you, but  
there's all this apple sauce stuck  
in my phone... I don't wanna talk  
about it. How the hell are you?  
(extends his hand)  
Here's five good ones!

No trace of recognition on Martin's face. PAUL Marty! It's  
me. Paul.

MARTIN  
(realizing)  
Paul?

PAUL  
(re: hand)  
You're leaving me hanging here....

They shake. Martin looks him up and down, astonished at the  
respectable veneer of his old burn-out friend.

PAUL  
Hey. Give me a break.

INT. PAUL'S BMW - DAY

Martin and Paul drive through Grosse Pointe, Michigan: Wide  
streets lined with huge, shady oaks. Castle-like homes on  
golf-course green lawns. A comfortable, Midwestern Beverly  
Hills. They are cruising their old haunts, Paul smoking a  
joint.

PAUL  
This won't take but a minute. I just  
gotta hold their hands for a final  
walk-through. I'll take them in, get  
'em out, then you and I can grab a  
little quality time.

Martin looks out the window, breathing in the past.

PAUL  
Goddamn, It's good to see you. I was  
afraid you joined a cult or something.

PAUL  
I half-expected you to come back to town in a fennel wreath and paper pants.

Paul offers Martin the joint. He declines.

MARTIN  
There was no money in it.

Martin regards Paul archly.

MARTIN  
(grinning)  
So what happened to you?

PAUL  
Same thing that happened to you-- I stopped poutin' there on the sidelines. Got in. Got on the team. I joined the working week, you slick fucking asshole, so why don't you valet park your high horse and take it easy on your old buddy, Paul.

MARTIN  
Fair enough.

Beat.

PAUL  
God it's great to see you.

MARTIN  
You too.

EXT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - DAY

MARTIN'S P. O. V.

of a lovely YOUNG COUPLE on the front porch of a mid-sized Wright home... Perhaps that could be him if things were different, but for now it feels like along shot. Paul is hawking the house to them out of earshot.

SOUTHTEC GUARD (V.O.)  
Well, we do what we have to do if we find you on the property. But we don't really enforce the law, we execute company policy for homeowners.

MARTIN AND THE GUARD

standing in the driveway.

MARTIN

So when are you authorized to use  
deadly force?

SOUTHTEC GUARD

Well, a 'course, taxes provide your  
basic service-- police and whatnot.  
But our customers need a little more  
than just that, you understand? This  
badge doesn't mean that I am a peace  
officer.

The woman turns at Martin and smiles. Martin smiles back.

MARTIN

So it's not a meaningful symbol, or  
anything. That badge is just the  
badge of your company. If I look  
suspicious on your customers' property--  
well, under those heightened  
circumstances you have the authority  
to, ah... To shoot me.

SOUTHTEC GUARD

To shoot you. Correct.

MARTIN

How did you get this job?

SOUTHTEC GUARD

Well, they were hiring, and it was  
only a two week course....

MARTIN

(pleasantly)  
Wow.

Paul walks the happy couple down the steps.

PAUL

(to couple)  
...What more can I say.

HUSBAND

(smiling)  
We'll talk soon.

PAUL

(much hand gesturing)  
You'll be raising your new family in  
a work of art. A work of art in a  
work of art.

Paul looks at Martin and the Guard, inviting them into the  
sell.

SOUTHTEC GUARD  
I'm sure you'll be very happy.

All look to Martin....

MARTIN  
(heartfelt)  
When my time comes, if it ever does,  
I want a beautiful, normal place  
like this... and a wife like you....

All are confused. Martin thumbs to the guard.

MARTIN  
...and you'll be safe here....

Paul looks at his shoes and rolls his shoulders.

EXT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE

Lardner and McCullers sit in the wagon, watching the house  
in the distance.

INT. PAUL'S BMW - LATER

Martin and Paul cut through a particularly charming  
neighborhood.

PAUL  
Now. I don't make a habit of pimping  
my friends, but there is one prime  
little piece of land that you must  
see....

MARTIN'S P. O. V.

A sprawling gingerbread mansion rises into view. A long and  
winding driveway cuts through thickly wooded property to the  
house.

MARTIN (V. O.)  
Debi's house.

PAUL (V. O.)  
Kind of crept up on you, didn't it?

C. U. OF MARTIN

MARTIN  
No. You drove us here.

PAUL  
Yeah, but it's still kind of eerie,  
isn't it?

MARTIN

No.

Martin's not listening. His eyes track the house out the window.

MARTIN'S P.O.V.

of the mansion.

They roll slowly by Debi's house.

They drive in silence for a beat. Paul suddenly swerves to the shoulder, jams the brake, and turns on Martin.

PAUL

Ten years. What happened!?

MARTIN

I freaked out, joined the Army, worked for the government, and went into business for myself. . . . I'm a professional killer.

PAUL

Thank you.

Paul, satisfied, gets back on the road.

PAUL

Professional killer, huh? Does that come with a good HMO?

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Paul makes a turn. They approach a large car dealership. The sign above it says DESTEPHANO'S BAVARIAN MOTOR WORKS

MARTIN

(Looking ahead)  
He sells BMW's?

PAUL

He sold me this bad boy.

MARTIN

How could you put your hard-earned dollars into the hands of the class bully?

PAUL

He gave me a great deal.

MARTIN

Mein Dealer.

Paul slows outside the lot. BOB DESTEPHANO-- a big, angry-looking man in an expensive suit-- stands in the lot, puffing up amidst his stable of expensive cars.

PAUL  
Hey! Bob! The car's running great.

BOB  
(dismissive)  
Glad to hear it.

Bob turns his back on them and begins to walk away.

MARTIN  
(shouts)  
Bob...

BOB  
(turning)  
What?

MARTIN  
It's me. Martin Blank.

BOB  
Really...? So what?

MARTIN  
Okay. See you later.

EXT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT

Martin climbs out of Paul's car and begins to walk toward his own. Paul calls after him.

PAUL  
See you at the left-a-boy-came-back-a-man-made-good party.

Martin nods him off. Paul pulls away.

MARTIN  
stands across the street from the radio station, looking at Debi in the window... Martin draws a thin rifle scope from his back pocket, and lifts it to his eye...

MARTIN'S P.O.V. - SCOPE

of Debi, in the crosshairs, bored, tapping a pencil to the beat of an unheard song.

MARTIN

dejected. He puts the scope away and gets in his car.

INT. 7-11 - NIGHT

Martin walks into the store, looking around once again at his old home. To the left of the door, a typical suburban teenage SKATEBOARDER is lost in the "Mortal Combat" video game and something too loud from his walkman. Carl, still working the double, nods to Martin.

CARL  
Can I help you?

MARTIN  
What's done is done.

Martin moves up one aisle to the gum rack. He picks out a pack of Beaman's and unwraps a stick as he heads to the counter. On the way, he makes a black Town Car pulling into a spot next to his own. He immediately changes course, and bee-lines for a rear aisle where he ducks down....

FELIX

Comes through the door, drawing a Mac-10 for each hand.

MARTIN

grabs the gum out of his mouth and sticks it onto the bottom of the Glock .9mm he has produced from somewhere in his suit.

CARL

grabs the cash drawer, sets it on the counter, and puts his hands up.

THE SKATEBOARDER

Plays on.

FELIX AND CARL

Felix shoots CARL DEAD on his way toward MARTIN Bolts up the cooler aisle. Bursts of FIRE follow him, taking out each freezer door behind him.

MARTIN AND FELIX

EXCHANGE FIRE John Woo-style between the aisles of the cramped store. Felix delivers a close-to-home burst as he jumps the counter, sending Martin diving out of view.

MARTIN

pinned behind the Slurpee machine, pauses to reload his now two Glock nines. Martin steals a glance to get a bead on Felix and is met with a salvo that rocks the Slurpee machine, spattering him with several flavors... and that's all he can take. Martin comes up BLASTING with both guns, but all that's left of Felix is swinging doors and squealing tires.

Martin moves to the cashier island, low to the ground.

THE SKATEBOARDER

Twitches and jerks, still absorbed in his game and oblivious to the surrounding carnage.

CASHIER ISLAND

Martin crawls through the waist-level swinging door and moves to Carl.

CARL

is really dead. Martin rolls him over to check it out and finds

A BOMB

under the corpse.

MARTIN

Flips the corpse back on top of the device and leaps the counter toward the doors. He grabs the shoulder of the Skateboarder, who shrugs him off, annoyed--

SKATEBOARDER

What the fuck, man?!

The video game screen explodes. Shot full of Martin's bullets. The Skateboarder reacts backward and Martin jerks him out of the double doors.

EXT. 7-11 - CONTINUOUS

The Skateboarder is running like crazy, and Martin's car is peeling out in reverse as the 7-11 is blown to hell.

INT. MARTIN'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Martin's hair is matted with Slurpee as he tries to drive and cool out. He sees his do in the mirror, pulls out a comb and starts to comb it back into a slick Pat Riley style.

EXT. RADIO STATION - NIGHT

Martin walks in, not looking half bad, considering. Debi looks up from some reading. "Naïve Melody" by the Talking Heads plays in the studio.

MARTIN

Are you going to the reunion?

DEBI

No. I'm not going. Is that why you're here?

MARTIN

That's part of it.

DEBI

Well, you'll have a ball. You seem to have everything everybody wants when they go back. The car, the suit, the watch. The look. That just leaves the little things, like happiness, character, point of view...

MARTIN

It's always the little things.

DEBI

Yep.

Beat. MARTIN I'm wondering how you've been. How you are. I'd like to catch up with you. If it's possible.

Beat as Debi considers. She spins her seat to face him.

DEBI

Okay. Let's catch up. You go first.

MARTIN

Well, there's not much to tell.

DEBI

I'm sure you've done worthwhile things in the last ten years. You've had experiences.

MARTIN

Bad experiences.

DEBI

You met people.

MARTIN

Bad people.

DEBI  
Watched tel evi si on?

MARTIN  
Bad tel evi si on.

DEBI  
(amused)  
Jesus. Marty. You're pathetic. It  
sounds like you need a Shockabuku.

MARTIN  
What's that?

DEBI  
It's a swift spiritual kick to the  
head that alters your reality forever.

MARTIN  
That'd be good.

Beat.

DEBI  
What do you want?

The questi on i s open.

MARTIN  
I figured I could pick you up tomorrow  
around seven o'clock.

DEBI  
Let me get this straight, are you  
asking me out?

MARTIN  
Yes.

DEBI  
Unbel i evabl e.

MARTIN  
Seven i t i s.

DEBI  
I'll think about it.

EXT. JOSHUA TREE CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Under a crisp and starry night, a man and a woman sit around  
a campfire. As we MOVE CLOSER we see that the woman is  
Marcella reading, "Women Who Run With Wolves."

She tends to s'mores on the campfire, assembles one, and hands it to MONTY, her young outdoorsman boyfriend. Monty is perched on a small boulder, engaged in a Tai-Chi-like ritual, wearing Patagonia's finest. There is a path of crystals leading from the fire to the boulder. In the background is a tent and a Nissan Pathfinder. Monty's watch goes off.

MONTY

Baby, it's eight o'clock.

Marcella gets up.

MARCELLA

Thanks, Monty.

She tousles Monty's hair on the way to the truck.

INT. TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

Marcella gets in. She shuts the door and dials the phone.

MARCELLA

Hey there, how'd it go?

INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - NIGHT - INTERCUT

Martin sits on the edge of the bed in a towel.

MARTIN

It isn't done.

Marcella pauses, taking this in.

MARCELLA

This is not good.

MARTIN

I'll do it tomorrow.

Marcella considers this.

MARCELLA

What's it look like?

MARTIN

It's fine.

MARCELLA

You haven't looked at the dossier.

MARTIN

(a little defensive)  
I've looked at it.

Martin eyes the vent.

MARCELLA

You have.

MARTIN

Yes. It's the same as usual. Nothing remarkable about it at all.

MARCELLA

I have to call the client and give them a reason why you're late.

MARTIN

Tell them my house exploded.

Beat. Marcella doesn't know what to make of this.

MARCELLA

I'll call them and tell them you're taking your time. Being a professional.

MARTIN

Okay, call them. Fine. Oh-- And if you could find out why they double-booked the job, and who is trying to kill me, and call me back-- that's be great.

MARCELLA

Will do.

Martin hangs up. He moves up to the air vent, deciding to get down to business. He pries it open, and withdraws his briefcase, putting it down on the bed and propping it open. He looks at the unopened dossier for a moment, flips it over in his hands, and tosses it on the bed.

BRIEFCASE

We catch a glimpse of Martin's weapons. Martin picks up the envelope and is about to tear the seal when

THE PHONE RINGS

Martin drops the envelope and lifts the receiver.

DEBI

(filtered)  
Are you there?

MARTIN

Yes.

DEBI

Pick me up at my father's house at around seven. And don't be late this time.

Beat.

DEBI

Hello...?

MARTIN

This night, this reunion will be an important step in our relationship.

DEBI

You're fucking psycho.

MARTIN

Don't rush to judgement until all the facts are in.

She hangs up. Martin smiles and replaces the receiver. He turns to the apparatus laid out on the bed. GUNS, BULLETS, ETC.

What has been his life is beginning to look more like death to him. He places the envelope in the case, then returns the case to its hiding place.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Lardner and McCullers stake out Martin from the Country Squire across the street.

MCCULLERS

I wish he'd do his job already so we could do our job.

LARDNER

We can't do our job unless he does his job.

MCCULLERS

Why don't we just do his job then, so we can do our job, and get the fuck out of here.

LARDNER

Do his job? I'm not a cold-blooded killer.

MCCULLERS

Wait a minute--

LARDNER

-Look. You want to kill a Good Guy, but not be a Bad Guy, you wait until a Bad Guy kills the Good Guy, and then you come in and kill the Bad Guy, and then you're the Good Guy.

MCCULLERS

So if we do his job, we're the bad guys. If we do our job, we're the good guys.

LARDNER

Yup.

They both laugh, as if at some great joke. Their laughter is caught short by the sight of

LARDNER AND MCCULLERS' POV

GROCER

moving into the diner. INT. DINER - LATE MORNING Martin sits in a window booth splitting nutrient caplets into an apple juice and looking out the window.

GROCER

slides into the booth, across from Martin.

MARTIN AND GROCER

Martin draws a nasty little PPK pistol from his waist, and levels it at Grocer under the table-- but Grocer is already drawing his pistol down there, and there is an instant Mexican breakfast stand-off.

GROCER

Easy, tiger.

A waitress approaches.

WAITRESS

Hi. Welcome to B.I. McCafferty's. My name is Melanie and I'll be your server this morning. Let me tell you about some of our specials. Today we have the "Alfalfa on My Mind," our feature omelette. And there's our "Gatsby's West Egg Omelette." And if you're in the mood for something different there's the "I left my heart in San Franchezie."

Martin and Grocer's eyes remain locked.

GROCER

I want two eggs poached, hash brown well-done. English muffin for the bread. And a coffee.

MARTIN

Whole-grain pancakes. And an egg-white omelette.

WAITRESS

What would you like in the omelette?

MARTIN

Nothing in the omelette. Nothing at all.

The waitress nods pertly and leaves.

GROCER

(re: the omelette)

Come on, live a little. I'm sorry about the incident yesterday.

MARTIN

No harm no foul.

GROCER

A little misunderstanding among my associates.

Beat.

GROCER

I told them to kill you and they didn't.

MARTIN

Hard to get good help these days.

GROCER

But since we're both here, I think it's time to take a fresh look at our relationship.

MARTIN

I didn't get into this business to have "associates." And I don't want to join your Goddamned union. "Loner--" "Loner gunman." Get it? "On my own." That's the whole point. Why don't you become a cop, or something. You can drink coffee in the morning... with friends!

Grocer looks a little hurt.

MARTIN

(easing up)

Look, this is a one-on-one business... Every time you get to know people, bad things happen. If it'll make you feel any better, this is my last job. So what do you say we put our guns away and forget the whole damn thing.

Grocer loses it.

GROCER

Fuck you! No scabs! From now on, everything's regulated!

Long beat as Grocer gets a hold of himself.

MARTIN

No deal.

GROCER

Fine. But we're not going to let you do your job. Because we're gonna do it. And then, after we do your job, we're gonna do another little job...

MARTIN

(wry)

Is that right?

GROCER

Yeah-- after I shoot you through the fucking forehead I'm gonna fuck you in the bullet hole.

MARTIN

Nice talk, Sugarmouth.

INT. SUITE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Martin sits at a desk, staring at the reunion card. He tosses it aside, gets up, and moves in front of a mirror. He wears a crisp black suit and practices his greeting smile...

MARTIN

(trying on smile)

Yes, I'm a pet psychiatrist. I sell couch insurance. I test-market positive thinking. I lead a weekend men's group, actually. We specialize in ritual killings. I'm hungry, are you hungry, I'm hungry, ooh, ooh.

(sarcastic)

Hi, I'm Martin Blank, remember me?

MARTIN

I'm not married, I have no kids and I'd blow your brains out if someone paid me enough... So how've you been? Where do you stand on The Issues? Are you Left? Right? Up, down, proud, shamed, bl ahbl ahbl ahbl ah--

EXT. DEBI'S HOUSE - EARLY EVENING

Martin makes his way up the walk leading to the front door, holding a simple bouquet of flowers. He skips up the front steps and finds the doorbell. After a moment, Debi answers.

DEBI

Flowers. That's funny.

MARTIN

As long as I get the laugh.

DEBI

(taking them)

Here. Let me put these in some rubbing alcohol.

She backs into the house, and he follows.

INT. NEWBERRY FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Martin follows Debi into the hall. Both are enjoying this atavistic ritual.

MARTIN

You look beautiful.

DEBI

Okay... Hold on...

MARTIN'S P.O.V.

through a doorway leading into a den. All that's visible of MR. NEWBERRY, Debi's father, is a pair of legs resting in a Barcolounger.

DEBI (V.O.)

...Let me get my coat.

MARTIN

I'll just help myself to a cocktail.

DEBI

moves up the stairs and disappears.

MARTIN

Looks at the legs, rolls his shoulders, and heads into the den.

INT. DEN - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Newberry sits in the recliner reading a Tom Clancy novel. He is a corporate Aspen-dude-ranch sort with a good head of hair. He sighs, closes the book on his knee and looks up to Martin.

MARTIN

Good evening, Mr. Newberry.

MR. NEWBERRY

Good evening, Mr. Blank.

MARTIN

How are you? How's business?

MR. NEWBERRY

Martin, I don't know where you've been since you abandoned my daughter ten years ago, and I don't care. It was good that you left, and I'm glad you did. So what do you want to talk about? You've grown up a bit. Maybe I had you figured wrong.

MARTIN

How's that?

MR. NEWBERRY

I visualized you, in a haze, as one of the slackster, flannel-wearing, coffeehouse-misanthropes I've been seeing in Newsweek.

MARTIN

I took the other road. I'm more of a self-reflective young lion who does business with lead-pipe cruelty and goes home to drink light beer in milky-eyes isolation. I love sports and sex and have no real relationships with anyone. And you?

MR. NEWBERRY

Oh, you know me, Martin. I'm the same old sell-out baby-boomer, exploiting the oppressed I got shot for at Kent State. But why don't we have a drink and forget the whole thing?

Newberry lays down his book, and moves behind the wet bar.

MARTIN  
Why not?

MR. NEWBERRY  
So what are you doing with your life  
now, son?

MARTIN  
I'm a professional killer.

MR. NEWBERRY  
That's good.

Debi's footsteps are heard coming down the stairs.

DEBI (O.S.)  
Okay Mr. Newberry watches Martin  
turn and walk out of the room.

EXT. DEBI'S HOUSE

Martin and Debi pull away from the curb.

INT. CAR - DUSK

Martin and Debi drive through that to Debi's town, and to  
Martin is a widening pool of quicksand.

MARTIN  
Do you want to get a drink first?

DEBI  
I think they'll probably have booze  
there.

MARTIN  
Right.

Martin's right hand shakes off of the wheel a bit. He grips  
it tighter. Suddenly, Martin turns the wheel and pulls into  
a gas station parking lot, halting next to a pay phone.

MARTIN  
I'll just be a second.

Debi nods, a little confused but going with it.

DEBI  
Okay....

EXT. PAYPHONE - MINUTES LATER

Martin stands at the kiosk next to the Town Car, mid-conversation.

MARTIN  
 (defensive)  
 ... Well, I didn't kill anyone, but someone tried to kill me and the guy in the middle got killed. So if I see that guy again I'm definitely going to kill him, but I won't kill anyone else. Oh, except for the guy I was sent here to kill. I don't know...

INT. OATMAN'S OFFICE - INTERCUT

Oatman treats his patient.

DR. OATMAN  
 What else? Say more.

MARTIN  
 Saw my mom... I'm with Debi, and I'm on my way to the reunion.

In the background, Lardner and McCullers drive past the station.

DR. OATMAN  
 Okay. Repeat this after me.

MARTIN  
 Out Loud?

Martin looks to Debi. She looks up and smiles. We hear Dr. Oatman's command, Martin mumbles them back.

MARTIN  
 ... I am at home with the me. I am rooted in me, who is on this adventure.

DR. OATMAN  
 Take a deep breath and realize, that this is me breathing.

MARTIN  
 This is me breathing.

Martin takes in a few breaths.

MARTIN  
 Alright, look. I gotta go.

DR. OATMAN  
And don't kill anyone.

MARTIN  
Right. Don't kill anyone....

INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - SAME

Felix rummages delicately around the room. He goes to the NIGHTSTAND

The reunion invite.

FELIX

picks it up and scans it.

EXT. GROSSE POINT HIGH SCHOOL - DUSK

Lardner and McCullers sit in the parking lot. They watch Martin and Debi pull into a space.

LARDNER  
He's falling for her. Look at him.

MCCULLERS  
He using her.

LARDNER  
You're wrong. Look at his face.

MCCULLERS  
One cannot love and kill.

LARDNER  
(defensive)  
I love. I kill.

MARTIN AND DEBI

climb out of the car. Martin, breathing deeply and wiping his sweaty palms, leans against the car and tries to calm himself. Eighties music echoes from the gym.

MARTIN  
(to himself)  
Shoul da brought my gun.

DEBI  
What?

He pulls himself off the car and heads toward

GROSSE POINTE HIGH SCHOOL

A sprawling red-brick Gothic structure with many wings. It is topped by church-like towers. It's scary.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

Martin and Debi enter and pause to take in the entire scene. A benevolent Ronald Reagan hangs crookedly above. Basketball nets are swung back, draped with crepe. Lights are half-low and the music is loud. Alumni are dancing.

ARLENE

Welcome back! I'm Arlene Oslott-Joseph.

MARTIN

I'm Martin Blank.

DEBI

Debi Newberry.

Debi heads off into the gym, smiling back as she strands Martin. Arlene rises from a card table. They have little to say. Martin wasn't part of her crowd.

ARLENE

Marty, you haven't changed a bit!

MARTIN

Don't say that.

Arlene gives him a NAMETAG. As a special torture, the tags have YEARBOOK PHOTOS. Martin looks at the name tag uncomfortably.

ARLENE

We had pictures put on, that way everybody knows who everybody was!

MARTIN

Wonderful.

ARLENE

So, what are you doing now?

MARTIN

Whatever I can get away with.

She smiles at his joke and is immediately distracted by the next arrival. Martin moves off...

ARLENE  
 (to the next person)  
 Isn't it cute. It's so everybody  
 knows who everybody was!

He circles the crowded gym. Looking for familiar faces. He stops at the open bar.

BATENDER  
 What can I make you?

MARTIN  
 Beer.

The bartender gets him a beer. Martin recognizes a guy at the bar. He is well-appointed and shiny. He is KEN ALDRIDGE.

MARTIN  
 Hey, Ken. How have you been?

KEN  
 (glancing at Martin's  
 name tag)  
 Hello Martin. How have you been?

MARTIN  
 Not bad. You?

Bob Destephano arrives next to them and orders a drink. Eye contact is made.

KEN  
 Hello, Bob.

MARTIN  
 Hey, Bob.

Bob turns slightly toward them. They continue in their conversation.

KEN  
 I'm an attorney. I'm with Moss, Brice  
 & Fromeyer.

MARTIN  
 That sounds pretty interesting...

Bob wants to join the conversation but doesn't know how.

KEN  
 Sometimes. I'm in divorce, mainly.  
 Some property. Some personal injury.

MARTIN  
 Those all seem kind of related....

Bob takes another drink and mopes off, Martin watches him go.

MARTIN  
Tragedy makes you thirsty.

Ken chuckles. The bartender arrives with the bottle. Martin grabs it and begins to move off.

MARTIN  
Well... I have to take this over to Debi.

KEN  
Here. Take my card. Wait a minute... here's a special one. For top-shelf clients.

Ken hands Martin a Monte Blanc pen with Ken's title and business address printed on the shaft. Martin reads it and puts it in his kerchief pocket.

MARTIN  
Thanks.

Ken goes back to listening to the Guys at the bar.

MARTIN

makes his way through the upbeat crowd of well-wishers. TERRY emerges like an inkspot on a clean white shirt, and intercepts Martin. His angst is barely under control as he sidles up to Martin.

TERRY  
I don't know, Blank, all these fucking people, driving me crazy. Look at them over there, memorializing old times, acting all like it was something "life-changing." And the people in the National Honor Society? The name tags?

Martin shrugs.

TERRY  
They have special blue stars on them like it fucking matters now that they were in the honor club ten years ago. I'm getting fucking nauseous from all this sentimental bullshit. It's making me sick.

Terry stops suddenly as if he's finished. Martin reads this man's nametag.

MARTIN  
Why are you here... Terry?

Terry turns on a dime.

TERRY  
I wanted to see a couple people. But I don't want to talk about the old days... What did we have together, Martin? Typing?

MARTIN  
(remembering)  
Drafting.

TERRY  
Yeah, I couldn't stand that fucking class. But I appreciate you helping me out, man.

MARTIN  
Don't mention it.

TERRY  
Yeah, thanks. Well I'm going to try and get out of here, man. I'll see you later.

Terry slinks off.

BAR - SAME

Bob Destephano grabs two more scotches off the bar and turns to leave, thoroughly morose. In his path, he finds DAN KORETZKY, the good-looking side of brainy.

DAN  
Bob. Bob Destephano.

BOB  
What?

DAN  
I'm Dan. Dan Koretzky.

BOB  
Computer guy.

DAN  
Yeah... Hey, I saw you at your dad's dealership the other day.

BOB  
I sell BMW's. What do you do?

DAN  
Not much, actually. My software company just went public so I'm just... hanging out, really.

There's a sudden lull in the conversation. Bob tries his drunken hand at relating...

BOB  
Remember high school?

DAN  
Sure. Listen. Why don't you join us up in the grandstands?

Dan points up to a group of happy, laughing people. Bob walks off shaking his head and smiling bitterly.

INT. GYM - LATER

Debi and Martin are seated at a round table with six others in an area blocked off for dinner. Plates of gumbo are arriving and the wine is poured. DARIUS, an African-American, is in mid-conversation with AMY, who looks like she walked out of a Laura Ashley catalog and sits on the other side of Martin. DENNIS and MIKE are two suits in the midst of a non-stop sports conversation.

MIKE  
... You gotta hold the fans responsible, though, Dennis, because they're the ones putting up with the mediocre product.

DENNIS  
I guess, though, you know, if you look at it Mike, that park is a beautiful park, I've gone to that park many times-I've had the greatest time of my life at that ballpark and let's face it, I tell you this, Mike, by the sixth inning, if you're having the fun you should be having at Tigers Stadium, you don't even know what the hell's going on anyway...

They both crack up at this.

ANGLE ON DARIUS, MARTIN, & DEBI

DARIUS  
Have you two been together since high school?

DEBI

No--

MARTIN

--Yes. Actually we just bought that little Frank Lloyd Wright on Pine Avenue... Debi's a social worker and I mow down insurance claims at Aetna--

DEBI

We haven't seen each other since high school.

DARIUS

I figured. You two look too happy together. I shouldn't say that though, I'm married... So, Martin-- what are you up to these days? What do you do for a living?

Debi perks up; this should be interesting.

MARTIN

I'm in pro-active international relations. It's a very specialized company. We execute economic investment opportunities. Sort of economic clean-up... with an emphasis on personnel. It's boring, you know, it's boring. I don't like to talk about it because I don't think what a man does necessarily reflects who he is...

Martin begins to draw strange looks from all over the table. Martin may be in trouble.

MARTIN

....I've always tried to refrain from a black-and-white moral lexicon-- you know, good, bad, right, wrong-- I've been more interested in the gray areas.

Silence. Martin pushes on.

MARTIN

But that's no way to live. I guess you've got to just take the leap of faith. Believe in something. Fuck it.

DARIUS

Sounds complicated, Martin. Are you happy?

MARTIN

I just have to close this one last account. I'd like to just stop now, today, but I can't... It's a step in the right direction.

DEBI

I don't know, Martin. It sounds like you're feeling compromised. Live the way you want. The only thing that's inexcusable, to me, is cynicism. That's the biggest cop-out there is.

Nods of assent come from around the table. A brief silence, and then...

AMY

But wait. I still don't understand what you do.

MARTIN

I work at Kentucky Fried Chicken.

Debi suppresses a laugh.

AMY

You do not.

MARTIN

Yes I do.

AMY

You don't...

MARTIN

In the corporate offices.

AMY

Oh... really?

MARTIN

Yeah...

AMY

What do you do?

MARTIN

I sell biscuits to the Southland.

AMY

You do not.

MARTIN

It's what I do.

AMY  
You're so funny...

MARTIN  
I sell biscuits and gravy all over  
the Southland--

AMY  
--Stop it--

MARTIN  
You know those horsey biscuit gravy  
packets? I move all of those--

AMY  
--No.

MARTIN  
Sometimes we sell them to McDonald's  
and just change them to special  
barbecue sauce.

Across the table from Martin and Debi, Dennis turns to Darius.

DENNIS  
What do you think about black coaching  
in the NFL, Darius? Because I think  
it's great.

DARIUS  
I don't pay much attention to  
football.

MIKE  
I have to agree with you Dennis.  
It's good to see that the owners are  
willing to put the franchise behind  
a black head coach or QB when for  
years in the league they've been  
kept out of the thinking positions  
and relegated mainly to the physical  
game.

DENNIS  
But now, you see, you have Warren  
Moon at the helm, Cunningham, Art  
Shell, and the coach up at  
Minnesota...

MIKE  
Dennis Green. And if you remember,  
Doug Williams was the first black  
man to prove that on a Superbowl  
Sunday.

Amy leans in to Martin.

AMY  
(to Martin)  
I'm teaching art at Cedar Junior  
High School.

DENNIS  
... Yeah, listen. Where do you stand  
on this whole Louis Farrakhan  
issue...?

DARIUS  
(facetious)  
I'm a De Klerk man myself.

Debi nods, indicating to the deejay stand.

DEBI  
I'm going over to play some tunes.

Martin watches her walk away.

INT. GYM - GRANDSTANDS - LATER

Dan Koretzky sits with two other FORMER-SQUARES-turned-handsome-fellas who now enjoy a confidence that comes with early investment in Microsoft.

Martin looks out over the milieu below, enjoying the scene. He eavesdrops on a group of men from a few rows back.

GROUP OF MEN

DAN  
Look at her. There it is. Jenny  
Slater. The finest thing that ever  
walked these halls.

FORMER-SQUARE #2  
I believe she married the state of  
Maine.

DAN  
Yeah, he's around here somewhere.  
What a shame. She would have looked  
great in my fucking Bentley.

FORMER-SQUARE #3  
No, my friends, Jenny Beam. Not only  
was she as fine, if not finer, than  
Slater, but she had the "bad girl"  
thing going for her. And the red  
hair. C'mon.

DAN  
She's a paramedic in Skokie, Illinois.

FORMER-SQUARE #2  
You both are mistaken. Jenny Maretta was the finest. No question about it.

FORMER-SQUARE #3  
The three Jenny's. Three Jenny's. All named Jenny....

DAN  
You know what I'm really hoping? That Jenny Slater gets divorced. And she's twenty-eight--

FORMER-SQUARE #3  
--she's got half the state of Maine--

DAN  
She's twenty-eight years old, with two kids, she's still really really fine, and I see her at a bookstore or something, and she sees me for what I was then, and what I am now: the redemption for all her failure.

FORMER-SQUARE #3  
You mean the redemption for all your failure.

They ponder this. Martin looks down on the gym, concentrating on Debi.

BOB DESTEPHANO

Dancing drunkenly, miserable, like an unbalanced orangutan.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM - DEEJAY BOOTH - LATER

Martin stands by Debi as she sits in for a set in the deejay booth, on a raised stage. They are playing an old sophomore game.

DEBI  
Which would you rather...?

MARTIN  
Okay.... Would you rather... commit yourself sexually to a four-by-nine cell with former President George Herbert Walker Bush dressed as a

MARTIN  
super-model for a month, or make  
love to a otter on crank for a week?

DEBI  
Soft. I'll take the junkie otter,  
clearly! I'd let the little beast  
scratch and claw all he wants....  
Okay. Would you rather make love to  
the candied corpse of Phyllis Diller--

MARTIN  
--She's not dead---

DEBI  
It's just a game...! Alright. Candied  
Diller, or... wear a hot pork vest  
across the desert with a fully  
digested crab apple in your mouth?

MARTIN  
Wow. I have to give this some thought.

DEBI  
No time.

MARTIN  
Okay, then. Clearly Candied Diller.

STACEY breaks the moment, looking up at the two, horrified  
and unsure at what she's heard.

STACEY  
Marty! Debi! How are you! So many  
people came, but I never expected to  
see you Marty. Or you Debi... I  
mean... because of what your  
divorce... I didn't mean to say that.  
I just meant you look so good.

DEBI  
Thank you.

STACEY  
Do you think you could play "Too  
Shy" by Kaja Goo Goo?

DEBI  
Stacey, why don't you come up here  
and take over for a little while?

STACEY  
I'd love to.

Stacey nods thanks and makes her way up into the booth as Martin and Debi make their way down.

DEBI  
 (to Martin)  
 Everybody thinks they know me now  
 that I'm divorced.

She leads Martin toward the exit.

DEBI  
 It's time to see you in private.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Martin and Debi walk down the hallway, alone together.

MARTIN  
 Even though I left, you never left  
 me. Not just memory but a substance  
 in my blood.

DEBI  
 (smiling)  
 Like heroin?

MARTIN  
 Too junky-kitschy. Deeper, deeper.

DEBI  
 (enjoying this)  
 Like love?

MARTIN  
 Could be. The physical substance of  
 love.

Debi stops.

DEBI  
 I'll accept that. Follow me.

Together they move into what appears to be the Nurse's Office, and close the door behind them.

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE

Martin and Debi make wild banshee love.

EXT. PARKING LOT - SAME

Lardner and McCullers watch Felix into the gym.

MCCULLERS

Looks like someone keeps trying to do our job for us.

LARDNER

If he does our job, he's our job.

MCCULLERS

I get it.

INT. GYM - SAME

FELIX

steps through the doorway he's standing in and strolls into the crowded gym. He wears the standard khaki-pants-blue-blazer combo, with no nametag. He's clearly too old for the class of 1984.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Martin and Debi come out of the Nurse's Office. The post-coital mood is broken as they hear The Human League's "Don't You Want Me, Baby?" blasting from the gym. Martin and Debi tune in on the song for a moment, unhappy at remembering that particular moment in pop music history. Debi looks to Martin, something must be done about it.

DEBI

I'll be right back....

Debi kisses him. They split up. Martin walks off, the happiest we've seen him....

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY

Bob and several others from the muscle-to-fat crew play a drunken scrimmage with a papier-mache table ornament football that is coming unwound. Bob quarterback and begins to recite a long, complicated, and forgotten play. Martin approaches from behind Bob and glides through the ad-hoc line-up, continuing down the hall. Bob yells "hike" as he stares after Martin, distracted. Bob's rushed upon and sacked. He lets the papier-mache ball drop and crack on the floor.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - LATER

Martin walks down a silent, deserted hall of lockers and classroom doors. The only sounds are his footsteps and the echoed strains of Iggy Pop's "Wild Child" from the distant gym. He stops at locker number 1963 and flips the dial: Right-back left-right again. It opens. He pops up the steel false ceiling in the empty locker, fishes his hand in the opening, and withdraws what he is looking for: an ancient joint.

He holds it up and examines the now brown and dried reefer. He grinds it into dust in his hand.

INT. HALLWAY

Debi comes out of the gym and starts down the hall, the music changed for the better. INT. HALLWAY - SAME Martin senses he is not alone. He turns to find Bob Destephano. The big man holds a glass unsteadily and slurs slightly when he speaks. Bob is looking sad and scary. He leans into Martin

BOB  
So. You and Debi. Gonna hit that  
shit again?

MARTIN  
Fine, Bob. How are you?

BOB  
Never better.

MARTIN  
Really?

Bob crumbles.

BOB  
Ahhh... it's all fucked up. Nothing  
adds up to nothing... you work your  
whole life, day in and day out-- try  
to make sense of it all. One day  
your twenty-seven and what do you  
get to show for it...

MARTIN  
You could've been a contender, huh?

Bob realizes he can't even express his own tragedy without the use of cliches.

BOB  
Smart boy. Real smart. Let's see how  
smart you are with my foot up your  
ass! I'm gonna kick your ass!

Martin steps to Bob.

MARTIN  
Why would you want to hit me, Bob?  
Do you really believe that there's  
some stored up conflict that needs  
resolution between us? We don't exist.  
There's nothing between us. So who  
do you want to hit, Bob? It's not  
me.

Bob slumps against the lockers, deflated.

BOB  
What am I gonna do?

MARTIN  
What do you want to do?

BOB  
I want to be an actor.

MARTIN  
Then express yourself, Bob.

Bob frowns, trying to think of a way to express himself.

MARTIN  
(catching him)  
Be honest....

Bob backs up and lets out a huge, drunken caveman scream, then stops abruptly, and smiles.

BOB  
Later, Martin.

Bob backpedals down the hallway and out of sight. Martin watches him stumble out of the hallway and bang through the doors of a stairwell, disappearing.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

Bob slams through the doors and begins to stumble down the stairs. He encounters Debi, on her way up. He glances at her but does not break stride. Debi gives him wide berth, and quickens her pace up the stairs...

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Martin watches the doors swing to a stop. He exhales and relaxes... and then Spin-pivots on his right heel, as a BURST from a silenced pistol pierces the space where his head was a split-second before. As he spins around, his right hand withdraws Ken's give-away pen from his kerchief pocket, pops the cap off, and drive the pen up and through the throat of his attacker--

FELIX

impaled through the throat on the pen, his head snapped back. MARTIN AND FELIX are frozen for a moment. Blood runs quickly down the front of Felix's body, off of his shoes, and on to the floor. The stairwell doors band open. Martin's head turns toward the sound. His eyes lock onto

DEBI

who is frozen, horrified for a moment. She flees.

MARTIN

Looks back at

FELIX

Dead.

THE FLOOR

A growing pool of blood.

MARTIN

Looks around wildly, holding Felix up against the lockers. Above the lockers is a plastic banner proclaiming "SPANISH CLUB FIESTA FUN-RAISER SATURDAY JUNE 1"

MARTIN

rips it down from the wall with his free hand, wraps it around Felix, stuffs the body into his open locker, and slams it shut. He pulls off his shoes and socks, puts a sock over each hand like mittens, and wipes up the small pool of blood. He stuffs the socks into his pockets, takes off down the hall, and bangs through the doors.

INT. GYM - GRANDSTANDS - MOMENTS LATER

Martin blasts through the upstairs doors to the grandstands looking for Debi below. She is nowhere to be found. He scans the party in progress-- It is the same frame of image as the one in Oatman's office. In the middle of the floor, Terry slowly turns up to meet Martin's eyes.

MARTIN

pulls the doors shut, and takes off down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY - MINUTES LATER

Martin opens his locker, withdraws the corpse, and hefts it over his shoulder.

INT. STAIRWELL - A MINUTE LATER

Brick-walled, darkly lit, and narrow. Martin bounds down the steep steps with his load.

INT. BASEMENT LOCKER ROOM HALLWAY - MINUTE LATER

Martin hustles toward a cage door in front of him. He kicks through it and dumps Felix into a canvas laundry cart on casters and begins rolling.

INT. PUMP AND FURNACE ROOM - A MINUTE LATER

The door bangs open and light pours into the room from behind Martin. He negotiates the cart over the dirt floor and stops next to the furnace that heats the swimming pool. He pauses and looks to the ceiling; the music from the reunion pulses into the floor above him. Martin picks up a large metal bar and works open the door on the hulking cast-iron furnace. A white-hot blaze roars within.

INT. GYM - NIGHT

The party is winding down. A harried-looking Martin walks in and looks around once more for Debi -- nothing.

MARTIN'S POV

of the Deejay booth. It is empty. He moves over to the bar and joins Ken Aldridge. He motions to the bartender who opens a beer for him.

MARTIN  
Have you seen Debi Newberry?

KEN  
Nope.

They both look around at the last of the reunion.

KEN  
The more things change, the more  
they Goddamned well stay the same.

MARTIN  
I guess.

Before Ken can get started again...

MARTIN  
Take care of yourself, Ken. Thanks  
for the pen.

Martin walks out of the gym.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Paul is leaning against his Beemer, having a smoke.

PAUL  
What the hell happened to you?

MARTIN  
I was catching up with Bob Destephano.

PAUL  
As long as you had a good time.

Beat. Martin scans the lot for sign of Debi.

PAUL  
What now? Chase the girl?

There is a beat of silence. Nothing seems worth saying.

MARTIN  
It didn't work out.

PAUL  
That's too bad.

MARTIN  
I have to get my head back into my work.

PAUL  
Work's good for the soul.

Martin gets up to leave.

MARTIN  
When you see Debi, tell her I'm sorry.

PAUL  
See you in ten years.

Paul watches him leave. He almost stops him, but thinks better of it.

INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - NIGHT

Martin hunches over his briefcase that lays open on the bed.

MARTIN PULLS

THE DOSSIER from the briefcase. It's seal is broken, but the contents remain enclosed... He withdraws the package and dumps the contents on the bed. His face registers muted shock.

MARTIN  
Dumb fucking luck...

## THE CONTENTS

include various photos of MR. NEWBERRY, Mr. Newberry with Debi, and the house. The photos are mingled with official-looking papers including credit reports, medical records, etc. . . . Newberry's life.

He cocks his head toward the door anticipating a . . . KNOCK. He freezes, then plucks a gun tapped under a desk, and moves toward the door, pointing. Halfway to the door, his face and body slacken. He lobs the gun onto the bed. With everything gone wrong, there is nothing left to defend. He goes to the door and opens it, body relaxed, expecting a bullet . . .

Debi moves past him into the room. She is completely calm.

DEBI

He was trying to kill you, right?

MARTIN

Yes.

DEBI

Not the other way around . . . ?

MARTIN

No.

DEBI

Is it something you've done?

MARTIN

It's something I do . . .

Beat.

MARTIN

. . . Professionally . . .

Beat.

MARTIN

. . . About five years now.

DEBI

(stunned)  
Get the fuck outta here.

MARTIN

Seriously, when I left, I joined the Army and took the service exam. They found my psych results fit a certain profile. A certain "Moral flexibility" would be the best way to describe it . . . I was loaned out to a CIA-

MARTIN  
 sponsored program. It's called  
 "mechanical operations." We sort of  
 found each other....

DEBI  
 You're a government spook?

Martin says nothing.

MARTIN  
 I was, but no... yes... I was before,  
 but now I'm not. It's irrelevant,  
 really. The idea of governments,  
 nations, it's mostly a public  
 relations theory at this point,  
 anyway. But I'll tell you something,  
 until about five months ago, I really  
 enjoyed my work.

DEBI  
 Jesus Christ!

MARTIN  
 Then I started losing my taste for  
 it. Which usually means your time is  
 up. But then I realized it was  
 something entirely different.... I  
 started getting the sneaking, dark  
 suspicion that maybe there was...  
 meaning to life.

DEBI  
 Okay. Great, Martin, that's just  
 great. Meaning to life... Mmm....

MARTIN  
 Like, that there's a point? An organic  
 connection between all living things.

DEBI  
 Let me help you along, Martin. You're  
 a sociopath!

MARTIN  
 (defensive)  
 A sociopath kills for no reason. I  
 kill for money.

DEBI  
 You never could have kept this from  
 me.

MARTIN  
 I was leaving.

DEBI  
That's probably a good idea.

MARTIN  
Will you come with me?

DEBI  
I'm staying here.

MARTIN  
What if I come back?

DEBI  
I'll hide.

She goes for the door.

MARTIN  
Don't go.

She stops at the door. Slowly, she turns.

DEBI  
You don't get to have me. You are a monster, I'm a human being. We're not going to mate.

MARTIN  
You don't understand....

DEBI  
That's because I speak human, and you speak monster.

Debi bolts out of the room. Martin is left alone.

Martin looks over at his gear on the bed. After a beat, he walks slowly over and surveys his tools. He picks up a cleaning rag and begins to go over the weapons, absently singing to himself....

MARTIN  
"What's up Doc? What's cookin'? What's up Doc, are you lookin'....?"

INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - DAWN

Morning light comes through the slit in the curtains, picking up four or five exquisitely clean guns are laid out on the bed, almost geometrically spaced. Martin lifts one at a time, checking their bores and actions....

INT. COUNTRY SQUIRE - MORNING

Lardner and McCullers gear up. They each finish loading the last of many clips....

EXT. MICHIGAN HIGHWAY - MORNING

Grocer and Company, not in a Ford Passenger Van, veer off onto an exit ramp. Grocer has assembled a team of about nine. They draw different guns from their kit bags and begin loading....

INT. COUNTRY SQUIRE - SAME

Lardner and McCullers jam clips into their service autos and knock the slides....

INT. MARTIN'S SUITE - SAME

Martin finished loading his guns, and puts them in his case. He shuts it and moves for the door. On the way out he stops and looks himself in the mirror before exiting.

EXT. THREE DIFFERENT ROADS - INTERCUT

Each car whooshes by camera, on its way to the inevitable....

INT. EASTWEST HOLDING COMPANY - INTERCUT

Marcella has a cordless tucked between her shoulder and ear, and holds a two-gallon gas can. She moves from room to room pouring gasoline onto the computers, desks, and piles of paper stacked on the floor. She adds a splash to her copy of "Women Who Run With the Wolves."

MARCELLA

I'm bringing down the office now.

She picks up her hard drive and smashes it on the floor. It's cathartic.

INTERCUT WITH MARTIN IN THE TOWN CAR -

MARTIN

I'll put things right. Then I'll find you.

Silence on the line.

MARCELLA

(apprehensive)  
Uh... why?

Martin finishes his weapons check, and pulls out the dossier.

MARTIN  
Don't worry. I left you a little  
something under your desk.

Martin hangs up.

Marcella goes to it and pulls loose from underneath a shrink-wrapped brick of \$100 bills, probably a \$100,000 or so.

MARCELLA  
All right!!

INT. MARTIN'S TOWN CAR

Martin makes his way down the road to the Newberry's. In the distance, he sees a lone figure jogging on the shoulder, away from him.

INT. GROCER'S VAN - SAME

Grocer and Company are parked off to the side, watching Newberry, in the distance, jog toward them. A SNIPER prepares to blow Newberry's head off.

INT. MARTIN'S TOWN CAR - SAME

As he approaches the figure, he recognizes it as Newberry, he accelerates.

INT. GROCER'S VAN - SAME

Grocer spots Martin's car speeding at Newberry.

GROCER  
Oh shit....

EXT. ROAD - SAME

Newberry stops jogging and turns to face the Town Car bearing down on him. His face goes slack, expecting to be creamed.

INT. TOWN CAR - SAME

Martin roars straight at Newberry, his engine shrieking. As the distance between them turns from yards to feet... Martin swerves hard, just missing Newberry and comes to a halt next to him, blocking the Sniper's line of fire. After a moment, Newberry opens the passenger door.

NEWBERRY  
What the fuck is the matter with  
you?!

MARTIN

Well, I was hired to kill you. It's what I do, and come to think of it, I told you that, but... Okay. I'm not going to do it. Get in the car.

He does. They drive on.

MARTIN

It's either because I'm in love with your daughter, or because I have a new-found respect for life. Or both. But I don't know.

INT. GROCER'S VAN - SAME

Grocer and company watch in amazement.

GROCER'S P. O. V.

of Martin's car disappearing into Newberry's long and wooded driveway.

GROCER

GROCER

That punk is either in love with that guy's daughter or he has new found respect for life... Let's go.

EXT. NEWBERRY HOUSE - SAME

Martin pulls up in front and stops. Both men scramble out and head toward the front door at a quick clip. Newberry is shaken; Martin seems at ease, at home in his element.

NEWBERRY

Why? I build cars! They're paying you to kill me? Why?

MARTIN

It was a cost-cutting effort. They can't afford a recall.

NEWBERRY

It was a leaky sunroof! A design flaw! I reported a leaky sunroof! You want to kill me because of that?

MARTIN

It's not me! Why does everybody think it's personal?!

They go through the front door and shut it behind them.

INT. GROCER'S VAN - SAME

Grocer drops the van into gear and heads toward the driveway.

INT. COUNTRY SQUIRE - SAME

Lardner and McCullers approach the scene. They get within viewing distance in time to see Grocer's Town Car turn into the driveway.

LARDNER

We'll go in through the woods.

INT. NEWBERRY HOUSE

Martin's briefcase is open on the large oak table. The contents of the dossier are spilled out onto the table. Newberry and Debi watch him, dumbstruck, as he draws a huge Desert Eagle automatic and jerks back the slide. He turns to Debi.

MARTIN

I was sitting in my house on prom night wearing that Goddamned rented tuxedo, a corsage in one hand, a bottle of champagne in the other. So I was just sitting there, and then the whole night flashed before my eyes, and it struck me like a bullet in the head-- I realized, finally, and for the first time, that... I wanted to kill somebody. So I figured because I loved you so much, that'd it'd be a good idea if I didn't see you anymore. But now I'm different.

He turns and points the gun at the front door and FIRES two shots through it, leaving two baseball-size holes in the door.

Martin bolts out of the room toward the back of the house. Debi and Newberry run as fast as they can away from Martin. Newberry opens the front door, preparing to rush out with Debi. They stop at what they see:

NEWBERRY'S & DEBI'S P.O.V.

As ASSASSIN lies on the porch, shot dead through the door by Martin. IN one hand is a gun, in the other is a Fuller Brush kit. Two men, GROCER and an ASSASSIN, clamber out of van, their guns rising up fast toward us.

Debi pulls Newberry inside, slams the front door, and locks it. They dive away just before ten rounds hit the door from outside.

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Martin rushes toward the back door which is already opening. A barrel comes through and FIRES at Martin. Martin pulls back behind the refrigerator and returns FIRE. An ASSASSIN comes through the door in a crouch and takes cover behind the cooking island. Martin, yelling back to Debi...

MARTIN  
I'm in love with you. I know we can  
make this work!

MARTIN

rushes toward the island, grabbing an iron skillet off the range, and holds it up like a crossing-guard stop sign. He steps toward the hidden Assassin just as the Assassin rises SHOOTING. The skillet takes two rounds before Martin hammers the Assassin's head with it. Debi and Newberry arrive in the kitchen.

NEW ANGLE - LOW DUTCH

Martin bashes the skillet into the Assassin's skull, which is beyond our view. He rises spattered with blood and looks at Debi.

MARTIN  
I was afraid to commit to a  
relationship, but now I know I'm  
ready to make it happen.

Martin drops the skillet and grabs Newberry and Debi gently by the wrists.

MARTIN  
I just need time to change.

He ushers them past the bludgeoned corpse and up the back stairs. He spins and FIRES twice back down the stairs at another ASSASSIN coming up, blowing his arms off. HALLWAY He leads them quickly.

MARTIN  
It's not easy for me. I was raised  
to close off, to control my  
feelings...

He takes them into a bedroom, and BLOWS AWAY, an ASSASSIN coming in through the window, emptying his auto. Martin pushes Debi and Newberry into an adjoining bathroom. He backs out through the doorway.

MARTIN  
Lock the door.

They do. Martin starts away, but stops to get something straight.

MARTIN  
I wasn't raised in a loving environment.  
(beat)  
But that's not an excuse. It's a reason.

INT. FOYER

Martin corners the banister and springs half-way down the stairs, then hears the front door begin to open.

MARTIN  
My soul was empty--

Martin jams in another clip, and chambers a round. He sees Grocer beginning to slip in.

MARTIN  
--and it's up to me to fill it.

Martin FIRES the twelve-round clip into the door until the slide locks back empty again. Grocer back out fast. Martin hears a gun REPORT from upstairs and moves back toward it, tossing the spent weapon.

INT. BEDROOM

An ASSASSIN slams his body against the bathroom door while Debi and Newberry scream from within. Martin flies at him. The Assassin wheels on Martin FIRING. Martin pivots out of the line of fire, still moving forward. He takes hold of Assassin's neck and snaps it. Martin drops the corpse.

MARTIN  
(through the door)  
It's okay. It's Martin.

The door begins to open revealing Debi and Newberry.

MARTIN  
I know what I do isn't moral, per se, but if you could just look past that, you'd see a man worth loving.

GROCER (O.S.)  
Don't listen to him, he's a professional.

Martin stops short and cocks his head toward Grocer's muffled voice coming from the vent. Grocer continues...

GROCER (O. S.)  
 You're breaking my heart down here,  
 Blank. I can't shoot through the  
 tears.

Martin, incensed, bends down and takes the gun from the dead man. He runs out of the bedroom, gun poised for a kamikaze firefight. . . .

EXT. NEWBERRY HOUSE - SAME

Lardner and McCullers are poised outside the front door, about to enter the mix. McCullers peers through the window.

LARDNER  
 Did you see Blank in there?

MCCULLERS  
 No. . . .

LARDNER  
 Good. For a second there I thought  
 we were in trouble.

INT. NEWBERRY FOYER - CONTINUOUS

MARTIN

reaches the top of the front stairs to find Grocer heading up the stairs at him. They lift their guns at each other to FIRE, when they hear. . .

LARDNER AND MCCULLERS

power through the front door, guns BLAZING at floor-level, ala Butch and Sundance.

Martin and Grocer, above, spin on them instinctively, and FIRE, killing them. Grocer dives off of the stairs and rolls out of view.

KITCHEN - INTERCUT

GROCER

heads up the back stairs.

MARTIN

works his way toward Grocer, moving with stealth toward the kitchen.

GROCER

hears him and starts back down.

Martin dives behind the cooking island just as Grocer comes out of the stairwell blasting. They unload at each other as Grocer runs a pattern across the kitchen, FIRING at Martin, crouched, who BLASTS back. Grocer vaults himself through the air toward a serving window from the kitchen to the dining room, still firing.

C. U. - MARTIN'S GUN - SLOW MOTION

The last casing floats out of the chamber into the air, and the slide on the auto locks back-- empty.

NORMAL SPEED

GROCER

Flying through the air disappearing through the shuttered serving window, his flight carrying him past a television that sits on a lazy susan.

MARTIN AND GROCER - INTERCUT

Martin and Grocer sit on the floor, backs up against opposite side of the counter-- Martin in the kitchen and Grocer in the dining room. The hulking old television sits on the counter above and between them.

MARTIN LOOKS UP AND SPIES THE

TELEVISION

GROCER

....How about I sell you two rounds  
for a hundred grand a piece?

MARTIN

Okay.

Martin takes out a checkbook, and tears one free. He wads it into a loose ball and tosses it over the counter.

BALLED CHECK

sails over the television and comes down, bouncing off Grocer's head and into his lap.

MARTIN

There you go. I left it blank.

GROCER

Excellent. Here they come.

Grocer pulls two rounds from the clip of his semi-automatic and pushes the clip back into the gun. Grocer arcs the TWO BULLETS into the air.

MARTIN

ri ses and springs at the televi si on, gri ppi ng i t. The TWO BULLETS sail past hi s head.

GROCER

begi ns to ri se from hi s si de of the counter, cocki ng hi s gun.

MARTIN

puts all hi s wei ght and moti on behi nd the televi si on. Marti n and the televi si on careen off of the counter toward Grocer. GROCER gets off one round before

MARTIN

fl i es onto Grocer, smashi ng the seventy-fi ve pound televi si on over hi s Goddamn head. Marti n sails past the col li si on, landi ng on hi s back i n the dini ng room. He rol ls over to see

GROCER

Body crumpled, neck i s snapped, head encased i n the shattered pi ctu re tube. He i s dead.

MARTIN

runs up the front stai rs, retrievi ng the spent gun he di scarded earli er, and heads i nto the bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - MI NUTES LATER

Marti n opens the bathroom door. Inside, Debi si ts on the edge of the tub, her face i n her hands. Newberry kneels wi th hi s arms around her. Marti n takes thi s i n, and wal ks back i nto the bedroom. Newberry stands and fol l ows hi m out.

MARTIN AND NEWBERRY

MARTIN

a bloody, tattered mess, wi pes off the gun and puts i t i nto Newberry' s hand. Newberry, i n total shock, gri ps i t. Marti n looks past Newberry.

MARTIN' S P. O. V.

Of Debi , head i n hands.

MARTIN (V. O.)  
Debi . . . wi ll you marry me?

Debi doesn't look up. After a moment, she reaches out, head still down, and closes the bathroom door....

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

Outside is a Michigan autumn. Debi sits at her console, bringing in the mike as she fades out of a tune...

DEBI

This is WRFN Radio Free Newberry cause that's what it does. Bringing you New Ones for the Nineties, a fresh new format designed to pull you out of what's come before, and reel you into what's coming soon--

THE PHONE CONSOLE

Lights up with an incoming call....

DEBI

I tell you what's coming soon for me, or at least what I dreamed this morning in that weird time just before you actually wake up. But first this commercial. Back after this....

She pushes a couple of buttons, slaps a cartridge in a player, and answers the phone. We hear the commercial over the studio monitor:

ANNOUNCER

Don't miss the show of the season at Bilkin Community Center! "Brigadoon!" A musical for all ages! "Brigadoon," starring Carol Plummer, Thomas Canchola, Bob Destephano, and Lee Ordman!...

Debi picks up the phone.

DEBI

RFN...

Her face goes slack as she listens... not good, not bad... Then she hangs up slowly. The commercial ends. A moment of dead air, then she snaps to.

DEBI

Hey out there.... Okay.... I'm going to finish up that fantasy later. First I'll give you an hour of nonstop music.... If I don't come back on after that-- well, never mind.

Debi turns on a reel-to-reel, and leaves.

EXT. FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT HOUSE - DAY

Debi pulls up and gets out. She begins toward the door but stops dead when she sees

MARTIN

sitting on the front steps.

Debi moves slowly up the walk and sits next to him on the porch. They sit, gazing out over the grass and trees beyond. After a while...

DEBI  
This will never work out.

She turns to him, serious.

DEBI  
You kill people.

Beat.

MARTIN  
I have no illusions about the future.  
What is, is. We make choices. And we  
become the sum total of our choices.  
I can live with that.

DEBI  
Other people can't.

Martin looks at her earnestly... And smiles ever so slightly. She does the same, and then just a little wider. He the same. They turn back out to face the lawn, and they share a laugh....

THE END